

ENRICHMENT PAPER

Love Languages Interviews

The first couple interviewed both listed all the love languages as their favorite but varied somewhat in guessing the love languages of their partner. Jonathan omitted gifts as one of his wife's favorite words as he did not think that gifts were very important to her. Whilst he included words as one of her favorite expressions, Victoria did not identify with him using words to her as meaningful expressions of love although he did actually put it down. Jonathan knew that Victoria felt that this type of language was an important acknowledgement even though he did not actually take charge of it. When Victoria had to guess her husband's favorite she did not choose words as one of them. During discussion she acknowledged that her husband could use words more as an expression of endearment as this would be pleasing to her. Victoria expressed that engaging in this interviewing experience helped her identify that more time needs to be spent on what may seem to be very simple issues in the daily lives of her and her husband, and which were taken for granted. Jonathan felt that the exercise gave him the opportunity also to consider different things which he should be aware of. The issue of verbal expression and the importance of it to Victoria was really an eye opener for her husband as this had never been expressed before. Victoria on the other hand felt that Jonathan did not bring out too much surprise in relation to the love language choices.

Overall, this couple felt that they blended well and this was the reason why they had been able to remain together for so many years. Jonathan verbalized that having the opportunity to discuss different aspects of their lives which perhaps had never really been given much attention before could only serve to enhance their relationship and make it even more meaningful. Similar sentiments were mentioned by Victoria. She stated that it was beneficial to open up one's mind to look beyond what one had been accustomed to. She referred to something which I touched on in my initial discussion with them. The

significance of words and how very often those words which we are exposed to and are used to tend to be those words which we often become accustomed to using throughout life. She could see her relationship with her husband being more fulfilling moving forward.

For Beverley there were no surprises in the love languages which her husband chose. She felt that he tended to be an expressive person and could, therefore, identify with them. She was rather surprised that she guessed that he would choose all the words although he was an expressive person. The fact that she was able to match him so well made her realize how well she actually knew her husband.

Beverley also had to admit that she did not actually reflect on the words in relation to her husband in everyday life, although she was aware that he had a particular persuasion. She knew he liked certain things, in this case certain expressions, but did not cater to those expressions in an attempt to please him. Beverley was aware that her husband liked to spend time with her but she did not actually put herself out to make that happen. She was so engrossed in those things which she thought was important to her and had not taken him serious. Seeing him reflect that desire on paper made her realize that it was important to him and that perhaps she should try to make time to be in his presence in a special way more often.

Beverley expressed that she learnt most of all how very sensitive her husband was. He was a soft-spoken person, but this opportunity allowed him to be more expressive. She knew that he appreciated gift giving but not receiving. There was a certain amount of neglect that she was responsible for. They are very complementary to each other. Despite her frailties their relationship was secure and had grown in a positive way. She could see it being more fun now as they were prodded to explore those things which were beneficial to them.

Andrew expressed his surprise that his wife did not consider gifts as one of her love expressions. Whilst he had always thought she liked receiving gifts in the discussion she revealed that they were not always important to her. Touch was also a word which Beverley wrote as a favorite which surprised Andrew. He noted that he would try to pay more attention to that love language. Andrew expressed that even though touch was one of the love -language words he wrote for his wife, he did not pay sufficient attention to it, and mentioned that he would try to do so. Beverley from the discussion did place a lot of importance on words of affection and he would try to be more attentive to her need. Andrew appreciated the exercise and thought it gave insight into how they could both improve their marital relationship. He thought the areas mentioned appeared to be small but in fact were very impactful.

I loved the feeling of fun and excitement which the interview seemed to spread throughout the couples. The element of surprise which overtook them all when they realized the form which it would take brought on a feeling of relaxation and this in itself enabled them to respond in a positive way, especially to the questions which they were asked at the end of the exercise. They were able to open up in an honest way about their feelings and proposed intentions in relation to how they would use the love languages in the future. The couples were appreciative of the awareness of the words expressed – everyday words but so meaningful. I liked that they pledged jokingly to be more cognizant of them in their relationship.

It became very aware to me during the interviews that people can become somewhat stuck in their relationship and not think about the basic things which can be most beneficial to them in maintaining a good relationship. The introduction of the love languages were actually simple words used daily in most instances, but not put in relation to personal relationships.

Taking part in these interviews opened up to me the fact that couples can be in need of consultation about their relationship and how it can be enhanced, but unless something really goes wrong or an instance such as an interview occurs, they would never be stirred to do anything about it. This makes me realize too that perhaps many relationships which may have ended could have been prevented from doing so had there been an opportunity for meaningful discussion.

Although far from being considered trained, an opportunity was afforded to me to take part in this interview, and discuss with the couples' various issues which were pertinent to the use of the different love language words. The importance of touch – good touch which does not have to be sexual but indeed turn out to be soothing and expressive. Pointing out that sometimes all a partner may need is a certain assurance expressed through touch or words of affirmation to bring them back to reality.

Opening up the realization that gifts need not be in a physical form but can be given in facial expressions of assurance. I think the fact that this experience helped to somehow stop the couples in their tracks and have them think of the effect that each had on the other was very important. They acknowledged that moving forward they could try to foster growth in their togetherness by paying more attention to such basic concepts for they realized the input that they could have on improving their communication.

For a couple there is value in being put on the spot as it were to reflect on certain important issues. It is only at those times that people will stop to give thought to their lives and what is actually happening.

Both couples began the interview in a guarded manner, but as it progressed seemed to welcome the opportunity to discuss aspects of their love in terms of the language which they perhaps use on a daily basis. The thought of those words being put into a love context was exciting to both couples and gave them the opportunity to have meaningful discussion about their lives in relation to the language of love, which these words were then referred to as. I liked that the couples did not feel inhibited about indulging in personal conversation about themselves. Entrance into personal areas were brought up by

them as a result of discussion. This was not something which I thought would have happened in the interviews, with couples professing to try different things as a way of encouraging warmth between them as partners. Certain realizations about themselves through looking closely at their physical and verbal interpretation of certain words was also interesting. What was also wonderful as a result of this interview was that I found that each partner in one way or the other was finding solutions to whatever was being brought up as wanting to be attended to. This showed their commitment to improving their relationship.

I learnt the importance of couples reviewing their relationship periodically in certain ways and seeing if there were ways in which they could improve and enrich their married life, bearing in mind that the enrichment gained will be pleasing to God and will be fulfilling his desires when they are brought closer together and ultimately closer to him in the expression of their love. When couples get the opportunity to review their lives' they can be open to receiving added excitement in their lives and have their relationship rejuvenated.

This interview was informative to me also for it showed yet another avenue which can be used to gain entrance into the everyday lives of people and give them assistance in better managing their relationships without being relatively formal in its approach.