The Spectrum of Love in Classical Arabic

The word for "love" appears throughout Arabic literature in many forms. Arabic views love as a complex spectrum, containing several various stages. These stages begin with inclination and infatuation, and in the final stages, end with losing one's mind. While some of these words imply tenderness, others denote a love sometimes so strong it hurts. This graphic displays 14 increasingly strong stages of how the Arabic language expresses the idea of love.

- **sabbāb** the act of spilling the blood of one's heart
- **shaghaf** whole hearted love
- **hub** growing love similar to a hidden seed that proliferates
- **wudd** expressing love
- **hawā** showing an inclination towards somebody
- **hūyyām** mystified love resembling the psychological state similar to extreme thirstiness
- **gharām** preoccupied by loving someone at all times
- **wala** burning passion
- **‘ishq** being inseparable from the beloved
- **tawq** hinging love involving an internal struggle leading to personal sacrifice
- **fitna** smoldering love resembling smelting metal
- **jawā** burning love similar to a stomach ache or heartburn
- **walah** passionate love resembling losing one's mind
- **taym** infatuating love resembling a psychological state similar to losing one's way in the desert