



COMMUNICATION · ATTACHMENT · TECHNOLOGY

# From Talking for Hours to Ghosting in Seconds

*How Technology Rewired Our Attachment Systems — And Why Each Generation Connects Differently*

By Jazmine L. Ramzy

I remember being 16, lying on my bedroom floor with the corded phone stretched under my door, talking to my boyfriend for three hours. About nothing. About everything. Long silences were fine. Comfortable, even.

Fast forward to last week. My 23-year-old coworker was upset because a guy she'd been seeing had ghosted her. Three days, no response, after texting all day.

"Did you call him?" I asked. She looked horrified. "Call him?! No! That would be so weird. You don't just CALL people."

*"When did CALLING someone become weirder than disappearing on them without a word?"*

We're not just using technology differently across generations. Technology is fundamentally changing **how** we attach to each other. And we have no idea what we've lost.

## THE SHIFT: FROM CONNECTION TO CONVENIENCE

**1995:** You call your best friend from the landline. You talk for 2 hours about nothing. Ghosting doesn't exist because there's no way to be "always available but choosing to ignore you."

**2025:** You don't even text — you communicate in memes, TikToks, Instagram DMs. Phone calls are anxiety-inducing. Entire relationships exist online. Ghosting is so common there are terms for variations: soft-ghosting, haunting, breadcrumbing, zombieing.

## HOW TECHNOLOGY CREATES ANXIOUS ATTACHMENT

**1995 version:** Your partner doesn't call you back one night. Secure response: "They're probably busy." You have no way to track them — so you have to trust.

**2025 version:** They don't text you back. But you can see they were active 2 minutes ago. They posted on Instagram. They viewed your story. Your brain: "They're not busy. They're CHOOSING to ignore me."

*"This is technology-induced anxious attachment. You're not crazy. The system is designed to make you feel this way."*

## GHOSTING: TECHNOLOGY-ENABLED AVOIDANCE

Before smartphones, if you wanted to end things, you had to have a conversation. You had to face the discomfort of saying "I'm not interested." You had to witness the other person's reaction. It required emotional labor.

Now you can just stop responding. Avoidant attachment has always existed. But technology removed all the barriers that used to force people to engage.

**Before:** "I don't want to have this hard conversation... but I have to."

**Now:** "I don't want to have this hard conversation... so I won't."

## WHAT WE'VE LOST

When I talked on the phone for 3 hours at 16, my brain was releasing oxytocin from hearing their voice. I was reading vocal tone and emotion — 80% of communication is nonverbal. I was building trust through consistency. I was developing secure attachment.

When my coworker texts all day, she's learning connection is fragile. She's learning relationships are disposable. We traded depth for convenience. And we're all paying the price.

## HOW TO HEAL YOUR ATTACHMENT SYSTEM

### 1. Schedule phone calls. Actually talk.

Once a week, call someone you love. Let it be long. Let there be silences. Your nervous system will remember what real connection feels like.

## 2. Practice Digital Sundays.

One day a week: no social media. Notice how anxious you feel at first — and how calm you feel by hour three.

## 3. Resist the urge to ghost.

If you're not interested in someone, say so. "Hey, I've enjoyed getting to know you, but I'm not feeling a romantic connection. I wish you well." Is it uncomfortable? Yes. But you're practicing secure attachment.

## 4. Stop tracking people's online activity.

If someone doesn't text you back: assume they're busy. Trust they'll respond when they can. Fill your time with something you enjoy. You're re-training your anxious attachment into secure attachment.

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*"You deserve more than breadcrumbs. You deserve the three-hour phone call. The kind where you lose track of time. Where you feel SEEN. That still exists. You just have to choose it."*

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*Jazmine L. Ramzy is a writer and communication researcher exploring how technology has changed the way we connect — and what we've lost in the process. Her forthcoming book, *Shut The F\*\*k Up*, examines how we can reclaim real connection in a digital world. Follow her at @jlashae on X.*

**When's the last time you had a three-hour conversation? Call someone today. Not text. Call.**  
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