

WHAT IS LOVE?



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How is love defined?

For many, love is a very important phenomenon and cultural works, especially musical ones, it is often described. Serious explanations of the phenomenon is, however, quite scarce. For example, in Bonnier's conversation dictionary from 1925 a number of words starting with love are explained but not the actual word love. Regarding the verb loving not even variations on the word is included. The same observation can be made in more modern encyclopaedias such as the Nya Uppslagsverket (The New Encyclopaedia) published by Informationsförlaget in 1987.

In the Bible (**Corinthians 13** in the **New Testament**), there is a description of the nature of love, which perhaps can be seen as a definition since it describes a state of gentleness which, by implication, those who feel love may experience:

Love is patient and kind. Love is not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, is not selfish, it does not roars up, it would not hurt.



A poster saying:

*“Love
Take as much as you need”*

There is also some literature on the subject, but I do not understand the explanations presented in these. A librarian at the Stockholm Public Library, familiar with the topic, claimed that in their collection of informative books about love four prominent authors excels: Francesco Alberoni, Nathaniel Branden, Tomas Böhm and Erich Fromm. Of these four, I have read suggested works of all but the last one. The first gives in the book **I love you (Alberoni F, 1996)** the following explanation of what love is:

Love is the inner, emotional back of the birth of a new togetherness and a new me. And the beloved is the hub, the axle around which the reconstruction takes place. It is the experience of merging with the beloved and creates a new identity that transforms and transforms myself and the world I live in. It is the experience of discovering that I am part of a new world, a new heaven and a new earth. And the one I love is the entrance giving access to all of this.

The third expresses it in a similar way, a bit clearer, but still not quite crystal clear, in his book **After the love (Böhm T, 1984)**:

A love relationship will also give the feeling of coming home. A return to a place where you have never been. This return does not mean that the new relationship is a reminiscent of the old relation with the early parents. Rather it means to come home to a truer, more restful version of oneself, which is both liberated and created with the other.

While the second author in **The psychology of love (Branden N, 1996)** suggests the following much more concrete definition:

Romantic love is a passionate spiritual-emotional-sexual attraction between a man and a woman that reflects the great respect they have for each other.

Several of these authors argue that there are those who think they love someone even though they in actually do not. For example, Nathaniel Branden writes:

Many men and women seem to be in love with a fantasy rather than the person they say they love. One reason may be that they have repressed needs, repressed desires, repressed pain, repressed desires that they on a conscious plan perhaps are unaware of, while they unconsciously seek to satisfy, resolve and restore them. A person who is not aware of their deepest needs, can be attracted to someone because of rather superficial characteristics, some of them raise a hope or a dream that these needs could receive feedback in a relationship.

One explanation for why some people falsely think they feel love can be that possibly there is some confusion about what it means. Especially among those who, like me, do not understand the answers given in the literature about the phenomenon. The purpose of this chapter is to reduce this possible ambiguity.

Does love exist, and if so, why?

I thought that love was just a word, they sang about in song I've heard.

From **La vie en rose** by **Edith Piaf**

If love would not exist, there are many songwriters, poets and others who for centuries have written about nothing, which does not seem likely. In order to investigate the matter, I asked six persons¹ if they believe that love exists and if so, why? All answered yes to the first part of the question. The answers to the second part of the question were more diverse. Three of the respondents answered something like that it allows the human specie to survive and two said that it makes the relationships better. The results thus indicate that we believe that love exists, though we may disagree a bit about why.

¹. Three men and three women men (mean and median age: 47, 46, min-max: 38-55 years) who all claimed that they had loved at least one person.

Can the object for love be whatever?

Judging by how the word is used, we can love in many different ways and the objects for love may vary. There are those who claim that they love, for example, chocolate. But it's probably not the same sense that they feel for a life-mate, because then they would probably not eat the chocolate. Moreover the feeling that they have for a life-mate is probably not the same as they have for the kids or the dog. In the literature the feeling is, of course, described in different ways by different authors. Here are some examples where the object of love is a prospective or current partner in a sexual relationship.

A. She loved him with every cell of her body. She found joy in every part of him - his hilarious laughter, the happy eyes that almost always looked like he just heard a joke, his presence in every a awake moment. She loved his impulsive way to touch her cheek at the most unexpected moments. He made her feel alive and cherished.

B. She loved Frank flexible thinking - that he spent the day with joining geometric shapes, yet able to express himself eloquently in writing and playing the piano with sincerity and beauty. About his remarkable inner one only need to consider the houses he designed for it to be publicly shown. Mamah realized that she was attracted to him for the same reasons that made others shy away. He did not mince words. And he was eccentric, but with the same sort of eccentricity she had come to admire in her father.

Out of love for Frank by Nancy Horan.

C. Despite her violent surprise, she could not help putting her hand on his defenceless neck, and he shook and trembled violently. Then he looked up at her with that incredible pulling power in his big glowing eyes. She was completely unable to resist it. From her breast flowed the immense desire to meet him: she must give him anything, anything.

From Lady Chatterley's Lover by D. H. Lawrence

D. When I knew he could not catch me, I turned my head to watch him sleep. I stole from him - but only with my eyes - a bit of his sleep, his curved brown eyelashes, and his curved lips whose crimson stood out against the pink of his skin. I could have spent the whole night to looking at him, but I felt guilty for this insidious theft. I stopped after a few minutes and retained the dissatisfaction for myself.

From Love without resistance by Gilles Rozier

In these quotes names and gender markers were replaced with X and Y. Which in case A looked like this:

A. X loved Y with every cell of his/her body. X found joy in every part of Y- Ys hilarious laughter, the happy eyes that almost always looked like Y just heard a joke, Ys presence in every moment. X loved Ys impulsive way to touch Xs cheek at the most unexpected moments. Y made X feel alive, and cherished.

The quotes were then read for the participants but with the X and Y exchanged with their own name or the name of a partner that they love or have loved, and in addition had a sexual relationship with. Then they were asked to categorize the quotes in any of the categories: I feel very much the same for my love, I feel pretty much the same for my love, and to some extent I feel the much the same for my love and I do not recognize the feeling at all. Most recognized themselves quite or very well in the first quotation (table 1). In the other, however, they recognized themselves less.

Table 1. The number of respondents who recognized themselves "very well", "pretty well" and so on in the various quotations.

| | I feel very much the same for my love. | I feel pretty much the same for my love. | To some extent I feel the same for my love. | I do not recognize the feeling at all. |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| A. X loved Y with every cell of his/her body. X found joy in every part of Y- Ys hilarious laughter, the happy eyes that almost always looked like Y just heard a joke, Ys presence in every awake moment. X loved Ys impulsive way to touch Xs cheek at the most unexpected moments. Y made X feel alive, and cherished. | 2 | 3 | | 1 |
| B. X loved Ys flexible thinking - that Y spent the day with joining geometric shapes, yet able to express Yself eloquently in writing and playing the piano with sincerity and beauty. About Ys remarkable inner one need only to consider the houses Y designed for it to be publicly shown. X realized that X was attracted to Y for the same reasons that made others shy away. Y did not mince words. And Y was eccentric, but with the same sort of eccentricity X had come to admire in Xs father. | | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| C. Despite X violent surprise, X could not help putting X hand on Ys defenseless neck, and Y shook and trembled violently. Then Y looked up at X with that incredible pulling power in Ys big glowing eyes. X was completely unable to resist it. From X breast flowed the immense desire to meet Y: X must give Y anything, anything. | | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| D. When I knew Y could not catch me, I turned my head to watch Y sleep. I stole from Y - but only with my eyes - a bit of Ys sleep, Ys curved brown eyelashes, Ys curved lips whose crimson stood out against the pink of Ys skin. I could have spent the whole night to looking at Y, but I felt guilty for this insidious theft. I stopped after a few minutes and retained the dissatisfaction for myself. | | 1 | 1 | 4 |

After this ranking the interviewees were asked to do the same thing with the name of the beloved replaced with the name of their favourite candy and relevant adjectives and nouns replaced with qualities that the candy may have. Which would have looked like this:

X loved Toblerone with every cell of X body. X found joy in every part of the product - the pretty packaging, the pointy bits, the sound when he broke off a piece. X loved the taste of milk chocolate mixed with a hint of almond. Toblerone made X feel alive and cherished.

Almost none of the participants then recognized themselves in any of the quotes. This, for candy manufacturers, disappointing results suggests that the feeling for, for example, a particular chocolate is not the same as for a prospective or current partner in a sexual relationship.

The corresponding exercise with Y replaced with the name of one of their children's (for the three participants who have children) or a treasured belonging gave equally low results. The results became slightly higher when the quotes were changed to address someone they really like, but when the relationship is not of a sexual nature. Taken together, this suggests that love has to do with sex.

Additionally half of the respondents (3 of 6) answered no on the question: Have you felt the same feeling² to someone or something that you did not want to have a sexual relationship with.

Though the other half said yes and it may be due to:

- They did not answer truthfully.
- They have not felt true love for someone.
- The subject of true love can be something that you do not intend to have sex with.

Since it is unclear which of these alternatives is correct, it is not entirely clarified whether you can feel love for whatever or not.

² The same feeling, that you have felt for someone that you had or wanted to have a sexual relationship with, that you think is love.

Can love for someone or something end and if so, why?

Old love does not rust

Old proverb

Some people, at least in literature and on film, feel love for someone after only a short period of time together and they then continue to love the person for life even if they never meet again. Is it normal? Or are such stories exceptions? All participants believe that true love can really run out (table 2), but most people believe that there is someone they would again feel love for, if they met him/her under appropriate circumstances. Some also think that they still feel love for someone that they have not seen for a long time.

The reason that all of the participants believe that love can end may be that in reality they have not felt true love, though it could reasonably also be that:

- The old loves are replaced by newer ones.
- The participants suppress old loves for the sake of a present one.
- They haven't really thought the thing through truly enough.
- Or ...

An alternative explanation is that true love really can end. It does not contradict that the sentiment also may stay, not only in the movies but also in real life.

Table 2. The participants' answers to questions about the durability of love.

| | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
| Can true love to a person end? | 6 | 0 |
| Is there somebody that you fel love for even though you havent met in several years. | 2 | 4 |
| Else, is there someone that you would feel love for again if you met under suitable circumstances? | 5 | 1 |

How important is love?

But now abides faith, hope, love, these three, but the greatest of these is love.

First Corinthians 13

There are many real-life examples where people have sacrificed a lot for love. Like leaving wife/husband and children, abdicate the throne, committing suicide and so on. But there are many more examples of people who made the opposite and let the "common sense" prevail, though those we do not hear about. Because it lacks sensations and gossip value to tell about someone who did not cheat or didn't commit suicide for love. This difference is reflected in the interviewees' answers to the question about how important love is³. A couple of respondents claim that they would sacrifice almost anything, while three of them are not willing to sacrifice anything but very little.

The difference may be due to different ability to feel real love, but it's probably more likely that it depends on other things such as:

- The belief in ones own ability to built up a completely new life when one have left all the old behind.
- The courage to change lives.
- The strength to resist what others think.
- Or ...

The very most likely answer is though probably that love is of different importance to different people.

³. The answers to the free question: How much are you willing to sacrifice for a new romance that you for the moment think you love? (Consider, for example: health, eventual wife/husband, work, housing, and contact with any children, half of your money.)

They answered: In extreme cases, I could sacrifice everything except life, health and contact with the children, otherwise not so much (1 person), quite a bit, unfortunately (1 answer), damn much, like 90% (1 reply), some, such as jobs and housing (1 person), and nothing (2 persons).

What is love?

Many have speculated about this, not least songwriter who composed text lines such as:

*Is this love - is this love - is this love -
Is this love that I'm feeling'?*

Is This Love by **Bob Marley**

But they rarely develop the question further than that. This means that the usefulness of such texts often is of pretty limited for someone who wants to assess whether he/she really feels love.

Francesco Alberoni describes in the book, "**I love you**" how we more or less unconsciously in the transition to love, do love tests. The first of these tests is according to him the *authenticity test* which boils down to that those who think they love stays away from the object of the possible feeling and observes what happens. If he/she then feels despair and feel that he/she can't be without the object for the feeling, it is real love. Though I am rather sceptical to that the tests really give a true answer. Because if you try to stay away from something that you feel for, one always feel more or less in desperate need of it. Whether you loved it or just felt pretty good about it.

The second and final test Alberoni describes is the *reciprocity test* that is about if one's feelings are answered. Which of course does not have as much to do with what one feels, in addition to that the more the question seems interesting the more likely it is that one feels real love.

For those who are not fully satisfied with these two tests, there is, fortunately, aids in the form of additional self-tests. These tests appear, as a to rule, to based on that the testers estimates to which degree they feel that they, for example, feel desire for, or liability to anyone. Then the estimates are summed up and the higher the total, the greater is the love.

In order to investigate the "ingredients" that are included in the discussed sense, a number of randomly⁴ selected love tests⁵ were studied. The factors that to some extent were addressed in several of the studied tests (see table 3) are: omission, responsibility, desire, communication, long vision, sacrifice, thoughts of the other person, romance, and his or her ability to make the tester happy. The factor that was most frequently expressed in the tests was: desire, followed by thoughts of the other, and then deleting and sense of responsibility. One conclusion from the comparison could therefore be that desire is the main ingredient in love.

Table 3. Issues in three randomly chosen love tests. Classified by the nature of the topic of the question. And with a description of what the issue basically implies about its importance to whether it is love. All three tests are designed so that the higher the estimate the more likely that it is about love.

| | | Test A | Test B | Test C |
|----------------------------------|---|--------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Omission | The more one can open up for the object of the love, the stronger the love for the person is. | Yes, question 1 | Yes, question 1 & partly 8 | |
| Responsibility | The more responsibility one feel for the person, the larger the love. | Yes, quest. 9 | Yes, quest.7, partly 5 & 8 | |
| Desire | The more one wants to be with the person... | Yes, quest. 14 | Yes partly 3, 4 & 9 | Yes, quest. 4 & 12 |
| Trust | The more one field trust for the person... | Yes, quest. 10 | | |
| Communication | The better the communication is... | Yes, quest. 7 & 13 | | Yes, partly quest. 14 |
| Long vision | The longer one want the relation to last... | Yes, quest. 6 & 12 | | Yes, partly quest. 1 and maybe also 8 & 9 |
| Sacrifice | The more one is willing to sacrifice/forgive... | | Yes, quest.2 & 6 | Maybe 8, 9 & 10 |
| Thoughts | The more one thinks about the person... | Yes, quest. 2 | | Yes, quest.2, 5, 7 & 13 |
| Romance | The more romance/passion... | Yes, quest. 5 & 11 | | Yes, maybe quest. 11 |
| Support | The more emotional support... | Yes, quest. 4 | | |
| Jealousy | The more one want to have nonopoly on the person | Yes, quest. 3 | | |
| Stability | The more trust one have for the stabilty in the the relation.. | Yes, quest. 15 | | |
| Ability to make the tester happy | The morehe/she is the only one making one happy.. | Yes, quest. 8 | | Yes, maybe quest. 3 |
| In love | The faster one feel in love.... | | | Yes, quest.6 |

⁴. The first three, in this context, useful tests, I found when goggling the word "love test".

⁵. The questions in the downloaded tests are presented in the Annex in the Swedish original version of this chapter.

Against this way of seeing the phenomena, one can probably have several important objections. Among other things, or in particular, the test shows more how you are as a person than how you feel about the test object, compared to how it felt/feel about others. This means that a person that is more likely to feel desire, open up, and to show great responsibility would always win the tests compared to those who is in the opposite way.

The thing comes in a somewhat different light if the questions had been "compared to others I have met." But there still remains a lot of objections, such as the more romantic and/or reliable object of the test is, the higher the score. Which has the effect that test objects that do not exude these qualities always will have lower scores, regardless of what the tester actually is attracted to. In addition, many of the issues are rather rational consideration than emotional ones, like:

The better you communicate ... the more confidence you have in the stability of the relationship ...

Considerations that may be wise to take in account if you want to judge the wise ness in initiating/continue a relationship, but they have reasonably not so much to do with your feelings for the test object. Emotions are, as familiar, phenomena's such as: anxiety, sadness, desire and longing. Either love is an entirely own feeling, or the cumulative effect of a host of other emotions, such as the aforementioned. In the latter case, the feeling of love for someone could be quantified in terms of desire, etc. (see the suggestions in table 4). In this case, the purpose of each question is to quantify the degree of any of the emotions involved in the feeling of love.

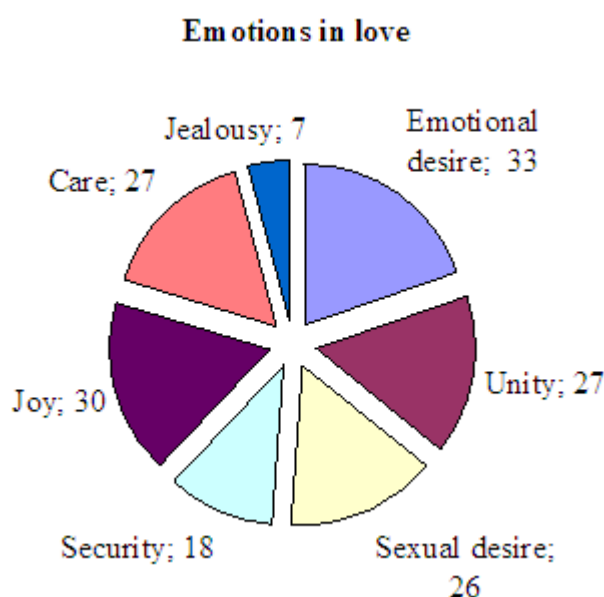
Table 4. Each of the questions in the three tests linked to any of seven feelings⁶, I guessed, could be relevant and reasonably exclusive.

| The feelings ranked in chart 1 | The number of questions in each test that appears to discuss the listed feeling (pcs.) | | | Share of the total amount of questions in all three tests (%) |
|--------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| | Test A (totally 15 questions) | Test B (totally 9 ques.) | Test C (totally 14 quest.) | |
| Emotional desire | 2 | 1 | 5 | 21 |
| Unity | 4 | 1 | 2 | 18 |
| Sexual desire | 2 | 1 | 3 | 16 |
| Security | 4 | 2 | 2 | 21 |
| Joy | 1 | 1 | 2 | 11 |
| Care | 1 | 3 | | 11 |
| Jealousy | 1 | | | 3 |

⁶. Here it is assumed, that for instance security is an emotion and that it gives a dominant contribution to the desire to give oneself away to someone, but it doesn't need to be so. Though it is of less important in this discussion.

Love tests, as described earlier, assumes that every emotion gives a contribution to the overall feeling of love that is proportional to the number of questions in which they are involved. To some extent, determine if it is the actual case, I asked the respondents rank how much effect those in table 4 listed emotions have on their sense of love. All interviewees managed successfully to rank the emotions (see figure 1), suggesting that they feel that they contribute in different ways. And the overall ranking score for each emotion did not point out security as the most important emotion, even though it is the emotion involved, together with emotional desire in the most test questions. This means that someone who very much feel emotions, which my interviewees rated higher than security (such as joy and care), will receive unfairly low scores in relation to the importance that the participants believe that the feelings have. That person then perhaps becomes, unjustly, very disappointed with the test results.

Chart 1. The overall ranking score for each feeling regarding its contribution to the overall feeling of love. The participants had to rate the contribution of each feeling 1-7, where 7 = max.



| Emotion | Explanation of the word to the interviewees |
|------------------|--|
| Emotional desire | The more one is longing for to be with the loved. |
| Unity | The more one feel like the couple consists a team against the rest of the world. |
| Sexual desire | The stronger and more often one wish to have sex. |
| Security | The more anxiusness that dissapear with the love. |
| Joy | The more joy the love brings out. |
| Care | The more one care about the loves wellbeing. |
| Jealousy | The more one is worried about loosing the love. |

If love however is an own feeling, it is not fair to try to quantify it through other emotions. And given that the question: how much do you love X on a scale of 1 to 9, does not help the respondents so much further in their wonderings whether he/she feel love or not, other measures to estimate precisely that feeling are needed. So here's an attempt to suggest a model for such estimates:

The one who asks someone who loves a person what he/she thinks is so special with the loved one, probably gets several superlatives in response. These superlatives can be either 'true' observations that the respondent has observed or qualities that he or she would not have raised to the skies if he/she did not love. This difference in the feeling could be love. This can be described by the formula:

Σ (feelings for the loved one - sober observations of that person) = love for him/her.

It means that love is the sum of differences between the emotional experiences, the object of love creates in different ways compared to what the experience would be if the person that feels love did not feel love for the person.

Note that the model assumes that everything that has to do with the subject of love does not give this feeling but instead they gives relatively neutral, or perhaps even in some cases, negative emotions.

An easy and perfectly constructed example:

Ulla thinks of her boyfriend Peter and, in particular, that his shoes left large stains on the floor in the hallway the night before. She remembers how disappointed she was over this, until Peter came up to her and looked so beseechingly at her, like only he can do. Then she got like warm inside and hugged him. As she hugged him, she felt his special fragrance, a blend of diesel oil and dandruff shampoo and the warm feeling inside was even stronger. Now that she's thinking about this again, she again had the same feeling.

By the formula would look like this:

Ulla's love = ((the feeling that Peters praying expressions brings her - the feeling the same expression would have given if she had a neutral attitude towards him) + (ditto for his scent)).

With the foregoing explanation, we have five modern explanations of the discussed phenomena:

1. Alberoni's, quoted in the introduction, about that love is an own emotion which seems to unite and transform.
2. Thomas Böhm's, who is on to something similar. But with the emphasis on that it gives something that might resemble to harmony.
3. Nathaniel Branden's that in contrast to the previous means that love is a combination of attraction and admiration.
4. That love is composed of a variety of emotions, such as desire and joy, and each of them can be quantified and then added up to a value that together constitutes the love.
5. The one described on the previous page about that love is the sum of the differences.

The interview subjects were told to think about these descriptions one at a time and they were then asked to assess how consistent explanation was with their perception of what love is, by placing each of them in one of the categories: very well, pretty well, some, not at all.

Most of them did not seem to recognize themselves particularly well in any of the explanations (table 5), but the one who got the best grades was the one by Nathaniel Branden. The one that got the worst rating was Thomas Böhm's followed by Alberoni's. The reason that everyone did not recognize themselves in the same definition can be:

- A part, or none of them answered truthfully.
- A part, or none of them, has felt true love for someone.
- True love can be felt in different ways.
- Some or all certainly feel or have felt like in some of the explanations, but they do not realize this.
- None of the definitions are good.

Table 5. How well those interviewed recognized themselves in the various explanations. Total score = 4 x number of ranked "Very well" + 3 x "Pretty well" + 2 x "Some" + 1 x "Not at all".

| <i>How well do you think the following explanations of love fits your own idear of what love is?</i> | Very well | Pretty well | Some | Not at all | Total grade |
|---|-----------|-------------|------|------------|-------------|
| Love is the inner, emotional back of the birth of a new collectivity and a new me. And the beloved is the hub, the axle around which the reconstruction takes place. It is the experience of merging with the beloved and create a new etentity that transforms and transform myself and the world I live in. It is the experience of discovering that I am part of a new world, a new heaven and a new earth. And the one I love is the entrance giving access to all of this. | 0 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 13 |
| A love relationship will also give the feeling of coming home. A return to a place where you have never been. This return does not mean that the new relationship is a reminiscent of the old relation with the early parents. Rather it means to come home to a truer, more restful version of oneself, which is both liberated and created with the other. | 0 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 12 |
| Romantic love is a passionate spiritual-emotional-sexual attraction between a man and a woman that reflects the great respect they have for each other. | 2 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 19 |
| love is composed of a variety of emotions, such as desire and joy, and each of them can be quantified and then added up to a value that together constitutes the love. | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 16 |
| Love is the sum of differences between the emotional experiences, the object of love creates in different ways compared to what the experience would be if the person that feels love did not feel love for the person. | 2 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 14 |

What is the difference between desire, to be in love or to love someone?

Encyclopaedias do not give a clear answer here, see examples in table 6.

Table 6. Some examples of what dictionaries and encyclopaedias can learn about the difference between desire, being in love and to love someone.

| Phenomena | Bra Böckers lexicon 2000 | The National Encyklopedia |
|-----------|--|--|
| Desire | Not included. | Not included. |
| In love | Not included. | Not included. |
| Love | No definition is presented, however, a historical and cultural exposé on the phenomena is given. | <i>"An at the same time comprehensive and widely accepted definition of love can hardly be given."</i> The text is then followed by an exposé like that of Bra böckers lexicon. |

Several of the interviewees said that desire is sexual, being in love is deeper and to love someone is even deeper (table 8).

Table 8. What the respondents considered to be the difference between desires, being in love and to love someone.

| <i>What is the difference between desire, to be in love or to love someone?</i> |
|--|
| Desire is sexual, in love is passionate, love= unity. |
| Desire is shallow, in love is deeper, love= really deep and it comes after the other. |
| Desire= one wants the person sexually, in love= a further step on the way to love, to love someone is something unselfish. |
| Desire= longing for someone, one can not get, in love= likes someone and wants to be with the person, love= one likes the whole person and all pieces come together. |
| Dont know. |
| Desire= a demand that does'nt need to be fulfilled, in love is when it is new, to love someone is more durable. |

A theory about love (Leander G, 2004) is that it is the experience of a number of chemical substances that provides excitement and joy, are activated and/or released in the body when we think about or spend time with a particular person. These substances are according to the author phenyl ethylamine (also available in chocolate), endorphins (neurotransmitters for happiness) and dopamine (pleasure hormones).

According to Alberoni everyone who is truly in love has to simultaneously feel twenty specific emotions (table 9), otherwise he/she is not truly in love. None of the participants could, however, recognize themselves in all the feelings listed by Alberoni, even though all claimed that they had been in love. Which, if you believe Alberoni, is not true, and if so, it might not be true that they have ever loved someone. If so, it may be because it is taboo to choose to be with someone without loving him or her. Therefore, the participants lie when they say that love or have loved someone. Which in turn may be due to that the objects for "the love" has forced them to claim such lies. Another possible explanation is that they do not know what love means. Alternatively, it has somewhere in the chain between what Alberoni meant and how the respondents interpreted it, been some critical misunderstandings.

Table 9. Have the participants really been in love?

| <i>Think of someone you think you certainly been in love with, do you then recognize:</i> | Yes | No |
|---|-----|----|
| The feeling that previously only to have followed others' rules and not one owns dreams. | 1 | 5 |
| Suddenly one know what to do, earlier one was blinded. | 1 | 5 |
| The beloved are the only one who you can love. | 3 | 3 |
| The feeling that all evil is impermanent, but love is resistant. | 1 | 5 |
| Everything that we see around us have a meaning. | 3 | 3 |
| One feels free. | 3 | 3 |
| One loves everything. | 2 | 4 |
| One becommes another person. | 4 | 2 |
| One leaves the old lying personality and wants to be honest. | 2 | 4 |
| One can do without most as long as one have love. | 3 | 3 |
| One cares not about money, what one has one parts with the beloved and if it is the beloved who has one parts that. | 2 | 4 |
| One melts together even in the life before the beloved was a part of it. | 2 | 4 |
| One feels that love is like a miracle. | 3 | 3 |
| Both are the others leader. | 4 | 2 |
| We wants to share the whole life with the beloved. | 5 | 1 |
| We dont see any bad sides of the beloved only good sides. | 5 | 1 |
| We gets and inner power to improve ourselves. | 3 | 3 |
| Ones body unifies with the others in something holy. | 1 | 5 |
| One wants everything together. | 4 | 2 |
| One who loves wants everybody to be happy, but realizes that its not the case. | 5 | 1 |

Though regardless of if the respondents have felt true love or not, I assume that they felt something special when they thought they were in love. And that probably is god enough.

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