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# Workers' COMPanion

**FEBRUARY 2022**

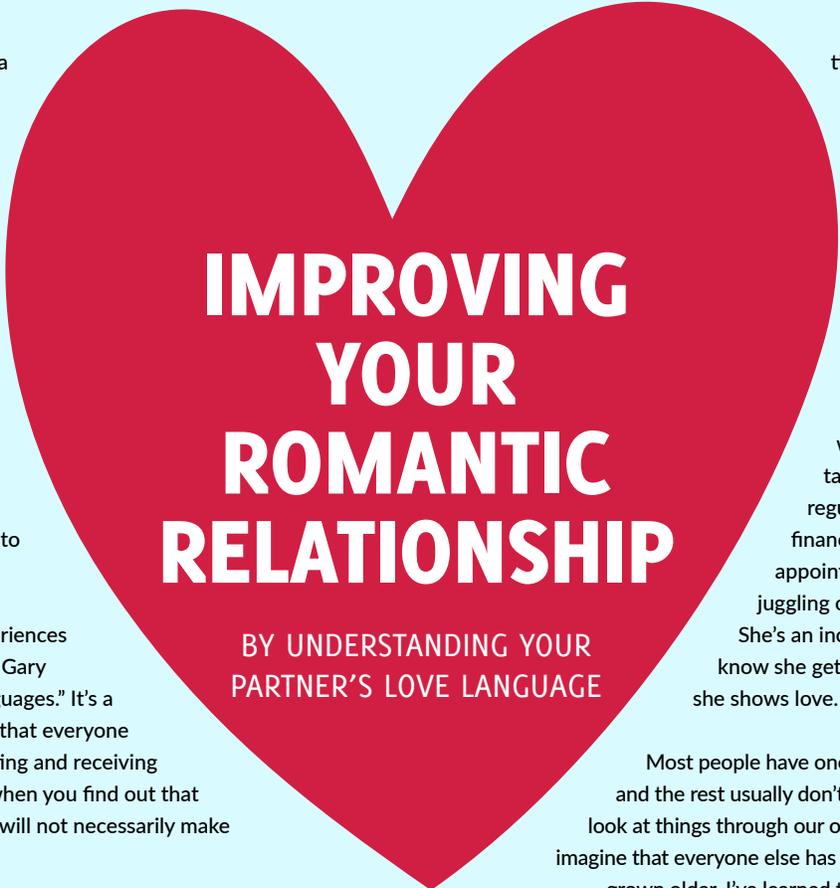
www.monastlaw.com | 614-334-4649 | 5000 Arlington Centre Blvd. Bldg 2, Suite 2117, Upper Arlington, OH 43220-2913

February is often thought of as a month dedicated to love and romance. With Valentine's Day taking place right in the middle of the month on the 14th, there really is no better time to express your love to your significant other or those who are close to you. Expressing your love can be much more difficult than simply saying "I love you" to your wife or husband. Everyone has their own love language, and it can take some time to learn how to effectively communicate your love to those who mean the most to you.

One of the most eye-opening experiences for me was the first time I read Dr. Gary Chapman's book, "The 5 Love Languages." It's a fairly well-known book that posits that everyone has their own ways of communicating and receiving love. It's an important realization when you find out that what makes one person feel loved will not necessarily make another person feel loved.

The first of the five love languages is probably the most familiar to people. Those who have words of affirmation as their love language value verbal acknowledgments of affection. They want to hear others tell them "I love you" and also receive compliments from their loved ones. The next love language is quality time, which means these people feel most loved when their partner sets everything aside and gives them their full, undivided attention.

Gifts and physical touch are also two of the five love languages and are pretty self-explanatory. The final love language is acts of service, which plays a huge role in my life. It's essentially the act of going out of your way to make life easier for those you love. I grew up thinking the best way to someone's heart was to give them gifts like candy or flowers. My wife does enjoy getting flowers from time to



## IMPROVING YOUR ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP

BY UNDERSTANDING YOUR PARTNER'S LOVE LANGUAGE



IT'S AN IMPORTANT REALIZATION WHEN YOU FIND OUT THAT WHAT MAKES ONE PERSON FEEL LOVED WILL NOT NECESSARILY MAKE ANOTHER PERSON FEEL LOVED."

time; however, it would speak volumes if I cleaned out the garage instead.

My wife definitely speaks the acts of service love language, and I really have to commend her for her commitment. Her mom is in her early 90s and living in assisted living, and she definitely gets lonely at times. Amy goes way out of her way to ensure that her mom is taken care of. She'll go visit her regularly and will take care of her finances, medications, and doctor appointments. She does this all while juggling our daughter and the grandkids. She's an incredibly selfless person, and I know she gets exhausted, but that's just how she shows love.

Most people have one or two prominent love languages and the rest usually don't mean much to them. We always look at things through our own perspectives and tend to imagine that everyone else has similar thoughts and views. As I've grown older, I've learned that this is simply not true. People have a lot of differing opinions, and it's not just because of different cultures around the world. Among our friends, family, and community there are differences, and love languages are one of those differences.

If you're looking for something fun to do inside your house this Valentine's Day, you can't go wrong by taking the five love languages quiz on [5lovelanguages.com](http://5lovelanguages.com). You'll learn more about your significant other and maybe even more about how you communicate love. If anything, it will create a more loving and understanding relationship between you and your partner.

*-Jim Monast*

Instead of using harsh chemicals to clean, you can use natural products you probably already have in your home! Vinegar and baking soda are great resources for cleaning your house.

Both are effective cleaning agents because they are on opposite sides of the pH scale, which measures how acidic a substance is. The scale goes from 1–14, with 1 being very acidic, 7 being neutral, and 14 being very basic. Baking soda has a pH of 9, and vinegar has a pH of 2. When combined, the mixture releases carbon dioxide gas that can help lift dirt and germs from surfaces.

Individually, these products are already cleaning powerhouses. Baking soda dissolves dirt, grease, and other sticky substances. It's also gentle enough to clean without leaving scratches. Vinegar breaks down minerals that form from hard tap water, which can cause stains on sinks, bathtubs, and countertops.

Please note that while bleach is popular for disinfecting surfaces, it's unsafe when mixed with vinegar. Baking soda and bleach, however, are fine to mix together.

Here are a few ways to use vinegar and baking soda in your cleaning routine.

- **To remove hard water stains from your sink,** place a towel soaked in vinegar over the area. After a few hours, remove the towel and scrub the area with baking soda and water.
- **If your laundry has mildew on it,** add half a cup of baking soda into the laundry detergent. Then, add one cup of vinegar during the rinse cycle to kill bacteria. This method won't ruin the fabric of your clothes.
- **Instead of using chemicals that could damage your pipes, unclog and clean your drains** by using half a cup of baking soda and one cup of vinegar. This concoction will fizz up, but once it settles, flush the drain with hot water

for five minutes. Afterward, run cold water down the drain.

- **Grout on bathroom tiles can be annoying to clean. To clean the grout,** create a paste using baking soda and water, then spritz with vinegar. Immediately after doing this, scrub and rinse the area. Repeat these steps if needed.

Cleaning is all about trial and error. Try these tricks to find what works best for you!



*Normally, we feature a client story but here, for Valentine's Day, we figured we'd share this article for ideas how to connect with loved ones who may be far away!*

If you're in a long-distance relationship or friendship, you probably think you've tried everything to stay in touch. Texting? Check. FaceTime? Check. Old-fashioned phone calls? Double check! But have you tried high-tech gadgets that can bring you closer without words?

This Valentine's Day, consider treating your romantic partner, or platonic friend, to one of these three handy devices. While these items

## 3 VALENTINE'S GADGETS FOR LONG-DISTANCE COUPLES

may be on the pricier side during most of the year, keep an eye out for any holiday sales!

### **The Hey Bracelets (FeelHey.com)**

These paired bracelets look like fitness bands, but they can do a lot more than count your steps! When you activate your bracelet, it will communicate with the band on your partner's wrist through the HEY app and give it a gentle squeeze to let them know you're thinking about them. The bracelets come in classic black or sleek white, are weatherproof, and can go for three days between charges.

### **Pillow Talk Wristbands (LittleRiot.com/pillow-talk)**

This package includes wristbands with heart rate sensors, small speakers, and various cables — for you and your partner! When

you sleep, simply wear your wristband and slide your speaker under your pillow. From there, the Pillow Talk app will broadcast your heartbeat to your partner's speaker in real time! It's the next best thing to sleeping next to each other.

### **Friendship Lamps (FriendshipLamps.com)**

Like the Hey Bracelets and Pillow Talk Wristbands, these lamps come in pairs. One goes to you and one to your partner. Tap your lamp, and your partner's lamp will glow to let them know they're on your mind. You can even send different colors that communicate different messages. (For example, maybe you agree that pink means "wish you were here.") You can also sync over two lamps to connect with additional people you love.

# IS THIS THE FUTURE FOR HOUSING CONSTRUCTION?

3D PRINTING LIKE YOU'VE NEVER SEEN BEFORE



For nearly 50 years, Habitat for Humanity has helped repair or improve people's homes and neighborhoods that are located in poor or disaster-inflicted areas. Not only do they help repair people's homes or provide them with basic necessities, but they also sell homes to families with low-to-moderate incomes with a no-interest, 20- or 30-year mortgage.

The Habitat Homebuyer Program becomes available to people who volunteer more than 300 hours of service, or "sweat equity," and who make 45%-80% of an area's median income. One woman in Virginia just made history with her new house that she helped construct and then bought from Habitat for Humanity.

April Springfield's new Virginia home may look like other houses in her neighborhood, but it's the first home constructed by Habitat for Humanity on the East Coast using 3D printing. April has worked full time at a nearby hotel for five years and logged 300 hours of community service during that time.

With the costs of lumber soaring during construction, Habitat for Humanity saved an estimated 15% per square foot on the 1,200-square-foot house by using 3D printing. The house has three bedrooms, two bathrooms, and is built mostly from concrete instead of wood. The concrete retains heat better and is more resistant to tornado and hurricane damage.

The house also comes with its own mini-3D printer that April can use to fix light switch covers and other small items that may need repairs down the line. They even added solar panels and a smart home system so April and her son will have lower energy costs throughout the year.

And the 3D printing is much faster than a typical construction schedule. The entire house, dedicated at the end of December, was built in 28 hours as opposed to the typical time frame of four or more weeks.

With all of the benefits in mind, could 3D printing be the future for homebuilding?

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ANSWER



## MUNCHIES WITH MOLLY CHOCOLATE PECAN FONDUE

Inspired by TasteOfHome.com

*This Valentine's Day, forget the entree! Surprise your honey with a delicious chocolate treat!*

### INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup half-and-half cream
- 2 tbsp honey
- 9 oz semisweet chocolate, broken into pieces
- 1/4 cup pecans, finely chopped
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- Fresh fruit of your choice
- Shortbread cookies
- Large marshmallows

### DIRECTIONS

1. In a sturdy saucepan over low heat, combine cream and honey. Stir until mixed thoroughly and heat until warm.
2. Add in chocolate, stirring until melted.
3. Stir in pecans and vanilla.
4. Transfer to a fondue pot or a slow cooker to keep warm.
5. Serve with fruit, cookies, and marshmallows of your choice.

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# THE HEROES OF THE SEA

## HUMPBACK WHALE SAVES SCIENTIST

In the movie "Cast Away," we see a whale notifying Chuck Noland of a nearby ship. The whale continuously sprays him with water to get his attention. Although this is a fictional story, what happened in "Cast Away" isn't just movie magic. There are real-life stories about whales helping people in need.

In 2018, a marine biologist, Nan Hauser, was swimming in the waters off the Cook Islands when she noticed a 50,000-pound humpback whale near her. For 10 minutes, Hauser swam around the whale while it nudged her with its head, bumped her with its belly, and swiped at her with its fins. At first, Hauser thought the whale was trying to attack her. But actually, it protected her from a 15-foot-long tiger shark on the other side of the whale.

Hauser told the Daily Mirror, "I've spent 28 years underwater with whales and have never had a whale so tactile and so insistent on putting me on his head, belly, or back, and most of all, trying to tuck me under his huge pectoral fin ... I was sure that it was most likely going to be a deadly encounter." Hauser didn't know the whale wanted to protect her until she returned to her team's research vessel. This is when she noticed the tiger shark creeping nearby.

This isn't the first time a humpback whale has intervened to help another creature. In fact, the humpback's altruism has been well-documented over the years to show how they benefit other species at their own cost.

In 2009, Robert Pitman took a photo of a humpback cradling a seal while rolling out of the water. The whale had protected the seal from a group of killer whales. Pitman, a marine biologist, has analyzed 115 interactions with humpback whales and concluded that they will travel long distances in order to prevent killer whales from attacking, regardless of what type of animal the killer whale is pursuing.

Whether this behavior is out of instinct, accident, or altruism, they have saved the lives of many aquatic animals and people. They are the heroes of the sea!

