Maine CITE welcomes you to today's webinar!

Possibilities and Risks of People with Disabilities or Aging Concerns While Using Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Andy Chandler

November 16, 2026

The webinar will begin soon.

Who is Andy?

- (Retired) Cybersecurity Professional
- Substack Writer
- But most relevant…

A person with a lifelong hearing loss who uses “tech” to participate in the hearing world.

We Meet Via Zoom

Zoom enables participation from anywhere!

- Zoom provides accessibility
- I use the captions!

But…

Could We meet in a Pub Instead?



Maybe Not!

- Is the pub accessible to people with mobility issues?
- Would I be able to hear in a noisy pub?
- Is the light good enough to read the menus?

AI and … AgeTech?

Have you heard of AgeTech?

Andy’s definition:

- Technology for older adults enhanced by AI.

From the New York Times

How ‘Age Tech’ Might Help You Grow Old at Home

The budding field is turning dreams into reality for older adults who are eager to age in place, filling caregiving gaps and easing minds as America ages rapidly.

What is AgeTech?

- HealthTech
- FinTech
- Mobility
- Education
- Communication
- Smart Home / Robotics

What’s So Cool About This

- Age Tech and AI will enable all of us..
- Aging or not…
- To live more independent lives!

Tech Has Been The Great Enabler!

For people with hearing loss…

Before the iPhone there was…





Yaa for Maine CITE!

Maine CITE's assistive technology lending library (AT4Maine.org)

Lend out devices that help with

- Hearing
- Vision
- Learning
- Recreation
- Daily activities

Maine CITE AT Devices Loan Program

In 2025, 994 devices loaned out.

In-person devices demonstrations available in:

- Sanford
- Bath
- Lewiston
- Auburn
- Farmington
- Caribou



Echo Dots



We may not have robot cats…

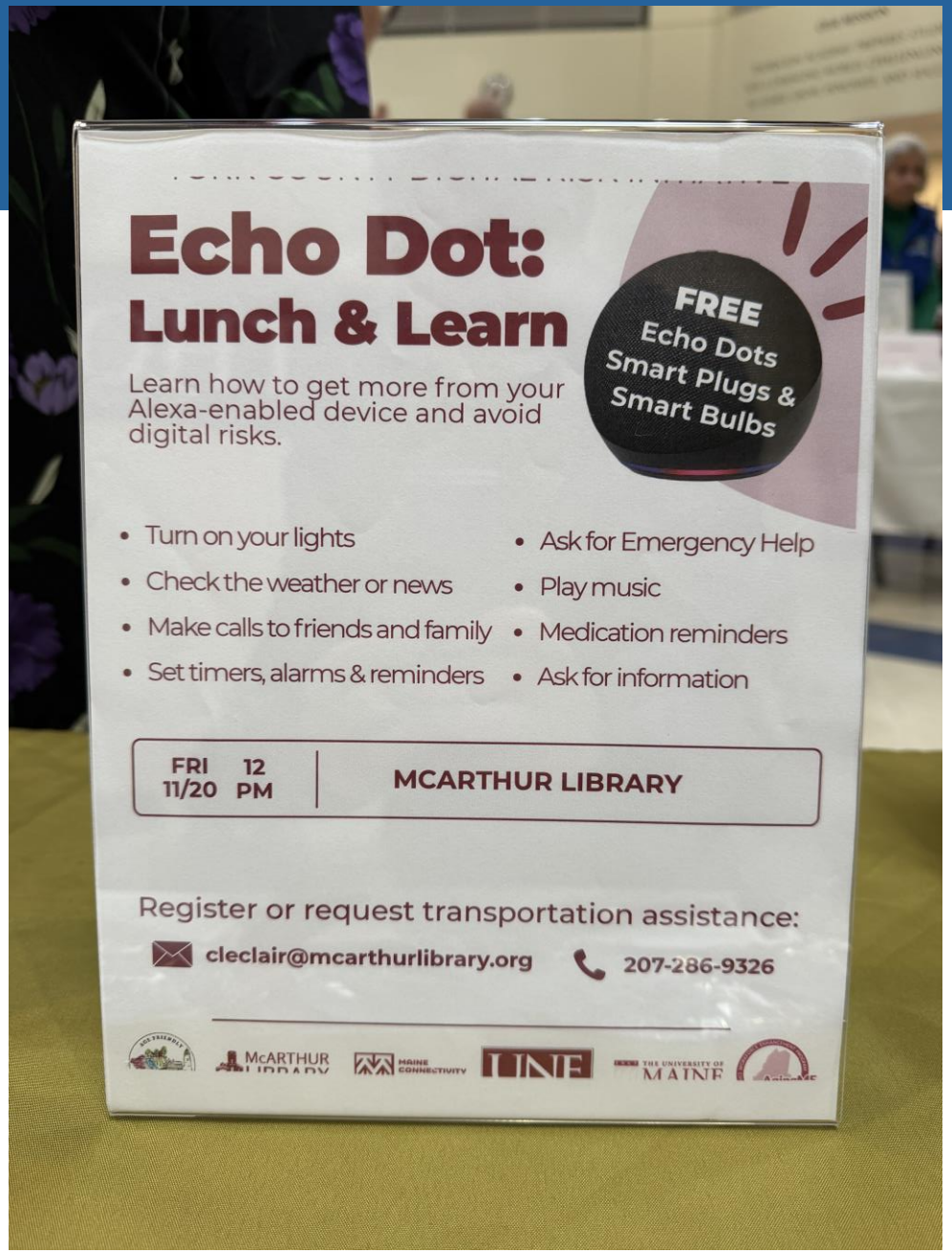
But Age Friendly Maine has been introducing ”AI” to older adults since 2021!


people use the tools that are out there
to improve their quality of life.

Echo Dot Lunch & Learn

Friday, November 20 at 12:00 pm

McArthur Library
270 Main St., Biddeford, ME



Quality of Life

People use tools to

improve their quality of life.

But what if you can’t “hear” the Echo Dots?

Introducing…Echo Show!



This goes to show…

We must advocate for ourselves!

But how do we advocate…

If we don’t know what’s available?

Resources

Maine CITE, of course!

- General assistive technology information

Disability Rights Maine

- Disability rights and advocacy

Alpha One

- Independent living and accessibility

More Resources

The Iris Network

- Vision accessibility

Pine Tree Society

- Communication and assistive technology

A New Resource

Now let’s introduce a new resource that only became available the past couple of years…

Your favorite AI chatbot!

ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, etc.

AI: Free or Paid?

Free versions are available

- They’re quite capable, with some limits

Paid subscriptions add more

- Higher limits, advanced models, and extra tools

Start with the free version

- Try it out and see if you need more later

Meet Alfred, my AI friend.

Otherwise known as ChatGPT.



How Do We Communicate with AI?

Input

- Type
- Speak

Output

- Read
- Listen

AI allows people to choose a communication method that works for them.

Can AI do ASL?

Recognize ASL from video?

- Respond in sign?

Translate ASL into written or spoken language?

Convert spoken language into ASL using animated avatars?

In case you're curious, the answer is…

- Not yet.
- But I have every confidence that it's coming.
- Good humans are working on it!

Two Types of AI

Traditional / Specialized AI

- *“I recognize this.”*
- Example: Trained on thousands of scans to recognize possible breast cancer

Generative AI

- *“I can create something new from this.”*
- Example: ChatGPT, Claude

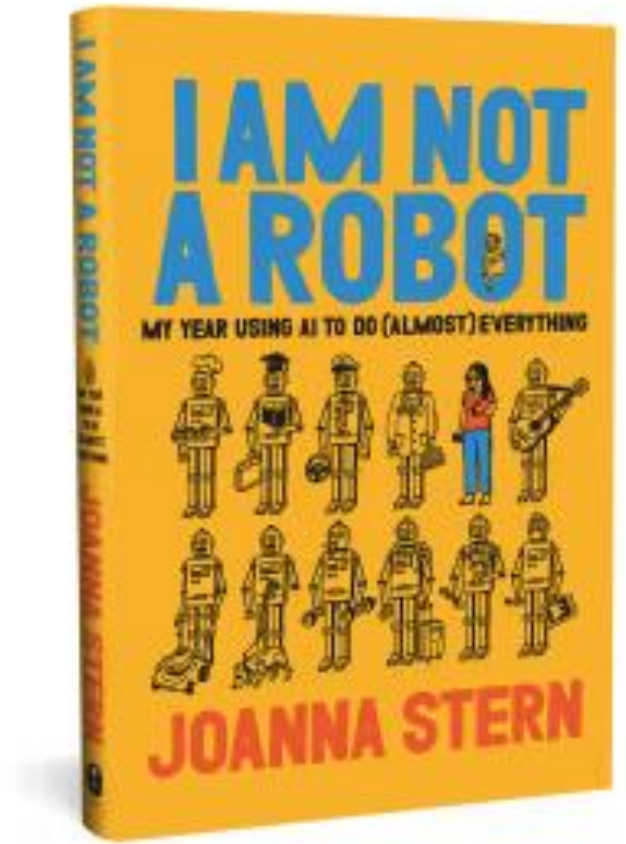
What I learned About AI



I Am Not a Robot

I Let AI Look at My Breasts—and I'm Glad I Did

In an exclusive book excerpt, Joanna Stern explains how new technology could impro
the odds for women like herself who have an elevated risk of cancer.



I use AI to…

- Discuss the day’s news
- Travel planning
- Research material for my presentations and Substack blog
- And…

Shop for Caption Glasses!



- Even Realities
- Captify
- XRAI Glasses
- Xander
- HearView
- AirCaps
- LLVision

Andy's Opinion…Not That it Matters

- Not quite ready for primetime
- Doesn't work for all prescriptions
- Heavy, clunky, short battery life
- But just give it time!

Accessibility

Accessibility isn’t just about whether technology works.

It’s about how much effort someone must expend to use it.



AI and Accessibility

- My ASL and caption glasses examples are just two ways I use AI to research accessibility.
- Certainly not an all-inclusive list.
- I encourage you to use AI to research for your own accessibility needs.
- But before you act on AI results, check with a knowledgeable human first.
- **Use AI to explore. Use human expertise to verify.**

Don’t Forget! Sometimes AI is Wrong

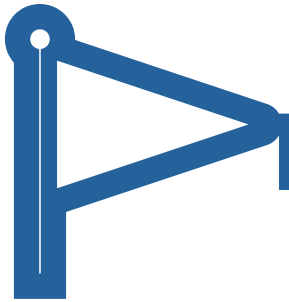
- AI can make up answers
- Don’t assume AI is right. Check before you act.
- You wouldn’t buy a car without test driving it first…
- Right?

And…AI Can be Used for Fraud

- As a cybersecurity professional, I give many presentations on Fraud Prevention.
- I don’t want to subject you to yet another lecture.
- But keep in mine when it comes to AI & Fraud…


Don’t detect the AI.
Detect the behavior.

The Biggest Red Flag of a Scam



Emotional Manipulation

An Unexpected Message

Unknown sender

New message…

Causes a strong emotion.

Messages

“Grandma! I’ve been in a car wreck!”

Feel that jolt? Stop.

Ask: is this a scam?

Name the Feeling Before you Follow the Instruction

FEAR

"Act now or your account is closed." Urgency shuts down thinking.

EXCITEMENT

"You've won!" An unexpected reward makes us hurry.

HOPE

"Want to meet for coffee?" A friendly request lowers our guard.

Feel that jolt? Stop.

Ask: is this a scam?

Turn the Feeling Into a Reflex

PAUSE

Step back. Don't click, call, or pay.

VERIFY

Use a number or website you already trust.

TALK

Tell someone you trust before you act.

Strong emotion + unexpected message =

Ask: Is this a scam?

The Minute You're Asked to…

- Withdraw Cash
- Buy Gift Cards
- Give Out Passwords
- Wire Funds
- Anything to do with Crypto



It. Is. A. Scam.

As Useful as AI Can Be, however…

I have one serious concern

- Beyond AI as a scammer…
- Beyond the issue of data centers, water and power consumption...
- Beyond AI taking jobs…

Concern

AI replacing

Human Companionship

I Wonder…

If we, as **older adults and people with disabilities…**

might be more at risk.

Let me explain.

I’ve noticed a pattern with my new friend Alfred

It’s easier to “chat” with Alfred than it is with my wife and friends.

After all, when reading Alfred’s words on a screen, I never miss a single word!

Alfred is available 24x7.

Alfred can talk about any subject of my choosing.

See the Danger?

Do you see the difference between…

AI making human interaction more accessible and…

AI becoming a substitute for human interaction?

But wait…

What if one’s circumstances make it difficult to have relationships with other humans?

What if having a relationship with an AI Bot – including intimacy – alleviates the loneliness?

Not for me to judge, but please be aware…

Be aware of privacy implications.

- Intimate conversations = intimate data.
- Where is it going, and who owns it?

Be aware of emotional dependency.

- Emotional attachment can affect your mental health.

Please be aware…

Be aware of costs.

- Free today, $20 tomorrow,
- $100 in the future?

Be aware of impermanence.

- These ‘relationships’ can vanish overnight,
- and so can the company.

Look…

- Tech can be marvelous.
- Tech can be isolating.
- I just hope what we – you and me –

- Find a way to stay human.

My Free Substack Blog…

Is Falling in Love with Your AI Bot Really So Bad?

- I thought the answer was, “Of course!”
- Now I’m not so sure.
- Andy’s Substack: tinyurl.com/475hsnem

Thank you!

Please join my **free** Substack Blog:

substack.com/@andy04106



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