

A “Cosmo quiz”: What is your love language?

One of the most important talents a partner, friend, or family member brings to labor support is a history of love and support for the birthing mother. You can maximize the benefit of this support by understanding more about how to communicate that love.

In Gary Chapman’s book, The Five Love Languages, he illustrates that we each express our love with certain ‘languages’, and there are certain ‘languages’ that we hear love in. If someone is saying “I love you” over and over, but using a different language than we speak, it is hard to hear the love coming through. Here’s a quiz to help you determine your love languages.

1. Which would be the sweetest thing someone could do for you to show their love?

- | | Mom | Dad |
|---|-------|-------|
| a. Give me an hour-long massage. | _____ | _____ |
| b. Write a list telling me all the things they love about me. | _____ | _____ |
| c. Buy me something that I had admired in a store. | _____ | _____ |
| d. Clean the house; fix the leaky faucet I’ve been meaning to fix | _____ | _____ |
| e. Give up an evening’s plans just to spend time with me. | _____ | _____ |

2. If you had a really hard day, what would be the best thing your support person could do?

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|--|-------|-------|
| a. Curl up on the couch together, let me lay my head in his/her lap. | _____ | _____ |
| b. Tell me that they love me, and know I’m doing the best I can. | _____ | _____ |
| c. Surprise me with a special treat to make up for the rough day. | _____ | _____ |
| d. Run errands for me, and make dinner, so I can rest for a while. | _____ | _____ |
| e. Spend time together just talking and relaxing and re-connecting. | _____ | _____ |

3. You are hurrying off to work. What would be a quick way someone could say I love you?

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|---|-------|-------|
| a. A hug and a kiss. | _____ | _____ |
| b. Tell me they love me, and think that I look great. | _____ | _____ |
| c. Hand me a snack to eat in the car. | _____ | _____ |
| d. Say that they’ll take care of taking the trash out. | _____ | _____ |
| e. Say they look forward to our next chance to spend time together. | _____ | _____ |

4. A friend has been out of work for a while, and is feeling really down. What do you do?

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|---|-------|-------|
| a. Give him a hug, and put my hand on his arm while we talk. | _____ | _____ |
| b. Tell him what a great guy he is & what confidence I have in him. | _____ | _____ |
| c. Take him out for a nice dinner at his favorite restaurant. | _____ | _____ |
| d. Spend an afternoon helping him write resumes and cover letters. | _____ | _____ |
| e. Set aside time each week to spend together. | _____ | _____ |

5. When you meet with a friend for lunch, she tells you joyfully, that she is pregnant. Do you:

- | | | |
|---|-------|-------|
| a. Jump up and give her a huge hug. | _____ | _____ |
| b. Say “I’m so excited for you, you’ll be such a great mom!” | _____ | _____ |
| c. Offer to plan a baby shower & start planning what you’ll give her. | _____ | _____ |
| d. Offer to help her complete some projects before the baby comes. | _____ | _____ |
| e. Spend a long lunch with her, just talking about babies. | _____ | _____ |

Scoring

Questions 1 – 3 are about what love language(s) you are best able to *hear*, and most enjoy having spoken to you. Questions 4 and 5 are about what language(s) you feel most comfortable *speaking* to your loved ones. These might be the same, but they're often different. Here's what the answers indicate about your love language.

A = Physical Touch.

B = Words of Affirmation.

C = Gifts.

D = Acts of Service.

E = Quality Time.

Compare your answers to your partner's answers, or what the answers would be for other support people in your life. In a few lucky couples, each person happens to be most comfortable speaking the love language the other person most needs to hear.

For most of us, though, there are times when our languages are out of synch. It's important to learn what language our loved one(s) hears, so that we can try to speak in that language as much as possible. It's also good if they know what our primary speaking language is, so that if we "miss", at least they know we're trying!

For example, you may have a partner who thrives on words of affirmation, but if you've come from a very reserved, restrained background, it may be very difficult to give effusive praise and have it sound genuine. You will try to learn a new language, and they'll forgive you for your stumbles. You can learn to give verbal encouragement as often as possible, and they can learn to translate your quiet "you did a nice job" into the full cheerleader routine they'd love to hear.

Partners: Applying the Love Languages to Labor Support.

Physical Touch: If this is mom's language, try: stroking her hair, holding her hand, massage, hugging, kissing, rubbing her feet, just resting your hand on her... Be in physical contact throughout labor. If you need to leave the room, give her something to hold on to.

Words of Affirmation: Encouragement and praise are vital to supporting her. She may be very sensitive to criticism, and may feel unsupported if you do not actively cheer her on.

Gifts: In preparation for the birth, tuck a few special surprises away in the birth bag. Her favorite music, her favorite hard candy, a cute hat for the baby, a favorite picture to use as a focal point. Show that you made an effort to prepare for the birth and for the baby.

Acts of Service: This mom wants active support. She'll love it if you get her a glass of juice, heat up a heating pad for her, get a cool cloth to put on her forehead, or do any other tasks that need to be done during labor.

Quality Time: This mom needs your Presence. She wants someone by her side continuously throughout labor, supporting her just by being there and being attuned to her needs. Try not to ever leave her alone, if possible.

A special message for moms: Labor will consume most of your attention and energy, and it may be hard to feel like you're giving much back to your partner. By understanding what love language he hears most clearly, you can focus your efforts on this area, knowing that even a little gesture goes a long way if it's spoken in the right language.