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# I Have to Say "I Love You" in a ... Affirmation?: Five Forms of Demonstrating our Love for our Students

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**OBTC 2015 at University of La Verne  
June 17<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

**Submission Template**

**SUBMISSION GUIDANCE**

- \* Remove all identifying properties from this document \**
- \* All files must be saved in PDF format \**
- \*Please include ALL supplementary text at the end of this document\**
- \*Only one document should be submitted\**

## Submission Template for the 2015 OBTC Teaching Conference for Management Educators

### 1) Title of Proposal:

I have to say "I love you" in a ... affirmation?: Five forms of demonstrating our love for our students

### 2) Abstract:

*Please include a brief session description (not to exceed 100 words). If your proposal is accepted, this description will be printed in the conference program.*

Many OBTCers share a love for teaching and a love for our students. However, is it OK to demonstrate this love and, if so, how? This session utilizes Coleman's 5 Love Languages (5LL) as a framework for an interactive session discussing the advantages and challenges in expressing one's love for his or her students. Participants are encouraged to complete the 5LL survey prior to attending the session at <http://www.5lovelanguages.com/> to use in an interactive exercise on expressing one's love. The facilitators will discuss their own experiences when they let their love flow. Come out and feel the love!

### 3) Keywords:

*Use three or four keywords to describe your session.*

*Love, authenticity, classroom culture*

### 4) Format

- Activity or exercise  
 Discussion roundtable (60 minute only)  
 General discussion session

### 5) Time Requested:

- 30 Minutes  
 60 Minutes (*Roundtables must select 60 minutes*)  
 90 Minutes

\*\* Session can be reduced to 60 minutes, but a 90 minute session is ideal.

### 6) Planning Details:

*Does your session have any special requirements for space or materials?*

No special materials needed. Ideally, the room should have white boards or wall space for large pieces of paper for the exercise portion of the session. If available, we may use a laptop and a projector.

### 7) Learning Objectives or Goals for the Session:

*What are 2-4 specific learning outcomes that participants will get from your session?*

The following are learning goals for the session:

- Participants will gain a greater understanding of the primary ways individuals effectively communicate love.
- Participants will learn how to translate the five primary languages of love (affirmation, quality time, physical touch, gift giving and act of service) to the classroom environment.
- Participants will learn how to use expressions of love to create a more open and positive classroom environment.

## 8) Management or Teaching Topics:

*Describe what management and/or teaching topics are relevant to your session, and why. Please include theoretical, disciplinary, or theoretical foundations that will help reviewers understand how your ideas fit within the broader field of management.*

Researchers have shown empirically the fundamental need for love and affection (Rotter, Chance & Phares, 1972; Floyd, 2002) and its positive affect on mental health (Downs & Javidi, 1990), physical well being (Komisaruk & Whipple, 1998) and even academic performance (Steward & Luper, 1987) and its negative relationship with depression (Floyd, et al, 2005). In addition, Reis and Gable (2003) suggest that affection may be an important element of flourishing. Affection exchange theory (AET; Floyd, 2001; Floyd & Morman, 2001) predicts that individuals benefit not only from receiving affectionate communication from others but also when communicating affection to others. AET explicates that affectionate communication functions as a type of relational currency that has benefits to the receiver as well as the sender because of the goods and benefits it engenders (Floyd, 2002). Floyd and his associates (2005) found when affection was expressed to others happiness and self-esteem increased and were independent of the affection received in return. This is good news for educators! When we express our affection to our students, even if that affection is not received in return, we have the potential to increase our own happiness and self-esteem.

This session applies AET and attempts to build on the positive outcomes of expressing love to others, specifically to our students. This session uses Chapman's (1992) Five Languages of Love (5LL) as a framework to discuss how an instructor can express love for one's students in a way that is authentic to the instructor's style, is socially appropriate, and aligns with the instructor's institutional and classroom culture. In this best-selling book, *The Five Love Languages: How to Express Heartfelt Commitment to Your Mate*, Chapman suggests that there are five emotional love languages that individuals use to "speak" and understand love. He describes those languages as affirmation, quality time, physical touch, gift giving and act of service, Chapman originally developed his five love languages through his work as a couple's counselor and the book gained notoriety in the popular press, selling over ten million copies (Moody Publishing). Subsequent empirical testing did find support for the five distinct factors that form the love languages (Egbert & Polk, 2006), although Chapman's assertions as to marital quality based on each partner's primary love language has mixed supported in the communication literature (Polk & Egbert, 2013; Petersen, Beus, Jeppesen, & Anderson, 2008). Chapman's five love languages gives us a reference to utilize in discussing the different ways instructors can communicate their affection for their students.

## 9) Session Description and Plan:

*What will you actually do in this session? What activities will you facilitate, how long will they take, and how will participants be involved? Reviewers will be evaluating how well the time request matches the activities you'd like to do, and the extent you can reasonably accomplish the session's goals. Reviewers will also be looking for how you are engaging the participants in the session. Include a timeline for your session.*

We offer two options, depending on time available. If a 90-minute session is available, it will allow additional time to discuss ways instructors can express their love and the challenges and concerns that participants raise in integrating love into their classroom.

Activity	Time	
	60 Min	90 Min
Introduction of Facilitators and Subject	5 Minutes	5 Minutes
Introduction of the Five Love Languages and research on love	10 Min	10 Minutes
Participant idea exchanged based on primary love language	15 min	20 minutes
Debrief ideas to the group	15 min	25 minutes
Challenges in expressing love to students	10 min	20 minutes
Wrap Up & Closing	5 Min	10 minutes
Total Time	60 min	90 Minutes

## 10) For Activities and Exercises:

*Attach any materials needed to run the activity and debriefing questions. Evidence for effectiveness may also be included.*

Participants will be encouraged to complete the 5LL survey prior to attending the session at <http://www.5lovelanguages.com/>. The presenters will send the link for the Five Love Language (5LL) survey to potential participants via OBTC's Facebook page, Twitter account, and OBTC's conference social networking application (Yapp) in advance of the session.

For the idea exchange, we will separate participants into five groups, corresponding to each participant's primary love language. Participants will brainstorm ideas on how to express their primary love language to students (and colleagues). During the debrief session, each group will present their ideas to the larger group. The facilitators will encourage participants to develop ideas on how to implement their expressions of love. In addition, if time allows, we will discuss the challenges in expressing love due to differences in age, gender, marital status, prior experiences, and other factors.

The facilitators will present their experiences in expressing love in their classrooms and student outcomes that have resulted from these expressions.

## **11) Implications for Teaching or for Teachers:**

*What is the contribution of your session?*

James Carville, in the documentary *The War Room* (1993), notes, "Outside of a person's love, the most sacred thing that they can give is their labor. And somehow or another along the way, we tend to forget that. Labor is a very precious thing that you have. Anytime that you can combine labor with love, you've made a good merger." - Our goal is that this session will make good mergers. By developing an awareness of the different ways we can express our love while we labor, we have the potential to benefit of our students and ourselves by building positive environments where our students can fall in love with learning and we can create positive communities for us as teachers to flourish.

## **12) Application to Conference theme:**

How does your session fit with the overall OBTC theme of Learning in Community?

Webster's dictionary defines love as "unselfish loyal and benevolent concern for the good of another". By definition, love builds community through this loyal and benevolent concern. What this session attempts to do is allow teachers to connect more deeply with our students by learning to express our love for our students and each other in an authentic way. If we are able to do this, we will build a stronger community in the classroom.

## **13) Unique Contribution to OBTC:**

*Have you presented the work in this proposal before? If so, how will it be different? Is this proposal under current review somewhere else? If so, please explain. How will your proposal be different for the OBTC conference?*

We have not presented this work before and this work is not under review with any other outlet. Based on our review of the literature, we believe this is the first time that Chapman's (2004) five love languages is being applied to the management education literature.

## **14) References and/or Additional Materials:**

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