

5 Love Languages Couples Retreat



with Cindy Cline and Ed Green

The 5 Stages Of Falling In Love (And Why It Makes Us Do Dumb Things)

By [Joe Masters](#), March 22nd 2017

Dopamine, Oxytocin, Serotonin... these are probably words you've heard before. But did you know that they are also the same chemicals that get jumbled up in your brain when you're falling in love with someone? (or at least, developing an attachment).

It turns out there literally is "chemistry" happening in the brain to make you feel a certain way about someone.

If you've ever heard that "love is a drug", this is why!

Stage 1 of falling in love: The initial stages of lust, physical attraction, eye contact, or anything that makes you intrigued about someone.

In this stage, there is a lot that can happen – we might not feel an immediate attraction to someone, and then develop it over time. Or we might instantly feel a connection to someone, and develop it from there. What happens in this early stage is that there is a rush of a neurotransmitter called "dopamine", which makes us excited and feel good. Dopamine is also the same chemical that gets released when people take drugs or do something that makes them happy.

Stage 2: Early courtship, dating phase, and everything in between (including those jittery nervous, "butterflies in the stomach" feelings).

In this stage, there is some level of uncertainty about where the relationship is going. That's why the brain sends off chemicals that are related to adrenaline – and combined with the good feelings of dopamine, can make for a potent

cocktail that makes us feel even more motivated to pursue this specific person. Because of its early stage in the relationship, it might even be a case of being highly compatible with each other (which could be indicated through pheromones).

Stage 3: Ever been “obsessed” with someone, or at least thought about so much to the point you thought you were crazy?

If you’ve ever had a crazy stalker, or even been so interested in someone you couldn’t stop thinking about them... it’s probably because at this stage, there is another chemical involved in the cocktail of love. However this time, it’s not a “release” of a certain chemical. It’s actually a “suppression” of serotonin – a chemical that helps us feel calm, confident, and gives us a sense of wellbeing.

But why? It turns out that a suppression of this chemical can actually lead to obsessive behaviors, which is often why serotonin medication is prescribed to people with obsessive-compulsive disorder and to treat other similar problems. It’s unclear exactly why this happens, but scientists believe that it is a biological response to motivate people to pursue your romantic interest even more.

Conversely, if this didn’t happen, we might not really feel the urge to get to know and become romantically involved.

Stage 4: You start to idealize your romantic interest (even if it’s completely irrational to other people).

If you’ve ever tried to persuade a friend or someone else that they were making a dumb decision, this is probably why: your brain actually starts to idealize someone once you become attached romantically on some level. But why?

In a study by Professor Semir Zeki, it showed that people who were romantically involved with someone actually shut off (or at least reduced the effectiveness) of parts of the brain involved with controlling negative emotions, judgment, and empathy.

Stage 5: Uncertainty starts fading away as couples settle into the relationship, and the final piece of the attraction puzzle: oxytocin + vasopressin.

It's difficult for the human mind and body to constantly maintain a state of excitement, euphoria, and all those other feelings that are exciting about falling in love. Over time, these feelings naturally start to fade, while the trust, attachment, and deepening of the relationship takes place.