

NOTE: The first two results sections by Perplexity were fed into ElevenLabs for the AI-generated podcast production of Talking the Read, episode 6. The full episode can be found at bravingeducation.com.

Pillars of Tech-scendentalism

Researched and Generated with Perplexity

Tech-scendentalism would blend the core ideals of transcendentalism with a thoughtful approach to technology. Drawing from the established pillars of transcendentalism[1][2][6][8], the pillars of tech-scendentalism might include:

Digital Self-Reliance

Encouraging individuals to develop their own understanding and mastery of technology, rather than relying solely on institutions or corporations[5][8].

Mindful Simplicity

Advocating for intentional, minimalist use of technology to enhance life, not overwhelm it—mirroring the transcendentalist value of simple living[1][2][6].

Connection to (and Through) Nature

Using technology to deepen our appreciation for the natural world, not to replace or dominate it, and ensuring digital life doesn't sever our bond with nature[5][7].

Free Thought and Digital Nonconformity

Promoting independent thinking and creative use of technology, resisting conformity to trends or algorithms that shape thought and behavior[6][8].

Ethical Intuition and Digital Empathy

Trusting one's intuition and moral compass in digital spaces, fostering empathy and authentic connection online as in real life[5][8].

Confidence in Human Potential

Believing that technology should empower individuals to realize their fullest potential, not diminish their agency or creativity[6].

In summary, tech-scendentalism would seek to harmonize technology with the timeless values of self-reliance, simplicity, nature, freethought, and ethical intuition—using tech as a tool for deeper human experience, not as an end in itself[1][2][5][6][8].

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How Self-Reliance Shapes a Tech-scendentalist Approach

Researched and Generated with Perplexity

Self-reliance, a core transcendentalist value, would guide tech-scendentalists to:

Prioritize independent thinking and digital autonomy, encouraging individuals to trust their intuition and judgment when using technology rather than passively accepting prevailing trends or algorithms[2][3].

Cultivate digital skills and discernment, empowering people to evaluate information quality, learn new technologies, and solve problems without overdependence on external sources or platforms[3].

Resist conformity and foster innovation, using technology as a tool for authentic self-expression and creativity rather than merely imitating others or following societal pressures[2].

Balance technological interdependence with personal empowerment, leveraging technology to enhance capabilities while maintaining control and avoiding overreliance on any single system or provider[3][5].

In essence, self-reliance in tech-scendentalism means using technology to strengthen individual agency, creativity, and resilience, not as a crutch that diminishes independent thought or personal growth[2][3].

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Tech-scendentalism Concept Exploration

Researched and Generated with Chat GPT

Prompt: Is Tech-scendentalism an existing movement or theory?

“Tech-scendentalism” is not currently an established or widely recognized academic movement or theory. As of now, the term appears to be a neologism—a newly coined concept that blends technology with Transcendentalism, likely to explore how emerging technologies like AI might inspire a cultural or philosophical response akin to 19th-century Transcendentalism.

Why It Feels Timely:

Historically, major technological shifts have sparked new cultural and intellectual movements:

- The Romantics and Transcendentalists responded to the Industrial Revolution with a return to nature, introspection, and individual conscience.
- The Modernists responded to the mechanized horrors of WWI and technological alienation with experimental forms in literature and art.
- The Digital Age has inspired postmodernism, cyberculture, and surveillance critique.

Now, with AI being dubbed the Fifth Industrial Revolution, it's plausible that we're on the cusp of a new cultural response. “Tech-scendentalism,” as you've coined it, could be that response—an effort to reclaim human agency, meaning, and authenticity in a world increasingly shaped by intelligent machines.

Potential Pillars of Tech-scendentalism (as a developing idea):

1. Digital Self-Reliance – Emphasis on using AI mindfully, not dependently.
2. Technological Mindfulness – Reflection on how tech reshapes attention, relationships, and ethics.
3. Ecological-AI Consciousness – A return to sustainability and human-nature balance, using tech as a tool, not a tyrant.
4. Creative Humanism – Upholding human creativity, emotion, and intuition as vital counterweights to algorithmic logic.
5. Place-Based Innovation¹ – Grounding digital progress in local, cultural, and natural contexts.

¹ One of my other professional projects deals with localized learning experiences—or placed-based learning. I have used ChatGPT in separate threads to explore this topic. This last pillar proposed by ChatGPT leads me to believe that the LLM will try to produce results that complement other ideas from otherwise non-related threads generated by the same user in separate inquiry sessions. In other words, the model is feeding off of its user's own threads. My opinion? This may or may not be a good thing...