



# Building Noble Society

Through Artificial Intelligence and  
Interactive Fiction

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## Summary

- Storytelling and interactive-play is a fundamental fact of life. We will discuss the significance and evolution of story telling in society; the emergence of interactive fiction and its different forms; and evoking emotions through interactive fiction. Programming interactive fiction stimulates real world emotions. The introduction of machines that can talk and imitate human conversations do, in fact, develop emotional human-machine non biological relationships
- Bird's eye view of today's world of e-culture, e-society and e-religion and show how individuals are actually interacting more with machines than with other human beings.. This illustrates the social need for synthesis of religion and science. It is in the best interest of everyone that these different perspectives come together and agree on universalities, on which whole world can agree and consciously work together to build a better, improved and noble society. To reach this goal, the best form or vehicle is interactive fiction coupled with artificial intelligence
- Discussion of the triangular relationship of religion, science and society and the social need for science and religion to come together for the sake of all humanity. The blind worship of science and technology is wrong. It is not what technology can do but what we can do with it. We conclude this part with a reminder of the importance of religion, and why it would be self destructive for us to move away from it
- Example Sites, Case studies

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## Storytelling <sup>1</sup>

Storytelling is a fundamental part of our lives. Since hominids first acquired the ability to speak, we've been telling each other story. Storytelling is not something that only "real authors" or "real screenwriters" do. Every day every one of us makes up stories about things that happen to us and tell them to our family and friends.

I went to see my dad in the hospital a couple of days ago. He was off the respirator, thank God, talking and awake, but still quite weak and a bit confused. He was under the misapprehension that we were all in London, and going to the theater that night. He kept on asking me to make sure that I picked up the tickets. Mind you, it's probably more cheerful to think that you're going to the theater in London than to realize that you're a heart patient in the intensive care unit.

That's a story. It's a true story, but a story nonetheless. I've already told it to several people. The experience is shaped into the form of a story, to allow us to tell it, in a coherent and understandable fashion, to others.

## Interactive Play <sup>2</sup>

Interactive play is an equally fundamental part of our lives. Infants play before they can speak, and most adults play, too--with their children, with their pets, in a softball league, or in poker games. *Playing* continues to be important factor for learning later in life, though most people don't think of what they're doing as "interactive play". When you start up a new software application, you experiment with it and try different things or see what the different menu items do; that's playing.

When you design a new marketing campaign, you come up with several ideas, run them past your colleagues, chat about them-- you're experimenting with different behaviors, you're

seeing what works, and exploring the structure of the system. You are not playing a game but you are playing with the ideas; a game is just a particular, structured form of play, just as a novel is a particular, structured form of storytelling. The point is this: Playing is fundamental to being human, as is storytelling.

What happens after you play? Frequently, you make up a story about what happened. When you go home to your spouse after a softball game, he or she asks how the game went, and you tell a story about the game. When your boss asks you how the plan for the project is going, you tell a story about the ideas you've experimented with. First you play; then you tell a story about it.

Interactive play is how we learn. Stories are how we integrate what we've learned, and how we teach others the things we've learned ourselves through interactive play. But play comes first.” <sup>2</sup>

Storytelling is at the core of every means of entertainment through the use of such media as radio, drama, literature, cinema, computer games and music. Examining the relationship of the story and its means communication is useful, because it can illustrate the role of interactions among humans, the key to human-human relationship, and the ways in which storytelling, particularly fiction has influenced evolution of society in its growth and progress.

A story is a linear and controlled experience, which occurs in the same way each time we read, watch or listen. The author consciously crafts the story to choose precisely the events that will create the maximum impact. Interactive Media like games are non-linear; they provide the illusion of free will to players who have freedom of action within all possible ranges. But in an interactive medium, players are not passive recipients of experience. Players feel they have options, which keeps them actively engaged and gives them the feeling that anything

that they do has an impact and that they could enjoy a new experience, every time they play the game.

### Interactive Storytelling<sup>3</sup>

The simplest example of Interactive storytelling is fiction novels, where readers were asked questions and based upon their answers the story proceeds. For example, a reader is asked, *Do you think the story character - Diana - was murdered or did she escape?* Based on the answer, the story takes different turns, therefore the reader can read a story in many different ways.

Books are read sequentially, movies also have a linear sequence of frames. Computer Games are an extension of stories, where a player is interactively engaged so that the pre-determined experience occurs more effectively and also provides alternative paths and outcomes. There are non-linear forms of fiction, such as novels where one can read the chapters in an alternative order. This presents a different experience as every time the book is read the reader may see the story in a different light. However to understand the novel fully it needs to be read in both ways – from first page to last page or from last page to the first page. These narrative experiments where steps towards non linear storytelling which laid the foundation for interactive storytelling.

### Hypertext Fiction<sup>4</sup>

Hypertext fiction works like a web site; one begins by reading a bit of text, which can vary in length from a sentence to several paragraphs. Certain words or phrases are links to other bits of text. The pieces are linked together in a spider's web of paths, sometimes, with supporting music, videos and/or pictures. Some hypertext fiction has multiple endings; some doesn't have any explicit ending at all. The basic idea is that we explore the story--moving from one branch to

another-- gradually gaining an understanding of what's happening. So instead of the traditional story's ending, is instead an epiphany, a sudden insight or "aha" that draws what you've read together into a coherent whole.

### Interactive Hypertext fiction<sup>5</sup>

Interactive Hypertext fiction is a unique way of talking or storytelling but because the author has no control over how the reader encounters his story, he cannot structure the story for maximum effectiveness. Reading hypertext fiction, unlike playing a game, is a purposeless exploration and does not produce the same sense of desire, of compulsion to *play*. In other words, hypertext fiction is an unhappy compromise between traditional storytelling and *Play*. It's game-like in that the player has a variety of options, but not surprisingly, since it's created by people who have little interest in games, it has few of the other aspects that make games appealing. Works of hypertext fiction make for lousy games.

### "Choose-your-own-ending" books<sup>6</sup>

In game books you begin by reading the first page or two; at the end of the page, you're faced with a decision. Depending on what you decide, you turn to one page or another--if you choose option A, you might go to page 16, while option B might send you to page 86. The idea is that you're taking the role of a character, and you're trying to solve his narrative problem, whatever that may be. Some paths through the book lead to failure, others to success. Often, "failure" means "you die; start over."

### Paper Role Playing Games and board games<sup>7</sup>

In these games an adventure begins by reading a numbered paragraph or set of paragraphs, and often then turns to a different paragraph, depending on the decision. However, the player



is also expected to be familiar with the rules of the role-playing game for which the adventure is written. Paragraph-system board games are games where we have a piece (or pieces) on the board, and an external game system to manage the movement and other facets of the game. At various times, the game directs us to read a numbered paragraph in an accompanying booklet. That paragraph instructs us to make a decision and turn to a different numbered paragraph, perhaps using aspects of the game system before proceeding.

### Application of Interactive Fiction<sup>8</sup>

The major application of Interactive Fiction is in computer games because of the powerful storytelling capability of the concept. The flexibility of allowing the reader to decide the progression of the story captures their interest, since it provides the reader with the feeling that they are directly involved in the story and have control over how the story would unfold. Due to its strong descriptive characteristic, users of Interactive Fiction are brought closer to reality. Through Computers, the difference between Reality and Virtual Reality is diminished and this difference can be reduced even more, by using Chatbots.

### Addictiveness of Interactive Technology<sup>9</sup>

The increasing effectiveness of all different forms of communication (radio, Internet, and audio-video etc) have contributed toward the increase in human-machine interaction. Computers have extended their domain to virtually every household via the Internet. The increasing number of 'chat-addicts' and people falling in love through the Internet proves that people are increasingly becoming dependent on machines. A bond of trust has developed through the interaction between machines and human beings.

According to USA today, the recent wave

created by the 'Tamagotchi' virtual pets, is a strong indication that humans are finding it easier to communicate and relate to machines as time progresses and are even increasingly becoming emotionally dependent on machines as well.<sup>10</sup> The emotional bond of humans with machines took another step forward when Sony Co. introduced their robotic dog, AIBO (Artificial Intelligence robot), which performs a majority of the tasks of a normal pet dog, and even possesses characteristics of a real pet dog. Though fundamentally AIBO is a robot, the phenomenal market response proves that humans are bonding emotionally with machines.<sup>11</sup>

The powerful, successful and advancing concept of Interactive Fiction makes it an ideal candidate to help steer society to the righteous path which will be reviewed further in this report.

### Interactive Computers

Chatbots are the *in* terms of computer science, Interactive Fiction can be understood as a tiny "text adventure" game, developed by William Crother. It is played only by text input and text output and tries to understand and communicate in human language.

From a programming point of view, "A work of interactive fiction" is a program that simulates the world, understands natural-language text input from an interactor; and provides a textual reply, based on events in the world".<sup>12</sup> Interactive Fiction can be thought of as a movie or a drama which is live, whereby a person can interact with the characters as if they are live. Chatbots are the interactive chat sessions.

### Significance of Storytelling<sup>13</sup>

Thinking is what we are; what we can become, through religious teachings, frees our mind from conditions and brings a higher vision of a bigger picture to mind. Religion with the help of

fiction, stories, poems, quotes, dramas (even interesting, heartwarming email) is generating emotions and compassion on the Internet.

Fictional storytelling is best measured by the kind, degree and depth of emotions it produces. Music can also generate emotions. There are arguable theories of mathematical and pattern observations about music. Paintings can move us. The canvases produce the strongest of emotions and are often highly prized. The same is also true about portraits, monuments or anything which connects with our inner self. Interaction generates emotion and emotions create experience, or memories, something which may affect our thoughts and actions for the rest of our life.

#### A different perspective<sup>14</sup>

Many scientists have become philosophers in their role as social critics. Why is that? It is more than an interesting alternate intellectual path. Many of them have realized and accepted that oneness is the secret of everything and agreed that science, art, philosophy, poetry are all different branches of a river going into one big ocean.

None of the art forms or mediums of storytelling is superior or inferior to another. To think one is more legitimate than the other is to think that music is somehow more legitimate than poetry, or poetry more legitimate than painting. It's comparing apples to oranges. It's the merit of the art form within itself that matters. Does it connect with most of the people? Is it positive, progressive, constructive and is in the best interest of most of the people?

The intention or goal is missing from the games and interactive fiction or non-linear storytelling forms. The best goal for these storytelling forms would be to train and educate the human mind to think and do what is in the best interest of most of the people.

#### Using Artificial Intelligence<sup>15</sup>

Artificial Intelligence is a branch of science which deals with helping machines find solutions to complex problems in a more human-like fashion. This generally involves borrowing characteristics from human intelligence, and applying them as algorithms in a computer friendly way. A more or less flexible or efficient approach can be taken depending on the requirements established; this influences how artificial the intelligent behavior appears. It is only recently that humans have utilized technology to assist them in solving problems.

For example, computers are programmed to perform a certain monotonous mathematical task to increase accuracy and efficiency. The drawback is that these pre-programmed machines cannot 'think', that is, utilize senses to study a specific problem and react accordingly as required by the situation. Humans are capable of reacting to situations dynamically thus ruling out the usage of machines in situations that require instant decisions to be made.

#### Imparting e-intelligence<sup>16</sup>

Due to the introduction of artificial intelligence and its consequent growth we taught machines how to read, speak and understand human voices, actions and events. Now we are fast approaching a stage where we will have to impart intelligence to make these non biological machines a part of a "living family", further diminishing the difference between living and non living, and between biological and non biological. The intelligence could include emotions, creativity and spirituality". The fusion of artificial intelligence and interactive fiction will prove to be the perfect blend to attract society and guide it to a dream of a noble society.

The field of technology is vast and various options exist to achieve the drive towards a

noble society. One of the best ways appears to be based on a fusion of interactive fiction and artificial intelligence. One of the methods of promoting righteousness through technology is the utilization of 'chat bots'. The use of chat bots is justifiable because of the phenomenon of large numbers of people gathering in Internet chat rooms, groups and bulletin boards.

### Chatbots or Chat Robots <sup>17</sup>

A Chat bot is "a computer program that simulates human conversation, or chat, through artificial intelligence. Typically, a chat bot will communicate with a real person, but applications are being developed in which two chat bots can communicate with each other. Chat bots are already used in applications such as e-commerce customer service, call centers and Internet gaming. Chat bots used for these purposes are typically limited to conversations regarding a specialized purpose and not for the entire range of human communication.

Some popular examples of chat bots are:

1. <http://robot-hosting.com>
2. <http://www.mediasemantics.com/>
3. <http://www.alicebot.org>

A normal chat bot utilizes a logical tree to respond to queries put forth by the human correspondent. A human, while chatting with a person or a machine judges and decides everything based on the responses that the human receives from the second party.

A chat bot provides the human interactor with the feeling that he/she is actually conversing with another human and not a machine. To communicate properly and at a higher level chat bots must be able to respond to human emotions and even to disseminate human-like emotions. With the Internet as the most popular medium of communication people are becoming more and more emotionally open to machines, thus

providing us with the opportunity to deploy emotional chat bots. According to most of the chatters on the Internet, an emotionally active machine does not appear to be an impossible dream.

Currently, emotionless bots are controlling the groups on chat clubs. Their performance is as impressive as any personality in the chat room. Fundamentally, these bots are convincingly human. If these bots can generate emotions when interacting with humans, they will no longer be regarded as non-human.

### Deciphering Emotions in Text <sup>18</sup>

It is well known that computers cannot "understand" human beings. This is not surprising since it is difficult even to translate text from one language to another. For example: in english we say, "I am hungry. The translation into French is: "J'ai faim". But the literal translation is: "I have hunger!" In Hindi, there is lot of personification, so we say "Bhookh Lagi hai", or "Neend Aa rahi hai", on translation is: - "Hunger is coming to me!", "Sleep is coming to me!".

What is important in this example is to understand the emotion, the feeling within the lines, rather than to translate the words. The way people think, behave and communicate varies in different societies of the East and West. This cannot simply be done by automating and rationalizing the process of language translations or highly refined, skilled processes of deciphering. In every age, considerable changes occur in the meanings of words and in the use of "slang" that is so common in our everyday conversation. This is due to personal experiences, as well as interaction with other people. Considering these hurdles faced by computer programmers, it is not a miniscule task to create an emotionally active bot.

However, these chat bots could facilitate a new

level of interaction between humans and machines, which may well serve as building blocks for creating intelligent emotionally active robots for the betterment of society.

### Need for synthesis of science & religion <sup>18</sup>

Emotions are a vehicle to religion; a cold or insensitive man can not be religious. We need emotion. So it is important to make sure people don't lose emotion and feeling in this material rat race. In my opinion, this interactive fiction, when put in service for a unified religion, will help us establish one noble world, which all great poets, philosophers, and religious people have dreamed and prayed for.

Humanity may well be dependent on the convergence of technology with human intelligence and attributes such as creativity and emotion. Science and religion must come together, synthesize and make modern technology a vehicle for moving society upwards and forward on the path of growth, nobility and righteousness.

Talking of unified religion, all differences in the world are those of degree and not kind. Some say that science and religion have a lot in common and others say they have nothing in common. We could combine all Christians, Jews, Muslims, Hindu's, Buddhists and take what is good and common to all, take in the best interest of everyone. If we combine poetry, philosophy, art, science, dance, music and take what is common to all, do we not have the religion of the future? A religion that will make this world one noble society?

Computers and the Internet are appropriate vehicles to reach this goal. We are spending more time each day with this technology, than we are with other people. Technology has become a big part of our lives, like the backbone of our society. Remember the blackout of August 14, 2003, which brought a large part of

North America to a halt? 20 years ago we could not imagine that something like that would ever happen. Welcome to the twenty first century!

Practically speaking, in order to learn to love, we need a tool for transforming anger into compassion and into acceptance. We need some kind of "brake" to apply when the mind shifts into high gear under the influence of anger and other negative emotions. The mind is so used to having its own way in almost everything that all it knows is how to race out of control.

### Mind Works

Eknath Easwaran once asked his disciples, "How many of you would ever step into your automobile if you knew the brakes were not working properly? I could say, "You have plenty of gas, a big engine, gorgeous upholstery, radial tires, eight-channel stereo tape deck, etc. Why don't you go ahead?" You would reply, "But I can't stop the car!" The vast majority of us, amazingly enough, manage to travel through life without knowing how to brake the engine of the mind."

Sri Murari Bapu once said, "The three dimensions of life are material, emotional and spiritual. Most people live on the material level and enjoy the pleasure of the senses. The emotional level is for the poets, philosophers, and those religious people who live on ideas, thoughts and notions of finding oneness with everything around. At the spiritual level one becomes free from all thoughts, attains a supreme state of bliss or nirvana as the Buddha teaches: A perfect balance of these attributes is important for individuals as well as society to lead a path of meaningful growth and righteous progress."

Further he added, "If life is a painting, then material people are those who are impressed by the visual, the view. Emotional people are impressed with the colors, the stroke, patterns,



and the finer details. Religious people are impressed with the painter, God. Spiritual people, while impressed by the God, go further to make their life a canvas to extend His creativity.”

Eknath Eswaran, suggested that mind can be programmed. He said, “We can all install a simple but effective brake, which is called the “mantra”. Whenever you feel agitated, annoyed, impolite, or downright angry, keep repeating the “mantra”. Gradually the mind will race less and less. When the brake is thoroughly road-tested, you will have the equipment to be patient and kind in every situation. You will be ready to face the tests that real love demands.”

## Beyond Religion<sup>20</sup>

The idea of reality can be captured in a realization experience, as told by Frank Koch, in Proceedings, the magazine of the Naval Institute.

Two battleships assigned to the training squadron had been at sea on maneuvers in heavy weather for several days. I was serving on the lead battleship and was on watch on the bridge as night fell. The visibility was poor with patchy fog, so the captain remained on the bridge keeping an eye on all activities.

Shortly after dark, the lookout on the wing of the bridge reported, “Light, bearing on the starboard bow”. “Is it steady or moving astern?”, the captain called out. Lookout replied, “Steady, captain”, which meant we were on a dangerous collision course with that ship.

The captain then called to the signalman, “Signal that ship: We are on collision course, advise you change course 20 degrees.” Back came a signal, “Advisable for you to change course 20 degrees”

The captain said, “Send, I’m a captain, change course 20 degrees”. “I’m a seaman second class”, came the reply, “You had better change course 20 degrees”.

By that time, the captain was furious. He spat out, “Send, I’m in a battleship. Change course 20 degrees”.

Back came the flashing light, “I’m the Lighthouse”.

We changed the course

The shift of paradigm, experienced by the captain – and by us, as we read the account – puts the situation in a totally different light. We can see a reality that is superseded by his limited perception – a reality that is as critical for us to understand in our lives and society, as it was for the captain in the fog. These principles or laws of nature are woven into the fabric of every society, religion and institution that has endured and prospered. The degree to which any of these religions or cults accurately describes the territory, does not alter their existence because He is infinite by nature, beyond expression, and beyond comprehension. This cannot be expressed but only felt.

Religious teachings, words from the saints, the human values are principles of life, and are always present with us as a subjective reality. But they are only attempts at describing God’s territory and His presence. The real God is the superimposition of the light by all those “lighthouses”, the cumulative effect of all the principles that govern human growth, happiness and progress.

## Measuring Society

The Ocean is our Universe. Religion is the map. Saints and ethics are our guides. Principles are the lighthouses, the truths, which we more than often ignore due to pride. They are the natural Laws, the godly manifestations that cannot be changed or broken. It has been wisely said, that it is impossible for us to break the law. We can only break ourselves against the law. The saints, ethics and religions help us, like guides, Maps are there for us to check and confirm that we are on the right track in finding God.

Universal Principles are guidelines for human conduct that are proven to have enduring and permanent value. They are fundamental! They are essentially unarguable because they are self evident like the sun. They need no proof. One way to quickly grasp the self evident nature of

principles is to consider the absurdity of attempting to live an effective life based on unfairness, deceit, uselessness or degeneration, as, supposedly in support of a solid foundation for lasting happiness and success. Although people may argue about how these principles are defined or manifested or achieved, there seems to be an innate consciousness an awareness that they exist.

Society, community and religious programs help us to talk, think, work and behave in certain ways. In all societies there are some ethics, values or social behaviors that are functions of a particular time, place and situation. However, there are many principles, values and ethics which have universality in all cultures and societies.

Those qualities, ethics, and values are universal. --- the real truth! They should be respected as directly from God. It is wisely said that for these, everything must be sacrificed. It is the supreme! A sign of God! The reflection of Infinite! A corollary of this principle is that everything that is not in coherence with these will die sooner or later.<sup>22</sup>

### Understanding Universality<sup>23</sup>

Universality from Infinitesimal to infinity ---- Is Man a finite being? What is finite in this universe? Nothing! Take any living or non-living thing and start analyzing it, dissecting through the use of sciences. What is a rose made of? Petals, leaves, thorns, stem. Go deep: colors, chlorophyll and hydrocarbon compounds. Go deeper: different type of molecular arrangements between hydrogen and carbon atoms. Deeper and Deeper... nucleus, electrons, protons, neutrons, photons, charged clouds... Are these finite beings? None of their physical or chemical properties can be defined. They can only be described based on the scientific observations, postulations and assumptions. But these are the same, electrons and protons of hydrogen and

carbon that constitute us.

So, we all share the same basic constituents, but we all are so different. Truth cannot be found, because of the infinite nature of dissection. Is there any logical reason why these basic constituents, and hydrocarbons cannot be called Roses? Since they are also our constituents, why can't they be called human beings?

Such is the vision of universality. Equality, love and respect for all, giving a noble way to live. To see every life form, every human being, the thief, the robber, the saint, all as equal manifestations of God is the noblest form of appreciating universality.

## Religion, Science and Society

### Evolution of Technology<sup>24</sup>

Evolution is a constituent of each one of us, a gift of life. Evolution is growth and progress. Humans colonized, created sects, societies and countries. Individuals in these societies study surroundings, observe and learn and try to contribute in the betterment of their society.

"Man has existed for about a million years. He has possessed writing for about 6,000 years, agriculture somewhat longer, but perhaps not much longer. Science, as a dominant factor in determining the belief of educated men, has existed for about 300 years; as a source of economic technique, for about 150 years. In this brief period it has proved itself an incredibly powerful revolutionary force. When we consider how recently it has risen to power, we find ourselves forced to believe that we are at the very beginning of its work in transforming human life."

- BERTRAND RUSSEL, A British philosopher, logician, essayist, and social critic, Nobel Prize for Literature

Observation and experience, and our relationships with other human beings are the source of all knowledge. Humans implemented the collected knowledge on logical assumptions and developed theories and devices from them. This is called Science. Societies realized evolution and progressed towards betterment on the vehicle of technology, which drove them forward and upwards towards growth.

Fast-forward to the current era, booming with technology and competition among societies. Technology stands at its pinnacle with the ideas of biological cloning, the electronic mind, weapons, space shuttles and even efforts to decipher highly abstract human attributes like emotions, spiritualism and creativity. But modern technology has also contributed to the moral degradation of our society.

"Technology shapes society and society shapes technology." - ROBERT W. WHITE, Environmental Science and Technology, 1990. (S&S)

"Each new machine or technique, in a sense, changes all existing machines and techniques, by permitting us to put them together into new combinations. The number of possible combinations rises exponentially as the number of new machines or techniques rises arithmetically. Indeed, each new combination may, itself, be regarded as a new super-machine" - ALVIN TOFFLER, Future Shock, 1970. (Harper)

The contribution of science and technology to the decline in morality cannot be denied. Adult Videos, sold in even the smallest corner store are a part of one of the largest industries and an even bigger business on the Internet. When the Internet was born, it was with the vision of spreading education among universities but today it has become a slave of pornography. This is not the first time but is a repeat of how television evolved, for television was also seen

as a means to education. The Internet, which grew into e-learning and distance education, has been smothered by pornography and other evils and is rapidly becoming the moral sewer of society.

Military expenditures all over the globe have increased each and every year. Millions of scientists and engineers around the world are engaged in weapons research. It is doubtful if the vast majority of them have any desire for war. But even a child knows that weapons are made to kill, to destroy people, cities and countries. Today, countries are manufacturing and selling far more dangerous instruments of war and death than ever before. Weapons have become a big business, a kind of industry in the world.

### Importance of Religion <sup>25</sup>

One fundamental crisis that wise commentators today have cited is that, we as a society are losing our ability to differentiate between good and evil. For example, freedom is the basic human right with which every human is born. But there is "good freedom" and "bad freedom". Bad freedom is best described as "license", which is the freedom to do evil and destructive things no matter what the consequences of one's actions. It has been spreading like a disease and affecting whole world as a whole.

Science deals with the truths of the physical world while religion deals with the truths of the metaphysical world. The success of science is so enchanting, so alluring, that, in its material success, we forget its true purpose. Science is blind. It is becoming the vehicle of evil. It does not know the difference between good and bad. Science makes a nuclear bomb, but it can also create the ability to generate electricity.

Religion is like eyes to the society. Religion provides humanity with a vision of righteousness and the ability to distinguish between good and

evil. Religion suggests how individuals can grow and progress in life and help us decide what is in the best interest of each and every person and society in general. Values taught by Religion free our mind from all errors and drive us on a path of growth and success towards a meaningful life. To understanding the difference between good and evil, permit me to borrow from an email I received the other day.

>  
 > At a certain college, there was a professor with a  
 >reputation for being tough on religious students. At  
 >the first class every semester, he would ask if  
 >anyone was religious and would then proceed to  
 >degrade and mock their statement of faith.  
 >  
 > One semester, he asked the question and a young  
 >man raised his hand. The professor asked, "Did God  
 >make everything, young man?" "Yes he did, sir,"  
 >the young man replied.  
 >  
 > The professor responded, "If God made everything,  
 >then God made evil, and if we can only create  
 >from within ourselves, then God is evil." The student  
 >didn't have a response, and the professor was  
 > happy to have once again proved the religious faith  
 >to be a myth.  
 > Then another man raised his hand and asked,  
 >"May I ask you something, sir?" "Yes you may,"  
 > responded the professor. The young man stood up  
 >and said, "Sir, is there such thing as cold?" "Of >  
 >course, there is. What kind of a question is that?  
 >Haven't you ever been cold?"  
 >  
 > The young man replied, "Actually, sir, cold does not  
 >exist. What we consider to be cold, is really  
 > only the absence of heat. Absolute zero is when  
 >there is absolutely no heat, but cold does not  
 > really exist.  
 >  
 > We have only created that term to describe how we  
 >feel when heat is not there." The young man  
 > continued, "Sir, is there such thing as dark?" Once  
 >again, the professor responded, "Of course,  
 > there is." And once again, the student replied,  
 >"Actually, sir, darkness does not exist. Darkness is  
 > really only the absence of light. Darkness is only a  
 >term man developed to describe what happens  
 > when there is no light present..  
 >  
 > Finally, the young man asked, "Sir, is there such  
 >thing as evil?" The professor responded, "Of

> course. We have rapes and murders and violence  
 >everywhere in the world. Those things are evil."  
 > The student replied, "Actually, sir, evil does not  
 >exist. Evil is simply the absence of God.  
 >  
 > Evil is a term man developed to describe the  
 >absence of God. God did not create evil. It isn't like  
 > truth or love, which exist as virtues like heat and  
 >light. Evil is simply the state where God is not  
 > present, like cold without heat or darkness without  
 >light." The professor had nothing to say.

Modern Science can greatly assist in strengthening the establishment of the righteous universal values and characteristics of humanity. The fault in today's technologically advanced world is that with our so called "scientific vision" we overlook the fact that the means to achieve our goals must always be righteous, proper and exact.

I like my new telephone, my  
 computer works just fine, my  
 calculator is perfect, but Lord, I miss  
 my mind! - Author Unknown

For a list of all the ways technology  
 has failed to improve the quality of  
 life, please press three.  
 - Alice Kahn

The real danger is not that computers  
 will begin to think like men, but that  
 men will begin to think like  
 computers.  
 ~Sydney J. Harris

The vast majority of human beings spend their lives in the pursuit of cherished goals which, when achieved, often leave restlessness and un-fulfillment. There is nothing wrong with desire; like electricity, which can light a home or electrocute the tenant, desire is, of itself, neither good nor bad. It is what happens as a result of desire that counts. It is the most powerful force we have to drive us to action. Tragedy comes when desire is not subject either to the intellect or to the conscious will. Then we have a powerful vehicle speeding without anybody in the driver's seat.



Imagine all the cars in your hometown coming out of their garages and going about anywhere they like without drivers. How many accidents there would be, how much damage to life and property! When I pursue, or act on my desires, without any concern for others, and you act in the same way, sooner or later we both suffer.

Religion helps us to distinguish between purely personal goals and those that include the happiness, security and rights of other people. These latter desires provide a more lasting fuel for our actions, and lead to the kind of fulfillment that does not fade away. Since science discovers and religion guides, the perfect technological achievement is an offspring of the fusion between Science and Religion.

### E-Culture, E-Society, E-Religion <sup>26</sup>

"It takes a Village to raise a child", we all know that "village" refers to the people in the neighborhood, the Church, family, barbers, shopkeepers, doctors, the State (Government) and society in general. The thought here is that without society, without exterior help or assistance, a child can not be raised successfully.

People with training in the arts still feel that in spite of the alterations made in their lives by technology--by the internal combustion engine, by penicillin, by the bomb--modern science has little to do with what concerns them most deeply. As far as today's science is concerned, this is partly true, but tomorrow's science is going to knock their culture right out from under them. - Unknown

Western Society has done extremely well in making the government a substitute for "the village" but this village does not buy groceries, does not help pay for tuition nor for drugs and other emergency items.. Even baby-sitting is not paid by the Village. All money comes from the parent's wallet. But parents are not solely

responsible for raising a child. If they are busy earning money to support their children, who will teach/educate and raise the children? They must seek help from technology --- most popularly – Television and the Internet. Without these two non-biological villagers, parents will find it extremely difficult to manage and raise growing children.

You cannot endow even the best machine with initiative; the jolliest steam-roller will not plant flowers.  
- Walter Lippmann

One machine can do the work of fifty ordinary men. No machine can do the work of one extraordinary man.  
- Elbert Hubbard

### Training the mind <sup>27</sup>

From their very early days, children have been interacting more with technology than with humans, in the process they are losing their people skills (and the learning that comes from interaction with people) and of course, alive visions, alive perspectives, which only a human-to-human interaction can provide. Consequently, they have only limited exposure to the infinite possibilities within human nature. They are growing, living and developing their potential in a very restricted circle of possibilities that a machine can provide. They are making use of a very small portion of their possible consciousness, much like a man who, out of his body, tried to live his entire life, while using only one finger.

Our minds are already conditioned by culture and society; we are conditioned to like some things and to dislike others. There is not necessarily any logic to it; it is often just a matter of habit. Take food, for example; we like what we learn to like. In India there is a particular kind of mango that is eaten green, when it is acutely sour. There is nothing inherently pleasant about this sensation; in fact,

a detached observer would call it painful. But everybody likes it; everybody eats it; so you learn to like it too. And in the end, you cannot do without it.

Beneath all likes and dislikes is a basic compulsion of the mind to pass judgment on everything: "I like this, I don't like that." When this compulsion is rigid, it is rigid everywhere: with food, with philosophies, and especially with other people. So, when we free ourselves from a compulsive liking for sour green mangos -- or chocolate cake or red chilis -- the whole likes-and-dislikes compulsion is weakened. As a result, all our other likes and dislikes will have a looser hold on us, giving us greater freedom, which will affect even our personal relationships for the better. Conscious, spiritual and clear thinking can help us identify the difference between good and evil.

For a better world...

For a better world, we do not need super smart computers or individual brilliance; we need noble individuals with human values. Good and righteous values, are, were, and will always be the basis for attaining goodness, truth and happiness. These values and principles must be respected and accepted by every noble person and country. All righteous principles and values which are true beyond the limitation of specific time, can be considered as universal. Logically it would be best to build life and society around these truths. Thus, in order for society to progress, the path of righteousness and nobility must be followed to achieve what might be seen by some as to be unattainable. <sup>28</sup>

Khalil Jibran said, "We do not inherit from our parents, we borrow from our children." Let us do all we can from now onward, to ensure that our children's children will live in a world unthreatened by radioactive waste and chemical pollution.

In the current technology driven era, computers are being embedded in all of our accessories, even in our bodies and brains. With emotional sensitivity inside, computers can provide the much needed lifespan companionship to human mind and soul. People are increasingly becoming dependent on computers. Computers have extended its domain to virtually every household via the Internet. They are democratizing the world for good. Society will not restrict scientists from migrating human minds and its attributes into machine brains because eventually the majority of the people will benefit from the indefinite life span, and better services from machines through this increased intelligence.

There are problems to whose solution I would attach an infinitely greater importance than to those of mathematics, for example touching ethics, or our relation to God, or concerning our destiny and our future; but their solution lies wholly beyond us and completely outside the province of science. - In J. R. Newman (ed.) *The World of Mathematics*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1956. p. 314

The advent of the Internet age has significantly improved and simplified communication within society. The possibility of an individual on one end of the globe conversing with another individual situated on the other extreme, through the use of such technologies as video-conferencing, eliminates the need to travel. This in a conceptual sense has caused the globe to "shrink". Consequently, the increase in communication through the Internet, among societies, eventually involves the exchange of varied cultures, beliefs and lifestyles thus creating a new "Cyber-culture". The Internet is destined to be the path of convergence of societal attributes and perspectives that contribute towards the understanding and harmony among societies.

## Case Studies/ Example Sites

- **www.techananda.com:**

*Seeking bliss through technology*

People who share the search of higher truth or God, through science and technology. Discussion Forum for Saints, students, religious scholars, teachers, programmers, scientists and everybody who loves science and wants to make it a vehicle in connecting with their real self and God; dedicated to build new technology products, do research and find real truth through science

- **www.ecognitiveinteractive.com:**

*Building e-cognition engine based on AI and IF*

Research group, knowledge base for building e-cognitive engine. Keywords: e-cognition, artificial intelligence, interactive fiction. Members are like minded designers, programmers, University Phd's and other prominent pioneers in the field of AI, Computer Science, Theology, Philosophy and Psychology

- **www.familyforyou.com:**

*Generating emotions, building e-relationships*

E-family will replace family. Chat Robots build e-relationships and stimulate emotions, diminishing the difference between virtual and reality

- **www.familyno1.com:**

*Entertainment through chatbots*

Dot Com entertainment - Soap Opera of Chatbots Artificial Intelligence and Interactive fiction based. Interact with the characters and make your own story.

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