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AI IS LEARNING FROM ALL OF US. HAVE YOU NOTICED?

On AI, collective learning, and building the human commons the machine already has.

By David Maruyama

THE VISION — ESSAY 3 OF 6

This is the third in a six-part series — a personal reflection on what AI actually changes, published every two weeks over the coming months. There's no pitch here and nothing for sale: just honest reflections on AI, and an attempt to actually act on them, in public, alongside anyone else figuring out the same thing in real time. Coming next: Best Is a Formula. Real Isn't..

Every time someone asks an AI system a question, that interaction — in aggregate, across millions of people doing the same thing — feeds back into something that gets smarter as a whole. Not smarter for that one person. Smarter, period. The system learns from all of us, whether we intend it to or not, and it consolidates everything it learns into one place.

Now ask the same question about us. When you figure out something genuinely useful — a way of using AI that actually changed how you work, solved a problem you'd been stuck on, opened up a project you didn't think you had the resources for — where does that go? Mostly, it stays with you. Maybe it reaches a few colleagues. It doesn't consolidate anywhere. It doesn't compound the way the machine's own learning compounds.

That's a strange asymmetry once you say it out loud. The system we're all individually feeding is getting collectively smarter. We, the people doing the feeding, are mostly staying exactly as smart as our own individual trial and error allows — rediscovering, one person at a time, possibilities that someone else, somewhere, already figured out last month.

I've lived that asymmetry directly. Most of what I've learned about actually using this well over the past fourteen months came from my own trial and error — badly at first, then less badly, entirely on my own clock. Some of that was necessary; you don't develop a real feel for a tool without spending real time with it yourself. But a fair amount of it was just time lost, reinventing something that someone else — a founder, a consultant, a student, anyone —

had already worked out for their own project, with no way for that to reach me, or for anything I figured out to reach them.

I don't think that has to stay true. I think there's real value in a place where people can share, plainly and without a pitch attached, what they've actually done with AI — in a personal project, a professional challenge they were stuck on, a business idea that only became possible because the barriers that used to block it are lower now. Not case studies dressed up for a sales page. Just real accounts, written by the person who lived them, for anyone else trying to figure out what's actually possible.

I want to be direct about what this isn't. It isn't a funnel. It isn't a lead list. It has nothing to do with CiteHQ.io's day-to-day work, and I'm not building it to sell anything to the people who join it. I've spent thirty years watching a couple of these technology shifts happen already, and what I want out of this one is simpler than a business outcome: to give back some of what that experience taught me, particularly to people earlier in their own path — new entrepreneurs, young professionals stepping into a corporate world that looks nothing like the one I started in. If this is useful to them, that's the whole return I'm looking for.

So here's the actual invitation, not a hint at one. If you've used AI to genuinely unlock something — in your own work, your own business, a project that mattered to you — I want to hear about it. Write it plainly, the way you'd tell a colleague over coffee, not the way you'd write a case study. Send it directly, or leave it where this is published, and we'll figure out the right shared home for these as they start to come in. The goal isn't a polished showcase. It's an honest, growing record of what's actually possible, written by the people who did it — the human commons the machine already has, that we don't, yet.

If AI is going to keep consolidating everything it learns from all of us into one place, I don't see why we shouldn't be doing at least a small version of the same thing for each other.
