



KAPITEL 5 / CHAPTER 5⁵ CORRELATION BETWEEN LOVE AND SEXUALITY

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Introduction.

The phenomenon of love has fascinated people in all times. Joys and sorrows of love inspired the works of many artists, poets, writers, directors, and other researchers of human relationships. Indeed, love is one of the most common themes in art and literature of many cultures. Each of us in one way or another has experienced the effects of love. Take the love we received from surrounding in childhood and youth. The best and worst moments of our lives are often associated with love experiences. But what is love and which words can define it remains an open question. It is clear that love is a special type of relationship whose emotional and behavioural components are the strongest. But it is also a phenomenon which can hardly be defined or explained.

Presenting main material. Man cannot live without love, because the most important and precious things in his life are open to his heart. Only observing love reveals to us the soul of another person for a true and sincere dialogue, for mutual understanding, for friendship, for marriage, for raising children. All is impossible for heartless people. Observing love opens to us our home, our spiritual connection with native people, and our national identity. To have a motherland is happiness, and one can only find it through love. What a terrible life lives a person deprived of this gift! How deserted, how vulgar his life becomes! Man cannot live without love because it is our main creative force. Since human creativity does not appear in space and runs in a random combination of elements. Culture without love is dead, doomed and hopeless. All the great and brilliant things created by man were created by loving hearts.

John Allan Lee proposed the theory that describes six different styles of love to describe human intimate sexual relationships.

1. Romantic style (Eros) is characterized by the fact that in the choice of a perfect lover the primary emphasis is on physical attraction of the prospective chosen one. A romantic erotic lover above all values visual delight and tactile / sensory pleasure derived from the partner's body.

2. Playful style (Ludus) lovers like to get numerous sexual victories, without any commitment. Love is fun, the key thing in it is an act of seduction; relationships are random and deliberately short-lived.

3. Possessive style (Mania) involves obsession, often accompanied by confusion and jealousy. This love is like a roller coaster: any sign of attention on the part of the

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loved one is ecstatic, and the least neglect creates anxiety and suffering.

4. Companionate style (Storge) of love grows slowly but the relationship is more stable. This love has no passion and excitement, it rather resembles harmonious family relationship and often begins with friendship gradually developing into affection.

5. Selfless style (Agape) is altruistic love, giving care and devotion to a loved one without expectation of reciprocity. Such love is patient, demanding and free from jealousy.

6. Practical style (Pragma) means a person chooses their lover for rational, practical reasons (e.g., based on common interests). Such lovers apply business approach to love, making it a goal to find someone who is the most suitable for social, educational, religious or other criteria. What happens when there are two people with naturally different styles of love? It is a critical issue for Lee. He believes that relationships between the lovers break because “very often two people talking about love speak in different languages”. [2]

Even if both partners sincerely wish to build strong, lasting relationships, their efforts can be undermined by futile desire to combine incompatible styles of love. Conversely, satisfaction with marital and love relationships often depends on whether a person manages to find a partner who “would share the same approach and the same understanding of love.” [5]

For empirical research and of the Lee’s theory and identifying the styles of love described above, there was designed a special questionnaire called “Love Attitudes Scale.” One of the studies using this scale yielded interesting results, partly supporting the Lee’s hypothesis that successful relationships depend on compatibility of the styles of love. Another, later study used this scale to study how different styles of love affect satisfaction with sexual relationship at different stages of life.

The study involved 250 adult respondents, divided into four groups: single college-age people; young married couples without children; married with children, and finally, married with adult children living separately. The study revealed that two styles of love – Eros and Agape – positively correlated with relationship satisfaction at all stages of life. Ludus, as might be expected, negatively correlated with relationship satisfaction in all three categories of married people. As for Storge, a significant correlation was seen only in those married couples who had dependent minors. Finally, there was no meaningful correlation in any of the four groups between Mania and, oddly enough, Pragma, on the one hand, and relationship satisfaction on the other. [1]

The Greek classification of “styles” of love for intimate relationships has not lost its relevance.

1. Eros – passionate physical attraction.



2. Ludus – hedonistic game with no commitments.
3. Storge – affectionate friendship, loyal and reliable.
4. Pragma – mutual care controlled by the mind.
5. Mania – obsession with suspicion and jealousy.
6. Agape – selfless devotion, losing self in the object of love.

In particular, Solovyov in his book “The Meaning of Love” called love a means of procreation. Sexual love in this sense is the culmination of love, for the man on the whole. With this in mind, Solovyov distinguishes love from an external connection. The ideal of human love is preceded by the ideal of God’s love. God as a whole through Himself unites everything else, which is the Universe. For the author, this everything else has an image of a perfect, eternal femininity. It is the object of love for a man, even though a specific form of eternal femininity may change. Therefore, earthly love can be repeated. M. Berdyaev concludes that love is a disclosure of another person’s innermost secret, and sexual activity covers this secret. For Berdyaev, this leads to alienated attitude to sexuality. [3]

We can hope that in the near future we will discover new approaches and concepts to the study on the nature of love. This is so due to the fact that the number of scientists interested in studying the phenomenon of love has had a significant increase. What caused this scientific interest in the phenomenon of love? An interview with one of the leading representatives of the social sciences, psychologist Elaine Hatfield, gives a possible explanation. E. Hatfield says the following: there are more and more women coming into science, and they are more likely than men to consider love as an entirely appropriate subject for serious scientific research. [4]

As it is known, love takes many forms. There is love between the parents, the child, and other family members. The love of friends, which the ancient Greeks called *Philia*, suggests care for the mutual well-being. Lovers can have passionate love or companionate love. In this chapter, we discuss these two commonly discussed types of love, followed by two current models or theories of love.

First, there is passionate love, which is also known as romantic love or infatuation – a state of complete preoccupation with someone you love and commitment to them. This type of love is characterised by intense feelings of tenderness, joy, anxiety, strong sexual desire, ecstasy. There may also be a general physiological arousal shown in increased heart rate, shy blush, compression in the abdomen, along with a sense of excitement. Among the examples of thoughts and opinions typical for this condition: “My emotions are on the edge,” “Sometimes I think that I cannot control my thoughts, they always come back to him (her),” “I want to touch only him (her) and feel only his (her) touch,” “I feel desperate when there is a fall-out in our relationship,” “No one can



love him (her) more than I do.” This form of love is usually based on a strong sexual desire.

As a rule, passionate love is typical for the beginning of a relationship. Sometimes it seems that the less lovers know each other, the more passionate feelings they have for each other. Overcome with love, man pays no attention to the shortcomings of his partner and seeks to avoid the slightest conflict with him. The logic and the ability to a clear judgment is replaced with tumultuous rush of delight and excitement. A person in love sees the object of their love as perfect.

No wonder passionate love does not last long. It is rather measured in months than years. Love based on ignorance of the true personality of each other inevitably undergoes changes as the partners begin to get to know one another. Despite this, the fragility of passionate love is often overlooked, especially by young people who lack experience in long-term love relationships. However, couples manage to get through this period and set the stage for a further love relationship. Others, often to their own surprise, find out that they have nothing in common with each other, except passion. Unfortunately, many people experiencing a decrease in passion in their relationship tend to see it as the end of love, but not its transition to another type. Nonetheless, some people deliberately seek another type of relationship.

Erich Fromm said, “Romantic love is a form of art, but it is short-lived. Even the most stable of its supporters eventually admit that they would like to escape from the beautiful illusion and go to the next, realistic state that brings satisfaction.” [7]

Another type of love is companionate love – a less intense feeling than romantic love. It is characterised by friendliness and deep affection, based on a good knowledge of a loved one. It suggests a mature assessment of the partners of each other. Companionate love includes tolerance towards another person’s shortcomings and a desire to overcome difficulties and conflicts. This kind of love means to support and strengthen partner relationships. In short, companionate love is more long-lasting than passionate love, which may be temporary.

In this love sex is usually associated with a sense of security that comes from a good knowledge of each other, including the ways of giving pleasure to your partner. This knowledge and mutual trust may form a good basis for experimentation and sophisticated sexual communication. In its turn, the pleasure derived from sex strengthens psychological ties between partners. Even though sex in companionate love is usually less exciting than in romantic love, it is subjectively experienced as a richer, deeper, and more meaningful connection, as evidenced by the following revelation:

Although love relationships often begin with a period of passionate love and only



then grow into companionate love, in some cases they develop in the opposite way.

Companionate love can be a start of a relationship between the people who know each other for quite a while as acquaintances, friends or colleagues. Sexual desire may initially be absent or inhibited under the circumstances. The basis of love and passion in such relationships is a good knowledge of the partner, but not the excitement of the unknown.

There is a striking similarity in understanding of love among people living in different countries, such as Japan and America, and in different historical periods – in the times of the Sumerians and in the XXI century. We can say that love between man and woman is common everywhere, taking a special place in our spiritual life. If we turn to an anthology of love poetry, we will see that in understanding of love people have more in common than different. This is not surprising, because the need for love belongs to the fundamental emotional needs and manifests itself from the moment of birth. [6]

The widespread prevalence of family life in the world cultures is also connected with certain mental mechanisms, in particular the fact that relations with your mother and parents on the whole form the later “matrix” of our sensual bonds.

Thus, one could argue that love is a universal phenomenon. It is hard to say which culture has composed the best love hymns. “Hymn of Love” by St. Paul, “Song of Songs,” poems about love in ancient Korea and India, love songs of Egypt or Sumerians all are equally valuable.

American psychologist Robert Sternberg (1988) developed a three-component theory of love, according to which love has three components: intimacy, passion and a component called “decision / commitment.” Intimacy consists in providing and receiving emotional support, as well as other kinds of behaviour that create warmth in romantic relationships. They include sincere and fair communication, willingness to share grief and joy, happiness from communicating with each other, and the ability to cherish your loved one.

Passion includes not only the sexual component of the relationship, but it can appear due to other factors, too. For example, some people find the need for self-respect, establishing relations with others, dominating over others or, vice versa, subordinating a more important source of passion than sex.

The component of decision / commitment consists of two parts. The short-term part is a decision that one person loves another, and the long-term one – the awareness of the extent to which the person is ready to fulfil this commitment, that is to stay in love.

The Sternberg’s model, which has a graphic image of a triangle made of the



components of the triad, allows us to assess the extent of involvement of each partner into the love relationship. If partners are a good match, their triangles almost coincide. In unsuccessful relationships, where one partner expects too much from another, or when the partners' interests lie in completely different dimensions, their triangles do not even touch. These two dimensions of love can be called intensity and balance in relationships.

If there is intimacy alone, we can talk about friendship or passion. If there is only passion and no intimacy or commitment, it means that a person experiences infatuation. Commitment without passion and intimacy leads to empty love (this type may be common for long-term, static relationships). Intimacy and commitment without passion form companionate love (this type of relationship often reached by couples a long and happy family life). Combination of passion and commitment without intimacy is typical of fatuous love – a kind of stupid, according to R. Sternberg, infatuation, when one person loves another, but remains mentally distant. Love with intimacy and passion but no commitment is called romantic. Finally, the presence of all three components means consummate love – that perfect kind of love which people strive for, and which is so difficult to find and maintain.

Art and literature praise romantic love with a whirlwind of emotions – from passion to jealousy and suffering. A small number of such studies in psychology may be explained by the absence of a grounded theory of romantic love. According to Brande, romantic love is a “passionate spiritual-emotional-sexual attachment that occurs between men and women and reflects their high evaluation of each other”.

Summarising the data of American scientists and adding his own observations, W. Maestri described a cycle of romantic love. The first stage of the cycle – willingness to love – is latent, hidden, and including several elements. Firstly, love is seen as something desirable, as a reward, not a nuisance or a complication. People who consider romantic love as a sign of weakness, or fear that it may damage their careers are unlikely to allow themselves to fall in love. However, those who believe that love ennobles and brings up the best in man can actively search for a suitable object of love. Secondly, it is human nature to strive for intimacy with another person. This desire may be motivated by loneliness, envy to love relationships of others or a wish to relive the love that has been lost.

Thirdly, willingness to love often is often caused by sexual frustration. Casual sex, despite its availability, does not give complete satisfaction. Finally, willingness to love gives hope to any person to find love in response.

Romantic love begins with the birth of love, ranging from a sudden “love at first sight” to a gradual process that develops over months or years. A sudden sparkle of



love is hardly possible if the person is not ready to love. In real life, love at first sight is not a rule, but rather an exception, and the person falls in love gradually, and this process begins differently. Meetings and dates give a chance to determine whether people really feel mutual attraction and whether they are psychologically compatible. Physical intimacy allows to come to some preliminary conclusions about the sexual desire of the person. Sometimes love grows from friendship, although it is sometimes difficult to determine when exactly it happens. In the atmosphere of trust created between friends, passion may seem inappropriate, for love, should it occur in this case, often runs quietly without passionate emotions.

Falling in love may happen regardless of reciprocity. In the absence of the corresponding love, the chances of staying in love quickly decrease. However, the man who has reached this stage of romantic love is certainly inventive, full of hope, and willing to settle for even the most minor signs of reciprocity. At this stage the lover may get into the claws of limerence (a state in which a person is obsessed with thoughts about the loved one and is full of confidence that only this person can make them happy) or remain calm, contented with themselves, feeling secure and objective. Sexual desire is almost always quite strong, although it does not necessarily turn into action because of shyness or moral barriers. Whatever the form love took, it is a usually transitional phase that lasts an average of one to two years. Romantic love mostly either moves to a different quality, the so-called love-friendship, or gradually wanes due to quarrels, loss of interest or boredom.

The transitional stage of romantic love plays a crucial role. During this period, the initial excitement caused by intimacy with the partner, as well as the passion of new sexual relationship, gradually weakens or disappears. Lovers begin to notice each other's shortcomings, which they did not see or ignored before, and boredom and irritation creep into their relationship. Frustration arises when love is not up to our fantasies, when we begin to realise that not all our problems can be "cured," or when we find out that ecstasy cannot last forever.

Typically, at this transitional stage lovers start to try different ways of testing how strong their love is. They try to re-educate each other and fight for the lead in their relationship. If it is accompanied by jealousy, a conflict is inevitable. In the process of this struggle and conflicts, they try to find the answer to the question "Do I want to stay with this person or should I leave now while I still can?"

The transitional stage of love is the time to check out the real situation. In a sense, love is brought down to earth. The conflicts arise that can lead to the break-up. If both lovers desire to maintain a solid relationship, any conflict can be resolved, and then love becomes stronger by surviving the test. Love becomes a new quality – love-



friendship. This love is based on common interests, commitment, trust, care about each other, and spiritual unity.

Love-friendship is most common among married couples and other long-term steady relationships. It is less demanding and less absorbing than romantic love, allowing two people to smoothly continue their lives – work, raise children, pursue different kinds of hobbies, and spend time with friends. This love is strong, based on real values, as opposed to romantic love, which is too often based only on ideals and fantasies.

When people fall in love, they feel happy about intimacy with another person, because every day they discover something new in themselves and in those they love. But when love passes, this all stops giving so much joy, the feeling fades into the background and is eventually remembered as something already experienced and lived through. The relationship may become strained because the partners are not “on the same wave” anymore, the emerging troubles now seem not worthy of efforts made to overcome them.

Only about 15% of relationships are broken off by mutual consent (Hill, Rubin, Peplau, 1976). In many cases one partner leaves while the other is still “in love,” i.e., the stage of coming to an end does not come at the same time for both. The grief that the abandoned partner may feel can sometimes be compared with that from experiencing the death of a partner or a relative. The period of tears and shock changes into persistent painful memories; not everyone can quickly return to normal life. Many people fall into a rage, seek revenge or decide to avoid romantic relationships in the future. Once alone, people do not tend to be ready for a new love very soon. It also happens that the suffering experienced before is followed by a kind of “refractory period,” when it is simply impossible to fall in love again.

Conclusions.

Love is an act of infinite generosity, and only a truly great person full of life is capable of it. To love is the hardest thing to do. The art of loving is the most difficult skill in the world.

Consequently, we must save and invest wisely into our vital energy, only one manifestation of which is sexuality. It is worst of all when the release of this energy is expressed in antisocial manifestations: it leads to its pointless physical destruction. In order to have love, you have to build it. The one who understands the art of living mostly sees the loved one as a result of creative work. It is so because the very fact of love hides a possibility of metaphysical mediation, which can clearly be learnt only by the greatest experts in the art of living. “Metaphysical mediation” is the ability of the



two to merge and become the guide in the unity of Being. The other person ceases to be different, and the feeling of “I” in existence is born. A and B. Please stress that under no circumstances should one talk about intimate details of their erotic experiences, which must remain deeply personal, signifying natural sensitivity of heart. Any relationship between the two partners can be considered healthy if it is based on mutual consent and respect.