

# AI Chatbots Replacing Mental Health Professionals

*An AI-Integrated Emotional Wellness™ Perspective on How Technology Can Support Human Presence—Not Replace It*

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, May 26, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As millions of people increasingly turn to artificial intelligence chatbots for emotional support, a newly released article from [The National Center for Emotional Wellness](#) explores a critical question: Can AI replace mental health professionals?



In the article, “Can AI Chatbots Replace Mental Health Professionals? An [AI-Integrated Emotional Wellness™](#) Perspective,” psychologist and chairman of the National Center, Mark D. Lerner, Ph.D., examines the growing role of AI in emotional support while emphasizing the irreplaceable need for authentic human connection in mental health care.

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*Mark D. Lerner, Ph.D.*

The article acknowledges that AI chatbots can provide immediate, accessible, evidence-based strategies and tools that may help reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression in the short term. However, it cautions against confusing symptom reduction with [emotional wellness](#). “We must keep in mind that the reduction of symptoms is not mental health care—nor does it reflect emotional wellness,” said Lerner.

The article also explores growing concerns surrounding privacy, data security, accountability, and the ethical and professional limitations of AI in mental health care. Additionally, it highlights recent reports of individuals who allegedly harmed themselves or others after interacting with chatbots, underscoring the need for caution, ethical oversight, and professional responsibility.

At the center of the article is AI-Integrated Emotional Wellness™, created by Lerner—the ethical and responsible interface between artificial intelligence and the depth, complexity, and uniqueness of human emotion. The article emphasizes that while AI can provide accessible information, coping strategies, and emotional support, it cannot replace genuine human presence—compassion, emotional attunement, vulnerability, and authentic interpersonal connection.

The article further emphasizes that emotional wellness develops through human relationships and the lived experience of being seen, heard, understood, and emotionally validated—particularly during periods of stress precipitated by illness, grief, and other challenging life events.

Rather than positioning AI and mental health professionals in opposition, the article advocates for the thoughtful, ethical, and professional integration of technology as an adjunct to—not a replacement for—human mental health care.

Dr. Mark Lerner

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