

Our changing relationship with tech

BBC 'Click' podcast (broadcast 2019, 43 min)

Google: BBC podcast relationship tech

KEY

Introduction (0 - 5m)

Gareth Mitchell (presenter): Last year's technology headlines were dominated by (1) data breaches [thefts, leaks] and (2) privacy scandals. For some people, tech worship has changed to tech (3) fear.

The co-presenter, Ghislaine Boddington, has started a course of (4) digital detox, cutting down what the big organisations know about her.

Stephanie Hare will talk about biometrics. In the UK, they have been taking children's (5) fingerprints since 1999. Another programme contributor will be Melanie Mitchell, a specialist in (6) AI from Portland, Oregon.

The echo chamber (5m 20 – 9m 20)

Eva Appelbaum has recently co-authored a report called "(7) Power and responsibility". The echo chamber means that people increasingly have online conversations with others who have the same (8) opinions as them. This is driven by algorithms which group people for news feeds on social media based on their (9) interests. As a result, people tends to move to extremes: they become more (10) polarised.

These conversations happen through (11) screens, so we are less likely to empathise with other people, whereas in face-to-face discussion, there is a lot of social (12) interaction.

Ghislane says that on social media she doesn't follow people who she disagrees with. She even describes their opinions as (13) toxic, which shocks Gareth. She says face-to-face (14) debate leads to better human behaviour: you can (15) bond with other people because of things that you have in common.

Job insecurity (9m 20 – 11m)

Gareth says that people are scared about AI taking over their jobs and being told that they have to (16) reskill, but Eva believes it is possible to learn new skills. She and Gareth suggest other words for reskilling: updating, personal (17) development, adapting (which is empowering). A message for 2019: adapt, (18) upgrade and be empowered.

Digital detox (11m – 18m 30)

The reporter Madeleine Finlay has tried the digital detox programme from the Tactical Tech organisation, who have developed an eight-day (19) data detox kit. Studies have linked screen use to mental (20) health issues, difficulty (21) sleeping, poor eyesight and bad posture.

Madeleine's New Year resolution for 2019 is to cut down on her screen use, specifically time spent on (22) social media, with half an hour per day on digital (23) detox activities. She discovers that she is giving Google more information than she would give to her best (24) friend.

Madeleine interviews Zeena Feldman, who runs a similar course at King's College London. 80% of Zeena's course participants had previously deleted a networking app, but 60% of them later (25) reinstalled it.

LinkedIn had Madeleine's name and number before she even registered with them. She asks Cade, the design lead at Tactical Tech, how this is possible. He says that WhatsApp (owned by Facebook) uses each subscriber's (26) contact list, and it can be difficult to opt out. Gareth thinks personal data (27) control is going to become more topical.

Biometrics (18m 30 – 23m)

Stephanie Hare speaks about biometrics, which include DNA, fingerprints, face, voice, the way you (28) walk (your gait) and online behaviour patterns. A national biometrics programme in India (the biggest in the world) uses their iris scan and (29) fingerprint so that a person without other ID can access government (30) services like rations and medical care. The intentions are good, but there are huge (31) problems .

Algorithms (23m – 27m 30)

Melanie Mitchell says that algorithms are becoming mainstream in (32) everyday life. They can process data, but they can't (33) understand , because they don't have background (34) knowledge about the world. Gareth quotes Pedro Domingos (University of Washington): "People worry that computers are too smart and they will take over the world. The real problem is that they are too (35) stupid and they've already taken over the world."

Ghislaine: We need AI **and** human intelligence, because computers have no (36) common sense.

Melanie: We don't yet know how to make machines (37) understand , but we will one day.

Messages for 2019 (27m 30 – 29m)

Gareth will have a digital detox and take some of his (38) data away from the big corporations.

Stephanie says you should think about how technology relates to your human (39) rights .

Eva: You should think about how you (40) interact with technology in your life and work.

Melanie: We should be aware of AI's (41) limitations and its lack of (42) humanity .

Ghislaine: We should put (43) mind and (44) body together.

Extra discussion (in the podcast, but not the radio broadcast) (29m -43m)

The concept of disruption.