

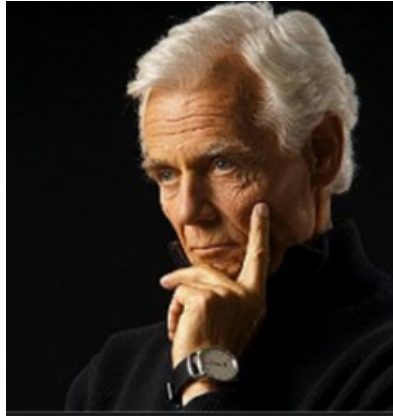
[Chapter 1](#) - this all comes from [this book](#) by [Allan and Barbara Pease](#)

History of Body Language

- **Before language was developed** (about 2M - 500K years ago), **the ancestors of humans HAD to rely on body language to communicate.**
- In modern times (1800s), body language started to be taught to actors in theatre. So they could communicate emotions through movement.
 - Silent actors like Charlie Chaplin had to be body language experts.
 - The most famous work on body language became Charles Darwin's "The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animals" - published in 1872. He discussed the link between human and monkey body language.
- In the 1950s, a scientist named Albert Mehrabian found that 7% of the total impact of a message is based on its words, 38% is based on its vocalisation (including tone of voice, inflection, and other sounds), and 55% is body language. Are these findings still held to be accurate today?
 - Other researchers like Birdwhistell also found that 60-80% of the impact of a message is based on body language. But **often, body language study results are from face-to-face interactions.**

Science

- **When we meet new people, we rapidly form first impressions on their friendliness, power, attractiveness, etc. In as little as 4 minutes.**
- Verbal messages transmit information. Body language transmits character.
- **When people's body language and words don't match, we think they're lying.**
- Lowered chin + crossed arms = bored
- Women (especially those who've had kids) score higher on tests trained to recognise body language cues than men.
 - *I really find this hard to believe but they say that gay men and male nurses did almost as well as women?*
 - *I'm not writing any more notes on this matter since they don't provide sources and the book is from 2006, so I'd be skeptical about those older studies.*
- **Certain body language gestures are universal (ex: smiling = happiness). Others are cultural.**
 - Nodding the head means 'yes' almost everywhere.
 - Shaking the head from side to side means 'no' to most people after early childhood.
 - Frowning/scowling = negative almost everywhere.
 - Baring teeth or flaring nostrils means aggression everywhere
 - Shoulder shrug (arms out to side, palms up, shoulders up, eyebrows raised) = confused everywhere.



- Index finger on cheekbone, thumb supporting chin, crossed legs, head/chin down means critical thoughts.
- Lowered chin is part of many negative gestures
- Crossed arms + lowered chin = defensive
- Covering mouth or touching nose is one sign of lying (among others)

Practical Tips:

- **Read gestures in clusters.** Don't try to interpret meaning from one individual gesture.
 - Ex: Scratching the head may show several things - sweat, uncertainty, dandruff, forgetfulness, or lying. Don't just assume it's one.
 - Ex: Repeatedly touching/twirling hair can show uncertainty, anxiety, stress, or boredom.
 - Just like you interpret a word's meaning based on context from sentence around it. Not one word at a time.
- **Look for whether body language and verbal language match**
- **Read gestures in context**
 - Ex: When someone is cold, they won't have the same movement/motion as when they're warm. Quite literally! Their crossed arms don't necessarily mean they're feeling negative.
 - Ex: Someone with arthritis won't shake your hand as firmly. Doesn't have to do with whether they like you.

Case Studies:

- *I find these hard to believe because I've never noticed anything like this, but I'm writing them down.*
- Men can make groping gestures with their hands when they're trying to keep their eyes up around a woman with large breasts.
- Politicians might use hand gestures of greater 'amplitude' (how far their hands go from their body) when they're more worked up. Ex: Bob Hawke, former Prime Minister of Australia, was defending salary increases for politicians by saying that CEOs had much larger salary increases. But in saying that, he gestured his hands 3x more far apart when talking about politicians salaries than when talking about corporate salaries.

- Psychics just make a bunch of general predictions about audiences that are 80% accurate to anyone that reads them. Then, they read your body language to see which ones you respond to and dig further in that direction.
 - “I sense that the things you really want out of life sometimes seem unrealistic and you often wonder whether you can achieve them. I also sense that at times you are friendly, social and outgoing to others, but that at other times you are withdrawn, reserved and cautious. You take pride in being an independent thinker but also know not to accept what you see and hear from others, without proof. You like change and variety but become restless if controlled by restrictions and routine. You want to share your innermost feelings with those closest to you but have found it unwise to be too open and revealing. A man in your life with the initial 'S' is exerting a strong influence over you right now and a woman who is born in November will contact you in the next month with an exciting offer. While you appear disciplined and controlled on the outside, you tend to be concerned and worried on the inside and at times you wonder whether or not you have made the right choice or decision.”