

CHAPTER 11 - PROTECTING YOUR MIND

Cognitive Fitness Self-Check

A short, repeatable check-in. Revisit this monthly to notice drift before it becomes permanent.

Over-reliance on AI tends to build in three quiet stages. This check-in catches each one early.

- 1

Dependency Risk

If AI disappeared tomorrow, could you still do your job well, even if it took longer?
- 2

Judgment Risk

Have you gradually stopped asking, “Is this actually correct?” before accepting an answer?
- 3

Identity Risk

Do you find yourself quietly less confident in your own expertise?

Rate Yourself, Right Now

1 means often true. 5 means rarely true. Be honest rather than generous.

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
If my AI tools disappeared tomorrow, I would struggle to do my job well.					
I catch myself accepting AI's first answer without questioning it.					
I feel less confident in my own expertise than I did a year ago.					
I still make my own first attempt before checking what AI would say.					
I stay curious enough to ask a follow-up question instead of accepting the first response.					

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Track It Over Time

Come back to this page every few weeks. The trend matters more than any single score.

Date	Dependency	Judgment	Identity	One honest note

Worth remembering

These habits develop through repetition. They can also be changed through repetition. The goal is not to use AI less. It is to keep using it in ways that strengthen the mind you have worked hard to build.

Cognitive fitness, like physical fitness, responds to regular practice.