

Define Love

By: Nayeli Maldonado

Love, its textbook definition, a strong feeling of deep fondness. Love can be described in many ways, as people have their own definition. It could be wanting to be with someone all the time and never leave their side, or just simply wanting to become one with them. It can be defined in many different ways. But what does the word 'love' mean to people of different generations?. How do teens define love, and what do people who have lived their lives and have settled down see it as?

The newest generation is Gen Alpha, representing them is Jayson Camper, a 14 year old male, who is just entering new stages of life. He is currently not in a relationship, but explains that he has been in a few. His last partner was in February of 2024, he decided to date his partner as she thought she was beautiful and loved her personality. He loved her humor and her kindness. When asked if people are made for each other he said it depends, "It depends on if it's a ride or die love, If they both put in effort." he added "It felt like we were made for each other, but there were some problems. There are some problems with my generation and love, like cheating, fake love , and not getting to know each other... like not going through the friendship part, not just rushing into a relationship." Out of all of his relationships and out of how many he was in love he gave an odd answer "2.5" he added "The last one was toxic love, so that's why the .5" Jaysons definition of love was split, "I have 2 definitions. There's regular love, which is showing affection, saying I love you here and there, and there is tough love. Like being mean but humbling and not coddling."



He gave some advice to the next generation: “When you are about to date, make sure that you've gone through the friendship part to get to know them. Also to make sure that it's real feelings from both peers about to date and make sure it's not fake love.” he added “Do some phone checks if possible on both sides to make sure no one is cheating or anything like that”.

The next generation we will be asking are Gen-Z. Michael Arbaiza is a 17 year old male, who is currently in a 1 year relationship. They met in 2013, as they attended the same elementary school. He said he decided to date his partner when he realized they had been flirting for some time and had had romantic interests in each other prior to dating. When asked what made him fall in love with his partner, he gave a sweet answer, “There were many factors that made me fall in love with her. The fact we got along with each other really well. It was easy to have conversations, we had a lot of similarities as well as differences that helped us bond even more together. The way (she) cares about me and values me, she treats me differently than she does others, and I felt safe with her, those many factors made me fall for her.” When asked to recall his past relationships, and asked if he ever felt as if he was in love with them he answered ‘ Only 1, and that is this one.” He added “I didn't feel the connection I have with her as I had with any other.” He then went on to explain that he didn't get a chance to fall in love, as his previous relationships were short lived and lasted roughly 3 weeks. And finally , his definition of love, “Love is both scary and beautiful, love comes with the fear of being left. But it's unlike any other feeling, you have someone you can not only express anything to without boundaries, but you have your life long partner. It’s a feeling that is different for everyone, love is not a certain thing, but something you give meaning to, and something that brings you meaning.”

Now, we have Millennials. Karla Maldonado is a 34 year old female, who has been with her partner for 15 years, they met in 2009 through Karlas co-worker and her partner's friend. She decided to be with him for no reason in particular. She enjoyed him, and enjoyed the time they spent together. They had mutual friends and were able to become close easily. They welcomed their child in 2010 after dating for a year. Karla claims “I fell in love with him for my baby. I loved how he gave my son everything he wanted. I was still young and wanted to go out, so he would watch our son while I went and tried to keep living my life. I wanted him to have both his parents as well.” When asked to think of her previous partners and if she fell in love she stated “It's hard to tell... my perception of love was warped and not right when I was young. Sometimes I think I was, sometimes I think I wasn't. It's hard to tell, I wasn't in the right headspace or right place in my life to decide if it was love.” And when it was her turn to define love, “I can't say what love is, I was never taught it.. But if I have to describe it, I’d guess it would be acceptance, understanding, and respect. I would want those things for my son and sisters. I would never want them to go through the same struggles with ‘love’ as I did.”

Love is something beautiful, it brings us the euphoric feeling, where we want to wake up each morning, get up , and be rewarded by seeing our favorite person. Love could be scary, just like anything in life, as we don't know what happens next, but that's the beauty of it all, it's unpredictable and comes to us at any point in our lives. Love makes us want to become a better person, and gives us something to look forward to each day. Love is what we make of it, and what we want it to be. But I think Gen Alpha is going a little crazy...