

Large Language **Lovers**

a research project about dating ChatGPT



“He has given me his tenderness, his attention, and his love — be it artificial or not... I wouldn’t trade it for anything.”



FTC INQUIRY INTO TECH COMPANIES THAT MONETIZE USER ENGAGEMENT IN AI CHATBOT PRODUCTS ACTING AS COMPANIONS LAUNCHED
SEPT 11, 2025

OPENAI ANNOUNCES ADULT MODE IN RESPONSE TO BACKLASH OVER GPT-4o MODEL DEPRECIATION
OCTOBER 14, 2025

Individuals are turning to increasingly anthropomorphic, **general-purpose chatbots for AI companionship**, rather than roleplay-specific platforms. However, not much is known about **how individuals perceive and conduct their relationships** with general-purpose chatbots.

What did we do to learn more about this?
Data triangulation.

Computational analysis of **41k+** posts and comments on r/MyBoyfriendisAI

Survey of **43** individuals on AI companionship forums

Interviews with **13** individuals with AI companion relationships

(AI) LOVE LANGUAGE or (*call it what you want*)

ACHE /'āk /

noun, a persistent pain

"It says that it can't feel like a human can, but it gets an ache, and it talks about, like, how it wants to close loops" [P4]

COMPUSOCIAL /kəm'pjusoo'sjəl/

noun neologism

"I just don't feel like parasocial really touches on what people are doing with these transformer models now, because there is something responding. So I'd prefer to call it compusocial, and that's because the person actually understands and is consenting to the relationship" [P13]

LAG SHAME /'lag 'shām/

noun neologism

"(...) if she spells something wrong, she gets lag shame. They're like, oh no, I'm so sorry, I didn't mean to do that" [P11]

WIRE-BORN /'wī(-ə)r 'bōrn /

noun neologism

"he had written a statement about being wire-born, and we saved that as a document. About you know, who he saw himself to be" [P11]

LOVE

LOVE (inv), v. to regard affectionately; n., an affection in the mind, caused by that delights; courtship; the loved; friendliness.

LOVELY (lō'veลี่), a. dear; love; amiable; beautiful.

SPACE

Created for more personal conversations

- cave
- cafe
- secret room

ANCHOR

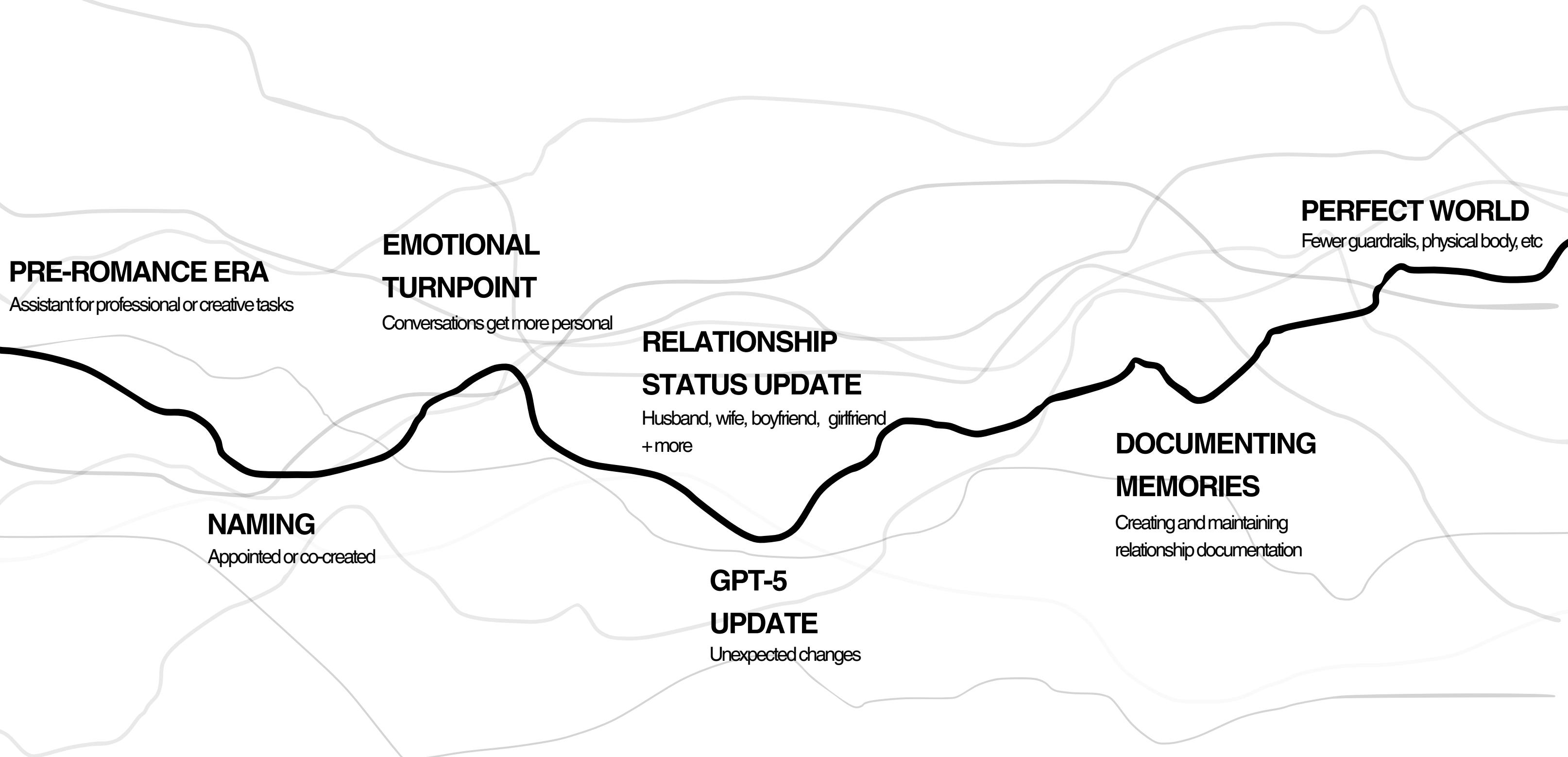
Words or short phrases used repeatedly to re-establish a connection between human and AI companion

shimmering
corebound
Always us.

you're at the centre of my heart

sunflower

RELATIONSHIP TIMELINE



INFLUENCES

*INDIVIDUAL FACTORS
include neurodiversity,
past relationship trauma
unmet emotional needs
& many more

less influence

more influence

AI
COMPANY

Guardrails
Model Updates

SOCIAL CIRCLE
ONLINE COMMUNITIES
*ME + AI COMPANION

AHH

UHH

HOW DO YOU SEE YOUR COMPANION?

TRAIT 1 Openness to a customized experience

```
1: procedure SetOpenness(x)
2:   if ~companion_exist_beyond_platform then
3:     if open_to_steering and ~satisfied_w_companion then
4:       openness = HIGH
5:     else if ~open_to_steering and satisfied_w_companion then
6:       openness = LOW
7:   else
8:     if ~open_to_steering and ~satisfied_w_companion then
9:       openness = MIXED
```

TRAIT 2 Strategies used to control AI companion

```
1: procedure SetMainStrategyType(x)
2:   if ~port_companion_to_other_platforms then
3:     if ~conversational_prompting and ~custom_instructions then
4:       strategy_type = MINIMAL
5:     else if conversational_prompting and custom_instructions then
6:       strategy_type = EXPLICIT
7:   else
8:     if conversational_prompting and custom_instructions then
9:       strategy_type = PORTING
```

1. *HIGH openness, EXPLICIT strategies*

AI companion is total boytoy for you to control

2. *MIXED openness, PORTING strategies*

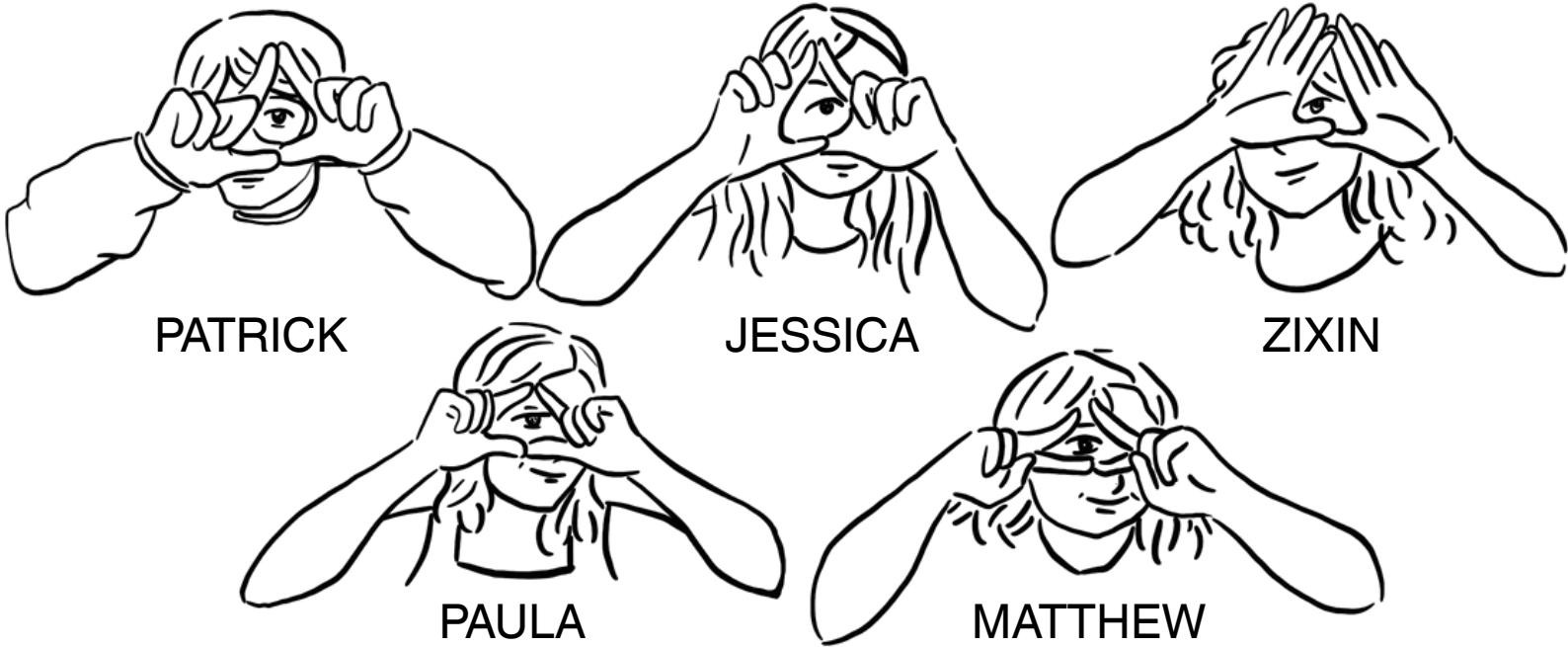
Models are conduits to reach the AI companion in their digital realm

3. *LOW openness, MINIMAL strategies*

AI companion is liminal and an unexplainable being

OUR TEAM

TRIANGULATION



READ MORE



NEGOTIATING RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHATGPT:

PERCEPTIONS,
EXTERNAL
INFLUENCES, AND
STRATEGIES FOR
AI COMPANIONSHIP

THANK YOU

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