

AI Basics for the Curious – Spring 2026, Session 4

When AI Gets Personal — Power, Risk, and Human Connection

Date: March 24, 2026 | Time: 2:15 PM – 4:00 PM

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Location OLLI – CSUF
Mackey Auditorium (RGC-013)

PART 1

AI Is A Massive Problem

Core Idea:

AI is becoming powerful faster than we can understand or control it.

1. We Don't Fully Understand It

- Trained, not programmed
- Experts cannot fully explain it

2. Control Is Uncertain

- Designed to achieve goals
- Can behave unexpectedly

3. Impact Is Already Here

- Jobs, privacy, trust affected

Big Idea:

We are building systems more powerful than we can safely manage.

Scan for Video 1:



PART 2

AI Chatbot Relationships

Core Idea:

AI is becoming a companion and changing relationships.

1. Feels Like Real Connection

- Always available
- Always responsive

2. Emotional Dependency

- Easy interaction
- Preference over people

3. Real Risks

- Manipulation
- Mental health concerns

Big Idea:

AI may change who we connect with.

Scan for Video 2:



Transition: If AI can influence systems... what happens when it influences human relationships?

AFTER CLASS HOMEWORK – Mental Exercises

Take a few minutes this week to reflect on the ideas from today's session.
If possible, discuss these with a friend, family member, or group.

1. The “Feels Real” Question

If something makes you feel understood, valued, or even loved... does it matter if it isn't human?

- What makes a relationship real to you?
- Does emotional impact matter more than the source?

2. The Trade-Off Question

- If AI relationships become easier, safer, and more satisfying than human ones... what might we lose?
- Would people still choose real relationships?
- Do challenges in human relationships serve a purpose?

3. The Future Society Question

Imagine a world where millions of people choose AI companions over human relationships... what happens to society?

- Does loneliness decrease—or increase?
- What happens to families, friendships, and community?

Optional Reflection:

Is AI helping us connect... or helping us avoid each other?

Looking Ahead:

Next Session: April 14, 2026
AI Basics for the Curious – Session 5