

Opinion: The different meanings of love

By Kim Kilgore

According to psychologist Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, it is essential for people to feel love and belonging to reach optimal health and wellness. Valentine's Day, whether you celebrate the holiday or not, reminds us of love. The word "love" can be confusing and have different meanings for everyone.



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Gary Chapman, the author of "The Five Love Languages", writes that "some of my encounters with couples through the years that brought me to realize that what makes one person feel loved does not necessarily make another person feel loved. For a number of years, I have been helping couples in the counseling office discover what their spouse desired in order to feel loved. Eventually, I began to see a pattern in their responses. [...] Their answers fell into five categories. I later called them the five love languages."

So what is your love language? Below is a brief explanation of the five love languages. Take a few minutes and contemplate how you express love and how you like to be loved.

- Words of Affirmation Language: Love is expressed by simply telling one another positive aspects about each

other. For example, words of affirmation can include statements such as, "You are a beautiful person," and "You are my best friend."

- **Quality Time Language:** Couples share their love for one another by spending quality time together. This aspect requires the individuals to focus their attention on one another in ways such as open communication, both listening and speaking, and spending time with one another doing activities that are enjoyed by both individuals.
- **Receiving Gifts Language:** Another language of love that individuals can share is the concept of receiving gifts. Some individuals see the act of providing one another with material objects, regardless of their cost, as an act of love. Without these acts of giving and receiving individuals who use this type of love language will feel deprived in their relationship.
- **Acts of Service Language:** Individuals who express love via the acts of service language are prone to seeing such tasks, like chores and various household tasks, as acts of love. In order for two individuals to experience the acts of service language together, both individuals need to be willing to step outside of their typical household routines and perform one another's tasks for the sole purpose of being kind to one another.
- **Physical Touch Language:** The physical touch language is simply the idea that individuals feel loved and comforted by being in close physical contact with one another in various ways, such as holding hands, hugging, kissing and sexual intercourse. Physical touch between couples can vary depending upon what each individual in the relationship is comfortable with.

You may notice you like to give and receive love in different ways. This Valentine's Day consider investing some energy into giving and receiving love or developing a deeper understanding of your loved ones in order to increase your well-being and

satisfaction within your relationships. If you are interested in finding out more about your love language, take a free assessment on Chapman's **website**.

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