



FEELING THE LOVE

AN APPROACH TO WORKING WITH COUPLES AND PROVIDING ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP PROGRAMMING THROUGH OUTREACH

Johanna Strokoff, PhD
University of Illinois at Chicago
AUCCCO Conference 2019

Objectives

- Discuss ways to design outreach programming to couples/romantic partnerships on college campuses
- Discuss unique considerations when working with couples, including logistical factors and cultural considerations
- Provide examples of programming

Programming Considerations

- Timing
- Do all partners need to be students? Do all partners need to be present?
- How to appeal to couples and romantic relationships
 - Date night vs. Couples Communication Skills
 - Wording such as “Come celebrate your relationship”
- Cultural Considerations
 - Heteronormative concepts
 - Differing comfort discussing relationships, sex, etc.
- No-show rates

Examples of Programs

- Communication skills 4-week series
- Hooking Up
- Relationship danger signs
- UIC Love Series
 - Online Dating
 - Love Languages
 - Engagement
 - Breaking up



LOVE series

Check out these programs for all stages of relationships!
Registration preferred (required for Love Talk: Cupid Yoga); drop-ins welcome on a first come, first served basis

17 JAN
SWIPING FOR LOVE IN THE DIGITAL AGE, 12:00-1:00 PM (Student Center West 206 A-B)
Learn a new perspective on online dating to enhance the likelihood of forming stronger connections and remaining resilient through the dating process

7 FEB
LOVE TALK: CUPID YOGA, 5:15-6:45 PM (Student Services Building Conference Rooms B-C)
Back by popular demand! Registration required! For more information and to register, go to <http://counseling.uic.edu/upcoming-workshops/>

5 MAR
PREPPING FOR THE WEDDING, 4:00-5:00 PM (Student Center West 206 A-B)
Learn ways to understand and cope with the emotional ups-and-downs of the significant life transition of engagement and early marriage

9 APR
BOUNCING BACK FROM A BREAKUP, 2:00-3:00 PM (Student Center East 603)
Learn how to understand and manage your emotions around a breakup and identify new ways to engage in relationships in the future

UIC COUNSELING CENTER
Questions and to register: Contact Johanna Strokoff, Ph.D. jstrokof@uic.edu, 312-996-3490

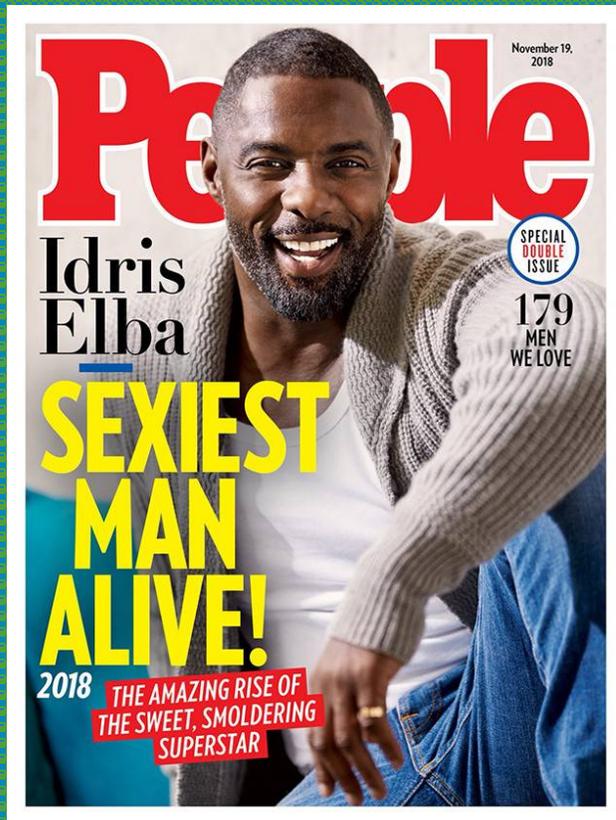
Photo: iStock.com

Swiping for Love in the Digital Age

Brooks, 2018

- How many people have tried online dating?
- Which online site is the most popular?
- What percentage of marriages last year occurred with partners meeting online?

Fantasy of the Perfect Partner



Other Topic Areas with Online Dating

- Writing down / sharing pet peeves
- What to put on a profile
- How to approach a first date
- How to inform someone if no longer interested
- Asking for feedback

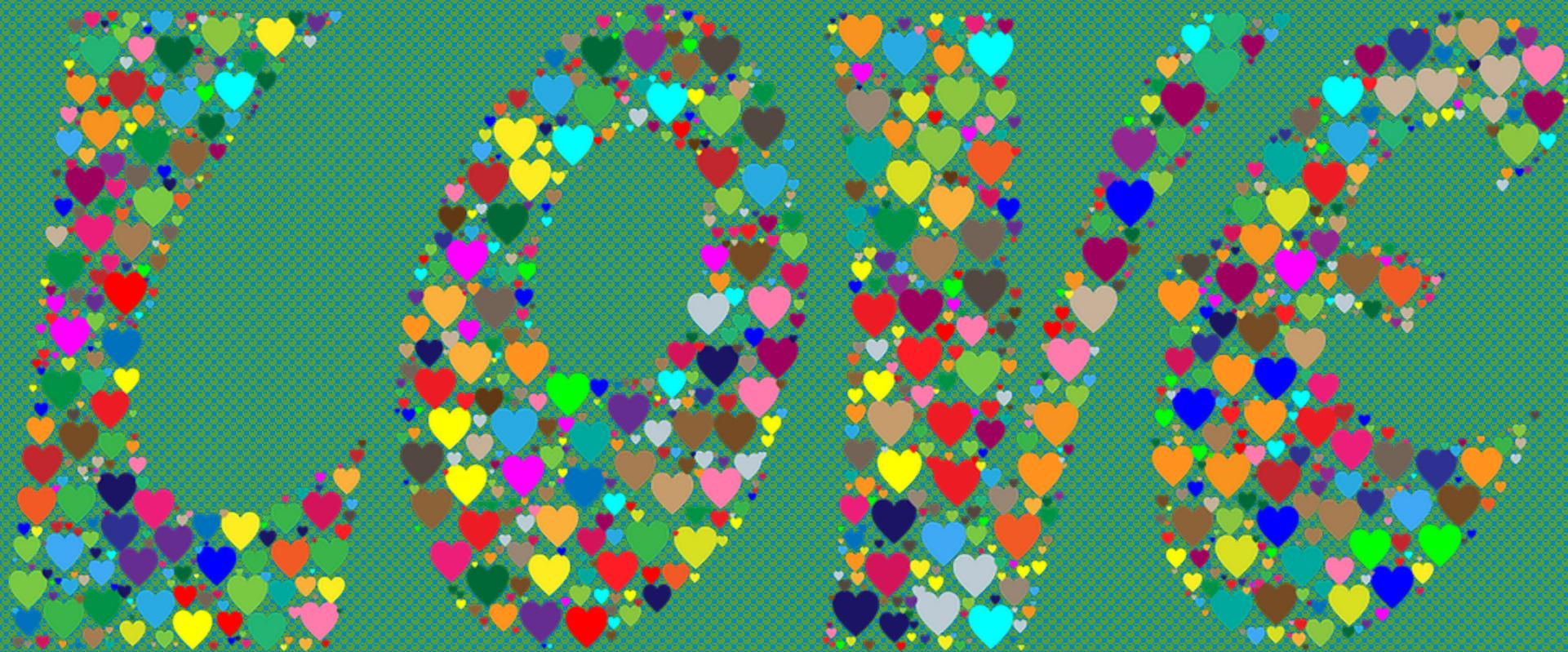
Gary Chapman's 5 Love Languages and Partner Yoga



What are Love Languages?

Chapman, 2015

- Ways people express and feel loved with others
 - Ways in which we feel cared for, cherished, and special
 - Ways to take responsibility giving love, rather than just receiving
- Our love languages are often different than our partners.
- How can you avoid missed cues?
 - Identify your love language
 - Interpret & decode your partners language
 - When wanting more connection, think to yourself, “how can I show my partner more love today”



Words of Affirmation; Physical Touch; Gifts; Quality Time; Acts of Service

Prepping for the Wedding!

What are the most common things people say to someone recently engaged?



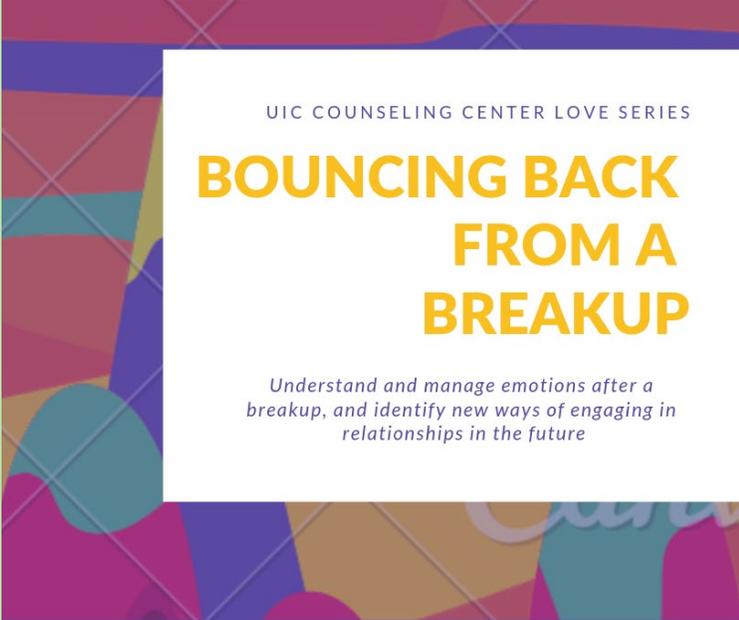
Prepping for the Wedding!

- Normalizing the ups-and-downs associated with the engagement process
- Discovering how wedding planning stresses may be symbolic
 - Is this really the right color scheme?
 - I must have the PERFECT wedding
- Understanding family/friend dynamics coming to life
 - Why am I not involved with the tasting, I'm the mother?!
 - How could you not have me in the wedding party?

Bouncing Back from a Breakup

-Stefani Pila, M.Ed., Samiha Jallouqa, M.A.

- Discussions surrounding grief
- Naming fears often elicited during a breakup
- Ways pain from a breakup may activate old hurt
- Helpful boundaries post-breakup
- Coping skills
- Group interaction



UIC COUNSELING CENTER LOVE SERIES

BOUNCING BACK FROM A BREAKUP

Understand and manage emotions after a breakup, and identify new ways of engaging in relationships in the future

**TUESDAY, 4/9
2:00-3:00 PM
SCE 603**

Registration preferred; drop-ins welcome. To register or for more information, email Stefani Pila, M.Ed. at spila@uic.edu or Samiha Jallouqa, M.A. at sjallo2@uic.edu



Future Directions

- More programming for marginalized populations
- Programs on social skills and cultural norms for dating
- Process / support groups for romantic relationships
- Balancing school and relationships

References

Brooks, 2019. 21 Amazing Online Statistics- The Good, Bad, and Weird. Dating Advice.com

Chapman, G. (2017). *The 5 Love Languages. The Secret to Love that Lasts*. Chicago: Northfield Publishing.

Questions/Discussion