

# Remember: Love is much more than a four-letter word

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February is the month of Valentine's Day, synonymous with romantic love.

February is also the month of Presidents' Day, when we remember two of our greatest presidents, Abraham Lincoln and George Washington.

It may not be immediately apparent how both of these days commemorate love; nevertheless, they do, as I will discuss in this article.

Researcher John Lee found in his extensive interviews with people that we think of love in six different ways. He labeled these love forms with Greek nouns, only one of which has only four letters.

- Eros: Romantic love that has tremendous passion, physical longing, deep intensity and intimacy. Erotic love

is based on strong feelings toward another and usually occurs in early stages of a "romantic" relationship.

This form of love is based more on physical attraction, and is commonly thought to be what Valentine's Day commemorates.

It is primarily a "me" based love, in that one individual loves another because it feels good and makes him/her happy.

- Storge: Friendship-based love, with strong companionship and shared values but little physical intimacy.

This type of love is based on mutual "give-and take," where two people benefit each other in a mutual way.

Long-term successful relationships can manifest this type of love, but hopefully not to the exclusion of other types of love as well.

- Agape: Altruistic love, that is, giving without asking anything in return, and sacrificing oneself for another. This is a spiritual love, one displayed by Mother Theresa and, I think,

the two American presidents we honor on Presidents' Day.

Is the kind of love a good mother gives to her child and an adult care-giver gives to an aged parent or spouse.

- Ludus: Game-playing love, like the love of a knight for a princess. There are playful interactions but little intimacy or deep intensity. Flirting and joking around fit into this type of love.

- Pragma: Practical or logical love in which someone actively searches for a partner with certain characteristics. This sounds like the stuff of personal ads.

- Mania: Troubled love because of jealousy and dependency/co-dependency. This type of love has great intensity, some intimacy, and exhibits many psychological problems related to the relationship and is often found in abusive relationships and domestic violence.

The research discovered that men tend to view love more in terms of the erotic, romantic or game-playing types of love while women often have the more logical outlook of the practical

love.

Texas Tech psychology professors Clyde Hendrick, Ph.D., and Susan Hendrick, Ph.D., have made the study of love and sexuality their life's work.

Their research suggests that lovers whose love styles are similar tend to stay together more often than those with differing love styles.

Now that I've explained how Valentine's Day and Presidents' Day both commemorate love in different forms, perhaps each of us can consider our own love relationships and the types of love that we give and receive.

If our primary love relationships have evolved into more of a Storge or Agape love, with little Eros or Ludus types of love exhibited, perhaps it's time for a relationship make-over to bring in more spark and fun.

If the relationship is based on a Mania, professional help may be needed to avert or stop the harm.

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