

# The 5 Love Languages Summary – Gary Chapman

6 MINUTE READ

[The 5 Love Languages](#) (1990)

The Secret to Love that Lasts

by [Gary Chapman](#)

The 5 Love Languages is a concise, actionable and time-tested guide to letting others know they are loved and feeling loved and appreciated in return - by best-selling author, pastor and marriage counsellor, Gary Chapman. ([232 pages](#))

[Paperback](#) | [Ebook](#) | [Audiobook](#)

**Note:** This **The 5 Love Languages summary** is part of an ongoing project to summarise the [Best Relationship Books](#) and [Best Self Help Books](#) of all time.

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## The 5 Love Languages Review

Gary Chapman's [5 Love Languages](#) is practical philosophy at its best.

It's concise, actionable and effective. It's timelessly relevant. It breaks a topic that's tricky to tackle into a simple 5-part framework that just makes instant sense.

But while the core ideas are so simple that I can easily cover them in this *5 Love Languages* summary, you'd be missing out if you didn't pick up the original book.

It's packed with inspiring stories, action steps, suggestions for stubborn situations and a thorough FAQ. There's even a hard copy of Gary's excellent [5 Love Languages quiz](#).

If you're on the fence about this one, read my summary then stop procrastinating and [grab your own copy as soon as possible](#).

There's a good reason [5 Love Languages](#) takes the #1 spot on my list of [the best relationship books of all time](#).

## The 5 Love Languages Summary

I've split this *5 Love Languages* summary across several questions:

- **What are the 5 love languages?**
- **Why are the 5 love languages important?**
- **How do I know what my primary love language is?**

- **How do I know what someone else's primary love language is?**
- **What's the best way to express my love or appreciation?**
- **How can I talk a love language I'm not familiar with?**
- **How can I get someone else to talk my love language? and**
- **What if the 5 love languages aren't working?**

Click a link above to skip ahead or keep reading below...

## What Are the 5 Love Languages?

A love language is a way of expressing love.

**There are 5 love languages:**

- **Words of affirmation** – words that build people up;
- **Quality time** – giving someone your focused, undivided attention;
- **Receiving gifts** – things that remind people they're loved;
- **Acts of service** – things you know they would like you to do; and
- **Physical touch** – physical contact made in passing or demanding full attention.

**Memory tip:** Remember with **WRAP + Q**. Picture [the letter Q wrapped up like a gift](#).

We all prefer speaking (receiving/giving) in one primary love languages.

That preference is often influenced by the way we receive love as we grow up.

## Why Are the 5 Love Languages Important?

Once the honeymoon period of a relationship ends, it's important to be able to make the other person feel consistently and sustainably loved and appreciated (to keep their "*love tank*" full).

But when two people (partners, family members, friends) don't speak the same primary love language this becomes difficult.

You can express as much love or appreciation as you like in a language someone else doesn't value or understand and it will fall on deaf ears.

If you don't know what's happening, that can feel a lot like rejection or indifference which can quickly undermine a relationship.

On the other hand, when two people know and learn to speak each other's primary love language they can quickly and easily communicate mutual love and appreciation.

They are able to make sure they each feel loved and validated.

And, if they're a couple, they can bring up well-rounded, multi-lingual children that can recognise, give and receive love in all 5 love languages.

## How Do I Know What My Primary Love Languages Are?

First, try asking these three questions:

1. What do others do or fail to do that most hurts me?
2. What do I most often ask of others?
3. How do you I often express love or appreciation for others?

This should help you determine your primary love language.

If it's not clear which love language is most important to you, you can:

- Experiment! Give and receive in each love language to see which feels right; or
- Take Gary Chapman's [5 love languages quiz](#).

**Note:** Many people feel comfortable giving and receiving love in multiple languages but there is usually one primary preference.

## How Do I Know What Someone Else's Primary Love Languages Are?

To work out someone else's primary love languages you can:

1. Ask them (if they're familiar with the 5 love languages framework); or
2. Reverse the same questions you used to work out your primary love language.

To do so, ask (and, if necessary, take time to observe):

1. What do I do or fail to do that most hurts them?
2. What do they most often ask of me?
3. How do they most often express love or appreciation for me?

If all else fails, experiment! Try each love language and see which one feels most effective. Or read this section on "*What if it's not working?*"

## What's the Best Way to Express My Love or Appreciation?

The best way to express your love or appreciation is to regularly speak the other person's primary love language.

To do so, make it a daily habit to:

1. Ask them how loved or appreciated they feel from 0 to 10;
2. Ask for a list of ways you could make them feel more loved or appreciated;
3. Do something from the list to make them feel loved or appreciated.

You may find it easier to do this if the other person has also read, or understand the 5 love languages framework.

## How Can I Talk a Love Language I'm Not Familiar With?

Anyone can learn to speak any of the 5 love languages. All it takes is practice!

The best way to work out what other people want is to ask and experiment.

Here are some thought-starters to help get you started...

### **Words of affirmation examples:**

- **Verbal compliments:** "You look great!"
- **Encouraging words:** "You can do this!"
- **Kind words:** "I love you.", "I care about you", "I forgive you."
- **Humble words:** "Could you help me ...?", share the credit.
- **Indirect words:** Affirm the other person to and in front of others.

### **Quality time examples:**

- **Focussed attention:** Time spent **NOT** focussing on anything/one else (e.g., TV).
- **Quality listening:** [Listening to let others feel heard.](#)
- **Quality sharing:** Opening up and being vulnerable.
- **Quality activities:** Doing something together that you're both interested in sharing.

### **Receiving gifts examples:**

- **Physical gifts:** Buy, make or find something that reminds them they're appreciated.
- **Remembered gifts:** Take notes whenever they mention they love something.
- **Lasting tributes:** Donate to a charity or cause in their name.
- **Shared interests:** A book or a quality activity you can both share.
- **The gift of self:** Show up when *they* think it really counts.

## Acts of service examples:

**Note:** Ask the other person often what kinds of and specific acts of service would be meaningful to them so you don't waste time performing acts that they don't value.

- **Housework:** Cooking meals, vacuuming, paying bills, gardening, fixing things etc...
- **Loved ones:** Look after the other person's relative, pet, cause.
- **Interference:** Block interruptions and distractions while they're busy.

## Physical touch examples:

**Note:** For maximum effect, try new touches in new places at new times and learn what kinds of physical touch the other person enjoys.

- **Explicit (full attention):** Massage, holding someone as they cry, foreplay, sex.
- **Implicit (in passing):** Hand on shoulder, holding hands, passing body graze, sitting close together, quick kiss or hug, under-the-table leg touch.
- **Remote:** Wearing their clothing, tactile gifts, photos.

## How Can I Get Someone Else to Talk My Love Language?

The best way to get is to give.

Concentrate on making others feel loved and appreciated first.

Keep showing love until it's clear you're not faking it.

Then as things start to improve and the other person begins to reciprocate, introduce them to the 5 love languages framework.

## What if the 5 Love Languages Aren't Working?

There are a handful of common reasons the 5 love languages may not be working:

1. You may not be talking the right love language;
2. The other person may not trust you (yet);
3. The other person may be emotionally involved with someone else;  
and
4. You may just need to keep practising or trying a little longer.

In each case, I would strongly recommend reading (or re-reading) [the original book](#).

Gary does an excellent job of identifying common obstacles and crisis situations and using simple, real-life stories to explain how to best to tackle them.

## The 5 Love Languages Contents

***The 5 Love Languages has 13 main chapters...***

1. What Happens to Love After the Wedding?
2. Keeping the Love Tank Full
3. Falling in Love
4. Love Language #1: Words of Affirmation
5. Love Language #2: Quality Time
6. Love Language #3: Receiving Gifts
7. Love Language #4: Acts of Service
8. Love Language #5: Physical Touch
9. Discovering Your Primary Love Language
10. Love Is a Choice
11. Love Makes the Difference
12. Loving the Unlovely
13. A Personal Word



# Best The 5 Love Languages Quotes

These The 5 Love Languages quotes come from **The Art of Living**'s ever-growing central library of thoughts, anecdotes, notes, and [inspirational quotes](#).

***"Forgiveness is not a feeling; it is a commitment."***

- [Gary Chapman](#), The 5 Love Languages

***"I am amazed by how many individuals mess up every new day with yesterday. They insist on bringing into today the failures of yesterday, and in so doing, they pollute a potentially wonderful present."***

- [Gary Chapman](#), The 5 Love Languages

***"Encouragement requires empathy and seeing the world from your spouse's perspective. We must first learn what is important to our spouse. Only then can we give encouragement."***

- [Gary Chapman](#), The 5 Love Languages

***"People tend to criticize their spouse most loudly in the area where they themselves have the deepest emotional need."***

- [Gary Chapman](#), The 5 Love Languages

***"Real love... is emotional in nature but not obsessional. It is a love that unites reason and emotion. It involves an act of the will and requires discipline, and it recognizes the need for personal growth."***

- [Gary Chapman](#), The 5 Love Languages

***"Love doesn't keep a score of wrongs. Love doesn't bring up past failures. None of us is perfect. In marriage we do not always do the***

*right thing. We have sometimes done and said hurtful things to our spouses. We cannot erase the past. We can only confess it and agree that it was wrong. We can ask for forgiveness and try to act differently in the future. Having confessed my failure and asked forgiveness, I can do nothing more to mitigate the hurt it may have caused my spouse. When I have been wronged by my spouse and she has painfully confessed it and requested forgiveness, I have the option of justice or forgiveness. If I choose justice and seek to pay her back or make her pay for her wrongdoing, I am making myself the judge and her the felon. Intimacy becomes impossible. If, however, I choose to forgive, intimacy can be restored. Forgiveness is the way of love."*

- [Gary Chapman](#), The 5 Love Languages

*"For love, we will climb mountains, cross seas, traverse desert sands, and endure untold hardships. Without love, mountains become unclimbable, seas uncrossable, deserts unbearable, and hardships our lot in life."*

- [Gary Chapman](#), The 5 Love Languages

*"Our most basic emotional need is not to fall in love but to be genuinely loved by another, to know a love that grows out of reason and choice, not instinct. I need to be loved by someone who chooses to love me, who sees in me something worth loving."*

- [Gary Chapman](#), The 5 Love Languages

*"The object of love is not getting something you want but doing something for the well-being of the one you love. It is a fact, however, that when we receive affirming words we are far more likely to be motivated to reciprocate and do something our spouse desires."*

- [Gary Chapman](#), The 5 Love Languages

## The 5 Love Languages PDF Summary

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## Read More: 5 Books Like The 5 Love Languages

**Enjoyed this The 5 Love Languages summary?** You might enjoy the rest of the books on these lists of the [Best Relationship Books](#) and [Best Self Help Books](#) of all time.

And in the meantime...

**Here are 5 top books like The 5 Love Languages...**

1. [The Mastery of Love](#) - [Miguel Ruiz](#) ([FREE Summary](#))

A Practical Guide to the Art of Relationship

The Mastery of Love is a beautiful, poetic and easy-to-read self-help book that illuminates the false and unnecessarily dramatic lives we lead, filled with fear and self-rejection, and how to wake up to our own inner power so that we can learn to love others and ourselves — by Toltec Nagual and best selling author, Don Miguel Ruiz.

Published 1999 // 240 pages // Rated 4.2 over 42,100 reviews [on Goodreads](#)

2. [Codependent No More](#) - [Melody Beattie](#) ([FREE Summary](#))

## How to Stop Controlling Others and Start Caring for Yourself

Codependent No More is the definitive book on codependency, clarifying what it is, why so many struggle with it, and most importantly, how to overcome it — by former codependent and beloved self-help author Melody Beattie.

Published 1986 // 276 pages // Rated 4.1 over 31,200 reviews [on Goodreads](#)

### 3. [The Symposium](#) - Plato

Published -385 // 131 pages // Rated 4.1 over 50,600 reviews [on Goodreads](#)

### 4. [Love and Respect](#) - Emerson Eggerichs

The Love She Most Desires; The Respect He Desperately Needs

Published 2004 // 336 pages // Rated 4.2 over 48,500 reviews [on Goodreads](#)

### 5. [The Art of Loving](#) - Erich Fromm

Published 1956 // 192 pages // Rated 4.0 over 61,100 reviews [on Goodreads](#)

## Wish There Was a Faster/Easier Way?

Whenever you're ready, here are four ways I can help you be more productive, find more balance and live life more on purpose...

1. **Curious? Discover how productive you really are...** Take this free, 2-minute assessment to unlock your PQ and discover the top 25 habits you need to get big things done. [Take the 2-minute quiz →](#)
2. **Overwhelmed? Get a free chapter of my book...** Let me show you how to beat procrastination, permanently, with this free sneak peek inside **TAoL**'s ultimate productivity primer. [Download your free chapter →](#)

3. **Stuck? Grab a 90-Day TRACKTION Planner...** Get the tool thousands trust to help them take control of their time, master their habits and hit goals in every part of their lives. [Order your 90-day planner →](#)
4. **Burned out? Join the TRACKTION Community...** Take the 6-week masterclass, get weekly group coaching, find accountability partners and connect with like-minded self-starters. [Get started FREE →](#)

### [Arthur Worsley](#)

I founded **TAoL** to discover and share the best wisdom on how to live long and prosper. Before that I studied Psychology, Philosophy & Physiology at Oxford and consulted at McKinsey. **Still curious?** [Learn more](#) or [take my FREE productivity quiz](#).