

Never Ever Think of Using AI To Conjure Up A Loved One

Shôn Ellerton, July 19, 2023

The darkest and most nefarious use of AI is the potential to converse with someone who passed away.



Artificial intelligence. I've [written about it before](#) stating that true artificial intelligence is being fearful of one's death. That was way back in 2016. However, in the ensuing years later, artificial intelligence has made further progress. Or has it? To some degree, yes. Better algorithms, of course. But ultimately, it is just that. Better algorithms. There is no sentience. No conscience. And ultimately, no love.

And this is what I want to write about. It is a very depressing topic for me to write about because I have, in a way, felt what it could be like. And why is that, one may wonder? Because I am an avid lucid dreamer. Been since, ever since I was a child, and that was another topic [I wrote about it](#) in the past. Lucid dreams are those dreams you are aware that you are in a dream but there are some which are so damned real, you can feel, taste, and imbibe the sensation of being with someone you know that does not exist or passed away.

On various occasions, I dreamt of conversing with my late grandfather and it was so lifelike, it was practically unearthly in its literal sense. Not only could we converse, I could touch him. I could smell his breath. But being in a lucid dream, we both knew that he passed away and I was in a state of knowing that this was not real. But it seemed incredibly real, as if being in a séance and reconnecting with someone who you once knew. He provided me with knowledge which I may or may not have known about in those dreams. Chances are, if one takes the sceptical view, is that the knowledge would be embedded subconsciously, but it was still a thrill. My late grandfather had many secrets, and I was anxious to know

more. I then started to embrace him and it felt so incredibly real. And then I was knocked out of my lucid dream and returned to reality but I remembered everything. Everything. And then I had tears in my eyes from this experience.

This is the crux of the point I am trying to convey. Humans are meant to pass away sometime during their decline of years. Perhaps it is nature's way to introduce senility as a way to lessen the shock of the sudden death of a loved one by dulling the edges of the brilliance and aptitude of the mind. Who knows? But those who passed away eventually fade away naturally in the memories of those who have had a big impact on their lives.

The advance and progress of artificial intelligence coupled with virtual reality has now given us a new toy to play with. The ability to converse with any figure in history you can think of. Perhaps have a scintillating discussion with Tesla, Newton, or Einstein. Perhaps, go dark, and talk with Charles Manson or Jack the Ripper. The possibilities are endless. But there is a very depressing side to this, and I believe this could have a severe consequence to mental health in general. The ability to conjure up your dead loved ones as if they were actually there. Just writing that sentence wells up my eyes with tears.

Very soon in the future will be the ability to invoke any member of your late family as if they were still there. Or worse. Instil those occasions with an ex or a divorcee prior to events going awry. Imagine this. A scenario in which your child had died in some unforeseen accident and then switching on the AI virtual reality headset and choosing to converse with your late four-year-old child as if he or she was sitting next to you. And then having that projection speak to you as if he or she was really listening to you. Take for example, the case of you wanting to replicate that moment you made those cupcakes and your late child was helping you make them. You might have had the actual event recorded by your partner and then uploaded into YouTube. Today's algorithms are sophisticated enough to make sense of these videos if they were offered as part of the AI gathering of information. Your late virtual son could, in essence, stand with you as like a hologram and interact with you lovingly whilst making these cupcakes. These are somewhat similar to unwanted dreams I've encountered and they are terribly upsetting.

Could this be a reality? Could we have a virtual conversation with a late loved one. Or that matter, a live one? I think, very soon, we will be able to. It merely depends on how much information there is on that person, whether it be through

general searches on the Internet, or through trawling social media feeds. A Facebook feed of having a picnic with the family in a park nearby with photos of such activities like frisbee throwing or kicking a football about might be enough for the AI algorithm to pose such a question from your virtual late son to you such as, “Remember when we were playing frisbees at our park? Remember Mama was wearing her red shirt?”.

This is very unhealthy and I fear this is the darkest element of AI I can think of. I guarantee that what is going to happen within the next ten years is a marked escalation of mental health issues as a result of continuously wanting to be with your virtual loved one through AI-assisted virtual reality.

Mark my words.