

The Chemistry of Love

Why your brain is a battlefield,
and how to make peace with your
mind, body — and desires.

A guide to logic gaps, lustful
longing + why we (temporarily)
lose control

By DANIELLE DOWLING, M.A.
Professional Soul Sister + Relationship Re-mixer

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Getting Cozy with Chemistry

LOVE IS PRIMAL. Love is essential to connecting with your mission, with other people and — most importantly — your own unfolding self. Love in its darkest most foreboding of forms can be awkward and unnerving — it can thwart your ideal life design. Yet, there is a particularly riveting flavor of love: *fiery love*. The “oh man, I’m standing at the precipice of something that is so insanely seasoned with possibilities that I want to indulgently wrap myself up in it, while laughing and sobbing at a cellular level” kind of love. Fiery love puts a manic spring in your step, and you do uncharacteristically rash and obsessive things.

Love pins down elation at every tick of the clock. With love, we are suspended from our usual sense of insignificance, delighted as we finally feel witnessed — and even celebrated — by our beloved. The eager joy of actualizing love’s possibilities gives us boundless energy and courage — we feel limitless, unburdened by logistics. We are pulled from the safe path of the familiar, feeling no fear as we bound toward uncharted alleyways and detours. In this state of elation, we celebrate our passion, as well as our humanity. Resist it and we do so at the cost of not only the affection we crave but our very nature.

“Anguish has cut me like a razor blade, leaving expert slits on my soul.”

How many different types of love are there? Love and lust. Romantic love. Loopy crushes. Love and loss. Love and marriage. The brain and body in love. Love and attachment. Love and rejection. Fading love. Re-kindled love. Why are we feverishly compelled to love?

Historically, how has it served us? Biologically speaking, what drives love's illogical and grandiose tidal waves of emotion? I've researched these questions, within the context of a Ph.D. program in Psychology. I've shepherded women + couples through these questions, as a relationship coach. And of course, I've lived with (and agonized over) these questions, myself. My quest to understand love — and help others do the same — is motivated by deeply personal longings. Connection. Community. Intimacy. Interdependence.

I have loved deeply. So passionately that I believed loving another would be utterly and fantastically impossible. I have lost profoundly. Anguish has cut me like a razor blade, leaving expert slits on my soul. Perhaps most compelling to me however, is the universality of roman-

tic loves breadth and depth. I am convinced we have all love and lost. And while each of our relationships have their own unique story arcs, the *Chemistry of Love* is a prevailing construct of the human phenomenon. **We are coded to love, and love again.**

PERSPECTIVE CHECK-POINT:

Have you ever considered how many men and women have loved before you?

How many generations have experienced love fulfilled and lost?

Bone-crushing despair, agonizing accommodation + liberating, lingering romantic love?

Really. Just cool it for a minute. Back 'er up. *Have you?*

SO here's the point — you're not in this boat alone. (Although sometimes, sister, I know it may feel like it.)

Love is a universal human experience. It is inextricably woven into the neural networks of the human brain. Just consider the thousands of love poems, songs and stories that have preceded your existence. Some of the earliest recorded love stories date between 1000-700 BC.

In case you're not too hot at math: that's a crazy-long time ago!

Think: Romeo and Juliet. Orpheus and Eurydice. Scarlett O' Hara and Brett Butler. *The Bachelor* — seasons 1-11.

Loving and losing.
It's timeless stuff.

So when you feel:

- »→ the pulsing rush of lust, obsessive, focused thinking, primordial craving ...
- »→ elevated exhilaration, jumping-up-and-down-on-the-bed joy, singing at the top of your lungs in the car elation ...
- »→ blindsided by grief, fingers clenched, panic soaring, love unrequited ...

Imagine the innumerable numbers of ancestors before you saying:

Oh, honey...I've been there.

Soak it all in. It's what you were born to do.