

# Know Thyself Retreat Day

## **E: Experience of Love**

Experience of Love - The Love Languages<sup>12</sup>  
Whether this is hard-wired or learned behavior, it is important to understand how we prefer to experience and express love in our lives.

### **Three Ways to Discover Your Love Language**

1. What does your spouse/close friends do or fail to do that hurts you most deeply? The opposite of what hurts you most is probably your love language.
2. What have you most often requested of your spouse/close friends? The thing you have most often requested is likely the thing that would make you feel most loved.
3. In what way do you regularly express love to your spouse/close friends? Your method of expressing love may be an indication that would also make you feel loved.

### **Words of Affirmation**

Verbal appreciation speaks powerfully to people whose primary Love Language is “Words of Affirmation.” Simple statements such as, “You look great in that suit,” or “You must be the best baker in the world! I love your oatmeal cookies,” are sometimes all a person needs to hear to feel loved. Aside from verbal compliments, another way to communicate through “Words of Affirmation” is to offer encouragement. Here are some examples: reinforcing a difficult decision; calling attention to progress made on a current project; acknowledging a person’s unique perspective on an important topic. If a loved one listens for “Words of Affirmation,” offering encouragement will help him or her to overcome insecurities and develop greater confidence.

### **Quality Time**

Quality time is more than mere proximity. It’s about focusing all your energy on your mate/close friends. A husband watching sports while talking to his wife is NOT quality time. Unless all of your attention is focused on your mate, even an intimate dinner for two can come and go without a minute of quality time being shared.

Quality conversation is very important in a healthy relationship. It involves sharing experiences, thoughts, feelings and desires in a friendly, uninterrupted context. This involves “active listening” to assure that the other person knows you are truly listening. Many people don’t expect you to solve their problems. They need a sympathetic listener.

An important aspect of quality conversation is self-revelation. In order for you to really communicate with another person, you must be in tune with your inner emotions. It is only when you understand your emotions and inner feelings that you are able to share quality conversation and quality time with another person.

Quality activities are a very important part of quality time. Many people feel most loved when they spend physical time together, doing activities that they love to do. Spending time together will bring you closer, and, help you build a memory bank that you can draw from in the future.

### **Receiving Gifts**

Some people respond well to visual symbols of love. If you speak this love language, you are more likely to treasure a gift as an expression of love and devotion. People who speak this love language often feel that a lack of gifts represents a lack of love from their mate. Luckily, this love language is one of the easiest to learn.

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If you want to become an effective gift-giver, you might have to learn to change your attitude about money. If you are naturally a spender, you will have no trouble buying gifts for that person. However, people who are used to investing and saving their money may have a tough time adjusting to the concept of spending money as an expression of love. These people must understand that you are investing the money not in gifts, but in deepening your relationship with your mate.

The gift of self is an important symbol of love. Sometimes all a person desires is for you to be there for him or her, going through the same trials and experiencing the same things. Your body can become a very powerful physical symbol of love.

These gifts need to come every week or even every day, but they don't have to cost a lot of money. Free, frequent, expensive, or rare, if that person relates to the language of receiving gifts, any visible sign of your love will leave him or her feeling happy and secure in your relationship.

## Acts of Service

Acts of service can bring about a great sense of feeling loved for those whom it is a love language. In a marriage relationship or within a family, sometimes simple chores around the house can be an undeniable expression of love. Even simple things like laundry and taking out the trash require some form of planning, time, effort, and energy. Just as Jesus demonstrated when He washed the feet of his disciples, doing humble chores can be a very powerful expression of love and devotion to your loved one.

It is very important to understand what acts of service another person most appreciates. Even though couples are helping each other around the house,

couples might still fight because they are unknowingly communicating with each other in two different dialects.

Also of importance is to engage in these acts of service out of love and not obligation. Someone who does chores and helps out around the house out of guilt or fear, will inevitably be speaking a language of resentment rather than a language of love. It's important to perform these acts out of the kindness of your heart.

Sometimes demonstrating acts of service can mean stepping out of the stereotypes. Acts of service require both people to humble themselves into doing some chores and services that aren't usually expected from their gender. However, these little sacrifices will mean the world to the other person, and invite a happier relationship.

## Physical Touch

Many people feel the most loved when they receive physical contact. For someone who speaks this love language loudly, physical touch can make or break the relationship.

Sexual intercourse makes many mates feel secure and loved in a marriage. However, it is only one dialect of physical touch. It is important to discover how your partner not only physically responds but also psychologically responds to these touches. Sometimes it's little acts such as touches on the cheek, on the hand, or the shoulder that can really make a difference.

All marriages will experience crises. In these cases, physical touch is very important. In a crisis situation, a hug can communicate an immense amount of love for that person. A person whose primary love language is physical touch would much rather have you hold them and be silent than offer any advice. It is important

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to remember that this love language is different for everyone. What type of touch makes you feel secure is not necessarily what will make your partner happy. It is important to learn each other's dialects.

## Experience of Love

### Love Languages

(Rank on a scale: 1 = Poor, 5 = Prefer)

	How Good are you at:	What do you Prefer:
	Giving	Receiving
Word of Affirmation		
Quality Time		
Gift Giving		
Acts of Service		
Physical Touch		

Other Insights:

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