



Steven S. Minter, Th.M., Psy.D.

Clinical Psychology

Licensed Psychologist/PY 8553

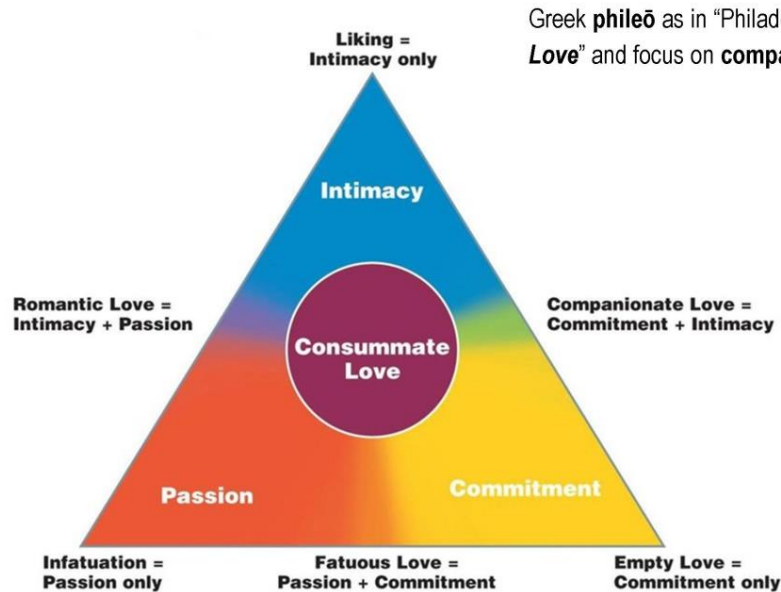
Working Therapeutically Between Sessions: Journaling Exercise

What's Love Got to Do With It?

I'm sure you remember the 1984 song popularized by Tina Turner; it became her best-selling single. Turns out that "love" has to do a lot of things, as we all know. We also know that the English word "love" can be applied to everything from sex to God to a Starbucks mocha latte.

In the 1980s a psychologist named Robert Sternberg theorized that what he called "consummate love" or "ideal love," consisted of three aspects, detailed in the diagram below. Study the diagram and see if it makes sense to you. Then you can reflect and/or journal on the following questions.

Sternberg's Triangular Theory of Love (adapted)



Greek **phileō** as in "Philadelphia," the "City of **Brotherly Love**" and focus on **companionship**.

Greek **eros** as in "erotic," that is, passionate, merging, **sexual** love

Greek **agapē** is certainly not "empty" but is love **committed** to the best interests of the other

Adapted from: Sternberg, Robert J. (2004). "A Triangular Theory of Love". In Reis, H. T.; Rusbult, C. E. (eds.). *Close Relationships*. New York: Psychology Press. p. 258. [ISBN 978-0863775956](https://doi.org/10.1080/0883779042000165456).

