

Dating Advice: Why 'Ghosting' is the New Normal in the Dating Scene



By [Hope Ankney](#)

Most of us have been the victim of abandoned text messages, empty voicemail boxes, and the complete disappearance of someone we thought we had a great connection with over drinks. This leaves us with a haunted mind that tries to understand what we did wrong to cause someone to vanish from our lives. An experience that is more common in our [dating](#) lives than most of us think, the term “ghosting” (the act of withdrawing or ending a relationship suddenly and without explanation) has

become the new normal.

In this dating advice, find out why “ghosting” is so trendy right now in the dating scene.

Is ghosting a new trend because of the rise of technology and social media? The absence of communicating with others face-to-face? The desensitization of considering others' feelings due to impersonal interaction? Those are questions that have circulated around the term “ghosting” for a while now, in an effort to understand the epidemic that has created open wounds and confusion. It seems that the main culprit to “ghosting” in our dating lives is the lack of vulnerable communication we have, now. Many people don't know how to cope with having an honest conversation, so they'd rather disappear instead of confronting the other person directly about their feelings. Dr. Fran Walfish, a leading child, couple and family Psychotherapist in private practice in Beverly Hills, California, provides her opinion on why “ghosting” has become so popular in modern dating:

1. Technology: As Dr. Walfish explains, “We are currently living in an age where people judge dates based on what technology they have. They slide this under the guise of ‘ease’.” With how technology-dependent our society is, nowadays, it's much easier to contact people on whatever social media app or texting device we have available to us. She goes on to say that people have normalized texting to be a front-runner in how we communicate in relationships, which ends up causing much more misunderstanding, uncertainty, and distance between people. This results in “ghosting” being a common practice that hurts and confuses the message receiver.

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2. “Cookie Jarring”: This, as Dr. Walfish has coined, “is a dating term where you keep someone as a backup with no real intention of dating them. You use them as a possible escort for parties or group events so you don’t have to go alone, but you put them back in the cookie jar when you’re done.” This somewhat of a brutal way to put it, right? But, “cookie jarring” is actually a phenomenon that only further perpetuates “ghosting.” With millennials and Gen Z-ers being raised in an environment of selfish and narcissistic media, these daters lack the realization that their behavior could significantly impact another. So, when they’re using someone or treating them coldly, they often don’t see it as being rude or disrespectful.

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3. Peer Pressure: Young people seem to constantly worry about how their peers perceive them, especially on social media. Dr. Walfish details that “young adults seem more consumed with how they are viewed by their peers if they show up dateless, rather than building internal character by doing the right thing and treating others the way they want to be treated.” Not only that but sometimes friends persuade them to drop those they’re dating or seeing. We love to fit in, and it isn’t abnormal for us to do that by ‘ghosting’ someone that the peers we value are telling us to. Peer pressure is the culprit for many people disappearing on others, and the constant focus on social media can tell a person that they don’t need to be dating one person when there are so many potential partners out there.

4. Bottom Line: ‘Ghosting has become a phenomenon that, sadly, is here to stay. The dating scene has veered away from finding someone to build a relationship with, instead, focusing more on how easy and simple hooking-up is. This replacement has

caused a stunt in how we utilize our communication skills and function in healthy relationships. The [relationship advice](#) that Dr. Walfish gives on how to combat the ever-increasing, impersonal characteristics of modern dating is to stick to traditional dating roles. "Open, honest communication between two loving and solemnly committed partners is required to make all the types of role divisions in relationships work." And, if you aren't feeling the same connection that your date is, the best thing to say is what Dr. Walfish suggests: "You are a lovely person, but I feel like we are not the right match (or fit)." By doing this, you're at least not leaving someone in the dark, feeling abandoned and rejected without knowing exactly why.

[Dr. Fran Walfish](#) is a leading couples relationship and family psychologist in Beverly Hills, CA, as well as the author of the book [The Self-Aware Parent: Resolving Conflict and Building a Better Bond with Your Child](#). She also writes a weekly relationship and parenting Q&A that is published in the 'Beverly Hills Courier' newspaper and is a former co-star on WE TV's 'Sex Box.' You can find her on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [YouTube](#).