

Relationships

Emotion and Connection



What is love anyway?

- What do we **love**?
Romantic partners, parents, children, friends
pets, chocolate, coffee, a day in nature
a favorite TV show, really good food, a favorite outfit
- Is the feeling the same for all of these?



Love is not a unified experience

- Varies from target to target significantly
- Fehr & Russell (1991)
list as many types of love that you can think of
then, which example is the 'best' example of love
then, rate each type on a number of characteristics
 - 'is a giving process'
 - 'has to be worked at'
 - 'is painful if not reciprocated'
- conclusions
 - Prototypical love occurs in close relationships
 - Prototypical love involves commitment
 - Prototypical love involves accepting faults
- When we say we love chocolate --- we don't really mean **LOVE**

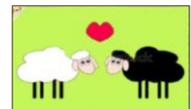
TABLE 9.1 Although the term "love" describes people's feelings toward many kinds of targets, American participants agree that some kinds of love are more "love-like" than others. This table shows how prototypically love-like (on a scale from 1 to 5) 1191 participants considered 26 different types of love.

Type of Love	Prototypicality
Maternal love	5.39
Paternal love	5.23
Friendship	4.98
Family love	4.82
Romantic love	4.78
Brotherly love	4.74
Sentimental love	4.71
sibling love	4.71
affection	4.60
Committed love	4.47
Love for humanity	4.42
Optimal love	4.27
Platonic love	4.00
Religious love	3.86
Self-love	3.79
Sexual love	3.75
Heroic love	3.24
Love of work	3.14
Hope love	2.88
Infatuation	2.42

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Love as an emotion?...

- A comparison: anger/ fear & love
Notice any differences in these states
- Love might be viewed more as an attitude
 - Blend of beliefs, feelings, behaviors
 - Long lasting rather than brief



Affectional Bonds: John Bowlby

- John Bowlby
Developmental Psychologist
Interested in Early Attachment
- Relationship & Attachment
had evolutionary basis
- Universal behaviors promote
 - Parent/ child attachment (dependent love)
 - Caregiving (nurturant love)
 - Sexual desire (romantic love)



Attachment/ Dependent love

- Long lasting emotional bond between child and caregivers
 - Desire to be in close proximity
 - Comfort in the company of caregivers
 - Distress when separated
- Facilitated with 'attachment' behaviors
 - Facilitated by interactional synchronicity
- Amae – Japanese word for pleasurable dependence on another
 - Positive emotional state for children – in all cultures
 - Considered an ideal even in adult relationships – in Japanese but not western culture



Caregiving/ Nurturant love

- Motivates parents to care for their children
also can be activated by others: young/ helpless/ needy/ distressed
- Sympathy/ Compassion/ Nurturant Love
emotions that activate caregiving
- Eisenberg study, 1989
college students/ elementary students
watched sad video (single mom in car accident)
how many hours would you help?



Those offering to help more – heart rates drop
more sadness in their facial expression
more concern in body language

Sympathy

- Is it an emotion?
Seems to have a universal profile: lower HR, facial display of concern
- Recent research suggests it may be well-regulated sadness
 - Requires effortful control to convert sadness to care
 - Individuals who can't control sadness are less likely to help



Sexual Love

- Sexual interest between good reproductive partners
(What do you think of this definition)
- Predictors of sexual attraction
 - Health
 - Waist hip ration of .70 – for women (not weight)
 - A face similar to others in your culture (averages)
 - Females: large eyes, small nose
 - Males: large eyes, small nose plus square jaw
- Happy/ kind/ intelligent/ sense of humor
- When we like someone, we find them more attractive



Flirting

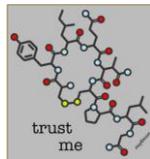
- Women:
 - Daring glance
 - Holding a gaze
 - Tossing head/ flipping hair
 - Tilted heads
 - Caressing/ fiddling with nearby objects
 - Licking lips
 - Flirting paces the 'courtship'
- Men:
 - Fewer 'flirting' behaviors
 - Simply approach when interested
 - Men misinterpret female interest frequently
- During interaction
 - Match non-verbal cues
 - Match language – use similar phrases



Oxytocin

- The biology of love
hormone: Oxytocin
- **Attachment love & Nurturant Love**
skin to skin touch releases oxytocin
facilitates nurturant love & attachment – both
- **Sexual Love**
in animals, long term pair bonds more likely
(prairie voles and meadow voles)

in humans, same is true
 - men with more receptors have closer relationships with their mates
 - In conflictual discussions – more positive behavior when given oxytocin



Endogenous Opiates

- Natural endorphins
sudden decrease when separated from loved ones

body's natural painkiller
perhaps why important social losses feel like physical pain
 - fMRI studies of physical/ social pain same brain areas active (cingulate gyrus)
- Endogenous opiates explain the pleasure of attachment also
 - Having more efficient opiate receptors leads to stronger bonds
 - Mothers release endorphins when viewing photos of their own babies



Empathy

- Emotional empathy:
feeling what another feels by matching physiology and display
 - Mirror neurons activity may account for higher skill
 - one study: more mirror neuron activity looking at emotion faces
- Empathetic accuracy:
figuring out what another feels using logic and social cues
 - In one study of strangers interacting, empathetic accuracy was highest with Partners talk about themselves/ with higher GPA/ people who smile a lot
- Are these skills good for relationships?

Marriage

- Is love necessary for marriage?
- Study of 166 cultures, 89% them focus on romantic love as important
- Some cultures base marriage on
 - Economic considerations
 - Status considerations
 - Family connections
 - Place no importance on romantic love
- Are these marriages successful?
Parent-arranged marriages in India are happier than love-based marriages in America
reverse is true in China



Stages of Romantic Love



- Often starts with Passionate Love
 - Frequent thoughts/ intense desire to be together/ excitement by attention
 - Idealize the partner/ ignore faults/ self expansion (widened interests)
 - Photos of the loved one stimulates the dopamine reward centers
- Progresses to Companionate love
 - Increased commitment/ sharing important aspects of their lives
 - Security/ mutual care/ other wishes the best for you
 - Acknowledgement of flaws/ shortcomings
 - Correlated with high satisfaction with life

Adult Attachment

- **A:** I am somewhat uncomfortable being too close to others: I find it difficult to trust them completely, difficult to allow myself to depend on them. I am nervous when anyone gets too close, and often, love partners want me to be more intimate than I feel comfortable being.
- **B:** I find it relatively easy to get close to others and am comfortable depending on them and having them depend on me. I don't often worry about being abandoned or about someone getting too close to me.
- **C:** I find others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I often worry that my partner doesn't really love me or want to stay with me. I want to deep closeness with the other person, and this desire sometimes scares people away.

Parallels to Infant Attachment

- Rely on partners for safe haven
- Use them as a secure base
- Seek comfort and safety
- Uncomfortable with separations
- Consider the schemas developed early in life

other	+	secure	anxious
	-	avoidant	
		+	-
		self	

Adult Attachment Research

- Secure (56%)
 - Longer relationships/ less likely to have divorced
 - Describe relationships as happy/ friendly/ trusting
 - Ups and downs in relationship are normal
 - Describe self as likable and others as well-intentioned
- Avoidant (25%)
 - Difficulty accepting a partner's flaws
 - Don't think love lasts forever
 - Feel able to be independent and get along by themselves
- Anxious (19%)
 - Obsessively preoccupied with partners
 - Extreme highs and lows in relationship
 - More likely to have love at first sight experiences
 - Intense feeling of oneness very important
 - Tend to feel misunderstood/ underappreciated



If you're curious...

- <http://www.web-research-design.net/cgi-bin/crq/crq.pl>

Successful Relationships

- Correlates of long marriage
 - Over 20 when married
 - Grew up in two parent homes
 - Dated a long time before marriage
 - Same level of education
 - Good income
 - Happy disposition
 - Live in small town/ rural area
 - Have religious affiliation
 - Same age and same attitudes
 - Frequent sexual relations
 - Infrequent arguments

