

Seasonal Seasonings

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What Does Love Got To Do With It?

In 1964, Murray Schisgal scored a Broadway hit with his farce called LUV. I directed that comedy years later. I loved it. In an interview, Schisgal was asked why he spelled the title L-U-V which may be the first time that spelling was ever used. He replied, "The emotion of love has been perverted and misused to such an extent that it can only be defined by using another word." He answered, "L-u-v is the perversion of l-o-v-e."

The use of the word love has spiraled out of control, and Schisgal recognized that almost fifty years ago. We love french fries; we love purple; we love movies; we love the Ravens; we love school; we love horror movies; we love texting, and on and on and on.

It's ironic that Schisgal's definition of love used in the play is the best concrete definition of an abstract word I've ever heard. People say "love" can't be defined. What do you think of this definition? "Love is a gradual development based on physical attraction, complimentary careers, and simple social similarities." I love it.

According to my communications textbook by DeVito (2011), there are six types of love, but first: below is a short true-false test that may answer "What Kind of Lover Are You?" Do you believe the statement to be a generally accurate representation of your attitudes about love or not?

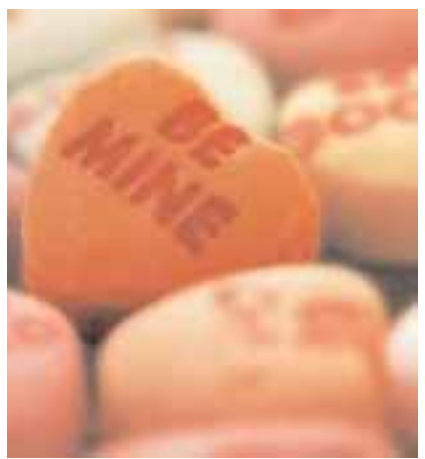


1. My lover and I have the right physical "chemistry" between us.
2. My lover and I really understand each other.
3. When my lover gets too dependent on me, I want to back off a little.
4. I believe what my lover doesn't know about me won't hurt him/her.
5. I expect to always be friends with my lover.
6. Our love is a really deep friendship, not a mysterious, mystical emotion.
7. An important factor in choosing my lover was whether he/she would be a good parent.
8. Choosing my lover, I believed it was best to love someone with a similar background.
9. When my lover doesn't pay attention to me, I feel sick all over.
10. I can't relax if I suspect that my lover is with someone else.
11. I would suffer myself rather than let my lover suffer.
12. When my lover gets mad at me, I still love him/her fully and unconditionally.

How'd you do? This scale by Hendrick and Hendrick (1990), is based on the work by Lee (1976). This scale is designed to enable you to identify your own beliefs about love. The statements

above relate to the six types of love. Here they are:

Eros love seeks beauty and sensuality and focuses on physical attractiveness, sometimes to the exclusion of qualities that others might consider more important. The erotic lover often feels unfulfilled.



Ludic love seeks entertainment and excitement and sees love as fun, a game. When the partner is no longer interesting enough, it's time to change.

Storge love is a peaceful and tranquil love. It's a gradual process of unfolding thoughts and feelings and is sometimes difficult to distinguish from friendship.

Pragma love is practical and traditional and seeks compatibility and a relationship in which important needs and desires will be satisfied. The pragma lover relies not so much on feelings as on logic.

Manic love is an obsessive love that needs to give and receive attention and affection. When an expression of increased commitment is not returned, reactions such as depression, jealousy, and self-doubt can lead to extreme lows.

Agapic love is compassionate and selfless. Jesus, Buddha, and Gandhi practiced and preached this unqualified love--a love that is offered without concern for personal reward or gain and without any expectation that love will be reciprocated.



So, if you look back at the 12 true-false statements, the first two are characteristic of eros love; the next two of ludic love and so forth. Like friendships, romantic partners come in different styles as well.

Valentine's Day on Thursday means it's a Valentine's Day weekend. Seize the opportunity. I hope each and every one of you can take a few minutes out of your busy lifestyle to show and tell the people that you really care about how important they are in your life. Last year, I suggested giving the big three: a thoughtful card, a nice traditional gift like flowers or candy, and an intimate dinner at the appropriate restaurant. And a bonus, don't forget the "something special". It doesn't have to be expensive, it just has to be from the heart. This is the perfect time for you to practice random acts of kindness. Honored poet, Nikki Giovanni reminds us that "We love because it's the only true adventure."