

Different Kinds of Love

The interest in the royal wedding last weekend got me thinking about the different kinds of love there are as not everyone experiences love in exactly the same manner.

Research has shown that love comes in several different forms or styles. For the most part, people experience love as a blend of two or three of the styles listed below. Essentially, people have different notions of what it means to "be in love." There are six styles of love that one can identify.

Passionate Love: Some people experience love with a lot of passion, intimacy and intensity. Love based on passion has a strong sexual and emotional component. People who experience love this way want to be emotionally and physically close to their romantic partners and they tend to idealize love. Such love is marked by passion as well as compassion (kindness and consideration). Passionate love is romantic - the type of love that creates excitement at the beginning of a new relationship.

Friendly love: Some people experience love as a gradual and slow process. When love is based on a form of friendship, getting to know someone comes before having intense feelings for that person. Love based on friendship takes time, it requires genuine liking and understanding of a partner, and it develops slowly over time. Love based on friendship is often compared to the love that one has for a friend.

Caring Love: Some people experience love as care giving. This kind of love is the overwhelming desire to want to take care of a partner - a parental or nurturing type of love. Love based on this is attentive, caring, compassionate and kind - a more altruistic or selfless type of love.

Manic Love: Some people experience love as being out of control. For these people love is an anxious experience an anxious experience. Love is an overwhelming experience; it turns one's life upside down and it results in a complete loss of one's identity. Love experienced this way is crazy, impulsive and needy. People who experience love as unstable fall in love quickly, but their love tends to consume them. It also tends to burnout before it gets the chance to mature. Such love is often marked by extreme delusions, feelings of being out of control, rash decisions, and vulnerability. People who experience love in this unstable way are easily taken advantage of by people who are game-players.

Rational Love: Some people take a practical approach to love. Love is not crazy, intense, or out of control. Love is based on common sense and reason. People who experience love as rational tend to pick a suitable mate the way most other people make serious life decisions: picking a partner is based on careful consideration and reason. Practical concerns underlie this type of love.

Game-playing 'love': This final type of love is false love within which the person seeks to dismiss and diminish their partner. Some people experience love as a game to be played with other people's emotions. The goal or desire is to gain control over a partner through manipulation. People who experience love in this way sometimes have affairs where they are also in complete control. Lying, cheating and deception are common for people who experience love in this way – it's all part of the

game. For people who engage in this false love, it is satisfying to outwit a partner and exploit his or her weak spot.

Overall, when thinking about love and relationships, sometimes it helps to keep in mind that love does not always mean the same thing to everyone.