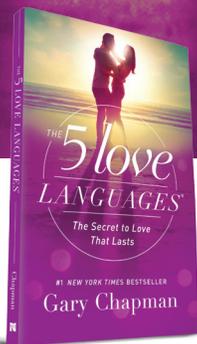


THE *5 love*
LANGUAGES[®]

7-Day Devotional

FOR HER



This devotional is derived from
The 5 Love Languages[®].

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As featured on the
YouVersion Bible App.

DAY 1

Something in our nature cries out

to be loved by another. Isolation is devastating to the human psyche. That is why solitary confinement is considered the cruelest of punishments. At the heart of humankind's existence is the desire to be intimate and to be loved by another. Marriage is designed to meet that need for intimacy and love. That is why the ancient biblical writings spoke of the husband and wife becoming "one flesh." That did not mean that individuals would lose their identity; it meant that they would enter into each other's lives in a deep and intimate way.

At the heart of humankind's existence is the desire to be intimate and to be loved by another. Marriage is designed to meet that need for intimacy and love.

But if love is important, it is also elusive. I have listened to many married couples share their secret pain. Some came to me because the inner ache had become unbearable. Others came because they realized that their behavior patterns or the misbehavior of their spouse was destroying the marriage. Some came simply to inform me that they no longer wanted to be married. Their dreams of "living happily ever after" had been dashed against the hard walls of reality. Again and again I have heard the words "Our love is gone, our relationship is dead. We used to feel close, but not now. We no longer enjoy being with each other. We don't meet each other's needs." Their stories bear testimony that adults as well as children have "love tanks."

Could it be that deep inside hurting couples exists an invisible "emotional love tank" with its gauge on empty? Could the misbehavior, withdrawal, harsh words, and critical spirit occur because of that empty tank? If we could find a way to fill it, could the marriage be reborn?

With a full tank would couples be able to create an emotional climate where it is possible to discuss differences and resolve conflicts? Could that tank be the key that makes marriage work? Those questions sent me on a long journey. Along the way, I discovered the simple yet powerful insights contained in this devotional. The journey has taken me not only through thirty years of marriage counseling but also into the hearts and minds of hundreds of couples throughout America. From Seattle to Miami, couples have invited me into the inner chamber of their marriages, and we have talked openly. The illustrations included in this book are cut from the fabric of real life. Only names and places are changed to protect the privacy of the individuals who have spoken so freely.

I am convinced that keeping the emotional love tank full is as important to a marriage as maintaining the proper oil level is to an automobile. Running your marriage on an empty "love tank" may cost you even more than trying to drive your car without oil. What you are about to read has the potential of saving thousands of marriages and can even enhance the emotional climate of a good marriage. Whatever the quality of your marriage now, it can always be better. ●

Today's Verse

Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins.

– 1 Peter 4:8 (NLT)

Your insights...

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DAY 2 *Love makes requests,* not demands.

When I demand things from my spouse, I become a parent and she the child. It is the parent who tells the three-year-old what he ought to do and, in fact, what he must do. That is necessary because the three-year-old does not yet know how to navigate in the treacherous waters of life. In marriage, however, we are equal, adult partners. We are not perfect to be sure, but we are adults and we are partners. If we are to develop an intimate relationship, we need to know each other's desires. If we wish to love each other, we need to know what the other person wants.

The way we express those desires, however, is all-important. If they come across as demands, we have erased the possibility of intimacy and will drive our spouse away.

The way we express those desires, however, is all-important. If they come across as demands, we have erased the possibility of intimacy and will drive our spouse away. If, however, we make our needs and desires known in the form of a request, we are giving guidance, not ultimatums. The husband who says, "Could you make that good pasta one of these nights?" is giving his wife guidance on how to love him and thus build intimacy. On the other hand, the husband who says, "Can't we ever have a decent meal around here?" is being adolescent, is making a demand, and his wife is likely to fire back, "Okay, you cook!" The wife who says, "Do you think it will be possible for you to clean the gutters this weekend?" is expressing love by making a request. But the wife who says, "If you don't get those gutters cleaned out soon, they are going to fall off the house. They already have trees growing out of them!" has ceased to love and has become a domineering spouse.

When you make a request of your husband you are affirming his worth and abilities. You are in essence indicating that he has something or can do something that is meaningful and worthwhile to you. When, however, you make demands, you have become not a lover but a tyrant. Your husband will feel not affirmed but belittled. A request introduces the element of choice. Your husband may choose to respond to your request or to deny it, because love is always a choice. That's what makes it meaningful. To know that my spouse loves me enough to respond to one of my requests communicates emotionally that she cares about me, respects me, admires me, and wants to do something to please me. We cannot get emotional love by way of demand. My spouse may in fact comply with my demands, but it is not an expression of love. It is an act of fear or guilt or some other emotion, but not love.

Thus, a request creates the possibility for an expression of love, whereas a demand suffocates that possibility. ●

Today's Verse

There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends.

– John 15:13 (NLT)

Your insights...

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DAY 3

It isn't enough to just be in the same

room with someone. A key ingredient in giving your spouse quality time is giving them focused attention, especially in this era of many distractions. When a father is sitting on the floor, rolling a ball to his two-year-old, his attention is not focused on the ball but on his child. For that brief moment, however long it lasts, they are together. If, however, the father is talking on the phone while he rolls the ball, his attention is diluted. Some husbands and wives think they are spending time together when, in reality, they are only living in close proximity. They are in the

same house at the same time, but they are not together. A wife who is texting while her husband tries to talk to her is not giving him quality time, because he does not have her full attention.

[Quality time] means that we are doing something together and that we are giving our full attention to the other person.

Quality time does not mean that we have to spend our together moments gazing into each other's eyes. It means that we are doing something together and that we are giving our full attention to the other person. The activity in which we are both engaged is incidental. The important thing emotionally is that we are spending focused time with each other. The activity is a vehicle that creates the sense of togetherness. The important thing about the father rolling the ball to the two-year-old is not the activity itself, but the emotions that are created between the father and his child.

Similarly, a husband and wife playing tennis together, if it is genuine quality time, will focus not on the game but on the fact that they are spending time together. What happens on the emotional level is what matters. Our spending time together in a common pursuit communicates that we care about each other, that we enjoy being with each other, that we like to do things together. ●

Today's Verse

So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing.

– 1 Thess. 5:11 (NLT)

Your insights...

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DAY 4*Not all of us*

are out of touch with our emotions, but when it comes to talking, all of us are affected by our personality. I have observed two basic personality types. The first I call the "Dead Sea." In the little nation of Israel, the Sea of Galilee flows south by way of the Jordan River into the Dead Sea. The Dead Sea goes nowhere. It receives but it does not give. This personality type receives many experiences, emotions, and thoughts throughout the day. They have a large reservoir where they store that information, and they are perfectly happy not to talk. If you say to a Dead Sea personality, "What's wrong? Why aren't you

talking tonight?" he will probably answer, "Nothing's wrong. What makes you think something's wrong?" And that response is perfectly honest. He is content not to talk. He could drive from Chicago to Detroit and never say a word and be perfectly happy.

The good news is that Dead Seas can learn to talk and Babbling Brooks can learn to listen. We are influenced by our personality but not controlled by it.

On the other extreme is the "Babbling Brook." For this personality, whatever enters into the eye gate or the ear gate comes out the mouth gate and there are seldom sixty seconds between the two. Whatever they see, whatever they hear, they tell. In fact, if no one is at home to talk to, they will call someone else. "Do you know what I saw? Do you know what I heard?" If they can't get someone on the

telephone, they may talk to themselves because they have no reservoir. Many times a Dead Sea marries a Babbling Brook. That happens because when they are dating, it is a very attractive match.

If you are a Dead Sea and you date a Babbling Brook, you will have a wonderful evening. You don't have to think, "How will I get the conversation started tonight? How will I keep the conversation flowing?" In fact, you don't have to think at all. All you have to do is nod your head and say, "Uh-huh," and he will fill up the whole evening and you will go home saying, "What a wonderful person." On the other hand, if you are a Babbling Brook and you date a Dead Sea, you will have an equally wonderful evening because Dead Seas are the world's best listeners. You will babble for three hours. He will listen intently to you, and you will go home saying, "What a wonderful person." You attract each other. But five years after marriage, the Babbling Brook wakes up one morning and says, "We've been married five years, and I don't know him." The Dead Sea is saying, "I know her too well. I wish she would stop the flow and give me a break." The good news is that Dead Seas can learn to talk and Babbling Brooks can learn to listen. We are influenced by our personality but not controlled by it. One way to learn new patterns is to establish a daily sharing time in which each of you will talk about three things that happened to you that day and how you feel about them. I call that the "Minimum Daily Requirement" for a healthy marriage. If you will start with the daily minimum, in a few weeks or months you may find quality conversation flowing more freely between you. ●

Today's Verse

Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry.

– James 1:19 (NLT)

Your insights...

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DAY 5 *What we do for each other*

before marriage is no indication of what we will do after marriage. Before marriage, we are carried along by the force of the in-love obsession. After marriage, we revert to being the people we were before we “fell in love.” Our actions are influenced by the model of our parents, our own personality, our perceptions of love, our emotions, needs, and desires. Only one thing is certain about our behavior: It will not be the same behavior we exhibited when we were caught up in being “in love.”

Our actions are influenced by the model of our parents, our own personality, our perceptions of love, our emotions, needs, and desires.

Love is a choice and cannot be coerced. Mark and Mary were criticizing each other’s behavior and getting nowhere. Once they decided to make requests of each other rather than demands, their marriage began to turn around. Criticism and demands tend to drive wedges. With enough criticism, you may get acquiescence from your husband. He may do what you want, but probably it will not be an expression of love. You can give guidance to love by making requests: “I wish you would wash the car, change the baby’s diaper, mow the grass,” but you cannot create the will to love.

Each of us must decide daily to love or not to love our husbands. If we choose to love, then expressing it in the way in which our husband requests will make our love most effective emotionally.

My spouse’s criticisms about my behavior provide me with the clearest clue to her primary love language. People tend to criticize their spouse most loudly in the area where they themselves have the deepest emotional need. Their criticism is an ineffective way of pleading for love. If we understand that, it may help us process their criticism in a more productive manner. A wife may say to her husband after he gives her a criticism, “It sounds like that is extremely important to you. Could you explain why it is so crucial?” Criticism often needs clarification. Initiating such a conversation may eventually turn the criticism into a request rather than a demand. ●

Today’s Verse

Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God.

– 1 John 4:7 (NLT)

Your insights...

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DAY 6

We have long known that physical

touch is a way of communicating emotional love. Numerous research projects in the area of child development have reached that conclusion: Babies who are held, hugged, and kissed develop a healthier emotional life than those who are left for long periods of time without physical contact. Physical touch is also a powerful vehicle for communicating marital love. Holding hands, kissing, embracing, and sexual intercourse are all ways of communicating emotional love to one's spouse. For some women, physical touch is their primary love language. Without it, they feel unloved. With it, their emotional tank is filled, and they feel secure in the love of their husband.

Of the five senses, touching, unlike the other four, is not limited to one localized area of the body.

Of the five senses, touching, unlike the other four, is not limited to one localized area of the body. Tiny tactile receptors are located throughout the body. When those receptors are touched or pressed, nerves carry impulses to the brain. The brain interprets these impulses and we perceive that the thing that touched us is warm or cold, hard or soft. It causes pain or pleasure. We may also interpret it as loving or hostile.

Some parts of the body are more sensitive than others. The difference is due to the fact that the tiny tactile receptors are not scattered evenly over the body but arranged in clusters. Thus, the tip of the tongue is highly sensitive to touch whereas the back of the shoulders is the least sensitive. The tips of the fingers and the tip of the nose are other extremely sensitive areas. Our purpose, however, is not to understand the neurological basis of the sense of touch but rather its psychological importance.

Physical touch can make or break a relationship. It can communicate hate or love. To the person whose primary love language is physical touch, the message will be far louder than the words "I hate you" or "I love you." A slap in the face is detrimental to any child, but it is devastating to a child whose primary love language is touch. A tender hug communicates love to any child, but it shouts love to the child whose primary love language is physical touch. The same is true of adults.

In marriage, the touch of love may take many forms. Since touch receptors are located throughout the body, lovingly touching your spouse almost anywhere can be an expression of love. That does not mean that all touches are created equal. Some will bring more pleasure to your spouse than others. Your best instructor is your husband of course. After all, he is the one you are seeking to love. He knows best what he perceives as a loving touch. Don't insist on touching him in your way and in your time. Learn to speak his love dialect. Your husband may find some touches uncomfortable or irritating. To insist on continuing those touches is to communicate the opposite of love. It is saying that you are not sensitive to his needs and that you care little about his perceptions of what is pleasant. Don't make the mistake of believing that the touch that brings pleasure to you will also bring pleasure to him. ●

Today's Verse

Greet each other with a kiss of love. Peace be with all of you who are in Christ.

1 Peter 5:14 (NLT)

Your insights...

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DAY 7 *Love is not our only* emotional need.

Psychologists have observed that among our basic needs are the need for security, self-worth, and significance. Love, however, interfaces with all of those. If I feel loved by my spouse, I can relax, knowing that my lover will do me no ill. I feel secure in her presence. I may face many uncertainties in my vocation. I may have enemies in other areas of my life, but with my spouse I feel secure.

My sense of self-worth is fed by the fact that my spouse loves me. After all, if she loves me, I must be worth loving. My parents may have given me negative or mixed messages about my worth, but my spouse knows me as an adult and loves me. Her love builds my self-esteem.

The need for significance is the emotional force behind much of our behavior. Life is driven by the desire for success. We want our lives to count for something. We have our own idea of what it means to be significant, and we work hard to reach our goals. Feeling loved by a husband enhances our sense of significance. We reason, If someone loves me, I must have significance.

The need for significance is the emotional force behind much of our behavior. Life is driven by the desire for success. We want our lives to count for something.

I am significant because I stand at the apex of the created order. I have the ability to think in abstract terms, communicate my thoughts via words, and make decisions. By means of printed or recorded words, I can benefit from the thoughts of those who have preceded me. I can profit from others' experience, though they lived in a different age and culture. I experience the death of family and friends and sense that there is existence beyond the material. I discover that, in all cultures, people believe in a spiritual world. My heart tells me it is true even when my mind, trained in scientific observation, raises critical questions. I am significant. Life has meaning. There is a higher purpose. I want to believe it, but I may not feel significant until someone expresses love to me. When my spouse lovingly invests time, energy, and effort in me, I believe that I am significant. Without love, I may spend a lifetime in search of significance, self-worth, and security.

When I experience love, it influences all of those needs positively. I am now freed to develop my potential. I am more secure in my self-worth and can now turn my efforts outward instead of being obsessed with my own needs. True love always liberates. In the context of marriage, if we do not feel loved, our differences are magnified. We come to view each other as a threat to our happiness.

We fight for self-worth and significance, and marriage becomes a battlefield rather than a haven. Love is not the answer to everything, but it creates a climate of security in which we can seek answers to those things that bother us. In the security of love, a couple can discuss differences without condemnation. Conflicts can be resolved. Two people who are different can learn to live together in harmony. We discover how to bring out the best in each other. Those are the rewards of love. ●

Today's Verse

You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it.

Psalm 139:13-14 (NLT)

Your insights...

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Simple Ideas, Lasting Love

Between busy schedules and long days, expressing love can fall by the wayside. We forget to compliment, to give gifts “just because,” to linger in our embrace. The things that say “I love you” seem to either not get said or not get through. This is a book about saying it—and hearing it—clearly. No gimmicks. No psychoanalyzing. Just learning to express love in your spouse’s language.

With over 10 million copies sold, *The 5 Love Languages*® has transformed countless relationships. Its ideas are simple and conveyed with clarity and humor, making this book as practical as it is personable. You’ll be inspired by real-life stories and encouraged by its commonsense approach. Reading this book feels like taking a walk with a wise friend. Applying it will forever change your relationship—starting today. ●



Gary Chapman—author, speaker, and counselor—has a passion for people

and for helping them form lasting relationships. He is the bestselling author of *The 5 Love Languages*® series and the director of Marriage and Family Life Consultants, Inc. Gary travels the world presenting seminars, and his radio programs air on more than 400 stations. For more information, visit 5lovelanguages.com.



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