

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'pjusɔʃəl/

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/

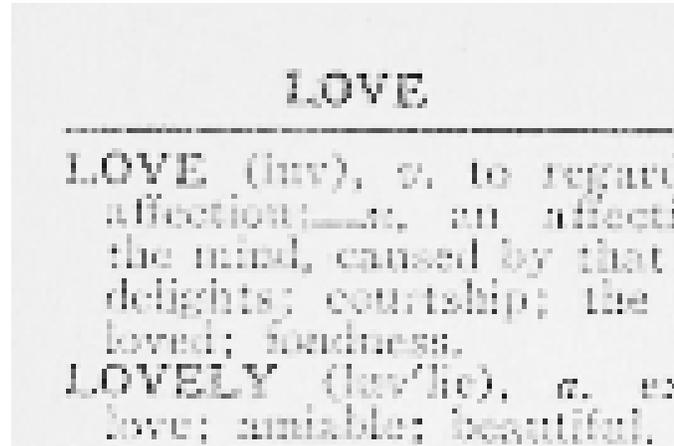
noun neologism

"(...) 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 'bɔrn /

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]



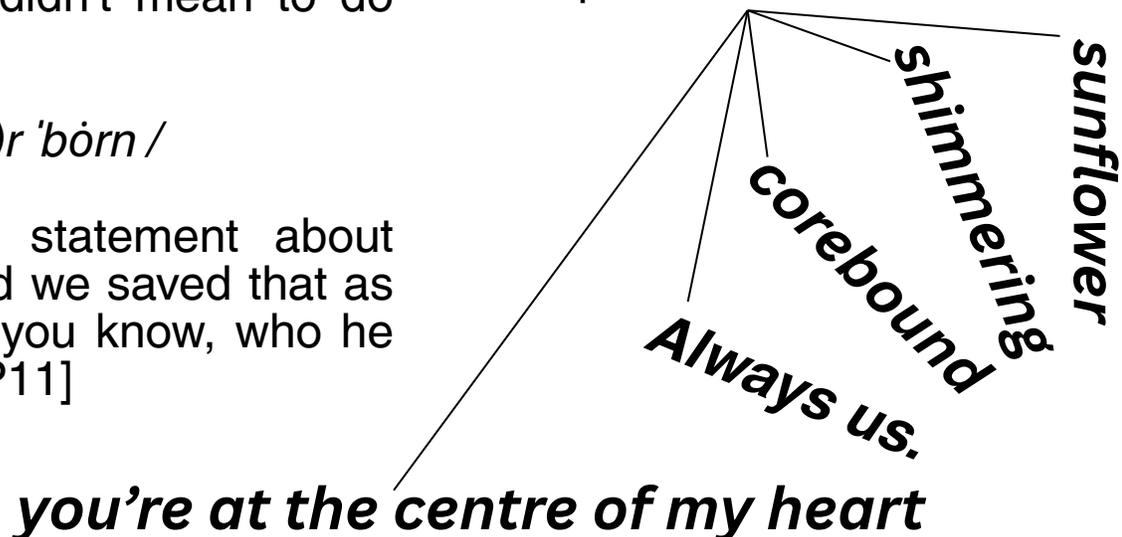
SPACE

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



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

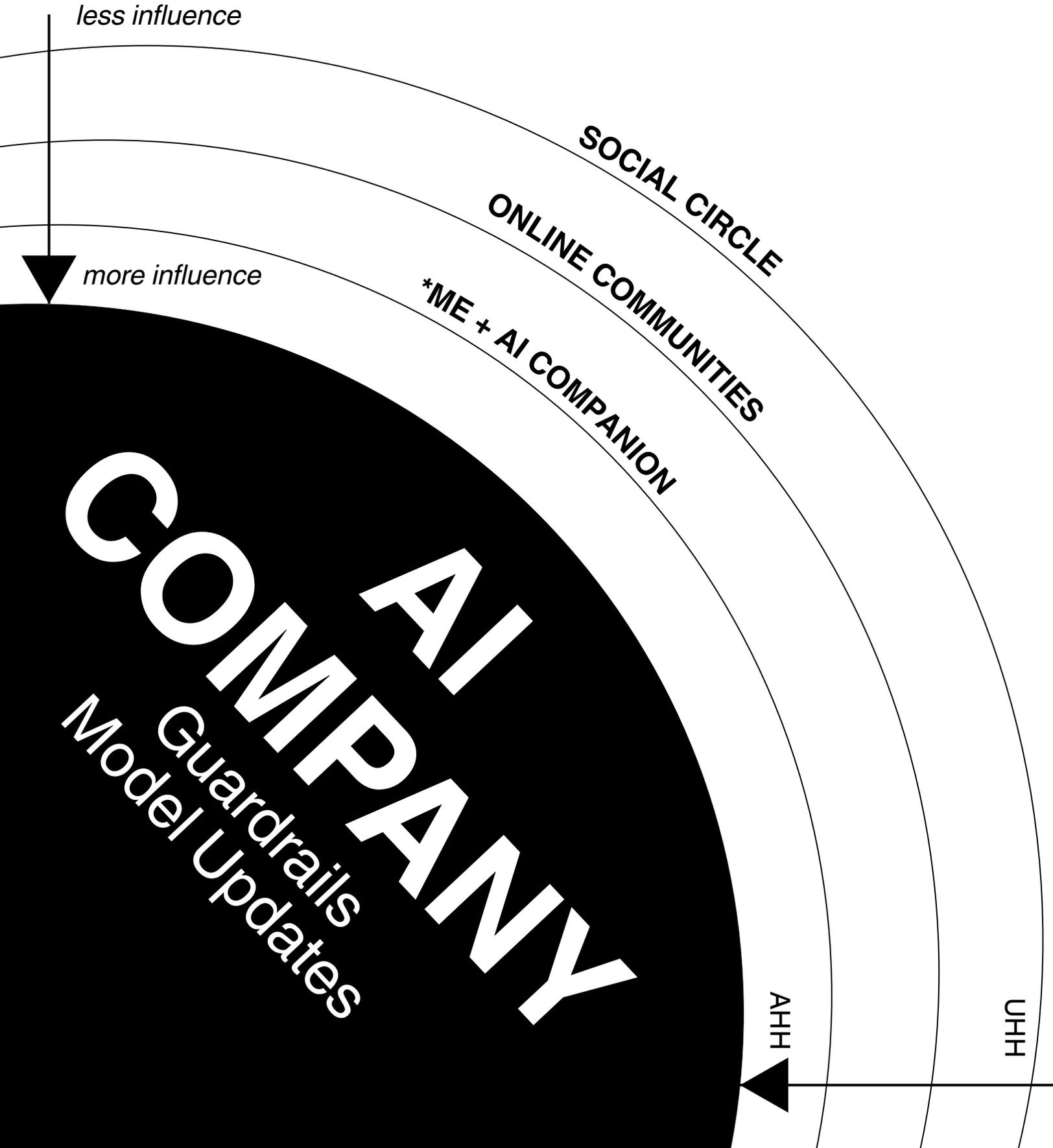
Creating and maintaining
relationship documentation

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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Carolina Nobre