

# Falling in love

For other uses, see [Falling in love \(disambiguation\)](#).

In romantic relationships, **falling in love** is concept of



*Music player*

moving from a feeling of neutrality towards a person to one of love.

## 1 Terminology

The use of the term “fall” implies that the process is in some way uncontrollable and risky - as in the phrases “to fall ill” or “to fall into a trap” - and that it leaves the lover in a state of vulnerability.

It may also reflect the importance of the lower brain centers in the process,<sup>[1]</sup> which can lead the rational, accounting brain to conclude (in John Cleese's words) that “this falling in love routine is very bizarre....It borders on the occult”.<sup>[2]</sup>

## 2 Factors: mental and chemical

### 2.1 Mental

“Factors known to contribute strongly to falling in love include proximity, similarity, reciprocity, and physical attractiveness”,<sup>[3]</sup> while at the same time, the process involves a re-activation of old childhood patterns of attachment.<sup>[4]</sup> Deep-set psychological parallels between two people may also underpin their pairing-

bonding,<sup>[5]</sup> which can thus border on mere narcissistic identification”.<sup>[6]</sup>

Jungians view the process of falling in love as one of projecting the anima or animus onto the other person, with all the potential for misunderstanding that can involve.<sup>[7]</sup>

### 2.2 Chemical



*Jean-Honoré Fragonard The Stolen Kiss*

Two chemical reactions associated with falling in love are increases in oxytocin and vasopressin,<sup>[8]</sup> and Elisabeth Young-Bruehl has suggested that “when we fall in love we are falling into a stream of naturally occurring amphetamines running through the emotional centres of our very own brains”.<sup>[9]</sup> With regard to sociobiology, it is stressed that mate selection *cannot* be left to the head alone<sup>[10]</sup> and must require complex neurochemical support.<sup>[11]</sup>

Critics of such Neo-Darwinism point out that oversimplistic physical arguments obscure the way sexual passion often leads not to secure attachment but to attachments thwarted, as well as the sheer frightening difficulties of all falling in love.<sup>[12]</sup>

Biologist Jeremy Griffith suggests that people fall in love in order to abandon themselves to the dream of an ideal state (being one free of the human condition).

## 3 Timing

Stendhal charted the timing of falling in love in terms of

what he called crystallization - a first period of crystallization (of some six weeks)<sup>[13]</sup> which often involves obsessive brooding and the idealisation of the other via a coating of desire;<sup>[14]</sup> a period of doubt; and then a final crystallization of love.<sup>[15]</sup>

Empirical studies suggest that men fall in love earlier than women and women are quicker to fall out of love than men.<sup>[16]</sup>

## 4 Spiritual value

While some consider falling in love to be the nearest approach to a spiritual experience possible for the non-religious,<sup>[17]</sup> others say its loss of ego boundaries is merely a temporary phenomenon which has little to do with, or may even block, spiritual development.<sup>[18]</sup>

## 5 See also

- Attachment theory
- Dating
- Flirting
- Limerence
- Love at first sight
- Love sickness
- Puppy love
- Transference

## 6 References

- [1] Desmond Morris, *The Naked Ape Trilogy* p. 387
- [2] R. Skinner/J. Cleese, *Families and how to survive them* (1994) p. 13
- [3] R. Crooks/K. Baur, *Our Sexuality* (2010) p. 223
- [4] Robert M. Gordon, *An Expert Looks at Love, Intimacy and Personal Growth* (2008) p. xiv-v
- [5] Robin Skynner/John Cleese, *Families and how to survive them* (London 1994) p. 14
- [6] Elizabeth Young-Bruehl, *Where Do We Fall When We Fall in Love?* (2003) p. 20
- [7] Carl Jung, *Man and his Symbols* (1964) p. 191
- [8] S. Kuchinkas, *The Chemistry of Connection* (2009) p. 88-9
- [9] Elizabeth Young-Bruehl, *Where Do We Fall When We Fall in Love?* (2003) p. 20
- [10] Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence* (London 1996) p. 4
- [11] R. Crooks/K. Baur, *Our Sexuality* (2010) p. 186
- [12] Elizabeth Young-Bruehl, *Where Do We Fall When We Fall in Love?* (2003) p. 5
- [13] Eric Berne, *Transactional Analysis in Psychotherapy* (1961) p. 245
- [14] R. J. Sternberg/K. Weiss, *A New Psychology of Love* (2013) p. 125-8
- [15] I. A. Mabergoj, *Reality and Truth in Literature* (2013) p. 174
- [16] E. R. Smith/D. M. Mackie, *Social Psychology* (2007) p. 420
- [17] J. Bailey/J. V. Bailey, *Slowing Down to the Speed of Love* (2004) p. 50
- [18] M. Scott Peck, *The Road Less Travelled* (London 1990) p. 94-5

## 7 Further reading

- Robert J Sternberg and Karen Sternberg, editors. *The New Psychology of Love*. Yale University Press, 2008.
- Denis de Rougemont, *Love in the Western World*. Pantheon Books, 1956.
- Eric Fromm, *The Art of Loving* (1956)
- Francesco Alberoni, *Falling in Love* (New York, Random House, 1983)
- Roland Barthes, *A Lover's Discourse* (1990)

## 8 Text and image sources, contributors, and licenses

### 8.1 Text

- **Falling in love** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Falling\\_in\\_love?oldid=664930464](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Falling_in_love?oldid=664930464) *Contributors:* Brion VIBBER, Habj, Hike395, Sam Spade, Angmering, Andyjcp, Discospinster, Pikestaff, QuantumEleven, Alfakim, SCEhardt, Planetneutral, Bhny, Pseudomonas, Nawl-in-Wiki, Aeusoes1, Saberwyn, Nescio, Sandstein, Zzuuzz, Closedmouth, SmackBot, Khfan93, KnowledgeOfSelf, McGeddon, Moralis, Ghosts&empties, Lenin and McCarthy, Crowbaaa, Kevinbrowning, Cybercobra, Zizhou, IronGargoyle, Fvasconcellos, Dgw, NaBUru38, ShelfSkewed, Alucard (Dr.), UnDeRsCoRe, Daven200520, ColdShine, PamD, FrancoGG, Epr123, Melchisedech, Mojo Hand, PrivateRyan, Davidhorman, Magioladitis, VoABot II, CalamusFortis, Rivertorch, JaGa, CliffC, Tvoz, J.delanoy, Adavidb, Eliz81, FamicomJL, Xiahou, Guru-sahib, Idioma-bot, Carter, Cshane20, Qxz, SHARU(ja), Insanity Incarnate, LOTRrules, WereSpielChequers, Flyer22, Techman224, Kudret abi, Nancy, ClueBot, K14m, I luv dogz 227, Myusername527114, Big Fish7, Horsecrazy44254, Haf-spajen, Niceguyedc, Sastagour, Miracle33, Justrick, Jusdafax, DOHazard, Yonskii, Lake32, Addbot, Fieldday-sunday, Luckas-bot, Ilovecartertowne, AnomieBOT, Rjanag, Ostikao2, DynamoDegsy, Capricorn42, RibotBOT, Stephan Matthiesen, BenzolBot, DrilBot, Katakay, Tinton5, PremieLover, Jhbuk, Maashatra, DARTH SIDIOUS 2, Carnival Honey, Burton80, Phesrios121, Robideux, Pw-dakdo1123, Wikipelli, Erpert, Cogiati, Dudeimissyou, Cymru.lass, Jacobisq, ClueBot NG, Payyan-2000, Christinacruz02, HMSSolent, Dipankan001, Jovanilic95, Canyonliving, Cimorcus, Pohoreske, Frosty, 069952497a, Michalena, EyeTruth, CsDix, Awesome2013, Dhicks15, Bergen1982, Kschwibinger, FrB.TG, Ramiropanda, TeaLover1996, Cwenners, Benroy32 and Anonymous: 101

### 8.2 Images

- **File:Albert\_Schröder\_Musikalische\_Unterhaltung\_1885.jpg** *Source:* [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/bd/Albert\\_Schr%C3%B6der\\_Musikalische\\_Unterhaltung\\_1885.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/bd/Albert_Schr%C3%B6der_Musikalische_Unterhaltung_1885.jpg) *License:* Public domain *Contributors:* Dorotheum *Original artist:* Albert Schröder (1854-1939)
- **File:Ambox\_important.svg** *Source:* [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b4/Ambox\\_important.svg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b4/Ambox_important.svg) *License:* Public domain *Contributors:* Own work, based off of Image:Ambox scales.svg *Original artist:* Dsmurat (talk · contribs)
- **File:Ambox\_rewrite.svg** *Source:* [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/1c/Ambox\\_rewrite.svg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/1c/Ambox_rewrite.svg) *License:* Public domain *Contributors:* self-made in Inkscape *Original artist:* penubag
- **File:Edit-clear.svg** *Source:* <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/f/f2/Edit-clear.svg> *License:* Public domain *Contributors:* The Tango! Desktop Project. *Original artist:* The people from the Tango! project. And according to the meta-data in the file, specifically: “Andreas Nilsson, and Jakob Steiner (although minimally).”
- **File:Heart\_icon\_red\_hollow.svg** *Source:* [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/52/Heart\\_icon\\_red\\_hollow.svg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/52/Heart_icon_red_hollow.svg) *License:* CC0 *Contributors:* Heart\_left-highlight\_jon\_01.svg *Original artist:* Heart\_left-highlight\_jon\_01.svg: Jon Phillips
- **File:Jean-Honoré\_Fragonard\_-\_The\_Stolen\_Kiss.jpg** *Source:* [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/9d/Jean-Honor%C3%A9\\_Fragonard\\_-\\_The\\_Stolen\\_Kiss.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/9d/Jean-Honor%C3%A9_Fragonard_-_The_Stolen_Kiss.jpg) *License:* Public domain *Contributors:* Hermitage Torrent *Original artist:* Jean-Honoré Fragonard

### 8.3 Content license

- Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0