

THE 5 LOVE LANGUAGES™

FOR MEN

STUDY GUIDE

**YOU'VE READ THE BOOK.
NOW GO DEEPER!**

The 5 Love Languages® has transformed countless relationships. This practical guide helps men—either on their own or with a small group—experience that transformation through thought-provoking, chapter-by-chapter discussion and application questions.

For more information or to discover your love language, visit
www.5LoveLanguages.com.

HOW MANY LANGUAGES DO YOU SPEAK?

IMPORTANT THOUGHT: One of the five love languages is an expressway to your wife's heart. That's not to say she won't respond politely to one or more of the other languages—especially if she sees you making a real effort. But ultimately, those other four love languages are as foreign to her as Cantonese is to most English speakers. On the other hand, when you express your love for your wife using her *primary* love language, it's like hitting the sweet spot on a baseball bat or golf club. It just feels right—and the results are impressive.

1. How many TV shows can you think of that feature men and women—usually married couples—who can't seem to understand or communicate with each other? Is there any truth to the notion that the two genders will simply never be able to understand each other completely?
2. What did you assume about your wife's love language before you started reading the book? What effect did those assumptions have on your relationship?
3. Why would someone fall in love with a person who speaks a foreign primary love language?
4. How would you describe the arc of your relationship with your wife, from the time you started dating until now? What role did love languages—the ability or inability to speak them—play in the ups and downs of your relationship?
5. Rank the following resources (which are listed in chapter 1) in order of importance as they relate to your efforts to become fluent in your wife's primary love language: a short memory, creativity, vision, the good advice of others, endurance, prayer, and a firm stance. Explain your rankings.

FOR GROUP DISCUSSION: What's the worst that could happen if you applied the principles of the 5 Love Languages to your marriage? What's the best that could happen?

Notes:

CHAPTER TWO

HOW TO BECOME FLUENT IN WORDS OF AFFIRMATION (LOVE LANGUAGE #1)

IMPORTANT THOUGHT: Mark Twain once said, “I can live for two months on a good compliment.” Spoken like a true Words-of-Affirmation guy. His admission gets to the heart of this love language. For someone whose primary manner of receiving love is Words of Affirmation, compliments and encouragement aren’t just nice gestures or polite conversational techniques. They’re nourishment. That person doesn’t just hear, “Well done!” or “You look incredible in that dress!” or “Attagirl!” She also hears, “You have value” and “I love you” and “You make a difference.”

1. What’s the best thing anyone has ever said to (or about) you? What kind of impact did it have on you?
2. What happens if you offer your wife flattery instead of Words of Affirmation? What impact might that have on her?
3. Think of a time you used words to hurt your wife. How did (or will) you use words to make amends?
4. What things are important to your wife? How can you work them into your Words of Affirmation?
5. What could your wife do, become, or accomplish, given the right encouragement? How can you give her the encouragement she needs?

FOR GROUP DISCUSSION: How does it make you feel to know that your words have such potential—not only for good, but also for bad? What happens when we fail to take that potential seriously?

Notes:

CHAPTER THREE

HOW TO BECOME FLUENT IN QUALITY TIME (LOVE LANGUAGE #2)

IMPORTANT THOUGHT: If you're married to a native Quality Time speaker, you should feel at least a little flattered. Your wife isn't looking for Words of Affirmation or Gifts or Acts of Service. She just wants you. She will experience love and affection—she will feel genuinely cared for—simply by sharing some of your precious time. A half hour here, an hour there, a weekend on occasion is enough to keep her love tank filled—provided it's the right kind of time.

1. Who or what gets first dibs on your waking hours? What about second? Third? Who or what gets what's left over?
2. What makes quality time *quality* time?
3. What impact, if any, does social media—the time you spend on your devices—have on the Quality Time you spend with your wife?
4. What are the biggest obstacles to Quality Time in your life right now? What steps can you take to clear them or at least make them a little more manageable?
5. List five things you and your wife can enjoy together—things that involve more than a little Quality Time. Put them on your schedule and don't allow them to be preempted or postponed.

FOR GROUP DISCUSSION: Take an objective look at your typical weekly schedule—the time you spend away from home, the time you spend with friends, the time you spend on yourself (working out, playing sports, indulging in hobbies). What are you communicating to your wife in the way you use your time?

Notes:

CHAPTER FOUR

HOW TO BECOME FLUENT IN RECEIVING GIFTS (LOVE LANGUAGE #3)

IMPORTANT THOUGHT: A person whose primary love language is Receiving Gifts is not necessarily a materialistic person. Her aim is not to amass a collection of valuables but rather to surround herself with reminders of her loved ones' affection. The cost and worth of the presents are incidental to her. When it comes to the Receiving Gifts love language, it truly is the thought that counts.

1. What is the best gift you've ever received? What makes it so special to you?
2. What is the best gift you've ever given? What separates it from other gifts you've given?
3. If gifts are visual symbols of love, what does your wife have to remind her of your love?
4. If "Extreme Saver" is at one end of the money spectrum and "Extreme Spender" is at the other end, where do you fall in that spectrum? (Don't say, "Right in the middle"; choose a side.) Where does your wife fall? What do your positions say about your relationship? What challenges do they present when it comes to giving gifts?
5. Which idea in the "Receiving Gifts Phrase Book" (in chapter 4) would work best for your wife? Why? What tweaks or adjustments, if any, would you need to make?

FOR GROUP DISCUSSION: A young newlywed comes to you for advice. He says, "My wife's primary love language is Receiving Gifts, but we're on a very tight budget. How can I keep her love tank filled?" What would you tell him?

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HOW TO BECOME FLUENT IN ACTS OF SERVICE (LOVE LANGUAGE #4)

IMPORTANT THOUGHT: For maximum impact, your Acts of Service should be done with eagerness that shows your excitement to do something meaningful for your wife. They should be done with good humor, even the ones that take you way, way, way out of your comfort zone. And they should be done with humility. Don't call attention to yourself while you're performing them. Don't make a big deal about them afterward. Refuse to play the hero card or the martyr card. Remember who you're doing them for and why.

1. Who is your role model when it comes to Acts of Service? Why? What did you learn from that person?
2. How can you tell if your Acts of Service are having the desired impact on your wife? How can you tell if she simply appreciates what you're doing or if she is truly experiencing love through your acts?
3. How can you maintain a spirit of eagerness and good humor—without faking—for Acts of Service that you otherwise would find distasteful?
4. What's the most loving, heartfelt Act of Service you've ever performed for your wife? What was her reaction? How did her reaction affect you?
5. What is at the very top of your wife's to-do list? What would happen if you finished that job for her? What's keeping you from finishing the job? What will it take for you to turn your good intentions regarding the project into a job well done?

FOR GROUP DISCUSSION: What would you say to someone who is performing Acts of Service for his wife but is not getting the kind of reactions he hoped for?

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HOW TO BECOME FLUENT IN PHYSICAL TOUCH (LOVE LANGUAGE #5)

IMPORTANT THOUGHT: If your wife's primary love language is Physical Touch, think of her as a "supertoucher." She can sense love and affection in the slightest arm squeeze or back caress. Physical contact that wouldn't even register with most people has the potential to thrill her, change her mood, brighten her day, and—most importantly—make her feel loved and cared for.

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, with "1" being "Untouchable" and "10" being "Crave It Constantly," how much do you enjoy Physical Touch? Where would your wife be on that same scale? What do those two numbers tell you?
2. Who or what has influenced your feelings about Physical Touch?
3. What do you think a "baseline test" (as described in chapter 6) of your current Physical Touch relationship with your wife would reveal? What conclusions would you draw from those results? What conclusions would your wife likely draw?
4. What two types of love touches are most likely to have an immediate positive impact on your wife? How do you know that?
5. Of the dozen or so suggestions in the "Physical Touch Phrase Book" in chapter 6, which ones would definitely work with your wife? Which ones would definitely not work? Which ones would need to be tweaked somewhat in order to work?

FOR GROUP DISCUSSION: Imagine that a newly married friend comes to you and says, "I just found out that my wife's primary love language is Physical Touch, and I have no idea what to do about it." What three tips would you give him?

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WHAT LANGUAGES DO YOU SPEAK?

IMPORTANT THOUGHT: For most of us, discovering a primary love language—our spouse’s or our own—is a challenge. The clues aren’t always as obvious as we might hope. We shouldn’t be surprised. We are, after all, complex individuals. We have a variety of interests. We respond to all kinds of stimuli. There’s no reason people *should* expect to figure us out quickly.

1. Did you have an “aha” moment the first time you glanced at the list of the five love languages? Did you spot your wife’s—or your own—love language right away? If so, what gave it away? If not, why do you suppose that is?
2. If you could choose your wife’s love language, what would it be? Why?
3. Of the five love languages, which one do you think would take you longest to become fluent in? Why?
4. How well do you think the Tank Check Game, as described in chapter 7, would work with your wife? Is she likely to be open and transparent with you about her needs and feelings? Is there an obstacle in your relationship right now that might lessen the game’s effectiveness? What, if anything, can you do to make the game work for you?
5. Why do the most effective strategies for growing and improving our relationship always seem to take us outside of our comfort zone?

FOR GROUP DISCUSSION:

Consider the following statements . . .

Two people can have a successful marriage without speaking each other’s love language.

Two people cannot have a successful marriage without speaking each other’s love language.

Choose your position and make your strongest case for it.

Notes:

TROUBLESHOOTING

IMPORTANT THOUGHT: Many couples allow their feelings of romance, excitement, and “in-loveness” to carry them into marriage before they’ve had a chance to consider each other’s love language. From there, the busyness and pressures of everyday life leave them little time or energy to learn. So they do what they can, stick to the language they know, and hope for the best. Unfortunately, hope is a lousy defense against the annoyances, mistakes, frustrations, fears, dissatisfaction, boredom, incompatibility, temptations, regrets, and troubles that lie ahead.

1. Describe a marriage in which spouses have lowered their expectations and learned to live with diminishing returns in their relationship. Why would two people choose to live that way?
2. Imagine that you could take an aerial view of your marriage and see the results of years of heated words, regrettable choices, unresolved issues, and silent treatments. What would it look like? Would it resemble a battlefield—two people living in a scarred and damaged landscape? Would it look more like an obstacle course—two people separated by all kinds of hurdles, stumbling blocks, and obstructions? Describe what you might see.
3. What made you fall in love with your wife? What has happened to your “in love” feelings since then? Have they gradually increased? Have they sharply declined? Have they “peaked and valleyed” over the years like the stock market?
4. Where is the needle on your love tank pointing right now? Why? Where do you think the needle on your wife’s love tank is pointing right now? What makes you think so?
5. Should loving your wife be hard work? Explain.

FOR GROUP DISCUSSION: What would you say to someone who argued that if you have to choose to show love to your spouse, instead of feeling it naturally, you’re probably with the wrong person?

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HOW CAN YOU WORK THROUGH ANGER TOGETHER?

IMPORTANT THOUGHT: I There's nothing inherently sinful about anger. It's simply evidence of our concern for fairness and justice. When we sense something is unfair or unjust, anger is our natural reaction. There's no need to condemn ourselves or our wife for experiencing anger. Likewise, there's no need to deny being angry. There's no shame in it. What we *do* with that anger is what matters.

1. Think of the first time you remember getting mad at your wife. What were the circumstances? How did you react? How did she react? What would you change about that encounter if you could?
2. Describe your models for anger resolution when you were growing up. How did your parents deal with their anger? How did that make you feel as a kid? How does it make you feel now? How does it affect the way you process and deal with anger?
3. Make a list of the daily stressors that tend to fuel your anger: work demands, clueless drivers, talk radio, social media, financial concerns, or anything else that tends to push your buttons. What specific steps can you take to lessen their impact on you?
4. What are some useful tips and strategies for staying calm when you're feeling angry?
5. Think of an unresolved conflict or issue in your marriage that was caused or made worse by an unhealthy anger. Using the principles from chapter 9, create a workable strategy for resolving the situation this week.

FOR GROUP DISCUSSION: According to the book, anger can be healthy in a relationship—if it's dealt with in the right way. If it's dealt with in the wrong way, though, it can be destructive and harmful. The question is, where's the tipping point? How can you tell when your anger has stopped being healthy and started being harmful?

Notes:

THE ART OF APOLOGIZING

IMPORTANT THOUGHT: Done well, an apology can bring closure to tensions, conflicts, and hurt feelings that have been sore spots for months, even years. It can change the way your wife thinks of you and the way she looks at you. It can break down barriers faster than any other words can.

1. Think about how often you use the phrase “My bad” or some other form of halfhearted apology. What would be a better way to express “I’m sorry” to your friends, colleagues, and casual acquaintances?
2. How do you determine whether someone is being sincere with you? How can you apply those same standards to your apologies?
3. True or false: If you don’t make yourself vulnerable to rejection by your wife, you’re not apologizing effectively.
4. Think of the last thing you said or did that called (or calls) for an apology to your wife. Make a list of three good ways and three bad ways to begin your apology.
5. What is your biggest challenge or obstacle when it comes to apologizing to your wife? What is your strategy for meeting that challenge or overcoming that obstacle?

FOR GROUP DISCUSSION: If you were to take the initiative in delivering sincere, well-crafted apologies when they are needed, what kind of domino effect might that have on your marriage, on your family, at work, and in the community and beyond?

Notes:

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PREMIUM ASSESSMENT

Love Just Got Easier.

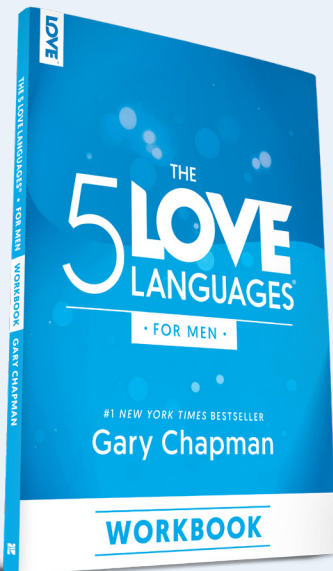
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