

There are six styles of love. Which one best describes you?

February 14 2017, by Rachel Grieve



Love is a complex and powerful force, one that plays out in a number of emotional, cognitive and social ways.

When we [love](#) a person, we feel emotional arousal in their presence. We will also have a set of thoughts (or cognitions) about that person, and our previous experiences can shape our ideas about what we expect in our relationships. For example, if you believe in love at first sight, then you

are [more likely to experience it](#).

But we use love in many different contexts. You might say that you love your partner, or your family, or your best friend, your job or even your car. Clearly, you're using the term in different ways that highlight the various dimensions of love.

The ancient Greeks described [several different types of love](#). Following the Greeks, the sociologist and activist John Alan Lee suggested that there are [six broad styles of love](#).

It is good to keep in mind that although these love styles can be thought of as "types", we are not necessarily [locked into only one](#). We might have a predominant love style, but we will also have some elements of the other styles.

Similarly, our love style might change over time based on our experiences and interactions with our partners.

Eros

This style is typically experienced as a romantic, fairytale-type love. Physical beauty is important to this love style. Attraction is intense and immediate ("head over heels"), and the Eros lover feels an [urgent drive](#) to deepen the relationship emotionally and physically.

Because these individuals love the feeling of being in love, they tend to be serial monogamists, staying in a relationship as long as it feels fresh and compelling, then moving on so they can experience those same feelings again with someone new.

Storge

Storgic types tend to be stable and committed in their relationships. They [value](#) companionship, psychological closeness and trust. For these individuals, love relationships can sometimes grow out of friendships, so that love sneaks up on the pair. This love style is enduring, and these individuals are in it for the long haul.

Ludus

People with a ludic style view love as a game that they are playing to win. Often this can be a multiplayer game! Ludic individuals are comfortable with deception and manipulation in their relationships. They tend to be low on commitment and are often emotionally distant.

Because ludic individuals are more focused on the short term, they tend to place greater importance on the physical characteristics of their mate than do the other love styles. They are also [more likely](#) to engage in sexual hookups.

Pragma

Practicality rules for this type. Logic is used to determine compatibility and future prospects. This doesn't mean that these individuals use an emotionless, Spock-like approach to their relationships, rather they place a [high importance on whether a potential mate](#) will be suited to meeting their needs.

These needs might be social or financial. Pragmatists might wonder if their prospective partner would be accepted by family and friends, or whether they're good with money. They might also evaluate their emotional assets; for example, does a would-be partner have the skills to be calm in times of stress?

Mania

This refers to an obsessive love style. These individuals tend to be emotionally dependent and to need fairly constant reassurance in a relationship. Someone with this love style is likely to experience peaks of joy and troughs of sorrow, depending on the extent to which their partner can accommodate their needs.

Because of the possessiveness associated with this style, [jealousy can be an issue](#) for these individuals.

Agape

Agapic individuals are giving and caring, and are centred on their partner's needs. This is largely a selfless and unconditional love. An agapic partner will love you just as you are. But they will also be particularly appreciative of acts of care and kindness [that they receive back](#) from their partner.

Perhaps because these individuals are so accepting, they tend to have [very high levels](#) of relationship satisfaction.

The truth about love

The kind of love that we feel towards our significant other is [likely to change over time](#). At the start of a relationship we feel anticipation about seeing our [partner](#) and we are excited every time we see them.

These are the heady feelings we associate with being in love, and are very characteristic of [romantic love](#). But in almost all relationships, these intense emotions are not sustainable, and will fade over months to a couple of years.

Those passionate feelings will then be replaced by deeper connection as the people in the partnership grow to truly know each other. This stage is "companionate love" and can last a lifetime (or beyond).

Unfortunately, many people do not realise that the evolution from romantic love to companionate love is a normal – and indeed healthy – transition. Because the ardent feelings of adoration subside, sometimes people will think that they have fallen out of love, when in fact the intimacy and closeness of companionate love can be extremely powerful, if only given the chance.

This is a shame, as these [individuals](#) might never experience the [life satisfaction that is associated with companionate love](#).

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