

“Is it Love?”

Telling the Difference

How can you tell the difference between infatuation and love that will last? Both seem very real when they happen. Remember that infatuation is based on only a few desirable traits, but lasting love knows and cares for a person as is.

Infatuation is self-centered, but love is focused on the loved one. Infatuation leads to daydreams and lack of interest in real-life concerns, but love fosters ambition, hard work, and planning for the future. Infatuated people try to ignore problems, while people in love try to solve their problems together. Infatuation places major importance on the physical side of a relationship, love sees physical intimacy as a meaningful expression of feelings, not just a source of pleasure.

It takes time for differences between infatuation and lasting love to become apparent. Enduring love deepens as you get to know the person, while infatuation of love-at-first sight simply disappears upon closer inspection. This is why time is the only valid test of love.

How Love Develops

Love relationships tend to move through a series of stages:

1. An intense, sometimes unexpected attraction to a particular person develops.
2. A willingness to share deepest secrets surfaces.
3. Each partner looks to the other for support and encouragement in everyday living.
4. Each partner attempts to meet the emotional needs of the other.

When you think about stages, it is difficult to understand the widely used phrase, “falling in love.” You may fall down the stairs, fall deep in the snow, or even fall into

a trap, but love is not something that you truly “fall” into. Love requires a sense of purpose in order to develop. Love needs to be built through self-control and sacrifice. Love must be nurtured and nourished in order to last.

Is It Love?

It is **not** love when...

- It happens suddenly.
- You want or plan to change the person.
- Separation causes you to forget him or her.
- Thoughts are of your own needs and feelings.
- Feelings are based on one or two qualities of the person.
- You are too much in love to eat or do your work.
- Differences are ignored
- You can't wait.
- It fades fast.

It is love when...

- It grows as two people get to know each other.
- You accept the person's faults.
- Feelings endure separation.
- You put the loved one's needs ahead of your own.
- Feelings are based on the total personality of the loved one.
- You work for your loved one, yourself and your relationship.
- Problems are faced together.
- You are patient.
- It lasts!

