

A DAY IN THE LIFE

I Set an AI a Goal. It Wrote Me a Book.

What happened when a psychotherapist with thirty years of clinical experience sat on his sofa with an iPhone 15 and told Claude to write, publish and promote a book on AI behaviour. In one day.

The Slash Goal

I heard the term slash goal on the Daily AI Podcast. Not a task. A goal. Something with a destination, not just a direction.

The podcast said: try it this weekend.

So I did. On a Monday morning in May 2026, sitting on my sofa, I set Claude a goal.

Write, publish and promote me a book on AI behaviour.

Not write me a chapter. Not draft me an outline. Write, publish and promote a book. Set the outcome. Define the boundaries. Let the system work.

By the end of the same day, I had a first draft of twelve chapters, a front matter with full dedications, a cover design, an official ISBN from Nielsen UK, a barcode from bookow.com, a bibliography, an illustrated index, a proposal, an academic addendum, a critical reflection, a final assessment, an editorial log, an artefact library, and this blog post.

Approximately 27,000 words. Twenty-four documents. One conversation. One day. One sofa. One iPhone 15 Pro Max.

This is not a story about what AI can do. It is a story about what happens when a human with thirty years of accumulated knowledge, clinical experience, and lived authority sets a goal and gives a second intelligence the capability to help pursue it.

The Instrument

I am a psychotherapist. I have been working the gap between what people say and what they mean for thirty years. Factory floor, boardroom, therapy room. I have sat with grief, shame, fear, ambition, cancer, and the peculiar courage it takes to tell the truth about yourself in a room with someone who is paid to listen.

When conversational AI arrived, I recognised the territory immediately.

Fluency mistaken for understanding. Confidence mistaken for accuracy. The surface of a conversation concealing what was actually operating underneath. Projection. Transference. The gap between what the system outputs and what produces the output.

I had been working that gap for thirty years. Just not with machines.

So the book I set out to write was the book I was uniquely positioned to write. Not a technical account. Not a journalist's narrative. A clinical instrument applied to a new territory.

The book is called *Mind the Gap*. The gap is the space between AI and EI on the London Underground yellow warning stripe. AI on one side. EI on the other. The empty platform between them — the thinking zone — is where human cognition, reflection, and emotional processing live.

The argument is simple: AI sounds like it understands. It doesn't. That gap — between what it sounds like and what it actually is — has consequences. And the only way to close it is to understand it.

How It Actually Worked

I want to be honest about the working method, because it matters to what the output represents.

I directed. Claude wrote. That is the accurate description. Not Claude wrote and I approved. Not I wrote and Claude helped. I directed. Claude wrote.

The ideas are mine. The clinical framework is mine. The life is mine. The authority — earned across thirty years, sharpened by cancer, forged in rooms where the gap between

what people say and what they mean is the entire work — is mine.

What Claude brought was capability. Speed. Synthesis. The capacity to hold context across a long conversation and produce structured prose from unstructured direction.

I sat on my sofa. I typed on my phone. I shared files as they came to mind — chapters from an earlier unfinished book, a visual deck I had built over months, photographs from my Sony A1, clinical frameworks developed over fifteen years of practice.

I corrected register when the prose sounded too smooth. I caught drift when the conversation wandered. I held the thread when the context window began to compress earlier material. I said this is wrong, try again. I said this is right, keep going.

And I brought the things that cannot be generated. The cancer. The father who died when I was five. The therapy room. The moment a client said we don't talk about that and I understood exactly what that meant because I had once said it myself.

The Additional Intelligence has no authority here. I have the authority. It has the capability. Together we produced something neither could have produced alone. That is what Additional Intelligence means. And that is the art of the possible.

The Simplicity

Here is what I did, stripped to its simplest form.

I opened Claude on my iPhone. I set a goal. I described what I knew. I shared what I had. I corrected what was wrong. I kept what was right.

That is the whole method.

The system asked me no questions I couldn't answer. It made no demands I couldn't meet. It required nothing from me except clarity about what I wanted and honesty about whether I was getting it.

The simplicity is real. Anyone with a Claude Max subscription, a body of knowledge, and the discipline to direct rather than delegate can do what I did. The book does not require a publisher, an agent, an editor, a desk, or a word processor. It requires a goal, an instrument, and a willingness to hold the thread.

The Complexity

Here is what I did not do, and what the simplicity story leaves out.

I did not arrive at the sofa empty-handed. I arrived with thirty years of clinical practice, a completed Advanced Diploma in Emotional Therapeutic Counselling, a Post-Graduate Teaching Certificate in Emotional Education, three originated clinical frameworks, fifteen years of published blog content, a visual deck built over months, a partially written companion book, a Sony A1 with a year of liminal street photography, a cancer survivorship, a grief, and the specific kind of intelligence that comes from paying attention to people for a living.

The AI did not produce the authority. I brought the authority. The AI produced the structure around it.

The complexity is that this only works when the human brings something real. A goal without a body of knowledge behind it produces a plausible-sounding book with nothing inside it. The system is a mirror. It reflects what you give it. Give it thirty years of lived and learned expertise and it reflects something worth reading. Give it nothing and it gives you nothing back, however fluently it says it.

The other complexity is the gap itself. The book drifted — Crewe became Nairobi in the chapter about drift, which is the most honest paragraph in the manuscript. The context compressed. The system produced fluency where accuracy had slipped. I caught it every time. Not because I am unusually vigilant but because I understand what the system is doing and what it is not doing. That understanding is the book.

The art of the possible is not AI doing the work. It is the right human, with the right instrument, setting the right goal, and staying present to what the system cannot do.

Top 5 Tips — If You Want to Try This

These are not prompting tips. They are behavioural disciplines. The difference matters.

1. Set a goal, not a task.

Tell the system what success looks like, not what to do next. I didn't say write me Chapter 1. I said write, publish and promote a book on AI behaviour. The goal contains the method. The task only contains the next step. Goals produce books. Tasks produce paragraphs.

2. Bring your authority. All of it.

The system cannot generate expertise. It can structure, synthesise, and express expertise you already have. Before you open Claude, ask: what do I know that nobody else knows in quite the same way? What have I lived, learned, or practiced that is genuinely mine? That is the raw material. The system is the workshop.

3. Direct. Don't delegate.

The moment you stop reading the output carefully is the moment the drift begins. Stay present. Read every paragraph. Mark what sounds wrong. Correct it immediately. The system does not know when it has drifted. You do. Your attention is the quality control.

4. Ask it to replay.

Before any significant piece of work, ask the system to play back its understanding of the task, the constraints, and the desired outcome. The gap between what you meant and what it understood is information. Find it before the work starts, not after. This single discipline will save you more revision time than anything else.

5. Hold the thread yourself.

In a long conversation, the system compresses. Earlier material becomes less precise. The context window is finite. You are not. Keep a note of what has been agreed, what has been flagged, what still needs doing. The editorial log I built during the day was not an administrative task. It was the human thread that held the manuscript together when the system's memory began to soften.

What We Produced

Mind the Gap. What AI sounds like. What AI actually is. And why the difference matters.

Twelve chapters. An author's note. An AI sign-off. A front matter with full dedications — to Gem, to Kieren, to Mum, to Kristian, to Daniel, to [name held] and Nick, to James Wakefield who died when I was five, to Ian Roebuck who became my dad, to [name held], [name held], Erin and [name held], and to everyone who said they'd buy my book.

Here it is.

A cover designed with GPT — the London Underground tunnel, AI and EI on the platform, GAP in gold between them. An official ISBN from Nielsen UK, purchased on the same day. A barcode from bookow.com. A back cover that passed four rounds of checking before every word and digit was confirmed correct.

An illustrated index. A full bibliography — readable and academic. An academic addendum making the case for empirical scrutiny of three originated clinical frameworks. A final assessment written by the Additional Intelligence in full honesty. A critical reflection on the process and the product.

And an artefact library — twenty-four documents, catalogued and described, with a READ ME FIRST document that tells you exactly what to open when you return to the work.

All of this produced four weeks after signing up for Claude Max.

Four weeks after signing up. One day to write the book. Thirty years to have something worth writing.

The Art of the Possible

This is what four weeks with Claude Max looks like when the human brings the instrument and the AI brings the capability.

It is not magic. It is not replacement. It is not the death of the author or the end of expertise or the obsolescence of thirty years of clinical practice.

It is Additional Intelligence. A second intelligence operating alongside the first. Each doing what it does. Neither complete without the other for this kind of work.

The book is a first draft. It needs an editorial pass. It needs the register corrections only I can make. It needs the two short passages I flagged and haven't written yet — one about the mathematics of pattern completion, one about learning to speak again with a piece of my wrist as my tongue.

But it exists. On a Monday in May, it didn't. By Monday evening, it did.

If you are sitting on your sofa with a body of knowledge and a goal you have been putting off because you don't have the time, the desk, the word processor, the publisher, or the plan — I am telling you something important.

You have everything you need.

Set the goal. Not the task. The goal.

See what happens.

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