

Image Anchoring, or Past Anchoring

Outside the world of revenge filming, there is also image-past-anchoring:

Though friends may bring up memories and this is normal, sometimes this can be a form of abuse, called Image Anchoring or Past Anchoring.

1. Image anchoring / past anchoring

They repeatedly anchor you to an **old version of yourself** rather than allowing your current identity to stand.

- Keeps you “frozen” in a narrative you’ve outgrown
- Undermines growth, change, or progress
- Often shows up when someone feels unsettled by your evolution

This is subtle, but powerful.

2. Social undermining (covert)

If the photos are:

- Unflattering
- Brought up in front of others
- Repeated despite discomfort

...it fits **covert social undermining**.

This isn’t playful teasing. It’s about:

- Lowering your social standing
- Re-establishing hierarchy
- Reclaiming a sense of control

3. Boundary testing

If you haven’t clearly objected yet, this can be:

- A test to see what you’ll tolerate
- A probe for dominance or permission

People who respect you **stop immediately** once a boundary is clear.

4. Nostalgia misuse (best-case scenario)

In the *least harmful* interpretation, they may be:

- Stuck in the past
- Clumsy about nostalgia
- Unaware it doesn't feel good to you

But this explanation only applies **once or twice**, not repeatedly.

What it is *not*

- It is **not supportive behavior**
- It is **not neutral** if it continues
- It is **not harmless** if it makes you feel diminished

Your discomfort is valid data.

Why people do this

Common motivations include:

- Difficulty accepting your growth
- Insecurity or comparison
- Desire to reassert familiarity or control
- Unconscious jealousy
- Social anxiety masked as “joking”

None require malicious intent—but **impact matters more than intent**.

How to respond (clean, calm, powerful)

Choose **one sentence** and repeat if needed:

- “*I don’t like old photos being shared. Please stop.*”
- “*That’s not how I see myself anymore.*”
- “*Let’s keep things current.*”
- “*I’m not comfortable with that.*”

No explanation. No apology. No softening.

If they continue after that, the behavior moves from *awkward* to **disrespectful**.

The quiet truth

People who truly like you:

- Want you seen at your best
- Adjust when you set boundaries
- Don't need to keep you small to feel connected

You're allowed to outgrow old images—of yourself **and** of who gets access to you.