Brain-computer interface: Elon Musk’s Neuralink venture hopes to dramatically increase communication. What’s he up to?

[Elon Musk] claimed that sticking electrodes in people’s heads is going to lead to a huge increase in the rate of data transfer out of, and into, human brains.

The occasion of Musk’s post was the announcement by Neuralink, his brain-computer interface (BCI) company, that it was officially seeking the first volunteer to receive the “N1,” an implant comprising 1,024 electrodes able to listen in on brain neurons.

Follow the latest news and policy debates on sustainable agriculture, biomedicine, and other ‘disruptive’ innovations. Subscribe to our newsletter.

One day, it might be possible to transmit a picture between two brains over a cable.

“Elon thinks a lot about mental imagery, and I believe he’s imagining a future where the image that I’m thinking of could be presented to you, or stimulated directly in your cortex,” says Vikash Gilja, a professor at the University of California, San Diego.

So that’s where more bandwidth could make a difference—not in speeding up speech, but in unexpected forms of thought transfer. It’s also possible, for example, to detect emotional states, like whether a person is depressed, by measuring the brain. Those feelings are not only hard to describe, but you might not even be aware of them.

This is an excerpt. Read the original post here