



## PLEASE TRANSLATE!

-By Véronique

Once upon a time, there was a princess who had found her prince charming. Every day, she asked her prince to prove his love to her. He offered her flowers, wrote long letters, sang sweet ballads, covered her with gifts, massaged her feet before going to bed and drove her to anywhere she wanted. Nevertheless, the princess was not convinced of the prince's love. « Do you really love me? » she asked him one day. « Of course! » he exclaimed in astonishment. « How can you doubt it? I am ready to offer you the moon, to massage you day and night, to travel all the roads for you as well as to write only for you the most beautiful love poems, my princess. » he adds. « I know my dear prince » she replied, but you never give me your attention when I share my feelings, dreams and fears to you. »

Few are the couples whose partners express their love the same way. Some men and women are more physical in their expression of their affection to their partner. Others verbalize it or write about their love, while some prefer making gifts or give loving cares. All of the ways are equally valid. What is important to keep in mind is that we naturally favor one or two ways in our expression of love while our spouse does not necessarily share the same.

According to Dr. Gary Chapman , there are five major « love languages »: words of affirmation (e.g. I love you, you're beautiful, I feel good with you); quality time ( e.g. romantic dinner, enjoying the sunset with our beloved one, romantic gateway); physical contact (e.g. sex, kissing, cuddling); obtaining or providing services (e.g. taking out the garbage, preparing dinner, picking up the kids, helping out your partner in his/her business); and receiving or giving gifts (e.g. jewelry, chocolate, lingerie, flowers, tickets for a show).

To know that there are several ways to express love is a valuable asset. It reminds us the importance of staying opened and of listening to our partner. The more curious partners are for each other, the better their chances of building a rich and satisfying relationship.

Personally, I favor the subtleties and surprises in my couple while my partner is more direct and spontaneous. Admittedly, there have been misunderstandings and some adjustments on our respective ways of exteriorize our love. Fortunately, once both our « languages » have been clarified, we were better able to appreciate the whole spectrum of possibilities that our differences bring to our couple dynamic. It takes work but the reward is great!

Do not try to change the other because you will lose at this game. Focus your energy and time at better understanding the way your partner sees, understands and communicates his/her love to you. As I said earlier, no language is better than another, so enjoy the differences in order to discover and nurture your couple's complicity. It makes life much more interesting when you have two worlds to explore: your partner's and yours.

Also be aware that there are often sub-categories or different definitions of the same love language. I confirm according to a recent experience. My partner was telling repeatedly that I was not touching him enough although, in my perspective, I was often hugging, kissing and cuddling him. After discussing the matter, I found out that « touch » means to him « massaging ». Eureka! I pay off to clarify with your partner what he or she means by « gift », « listening », « quality time » or « touching ».

For those who are interested in discovering or confirming their love language (s), here's a website containing a short online test and information: <http://www.5lovelanguages.com/>.

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2 World famous Dr. Gary Chapman has worked for over 30 years with couples and their families on various everyday life issues. He has written over twenty books. <http://www.garychapman.org/bio.htm>