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WITH KEITH WALL

Here Today, Ghosted Tomorrow

When Someone Disappears from Your Life





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INTRODUCTION

Have You Been Ghosted?

Has someone in your life cut off all communication with you, abruptly and without explanation, leaving you feeling sad, abandoned, and perplexed?

When a person chooses to abandon your romantic relationship, friendship, or family connection without even bothering to tell you their intentions ... you've been ghosted.

Ghosting is a relatively recent term for an old problem made much more prevalent in the age of social media. For most people today, a good portion of communication is conducted online or via smartphones.

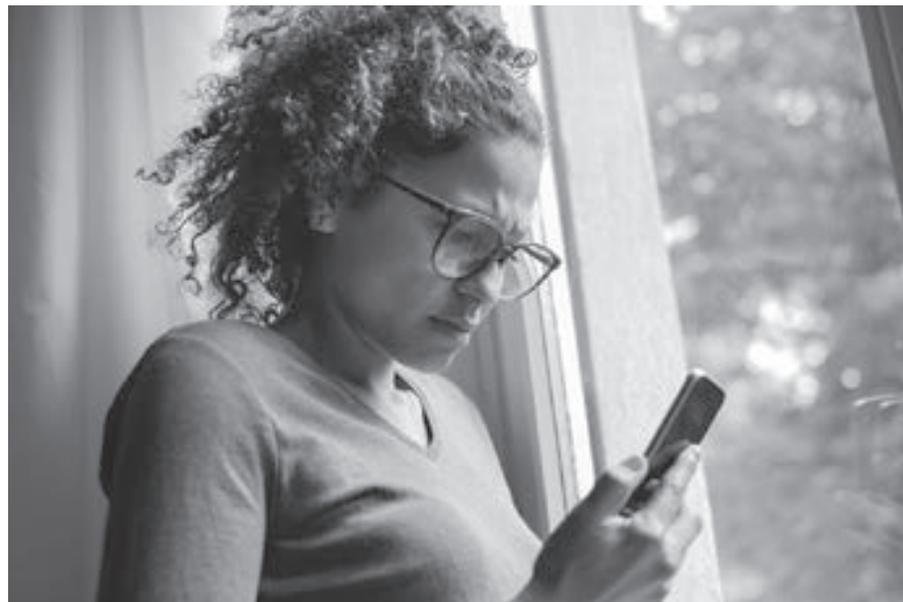
And while the digital technologies of the past thirty years have made life easier in many ways, they have also enabled surface-level interactions that are void of direct human contact. A sense of connection can result, but the

downside is that relationships can be easily abandoned without explanation.

Ghosting isn't limited just to social media, however—it can happen in families, friendships, work settings, churches or faith groups, and numerous other settings.

Amid the hurt and betrayal you feel after being ghosted, it's important to gain perspective on what happened and take practical steps toward healing.

Are you ready to renew your hope and confidence as you look forward to enjoying healthy relationships in the future? By the end of this book, you'll be well on your way. Let's get started.



| Definitions *and* Statistics

Here are two definitions of *ghosting* that provide context for the discussion in this book:

- From Merriam-Webster.com: “the act or practice of abruptly cutting off all contact with someone (such as a former romantic partner) usually without explanation by no longer accepting or responding to phone calls, instant messages, etc.”¹
- From *Psychology Today*: “Ghosting is abruptly ending communication with someone without explanation. The concept most often refers to romantic relationships but can also describe disappearances from friendships and the workplace.”²

You can see from these brief definitions that ghosting covers a wide range of situations. I can confirm that it does, because over the past months I talked with many people about this topic. You will read some of their stories in this chapter and throughout the book.

If you also have your own ghosting story, you’ve got plenty of company, because the experience is becoming more and more common. In the results of one study published in 2019, approximately 72 percent of the men and women surveyed reported they had been ghosted

in a romantic relationship, and 64 percent admitted to ghosting someone else.³

Ghosting in friendships may be even more common. More than a third of participants in another study reported they had ghosted a friend or had been ghosted by one.⁴

And not surprisingly, the majority of young people, who often utilize online dating, have experienced ghosting. One survey found that 78 percent of Millennials (ages 18–33) said they had been ghosted.⁵

Ghosting has also increased in the workplace and other business settings. In one survey, 40 percent of employers said it has become more common for job candidates to drop out of the interviewing process and cut off communication without explanation.⁶ On the flip side, 77 percent of job candidates who participated in a different survey reported they had been ghosted by a prospective employer.⁷

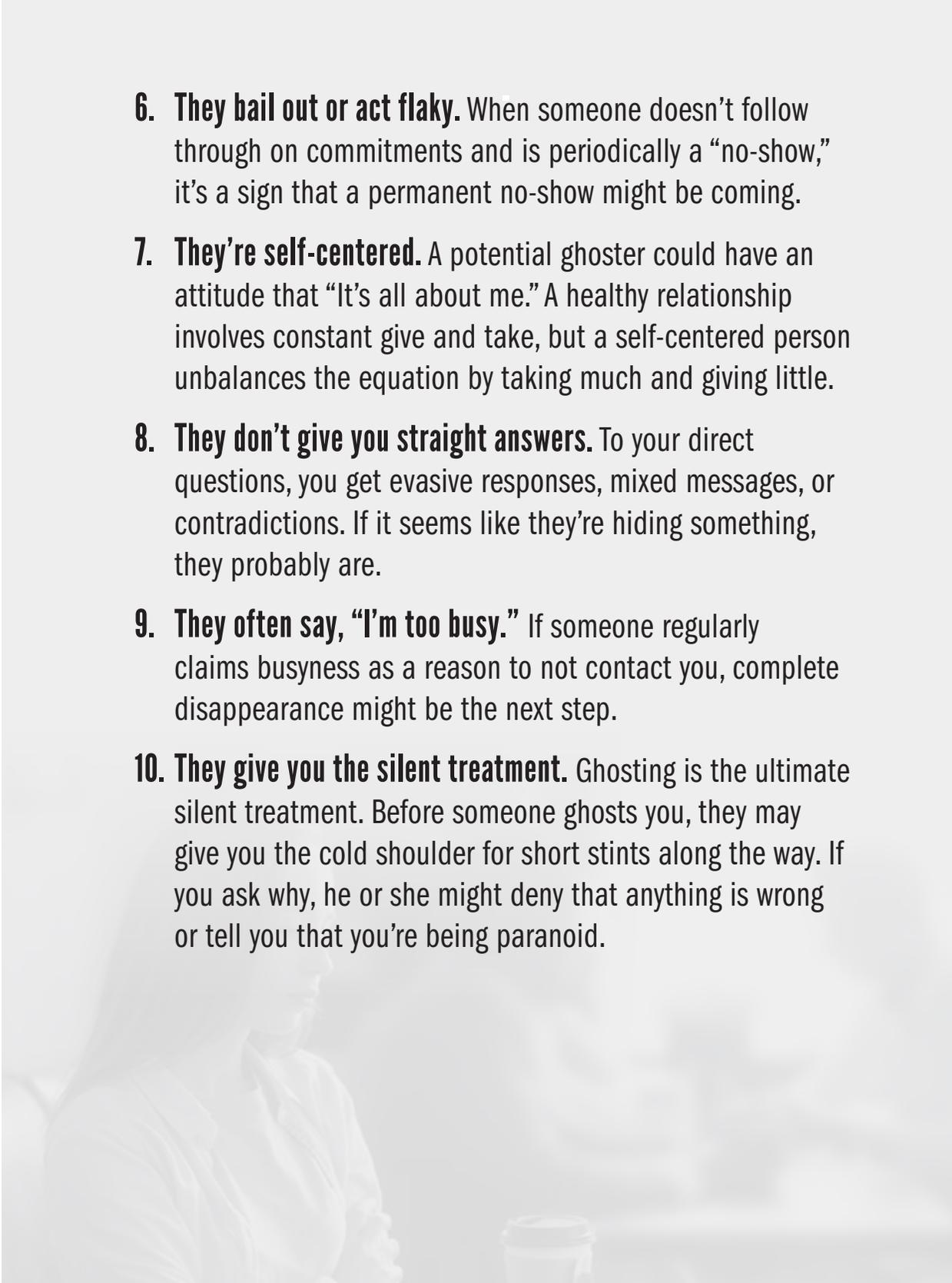
**GHOSTING HURTS,
AND IT CASTS A
SHADOW OF DOUBT
AND UNCERTAINTY
UPON YOUR SENSE
OF SELF-WORTH.**



TEN WARNING SIGNS SOMEONE MIGHT GHOST YOU

Although ghosting happens abruptly and silently, that doesn't mean there are no prior warning signs telling you it could happen. Following are ten red flags that indicate a friend or acquaintance could end up ghosting you.

- 1. They avoid conflict.** Sidestepping difficult situations and conversations is one of the top reasons people choose to disappear rather than deal with potentially painful circumstances.
- 2. They have extreme mood swings.** Some ghosters experience frequent emotional ups and downs and have difficulty regulating and stabilizing their moods.
- 3. They create distance but deny it.** You sense them pulling away emotionally, creating confusion for you. But when you ask about it, they claim not to know what you're talking about.
- 4. They minimize your problems or concerns.** You don't receive empathy or support for the issues you're dealing with and may even be told that you're overreacting.
- 5. They frequently withhold information, affection, and compliments.** Healthy people give these freely, but potential ghosters will cause you to feel shut out of knowing important facts and feelings about themselves.

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6. **They bail out or act flaky.** When someone doesn't follow through on commitments and is periodically a "no-show," it's a sign that a permanent no-show might be coming.
 7. **They're self-centered.** A potential ghoster could have an attitude that "It's all about me." A healthy relationship involves constant give and take, but a self-centered person unbalances the equation by taking much and giving little.
 8. **They don't give you straight answers.** To your direct questions, you get evasive responses, mixed messages, or contradictions. If it seems like they're hiding something, they probably are.
 9. **They often say, "I'm too busy."** If someone regularly claims busyness as a reason to not contact you, complete disappearance might be the next step.
 10. **They give you the silent treatment.** Ghosting is the ultimate silent treatment. Before someone ghosts you, they may give you the cold shoulder for short stints along the way. If you ask why, he or she might deny that anything is wrong or tell you that you're being paranoid.

HOW TO KNOW IF SOMEONE HAS A GOOD HEART

When you've been ghosted, you are justifiably wary about getting into another relationship with someone who would mistreat you. Stated more positively, *healthy relationships thrive between people who are honest, caring, and good-hearted.*

Since you don't have the ability to peer into the heart and soul of another person, consider observing outward expressions and looking for tangible evidence to assess someone's true character. Here's what to watch for:

- 1. Humor does not come at the expense of others.** A person's brand of humor says a lot about that individual. Is it cutting? Is it mean-spirited? A good-hearted person has a delightful sense of humor that lifts others up and doesn't tear them down.
- 2. Generosity is a way of life.** In big ways (such as donating to charity) and small ways (such as picking up a coffee tab), good-hearted people are glad to share their resources.
- 3. The person gives without expecting recognition.** In fact, good-hearted people often give of themselves anonymously, perfectly happy to go unnamed and unnoticed.
- 4. Everyone is treated with dignity.** Watch how this person treats the salesclerk, restaurant server, or Uber driver. A good-hearted person treats all people with honor and respect, regardless of their position.

5. **The person's words and actions match.** They live in a way that doesn't contradict views and beliefs they've expressed in the past. Integrity is key.
6. **Unselfishness prevails.** The unselfish person values your wishes and opinions, is not intent on getting his or her way, takes a genuine interest in your life, and is glad to serve you.
7. **Your relationship is all about win-win.** In other words, the good-hearted person recognizes that you both have worthy needs and desires—and makes a way for both to be satisfied. There's no need for either of you to feel like you've compromised or lost out in any way.
8. **The person gets angry for the right reasons.** Allowing trivial matters to evoke anger is a sign that someone is impatient and ill-tempered. But getting angry at instances of injustice or inequality demonstrates passion aimed at the right target.
9. **The person consistently lives out the word trustworthy.** Trustworthy people keep their word, following through on promises made. They know that every investment they make in the relationship will pay dividends.
10. **He or she chooses to see good in the world.** Sure, daunting problems confront everyone on a daily basis. But there are far more positives than negatives—and someone with a good heart dwells on what's going right rather than what's going wrong.

| Deepen Your Faith

This is not a spiritual cliché—it is an essential component of healing from heartache. That’s because faith is forged in the fires that test what you believe.

You form your *beliefs* in your mind as you learn new things and become convinced of new concepts. But *faith* is different. It involves acting on these newly formed

beliefs, and it comes from a deeper place within your heart and soul.

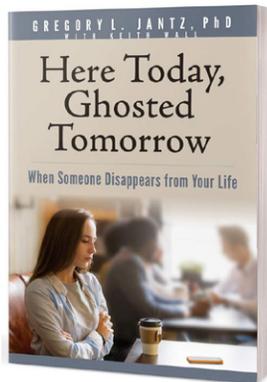
The writer C. S. Lewis once said, “Faith ... is the art of holding on to things your reason has once accepted, in spite of your changing moods.”¹⁸ In other words, believing something on intellectual grounds only gets you so far. Faith is what you need when those beliefs are put to the *test*.

WHEN SOMEONE
HAS ABANDONED
YOU AND BROKEN
YOUR TRUST, FAITH
DRIVES YOU TO
GOD, WHO WILL
NEVER LEAVE YOU
OR FORSAKE YOU.



When someone has abandoned you and broken your trust, faith drives you to God. In contrast to your ghoster, he will *never* abandon you or forsake you. He is completely

trustworthy. You can trust him with such wholehearted confidence that it’s safe to put your very life in his hands.



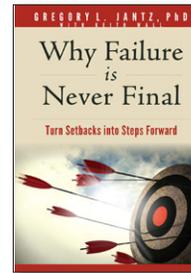
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Here Today, Ghosted Tomorrow

Has someone in your life cut off all communication with you, abruptly and without explanation, leaving you feeling hurt, abandoned, and perplexed? Without a word, they just stopped responding to your phone calls or texts? Maybe you've been blocked on social media or no longer see them at church or the office? Ghosting hurts, and it casts a showdown of doubt and uncertainty upon your sense of self-worth. But there's hope in resilience and healing.

Get the practical tools, psychology, and hope to deal with ghosting and the tumultuous emotions that follow in this easy-to-read handbook by Dr. Gregory Jantz!

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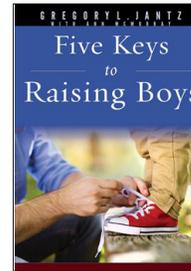


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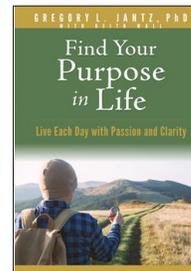


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