“Welcome to our study of the psychology of love and loss!”

If we are fortunate enough to experience love, then we may also know grief. In this course we will examine the scientific theory and related research on love and loss. In addition to identifying various styles of love and the patterns of response to grief we reflect on the practical significance of this information. This course includes discussion of theory-based assessments to identify personal styles of loving and grieving and offers research-based strategies to strengthen relationships.
**Class One:**  What is love?
Our class website, our roster, and our syllabus
Definitions of love
Multiple Intelligences (Howard Gardner)
Bring Human: 7 Observations
Love within the context of one’s
moral community and hierarchy of needs
(Judith Boss and Abraham Maslow)
Three components of an attitude of love
Preparation for our next class (Class Two on May 8th)

**Class Two:**  Different colors of love
Three theoretical approaches to the study of love
(Gary Chapman, Robert Sternberg, John Lee)
Styles of love, the paths of love, and five love languages
Research on relationship satisfaction for the different styles of love
(Susan Hendrick, Clyde Hendrick)

**Class Three:**  Types of Attachment and Communication
Three types of attachment formation
(Mary Ainsworth)
Impact of attachment formation on adult love relationships
A theory of men’s versus women’s style of communicating love
(Deborah Tannen)

**Class Four:**  What is grief? (Part 1)
Grief varies based on the type of loss:
Unexpected/off-time events versus Anticipated/on-time events
Grief as a response to the loss of control that death represents
Five stages of grief
(Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression and Acceptance)
(Elizabeth Kübler-Ross)
Four statements to say out loud that will increase acceptance
Class Five: What is grief? (Part 2)
Changes in existing relationships and the impact on one’s sense of identity (Stevenson, Eric Erickson)
Research on the effects of life-change related stress
Result of cumulative contributors on overall stress (Holmes & Rahe)

Class Six: The physiological effects of love and loss
Physiological responses to love and loss: the adaptive function of the sympathetic (alert) and parasympathetic (relaxed) branches of the autonomic nervous system (Hans Seyle)
Post-traumatic stress disorder
DABDA revisited: (focus on Bargaining) Counterfactual Thinking
Characteristics of Psychological Hardiness/Resilience

Class Seven: Loss of control & anxiety
Forgiveness
The relationship between one’s sense of control and one’s anxiety
The relationship between mental motion & emotion
Attention, Perception, and Memory
Impact of love and grief on our ability to process information (Daniel Schacter)
Our memory of an event after it comes to an end

Class Eight: Expectations, emotions & relationship success
The influence of our expectations on our emotions
How a sense of gratitude relieves stress and how a sense of entitlement increases stress
Characteristics of successful relationships
(Shelly Gable, Judith Wallerstein, John Gottman)
To find our course website online:

Google: rafter psychology

Then click on: Mark Rafter – Psychology Pages – College of the Canyons

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