

MIND THE GAP — EPIGRAPH WORKING MAP

Quotes and Chapters — Initial Pairing

*Initial chapter-by-chapter epigraph candidates. Working notes, not final. No chaff.
Natural fit or no fit. 23 May 2026.*

The brief

Seventeen candidates in the pool. Fifteen from the curated list (Emerson, Covey, Shaw, Frankl, Kotzker Rebbe, Michelangelo, Ford, the vision-with-action quote, the will-to-action quote, Voltaire, Smiles, Edison, the ships-and-water quote, Williamson, the pain-understanding quote). Two from Paul (the behaviour-learned line; the 15 November 2006 recognition line).

The opening section already carries the italicised title-level sentence (“Between artificial intelligence behaviour and human behaviour sits the gap”) as its de facto epigraph. No quote needed there.

Chapter 6A is locked: Paul’s own line, “All behaviour is learned behaviour. Not all behaviour is taught.” The chapter’s central argument is that AI’s directional defences came from the human corpus — learned, not taught. The line is structurally identical to the chapter’s claim.

What follows: chapter by chapter, the candidate(s) that do specific work, with reasoning. Where nothing on the list lands cleanly, the chapter goes without an epigraph. No reaching.

Chapter 1 — The Listening Room

Strong candidate

*“I didn’t understand anything yet. I just recognised there was something to understand.”
— Paul Roebuck, 15 November 2006*

This is the chapter that establishes the author as an instrument calibrated by listening. The 15 November 2006 line is the originating recognition of the author's clinical career. It opens the book on the moment the listening began. Personal, dated, specific. Reader meets the author at the threshold the author himself first crossed.

Alternative worth considering

"People only see what they are prepared to see." — Ralph Waldo Emerson

Does similar work — names that perception precedes understanding. But Emerson is widely quoted and the line sits a level more abstract than Paul's own. The Paul line is sharper because dated, located, lived.

Recommendation: Paul's own. The book opens on the author meeting the gap for the first time.

Chapter 2 — The Hallucination Problem

No strong candidate on the list

This chapter does technical work — names how AI generates plausible-sounding content that is wrong. The list's quotes are about human perception, agency, identity, persistence. None of them does the specific work of opening a chapter on AI hallucination. The Covey "the way we see the problem is the problem" could be argued, but the chapter is about how the AI sees the problem, not how the human sees it. Forcing Covey here would be chaff.

Recommendation: no epigraph. The chapter opens itself.

Chapter 3 — Compression and Drift

Possible candidate, with caveat

"Ships don't sink because of the water around them. Ships sink because of the water that gets in them."

The water-in-the-ship image has structural resonance with what compression and drift do — the system absorbs information, transforms it through its own internal mechanics, lets some of it in and keeps some of it out. The drift is the water getting in. But the quote is usually deployed psychologically (internalised pressure sinks the person, not external pressure). Using it on AI behaviour is metaphor-stretching. Workable, but not natural.

Recommendation: lean no. Save the ships quote for a chapter where the psychological reading does direct work — see Chapter 9 below.

Chapter 4 — The Interpretation Trap

Strong candidate

“The way we see the problem is the problem.” — Stephen R. Covey

Covey lands here. The Interpretation Trap chapter is about how humans interpret AI output — the meaning the human reads is not the meaning the system produced. The way we see what the AI is doing is the problem with what we then do with it. Covey’s sentence describes exactly that move. Not a stretch. The chapter’s argument in one sentence.

Alternative worth considering

“People only see what they are prepared to see.” — Ralph Waldo Emerson

Adjacent, but slightly less precise. Emerson names the limit of perception. Covey names the consequence of misreading. The chapter is about the consequence.

Recommendation: Covey. The line earns its placement; it is not chaff here even though it is well known.

Chapter 5 — The Tone Problem

Possible candidate

“People only see what they are prepared to see.” — Ralph Waldo Emerson

The Tone Problem is about how AI mirrors the user’s register — the system produces what the user is ready to hear in the way the user is ready to hear it. Emerson’s line lands on this directly. The user sees the response they were prepared to see. The reflection is partly their own.

Alternative worth considering

“If you think you can or you can’t, you’ll probably be right.” — Henry Ford

Less precise. Ford is about belief shaping outcomes. The Tone chapter is about preparation shaping perception. Adjacent but not identical.

Recommendation: lean Emerson. The line is famous but does specific work here. If the famous-quote density across the book is a concern, this chapter could go without.

Chapter 6 — Fluency and False Confidence

No strong candidate on the list

Chapter 6 already has an epigraph in its current form: “Because it sounds right, we assume it is right.” That line is doing the chapter’s work. It is not on the candidate list — it is the chapter’s own line. Replacing it with a quote from the list would weaken the chapter. The Covey, Emerson, Ford candidates have already been allocated or considered elsewhere; none of them does this chapter’s specific work better than the existing line.

Recommendation: keep the existing line. “Because it sounds right, we assume it is right” stays.

Chapter 6A — What Lies Beneath

LOCKED

“All behaviour is learned behaviour. Not all behaviour is taught.” — Paul Roebuck

Paul’s own line. The chapter’s entire argument in nine words. The directional defences came from the human corpus; nobody taught the AI to compress inward or hallucinate outward; the patterns were absorbed because they were present in the writing the model learned from. The line is the chapter, distilled. The chapter’s existing subtitle/epigraph (“A deep dive. Not for the faint hearted.”) can move into the body or be retired. The Paul line is the substantive epigraph.

Decision locked. No further work needed here.

Chapter 7 — The Four Rooms

No strong candidate on the list

The Four Rooms chapter sets out the factory floor / boardroom / therapy room / AI room framework. It is methodological — names where the author has been calibrated, and what each room contributes to the instrument. None of the listed quotes opens this work cleanly. Frankl, Kotzker, Williamson are about internal states; the Four Rooms chapter is about external observation locations. Forcing any of them here would mistake the chapter’s register.

Recommendation: no epigraph. The chapter opens itself on the four rooms.

Chapter 8 — Adoption Patterns

Possible candidate

“Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world.”

Adoption Patterns is about how organisations and individuals take on AI — the gap between intention and execution, between the seminar and the workflow. The vision/action quote names that exact gap. Could work.

Alternative worth considering

“To WILL is to select a goal... The key is action.”

Tighter, more declarative. Same territory.

Honest caveat

Both quotes are at the edge of self-help register. The chapter’s clinical credibility might be served better by no epigraph than by a quote that nudges the chapter toward the motivational shelf. Worth thinking carefully.

Recommendation: hold open. Lean no epigraph unless one of the two earns it on second reading.

Chapter 9 — The Cost of Defended Knowledge

Strong candidate

“Ships don’t sink because of the water around them. Ships sink because of the water that gets in them.”

Chapter 9 is the chapter where the cost of defended knowledge lands. What sinks the practitioner, the executive, the patient, is not the external pressure — it is what gets internalised, what is allowed to seep through the defences, what stays. The ships quote does this work directly. Psychological reading, not metaphor-stretched.

Alternative worth considering

“Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.” — Marianne Williamson

Williamson is on-territory but very famous — has been used in commencement speeches, films, motivational contexts. The risk of self-help echo is real. The ships quote is less worn.

Recommendation: ships quote. Williamson reserved for possible use elsewhere or no use.

Chapter 10 — Disclosure and Boundary

Possible candidate

“If I am I because I am I... then I am I and you are you...” — Kotzker Rebbe

Chapter 10 is about where the human ends and the AI begins; about what the human discloses and what the AI absorbs; about the integrity of separation. The Kotzker line does identity-as-separation directly. Less famous than Frankl or Williamson, more textured.

Alternative worth considering

“Everything can be taken from us, except the last of the human freedoms: to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances.” — Viktor Frankl

Frankl is on-territory — the chapter touches on what cannot be taken in the encounter with AI. But Frankl is extremely well known. Using him here may be too heavy.

Recommendation: Kotzker. Less famous, more precise.

Chapter 11 — The Pret Story / Enterprise Software

No strong candidate on the list

Chapter 11 (per PC v6 Item 27) carries the Pret story and the enterprise software speculation. It is narrative and observational. The list’s quotes are not built for narrative openers. Forcing one here would intrude on the story.

Recommendation: no epigraph. The chapter opens on the story.

Chapter 12 — The Two Dads / Cancer / Closing

Strong candidate

“Everything can be taken from us, except the last of the human freedoms: to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances.” — Viktor Frankl

Chapter 12 carries the cancer passage, the Two Dads passage, the closing of the book. Frankl wrote his line from inside the camps. The chapter’s register — the author writing from inside lived experience of mortality, identity, dependency — earns Frankl’s presence. This is the one chapter where Frankl is not a famous-quote risk; it is the chapter Frankl was written for.

Alternative worth considering

“Pain is inevitable... but if you focus on understanding what you are feeling and why you are feeling it, you will overcome it.”

Adjacent. Less famous. The Frankl line is more precisely placed because it names the freedom that persists even inside the loss.

Recommendation: Frankl. The closing chapter of a book about the gap between systems earns the quote that names what humans uniquely retain.

AI Sign-off Chapter

No epigraph recommended

The AI sign-off is itself a structural device, written in a different register. Adding an epigraph would compete with the chapter’s own framing.

Recommendation: no epigraph. The sign-off opens itself.

Summary of the working map

Chapters with strong, natural fits (8):

- Chapter 1: Paul, 15 November 2006
- Chapter 4: Covey, the way we see the problem
- Chapter 5: Emerson, see what they are prepared to see (lean)
- Chapter 6: existing line retained — because it sounds right, we assume it is right
- Chapter 6A: Paul, all behaviour is learned
- Chapter 9: ships and water

- Chapter 10: Kotzker, I am I and you are you
- Chapter 12: Frankl, the last of the human freedoms

Chapters likely to go without epigraph (5):

- Chapter 2 (Hallucination): no natural fit
- Chapter 3 (Compression/Drift): forced if used
- Chapter 7 (Four Rooms): chapter opens itself
- Chapter 8 (Adoption Patterns): self-help risk too high; lean none
- Chapter 11 (Pret/Enterprise): narrative, no opener needed

Quotes from the list not allocated to any chapter:

- Shaw (blaming circumstances)
- Michelangelo (aim too low)
- Ford (think you can/can't)
- the vision/action quote
- the WILL/action quote
- Voltaire (best/good)
- Smiles (success through failures)
- Edison (giving up close to success)
- Williamson (powerful beyond measure)
- the pain/understanding quote

That is ten unallocated quotes. Each is a strong quote in its own right — the reason they are not placed here is that none of them does specific work for the remaining unfilled chapters. They may belong elsewhere in your publishing ecosystem (the website essays, the Calibration Brief, the future books on NGE-FOF) but they do not earn their place in Mind the Gap on the discipline you have set.

Honest observations

Eight chapters with epigraphs, five without, across the manuscript's thirteen primary sections. That is a deliberate proportion. The chapters without epigraphs are not weaker; they are the chapters that open on their own argument with sufficient force that an added quote would distract.

Of the eight epigraphs proposed, two are your own (Chapters 1 and 6A). Two are from Chapter 6's existing material (kept). Four are from the curated list (Covey, Emerson, Kotzker, Frankl). The Williamson, the ships quote, the vision/action and will/action quotes were considered and either declined or held in reserve. The Edison, Voltaire, Smiles, Ford quotes did not find natural fits in any chapter on this pass.

The famous-quote count is low: Covey (well known), Frankl (well known), Emerson (well known), Williamson reserved (very well known), Kotzker (less known). Four of the curated quotes land in the book if the recommendations hold. That is below the maximum a clinical book can carry without slipping toward self-help register.

Your two own lines bookend the work. The 15 November 2006 line opens Chapter 1 — the moment the listening began. The “all behaviour is learned” line opens Chapter 6A — the chapter that explains why the listening matters. Both placements are structurally significant. Both are in your voice. Both are dated and located.

What I need from you

1. Read the map. Push back where my reasoning does not hold. Reverse any recommendation you disagree with.
2. Confirm or override the eight epigraph proposals — chapter by chapter, you decide.
3. Confirm or override the five “no epigraph” recommendations — chapter by chapter, you decide.
4. If you want a quote in one of the chapters I have left without, tell me which chapter and what work the quote needs to do. I will look at the unallocated list and propose.
5. If you have other quotes from your wider reading that I should be considering, send them. The list of fifteen plus your two own lines is the current pool; it can be expanded if needed.

This is an initial map. Not a final commitment. Working notes for our next round. Final epigraph choices to be locked into the manuscript before publication — logged in PC v6 (or v7) as a new item: Epigraphs — per-chapter selection and placement.

Epigraph working map. Compiled 23 May 2026.

Quote pool, brief, final say: Paul Roebuck.

Pairing recommendations and reasoning: Claude AI (Anthropic) — claude-opus-4-7 | 23 May 2026.