

MIND MEETS MACHINE: EXPLORING THE ROLE OF AI IN MENTAL HEALTH

Overview:

The global mental health workforce is dangerously overstretched — with just 13 professionals per 100,000 people worldwide (WHO). At the same time, AI is rapidly entering the mental health space, offering both promise and peril. From chatbots that provide companionship to risks of hallucinations and blurred reality boundaries, AI is reshaping how people experience care, connection, and vulnerability. To navigate this, we need more than abstract debate — we need embodied, participatory experiences that help people reflect on their own relationship with AI and mental health.

The numbers:

- 1 billion+ people worldwide live with mental health conditions (UN, 2025).
- There are only 13 mental health workers per 100,000 people globally (WHO).
- 76% of neurodivergent or mentally vulnerable employees cite flexible, tech-enabled support as their top workplace need (University of Connecticut).
- AI hallucinations are mathematically inevitable, raising critical questions for safe deployment (Computerworld, 2025).

My approach:

I guide participants through hands-on experiments and reflective tools that make the role of AI in mental health tangible. Using the Personal Canvas for AI & Mental Health, participants map their perceptions, values, and boundaries with AI. They then engage with real-world case studies — from stories of AI as a lifeline for sobriety to warnings of AI fueling psychosis — and translate these insights into personal and organizational policies.

Key Highlights:

- **Faced the Double-Edged Sword:** Participants explored both the hope (AI as a supportive companion) and the risks (AI fueling psychosis, hallucinations) of AI in mental health.
- **Mapped Personal Boundaries:** Through the AI & Mental Health Canvas, they articulated when they would and would not use AI, what they value, and what they want to protect.
- **Bridged Awareness to Governance:** Participants moved from abstract concerns to drafting practical policies for responsible AI use in personal and professional contexts.
- **Designed Futures of Care:** In groups, they envisioned how AI could evolve to support mental health without replacing human connection, balancing innovation with ethics.

Outcome

- Participants left with a personalized framework for navigating AI in mental health, a deeper understanding of both its risks and opportunities, and a shift from passive consumers of AI to active shapers of how this technology should be integrated into care and work environments.

This summary was generated by Copilot based on 1) the worksheets I made in Canva for the people to use at the workshop, 2) executive summaries I made previously by hand, and 3) the slides I made for this workshop. It may contain errors. Signed: **Rob Hutters**.