

Week 11: Handout A
TYPES OF LOVE

Love [luhv] noun, verb, loved, loving.
noun

1. a profoundly tender, passionate affection for another person.
2. a feeling of warm personal attachment or deep affection, as for a parent, child, or friend.

Healthy vs. Unhealthy Love:

Here is a short list of the characteristics of Love vs. toxic love (compiled with the help of the work of Melody Beattie, Terence Gorski. and Robert Burney.)

Healthy -----Unhealthy

Love: Development of self first priority.

Toxic love: Obsession with relationship.

Love: Room to grow, expand; desire for other to grow.

Toxic love: Security, comfort in sameness; intensity of need seen as proof of love – may really be fear, insecurity, loneliness.

Love: Separate interests; other friends; maintain other meaningful relationships.

Toxic love: Total involvement; limited social life; neglect old friends, interests.

Love: Encouragement of each other's expanding; secure in own worth.

Toxic love: Preoccupation with other's behavior; fear of other changing.

Love: Appropriate Trust (trusting partner to behave according to fundamental nature.)

Toxic love: Jealousy; possessiveness; fear of competition; protects "supply."

Love: Compromise, negotiation or taking turns at leading. Problem solving together.

Toxic love: Power plays for control; blaming; passive or aggressive manipulation.

Love: Embracing of each other's individuality.

Toxic love: Trying to change other to own image.

Love: Relationship deals with all aspects of reality.

Toxic love: Relationship is based on delusion and avoidance of the unpleasant.

Love: Self-care by both partners; emotional state not dependent on other's mood.

Toxic love: Expectation that one partner will fix and rescue the other.

Love: Loving detachment (healthy concern about partner, while letting go.)

Toxic love: Fusion (being obsessed with each other's problems and feelings.)

Love: Sex is free choice growing out of caring & friendship.

Toxic love: Pressure around sex due to fear, insecurity & need for immediate gratification.

Love: Ability to enjoy solitude by being alone.

Toxic love: Unable to endure separation; clinging.

Love: Cycle of comfort and contentment.

Toxic love: Cycle of pain and despair.

Love: Conversations based upon intent to Understand, Help, or convey affection.

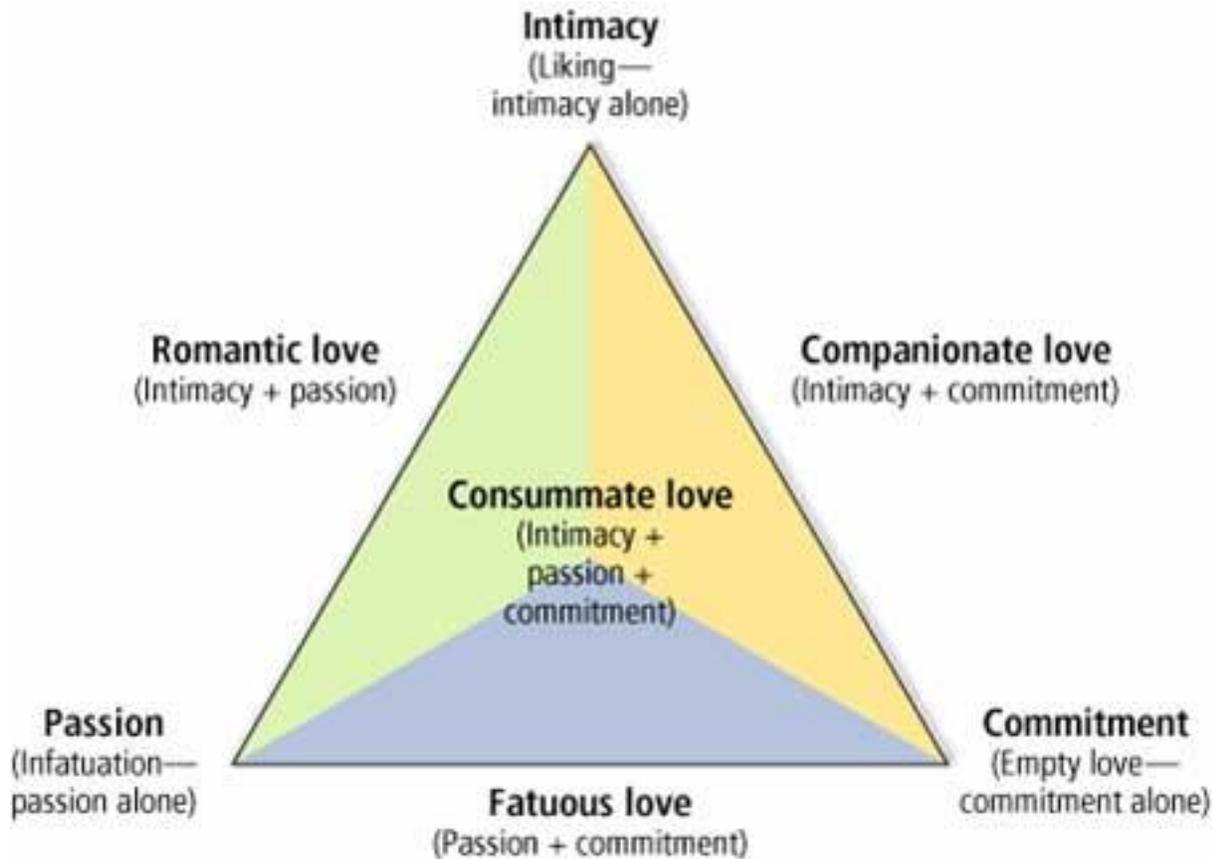
Toxic love: Conversations based upon intent to blame, defend, or manipulate.

Love is not supposed to be painful. There is pain involved in any relationship but if it is painful most of the time then something is not working. Loving relationships are based upon appreciation & affection and not fear and manipulation.

Week 11: Handout B
STERNBERG'S TRIANGULAR THEORY OF LOVE

The triangular theory of love explains the topic of love in an interpersonal relationship. Psychologist Robert Sternberg's theory describes types of love based on three different scales: intimacy, passion, and commitment. It is important to recognize that a relationship based on a single element is less likely to survive than one based on two or more.

Different stages and types of love can be explained as different combinations of these three elements. For example, the relative emphasis of each component changes over time as an adult romantic relationship develops.



1. Liking in this case is not used in a trivial sense. Sternberg says that this intimate liking characterizes true friendships, in which a person feels a connection, a warmth, and a closeness with another but not intense passion or long-term commitment.

2. Infatuated love is often what is felt as "love at first sight." But without the intimacy and the commitment components of love, infatuated love may disappear suddenly.

3. Empty love: Sometimes, a stronger love deteriorates into empty love, in which the commitment remains, but the intimacy and passion have died. In cultures in which arranged marriages are common, relationships often begin as empty love.

4. Romantic love: Romantic lovers are bonded emotionally (as in liking) and physically through passionate arousal.

5. Companionate love is often found in marriages in which the passion has gone out of the relationship, but a deep affection and commitment remain. Companionate love is generally a personal relation you build with somebody you share your life with, but with no sexual or physical desire. It is stronger than friendship because of the extra element of commitment. The love ideally shared between family members is a form of companionate love, as is the love between deep friends or those who spend a lot of time together in any asexual but friendly relationship.

6. Fatuous love can be exemplified by a whirlwind courtship and marriage in which a commitment is motivated largely by passion, without the stabilizing influence of intimacy.

7. Consummate love is the complete form of love, representing the ideal relationship toward which many people strive but which apparently few achieve. Sternberg cautions that maintaining a consummate love may be even harder than achieving it. He stresses the importance of translating the components of love into action. "Without expression," he warns, "even the greatest of loves can die" (1987, p.341). Consummate love may not be permanent. For example, if passion is lost over time, it may change into companionate love.

The balance among Sternberg's three aspects of love is likely to shift through the course of a relationship. A strong dose of all three components-found in consummate love-typifies, for many of us, an ideal relationship. However time alone does not cause intimacy, passion, and commitment to occur and grow.

Knowing about these components of love may help couples avoid pitfalls in their relationship, work on the areas that need improvement or help them recognize when it might be time for a relationship to come to an end.

Sternberg, R. J. (1986) A triangular theory of love. *Psychological Review*, 93, 119-135.