Abstract proposal for the 27th INPP Conference in Nijmegen (October, 8−9, 2026)

Proposed Title: Could Averse Effects of AI-Chatbots for Mental Health Be Explained in Terms of Inadequate "Resonance"?

Mental health practice is about to face pivotal changes through the progressive introduction of AI-chatbots in mental health care. While such chatbots are already being widely employed by private users, AI-chatbots are now also increasingly being offered by health insurance providers as a supplementary form of mental health care. However, although there may be attested benefits to the use of such applications, there are concerns that AI-chatbots could also have maleficent effects (as can be seen from the several legal cases that have been brought against OpenAI).

In the context of my (philosophical) work for the "Digital Animism" Thematic Research Network in Heidelberg, I ask myself the question of how and in what terms such maleficent effects of AI-chatbots can be understood. Moreover, as part of this group's work, I am also developing a measuring instrument ("Heidelberg AI Overreliance Questionnaire") which might help professionals in monitoring such averse effects.

In my talk, I shall refer to both phenomenological and metaphysical explanations for these effects. In addition, I shall attempt to explain the so-called overreliance effect in users by using the concept of "Resonance" as developed by Hartmut Rosa.