

Warmth vs. Love Bombing

How to tell genuine kindness from a pattern that expects a return

Survivors are right to be careful. But after being love bombed, even genuine kindness can feel dangerous. This guide doesn't ask you to trust anyone faster. It helps you look at the *pattern* and gives you permission to let time do the testing.

The core difference: warmth is given freely. Love bombing is an *investment* that expects a return.

	Genuine warmth	Love bombing
Pace	Grows gradually and stays steady	Fast and intense; "soulmate" talk within days or weeks
Who it's for	Offered to many people, in many places	Poured onto you, often while others are dropped or criticized
Strings	None. Kindness doesn't change if you say no	Hidden. Warmth turns cold, guilt-tripping, or punishing when you set a limit
Your "no"	Respected, even if they're disappointed	Argued with, ignored, or punished
Your other relationships	Encouraged: "go see your friends!"	Competed with: "they don't understand you like I do"
Over time	Consistent, even on a bad day	Hot and cold; idealize, then devalue
Mistakes	Owned and repaired	Denied, blamed on you, or flipped back at you
How you feel after	Calm, steady, more like yourself	Dizzy, anxious, working to keep it going

Five questions to ask about anyone

1. If I say no or pull back, does the warmth stay the same?
2. Are they warm with lots of people, or only intensely with me?
3. Do they want me to have other relationships, or to need only them?
4. Does it feel safe, or does it feel fast?
5. What does my body say in a calm moment, away from them?

The most important test is time

Real warmth looks the same in month six as in week one. Love bombing can't hold its shape. **You can stay careful and still let good people in, slowly. Both can be true.**

A lens for noticing patterns, not a diagnosis or a verdict on any person. Coaching is not therapy or crisis care. If you're in crisis, call or text 988 (US).

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