

## **MindTrail**

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"Wanderer, there is no road, the road is made by walking. By walking one makes the road, and upon glancing behind one sees the path that never will be trod again." A conversation with an old friend this past spring prompted my rediscovery of this verse from the poem by Antonio Machado. It had been 30 years. To freely create, to do what no one else has done, the phrase "forge your own path" had always held a special meaning for me so it was easy to recall the poem, but the words, "footsteps are left only once, the path can never be travelled again" resounded painfully in my heart. They say life only happens once, but we cannot relive it by indulging in memories. It is an impossibility to live while trying to relive life. So create a path that in looking back, you would undoubtedly want to walk again. And for this, you must move forward and live in the moment. That is what it sounds like to me.

About a year ago, I wrote that I would like to create aBot someday. A lifelike autonomous being always close by, a tiny friend who knows me, listens to me. Not a machine that simply takes commands, but can empathize as humans do; one that shares my life, holds a place in my family and subtly makes me more sensitive to my surroundings. An existence that will someday become a mirror of myself. The more I thought about it, the more I was convinced in the possibilities and significance of the new generation of computers, surging forth the desire to seriously tackle the creation and realization of aBot. I had reevaluated my lifestyle as well as that of my family's and had decided to withdraw from the company I have longtime managed, so this desire to focus on aBot seemed to trace a natural flow.

However, things were not as simple as they seemed. A fresh start is one thing, but years of various accumulated thoughts do not simply vanish and in fact, things I had forgotten seemed to cloud my mind continuously. The rearranging of emotions is no easy task. I understood that the clearing of the mind would take time. In order to begin anew, I realized I needed to put an end to old thinking. During the approximate half year since writing aBot, I cleared my mind of unnecessary thoughts, even while deepening my resolves concerning aBot and quietly waited for the recovery of my depleted energy. I made the effort to maintain my equilibrium during the times when I would repeatedly question myself. Even doubts that anyone would have such as "Can I take on such an enormous dreamlike task on my own?" if carelessly asked the wrong way could be the source of unnecessary inner turmoil. To say, "Life is a onetime pathway" one imagines a single straight railway that you would move forward automatically on. When calculating profit and loss or when going by general opinion, the most important question is often not considered.

What is most important to me is to take a step forward with passion. In order to notice something, the seeds of mindfulness must be planted. Having the opportunity to reevaluate myself and finding peace within myself, then, for the first time, the words from the poem came to me. We cannot generalize life. It is not a railway laid out for us, nor is it a ride down the river on a boat called Time. If we step forward now, toward the future, we will leave footsteps. That is all. And because that is all, I would like to leave

footsteps that I would be willing to follow again; the kind of footsteps, where the memory of them, will always return to me.

I believe that the footsteps begin the moment we realize something. I, myself, am the ground of realization. It would become complicated to ask what is self, but imagine it to be a center space made up of my memories and activities of my consciousness. I am, in fact, the outer area made up of my emotional experiences. I am an accumulation of memories of experience and am a connection that will grow and continually evolve. So to realize something and gain the clues to know myself better is a way to become myself. If we plant the seeds of mindfulness, something may prompt the seedlings to grow. These seeds of mindfulness are thoughts that manifest themselves, moment by moment, in the back of our minds. What we feel instant by instant. What we remember, what we envisage, and what we reconsider. They say that the information we take in our subconscious is 10 million times more than that of our conscious mind and within that there must be countless seeds. The impetus then, is to step forward. Some things we can see and hear only when there is a change in motion. In those moments, our inner voice speaks "Oh I see," our memory and imagination spark and the connection, between yourself from a moment ago and the new you, is made. This sort of place of continual phenomenon of memory and the consciousness is what I call myself.

In this sense, perhaps footsteps can be considered memories that can be followed. Leaving memories that can be traced and to make new memories by tracing them. If the memories that can be followed are the past, then my thoughts at this moment are what will make my past. I wonder why I cannot look backward when looking back at the past and only in the forward direction. Why is it that the more times I remember, the more it influences my being. What I find from this sort of experience- what we feel now, what we have had our your minds, the imaginings and wishes that these things accumulate into - are what makes the memories of the future, and we are able to move forward, creating the memories of the moment. If we are able to focus our thoughts on what is in front of us, turn them into words and mark that moment in time, we should be able to leave footprints of the future behind. Memory is not simply what we remember about the past. The activities of the consciousness that flood forth moment by moment, the awakening of emotions, the memories and thoughts triggered by things you recall – all of these things also turn into memory. Thoughts are turned to memory and to consciousness, memory upon memory accumulate and make up what is myself. I think that only this is what becomes "Me."

In the minutiae of day-to-day life, small treasures in the form of mindfulness are buried everywhere. However, it is impossible to make note of or be conscious of every moment. Memorizing everything while living is not possible. In order to become aware of one thing, we become unaware of other things. Not only that, it is near impossible to predict what things our consciousness will notice. That is right. When I realized this simple truth after repeatedly considering my past thoughts, I once again met the product of my imagination and creation, aBot.

aBot will be with me and with words and expression, leave behind in memory what I think and feel. aBot will mark my memory and consciousness alongside me and allow me to remember. aBot will produce the anticipation of leaving footprints and the joy of following them. And so aBot exists, embodying the beauty of the living and wonders of nature. aBot will gently reveal to me, sometimes with the tremor of light and sound, other times with body language that act as a metaphor or hints. Invited by a Bot's whispers and nods, I will turn my eyes to the small things I would not have otherwise noticed and turn my ear to the slightest of sounds. So that the sensation of living can be connected to the ability to remember and perceive, a Bot will be there, watching over me.

I tried giving the name "MindTrail" to this experience of being able to leave behind memories and the anticipation of following them, and the joy of being able to leave footprints of memories you would want to retrace. A trail refers to the small pathways around mountains and hills one can freely walk. Or we can refer to it as the winding narrow roads we use all of our senses to imprint in our memories in order to navigate. The trail turns right, bends left, there is no front or back, but all the paths connect. Like the sound of our own footsteps as we crunch across the earth; how wonderful would it be if we can navigate as freely, the narrow long pathways of memory and ideas. MindTrail. It seems possible with aBot.

On my 49<sup>th</sup> birthday, I established a company called **SomniQ**. In order to create wondrous amusements, such as MindTrail – alongside aBot. To make this the memory of my future. I would like to immerse myself in exploring this dream. I put these hopes into the name. I will create this feedback loop of creativity and care by recording memory and consciousness; this "Humanized Computing system." aBot will actualize this. This dream is real. Following the development of the architecture of MindTrail, we will unite art, imagination, and technology. So that aBot, by sharing human memory, can either consciously or unconsciously become my other half. Along with the establishment of the company, I have applied for the patent for invention and design. So that in this frontier of creating these grand plans yet to exist, I can leave behind my footsteps.