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Sommario/riassunto

The COMPANIONS project, which inspired this book, is studying conversational software-based artificial agents that will get to know their owners over a substantial period. These could be developed to advise, comfort and carry out a wide range of functions to support diverse personal and social needs, such as to be 'artificial Companions' for the elderly, helping their owners to learn, or assisting to sustain their owners' fitness and health. This chapter summarizes the main issues raised in the workshop that gave rise to this book. Most direct quotes from participants in this chapter come from their own chapters. Appendix 1 contains examples of current artificial Companions and related research projects mentioned at the workshop.
