

<u>TERM</u>	<u>SYMBOL</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION WORDS</u>
TOUCH	HAND	hugging holding hands physically close
VERBAL	EAR AND MOUTH	sharing one's feelings listening heart-to-heart talks caring words meaningful discussion
TASK	EYE	achievement accomplishments hard work status things

Where Does Your Communication Style Come From?

Your love language comes from a reflection of or reaction to your home life. Some people reflect their home life in their love language. If your mother is a task-oriented person and you are also a task-oriented person you reflect your home love language. If, on the other hand, your mother is task-oriented and you are touch-oriented, you are reacting to your home love language. One is not better or worse, but it is important to recognize that you do or do not speak the same love language as those around you. Most people have learned their love language-- so it can be changed. However, change is not what is needed, understanding is.

Give the following examples, then let the students respond:

A child comes home with good grades. What would a touch-oriented parent do?
(Give the child a hug and kiss or other physical reinforcement.)

What would a verbally-oriented parent do?
(Say things like, "I am very proud of you." "You are a wonderful student.")

What would a task-oriented parent do?
(Give the child money, buy something for the child, take the child somewhere special, do something nice for the child.)

Multiply this experience by a few hundred times and you can soon see why people develop their own communication style and feel a need to be spoken to in that style.

GOLDEN RULE WITH A TWIST

Do unto others as they would have you do to them, not as you would have them do to you.
Speak to your partner in whatever communication style he/she speaks.

METHODS OF DECODING OTHERS' COMMUNICATION STYLES:

1. Ask him/her to take the quiz.
2. Recognize how he/she reacts and shows love to others.
3. Observe his/her reaction when a compliment, hug, or gift is given. Which do you think means the most?

It is important to know that in a crisis, many people move to a different communication style, just to combat the crisis, then move back to their original style when the crisis has passed. Watch for signs of a different communication style when stress or crisis occurs.

THE TOUCH-ORIENTED PERSON

The touch-oriented person takes a bad rap because all too often touching implies a sexual connotation. In fact, most touching is non-sexual in nature. Touch can comfort, show appreciation, show approval, give encouragement, be reassuring, give confidence, show empathy, and many other emotions.

HOW TO RELATE TO A TOUCH-ORIENTED PERSON:

touch discreetly while passing
when giving a gift or receiving one, give a hug and a kiss
always give a hug and a kiss when you part or return to each other
hold hands at home or while going for a walk and stay with each other
sit next to your mate when in public

TOUCH-ORIENTED PERSON—CASE STUDY #1

Susan and Andy have been married for two years. While dating, Andy always held Susan's hand when they were in public and cuddled up close during movies. Susan remembers how good it made her feel when they would walk down the center of the mall hand in hand. She was always proud to have Andy's arm around her at home or during family gatherings. Things have changed now that they are married. Andy rarely puts his arm around Susan. Last week, as they walked down the center of the mall, Susan decided to stop and see just how far he would get before he noticed that she had stopped. He was two stores ahead of her before he turned to ask what she was doing. She wants to feel that he is proud to be with her. Has the love worn off?

DISCUSSION:

Do you think Andy's love for Susan has really worn off?

(Maybe, but not likely.)

What orientation is Susan?

(Probably touch.)

Do you think Susan wants constant public displays of affection?

(She wants him to hold her hand like he did when they were dating. It makes her feel loved and appreciated, like he is proud to be with her.)

What other things might Andy do to keep the communication in their marriage functioning well?

(Give hugs and kisses as they meet and part each day. Hold hands or put his arm around her at home and in other public places. Cuddle while watching a movie.)

TOUCH-ORIENTED PERSON—CASE STUDY #2

"I am nearly twenty-one years old and my mom still has to hug and kiss me every chance she gets. I have been away playing football at a university for two years now, and every time I come home, my mom cannot wait to get her arms around me. Even when I was in high school, my mom had to give me a kiss before I left for a weekender with the guys. My roommate says his mom always has fresh homemade bread when he goes home to visit. Why can't my mom be like that? She knows how much I like her apple pie—why can't she make that? Well, I guess I should be grateful that my mom does all my laundry and fixes great food while I am home.

DISCUSSION:

What orientation is the son?

(task)

What orientation is the mom?

(touch)

What might improve the relationship between the son and his mother?
(If they understood each others' love language and could accept each other as they are. If they could put the Golden Rule with a Twist into action, their relationship would be better.)

It is important to remember that you must recognize your mate's language (or whomever the relationship is with) and communicate with him/her in that language. Do not be afraid to ask your mate to communicate with you in your language but do not expect your mate to change his/her language just to fit your preferences.

THE VERBALLY-ORIENTED PERSON

The verbally-oriented person loves the heart-to-heart talk. This person usually spends long hours on the phone and enjoys going to visit people. A warm and sincere compliment would most often be preferred over a gift or even a warm hug. They may or may not be good listeners, but the relationships they enjoy most are those with people who are good, active listeners.

MEETING NEEDS FOR A VERBALLY-ORIENTED PERSON

- practice active listening
- make phone calls often
- send notes and/or poems
- have heart-to-heart talks
- give sincere compliments
- occasionally ask, "Do you need to talk?"
- say, "I love you"
- set aside a time to talk each day
- go on a weekly date so that the two of you can talk

JACKIE: "Why do I always have to tell Steve that I love him? He should know it by how I treat him, by how hard I work, and by the fact that we have been married for 30 years. I know he loves me, I do not have to be told everyday that I am loved. I think he is insecure, immature, and needs to grow up."

What orientation is Jackie? (TASK)

What orientation is Steve? (VERBAL)

Is Steve really immature and insecure? (No. He just speaks a different love language.)

Is it realistic or even fair for Jackie to expect him to change his love language?
(No. Her love language is no better. He has the right to be treated the way he wants to be treated.)

How might this couple compromise and resolve the problem?

(Discuss how they each feel and use active listening skills to be sure they really understand each other. They might try the Golden Rule with a Twist.)

One of the most meaningful parts of communication is the listening process. Too many times we are concentrating so hard on what to say that we forget to listen to what is being said.

ACTIVE LISTENING means that you are really involved in listening and not just putting up with the other person's talking. This is an extremely important skill to use with a verbally-oriented person.

THE TASK-ORIENTED PERSON

Characteristics of a task-oriented person:

- makes lists, establishes budgets, lives by appointment book

- has great expectations, so has great frustrations

- is a perfectionist or is frustrated because he/she is not perfect

- feelings are centered in things, not people

- he or she is a doing kind of person, can get much done and feels proud of accomplishments

- gets carried away with doing

- tries to do too many things

- sets himself/herself up for stress and pressure

MEETING NEEDS FOR A TASK-ORIENTED PERSON

- have a clean house

- be thrifty with money

- have lunch ready

- have clothes clean and ironed

- have dinner at a certain time each night

- be dependable and on time

- work side-by-side on projects

- do something special—bake a pie, wash the car

- do small things - mend, do repairs, surprise with gifts

Task-oriented people should:

- maintain perspective

- prioritize their values and refer to that list often

- in marriage, agree on roles with their mate and define each person's responsibilities

- schedule time for emotional fulfillment on their calendars or it will slip past them and destroy their relationships

TASK-ORIENTED PERSON CASE STUDY—The List

Sandy is a mother of four children. She got tired of nagging her husband to do things around the house. She decided to list the jobs on a piece of paper and post her list on the fridge. Her husband, John, would then know what she expected him to do on Saturdays. John did not like spending all his time on Saturday working around the house. As time went on, the list grew and grew, until one day John looked at a list that was four-pages long. Sandy was getting

rather cross. John decided that there was only one way he could face this problem and still live with his wife. He decided to work every Saturday for two hours. That way, he could get the things on the list done without losing his whole Saturday to THE LIST. To his dismay, he

could only get a couple of items finished each week. The list kept getting longer and longer. Finally, in complete despair, John hired a fix-it man and went to the football game with his kids. When Sandy discovered what he had done, she became very angry. She wanted John to do the jobs, not someone else. She thought it was unfair that she had to do all the housework without getting a break, while John went to ball games and enjoyed himself.

DISCUSSION:

Why did Sandy want John to do the jobs himself?

(Because she is task oriented and views that as an expression of his love for her.)

Do you think John is a task oriented person?

(Not likely or he would have done the jobs.)

What might the couple do to solve their problem?

(They could hire a fix-it man and a housekeeper. They could discuss a time and day each week to work on tasks together, then limit the stress of THE LIST to that time each week or day. They could delegate jobs to their children. They could spend every other Saturday working around the house, doing what Sandy felt was important. On the other Saturday, John could plan family activities.)