

Sociologist John Lee (1973) defined six basic styles of love:

1. Eros: love of beauty - romantic
2. Mania: obsessive love - possessive
3. Ludus: playful love - game playing
4. Storge: companionate love - best friends
5. Agape: altruistic love - unselfish
6. Pragma: practical love - logical

In addition to these pure forms, there are mixtures of these basic types: Storgic-Eros, Ludic-Eros, and Storgic-Ludis. The six basic types can be described as follows:

Eros

Erotic lovers delight in the tactile, in the immediate; they are attracted to beauty (though beauty may be in the eye of the beholder). They love the lines of the body, its feel and touch. They are fascinated by every detail of their beloved. Their love burns brightly but soon flickers and dies.. It's a passionate, all-enveloping love.

- immediate, powerful attraction at first meeting
- has physiological reactions, such as increased pulse rate, shortness of breath, tumbling, butterflies in the stomach
- can become speechless--no sensible conversation
- love at first sight emphasizes physical beauty
- characterized by an active and imaginative interest in sexual fulfillment--integral part of the fascination
- press for an early sexual relation - become lovers shortly after meeting - no place for Puritans
- occur in about 10% of marriages

Ludus

for ludic lovers, love is a game, something to play with rather than to become deeply involved in; for them, love is ultimately ludicrous. Love is for fun; encounters are casual, carefree, and often careless. "Nothing serious," is the motto of ludic lovers.

- a game to be played for amusement, pleasure, excitement, with no lasting commitments
- most easily played with several partners at once
- wants sex for fun, can delay sex satisfaction if necessary
- flirting, gallantry, are part of fun
- not jealous or possessive
- wide range of physical tastes in partners
- when he's not near the girl he loves, he loves the girl he's near

Storge

Storge is the love between companions. It is love without fever, tumult, or folly, a peaceful and enchanting affection. It begins usually as friendship and then gradually deepens into love. If the love ends, it is also gradual and the couple often become friends once again. Of such love it is a companionate form of love of quiet affection

- unexciting, uneventful, unpassionate
- wants marriage, kids, a place in the community
- treat each other as old friends
- once married, are relatively undemanding and nonpossessive
- sexual intimacy is slow to develop

Mania

comes from Greek word for madness

--common combination of eros and ludus

--racked by yearning and moodiness, alternating between joyous highs and depressing lows

--extreme jealousy, helpless obsession, feelings beyond rational control

--extreme jealousy is reasonable as a proof of love

--sexual intimacy brings uncertainty

--rarely achieve happiness in love

--nights are marked by sleeplessness and days by pain and anxiety.

--the slightest sign of affection brings them ecstasy for a short while, only to disappear into nothingness

--satisfactions last but a moment before they need to be renewed.

--manic love is roller coaster love

Pragma

pragmatic lovers are, first and foremost, pragmatic.

--they are lovers who are logical in their approach to looking for someone who meets their needs. They are the only ones who consciously consider such concepts as endogamy and exogamy, homogamy and heterogamy.

--they are looking for mates who have the background, education, personality, religion and interests that are compatible with their own

--if they meet a person who meets their criteria, then erotic or manic feelings may develop

Agape

--agape is the traditional Christian love that is chaste, patient, and undemanding

--it does not expect to be reciprocated. It is the love of saints and martyrs.

--Lee did not find any in his survey of lovers

--agape is more abstract and ideal than concrete and real

--it is easier to love all of humankind in such a way than an individual

Lee believes that in order to have a mutually satisfying love affair, a person has to find a partner who shares the same style and definition of love. The more different two people are in their styles of loving, the less chance they will share in understanding each other's love.

Test to see your own style of loving.