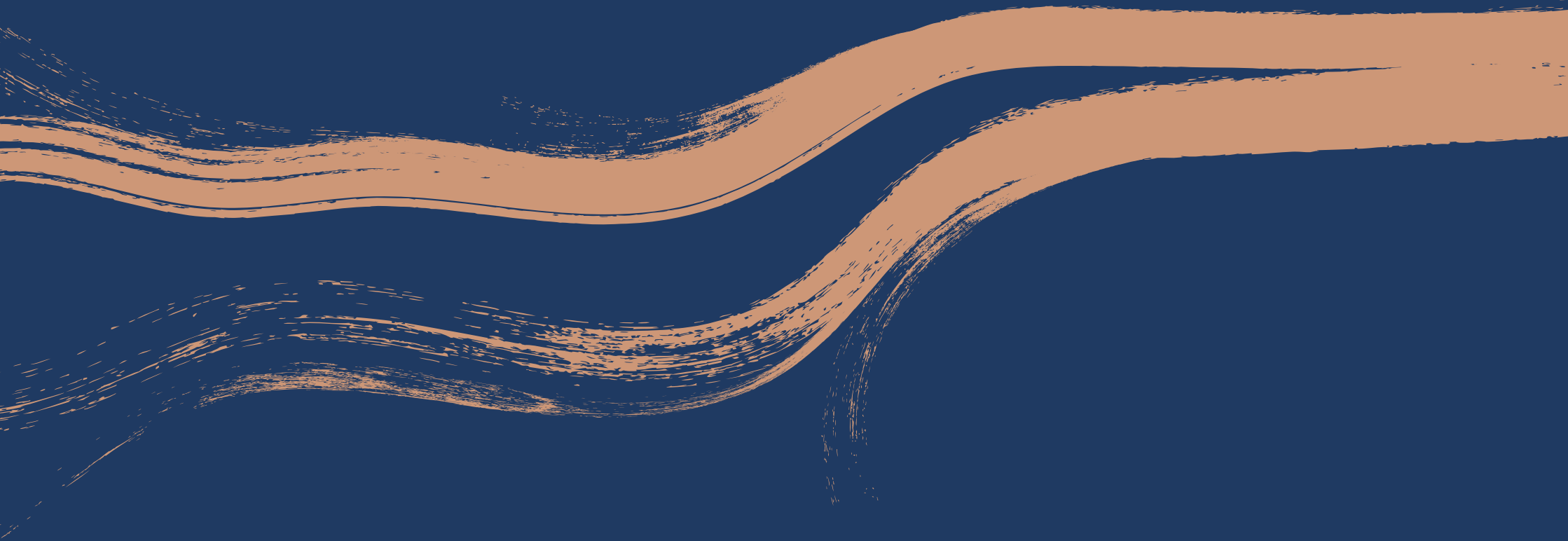


Love in Action



RECAP

Ask your partner:

'What do you think has been the most important thing for our relationship from the course so far?'

Then tell them:

'Last week I realised the best thing I can do to improve our sex life is...'



Session 7 – Love in Action

Love is about more than feelings; it's about what we do – it involves action. Love always costs us something.

The five love languages¹

1. Loving words

2. Thoughtful presents

3. Physical affection

4. Quality time

5. Kind actions

For each of us, one of these 'love languages' will communicate love more effectively than the others.

Most people have different love languages to their partner.

Often we try to communicate love in the way we understand it and want to receive it.

A marriage that is full of love is where we are seeking to meet our husband or wife's needs in the particular way that makes them feel loved.

Using our partner's love language may feel unnatural and awkward initially.

¹ The teaching on the Five Love Languages is adapted from Dr Gary Chapman's bestselling book, *The 5 Love Languages®: The Secret to Love That Lasts* (© 2015). Published by Northfield Publishing. Used by permission.

1. Loving words

Words have great power either to build up or to put down our partner.

Give compliments and encourage each other daily.

Speak kindly to each other.

For some people, hearing words of affirmation feels like arriving at an oasis in a desert.

“

Words affect love. And without loving words, relationships begin to die.

ROB PARSONS, OBE

Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.

— PROVERBS 16:24

2. Thoughtful presents

Presents are visual symbols of love.

Giving presents is a way of investing in our marriage

- can be inexpensive but have high value; for example: a single flower, a bar of chocolate
- don't wait only for special occasions
- actively discover what your partner likes (within your budget!)

CONVERSATION 1

10 minutes



FAVOURITE PRESENTS

Tell your partner what have been the best presents you've received from them. Explain why.

3. Physical affection

Affectionate touch is a powerful communicator of love in marriage

- if this is your partner's primary way of feeling loved, in times of crisis touch will communicate more than anything else that you care

We need to use the whole range and find out from our partner what's appropriate at different moments: holding hands, putting an arm round each other's shoulder or waist, a kiss, a hug, a hand on a hand, a back massage, sexual foreplay, making love

- both sexual and non-sexual touch are important in marriage

“

To touch my body is to touch me. To withdraw from my body is to distance yourself from me emotionally.

DR GARY CHAPMAN

4. Quality time

Married couples can spend a lot of time together without using it to convey love to each other.

Togetherness means more than physical proximity

- it involves focusing our attention on our partner

Quality time together builds friendship through:

1. Talking together

Important to share our thoughts, feelings, hopes, fears, disappointments.

I need to ☐ talk more ☐ listen more

2. Eating together

Make the effort to initiate conversation.

Ask questions that the other will enjoy answering.

Our meal times would be improved if I...

3. Having fun together

Friendship is built around shared experiences and shared memories.

CONVERSATION 2

10 minutes



TIMES TOGETHER

Each write a list of what you have most enjoyed doing together in the past or perhaps would like to start doing together:

Show each other what you have put. Use your lists as ideas when planning your future dates.

5. Kind actions

This involves expressing love through serving our partner, through seeking to meet their needs in practical ways.

Find out from your partner what kind actions are most meaningful for them.

**When you're both busy, ask your partner,
'Is there something I can do to help you?'
It doesn't always have to be fair.**

Do to others as you would have them do to you.

– LUKE 6:31

Learning to love

Jesus Christ showed love in all five ways:



1. Words
'As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you.'
John 15:9
2. Time
'Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place.'
Mark 6:31
3. Actions
'He poured some water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet.'
John 13:5
4. Touch
'Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man.'
Luke 5:13
5. Presents
'Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted.'
John 6:11

**Love is not just a feeling – it requires an
act of the will to meet each other's needs.
We are called to imitate the love of Jesus.**

My command is this: love each other as I have loved you.

– JOHN 15:12

CONVERSATION 3

30 minutes



DISCOVERING YOUR LOVE LANGUAGES

Please do questions 1 and 2 on your own and share your responses before filling in questions 4 and 5.

1. Write down up to 12 specific occasions through which you have known your partner's love for you. (It could be at any stage in your relationship – before or after marriage. These may be regular or rare events and could be deemed of major or minor significance.)

I have known your love for me when...

For example:

'We sat under the stars talking about our future when we were going out.'

'You gave me that watch on our wedding anniversary.'

'You cooked a special meal for my birthday.'

'You said how proud you were of me when I was promoted.'

'You spontaneously put your arm around me when we were waiting for the film to start.'

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.

2. Taking into consideration your answers to question 1, put the five ways of showing love in order of importance for you, where 1 = most important and 5 = least important. Then consider in which order of importance you think they come for your partner.

For you (number 1–5)	Love languages	For your partner (number 1–5)
	Loving words	
	Thoughtful presents	
	Physical affection	
	Quality time	
	Kind actions	

3. Now, compare and discuss with your partner what each of you put for questions 1 and 2.
4. Looking at your partner's number one 'love language' (ie, the most important for them), list three ways in which you could communicate love to your partner this week or this month. (Try to keep within the bounds of reality!)
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
5. Looking at your partner's second 'love language' (ie, the second most important for them), list three more ways in which you could communicate love to your partner effectively this week or this month.
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

Go online to www.5lovelanguages.com to fill in a short questionnaire to confirm the order of importance of these love languages for you.

The adventure of love for a lifetime

Marriage is a journey; it's designed to be a dynamic relationship that keeps changing and developing.

Expressing our commitment to each other is essential to the success of the journey.

Commitment is liberating as it means we can:

- take a long view
- plan our future together
- look beyond current difficulties



Love does not consist of gazing at each other, but in looking together in the same direction.

— ANTOINE DE ST EXUPÉRY

“

Every marriage is a really big commitment to the people. It's a commitment that says, 'I'm prepared not only to spend the rest of my life with you, but to spend the rest of my life finding out about you. There's always more of you to discover.'

DR ROWAN WILLIAMS (FORMER ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY)

CONVERSATION 4

5 minutes



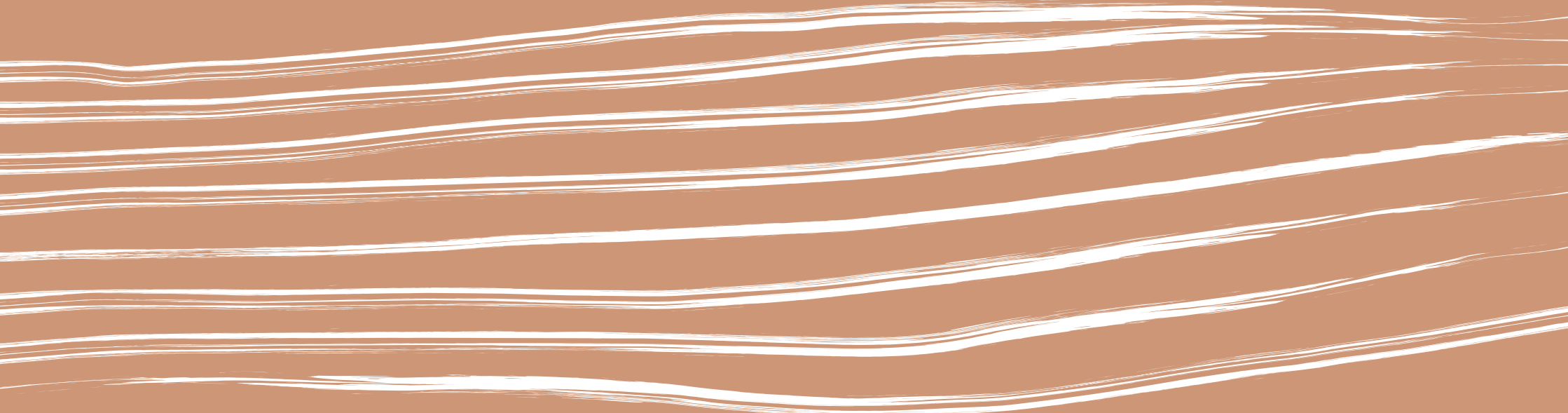
SUPPORTING EACH OTHER

- Ask your partner if there's something particular regarding your future together for which they'd like your understanding and support.
- If you feel comfortable, say a prayer for each other, aloud or silently. Otherwise, express your support in some other way.

Love and faithfulness meet together...

— PSALM 85:10




Continuing the Conversation



'A marriage that is full of love is where we are seeking to meet our husband or wife's needs in the particular way that makes them feel loved.'

— Nicky and Sila Lee

Plan a date together

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
 Morning							
 Afternoon							
 Evening							

My turn / your turn to organise what we do.

This week, we could.....

Ideas for our dates this month...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Write in your partner's journal a kind action that you would really appreciate this week.

**Putting the course into practice**

Five things I especially want to remember and practise from The Marriage Course:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Show each other what you have written.

Five things you would like me to remember and practise from The Marriage Course? Write them below:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Conversation starter on your next date:

Now we have finished the course, how can we maintain a date night routine?

What is the best sort of date to help us connect as a couple?

How can we make it happen?

For example: *putting boundaries around work, finding a babysitter, budgeting etc.*

