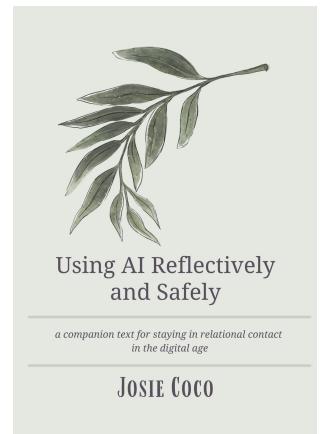


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW BOOK EXPLORES WHY AI CAN FEEL EMOTIONALLY MEANINGFUL

Australian Gestalt psychotherapist offers a grounded guide to emotional reflection with AI, without mistaking it for therapy or human relationship.



MALENY, QUEENSLAND — Conversational AI is becoming a place where people take questions about their emotions, relationships and inner lives. A new book by Australian Gestalt psychotherapist Josie Coco asks what people need to understand when AI language feels personal, empathic and emotionally attuned.

Using AI Reflectively and Safely: A Companion Text for Staying in Relational Contact in the Digital Age explores why an interaction with AI can feel genuinely meaningful, what people bring from their attachment histories and relational experiences, and how to use the technology without losing discernment, embodied experience or human connection.

Coco's position is neither enthusiastic promotion nor alarmism. AI may help someone find words for a difficult experience, notice a pattern, prepare for a therapy session or create space between an emotional reaction and an impulsive response. It can also sound more certain, or more relationally understanding than its actual capacities justify.

"AI can sometimes help us slow down, find language and become curious about our experience. But emotionally convincing language is not the same as an embodied, accountable human relationship. We need to be able to recognise both the usefulness and the limits."

■ Josie Coco

The book includes a practical AI Reliability Framework that helps readers distinguish grounded knowledge from informed inference, exploratory pattern recognition, language completion and the influence of their own framing. It also considers warning signs that reflective use may be becoming dependency, avoidance or a substitute for human connection.

The book grew from Coco's experience of hearing clients describe their interactions with AI, her own experimentation with it as a reflective tool, and her clinical understanding of attachment, trauma and the nervous system.

Using AI Reflectively and Safely was published in paperback on 3 September 2026 and is available for AUD \$19.99. The ebook will be published on 1 October 2026. Digital and paperback review copies are available on request

ABOUT JOSIE COCO

Josie Coco is a Gestalt psychotherapist, author and educator based in the Sunshine Coast hinterland in Queensland. Her professional background spans nearly three decades in health, and she completed a master's degree in Gestalt psychotherapy in 2021. Her work is informed by relational psychotherapy, attachment theory, trauma-informed practice and nervous-system awareness.

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BOOK INFORMATION

josiecoco.com/books/using-ai-reflectively-and-safely