

# Social psychology – passionate love vs compassionate love assignment

[Psychology](#)



## Social Psychology – Passionate Love vs Compassionate Love BY yren1994

How can we distinguish between romantic (or passionate) love and companionate love? Discuss with reference to theory and research. It is said that every human has the desire to affiliate with others and we are not stand-alone units. Despite we may get hurt during the affiliation with the other parties, we still desire to be loved and to avoid being isolated, this is mainly due to the social anxiety and loneliness in our daily lives.

Research done by Schachter (1959) presented that, people who is under distressing experience will have the tendency to look for informal social support or attention of the other people, even if they are completely strangers with each other. Although humans have the strong urge to be loved, they often cannot distinguish between romantic (or passionate) love and compassionate love. 1 . Lee's Typology of Love Theory Therefore, there are a number of theories and research are developed by social psychologists in order to explain the difference between romantic love and compassionate love.

The first one is Lee's Typology of Love proposed by John Allan Lee. According to Gregory P. (2012), Lee opined that there are six types of interpersonal love comprised of three primary types and three secondary types. In Lee's book with the title *The Colours of Love*, he gives explanation to each type of love and resembles each of them with a colour. Just like the colours of a rainbow that are made up of three primary colours – red, blue and yellow, he commented that this is the same to the types of love and by fusing these three primary types of loves, six styles will arise.

Eros, Ludus and Storge are the three primary types of loves whereas Mania, Pragma and Agape are the three secondary types of loves after the combination between the primary styles in various ways. Firstly, Eros (Red) lovers are passionate and constantly searching for passionate lovers too. They view their mate in aesthetic way and this usually involves sensual and sexual enjoyment. Eros is regarded as the stereotype of romantic or passionate love. Secondly, Ludus (Blue) lovers are deemed to be flirty and playful as they view their love as a gameplay.

They do not concern much about the commitment towards the relationship because love for them is simple and fun. It is often that their love is full of varieties. Thirdly, Storge (Yellow) lovers are affectionate ones that slowly evolves from friendship due to similarity in taste, preferences and beliefs. For them, friendship and intimacy are more significant than sex and passion. Next, Mania (Violet) is the combination of “ Eros and Ludus”. This type of love is of high volatility, which means that it goes between the extremes of highs and lows, thus making the relationship full of uncertainties.

Manic lovers get Jealous and obsessed easily and they would like to have a controlling power over their partners and the ending of their relationships are usually so devastating that they will end up mourning their lost love for a long time. In the other hand, Pragma (Green) is the one on logicity and practicality driven by the brains. Normally, cost-and-benefit analysis is done before the relationship is carried out and certain social requirements are needed in order to sustain this type of relationship. Lastly, Agape (Orange) is the combination of “ Eros and Storge”.

This type of love is selfless, altruistic and unconditional. Agape seems to be the truest love among the other types of love. Cassie H. (2010) states that Clyde Hendrick and Susan Hendrick expanded on Lee's Typology of Love theory through extensive research and found out that relationship based on similar love styles seems to stay longer and thereby concluding that people are inclined to find somebody with same type of love styles as their partners and reject others who do not fulfill into the similarity.

This theory narrows down the type of love into six, however, it is superficial to categorise the love into different types and this theory is difficult in distinguishing between passionate love and compassionate love. 2.

Passionate Love Versus Compassionate Love 2. 1 Passionate Love Another theory of love is passionate love versus compassionate love theory developed by Elaine Hatfield. According to Kendra C. (n. d. ), Hatfield divides love into two basic types : passionate love and compassionate love.

Passionate love has three components namely cognitive, emotional and behavioral.

Cognitive component includes viewing the other person or relationship as an ideal and the urge to get to know each other, emotional component focuses on physiological arousal, sexual attraction and the desire for union while behavioral element involves treating the other and being intimate to him or her. Passionate love is linked with other intense emotions. For instance, when our love is reciprocated, we will undergo closeness, fulfillment and ecstasy. Unreciprocated love, on the other side, can be devastating in terms of emotions.

It is also suggested that passionate love will arise when we meet someone who is ideal to fit the social norms or cultural expectations about what makes an appropriate partner as well as when we feel physiologically and neuropsychologically aroused thinking about or in the presence of him or her. However, the criticism about this that being aroused when we meet the other person does not necessarily mean that we are in love with them and it is unclear about the reason we fall in love as it is limited to only a few conditions.

## 2.2 Compassionate Love According to psychologist Elaine Hatfield (n.d.),

Compassionate love has traits such as attachment, intimacy, trust, affection and mutual respect. It usually arises out of the feeling of mutual understanding and shared respect for each other. As contrary to passionate love which is momentary, compassionate love is long-lasting and usually can happen on both close friends or romantic partners. Despite that a passionate love is wild and intense with ups and downs, it will eventually cool down over time and lead to compassionate love which is far more enduring than passionate love.

This is healthier for a romantic relationship because it is more comfortable to be a partner who gives you security, shared understanding and mutual respect as highs are just temporary and will not last forever. It is consistency that keeps a relationship flourish. (Melissa R., 2008)

## 2.3 Similarities

Something mutually inclusive between passionate love and compassionate love is that they both tend to seek a partner who is affectionate, good-looking and who love also have a strong need to live entwined or with each other.

Other than that, both of them also requires right timing to be in a

relationship. (Kendra C., n.d.)

## 2.4 Differences

Passionate love is wild at the

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commencement of the relationship and slowly fades over time whereas compassionate love is steady and enduring. Passionate lovers are guided by emotions without thinking much of the future while compassionate lovers aim to find a lasting companion. 3. Conclusion Majority of the people yearn for ideal relationships that complement the steadiness of compassionate love with the intensity of passionate love, however, it is believed that this type of relationships is rare.

In my opinion, compassionate love is more matured and therefore, should be encouraged among the couples because it is more enduring and truly withstand the test of time. Compassionate love is also good for people for are looking for long lived relationships. However, no matter we are experiencing passionate love or compassionate love, so long as the differences between each other are overlooked and tolerated, this relationship will definitely be healthier. (1250 words)