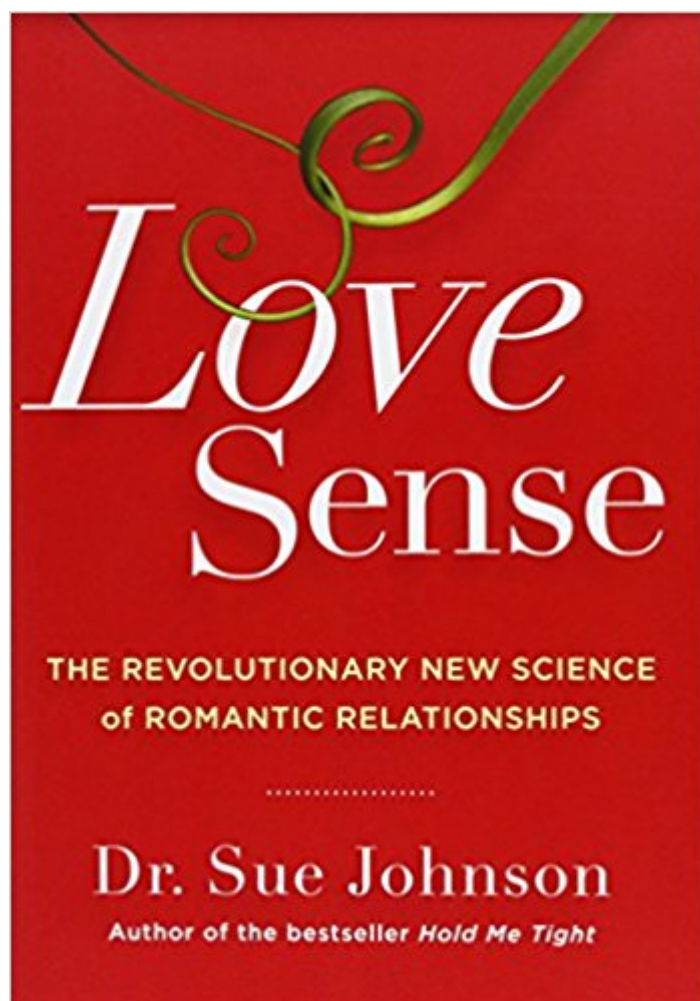


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# Love Sense: The Revolutionary New Science Of Romantic Relationships



## Synopsis

The bestselling author of *Hold Me Tight* presents a revolutionary new understanding of why and how we love, based on cutting-edge research. Every day, we hear of relationships failing and questions of whether humans are meant to be monogamous. *LOVE SENSE* presents new scientific evidence that tells us that humans are meant to mate for life. Dr. Johnson explains that romantic love is an attachment bond, just like that between mother and child, and shows us how to develop our "love sense"--our ability to develop long-lasting relationships. Love is not the least bit illogical or random, but actually an ordered and wise recipe for survival. *LOVE SENSE* covers the three stages of a relationship and how to best weather them; the intelligence of emotions and the logic of love; the physical and psychological benefits of secure love; and much more. Based on groundbreaking research, *LOVE SENSE* will change the way we think about love.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"This book is an absolute must for anyone who wants to understand how Love Makes Sense. Sue Johnson covers all the new science, and she has led the scientific field in helping us all understand love and how to repair an ailing relationship. The book is a real page-turner, an easy read that will enlighten all of us who want to build a lasting and secure bond filled with romance and passion. We need no longer wander around in the darkness, stumbling from one disastrous relationship to another. Read this book and learn how to create a life that is a safe haven for love." --John M. Gottman, PhD, author of *What Makes Love Last?* "A life-changing book! Dr. Johnson elucidates the science of love, convincingly demonstrating the underlying emotional logic of relationships. In an

entertaining way, she gives us practical, down-to-earth examples and exercises to help us develop our 'love sense.' It will enrich the lives of all who read it." --Richard Lannon, MD, coauthor of *A General Theory of Love*"You won't find a better book combining wonderful insight, practical wisdom, and the latest science of relationships. Plus the passion of a psychologist intent on making the world safe for the kind of intimacy we all long for." --William J. Doherty, PhD, author of *Take Back Your Marriage*"Sue Johnson, the developer of Emotion Focused Couple Therapy, has written a powerful book on the science of securely bonded marriages. Dr. Johnson's very human and inspiring approach to relationships will keep the reader mesmerized." --Barry McCarthy, PhD, author of *Rekindling Desire*"Sue Johnson sees no contradiction in viewing love as biology and poetry, physiology and romance. For her, love is the hard won endowment of our evolutionary history and a source of hope a world of uncertainty and danger. With this book, Sue reveals that love is scientifically understandable. She emerges not only as a world authority on love's repair, but also on its underlying, neural, physiological and psychological structure."--James Coan, PhD, Professor of Clinical Psychology and Director of the Virginia Affective Neuroscience Laboratory at the University of Virginia."In *Love Sense*, Dr. Sue Johnson creates fascinating and enlightening connections between cutting-edge research, professional applications of research in marital therapy, and scores of apt case examples and engaging exercises for people who struggle with relationship difficulties. Besides being an excellent researcher, theorist, and clinician, Johnson has a unique gift for inspiring and motivating other therapists and nonprofessional readers. With genuine enthusiasm and admirable clarity, she shows how emotion-focused therapy, guided by attachment theory and research, can heal troubled relationships while benefiting society more generally. This is a wonderful, uplifting, energizing book."--Phillip R. Shaver, PhD, Distinguished Professor of Psychology, University of California, Davis; Past President, International Association for Relationship Research

Dr. Sue Johnson is a clinical psychologist and Distinguished Research Professor at Alliant International University in San Diego, CA. The developer of Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy, she is a recognized leader in the new science of relationships. Dr. Johnson is the author of *Hold Me Tight* and other numerous books and articles, and has trained thousands of therapists in North America and around the world. She divides her time between Ottawa, New York, and San Diego.

Sue Johnson has a gift for presenting science with such delight and joy that it's like opening an extra special birthday present that the giver is as excited about as the receiver. In *Love Sense*, Sue

opens up the science of love for all of us. She begins by pointing out that our first instinct is to seek contact and comforting connection rather than sex or aggression. This idea opens up a whole new arena for understanding behavior and interactions. The idea that we must stand alone and strive for independence falls away for the idea that what we all really need is closeness and comfort. We worry that if we are "too soft" that we will raise self centered people but, in fact, we are mostly driven to be empathic rather than competitive. Sue reveals the science of her ideas in much the same way that Richard Feynman reveals physics - with joy and engagement. Sue discusses emotion, the brain, sex, monogamy. She addresses many issues couples struggle with over a lifetime of partnership such as making a commitment, parenthood, coping with the empty nest, retirement. Along this journey, Sue explains the common cycles couples get into and the emotion that is underneath those cycles that drives them. She uses examples from her work with couples to demonstrate what happens in these dynamics and how attachment styles and needs affect each person. She slows down the dynamics and digs deep into the emotion and attachment needs to expose what reassurance or support is needed to circumvent the cycle. In chapter nine Sue tells a love story and describes a betrayal between a couple, the opening up, understanding what was happening between them that created the environment for this fracture to happen and then the repair. This will be a wonderful piece for our clients to read to begin to understand the opening that needs to happen when people have hurt each other. Sue moves on to expose many of the challenges we have in our ability to be present with those we love. Throughout this book, the conversational style Sue has, her deep understanding of her subject and her passion for this topic are palpable. This book will be a best seller and I believe that it will create the revolution Sue talks about. We will begin to find each other, open up to each other, expose our vulnerability, understand our emotions and heal our interpersonal fractures. Thank you Sue for caring enough to bring forward these important messages. This is a lovely, mesmerizing book.

Without being too sappy or too stodgy, *Love Sense: The Revolutionary New Science of Romantic Relationships* (2013), by Sue Johnson, is a fascinating and heartwarming look at the phenomenon of love from a scientific perspective. Citing ample research on primate development, neuroscience, and biochemistry, Johnson makes a compelling case that humans evolved to be monogamous rather than philandering, interdependent rather than isolated, and that emotional connectedness to others is a testament to our strength rather than a sign of weakness. Although the book does an excellent job extolling the importance of romantic relationships, it seems to marginalize those who are not in a strictly monogamous and long-term relationship and, also, errs on the side of being too

permissive of clinginess and “you are my everything” enmeshment. Nevertheless, it’s a worthwhile read because it breaks down love in terms of cutting-edge science. Building on the work of John Bowlby, Sue Johnson offers a compelling foundation from which to understand, and even enhance, love relationships: attachment theory. The basic premise of attachment theory is that human beings thrive on emotional connection to caregivers as babies and to romantic partners as adults. Inconsistencies in attachment bonds cause humans distress, particularly infants. This makes sense from an evolutionary perspective since human infants are among the most helpless in the animal kingdom and are completely dependent on their parents’ care at birth.

Instinctively knowing that abandonment spells death, we humans are wired to connect and we thrive when we have at least one significant other to trust. I really enjoyed the parts of the book where Johnson examined the nitty gritty of what constitutes love. Humans are among the 3% of mammals that form monogamous pair bonds. The chemicals behind our desire to bond with one significant other include oxytocin (the cuddle hormone) and vasopressin (the mate-guarding hormone). These chemicals regulate stress and protect health. Having someone to trust and hold gives you the confidence to explore the world and to thrive as an individual. So, contrary to popular notions of independence, interdependence makes us strong rather than weak. This is good motivation to cherish a love relationship if you have one or honor your human need to connect with others.

Although I enjoyed the book overall, there were parts of it that left me irked. The book started off well, in my opinion, as an insightful investigation into the nature of love. I was, however, disappointed that the author didn’t answer some lingering questions I had as I made my way through the book. For example, the author never addressed how singles could benefit from this new understanding of love. It seemed to undermine the dangers of relying on one person to be your anchor to the rest of humanity instead of cultivating a myriad of relationships and general community involvement. I also didn’t really care for her model of couple’s therapy, Emotionally Focused Therapy. While it has a relatively high success rate compared to other modes of couple’s therapy, it seems too simplistic, vague, and naive. It would only work if both partners were committed to making their relationship work and sincerely wanted to restore a positive connection. I doubt it would work for people hellbent on “winning” at the other person’s expense. It works so long as both partners recognize each other’s humanity. Some people are simply abusive and see people as objects to manipulate. Others are simply too selfish to make the compromises necessary for an egalitarian, mutually beneficial partnership. Trusting such people would be destructive rather than healthy. So love isn’t the answer to every human problem. Love Sense is a touching reminder of what really matters in this

human life: meaningful connections to other people and the world at large. It inspires readers to cherish and make the most of the significant relationships in their lives, particular the romantic variety. I could also see this as a good reference for raising children, at least for explaining the implications of attachment theory in a child's development. Johnson's science is good, but the applications of this science leaves much to be desired. Nevertheless, it's an enlightening read and I would recommend it to people in good long-term relationships (i.e. those that are worth preserving and/or improving).

Quite the eye opening scientific study of why we are who we are and what we can do about it. I have already recommended the book to friends and family members in order for them to see themselves through this view of how the mind develops through the actions of those we care about the most. The creation of attachment styles through the actions of others is a phenomenon that awakes our realization of why we act the way we do under certain conditions. If this was required reading in every K-12 curriculum, it would do the world a huge favor. Read it and pass it along!

Great, maybe the best, book on relationships I've come across - ever. What separates this book from all others (and I've read/listened to a lot over the last thirty-five years) is that it speaks in the most fundamental terms that impact two people in a relationship, whether it's among family or friends, casual or long term, relationship. Other books tend to focus on issues that can be influences or techniques designed to help, but typically have roots in what works for the author, so may or may not apply in your relationships. If you wish to really connect to those that matter to you, I think this book can provide some insight for the elements in you that can be considered to enhance that connection. In truth, my experience is that most don't care to invest energy in understanding themselves/being honest with the mirror - and if that's you, pass on this book. It takes strength to act in positive, connection-building ways, and I think this book provides some great "love sense" to aid in that process.

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