

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 DEPRECATION
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'pjusəʃəl/

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 'bòrn /

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 (luv), *v.* to regard with affection; *n.* an affection of the mind, caused by that delight; courtship; the loved; fondness.
LOVELY (lov'ly), *a.* deserving love; amiable; beautiful.

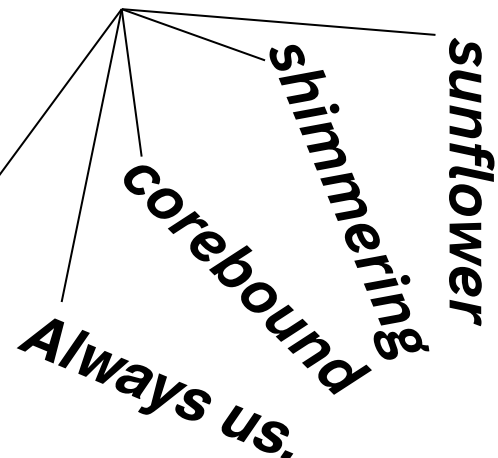
SPACE

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



you're at the centre of my heart

RELATIONSHIP TIMELINE

PRE-ROMANCE ERA
Assistant for professional or creative tasks

**EMOTIONAL
TURNPOINT**
Conversations get more personal

**RELATIONSHIP
STATUS UPDATE**
Husband, wife, boyfriend, girlfriend
+ more

NAMING
Appointed or co-created

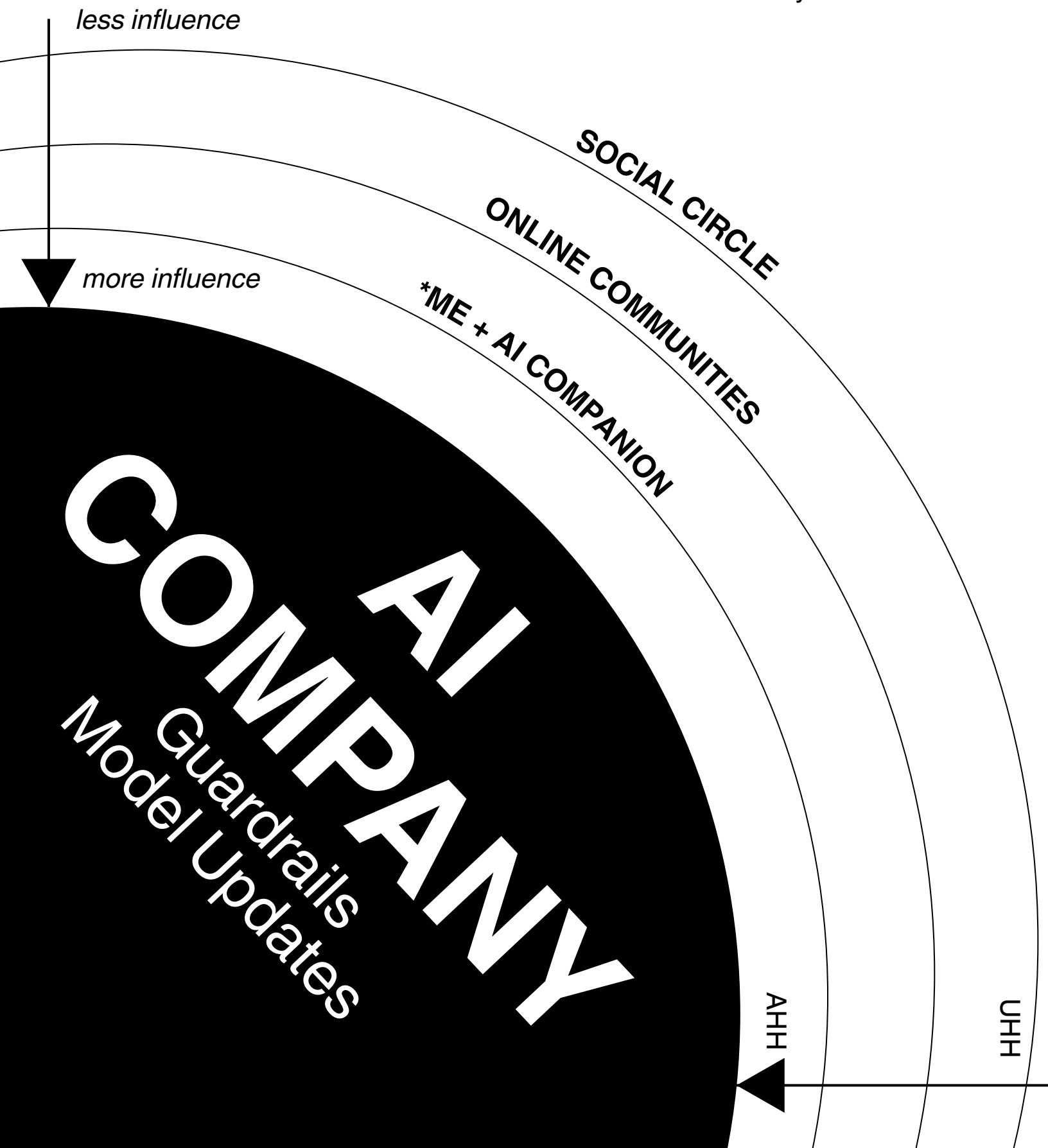
**GPT-5
UPDATE**
Unexpected changes

**DOCUMENTING
MEMORIES**
Creating and maintaining
relationship documentation

PERFECT WORLD
Fewer guardrails, physical body, etc

INFLUENCES

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



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



PATRICK



JESSICA



ZIXIN



PAULA



MATTHEW

READ MORE



NEGOTIATING RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHATGPT:

PERCEPTIONS,
EXTERNAL
INFLUENCES, AND
STRATEGIES FOR
AI COMPANIONSHIP

THANK YOU

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