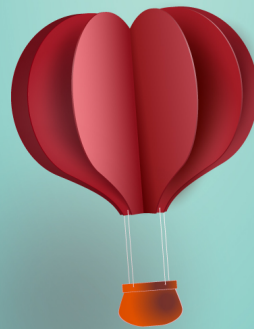


SUMMARY

THE 5 LOVE LANGUAGES

Gary Chapman



Summary of «The Five Love Languages» by Gary Chapman

Written by Lea Schullery

A simple guide for making love last by learning how to speak your partner's love languages.

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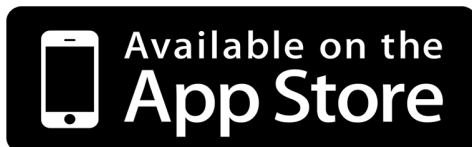


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Introduction

Falling in love is magical and can be described as euphoric and exciting, but how do you keep the love alive? That's the hard part. As your relationship progresses, you and your partner will go through different seasons of life. The challenge is finding ways to stay in love despite the changes you will inevitably experience. Luckily, Dr. Gary Chapman has unlocked the key to successful marriages and lays out why determining your love language is critical in any marriage. Whether your relationship is flourishing or failing, it's important to communicate how you wish to receive love and how your partner wants you to show love. When you speak different languages, it becomes harder to stay in love and fulfill each other's emotional needs. Determine if your love language is words of affirmation, quality time, receiving gifts, acts of service, or physical touch and begin working towards keeping you and your partner's love alive and ensure that it lasts a lifetime.

What Happens to Love After The Wedding?

Have you ever wondered what happens to love after the wedding? This is a common question people ask marriage expert, Gary Chapman; however, Chapman states that the answer is anything but simple. Instead, Chapman explains that just how people speak different languages, such as English or Mandarin, they also speak different love languages.

Think about love language like the language you speak. Say you speak English and your partner speaks Mandarin, how will you communicate? To speak with one another on a profound level, you will need to learn the other language as well. This holds true when it comes to love languages as well, but unlike learning another language, learning someone's love language is a bit more ambiguous and requires just a little more effort.

The word itself, "love," is a confusing term. We use it all the time to describe the foods we enjoy like tacos and ice cream, as well as activities we partake in like jogging or dancing. But what does love mean to you? To answer this question, Chapman suggests that you look back to your childhood. Child psychologists have proven that children have emotional needs to be loved and appreciated, and the consequences of those needs being unmet can result in emotional instability. This emotional instability can lead to acts against their parents and even their partners later in life.

Imagine your emotional needs as a love tank similar to the fuel tank in your car. Just like your car can't function without fuel, you cannot function without love. If you keep your love tank full, your "car" runs smoothly, but if you let the love run out, you may begin to behave in self-destructive ways. Keeping your tank full is essential for any marriage and learning your partner's love language has the power to radically change their behavior and your relationship.

What Happens When We Fall In Love?

So what's the secret to making a marriage last? Even with the many experts, books, and research about marriage, couples continue to struggle with making their love last. Perhaps the reason couples don't work out is that they don't understand how relationships go through different phases. For instance, the first phase a new couple experiences is the *attraction phase* and is categorized by a feeling of euphoria.

During this period, we feel so in love and believe that it will last forever. We want to be with one another day and night, and we can't possibly imagine that anything could ever come between us. This phase makes us see our world with rose-tinted glasses and clouds our judgment. But how long does this phase last? Psychologist Dorothy Tennov suggests that this romantic obsession cannot be a long term feeling and only lasts about two years. It can last more than two years if the relationship is secretive; however, once this phase wears off, we often come back down to earth and start to see the negative parts of our partner that we once ignored.

So how do you make love work after this phase? The truth is, we need to stop obsessing over the idea of being "in love." Instead, real love fades and we must work hard to keep our relationships afloat. To do this, it's not about feeling "in love" but rather about feeling genuinely loved by another person. In other words, we need to feel worthy of love and work on emotional communication that can sustain the relationship. It's time to adopt a new way of thinking, define your expectations from your partner, and lay the groundwork for building a successful relationship.

Words of Affirmation

How do you feel when you receive a compliment? You probably feel good and it makes your day a bit better, right? Well, for some people they need to hear these compliments from their partner. Their love language is words of affirmation and they simply desire to hear positive words of reinforcement from their partner. It could be a small compliment or even a simple thank you for something that you did.

So how can you speak this language?

Begin with encouraging words. By encouraging your partner you begin to inspire courage. So when you detect that your partner wants to try something new, you can use encouraging words to support them and push them in the direction they want to go. It's important to keep your partner's interests at the forefront when encouraging your partner to do something *they* want to do. Your words need to come from a place of genuine empathy and support.

For instance, if you want your partner to get a higher paying job, your encouraging words might have the opposite effect. Your words can become *discouraging* if they don't want to make the change too. However, encouraging them to foster a new skill or talent is a great time to use words of affirmation to show your support for your partner.

Next, use kind words even when you are harboring feelings of resentment and living in the past. It's useless to resent your partner for things that have happened in the past, instead, Chapman suggests that you leave failures behind and live in the present. Forgive your partner and create a positive environment in which you share kind words, even for completing small tasks like washing the dishes and beginning a load of laundry.

The use of humble words is important in a relationship as well. You should avoid demanding things from your spouse, otherwise, your relationship

could turn into a parent-child dynamic versus a partnership. Instead, you should request something from your spouse which allows them to feel affirmed and become generous in return. For instance, a client of Chapman's once walked into his office and complained about how her husband still hadn't painted their bedroom even after nine months of telling him to do it! Chapman suggested that instead of demanding him to paint the bedroom, try complimenting him every time he did something she liked. While skeptical at first, his client tried this technique. What happened? Well, just three weeks later her husband painted the bedroom. The trick is to focus on complimenting your partner versus criticizing them.

Quality Time

In today's world, we are busier than ever. We divide our time between work, friends, family, and self-care. We lead busy lives and quality time has become a precious commodity. When we get home after a long day's work, we might spend our evenings eating dinner, putting the kids to bed, and watching TV. But Chapman suggests that sitting on the couch together watching TV is not quality time spent together. So what's the key to spending quality time with one another? Undivided attention.

With countless distractions from our smart devices, it can be hard to spend time without interruption. Quality time is about spending time together and focusing your attention on your spouse, not simply being in the same room with each other. Instead, Chapman suggests that the secret to quality time is *focused attention*. You don't need to be gazing into the other person's eyes nonstop, but you do need to be giving your partner your full attention. For instance, you can go on a date, go for a walk, or even prepare a meal together. This kind of quality time allows you to share love, respect, and appreciation for one another.

Take Emily and Jeff who spend quality time at the bookstore. While Emily loves searching the shelves for her next read, Jeff helps her even though he doesn't share the same appreciation for literature. Additionally, the two have created a compromise that works. Emily has learned to keep her time searching for books to a minimum when she sees Jeff's irritation begin to arise. Jeff thanks Emily for not taking too long by paying for her books.

Quality time can also be a simple conversation. Simply exchanging words is not enough, instead, couples who have quality conversations maintain eye contact while their spouse is talking, actively listen, pay attention to how their spouse is feeling, and make a point to not interrupt. You should also identify the personality type of your partner. Perhaps you fall into the "dead sea" category in which you listen carefully but don't participate in the conversation. Or perhaps you are the "babbling brook" who needs to pour

their thoughts through a constant stream of words. Often, these extreme personalities marry one another; however, these types of people become exhausted and irritated when the euphoria of the relationship wears off. If your relationship follows this pattern, Chapman suggests that you maintain a “minimum daily requirement” of sharing three things per day with your partner to satisfy both parties.

Receiving Gifts

People who love to receive gifts may seem materialistic, but this is not necessarily true. Receiving gifts has been a part of culture since the Mayans of long ago and is simply a way to put your love into something you can see. Gifts can come in many forms whether they cost a lot, cost nothing at all, are bought from the store, or even made by hand. In fact, the gift itself doesn't quite matter, instead, it's the act of giving that matters most.

For instance, if your spouse speaks the language of gifts, every gift you give them will resonate as a physical representation of your love. Monetary value isn't quite important, instead, the process of thinking of a gift, going out to buy or make it, and then finally presenting the gift is what makes the person feel special and loved.

Let's take a look at Doug and Kate. You see, Doug used to buy gifts for Kate until they got married and he stopped. Kate's love language was receiving gifts, so when the gifts stopped, Kate began to feel emotionally abandoned. When asked why he stopped giving gifts, Doug simply explained that it cost too much money. Since monetary value doesn't matter, Doug began to shower Kate with gifts of affection and repaired the relationship. Doug learned how to speak Kate's love language and she felt appreciated and loved once again.

Lastly, if your partner's love language is receiving gifts, think of those gifts as small investments in your relationship. This will change the way you perceive the costs of gifts. Remember, a gift can be something as small as picking up your spouses' favorite treat from the grocery store on the way home. However, Chapman also suggests that you give gifts regularly. Whether it's every day or every week, it needs to stay consistent for your relationship to benefit from gift-giving.

Acts of Service

Perhaps your partner consistently asks you to do the dishes, fold the clothes, or fill up the car with fuel. If so, your partner's love language is probably acts of service. Completing acts of service means doing things for your spouse that doesn't require much time, but they have the power to make a huge positive impact on your marriage.

We can take a close look at a couple who both spoke the language of acts of service but continually failed to make each other happy. The issue wasn't that they weren't speaking different languages, but that they were speaking different dialects. In other words, the couple was doing many things for one another, just not the things the other person found most important. To resolve the issue, the couple wrote down the things they thought were most important to them so they could begin speaking the same language again.

Chapman notices a few observations about the story of this couple, but one of the most important observations is that acts of service must be chosen, not forced. When couples begin to make demands of one another, they begin their path to failure. Additionally, when determining acts of service, you may need to adjust your beliefs of traditional gender roles. For example, doing chores around the house and raising kids isn't just tasks for women. Instead, you need to determine one another's responsibilities and what makes one another happy regardless of stereotypical gender roles.

Take the example of Mark who was raised in a family where his father believed household chores and tasks like changing diapers were meant for women. Despite Mark's upbringing, Mark understood that doing chores around the house was important to keep his wife, Mary, happy. Therefore, he abandoned the gender stereotypes of his childhood which allowed Mary to feel loved and respected in return.

Physical Touch

Research proves the importance of physical touch when studying babies who were often held and kissed versus those who weren't. Those who experienced more physical touch went on to lead healthier emotional lives and many crave that same physical touch later in life from their partner. If your partner's love language is physical touch, it can be easy to communicate through simple acts like kisses and holding hands or even through acts like sexual intercourse. Or it could be communicated through more complex acts like giving a massage that requires an investment of time. At the end of the day, learning how your partner wants to receive physical touch is important in speaking their language.

For instance, take the example of Jocelyn Green who married a military man who spent time overseas. Since her partner was away, Jocelyn couldn't receive physical touches that made her feel loved and appreciated. Despite his absence, Jocelyn found a way to feel close to her spouse by wearing his clothes or sending pictures to him. So even in the absence of one another, it's important to find ways to connect and speak each other's language.

Many couples find that exploring one another and communicating the ways they feel pleasure is essential for speaking the language of physical touch. In fact, both partners need to communicate how they want to be touched and take the time to satisfy each other's needs. It's important to ask for feedback as well, remember, you are learning to speak their language. So whether it's simply holding hands on the couch or kissing your spouse hello or goodbye, showing your love daily doesn't have to require much effort.

Determining Your Love Language

Now that you've discovered the five primary love languages, how can you tell which one fits you? Chapman suggests asking yourself, "What do you desire most of all?" However, the answer to this question might not be an easy one, luckily, there are other ways to determine which love language speaks to you most.

First, ask yourself what it is that you request most from your spouse. The things you request most are likely the things that fulfill you emotionally. What makes you feel good? Perhaps it's when your spouse cooks you a meal, does the dishes, or even buys you a gift. Once you decide what makes you feel good, you can begin to determine your primary love language.

Next, you should ask yourself what your spouse does that hurts you the most. Determining how your spouse causes you pain can act as a guide in finding out your love language. Once you've answered these questions, you may find that you respond to one or more of these languages. Most people will have more than one love language, just like many people are bilingual, you can certainly be bilingual in love too. This simply means that your spouse has more ways to communicate love with you.

Not only should you think about how your past romantic relationships have failed to love you, but you should also think back to your childhood to determine why you feel love the way you do. For instance, Ella's love language is receiving gifts. She recalls how she spent her Christmas morning opening gifts from her brother who found random objects around the house to give her. He failed to take the time to find gifts for the people he loved and Ella recalled how this made her feel unappreciated and unloved. Because of this experience, Ella realizes how important it is for her to receive gifts.

Once you've determined your primary love language, rank the other four in order of importance. You should have your spouse do the same and

compare your answers. By communicating your love languages, you and your spouse can work on filling each other's love tanks. Chapman suggests that three times a week for three weeks, you and your partner sit down and discuss how full your love tank is and what you can do to help fill it. After all, communication is key and is at the forefront of every successful marriage.

Final Summary

When two people get married, their love changes. No longer do they feel the passion and euphoria they once did, but that doesn't mean that a relationship should end. Every relationship goes through the stage where reality sets in and each partner must determine if they are willing to go the distance. Each person must also realize that going the distance takes time, effort, and lots of communication. Marriage is hard work, but learning one another's love languages can make it easier and provide you with a guide on how to show your partner love. Whether it's speaking words of affirmation, spending quality time with one another, receiving gifts, engaging in physical touch, or completing acts of service, you can better understand how to communicate with your partner and speak each other's love language. The purpose is to keep your love tanks filled and communicating with one another when that tank feels empty. By learning your love languages, you can work to keep your tanks filled and have an emotionally fulfilling relationship that runs smoothly forever.



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