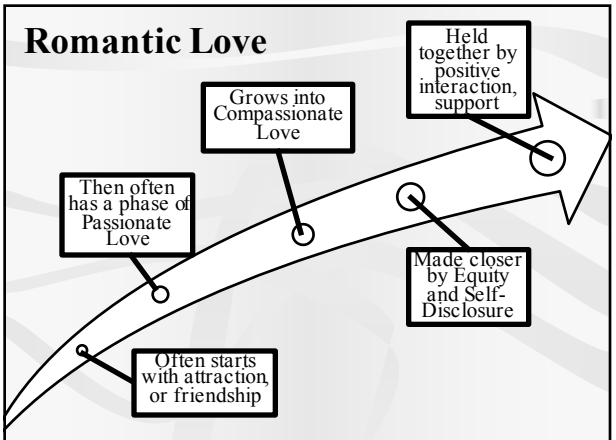
Close Relationships

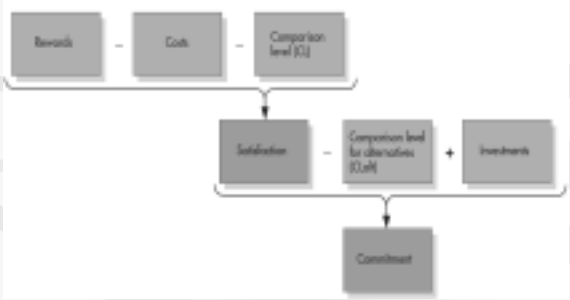
Romantic Love



The Intimate Marketplace: Tracking the Gains and Losses

- Social exchange theory
  - A perspective that views people as motivated to maximize benefits and minimize costs in their relationships with others
- The development of an intimate relationship is associated with the overall level of rewards

Relational Building Blocks



Equity Theory

- The theory that people are most satisfied with a relationship when the ratio between benefits and contributions is similar for both partners

$$\frac{\text{Your Benefits}}{\text{Your Contributions}} = \frac{\text{Partner's Benefits}}{\text{Partner's Contributions}}$$

- Balance is what counts

Secure and Insecure Attachment Styles

- Attachment style
  - The way a person typically interacts with significant others
- Is the attachment style we had with our parents related to the attachment style we exhibit in our romantic relationships?
- Does the attachment style you endorse today forecast potential outcomes tomorrow?

Attachment Styles: Which One Best Describes Your Feelings?

Answers and Percentages	Newspaper Sample	University Sample
Secure: I find it relatively easy to get close to others and am comfortable depending on them and having them depend on me. I don't often worry about being abandoned or about someone getting too close to me.	56	56
Avoidant: I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to others; I find it difficult to trust them completely and difficult to allow myself to depend on them. I am nervous when anyone gets too close, and often love partners want me to be more intimate than I feel comfortable being.	25	23
Anxious: I find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I often worry that my partner doesn't really love me or won't want to stay with me. I want to merge completely with another person, and this desire sometimes scares people away.	19	21

How Do I Love Thee? Counting the Ways

- Sternberg's triangular theory of love
  - A theory proposing that love has three basic components—intimacy, passion, and commitment—that can be combined to produce eight subtypes

Sternberg's Triangular Theory of Love

Passionate Love

- Romantic love characterized by high arousal, intense attraction, and fear of rejection
- Excitation transfer
  - The process whereby arousal caused by one stimulus is added to arousal from a second stimulus and the combined arousal is attributed to the second stimulus
  - Intensifies emotional reactions, positive or negative
  - Recall two-factor theory of emotion (and misattribution of arousal leading to different emotions) from Chapter 3

Companionate Love

- A secure, trusting, and stable partnership
- Less intense than passionate love, but in some respects, deeper and more enduring than passionate love
- Self-disclosure
  - Revelations about the self that a person makes to others
  - Higher emotional involvement increases self-disclosure

Passionate Love
A state of strong attraction, interest, excitement, felt so strongly that people are absorbed in each other

Components of Passionate Love
- Physiological Arousal (sweating, heart pounding)
- Flattering appraisal of the other
- Intense desire for the others' presence

Compassionate Love
Deep, caring, affectionate attachment/commitment

- Commitment: a plan to stay together even when not feeling passionate attraction
- Attachment is now more than just desire to be together: *a feeling that lives are intertwined.*

Keys to a Lasting Love Relationship

- **Equity**: Both giving and receiving, sharing responsibilities, with a sense of partnership
- **Self-Disclosure**: Sharing self in conversation increases intimacy
- **Positive Interactions and Support**: Offering sympathy, concern, laughs, hugs

Culture, Attraction, and Close Relationships

- Are attraction, desire, relationships, and love the same for people all over the world?
  - Passionate love is a widespread and universal emotion, but it is not universally seen as necessary to marriage
  - Cultural influence on mate preference and love is complex