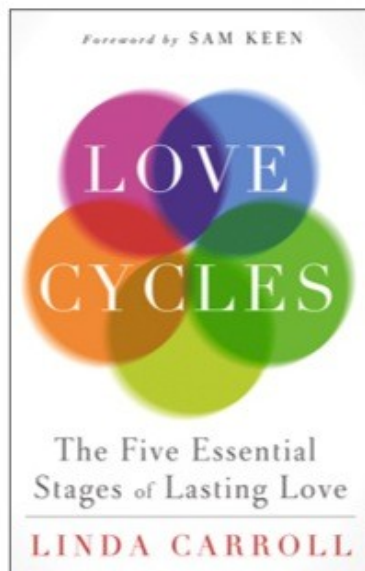


Learn the Stages of Lasting Love in Linda Carroll's New Book 'Love Cycles'



By [Sarah Batcheller](#) and Shannon Seibert

Linda Carroll has accumulated an abundance of knowledge when it comes to the meaning of true love and how to find it. The Oregon native has utilized her Masters of Counseling in therapy and group settings throughout New Zealand. She now travels with her veterinarian husband around the world to counsel couples and offer her advice through retreats and seminars. She teaches people how to effectively communicate with one another so a complaint doesn't mature into a criticism or a misunderstanding doesn't deter the relationship. In her third book, *Love Cycles: The Five*

Essential Stages of Lasting Love, she depicts love as a process with many everlasting cycles. CupidsPulse.com was able to catch up with the author about her recent release!

We love your idea that love is a cycle and not a straight and narrow path with one destination. Can you describe to us one of the most important stages?

The first stage is when we fall in love; I call it Merge. In our culture, this is what we think of as romance. We are struck by a love drug that is so powerful that we ignore everything that could be a warning sign or red flag. We get this high that knocks out the 911 center of our brain. Your heart is totally open. You don't necessarily make good decisions because you're under a spell and you only see the best.

What's the second stage Doubt and Denial like? How is this considered a normal part of love?

You start to feel like something is wrong. You are more conditional. Women fear disconnection, and men fear being incompetent and criticism – and for good reason. Typically, men become more disconnected and women become more critical. The things we fell in love with start to annoy us, because you finally see the other side of things.

Now, let's get more specific. What are some silver linings of Doubt and Denial?

You get to learn about your own senses. To get to real love, I need to find myself, see my own defense, learn my own triggers, and discover empathy. It's easy to be generous in the Merge but hard in Doubt and Denial. It requires you to work with yourself and to become more wholehearted as a human being. You have to balance yourself.

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Relationship

Continuing on, tell us about the third stage. How is this different from the first two stages of love?

Stage three is Disillusionment and is much like stage one but a different trance. Everything had been perfect in the first stage, and now, everything is imperfect and wrong. You're quick to jump to conclusions and are critical. At this point, there is a gridlock, and this is usually where people have affairs and get depressed. There are a lot of exits, not where you necessarily leave the relationship but where you create distractions to escape all of the time.

How do you leave this stage and move forward?

This point brings one of four decisions. The first decision is no decision; you just sweep everything under the rug. The second option is to split. Or three, you become different; you stay together but run on parallel lines and give up intimacy. Or the fourth decision is you commit to doing the work, which is to identify what is going on.

Tell us about the ultimate goal, the final stage of Wholehearted Love.

This happens when you've gone through a whole lot together, and you're resilient as a couple. You know yourself; you know how to manage the trouble; you have more empathy; and you are less into being right. Humor comes back into the relationship, and you know that it isn't going to stay perfect. You're able to discover the seasons in a relationship and weather them out. You can find a way back to each other after tough times.

Related Link: [10 Signs That You're in Love](#)

What are some ways couples can intensify the positive parts of the love cycle?

How couples manage conflicts is the number one indicator of

good relationships. Acts of generosity are another part of strong partnerships.

My husband is not my other half; he is his own person. Together, we make a third person where we overlap. We can have a good time away from each other, but we stay connected. We are two whole people together, which is better than half and half. Even on the days we don't like each other, he brews me a latte, which is an act of generosity.

In what ways does our society contribute, positively or negatively, to the way people interpret their own relationships?

It's our focus on romance. We emphasize romance as a really great love, but it's not perfect. To have a relationship that is good enough is different than having a relationship that is perfect. After all, humans are not perfect!

Order your copy of Love Cycles today! Check out her websites www.lovecycles.org/ and www.lindaacarroll.com/.