



EPISODE 6: RETHINKING THE FIVE LOVE LANGUAGES

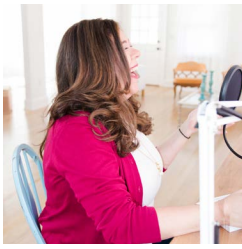
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Welcome everyone. Today we're going to talk about re-thinking the five love languages, which in case you're not familiar with them, they are the topic of the most popular relationship book in the world. Before we dive in though, I just want to thank you for listening and sharing and reviewing the podcast. This is the first episode I'm recording after the launch. We launched Valentine's weekend and by Sunday we were number 35 out of all the relationship podcasts on iTunes and that is thanks to you. I am so grateful to you for being here and listening and sharing with your friends and I want you to know that I really have a deep sense of responsibility to share concepts that are useful for you to apply and to have a lot of fun along the way. So on the five-star marriage episode, I talked about making excellence the goal and not perfection, and I want you all to know that I'm really on that.

Let's be excellent together in our lives and in our marriages. Before we dive into the five love languages, I want to share this quote from Abraham Hicks. It came up in my Facebook memories and it's one of those things sometimes now, does anyone do this, I put things on Facebook so that they come up in my memories later. So this is one of those things that came up in my memories and I was so happy it did come up right as I was working on this show because it sums up so many of the principles that I teach in such a powerful and succinct way. So this is the quote. "Tell everyone you know: My happiness depends on me, so you are off the hook. And then demonstrate it. Be happy no matter what they're doing. Practice feeling good no matter what. And before you know it, you will not give anyone else responsibility for the way you feel and then you'll love them all."

I love this quote so much and it is so perfect to frame the conversation that we're about to have about the five love languages. So think about what your marriage would be like if your happiness depended on you and if your husband's happiness depended on him. This is ultimate





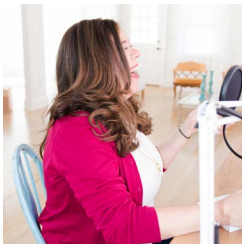
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emotional freedom, really. It really is. And paradoxically, we're going to talk about paradox several times today, that leads you to a deeper, richer, even more nourishing love than the kind of love that is filled with expectations and demands and obligations. So just think about what kind of love that is. It is for sure not the fun kind when it's based on demands and obligations. So I'm going to read that quote again so it really sinks in. I'm going to read it slowly. You guys know there's a transcript on the website. So you can always go and download the transcript if you want to get the exact quote.

"Tell everyone you know, 'My happiness depends on me, so you are off the hook.' And then demonstrate it. Be happy no matter what they're doing. Practice feeling good no matter what. And before you know it, you will not give anyone else responsibility for the way you feel and then you'll love them all." Okay, now let's dive in to rethinking the five love languages with that in mind. So I have to be honest, I had a lot of resistance to sitting down and writing and recording this episode. Even though I knew it was the next one I wanted to record, my brain was thinking thoughts like this is going to ruffle some feathers, so many people love that book so much. And yet I know I have to share what I'm going to teach today precisely because no one else is talking about this and it's affecting marriages right now and it might even be affecting your marriage. I'm going to give you an example of something that happened to one of my clients in just a moment, so you see why I'm so passionate about rethinking the five love languages and how we use them. The premise of the book, if you haven't read it or seen it, is that we all give love and like to receive love in certain ways, and the languages described in the book are words of affirmation, quality time, receiving gifts, acts of service and physical touch. And you can take a quiz on the book's website. You can find out your love language and your partner's love language and once you have this knowledge you can either use it to get closer or to create a huge wedge in your relationship. And that's why I'm talking about it today. This book is often





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used as a roadmap for how to help couples connect with each other.

And there is some things in the book that are just wrong. And when I say wrong, I don't mean that I disagree. I mean the way the concept is approached is flawed and ineffective and doesn't actually work. Or, better said, it doesn't reliably work. As in, it works sometimes, but not others. Some people feel amazing and some people feel worse. So imagine if you went to the doctor and you got medicine and half the time it made you sick and half the time it worked, wouldn't you want to double check if that medicine was a good idea? I for sure would. That is what we're going to do today with the love languages. We're just going to check in. Some of you love them and use them and that's great. And some of you might be super frustrated about them and this episode will help you. And some of you have never heard of them.

That's great too because you will know exactly what to do if someone brings them up. I'm going to give you the whole scoop. So I'm going to do a whole episode on decision making paradigms another day, which is a topic that doesn't sound super sexy, but it will make your lives much, much easier and easy is always sexy. Right? Anyway, I will do a whole episode on that, but to give you an idea of one of the decision making paradigms that I use with my coaching clients, it's super, super simple. It's two questions. Is it healthy and does it work? That is a litmus test that I run coaching tools through and I evaluate them whether it's a tool I develop or tool someone else teaches. You'll notice on the podcast that I quote my teachers and my mentors often and I don't share what I share because I think it's pretty or it's fun.

Although we'd love to have fun here, but what I share, I share because it works and because it's healthy. So just remember that. Is it healthy and does it work, is a great litmus test to run any decision through. Okay, so I mentioned that the premise of the book is you find out your love





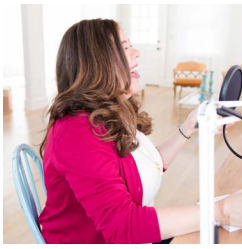
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language and your partner's language and then you commit to loving each other using each other's language. And this is where we need to pause and rethink that premise and rethink how we approach using this tool for awareness. So this is how I see the love languages. It's a tool to know yourself better and to know your partner better. It is not the sword that you will let your marriage fall on. And here's why. Here's what happened to one of my marriage coaching clients that really riled me up, I was just livid when I heard this story.

So she and her husband went to counseling and a very good natured loving person who was trying to help them, had them discover each other's love language and then told them to practice using it. This is what the book tells you to do. So this is just normal, good nature, trying to help, right. My client, she deeply, deeply loved her husband and basically went home afraid and worried because as it turns out, his highest language was something that was not easy for her to speak. So because of this, even though they spent years together and had built a whole life together, she thought that her relationship was doomed and that she was unequipped to love him. And it was really a turning point and it was really not a good turning point for them. So in this case, learning their love languages caused more harm than good because of the thoughts it created that this is not going to work out, we're never going to find a way. And we'll talk a lot and we already have, and we will continue to always on this podcast, about how powerful, how we think, what our perspective is the stance that we take determines how we show up in our relationship. So when someone in an official looking capacity comes and tells you, "Oh, that's going to be a problem forever." Guess what our brain does? It makes it a problem forever. It's not good news. Now, I had already begun my analysis of how to approach using love languages differently when my client told me this story, but this really just cemented for me the idea that I need to speak loudly and often on this topic because so many couples feel unequipped to choose each other's love language, to use that to choose to use, each





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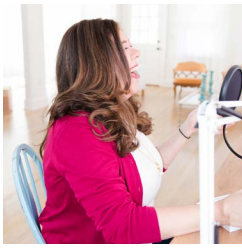
other's love language and then what do you do when that happens?

That's what we're going to talk about next. So let me be clear. The love languages concept is a tool that can be used for good. If we learn how to use it properly, it could be a tool for greater understanding. It's not a weapon to put an even bigger wedge in your relationship. That is like so, so, so important and I know some of you are like, hmm, so-and-so doesn't speak my love languages and you make that a problem. And I really want to invite you to listen to this episode and maybe listen to it again, especially if you have a reaction to anything I'm saying, if there's any intense emotion, take a moment, take a deep breath. Stay with me. And here's what I want you to know. I am one of the happiest married people that I know and my husband does not speak my primary love language.

So how is that even possible? I absolutely love words of affirmation, which is why I'm still, you know, thrilled about every review, every comment that we get on the podcast. It's just like lights me up in a magical way. So thank you all for leaving reviews, iTunes reviews and podcast reviews. Totally my love language, right? Now my hubby is an introverted engineer. Okay, he is not going to come home and like burst into song and tell me how beautiful and smart I am. This is not something that he's going to do. But when I first started writing my blog, he would go and do the groceries so I could write my articles. The very first present he ever bought me was a heart rate monitor. True story, because keeping me safe and healthy is one of his love languages. And that was so fun because if you remember the power questions episode, if you haven't heard that one, I'll link to it in the show notes.

One of my favorite questions is, what am I making this mean? So can you imagine you start dating someone and they give you a heart rate monitor? So I called my best friend, I'm like, what





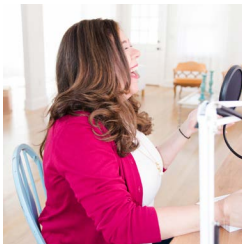
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do you think it means? And she said, “Well, I think it means he wants you to be healthy and safe,” and he does totally does. So whatever way he shows me love, I look for that every day, and I find it when I look for it. It’s true that sometimes you might have a situation where someone really is married to a jerk, but most guys want to please their wives as best they can and using words could be hard for them or they might suck at buying gifts. If there is a foundation of love, that is not a good reason to throw away a marriage. So most people, in my opinion, give up too soon.

And I really want the members of my community, my podcast listeners to be exceptional. I don’t want you to have typical results and have normal marriages. I want you to have thriving, five-star marriages. So my invitation is always do not give up before you have tried all the things and there are always more things. Okay now please note I said when there is a foundation of love, so that matters. That’s really important. And sometimes there isn’t, you know, but for most of you there is, and I don’t want you to miss out on having a great marriage just because your honey can’t speak Swahili or you were not born a natural trapeze artist. And as I was thinking about this episode and preparing this episode, I thought it would be really fun to take you all to the circus. So that’s what we’re going to do in my next example. So I want you to think this through and I’m going to use myself as an example. As I record this today, I am a 46 year old woman and am not in the best shape I could be in. I just bought a treadmill, which is an awesome story for another day. I’m working on getting healthier and more fit. But right now, I’m a 46 year old woman who gets winded if I have to walk up multiple flights of stairs. Okay, so imagine that we lived in an alternate universe. You guys know I love Sci-fi , we’re going Sci-fi today. We live in an alternate universe where the love languages were circus acts. I also love The Greatest Showman. I am obsessed with Hugh Jackman. If anybody knows Hugh Jackman and he wants to be interviewed about his wonderful marriage, send him over. But let’s go to this alternate universe where the love languages are circus acts.





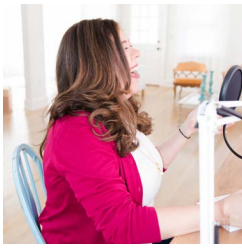
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There is the clown, the lion tamer, the trapeze artist, right, so start imagining all those different circus acts. Let's say that the only way that my husband understood and received love was for me to get on the trapeze fly high in the sky, flip, jump, maybe do some somersaults in the air, fly in the sky again, okay? Do you know what would happen, my dear friends? I would be totally 100% screwed. That is what would happen. It would take me years to be able to even hang from a trapeze without falling, let alone do tricks on it and imagine also I might have zero desire to learn trapeze, right? Imagine that I love my husband with everything in my heart, the most that you could love another human, but the trapeze was just not something that I ever wanted to do. And then imagine someone with a very official voice announcing from the loudspeaker of this magical love circus that we're in right now,

"No trapeze, no love. You must exit the circus now." Wouldn't that be awful? I mean, it sounds awful to me and I just made it all up, but I think that would be awful. Now let's come back to the universe we live in and imagine that our best friend loves receiving gifts and her honey is awful at choosing gifts, but is really great and hugs and kisses and hand holding and a bunch of other things, right? Can you imagine me going on the loudspeaker in their family room and saying, "No gifts, no love. You better learn gift giving right now, buddy." Right? Can you imagine such a thing? It's kind of wacky when you imagine it that way. So this is in essence what we do when we learn our love languages and then expect each other not just to have fluency. Imagine like speaking broken Spanish and then being able to make it to the restroom in Spain is one thing. But no, we expect like total literacy, like writing a bestselling book with 80,000 words in it, in Spanish. Now I could do it 'cause I actually speak Spanish. That's not a big deal for me. But imagine being asked to learn a whole new language overnight and then write books and plays and speeches in it or else. I'm going to pause a moment to let that sink in. Let's all just take a





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deep breath. Does anyone feel relieved hearing this? I hope so. I really do. Okay. So what do we do with the love languages? That's what the rest of the episode is gonna be about. What do we do once we realize this? My friend and coaching colleague, Patricia Cimino, beautiful name, wrote a great article on this that I will link to in the show notes. I think she wrote it for Valentine's day.

She helps people stop putting off their dreams and live what she calls a no regret life, which is just awesome. You should totally check her out. And as I was prepping this episode, I read her article. So here's what she said that I loved. She said, "Learn the love languages and then use them on yourself. You like gifts, go by yourself, one. You want, physical touch, go hug some people. Take the languages and absolutely use them. But don't wait for anyone to start using them. Use them wherever you are right now, however you can." That was so good. I love it so much. I will link to that article in the show notes 'cause I think you all should read it, so good. So that's one approach to using them as tools instead of weapons. Now here's what I see happen often. We often decide we can only accept love in one way and then we ignore and minimize. I'm going to repeat that, we ignore and minimize the expressions of love that we are getting.

And when we do that, we're giving our power away. And you know that I want every single person who listens to me to be fully in their power, to be loving, generous, kind, 'cause that's how you change the world, right? When we own our power, we can go out and use it for good. When we give it away, we can't use it to make the world a better place, including our world, our interior world. So remember if you practice coming from a place of love and choosing to love on purpose, you're in your own power. And whenever you let something external determine whether you feel loved or not, you're giving your power to circumstances instead of to yourself. Okay. Now here are three things that I want to make sure that I make super clear that you should





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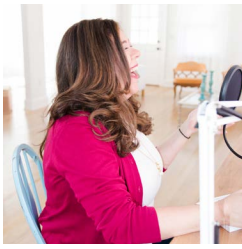
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specifically not do, should specifically avoid with the five love languages so that you can stay in your power to create the relationship you want.

These are the three things, I'm going to name them and then I'm going to talk about each one and some of them we've already covered in some of the examples. The first one is expect immediate fluency. The second one is make it mean that your partner doesn't love you or that you're not capable of loving your partner if it's not easy for you to speak their particular language very well or if it's not easy for them to speak your particular language very well. And then the third thing that you should absolutely not do with the five love languages is try using them to solve unsolvable problems. Okay, let's take these one at a time. For expecting immediate fluency, we covered that in my circus example. It's like expecting a toddler to read Shakespeare. Just imagine how wacky that sounds. So let's just give each other some grace and some love and if it feels like something you want to try doing and experimenting with, absolutely go for it.

But if it doesn't, I really challenge you to let that be okay too, both for you and your honey. If your partner has a hard time speaking your love language well, or if you feel challenged trying to speak your partner's love language, then this is really my invitation to not make it mean that you cannot find other ways to love each other. You absolutely can. And one of the first things you do is you look for the love that you do have. How are you expressing love right now? Now some of you are expressing lots of love right now and some of you aren't expressing love right now. And for those of you who aren't, we need to like get on that. We need to find out what's happening, what's getting in the way between you and expressing love. Okay? But once you are expressing love, make it count.





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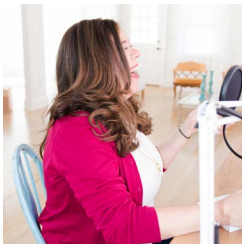
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Notice it and celebrate it and really receive the love you're already getting. When my hubby does the grocery, so I can create things for all you guys, I am grateful, very, very grateful. I receive that as if he told me I was smart and beautiful 10 times over. When I use words of affirmation on him and I tell him how much I love that he's a man of integrity, how much I admire him. He doesn't stop and ask me to take out the trash, right to perform an act of service. He says, thank you. Right? And he receives the love that am already giving him. Now, let me be clear, this does not mean don't try new things or don't go outside your comfort zone. I'm always a fan of going outside our comfort zones. So remember that one of the core things you need to have a thriving five-star relationship is partnership.

Always the three principles, perspective, partnership, and pleasure. You have those three, you're golden. Partnership means team. It means friendship. So what would you do for a friend? What would you do for your bestie, your sexy bestie, right? That's your partner. I'm totally gonna call it that from now on. It's what would you do for your sexy bestie? Would you sign up for trapeze lesson just to see if you could, maybe you would out of love, right? Not out of obligation or because your relationship was doomed otherwise. So by all means, cultivate trying new things, helping each other, asking for things, and seeing where you can meet halfway. Just don't make your marriage depend on one of the partners doing something that is totally opposite of their natural inclination or ability. Hear me, don't do that. Now notice there's a paradox here. There are contradictory features and I see a lot of paradox and we really try to live a full rich life.

We have sometimes have to hold opposites in our hand and see where we fall. What's our middle ground when we hold an opposite? So here's the contradictory feature. On the one side, you always want to be increasing the quality of your friendship. And you also remove expectation and demand from that same friendship. But friends and especially sexy besties, do things out of love for each other all the time, right? Make requests and invitations all the time.





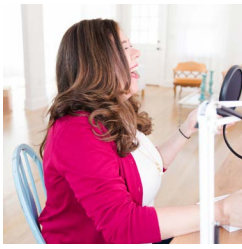
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And it's like a wave in the ocean. It ebbs and it flows. So keep that in mind. Now, the third thing that you don't want to do with the love languages is use them to solve unsolvable problems, like almost every couple has some problem that is totally unsolvable. Spenders and savers, early morning risers and night owls, right? Super high sex drive, super low sex drive. You name it, there will be a couple that is total opposites and that finds a way to make it work. So when there's an unsolvable problem, the idea is to manage it, to find the middle ground with it and the middle ground isn't, "Well, if they tried to speak my love language, everything would be okay, right?" That is almost never the answer. First, find the common ground, look for the love that is already there and second, build on that. One of the biggest issues that I often see in my coaching practice is what I will call a connection deficit. It's either verbal or physical and someone in the relationship wants more connection, either verbally or physically and it's not happening and the easiest answer is because the other person doesn't want the same thing for whatever reason. But connection deficits, whether verbal or physical, are both simple and complicated at the same time.

So there's that paradox again, we need to get to the root cause of what is happening, which often involves how we are thinking, how we are acting, how we are feeling and until we get to the root cause we might spend some time solving the wrong problem. Which is why sometimes you feel so overwhelmed in your relationship like you've tried it all and nothing is moving forward because you aren't really solving for the right things. I am not going to go deep into connection deficits today other than to say trying to apply the love languages to them doesn't usually make them better. And if you've tried it and you're listening today, you probably already know that because I talked to a lot of people where they've tried it and they've seen it. It doesn't really work the way they thought it would. It often just gives you something else to disagree





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about.

So we're going to wrap up today with this, the love languages are a great tool for awareness. However, they can be very easily weaponized. And you want to be careful how you use them just like you would with a very sharp knife, right? One of my favorite favorite power questions as a coach is, "What are you making that mean?" I mentioned that earlier in the episode. I will link to the power questions episode on the show notes for this episode because they're so, so powerful. So what are you making that mean? I want you to take that question, put it in your back pocket. So whenever you think of the love languages, again, you can pull it out and remember that you can choose a different, more empowering, more loving, more connecting meaning anytime, no matter what love language, anybody in this situation is speaking, okay?

Now I often give my clients coaching homework and I ask them for permission. So pretend right now I'm asking for permission. May I give you coaching homework? And you can nod and say yes. So your coaching homework for this week is to look for the love that is already there. Ask yourself, how is my partner expressing love to me right now? And once you see the love that is already there, receive it. Add it to your emotional bank account as a new deposit. Remember, you need three things to have a thriving, five-star marriage, perspective, partnership, and pleasure, and they are all in your control.

