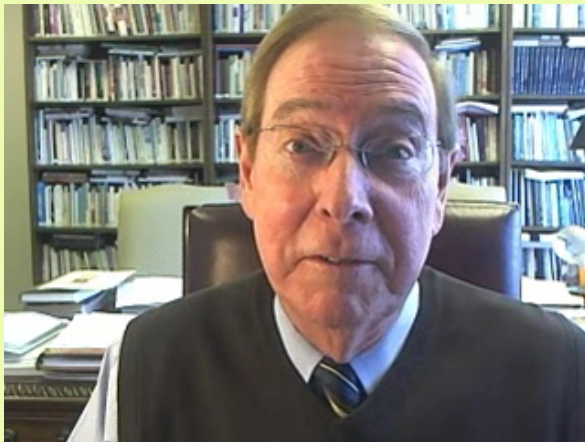


PRESCRIPTIONS FOR PARENTS -

MAKING SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH PRACTICAL FOR FAMILIES



LOVE LANGUAGES

We each have basic emotional needs - and the need for love and attention must be met if we are to be emotionally healthy and stable. Expressed another way, we each have an internal "emotional tank" waiting to be filled with love.

Gary Chapman, in his classic book, *The 5 Love Languages - The Secret to Love That Lasts*, discusses the five ways that most people experience love. Each of us tends to have a specific way in which our emotional love tank is filled. Without the constant refilling, we may feel isolated, lonely and depressed. We experience the deepest emotional pain when we do not feel loved!

Seldom do parents share the same love language - so when we speak to each other, we may become confused when we do not understand or appreciate expressions of love. We express our love, for example, by giving a gift, but it is not appreciated - probably because the other person's love language is not "Receiving gifts". We may then become discouraged and withdraw. A better answer - learn the other person's love language so you can "speak their language" and fill their love tank.

Children also experience love in these five different ways, and much of childish misbehavior is an attempt to fill their love tank.

As you read this information, we trust you will find your own love language and those of others in your family, so your "love tank" is filled and your relationships are enhanced.



WORDS OF AFFIRMATION

Verbal compliments, or words of appreciation, can fill the "love tank" of some people. Mark Twain must have been one of those whose love language was words of affirmation as he once said, "I can live for two months on a good compliment."

Affirmation can also include words of encouragement. Encourage really means "to inspire courage". Since our lack of courage or insecurity can hinder us from accomplishing difficult tasks, words of encouragement are inspirational.

Encouragement requires seeing the world from another's point of view and perspective, and then using words to communicate, "I understand; I care. I will be with you to help you."

Affirmative words are kind and humble. These words do not make demands of the other person.

Although not everyone's love language is "words of affirmation", every one appreciates a compliment.



QUALITY TIME

Quality time may be one of the more difficult love languages to accommodate because of our busy schedules, but for many people, it is the main way they experience love.

Quality time involves "focused attention" - not just sitting together in the same room watching television. The activity is not what is important - instead where your attention is focused is crucial. Spending time together should communicate that you do actually enjoy being with each other and care about each other.

Included in "quality time" is quality communication or conversation. Quality conversation focuses on the emotional state of the other individual and involves communicating that you understand the emotions and empathize with the situation.

For quality conversation, you need to:

1. Maintain eye contact and assure your partner that he/she has your undivided attention.



RECEIVING GIFTS

Giving and receiving gifts is an almost universal expression of love. In most cultures, gift giving is part of the marriage ceremonies, including the exchange of rings. But for some people, receiving gifts is the main way they experience love and have their love tank filled.

Gifts do not need to be expensive or purchased. In fact, some of the most meaningful gifts will be handmade cards, mementos of trips, a flower picked from the garden.

If your partner's love language is "receiving gifts", you may need to reevaluate how you view the use of money. Spending money for a gift no longer becomes a waste of money, but rather a way to fill the emotional tank of the person you love.

You may want to keep a "gift notebook" and list the things you hear your spouse say he /she enjoys or likes. That will help you with ideas for future gifts.

Try giving a little gift every day for one week



PHYSICAL TOUCH

Much research has demonstrated that all children need physical touch to have optimal emotional health. Holding hands, hugs, kisses and sexual affection continue to fill the love tank of those adults who have physical touch as their main love language.

Simple acts such as sitting close while watching television, a gentle touch as you walk through the room, a kiss before you leave the house can all be powerful communicators of love to a person whose love language is physical touch.

MORE INFORMATION ON LOVE LANGUAGES

Are you interested in learning more about love languages? Do you know your love language? The love language of your partner? your child?

For more information on love languages, especially on how to determine your own love language, see: www.5lovelanguages.com

Upcoming newsletters will address love languages of children as well as the love languages of

Decide now to:

1. Give your partner one compliment every day. "I appreciate you picking up our children from school."
2. Compliment your partner in the presence of friends or family.
3. Tell your children about the strengths you see in each other.

2. Do not be involved in other activities.
3. Listen for emotions and then confirm your suspicions. "It seems to me that you are feeling..... because"
4. Observe body language.
5. Don't interrupt.

and see what happens! apology.

ACTS OF SERVICE

Acts of service are those jobs and chores that must be done to maintain your home and care for your children. When these jobs are done with love and planning, they communicate love and fill the love tank of those whose love language is "acts of service".

You may be doing acts of service but do not feel appreciated. Are you doing the acts out of love? Are you doing the tasks your partner truly wants to see accomplished? If either of you have "acts of service" as your love language, begin talking now about how to prioritize the jobs.

Jane E. Anderson, MD

000 000 0000

md@physicianscenter.org

www.physicianscenter.org