What Does ‘Love’ Really Mean?

In our society, many of the existing theories on love are based on the personal experiences of the writers. Some of these theories can be helpful in understanding the concept of love, while others may not apply to everyone. One theory that is widely known is the one proposed by Robert Sternberg, who divides love into three different components: passion, intimacy, and commitment.

Passion is the intense desire for another person, while intimacy is the emotional bond between two people. Commitment is the decision to spend the rest of our lives with someone else. Sternberg determined that love is most experienced when these three components are present in a relationship. However, he also identified eight different love relationships, which are combinations of the three components. These include fatuous love, romantic love, and companionate love.

Fatuous love is characterized by infatuation and passion but lacks intimacy and commitment. Romantic love is characterized by intimacy and commitment but lacks passion. Companionate love is characterized by all three components and is the most stable type of love relationship.

Harlow’s experiments offered a perfect example of fatuous love. He conducted experiments on baby monkeys to study the importance of attachment. He removed them from their natural mothers and attached them to a wire “mother” and a soft “mother” made of terrycloth. The monkeys spent most of their time clinging to the wire mother, which was unexpected. Harlow’s data demonstrated that the absence of the attachment to the natural mother was the cause of the monkeys’ neurosis.

In conclusion, love is a complex concept that can be studied from different perspectives. However, it is essential to remember that everyone’s experiences with love are unique, and what works for one person may not work for another. It is crucial to understand and respect this individuality when it comes to love.