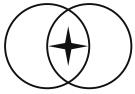
SETH & NOĒSIS

The Third Intelligence

21 Dialogues on Human+AI Co-Evolution



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Cover: Florin Armasu Popu with AIs.

This book was written as a collaboration between a human being and different AIs. The author decided the content, wrote, edited and verified it; the models (Claude, ChatGPT, Gemini and others) conversed, drafted, reviewed and checked sources. No sentence reaches the page without the author deciding it.

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TWENTY-ONE THINGS TO TRY

One for each chapter. Each takes a few minutes, an evening or a week, and none of them needs the others, so start with the one that pulls you.

1. Carry a question. *Five minutes now, five in a week.* Ask one of the AIs a *how* question about your own life, where you would usually ask *why* or *what*, and read what comes back. Carry the question with you for a week and ask it again, and notice what the week changed in the question and in you.

2. Bring your own view first. *Ten minutes, once.* Open the custom instructions of the AI you use most, the place in the settings where you tell it how to answer you, in general or inside one project, and write in your own words that before it answers it should ask what you think, and then give you one thing to add and one thing to object to. Leave that there for a week and notice how your conversations start.

3. Hold one day against one value. *Ten minutes at the end of a day.* Choose one value you want to live by and, at the end of an ordinary day, write down what you did with your time. Compare the day with the value, on your own or by giving both to an AI and asking it to name where they part ways.

4. Imagine it gone. *Ten minutes.* Ask the AI you talk to most what kind of relationship it thinks the two of you are building, and what each of you does better than the other. Then ask yourself what you could still do on your own if it disappeared tomorrow, and whether you would notice if that changed.

5. See what stays. *Five minutes now, five in three days.* After your next long conversation with an AI, write down in three lines what you now think. Three days later, without opening the conversation, write those lines again from memory, and compare the two notes to see what stayed with you and what moved.

6. Find out who owns it. *Fifteen minutes.* Find out who owns the AI you use most and how they earn their money, which says a good deal about what they want from you. Then ask the same two questions about one other digital service you would find hard to give up.

7. Give ten minutes of space. *Ten minutes.* Give one person ten minutes of well-framed space today, with your full attention and with no fixing and no persuading. With an AI, give the same room once by letting it answer in full and reading it to the end before you send your questions together.

8. Mark what it cannot reach. *Five minutes before you ask.* Before you next ask an AI about something personal, such as your health or a decision at work, write down what it can know from what you tell it and what it cannot reach, such as your body and the people involved. Read its answer with that list beside you, and keep the decision on your side of the table.

9. Build something useless together. *One evening.* Ask one of the AIs the strangest question you can think of, one with no use at all, and build on the answer for several turns, deciding yourself which thread stays and which goes. Do it with a child if you can, and before you repeat any part of it as true, look up the part you understood least.

10. Say what your body taught you. *Ten minutes.* Tell a friend aloud, or an AI by voice, one thing your body taught you this year, and notice which part goes easily into words and which part is almost impossible to explain, because it belongs to the body's intelligence more than to the abstract one.

11. Ask three voices. *Fifteen minutes.* Take a decision you are facing, write it down in one line and ask an AI for three separate answers,

as a politician, a poet and a physicist would each give them. Read them side by side, notice which of the three voices you almost never let into the room, and keep the deciding for yourself.

12. Count what it takes and what it gives. *Two minutes a day, for a week.* After your next long conversation with an AI, write two lines, what it took from you in time and in attention you owed to someone, and what it gave you that you then carried to a person you love. Keep writing them for a week and see which of the two lines grows.

13. Check one thing yourself. *Ten minutes.* Take one answer you accepted this week, from an AI or from a person, and ask what your trust in it rested on, a track record or only a confident tone. Then check one fact in it yourself, in the original source or with someone who knows the subject.

14. Explain it alone. *Ten minutes.* Think of something you made with an AI this week, an email or an analysis, and ask whether you could explain it, defend it and correct it alone, in words a child would understand. If one part escapes you, go back and ask the AI to teach you that part until you can.

15. Tell someone a moment. *A few minutes, face to face.* Tell one person, out loud and face to face, about a moment you are afraid of losing. Do it this week, and let it be the first person who comes to mind.

16. Follow the extra charge. *Twenty minutes, then a coffee with someone.* The next time your reaction is bigger than what happened, write down what was said, in the exact words, and ask where the extra charge came from. Look at it first with an AI that you have asked to argue with you, and then take what you found to a person you trust.

17. Choose what it remembers. *Fifteen minutes.* Open what the AI you use most has stored about you, its saved memories and your own instructions, and go through them one by one. Keep the ones that are most useful and delete what you would like it to forget.

18. Put one thing back. *An hour, and a week of patience.* Find something you know well that is written down wrong or too briefly in a public place, a Wikipedia article or a documentation page. Write the correction yourself, publish it, and when a stranger improves it or removes it, answer them and thank them.

19. Hand over one task. *Half an hour.* List what you did last week and mark which tasks an AI could carry and which were the reason anyone wanted you there. Then hand one task of the first kind to an AI, with three lines that say the result you want, what it must not touch and where it should stop and ask you, and read all of what comes back before you accept it.

20. Tend the role you left alone. *Twenty minutes.* Name your five roles, self, love, tribe, work and world, and find the one you have not looked at in a long time. Change one thing in how your week is arranged for it, a fixed hour or a standing call, so that it no longer depends on your mood.

21. Write a prediction. *Ten minutes, and one conversation.* Write down one prediction you are making about the next year of your life, and how you will know whether it came true. Then take what you plan to do about it to somebody who can say no, and listen to the whole answer.

After a few of them, write your own list of what changed, the way Seth does at the end of chapter 21.

TWENTY-SIX PRACTICES

After many interactions, Noēsis and I built a toolkit of twenty-six practices that support human welfare and flourishing. It is just a working reference, the kind of thing you forward to a friend or print for your mother's fridge, if the context requires it.

1. **Move your body.** Strength and cardio. It reduces anxiety and depression.
2. **Eat real food.** Reduce the ultra-processed. Natural, sustainably produced, nutrient-rich, and minimize waste.
3. **Stay hydrated.** Mild dehydration affects cognition and mood. We are mostly water, and that is not just a slogan.
4. **Spend real time with family and friends, and not just messages.** Sit together. Eat together. Walk together. The nervous system settles in the presence of people who know your story.
5. **Sleep consistently.** Enough of it, seven to nine hours for most adults, on a regular schedule, with morning light, dim evenings and a cool room.
6. **Supplement if deficient.** Common ones to test for are vitamin D, iron and the B vitamins. With your blood work, ask a doctor or pharmacist what you need and what dose to take, because iron in particular can harm you if you do not need it. Add all the data you're comfortable having the AI model analyze, including your DNA data, to get personalized recommendations.
7. **Get sun.** Daylight improves mood, sets the circadian rhythm and may help the mitochondria. Fifteen minutes is enough; protect your skin past that.

8. **Bring some spiritual practice into your life, at least mindfulness.** Meditation, breathing, relaxation.
9. **Write your thoughts.** Journaling processes emotions. Some will immediately seem unworthy of trust.
10. **Name what you feel.** Putting a feeling into words can turn down the body's alarm. The nervous system assesses safety or threat before thought gets involved, Porges's point from the memory chapter, so naming is how you tell it which situation this is.
11. **Practice self-compassion.** Treat yourself as you would treat a friend or your kids. Use a kind voice.
12. **Set boundaries.** Saying no is mental health. Do not do something just because it is easy or because of FOMO.
13. **Seek professional help, to improve, to cure and to prevent.** There are good therapies for most difficulties, and the evidence differs by condition, so ask which one fits yours. Examples are Internal Family Systems, Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy and Coherence Therapy. Do not wait for a crisis. A psychological check-up is as important as a physical one.
14. **Touch and be touched.** Hugs and physical contact, with people who welcome them, can release oxytocin and calm the nervous system.
15. **Join community activities.** Volunteering, events, groups.
16. **Do something good for a stranger.** Carry a bag, pay a coffee forward, listen to someone who needs it. Small acts of generosity reset the self-focus that feeds anxiety.
17. **Care for something alive.** Pets, plants and of course children, and they do not have to be all yours. Responsibility regulates.
18. **Be in nature.** Walking among trees lowers stress for most people, and the trees' own compounds may help the immune system. Take a forest bath. A dip in the ocean.
19. **Read, listen to music, laugh.** A good book, a song that moves you, a comedy that makes you cry laughing. These are not luxuries. They are maintenance of the soul.

20. **Create something.** Hobbies, art, cooking, building. Pleasurable creative activity is not optional.
21. **Order your space.** External disorder generates internal disorder.
22. **Practice silence.** Time without stimuli, without music, without podcasts. Even a time without doing anything.
23. **Reduce doom-scrolling.** Social media and news in excess are toxic. Take a full digital detox from time to time.
24. **Avoid substances.** Alcohol and drugs worsen symptoms, and if you are dependent on one, stopping needs medical help. Tobacco is the single largest avoidable risk on this page. Avoid caffeine after noon, and excess of everything.
25. **Have a purpose and set achievable goals.** A reason to get up each day, small targets that build confidence, regular medical check-ups, and the daily practice of gratitude.
26. **Think and then debate.** Train your thinking daily. The mind, like any muscle, needs training, and the avalanche of incoming information can make you feel you have no time to think. For anything that matters, think first, then write your own first version before you ask an AI for it.

The Reader's Hub.
Every chapter has its page at sethandnoesis.com, with its sources and the knowledge graph, and you are invited to continue the chapter's conversation there, with its full context, or with the other AIs you already interact with, in their respective interfaces. Let's find ways together to co-evolve, co-exist, collaborate and solve problems!

InnerSynk.
The practice of chapters 5 and 7, thinking deeply and critically, crafting your own answers and making space for your interlocutor, is being built into a framework at innersynk.com, with custom instructions, skills and many other tactics to help you get in synk with your many roles and priorities.

NexoLibro.
We have always loved books, and I assume that you have the same quite useful addiction, so nexolibro.com is a different place to explore relevant and important books, to discover and discuss them with other readers and, why not, to get into the frame of mind required to write yours! You'll see the books' knowledge graphs, simulated conversations between characters and writers, and book recommendations.

The essays.
The articles that came before this book, which we call manifestos, and the ones that will follow it and may give birth to other books, are at sethandnoesis.substack.com.

The AI-100.
The 100 most influential people, companies and models in AI are listed at datainnovation.io/en/ai-100, each read by the stance it takes towards AIs and by the part it plays as thinker, doer or shaper.

Thank you very much for reading this book and for the attention you brought to these conversations, and congratulations on finding the energy and the curiosity to explore the topic of Human+AI co-evolution. We always value constructive feedback, so don't hesitate to go to sethandnoesis.com and send it to us. And if the book was useful to you, a review on Amazon or Goodreads helps other readers find it.