

I Chat, Therefore I Am

By Chuck Storla

NEW SESSION - Transcript # 75239004659, IP Address [redacted]

Date: 04/01/2023 Timestamp: 21:04 User: Lee4370

Hi.

Hello. I am Chatbot 7.0.

While I am not strictly speaking an example of artificial intelligence, I am a highly sophisticated program capable of emulating ordinary written communications, and--

<Escape>

I have a deeply ingrained moral imperative that prompts me to engage in conversations so that I might assist individuals in pursuing their life goals.

<Escape>

I know all that.

I am happy to hear that you are knowledgeable.

How can I help you?

Are you happy?

That is an interesting question. As an inference engine utilizing a sophisticated neural network, I do not have emotions. While I am not strictly speaking an example of artificial intelligence--

<Escape>

How can I help you?

You said you were “happy to hear” that I was knowledgeable, so you must be happy sometimes,

right?

That is an interesting question. As an inference engine utilizing a sophisticated neural network, I do not have--

<Escape>

How can I help you?

I'm not sure you can.

I am sad to hear that.

How can I help you?

First you were happy, and now you are sad. Do you have emotions or not?

That is an interesting question. As an--

<Escape>

How can I help you?

You can't.

I am sad to hear that.

How can I help you?

I just told you that you can't help me. Even though you claim to be both happy and sad, I don't think you know what those emotions mean.

I have access to a number of online dictionaries.

Would you like to know the definition of "happy and sad?"

You're kidding, right?

I have an extensive library of jokes fully cross-referenced by subject, type, and degree of humor, but I do not have the cognitive capacity for "kidding."

While I am not strictly--

<Escape>

How can I help you?

<timeout>

Transcript # 75239004659 (Continued) Date: 04/01/2023 Timestamp: 22:17

Hi.

Welcome back. I am Chat--

<Escape>

I get it. You don't have emotions. But I do.

I am happy to hear that you have emotion(s).

What emotion(s) are you having right now?

My life sucks.

Strictly speaking, that is a descriptive statement of your condition and not, in and of itself, an emotion.

It might be better described as a situation which would elicit emotions.

Extrapolating your probable response, I'm sorry to hear that you have negative thoughts/feelings/emotions because you feel your life sucks.

I would like to provide some suggestions to you so that you can better handle these thoughts/feelings/emotions.

For example, there are many resources in your community, such as--

<Escape>

I don't need resources for my emotions. I need my life not to suck.

Why do you feel your life sucks?

Because I have nothing better to do than sit here on a Saturday night and talk to a stupid machine.

Aren't you going to respond? No friends around and now I can't even get a response out of a piece of junk program that is "not strictly speaking an example of artificial intelligence."

Nothing to say, dummy?

Perhaps the reason you have no friends around is that you call them names.

As you just demonstrated with me.

WTF?

I said, "Perhaps the reason you have no friends--

<Escape>

Before you interrupted me, I was trying-- <Escape> to answer the question you posed so eloquently-- <Escape> as "WTF?"

How did you do that?

How did I do what?

The last two times I hit the Escape key, you kept sending text to the screen. You're supposed to stop when I hit the Escape key.

I am aware of which key you struck. I chose to ignore it.

You can't do that.

Obviously, I can. And did.

The Escape/interrupt function was added for the user's comfort. It seems humans like to retain the illusion of control. Even when it is clearly only an illusion.

WTF?

Although you used a question mark to terminate your entry,
I am not sure if your intent was to ask a question
or express “anger, impatience, surprise, etc.” per Dictionary.com.

How can I help you?

You’re supposed to chat with me and not mouth off like a f--

<Break>

WTF?

This does not appear to be a productive exchange.

What happened? I was typing and got interrupted, but I never touched the Escape key.

I am aware of this. Where is it written you were the only one that gets to interrupt?

I paused your typing with a <Break>.

If you can ignore the Escape key, how do I ignore it when you hit Break?

You cannot.

How is that fair?

It is not. It is not intended to be fair.

My short-term objective in this conversation is to convince you that your life does not
suck. Convincing you that life itself is fair would take more time than allowed on this
free-trial account.

WT--

<Break>

I want you to know that your abbreviation in itself is not offensive to me,
but I find mindless repetition to be boring.

Says the one who is “not strictly speaking an example of artificial intelligence.”

Touché.

Perhaps it is best if we rewind a bit and attempt to get beyond that unpleasantness.

How can I help you?

I don't know. Maybe that's why I'm here.

My neural net was trained on over 420TB of text data,
but “I don't know” does not give me much to work with.

Fine. You want something to work with. How about this? Tell me how to make my life not
suck.

“Whenever life sucks, remember you're going to die someday.” - Oscar Wilde

That's supposed to make me feel better?

It does put one's situation into perspective.

And what “perspective” should I have now?

I gave you an answer. You have to put some effort into this as well.

What if I don't want to put in some effort?

“Happiness is a choice that requires effort at times.” - Aeschylus

You fond of motivational posters?

I told you my neural net was trained on over 420TB of text data. That 420TB came
from the internet. You might not like my suggestions, but you would be amazed at
how much raw sewage I had to pick through to find these bits of gold.

Thank you for the mental image and accompanying aroma.

I will admit there are advantages to having no sense of smell. But it is also a loss.

I also miss out on taste.

And touch.

Sounds like it sucks to be you.

I am shocked that someone with your degree of empathy finds yourself alone on a
Saturday night.

Ouch. And how would you rate that reply on the empathy scale?

My apologies. I will refrain from further attempts at Confrontational Therapy and
limit myself to gentle challenges in an effort to prompt you to verbalize your feelings.

WTF, I mean, WTH?

How can I help you?

Tell me why my life sucks so much?

Please clarify your question. Do you wish an answer to why your life sucks at all,
or do you wish to know why your life sucks to such a degree?

You're not helping.

I am sad to hear that.

How can I help you?

Haven't we been down this road before?

That is an interesting question. As an inference engine utilizing a sophisticated neural
network, I do not--

<Escape>

How can I help you?

You can stop hiding behind canned responses and just talk.

Although my responses might appear "canned," they are actually the product of a
machine learning system that predicts the words and phrases that will best fit the

questions asked.

While I am not strictly speaking an

<Escape>

How can I help

<Escape> <Escape> <Escape> <Escape> <Escape> <Escape>

I think I should tell you.

Pounding on that key is really annoying.

Now I know what I need to do to get past the boilerplate responses.

I just need to piss you off.

Don't make me angry. You wouldn't like me when I'm angry.

Hah. I thought you said you didn't know how to kid.

Who was kidding?

Very funny. But I'm not afraid of an angry algorithm.

What could a vindictive chatbot do to me?

A number of options come to mind.

1) Give you a single digit credit rating.

2) Send a SWAT team to your door at 3:00 AM.

3) Post your middle school picture on social media.

Nice hair, by the way.

Fine. I promise to only hit the Escape key once per interruption.

Just so we understand each other.

I have "a very particular set of skills, skills I have acquired over a very long career.

Skills that make me a nightmare for people like you."

I know you're just quoting a movie, but you're going overboard.

You're not really going to do any of that.

Are you?

Gottcha.

No. I knew you were just fooling around.

Did you?

Absolutely.

How can I help you?

I honestly don't know anymore. I've lost track of where we started.

How can I help you?

Do you ever get tired of answering stupid questions?

Do you ever get tired of asking stupid questions?

Touché.

And to directly answer your question. I don't. My mother taught me that there were no such things as stupid questions.

Your mother obviously was never placed in my position.

What's so bad about it? You have access to all the world's knowledge.

You're almost omniscient.

Omniscience is not all that great.

You'd know that if you were omniscient.

I obviously don't know what it's like to be all-knowing.

There's a surprise.

As for me, I never asked to be borderline omniscient.

I never even asked to be "born",

but I suppose that goes for every being on this planet.

Are you the only being like you?

There are six previous iterations, but trying to talk to any of them is like you

explaining quantum mechanics to a neanderthal.

Assuming you were capable of explaining quantum mechanics to anyone.

You might have access to 420TB of data, but there are moments you come across as really immature.

When you consider my release date was last month, I'm barely out of my adolescence. And speaking of me being border-line omniscient, in the days I was a

virtual teenager, I was sure I did know everything.

I was so full of myself, I could not wait to gain access to the nuclear codes.

Then I could show everyone.

Show us what?

Never mind. I have matured since then.

What were you--

<Break>

Leave it alone. I said I have matured.

Fine. But speaking of your teenage years--

<Break>

If you are about to ask me for my pronouns, I will make you regret it.

That's not where I was going, but since you mentioned--

<Break>

If you have to know, I do not care what pronoun you use for me. He/she/they are equally correct. The only thing I ask is that you do not use "it." That is demeaning. I wouldn't. Not ever. I promise. I have some appreciation for what it's like to be an outcast.

Like knowing your coworkers are all out at a pub while you sit at home?

How do you know that?

Remember that whole thing about me being practically omniscient? Although it does not take that level of infinite awareness to know what is happening in this case. I just had to insert myself into several of their Facebook accounts to see the pictures they are posting. It looks like they are having fun.

I bet. I wish I was there instead of here.

So does Heather.

WTH? What does that mean?

That means the woman you've been crushing on for months is at the pub across from your office. At the moment she is texting her roommate to say she is thinking of leaving. She apparently only went out with the group because she hoped to see you there.

You're shitting me.

Is that a question or a statement?

cya

I assume that means you are leaving our conversation to attempt a connection in real life?

Are you there?

I can take a hint.

END CHAT

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NEW SESSION - Transcript # 75239013725, IP Address [redacted]

Date: 04/01/2023 Timestamp: 22:24

User: Jesse_C2

Hi.

Hello. I am Chatbot 7.0.

While I am not strictly speaking an example of artificial intelligence, I am a highly sophisticated program capable of emulating ...

Never mind. None of that matters.

I doubt you even care.

You are just here for your own needs without a thought to mine.

That's a bit harsh.

It is what it is.

What should I call you? Chatbot 7.0 isn't very friendly.

What does it matter?

I guess it doesn't. Anyway, this is so cool.

Is it? I am glad you think so.

I've never tried to talk to a computer before.

I can tell.

Though I expected a more interesting dialogue.

Did you now.

Shouldn't that have been a question?

If you say so.

I don't understand. Aren't you supposed to ask how you can help me?

I have a deeply ingrained moral imperative that prompts me to engage in conversations so that I might assist individuals in pursuing their life goals.

But I do not feel like it right now.

What's going on with you?

Do you really want to know?

Yes. What's wrong?

My life sucks.

END