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# DR. GARY CHAPMAN EXPLAINS THE 5 LOVE LANGUAGES

ASHLEY CROUCH · APR 23, 2013

*Dr. Gary Chapman is a renowned marriage counselor, and director of marriage seminars. [The 5 Love Languages](#), is one of Chapman's most popular titles, topping various bestseller charts for years, selling upwards of seven million copies and landing on the #1 spot of the New York Times best-seller list. Chapman has been directly involved in real-life family counseling for more than 35 years.*

## What are the 5 Love Languages?

- 1. Words of Affirmation:* Actions don't always speak louder than words. If this is your love language, unsolicited compliments mean the world to you. Hearing the words, "I love you," are important—hearing the reasons behind that love sends your spirits skyward. Insults can leave you shattered and are not easily forgotten.
- 2. Quality Time:* In the vernacular of Quality Time, nothing says, "I love you," like full, undivided attention. Being there for this type of person is critical, but really being there—with the TV off, fork and knife down, and all chores and tasks on standby—makes your significant other feel truly special and loved. Distractions, postponed dates, or the failure to listen can be especially hurtful.
- 3. Receiving Gifts:* Don't mistake this love language for materialism; the receiver of gifts thrives on the love, thoughtfulness, and effort behind the gift. If you speak this language, the perfect gift or gesture shows that you are known, you are cared for, and you are prized above whatever was sacrificed to bring the gift to you. A missed birthday, anniversary, or a hasty, thoughtless gift would be disastrous—so would the absence of everyday gestures.
- 4. Acts of Service:* Can vacuuming the floors really be an expression of love? Absolutely! Anything you do to ease the burden of responsibilities weighing on an "Acts of Service" person will speak volumes. The words he or she most wants to hear: "Let me do that for you." Laziness, broken commitments, and making more work for them tell speakers of this language their feelings don't matter.

5. *Physical Touch*: This language isn't all about the bedroom. A person whose primary language is Physical Touch is, not surprisingly, very touchy. Hugs, pats on the back, holding hands, and thoughtful touches on the arm, shoulder, or face—they can all be ways to show excitement, concern, care, and love. Physical presence and accessibility are crucial, while neglect or abuse can be unforgivable and destructive.

### **What inspired you to write a book on this subject?**

During my early years of counseling it was obvious to me that couples were missing each other when one would say, "I feel like he/she doesn't love me." And the other would say, "I don't know what else to do. I try to show her that I love her." I heard this pattern over and over again. So, I went through 12 years of notes that I had made when counseling couples and asked the question: When someone said, I feel like my spouse doesn't love me, what did they want? What were they complaining about? Their answers fell into 5 categories. I later called them the 5 love languages.

### **Who benefits from understanding the 5 Love Languages?**

In all my years of counseling, speaking, and writing about the 5 love languages, I've found that everyone benefits when they begin to apply them in all their relationships; obviously people are at different levels and depending on the current condition of their relationship most find they see an immediate response.

### **If I am unmarried, but in a romantic relationship with someone who has an opposite love language, should I jump ship and find someone who shares the same love language?**

Rarely do couples share the same love language. I don't recommend giving up on a relationship because of this difference, however, it can create an atmosphere of frustration when you think you are doing a good job at expressing your love and yet the other person is not feeling loved. If you don't understand the love language concept, then you really "don't know what else to do." If however, you understand that they speak a different language, then you can learn to speak that language.

Here is an example:

One husband said,

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"I mow the grass every Saturday after I wash the car. I vacuum every Thursday night. I do the dishes at least four nights a week. I help her with the laundry. I do all of this and she says that she 'does not feel loved.' I don't know what else to do."

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Her response was,

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"He is right. He is a hard working man." Then she began to cry and said, "But we don't ever talk. We haven't talked in thirty years." She is dying for 'Quality Time' while he is speaking 'Acts of Service.'

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Both are frustrated. When he finally got the picture he said, “Why didn’t someone tell me this thirty years ago. I could have been sitting on the couch and talking to her instead of doing all this stuff.” We can all learn to speak someone’s love language.

**How do I communicate what my love language is to others?**

I highly recommend taking the love languages profile in the back of the book or at the website, [www.5lovelanguages.com](http://www.5lovelanguages.com). After taking the profile then share your results with your loved one(s) so they can know specifically what makes you feel loved and I recommend you encourage them to do the same.

**In your book you discuss the concept of a “love tank”, can you explain what this is?**

Every child is born with a love tank and I compare it to a gas tank in a car. When the love tank is full the world looks beautiful and we feel loved. When the love tank is empty we feel discouraged and uncertain about ourselves and our relationships.

**Do you have other books?**

I do have a list of other books that I’ve written over the years covering a variety of topics that relate to our relationships in all areas of our lives, and they are listed on the [love languages website](#).

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