

A SAMPLE MARRIAGE PREP EXERCISE TO TRY AT HOME The Five Love Languages

Gary Chapman has written a book, in which he describes five basic “love languages” that people speak and understand in relationships. Those languages are listed and described here. Please read the text, answer the questions at the end, and discuss your answers with your partner.

#1: Receiving Gifts

Presents and physical tokens of affection move you. It’s the fact that someone is thinking about you enough to give you something that moves you. The objects are of secondary importance to the relationship and sentiment with which they were intended.

- * I tend to give others things to express my feelings about them.
- * I feel so good when I receive a present from someone... or even just get a freebie.
- * I can feel quite depressed when I don’t get a gift, especially when I expected one.
- * I would rather get a reward than extravagant applause.

#2: Quality Time

This can be expressed either through those intimate tête-à-tête discussions or via doing things together.

- * I get lonely and begin to feel uncared about if I can’t hang out with someone I love.
- * I feel complete when I spend time with people I love.
- * I show people I care by being with them.
- * I expect others who care about me to spend their time with me.

#3: Acts of Service

You prefer to show your love through favors and chores and doing things for others. You feel put-upon and unappreciated when your efforts are taken for granted.

- * I often feel special, significant, and useful when I help others.
- * I often feel upset when others don’t help me out, much less offer to do anything.
- * I show affection by doing things for other people.
- * I don’t usually ask for help, but when someone does something for me, I feel really cherished.

#4: Physical Touch

You want to give and/or receive affection physically. This may or may not center on sex.

- * I give and expect in return hugs, pats, kisses, and other physical signs of affection.
- * I feel especially warm and appreciated when another touches me in a meaningful way.
- * I can feel awful about myself when people I love don’t touch me.
- * I like to show my feelings physically.

#5: Words of Affirmation

You need to hear praise to know you are loved, and you may also prefer to express your affection verbally. Negative comments cut right to the bone. You want to hear that you’re loved and how much and why.

- * I find that another’s criticism really, really hurts.
- * I tell those whom I love that I love them. That’s sufficient for me.
- * I feel like I need compliments, so sometimes I “fish” for them.

* I feel like “a million bucks” when I get sincere praise.

Questions for reflection and sharing: (answer these without talking with one another and then share your responses with your partner; let it lead to a loving but honest dialogue.)

1. What are your primary love languages?

*Strongest:

*Second:

*Third:

2. Does your partner “speak” your love languages? Do you speak his/hers? How can you coach one another to learn these languages and “speak” them to each other? Try to be concrete with examples and feedback.