collectivistic cultures never experience passion? Not at all. It simply means that passion isn’t the only consideration. After conducting research in the People’s Republic of China, R. L. Moore (1998) concluded that young Chinese do fall deeply in love and experience the same joys and sorrows of romance as young Westerners do. But they do so according to standards that require . . . [them to] sacrifice personal interests for the sake of the family [and avoid] fleeting infatuations [and] casual sexual encounters. (p. 280)

5. The Components of Love

Sternberg (1986) created a theory of love that synthesizes some of the themes we’ve been discussing. According to this theory, relationships can be understood in terms of three elements: intimacy, passion, and commitment; intimacy refers to feelings in a relationship that foster closeness and connectedness; passion refers to strong feelings of sexual desire and a desire to merge with the other person; commitment refers to a motivation to maintain the relationship over time. Table 11.2 shows that these three elements combine to form eight different types of relationships:

1. The first, which Sternberg calls nonlove, is a superficial relationship characterized by none of the three elements.
2. The second, liking, involves intimacy without passion or commitment. This type of liking often develops among people who work together or share some common background or interest.