

5 Love Languages: Gary Chapman

Chapter 1 – What Happens to Love After the Wedding?

- Romantic “euphoric” love while dating and first married only lasts a short time – 2 years on average. Then love becomes work to keep it alive as we start seeing the “quirks” of the other person that were “endearing” before.
- One key reason for the love to fade is that people speak different love languages (ie similar to English vs Chinese languages). And if you don’t learn your spouse’s language, including dialects, your attempts at loving may come up empty.
- Your Turn
 - How does your spouse respond when you try to show affection?

Chapter 2 – Keeping the Love Tank Full

- Need to feel loved is a primary human emotional need.
- Emotional tank or “love tank” waiting to be filled.
- Keeping the emotional love tank full is as important as maintaining the proper oil level in an automobile.
- 2 ingredients to successful healthy long term marriage are Love and Appreciation.
- Whatever the quality of your relationship is now, it can always be better.
- Your Turn
 - How full is your love tank? (scale 1-10)

Chapter 3 - Falling in Love

- The euphoric “in-love” stage only lasts about 24 months, when people would do anything to make their partners happy.
- Then reality begins to separate them and they fall “out of love”.
- Options chosen then are:
 - Resign yourself to a life of misery (earlier generations)
 - Jump ship and try again (current generation)
 - 50+ % divorce rate first marriage
 - Higher divorce rate second marriage (75+)
 - Higher still divorce rate 3rd marriage (93+ Note %s from other studies)
 - **NEW & BETTER OPTION – Pursue “REAL love” vs the temporary “IN love” emotion.** A love that unites reason and emotion. It involves an act of the will and requires discipline, and it recognizes the need for personal growth. A love that grows out of reason and choice, not instinct.

- When your spouse’s emotional love tank is full and he feels secure in your love, the whole world looks bright and your spouse will move out to reach his highest potential in life.
- How do you keep their love tank full – speak their love language! What one person feels loved by does not equal the next person.
- Your Turn
 - Can you pinpoint a time in your marriage when “reality” set in? How did this affect your relationship, for better or worse?

Chapter 4 – Love Language #1 – Words of Affirmation

- Verbal compliments and affirming words are far greater motivators for spouse to reciprocate and do something you’d like, than are nagging words.
- Focus on what we are saying.
- Dialects
 - Verbal compliments:
 - I really appreciate you running to the store for me when I had to finish that project
 - Encouraging words:
 - Requires empathy and seeing the world from your spouse perspective
 - You are a great writer.... You have to submit this to some magazines.
 - Kind words:
 - Use kind tone of voice (vs snarling or sarcastic)
 - I would be delighted to wash the dishes tonight (say in loving tone to reflect your love for the person, even if it’s not your first desire).
 - A soft answer turns away anger.
 - Love doesn’t keep score of wrongs. We cannot erase the past. We can only confess it and agree that it is wrong. We can ask for forgiveness and try to act differently in the future.
 - Forgiveness is not a feeling; it is a commitment. It is a choice to show mercy, not to hold the offense up against the offender. It is an expression of LOVE.
 - Humble words:
 - Love makes requests, not demands. We cannot get emotional love by way of demand.
 - “Could you make that good pasta one of these nights?” Is more effective than “Can’t we ever have a decent meal around here.”
- Notebooks and More
 - If words of affirmation is not your primary love language and it is your spouse and you need help, keep a notebook and record words of affirmation that you read or hear during days.
 - Bonus, say something positive about your spouse in front of others

- Practise giving verbal appreciation and suspending complaints.
- Practise accepting compliments – Thank you for saying that.
- Your Turn
 - What would you most like to hear your spouse say to you?

Chapter 5 – Love Language #2 - Quality Time

- Focused Attention
 - Giving someone your undivided attention (not sitting on couch watching tv together!)
 - Putting cell phone away when talking
 - Spend time together in common activity (NOTE Men's #2 Need – recreational companionship – from His Needs, Her Needs book – Willard Harley Jr.)
- Dialects
 - Quality Conversation
 - Focus on what we are hearing. Genuine desire to understand your thoughts, feelings and desires.
 - They want compassion and sympathy, not advice (unless specifically requested)
 - Tips:
 - Maintain eye contact when spouse talking
 - Don't multi task when spouse talking
 - Listen for feelings and what emotion spouse is experiencing. Is it sounds to me like you are feeling disappointed because I forgot _____
 - Observe body language
 - Refuse to interrupt
 - Learning to Talk – revealing yourself.
 - "I wish my husband would talk. I never know what he is thinking or feeling", is a plea for intimacy.
 - Self-revelation is hard for many people, especially those who have learned to deny their feelings since young.
 - If you need help, start noting your feelings in a notepad throughout the day, along with a couple words describing the event.
 - Remember, emotions themselves are neither good nor bad. They are simply our psychological response to the events of life.
 - **MINIMUM DAILY REQUIREMENT – a daily sharing time where you talk about 3 things that happened to you that day and how you feel about them.**
 - Quality Activities
 - Key ingredients are:
 - At least one of you wants to do it
 - The other is willing to do it

- Both of you know why you are doing it – to express love by being together.
 - Your Turn
 - What in your marriage detracts from spending quality time?

Chapter 6 – Love Language #3 – Receiving Gifts

- “Look, he was thinking of me.” Symbol of love.
- Spending vs saving orientation (savers may have to work hard at understanding the emotional need being met and ultimate benefit if spouse primary language is receiving gifts. Giving gift may be the best investment.)
- Cost of gift matters little (as long as in line with what you can afford)
- Gifts may be purchased, found or made.
- The gift of self – your presence.
 - Ie at spouse parent funeral
- Your Turn
 - Reflect on ways to give gifts even if finances are tight

Chapter 7 – Love Language #4 – Acts of Service

- May require re-examining our stereotypes of the roles of husbands and wives.
- Actions speak louder than words if this is your love language.
- Seldom do couples have the same love language.
- Key observations:
 - What we do for each other before marriage (when “in love”) is no indication of what we will do after marriage (when fallen “out of love”).
 - Love is a choice and cannot be coerced. Requests work much better than demands.
 - People tend to criticize their spouse most loudly in the area where they themselves have the deepest emotional need.
- Doormat or Lover
 - Manipulation by guilt (“if you were a good spouse you’d do this for me”), or coercion by fear (“you will do this or you will be sorry), are not acts of love. Do not use as a way to obtain acts of service.
- Your Turn
 - Many acts of service will involve household chores, but not all. What are some non-chore way of serving your mate?

Chapter 8 – Love Language #5 – Physical Touch

- Physical touch communicates love, as proven by research that shows babies who were held, stroked and kissed develop a healthier emotional life than those without physical contact.
- Only touch in ways and time that your partner is comfortable with. Our bodies are for touching but not abuse.
- Different people/cultures have different comfort levels with physical touch.
- If your spouse's primary love language is physical touch, nothing is more important than holding her as she cries.
- Running hand through hair, giving a back rub, holding hands in public, embracing, sexual intercourse – all of those and other “love touches” are the emotional lifeline of the person for whom physical touch is the primary language.
- Note – men often have a higher sex drive, but that is quite different from their emotional need to feel loved. And it alone does not indicate physical touch is their primary love language. Look for other signs too!
- Your Turn:
 - Recall some nonsexual “touching times” that enhanced intimacy between the two of you. What made these times special?

Chapter 9 – Discovering Your Primary Love Language

Different methods:

- Complete the Love Language Assessment on-line at 5lovelanguages.com.
- What does your spouse do or fail to do that hurts you most deeply. (What do you complain about the most?) The opposite is likely your love language.
 - Critical judgemental words → Words of affirmation
 - Gift with little thought put into it → Gifts
 - When spouse out of town → Quality time
- What do you request most often, that are often received as nagging? This may be your primary love language.
 - Help around house? → Acts of service
 - Time to talk? → Quality time
 - Hugs? → Physical touch
- In what way do you regularly express love to your spouse? May be an indication of your desired love language.
- What did I like about my spouse in the days when we “fell in love”?
- What would be the traits of an ideal spouse?
- Process of elimination? What can you do with least?

Love Tank Check Game:

- 3 times a week for 3 weeks, ask your spouse to rate their love tank on a scale of 0-10, and if less than 10, what is one thing you could do to help fill it. Then let spouse ask you in reverse.
- Even if you are requested to do something you don't like, focus on the love you are expressing to spouse, and then they will be more open to doing things for you.

Your Turn:

- Do you know your spouse's love language by now? Do they know yours? If not, what more can you do to explore them?
- Play the Love Tank Check game for a month. If you are at consistent 10's, pat yourself on the back, but don't stop loving!

Chapter 10 – Love is a Choice

- "I just don't love her anymore".
 - Very familiar phrase to counsellors. The euphoric "in-love" stage has ended, and if the work was not put in to maintain the love in the relationship, using the correct languages for the spouses, the emotional love tank starts to empty. Then the spouse will start looking elsewhere or being at risk of his love tank being filled from other places. They deserve happiness.
 - Counsellors can explain the higher divorce rates of second marriages, the devastating effects of divorce on children, and they explain the difference between the experience of falling in love and the deep emotional need to feel loved. But most times the spouse will assure the counsellor that their situation is different. There is just no hope for their marriage. Very difficult to reason with them while in the euphoric "in love" stage when love tank is getting filled elsewhere.
 - Then they come down off the high when they fall "out of the in love stage". Realize things aren't as rosy as they thought. And hopefully seek counselling.
- Long lasting emotional love is a CHOICE, and it can be reborn if they learn the right love languages.
- Love is something you do for someone else. Our actions precede our emotions.
- Your Turn:
 - Why is it so fundamental to speak your mate's love language whether or not it is natural for you?

Chapter 11 – Love Makes the Difference

- Love is not the answer to everything, but it creates a climate of security in which we can seek answers to those things that bother us. In the security of love, a couple can discuss differences without condemnation.
- Your Turn:
 - What does your spouse do to make you feel more significant? How about what you do for them?

Chapter 12 – Loving the Unlovely

- Is it possible to love someone you hate? Who has become your enemy? Yes, if you are open to learning and growing.
- “But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you... Do to others as you would have them do to you. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them.” Luke 6: 27-28, 31-32.
- Six month experiment – see page 154-161
 - “I’ve been thinking about us and I’ve decided that I would like to be a better wife to you. So if you have any suggestions, I want you to know that I am open to them. You can tell me now or you can think about it and let me know what you think, but I would really like to work on this.”
 - Whatever his response, negative or positive, simply accept it is information. That initial statement lets him know that something different is about to happen in your relationship.
 - Then focus your attention for the next month on your guess of his primary (and secondary if close) love languages.
 - If he comes back with a suggestion as to how you might be a better wife, accept that information and work it into your plan.
 - It may be hard to show love in some areas (ie physical touch if you have been struggling in this area), so you may have to rely heavily on your faith in God in order to do this. (You can view sexual intimacy as an act of love that is designed for the other person’s benefit or pleasure. It is simply a choice vs a feeling at the beginning. Over time hopefully it will come back to being a feeling.)
 - After the first month, ask them for feedback on how you are doing? Whatever they say, accept it as information. Do not argue. Assure him you are serious about being a better wife and you are open to any additional suggestions from him.
 - Follow this pattern of asking for feedback once a month for the entire 6 months.

- One week after you receive the first positive feedback, make a specific request of them that is in your primary love language.
- If he does it fine. If he doesn't do it fine. Continue loving him either way. In this process you are teaching him your primary love language needs.
- When your spouse starts speaking your love language by responding to your requests, your positive emotions toward him will return, and in time your marriage will be reborn!

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. What if I can't discover my primary love language?
2. What if I can't discover my wife's love language?
3. Does your primary love language change as you get older?
4. Does the 5 love language concept work with children?
5. Do children's love languages change when they get to be teenagers?
6. What if the primary love language of your wife is difficult for you?
7. Are some of the love languages found more among women and others found more among men?
8. How did you discover the five love languages?
9. Do the love languages work in other cultures?
10. Why do you think the 5 Love Languages has been so successful?
11. What if I speak my wife's love language and she doesn't respond?
12. Can love be reborn after sexual infidelity?
13. What do you do when your wife refuses to speak your language even though she knows it?
14. Can emotional love return after it's been gone for thirty years?
15. I'm single. How does the love language concept apply to me?
16. How do I speak my spouse love language if he/she is away from me for a time (e.g., deployment, work, school)?