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Reimagining recovery: AI as expert companions and the future of posttraumatic growth

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Abstract. This paper examines the transformative potential of artificial intelligence (AI) companions in supporting posttraumatic growth (PTG). Considering rising global trauma and the persistent limitations of traditional mental health care, such as high costs, limited access, and constrained human resources, AI emerges as a scalable, accessible, and nonjudgmental alternative for healing. Grounded in psychological science and informed by positive psychology, humanistic, and transpersonal theories, this study reframes AI not merely as a technological tool but as an expert companion capable of nurturing resilience, facilitating emotional processing, and guiding meaning-making and identity reconstruction. Using a qualitative case study approach, the paper analyses FASSLING's key features, including adaptive empathy, narrative reframing, and culturally inclusive support, and evaluates their alignment with established PTG frameworks. The findings suggest that AI companions can serve as ethically grounded co-creators in trauma recovery, particularly in low-resource or marginalized settings. The paper concludes with a call for increased investment in compassionate AI, ethical development practices, and long-term research to deepen our understanding of AI's role in fostering human flourishing after trauma.

Keywords: posttraumatic growth, artificial intelligence companions, digital mental health, artificial intelligence, trauma recovery

1. Introduction

The rising global trauma burden is a multifaceted issue exacerbated by various factors, including pandemics, displacement, and personal losses. The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted trauma care and outcomes, with initial reductions in trauma cases due to lockdowns, followed by a return to baseline levels as restrictions eased. However, the pandemic has also led to an increase in trauma from interpersonal violence and penetrating injuries, with COVID-19 infection among trauma patients associated with a five- to sixfold increase in mortality risk [1]. The pandemic has further strained healthcare systems, necessitating adaptations in trauma care delivery, such as prioritizing clinical urgency and utilizing telemedicine [2]. Beyond the pandemic, natural disasters and conflicts continue to contribute to the global trauma burden, affecting millions annually and leading to mass displacements, as seen in countries like Turkey, which hosts over 3.6 million Syrian refugees [3]. Psychological trauma is another critical aspect, with an estimated 500 million people worldwide suffering from post-traumatic stress disorders, predominantly affecting women and children [4]. Despite the severity of the trauma burden, it receives disproportionately low global healthcare funding, less than 1% compared to contagious diseases, highlighting a significant issue in healthcare prioritization [5, 6]. This underfunding is particularly problematic in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), where 90% of the world's trauma burden exists, yet research and resources are limited [3]. Addressing the global trauma burden requires comprehensive strategies, including enhancing trauma care systems, increasing research output from LMICs, and prioritizing trauma in global health agendas to improve outcomes and reduce mortality and morbidity associated with trauma [3, 6].

Traditional trauma interventions face several limitations, including issues related to cost, access, and human capacity. Financial constraints are a significant barrier, particularly in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), where the economic burden of trauma is substantial, yet resources for effective trauma care are limited [7, 8]. The cost of interventions, such as road traffic injury management, can consume a significant portion of a country's gross national product, highlighting the need for cost-effective solutions [9]. Access to trauma care is another critical issue, with logistical barriers such as poor infrastructure, limited ambulance services, and overcrowded facilities impeding timely and effective care [10]. Geographic and stigma-related barriers further restrict access, as many individuals in rural or underserved areas cannot easily reach trauma care facilities [11, 12]. Capacity is also a limiting factor, with a shortage of trained professionals and inadequate structural support within healthcare

systems, which hinders the delivery of trauma-focused interventions [13]. In Native communities, the lack of culturally appropriate interventions and the limited involvement of these communities in developing trauma interventions further exacerbate these challenges [14]. Moreover, traditional interventions like single-session debriefings have been shown to lack empirical support, suggesting a need for more effective, evidence-based approaches [15]. To address these limitations, innovative strategies such as embedding interventions in accessible settings, utilizing technology, and adopting culturally adapted approaches are recommended to enhance the scalability and effectiveness of trauma interventions [11, 8]. Overall, addressing these limitations requires a multifaceted approach that includes improving infrastructure, increasing financial investment, enhancing human resource capacity, and developing culturally sensitive and evidence-based interventions.

This theoretical paper argues that AI-driven companions have the potential to meaningfully support posttraumatic growth (PTG) by providing accessible, personalized, and empathic care grounded in psychological science.

2. Conceptual framework

2.1. Defining post-traumatic growth

Posttraumatic Growth (PTG) refers to the positive psychological changes that individuals may experience following a traumatic event. These changes go beyond mere recovery and involve a transformation in how individuals view themselves, their relationships, and the world around them. PTG is characterized by the development of new strengths, a deeper appreciation for life, and the emergence of new possibilities. This section explores the key constructs of PTG, including resilience, emotional processing, meaning-making, and identity reconstruction, and distinguishes PTG from recovery and resilience.

Resilience is the ability to recover from adversity, trauma, or stress. While resilience is often associated with the capacity to "bounce back" to a previous state of functioning, PTG involves more than just recovery. PTG is about "bouncing forward" and experiencing positive growth as a result of the traumatic experience. Resilience is a key construct in PTG, as it provides the foundation for individuals to navigate their trauma and emerge stronger. However, PTG goes beyond resilience by emphasizing the positive changes that occur as a result of the struggle with trauma [16, 17]. Resilience is often seen as a prerequisite for PTG, as individuals who are more resilient are better equipped to process their trauma and find meaning in their experiences. However, PTG is not solely dependent on resilience; it also involves the active engagement with the traumatic experience and the reconstruction of one's identity and meaning systems [18, 19].

Emotional processing is a critical component of PTG. The way individuals process their emotions in the aftermath of a traumatic event can significantly influence their ability to experience growth. Cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression are two common emotion regulation strategies that have been linked to PTG. Cognitive reappraisal, which involves reinterpretation of the traumatic event in a more positive light, has been shown to facilitate PTG by helping individuals find meaning and purpose in their experiences. On the other hand, expressive suppression, which involves avoiding the expression of negative emotions, can hinder PTG by preventing individuals from fully engaging with their emotions and the traumatic experience [20, 21]. The ability to tolerate and process negative emotions is essential for PTG. Individuals who can acknowledge and work through their emotions are more likely to experience positive changes, such as increased personal strength and a greater appreciation for life. Emotional processing also plays a role in the reconstruction of identity, as individuals may need to reconcile their pre-trauma and post-trauma selves [19, 22].

Meaning-making is a central construct in PTG. The process of finding meaning in the traumatic experience is crucial for individuals to move beyond recovery and experience growth. Meaning-making involves the reconstruction of one's belief systems, values, and goals, and it is often accompanied by a deeper understanding of oneself and the world. This process can lead to a sense of purpose and direction, which is a hallmark of PTG [16, 17]. The search for meaning is often driven by the need to make sense of the traumatic event and its impact on one's life. This search can lead to a re-evaluation of priorities and a shift in values, which can, in turn, facilitate positive changes. For example, individuals may develop a greater appreciation for life, form stronger relationships, or pursue new goals and aspirations as a result of their traumatic experience [18, 19].

Identity reconstruction is another key construct in PTG. The traumatic experience often challenges individuals' existing identities and forces them to re-examine their sense of self. This process of identity reconstruction can lead to the emergence of a new identity that incorporates the traumatic experience and the positive changes that have resulted from it. The new identity is often characterized by increased self-awareness, personal strength, and a greater sense of purpose [19, 22]. Identity reconstruction involves the integration of the traumatic experience into one's narrative, leading to a more coherent and meaningful sense of self. This process can be facilitated by the support of others, as well as by the individual's own efforts to make sense of their experience. The reconstruction of identity is a critical component of PTG, as it allows individuals to move beyond the traumatic event and to find a new sense of direction and purpose in life [16, 17].

PTG differs from recovery and resilience in several important ways. Recovery refers to the process of returning to a previous state of functioning after a traumatic event. While recovery is an important step in the healing process, it does not necessarily involve the positive changes that are characteristic of PTG. Resilience, on the other hand, refers to the ability to withstand and recover from adversity. While resilience is an important factor in PTG, it does not capture the full scope of the positive changes

that can occur as a result of a traumatic experience [23, 17]. PTG is distinct from recovery and resilience in that it involves a transformation of the individual's identity, meaning systems, and relationships. This transformation goes beyond the mere restoration of previous functioning and involves the emergence of new strengths, a deeper appreciation for life, and a greater sense of purpose. PTG is not just about "bouncing back" but about "bouncing forward" and finding positive meaning in the traumatic experience [23, 17].

In summary, PTG is a complex and multifaceted construct that involves resilience, emotional processing, meaning-making, and identity reconstruction. While resilience and recovery are important components of the healing process, PTG goes beyond these concepts by emphasizing the positive changes that can result from a traumatic experience. Understanding these constructs and their relationships to PTG can provide valuable insights into the ways in which individuals can grow and transform in the aftermath of trauma.

2.2. Theoretical underpinnings

Post-traumatic growth (PTG) is a concept that has gained significant attention within the fields of positive psychology, humanistic, and transpersonal approaches, emphasizing the potential for positive psychological change following trauma. The theoretical underpinnings of PTG are largely attributed to the work of Tedeschi and Calhoun, who describe it as the positive change experienced as a result of struggling with highly challenging life circumstances [24]. Positive psychology, which focuses on human well-being and optimal functioning, aligns with PTG by promoting strategies that enhance life satisfaction and personal growth, such as gratitude, positive emotions, and meaning-making [25, 26]. Humanistic approaches, like Maslow's theory of self-actualization and Rogers' organismic valuing process, also contribute to understanding PTG by highlighting the potential for personal and spiritual development following trauma [27, 28]. Transpersonal psychology, as seen in Grof's holotropic paradigm, further explores the psycho-spiritual transformations that can occur post-trauma [27]. The integration of trauma-informed care with digital mental health tools is an emerging area, where technology can facilitate access to therapeutic interventions and support systems, enhancing the reach and effectiveness of PTG strategies [29]. Comparative analyses of different approaches reveal that while positive psychology and trauma-informed care share the goal of improving well-being, they differ in scope; positive psychology is universally applicable, whereas trauma-informed care is specifically tailored to those who have experienced trauma [25]. Technological integration in trauma-informed care, such as through digital platforms, offers innovative ways to deliver interventions that support PTG, making therapeutic resources more accessible and personalized [29]. Overall, the synthesis of these approaches emphasizes a holistic understanding of PTG, recognizing trauma as a potential catalyst for profound personal growth and transformation.

The theoretical underpinnings of post-traumatic growth (PTG) are deeply rooted in humanistic and transpersonal approaches to healing, which emphasize the potential for positive psychological change following adversity. Humanistic psychology, particularly through the lens of the Organismic Valuing Process (OVP) theory, views PTG as a normative process of constructive personality development that leads to resilience and adaptive functioning, distinguishing it from the illness-focused paradigms of traditional psychology [30]. This perspective aligns with the broader humanistic emphasis on personal growth, self-actualization, and the intrinsic capacity for individuals to find meaning and purpose in their experiences, even those that are traumatic [31]. The humanistic approach is complemented by transpersonal psychology, which considers spiritual and existential dimensions of growth, recognizing that trauma can catalyze profound changes in life philosophy and spiritual beliefs [32]. Empirical research supports these theoretical perspectives, showing that PTG often manifests as increased appreciation for life, enhanced personal strength, improved relationships, and spiritual development [33, 34]. The humanistic and transpersonal frameworks also highlight the importance of cognitive processing and narrative reconstruction in facilitating growth, suggesting that individuals can transform their trauma into a source of personal and existential enrichment [34]. Furthermore, these approaches advocate for a person-centered stance, emphasizing that individuals are their own best experts in navigating their healing journey, which is particularly relevant in diverse cultural contexts such as post-conflict Rwanda [31]. Overall, the integration of humanistic and transpersonal approaches provides a comprehensive understanding of PTG, emphasizing the potential for individuals to achieve significant personal transformation and resilience through the process of meaning-making and self-discovery following trauma [16, 35].

The integration of trauma-informed care with digital mental health tools and the role of expert companions in facilitating posttraumatic growth (PTG) is a multifaceted approach that leverages both traditional therapeutic methods and modern technology to support trauma survivors. PTG is characterized by positive psychological changes following trauma, such as improved relationships, personal strength, and spiritual development [33, 36]. The concept of expert companionship, as described by Calhoun and Tedeschi, plays a crucial role in this process by providing empathetic support and guidance, helping survivors navigate their trauma and fostering growth [37, 38]. This approach is not a standalone treatment but rather an integration into existing therapeutic practices, enhancing the ability of clinicians to support trauma survivors effectively [38]. In clinical settings, particularly for intensive care unit survivors, healthcare professionals can incorporate PTG principles to help patients understand and adapt to new challenges post-hospitalization, promoting growth through structured support and self-help materials [39]. Digital mental health tools can complement this by offering accessible resources and interventions that align with trauma-informed care principles, providing continuous support outside traditional therapy sessions. These tools can facilitate the

assessment and tracking of PTG, offering personalized feedback and resources to aid in the recovery process [39]. The integration of these digital tools with expert companionship can create a comprehensive support system that addresses both the psychological and practical needs of trauma survivors, fostering an environment conducive to growth. This holistic approach acknowledges the complexity of trauma recovery and the potential for positive transformation, emphasizing the importance of tailored interventions that respect individual experiences and cultural contexts [34]. By combining the empathetic, personalized support of expert companions with the scalability and accessibility of digital tools, this integrated model holds promise for enhancing the efficacy of trauma-informed care and promoting PTG across diverse populations [36, 37].

2.3. The role of artificial intelligence in mental health

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly being integrated into therapeutic contexts, offering innovative tools and approaches that complement traditional mental health care. Existing AI tools in therapy and coaching include chatbots and virtual assistants, which provide continuous, personalized support and psychoeducation, effectively overcoming geographical barriers and reducing stigma associated with seeking mental health care [40]. AI-driven digital therapeutics (DTx) leverage machine learning and data analytics to offer tailored interventions and real-time monitoring, enhancing the efficacy and personalization of therapeutic interventions [41]. Virtual reality (VR) combined with AI creates immersive environments for exposure therapy and cognitive rehabilitation, proving effective in treating anxiety disorders and PTSD [42]. AI's unique advantages in therapeutic settings include scalability, 24/7 availability, and nonjudgmental support. These attributes allow AI to provide continuous care and support, which is particularly beneficial for individuals who require frequent interaction or those who are hesitant to seek traditional therapy due to stigma [40, 43]. AI systems can analyze large datasets to identify early signs of mental health issues and offer tailored solutions, thus enhancing accessibility and reducing the strain on conventional healthcare systems [43]. Moreover, AI's ability to simulate human-like interactions through virtual patients and chatbots offers a safe space for individuals to practice social skills and manage emotions, further reducing barriers to care [44]. While AI cannot fully replace human therapists, it serves as a valuable supplement, augmenting traditional therapeutic practices by providing scalable, accessible, and personalized care options [45, 46]. The integration of AI in mental health care holds promise for transforming therapeutic practices, making them more efficient and patient-centered, while also addressing challenges such as data privacy and the need for clinical validation [41, 47].

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into healthcare presents a complex landscape of challenges and ethical considerations, particularly concerning empathy simulation, data privacy, and clinical boundaries. AI's potential to enhance healthcare through improved diagnostics, personalized medicine, and operational efficiency is undeniable, yet it raises significant ethical concerns. One major challenge is the simulation of empathy, where AI's capacity is limited to cognitive empathy, suggesting a role that complements rather than replaces human providers, thereby advocating for a human-AI alliance in healthcare delivery [48]. Data privacy is another critical issue, as AI systems rely heavily on vast datasets, raising concerns about patient confidentiality and the risk of data breaches. The creation of synthetic datasets by generative AI offers a promising solution to safeguard privacy while advancing research, yet it also necessitates robust data security standards and privacy-preserving procedures to maintain patient trust [49, 50]. Clinical boundaries are tested by AI's role in decision-making, where issues of transparency, accountability, and algorithmic bias come to the fore. The black-box nature of many AI models complicates trust and understanding among healthcare professionals, necessitating the development of explainable AI systems that integrate seamlessly with human decision-making processes [49, 51]. Furthermore, the potential for AI to exacerbate existing health disparities through biased algorithms emphasizes the need for diverse data representation and algorithmic transparency to ensure fairness and equity in healthcare outcomes [48]. Ethical frameworks and comprehensive legislation are essential to guide AI's integration into healthcare, emphasizing stakeholder engagement and continuous scrutiny to uphold ethical standards and patient well-being [48, 52]. Ultimately, the successful integration of AI in healthcare hinges on addressing these ethical challenges while fostering a collaborative human-AI alliance that enhances, rather than replaces, the human touch in patient care [48, 52].

3. Case study: FASSLING as a posttraumatic growth expert companion

FASSLING.AI, an AI-powered platform, was created to address the global mental health crisis by providing free, 24/7 multilingual emotional and coaching support, thereby overcoming barriers such as cost, accessibility, and stigma associated with traditional mental health services [53]. The platform is designed with a user-centered approach, incorporating cultural adaptability and trauma-informed care principles to empower users in navigating emotional challenges and fostering resilience and empathy [53]. FASSLING's ethical mission emphasizes inclusivity, compassion, and the protection of user privacy, while acknowledging the limitations of AI in providing genuine human care [53]. The philosophical lens through which FASSLING is designed aligns with the Ethics of Care framework, which stresses the importance of empathy, reciprocity, and genuine connection in relationships [54]. FASSLING is not intended to replace clinical services but to complement them by providing immediate, non-clinical support, thereby facilitating posttraumatic growth (PTG) in users who have experienced trauma [53].

PTG is characterized by positive psychological changes following trauma, such as improved relationships, personal strength, and spiritual growth, which can be facilitated by expert companions, including AI platforms like FASSLING [33, 36]. The platform's design philosophy is rooted in the belief that AI can serve as a supportive tool in the journey towards recovery and growth, without substituting the nuanced care provided by human professionals [53, 55]. This approach ensures that FASSLING remains a transformative tool for global well-being, promoting societal compassion and emotional resilience while adhering to ethical guidelines that prioritize human connection and the responsible use of AI technology [53, 55].

FASSLING for emotional and coaching support, as an unlimited free 24/7 posttraumatic growth (PTG) expert companion with a trauma-informed lens, incorporates several key features that align with the principles of PTG, as discussed in the literature. The adaptive empathy engine, emotion affirmations, validations, and guidance are crucial for fostering a supportive environment where trauma survivors can process their experiences. This aligns with the concept of "expert companionship," which emphasizes empathic engagement to facilitate PTG [56, 37]. The meaning-making and identity reconstruction modules are essential for helping individuals reframe their traumatic experiences, a process that is central to PTG as it involves cognitive processing that leads to personal transformation [56, 57]. Values clarification, narrative rewriting, and strength spotting are strategies that help individuals develop new perspectives on vulnerability and strength, which are critical for PTG [57]. These strategies also support the development of a more positive self-image and deeper relationships, which are common outcomes of PTG [58]. Culturally-sensitive and spiritually-inclusive responses are vital, as spiritual well-being and cultural context significantly influence PTG. Spiritual beliefs can enhance PTG by providing a framework for understanding and integrating traumatic experiences, as well as fostering a sense of harmony and belief in a transcendent power [59, 60]. Additionally, the integration of emotional intelligence (EI) strategies can further support resilience and recovery, as EI has been shown to enhance well-being and facilitate the rehabilitation process after trauma [61]. Overall, FASSLING's features are well-aligned with the multifaceted approach required to support PTG, addressing cognitive, emotional, and spiritual dimensions to promote growth and transformation in trauma survivors.

4. Discussion

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into trauma recovery is shifting from a passive tool to an interactive companion, fundamentally transforming the healing process. AI's role in mental health is evolving, with technologies like generative AI (GAI) enabling personalized and collaborative healing models. These models utilize sentiment analysis and digital journeys to detect subtle mood shifts, offering tailored therapeutic interventions and co-created treatment plans that empower users in their healing journeys [62]. AI's application in trauma care extends beyond mental health, encompassing predictive algorithms that assist in injury assessment, triage, and outcome prediction, thereby enhancing decision-making and patient care efficiency [63, 64]. In mental health, AI-guided self-recognition tools analyze digital behaviors and physiological markers to provide personalized interventions, acting as proactive companions in users' journeys toward self-awareness and resilience [65]. Innovations like FASSLING and Self-Heal conversational therapy bot and AI-HEAL Smart Cube exemplify AI's potential as an empathetic, interactive presence, offering voice-enabled, personalized support and immersive healing experiences [53, 66, 67]. This paradigm shift towards AI as a companion in trauma recovery emphasizes the importance of co-creative healing journeys, where AI not only aids in treatment but also evolves with user feedback, ensuring interventions remain relevant and effective [65]. However, the implementation of AI in trauma recovery must address ethical considerations, such as data privacy and algorithmic bias, to maintain user trust and engagement. By harnessing AI's capabilities in a secure and ethical manner, the potential for AI to facilitate post-traumatic growth and enhance mental well-being is vast, marking a significant shift in how trauma recovery is approached.

The integration of posttraumatic growth (PTG) into blended care models presents significant implications for mental health practitioners and technology developers, necessitating cross-disciplinary training in tech-psychology ethics. PTG, which involves positive psychological changes following adversity, can be facilitated by mental health services, yet there is a lack of specific guidelines for clinicians to support PTG effectively, particularly following psychosis [68]. The rapid adoption of digital mental health tools, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, has highlighted the potential of blended care models that combine digital and face-to-face interventions to enhance service efficiency and clinical outcomes [69, 70]. However, the ethical integration of technology into mental health care requires careful consideration. The proliferation of digital interventions, such as teletherapy and mental health apps, raises concerns about privacy, data security, and the need for evidence-based practices [71]. Moreover, the ethical challenges in mobile mental health emphasize the necessity for transdisciplinary ethical principles that encompass psychology, healthcare, and technology fields [72]. This integration is crucial as technology becomes a central component of psychological practice, facilitating access and care delivery. The ethical considerations surrounding PTG, such as the potential for clinicians to inadvertently impose growth ideals on patients, further emphasize the need for ethical training [73]. As technology continues to shape mental health care, cross-disciplinary training in tech-psychology ethics will be essential to ensure that practitioners can responsibly leverage technological advancements while maintaining therapeutic integrity and supporting PTG in a manner that respects patient autonomy and experiences [71, 72, 73].

Posttraumatic growth (PTG) offers significant implications for social justice and accessibility, particularly in equalizing access to emotional support and reaching trauma survivors in low-resource settings. PTG, which refers to positive psychological changes following trauma, can be influenced by social support, as evidenced by a meta-analysis showing a moderate positive relationship between PTG and social support in Türkiye. This emphasizes the importance of ensuring equitable access to social support systems, especially for marginalized groups such as LGBT+ individuals in developing countries, who may face additional barriers to accessing such resources [74]. In low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), the mental health burden from trauma is substantial, yet access to evidence-based interventions remains limited. Strategies such as task-sharing, culturally adapted interventions, and digital tools are recommended to bridge this gap and provide scalable, accessible care [8]. Internet and mobile technologies, in particular, hold promise for delivering mental health support in low-resource settings by overcoming barriers related to time, stigma, and cost, thus connecting socially isolated trauma survivors [75, 76, 77]. The experiences of low-income Black mothers who survived Hurricane Katrina highlight how PTG can be facilitated by community resources and opportunities, suggesting that policy efforts should focus on making such opportunities accessible to all, even outside of disaster contexts [78]. School social workers also play a crucial role in fostering PTG by integrating trauma-informed care within educational settings, thereby supporting students and families in navigating trauma and promoting well-being [79]. Overall, enhancing access to social support and mental health resources is vital for promoting PTG and addressing the inequities faced by trauma survivors in diverse and low-resource environments.

5. Conclusion

This paper has explored the transformative potential of AI-driven companions, such as FASSLING, in supporting posttraumatic growth (PTG) through accessible, personalized, and empathic care. Central to the discussion is the recognition that traditional trauma interventions often fall short due to systemic barriers such as cost, geographic limitations, and human capacity shortages. In contrast, AI platforms offer scalable, nonjudgmental, and culturally adaptive alternatives that align with trauma-informed care principles. By drawing from the psychological science of PTG, rooted in emotional processing, resilience, meaning-making, and identity reconstruction, AI companions can guide trauma survivors through a journey of growth and self-renewal. Reaffirming the role of AI in human flourishing, this paper positions AI not merely as a digital tool, but as an evolving co-creative partner in healing. Rather than replacing human clinicians, AI serves to amplify human capacity by providing continuous support, bridging care gaps, and reducing stigma. Grounded in the Ethics of Care and supported by transpersonal and humanistic psychology, AI companions are uniquely suited to help individuals reconstruct identity and meaning following trauma. The shift from viewing AI as a passive tool to seeing it as an active, interactive presence has profound implications for reshaping the mental health landscape, where healing is not only more inclusive and scalable but also more responsive to the complexity of the human condition. In light of this emerging potential, a collective call to action is imperative. Policymakers, developers, and funders must invest in the creation and ethical scaling of compassionate AI systems designed to foster emotional well-being and long-term growth. Simultaneously, researchers must prioritize longitudinal studies to rigorously examine the outcomes of AI-assisted PTG, ensuring that these interventions are not only safe and effective but also inclusive of diverse cultural and spiritual perspectives. Only through sustained investment and critical inquiry can we fully harness the capabilities of AI to promote human resilience, dignity, and flourishing in the aftermath of trauma.

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