[Student's Name]

Overtime, technology has assumed an increasingly prominent role in society as machines are now relied upon in hospitals, schools, and homes. New innovations are becoming more advanced, whether it is the ipad or the hand held medical scanners. Although machines are becoming extremely common, technologies should never replace human beings but should rather aid humans and enhance daily life.

One application of machines should be as medical assistants. These machines should never replace doctors, therapists, or medical technicians, but should be able to do what humans cannot. Groopman supports this notion by claiming, "Medical robots are, for the most part, tools to enhance a doctor's or a therapist's techniques" (2) The robots could increase the amount of attention and assistance a patient could receive, thus leading to a faster and more attainable recovery. Additionally, the medical robots could attend to patients who suffered a severe trauma and who need extra help with developing motor skills. Since doctors can not attend to each patient 24 hours a day, technologies such as the exoskeleton robots should be used by helping patients to "coordinate physical movements" when patients are at home.

Additionally, machines should be used to provide motivation that might otherwise be difficult for humans to give. Often it can be difficult for children or the elderly to accomplish every day tasks because of stubbornness or inability. It has been observed robots can "keep people doing something even if they don't want to do it" (Groopman 4). This has been proved through an elderly woman who engaged in a game of "Name that

Tune" with a robot. The woman became joyful, even sang along with the robot, and guessed the song correctly. As a result, the robot clapped and praised her. These same machines could be used to persuade children to take their baths when mothers are unsuccessful or to motivate the elderly to take their medicine when they are unwilling. It is believed that the robots are successful motivators because of their even temperaments and their human-like qualities. As for their "personalities", the robots can be programmed differently to interact with introvert or extrovert people, thus creating a personality match between the patient and robot every time. While human motivation should never be replaced, the motivation offered by a machine is a useful addition in that it gives the people another option when humans are unsuccessful.

Finally, newly developed robots should be used to help many individuals create or maintain social skills. While most people are able to gain social skills from their parents and the community, some people are not gifted with the ability to do so. Additionally, there are some times in which physicians and therapists are unable to teach such skills. In such situations, machines and robots should be brought in for assistance. Some robots of this nature are already being tested, such as robotic pets. Its been determined that "when fish tanks are introduced into a nursing home, residents congregate to watch the fish; this not only sparks more conversation among the residents but also encourages healthier eating" (Groopman 5). Robotic fish have the same effect but also have the advantage of needing no caretaker. While real pets can fulfill the same roll, introducing robotic pets to the elderly seems more viable in both nursing homes and in individual houses since guardians of the patients will not need to worry about caring about the pets or about the

danger a real pet could pose.

Although there are numerous reported benefits of machines, more specifically robots, many skeptics are worried about a negative social effect. Sherry Turkle claims, “the idea that robots will teach people to relate to others is as fallacious as the argument that e-mail facilitates telephone conversation and then direct discussions” (9). Turkle’s worry is not unwarranted. With innovations such as Facebook replacing face to face contact, it is probable that overuse of machines would lead to the downfall of social skills. With this in mind, machines used for social uses should be limited to helping people form social skills. This is exemplified through a specific case, a child with dyspraxia and decreased social and emotional abilities, which showed great improvement after interacting with a robot. After playing with the robot, the kid laughed and looked back at his mother, making the connection. David Feil-Seifer, a graduate student, concluded, “You see how he is interacting. He is both physically interacting with the robot and also looking back at his mom, talking to his mom, not just talking to the robot” (7). While the robot was necessary initially in getting the boy to respond, the interaction did in fact lead the boy to human connections, such as the one with his mother. In circumstances such as the one stated, machines should be utilized.

While there are still many kinks to attend to in developing machines, the benefits available seem to make it worth the effort. With the numerous technologies created every moment, the possibilities seem endless in helping humans to improve as a race and overall evolve.