

# Love Languages

Based on concepts from Gary Chapman's book *The 5 Love Languages\** with additional insights by Jonathan Decker, LMFT.

## Lesson 1: Are You Speaking the Same Language?

Imagine that you say "I love you" while your loved one says "te amo," or "j'tame." You are both conveying a message of love, but it's not being received or understood.

- Love is being felt internally, but not transferred or communicated externally.
- This is a lonely way to live.
- We all have a primary love language.
- We show (and expect to receive) love in that love language, just as in verbal language (English-to-English).
- The way we show and receive love is part nature and part nurture.

### Bridge the Gap

- Speak Spanglish!
- Learning a new language takes time and effort, but it can be done.
- Speak in a way the other person understands.
- Also understand his or her attempts to say "I love you" in a language not natural to you.

The Golden Rule of Relationships:

**Treat others the way THEY want to be treated.**

## Lesson 2: Words of Affirmation

These are words that build up your loved one. Words speak louder than actions for these people. They need to hear "I love you" and "I appreciate you." It's even better when the praise is specific. Words of affection and endearment, of praise and encouragement, and that give positive guidance all say, "I care about you."

### Things NOT to do:

- Insults
- Sarcasm

**Remember:** Even though words are quickly said, they are not soon forgotten, whether positive or negative.

### What do “Words of Affirmation” look like?

- Compliments
- Praise
- Expressions of gratitude
- Public praise, including on social media
- Compliments on appearance
- Really listening, not interrupting
- Praise them on who they are
- Take time to understand their feelings
- Letters, texts, notes, cards

## Lesson 3: Acts of Service

This looks like easing the burden of your partner and offering practical solutions. You look to his/her comfort and needs. Even if you and your loved one both “speak” acts of service, you may value different types of help. **Ask** them to list the tasks that are most important to them, then **do those!**

### Things NOT to do:

- Laziness
- Not doing what you say you’re going to do
- Making more work for them
- Taking them and what they do for granted

### What do “Acts of Service” look like?

- Practical, helpful, solutions
- Follow-through — do what you say you’ll do
- Helping with a task
- Doing things you don’t enjoy if they are important to your partner
- Stopping to help even though you’re busy
- Doing more than your share
- Taking care of their responsibility for them
- Errands, laundry, trash
- Fixing something that is broken
- Doing something that would be hard for them

## Lesson 4: Gifts

It's not about materialism. It's about the thoughtfulness, time, energy, and emotion behind the gift. Gifts are visual symbols of love. Perfect gifts show that the receiver is prized and understood. They say "I understand you. I know what you need and want." If you are not intuitive about giving gifts, start by making a list of the gifts about which your loved one has been most excited. Give a gift that is tied to a fond memory or builds a future one.

### Things NOT to do:

- Forget birthdays, anniversaries, Valentine's, or other special occasions
- Give a thoughtless gift

### What might "Gifts" look like?

- Sentimental
- Handmade
- Cards
- Surprise element
- Can lift the spirits
- Unexpected
- Public element
- Large or small, both are exciting
- Christmas, birthday, Valentine's, anniversary
- Just because
- Travel gifts

## Lesson 5: Quality Time

The activity is not as important as togetherness and having the undivided attention of a loved one. Putting aside everything else and showing that your loved one is the first priority. Quality time and quality activities express "You are important" and "I like being with you."

### Things NOT to do:

- Postpone dates
- Fail to listen
- Pay attention to distractions; this behavior is hurtful to a "quality time" speaker

### **What does “quality Time” look like?**

- Showing interest in things the other person cares about
- Don't check phone, read, or otherwise be multi-tasking
- Travel
- Dates
- Shared interests
- Hanging out
- One on one time
- Working on special projects

## **Lesson 6: Physical Touch**

It's not just about sex (that's part of it), but about feeling safe and cherished. It's the need to be held, caressed, kissed. Physical touch can bring a sense of security and connection to any relationship.

### **Things NOT to do:**

- Physical neglect
- Withhold of affection
- Physical abuse (it's especially devastating)

### **What does this look like?**

- Hugs
- Slow dancing
- Massages
- Rough-housing with children
- Tickling with children
- Cuddling
- Sitting close
- Kissing

NOTE: Sex without affectionate touch (before and after) feels empty for these people.

### **What about PDA?**

Public displays of affection let the world know I love this person. It is excruciating for some, critical for others. The key is subtlety. Holding hands, touching the back, resting head on the other's shoulder are okay.

## **Lesson 7: Underlying Need**

“People tend to criticize their spouse most loudly in the area where they themselves have the deepest emotional need.” ~ Gary Chapman, *The 5 Love Languages*

Each of the four personality types (Dreamer, Healer, Thinker, Closer) has a primary need. If that need isn't being met, the person doesn't feel loved, no matter what love language is spoken. All of the personality types can connect to the different love languages in unique ways.

### **What is each type's underlying need?**

- **Dreamers** need to have fun and connect socially.
- **Healers** need to comfort and be comforted, to hear and be heard.
- **Thinkers** need to be respected and stimulated intellectually.
- **Closers** have a need that unlocks the hidden sixth love language.

### **The 6<sup>TH</sup> Love Language: Results**

Closers value accomplishment. They value achieving their goals. No matter what other love languages are being spoken, if there is a goal a Closer is working towards and a loved one isn't pulling their weight and getting results, the Closer is not going to feel loved or valued.

If RESULTS are not being achieved, a Closer may view attempts to convey love through the other five languages in these ways:

- 1) Words of affirmation = “talk is cheap.”
- 2) Acts of service are fine, but if they don't have the intended result, a Closer may see them as a waste of time.
- 3) Gifts are not as rewarding as achievement or accomplishment.
- 4) “Quality time” is time spent working towards a goal or on a project, not relaxing or playing.
- 5) Physical touch is nice, but unless there's moving forward with goals, it's not enough.

“Our most basic emotional need is not to fall in love but to be genuinely loved by another, to know a love that grows out of reason and choice, not instinct.” ~Gary Chapman

## **Lesson 8: Five Languages & Four Types**

However your loved one prefers to be shown affection, make sure that you are meeting their overall need in life.

For example, if you are trying to spend quality time with a healer, attending a large party filled with strangers is not the way to go . A closer may be annoyed by your attempts to validate their emotions, preferring a solution to their problem. Love your loved one the way they need to be shown love.

**Please refer to the worksheet by this name for more information.**

*\* This presentation is unaffiliated with Dr. Chapman and is not intended to represent his thoughts or work. Visit [5lovelanguages.com](http://5lovelanguages.com) for the original.*