

A "Cosmo quiz": What is your love language?

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In Gary Chapman's book, The Five Love Languages, he illustrates that we each express our love with certain 'languages', and there are certain 'languages' that we hear love in. If someone is saying "I love you" over and over, but using a different language than we naturally speak, it is hard to hear the love coming through. Here's a quiz to help you determine your love languages.

1. Which would be the sweetest thing someone could do for you to show their love?

- Give me an hour-long massage. _____
- Write a romantic card telling me everything they love about me. _____
- Buy me something that I had admired in a store. _____
- Clean the house while I take a nap or go for a long walk. _____
- Give up an evening's plans just to spend time with me. _____

2. If you had a really hard day, what would be the most helpful thing your partner could do?

- Curl up on the couch with me and hold me. _____
- Tell me that they love me, and know I'm doing the best I can. _____
- Surprise me with a special treat to make up for the rough day. _____
- Run errands for me and make dinner, so I can rest for a while. _____
- Spend time together just talking and relaxing and re-connecting. _____

3. You are late, and in a hurry. What could someone do quickly to express their love?

- A hug and a kiss. _____
- Tell me they love me, and think that I look great. _____
- Hand me a special snack to eat in the car. _____
- Say that they'll take care of taking the trash out. _____
- Say they look forward to our next chance to spend time together. _____

4. A friend has been out of work for a while and is feeling really down. What do you do?

- Give him a hug, or put my hand on his arm while we talk. _____
- Tell him how great he is, and what confidence I have in him. _____
- Take him out for dinner at his favorite restaurant. _____
- Spend a few hours helping him write job applications. _____
- Set aside time each week to spend together. _____

5. When you meet with a friend for lunch, she tells you, joyfully, that she is pregnant. Do you

- Give her a huge hug. _____
- Say "I'm so excited for you, you'll be such a great mom!" _____
- Offer to plan her baby shower. _____
- Offer to help her complete some projects before the baby comes. _____
- Spend a long lunch with her, just talking about her news. _____

Scoring

Questions 1 – 3 are about what love language(s) you are best able to *hear*, and most enjoy having spoken to you. Questions 4 and 5 are about what language(s) you feel most comfortable *speaking* to your loved ones. These might be the same, but they're often different. Here's what the answers indicate about your love language.

A = Physical Touch.

B = Words of Affirmation.

C = Gifts.

D = Acts of Service.

E = Quality Time.

Compare your answers to your partner's answers, or think about what the answers would be for other friends / family / support people in your life. In a few lucky relationships, each person happens to be most comfortable speaking the love language the other most needs to hear.

For most of us, though, there are times when our languages are out of synch. It's important to learn what language our loved one(s) hears, so that we can try to speak in that language as much as possible. It's also good if they know what our primary speaking language is, so that if we "miss the mark" at making them feel loved, at least they know we're trying!

For example, you may have a partner who thrives on words of affirmation, but if you come from a very reserved background, it may be very difficult to give effusive praise and have it sound genuine. You'll try to learn a new language, and they'll forgive you for your stumbles. You can learn to give verbal encouragement as often as possible, and they can learn to translate your quiet "you did a nice job" into the full cheerleader routine they'd love to hear.

Applying the Love Languages to Life as Parents

Physical Touch: If this is your partner's language, try: stroking her hair, holding his hand, massage, hugging, kissing, rubbing his feet... Be in physical contact whenever possible. Spend time snuggling when possible. (And, if you're not primarily a physical touch person, and are feeling overwhelmed by being in physical contact with your child so much, encourage your partner to take some snuggle time (or wrestling time) with your kid(s). They'll both be happy!)

Words of Affirmation: Encouragement and praise are vital to supporting your partner. Acknowledging all the hard work s/he is doing, and validating the way s/he is taking care of the family, work and day to day tasks is very helpful. S/he may be very sensitive to criticism, and may feel unsupported if you do not actively cheer him/her on.

Gifts: Surprise your partner with symbols of affection, and thoughtful little details. Bring home her favorite snack. Take pictures of the children to share with him at the end of the day. Leave love notes around the house. Any little thing that is done especially for him/her will speak your love loud and clear.

Acts of Service: This partner wants active support with household responsibilities. Help with doing laundry, washing dishes, running errands, making a to-do list together and taking on tasks. Ask them which tasks most need to be done, and focus on those priorities.

Quality Time: This partner needs your Presence and Attention. They do not want you running errands on the way home from work, or spending time doing household tasks when you could be together. S/he wants someone by his/her side, supporting her just by being there and being attuned to her needs. Arrange for a babysitter and go out on a date!