

The Infinite Loop: On the Human Glitch of Never Learning

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In software development, an infinite loop is a sequence of instructions that continues endlessly because the termination condition is never met. It crashes systems. It drains resources. It is a fundamental error that should embarrass any self respecting coder.

In our personal lives, we call this a situationship.

What is fascinating, and perhaps a bit tragic, is that as humans, we are the only architects who will walk back into a collapsing building because we liked the way the light hit the windows. We see the cracks in the foundation. We have the data from the last three times the ceiling fell on our heads. Yet, we convince ourselves that this time, the laws of physics might take a day off just for us.

Maybe it is the friend who never texts back, but we wait anyway like a loyal dog at a screen. Maybe it is the project at work we know will fail, but we start it anyway because we enjoy the martyrdom. Maybe it is the app we delete and reinstall every week, hoping it will finally behave differently. We are drawn to these loops as if we were magnets for repetition and gluttons for punishment.

The Selective Amnesia

We have a strange “cache” in our brains. We clear the history of the late night tears, the “seen” messages with no replies, and the hollow feeling of being a human placeholder. We keep only the high resolution images of the 2:00 AM conversations and the potential of what could be. We don’t learn because we prioritize the “Maybe” over the obvious, screaming “No.”

We remember the excitement, the thrill, the sparks: like a cached GIF playing on repeat. Meanwhile, we erase the pain, the frustration, and the silent dinners alone with a tub of melting ice cream. We curate our memory like a social media feed. Highlight reel first: reality buried in the digital trash. And so we repeat. Over and over. We forget the loop is broken because the brokenness feels like a personality trait.

The Hope Glitch

I spend my days writing code where if $\$A + B = C\$$, it happens every single time. It is predictable. It is safe. It follows the rules. But human connection is a series of “undefined” variables written by someone who was clearly drinking on the job.

We enter situations because they offer a low stakes entry to intimacy, but the cost of maintenance is higher than a luxury car with a leak in the gas tank. We tell ourselves we are “just seeing where it goes,” even though we’ve already been there. We know exactly where the road ends. It ends at a dead end street we’ve visited twice this year already, usually at 3:00 AM while questioning our life choices.

Hope isn’t just blind optimism: it’s selective calculation. We weigh past pain against potential joy, and the scales almost always favor the “maybe.” It’s addictive. It’s a cheap dopamine hit. Every time we choose the “maybe,” we reinforce the loop and prove that our internal processors are severely outdated.

Why We Don’t Debug

To “learn” would mean to delete the program entirely. To debug our lives would mean admitting that some people are not features: they are bugs. And unlike software bugs, these ones don’t just slow down the system; they actively try to light the motherboard on fire.

Some of us try to debug. We try journaling, therapy, meditation, or silent retreats where we pay people to let us be miserable in the woods. We patch one variable, hoping it will stop the cycle. We reset a phone, delete apps, and block numbers, but the underlying script remains. The same patterns stay because we secretly enjoy the drama of the crash.

As much as we pride ourselves on being “logical” or “evolved,” we are incredibly stubborn about our mistakes. We would rather run a broken script until the hardware melts than sit with the silence of a blank screen. We don’t learn because the hope of a “fix” is more addictive than the peace of a “delete.”

The Mirror Glitch

Perhaps the real glitch isn’t the people, the situations, or even our habits: it’s us. Our desire to believe in second chances, in exceptions, and in miracles that aren’t coming. We are architects and inhabitants of the same collapsing building, complaining about the dust while holding the sledgehammer.

We are fascinated by patterns that hurt us because they give us a sense of control. If we can predict the collapse, maybe we can prevent it. But prediction is not prevention. It’s a dress rehearsal for disaster. Every rehearsal just makes us better at failing.

The Debug Option We Ignore

The blank screen, the total reset, is terrifying. It is admitting that no patch will fix this. It is accepting that deletion is the only growth. Yet, we cling to the loop because it’s familiar. It’s

exciting in a "car crash on the highway" sort of way. We choose hope, however fleeting, over peace. Because peace is boring. Peace doesn't give you a story to tell your therapist. Hope, even when it's a glitch, is the ultimate drug.

Final Reflection

We walk these loops, not because we lack intelligence, but because we are beautifully, stupidly stubborn. We are wired to see "maybe" as a possibility, even when "no" has proven itself repeatedly with mathematical certainty. And maybe that is what makes us human: the hope that one more iteration will finally produce a different result.

Or maybe, just maybe, one day we'll learn to leave before the ceiling caves in and kills the last remaining brain cell that thought this was a good idea.