



# The Quiet Hum of Learning: What AI Taught Me About Being Human

by Aditya Bawa

I've been utterly fascinated by Artificial Intelligence lately, especially how it's reshaping healthcare, digital operating rooms, and clinical decision-making. I've even tried to understand the math behind it. Honestly, complex concepts like backpropagation and gradient descent are still out of my league.

But I realized I don't need to master the equations to grasp the core idea of how intelligent systems actually learn.

## **The humble machine's job**

At its simplest, an AI model is a neural network, a thinking machine powered by deep learning. In healthcare technology, these same principles are quietly driving smarter imaging workflows, predictive analytics, and decision support in modern hospitals.

What is the fundamental job of this kind of system? To correct and to learn. This learning machine uses math to check its output against the desired result. If it's wrong (an "error"), it instantly adjusts its internal workings ("weights") and tries again. It iterates, constantly getting closer to the correct answer.

In other words, it is a true learning system, a machine built for relentless, quiet self-improvement. In the context of medical technology and digital OR integration, that same loop of feedback and correction is what helps systems become safer, more reliable, and more aligned with what clinicians actually need.

## The human parallel

We humans have the incredible gift of consciousness, context, and empathy: the power to think, reflect, and choose. Yet, when I compare myself to the machine's simple dedication to learning, I have to pause.

Do we stop and correct our mistakes the way a learning algorithm does? Or are we just reactive, drifting from one stimulus to the next without reflection, whether in our personal lives or in how we run our hospitals, teams, and operating rooms?

Do we have the patience to look at the "output" of our lives, a failed habit, a bad decision, a relationship stumble, even a broken workflow in the OT and perform our own internal correction?

Do we humbly adjust our own "weights" and try again, dedicated to getting closer to the person, the professional, or the organisation we want to be? The machine's strength is its honesty: it accepts the error, adjusts, and iterates. No ego. No excuses. Just continuous improvement.

And that is the core question for me: Are we still dedicated learning systems, individually and as healthcare organisations, or are we leaving learning only to the machines, while our processes, operating rooms, and patient experiences remain stuck in old patterns?

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