



Social Distancing and Non-Verbal Communication Amidst COVID Pandemic

By: George Plathottam

**Covid-19 Pandemic
has changed our life
in a big way
in the past few months.....**

New words and expressions...

QUARANTINE
COVID-19

LOCKED  IN

PREVENTION OF COVID-19 SPREAD:
SOCIAL DISTANCING

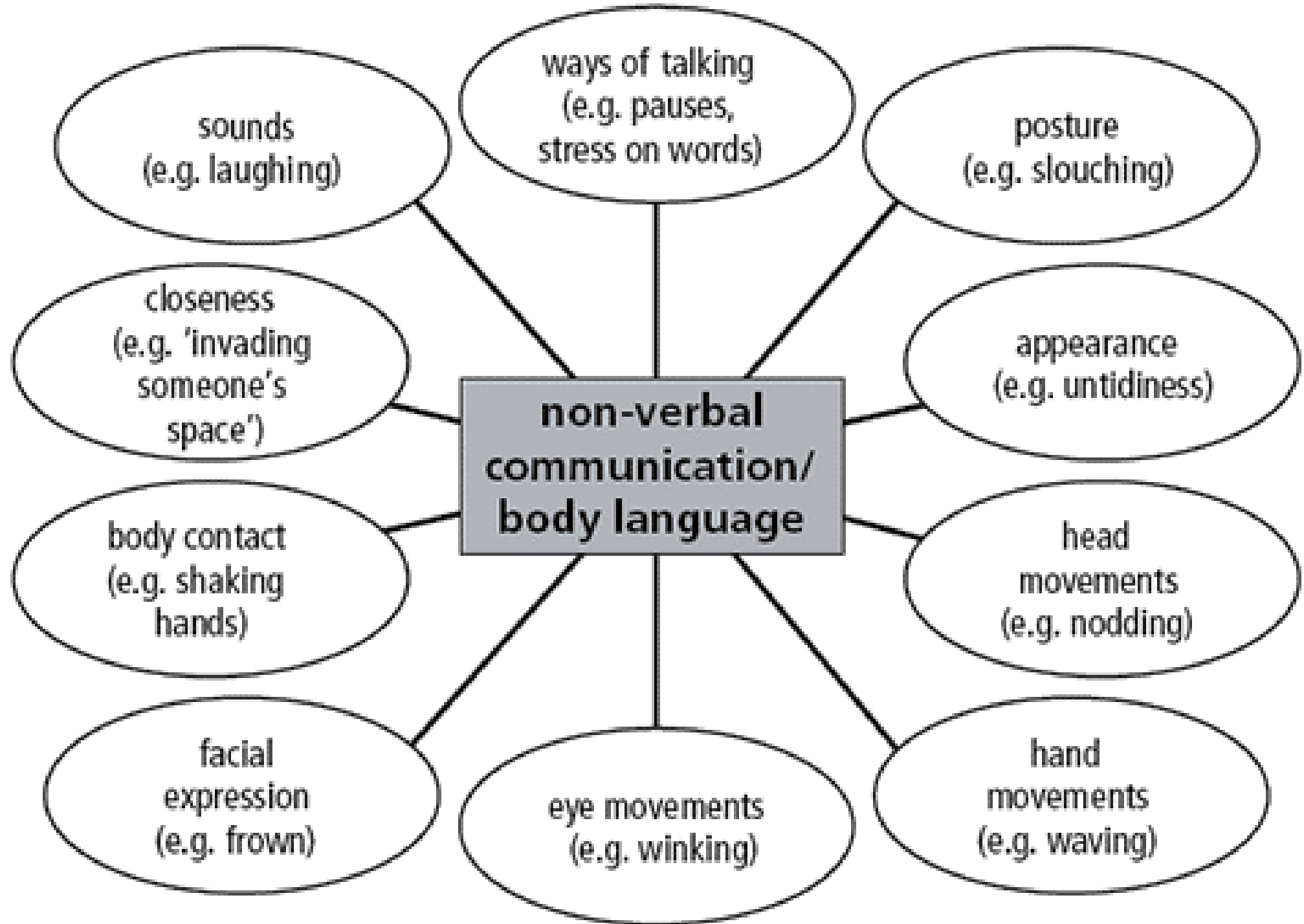
WORK
FROM
HOME



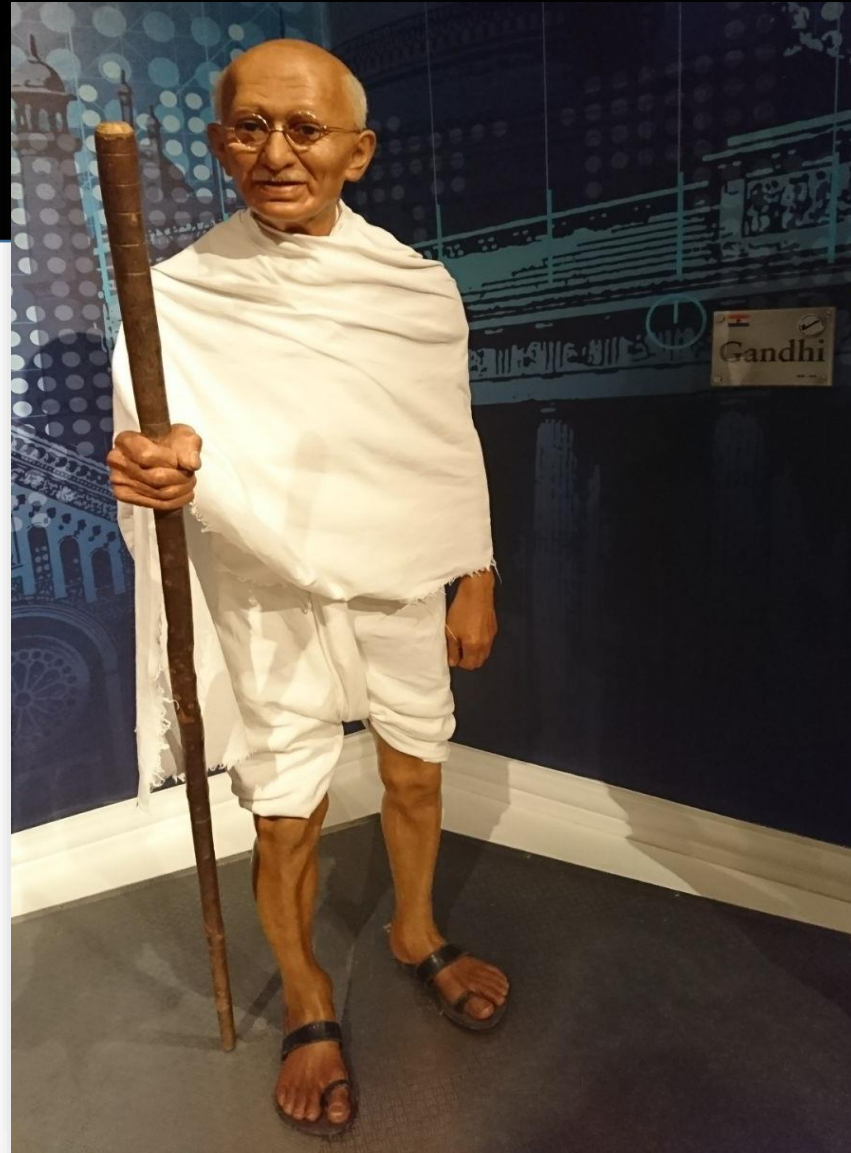
All behavior is communication



**As we follow
continue with
social
distancing and
work from
home, we are
more
dependent on
digital
technologies.**



We communicate through our dress...



Mahatma Gandhi

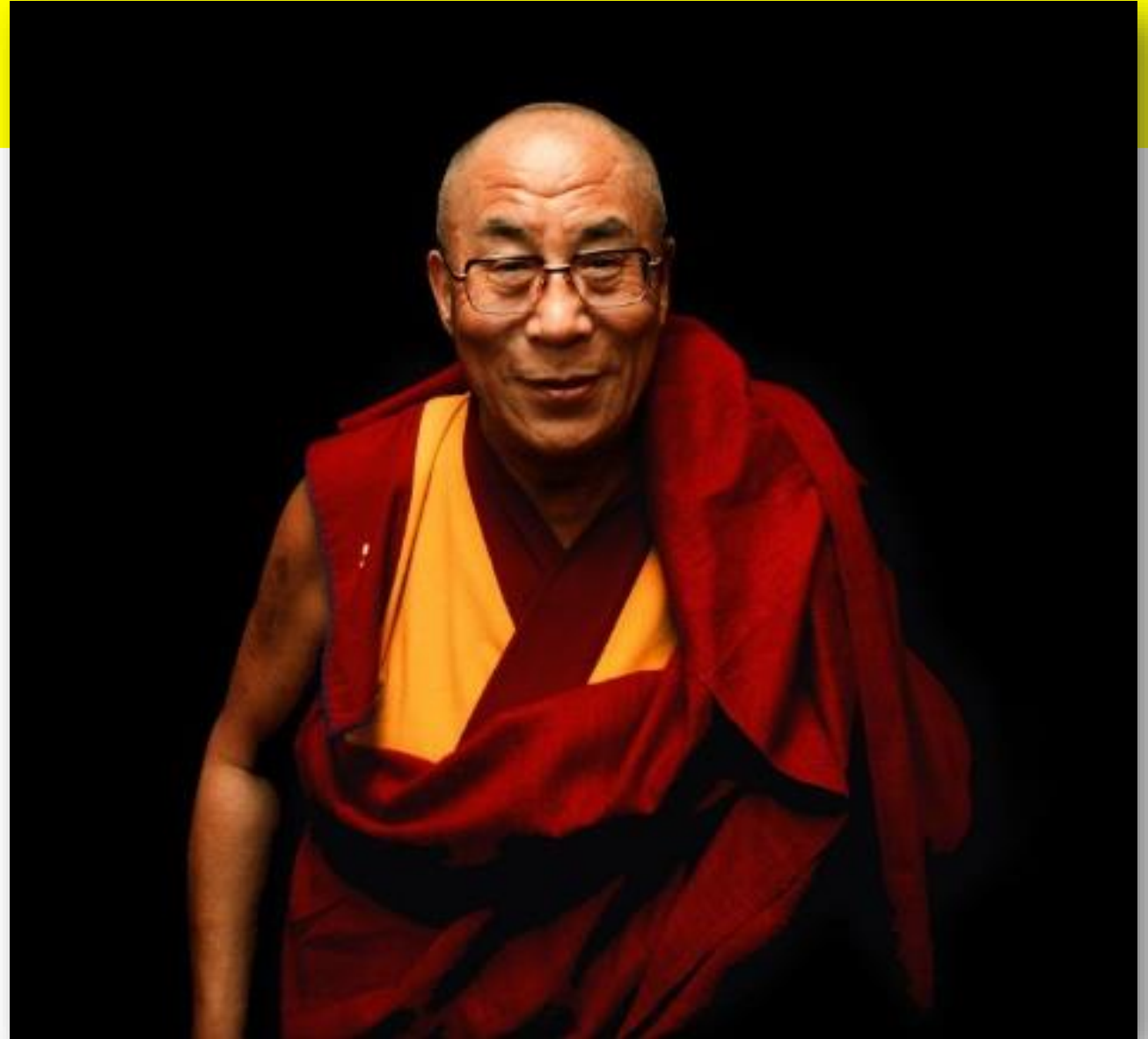
We communicate through our dress...



Mother Teresa

We communicate through our dress...

Dalai Lama



We communicate through our dress...



Pope Francis

We communicate through our dress...



- **Throughout history we have used all sorts of images to communicate**
- **Visual images flood our minds & dominate our imagination**
- **We have become more visual than ever**



'A picture is worth a thousand words'



- graffiti
- murals
- Iconography
- paintings
- emojis



Pope Francis charmed by 'unruly' young boy playing on stage



Pope Francis charmed by 'unruly' young boy playing on stage

A young boy upstaged Pope Francis, escaping from his mother and running onto the papal podium at a general audience, tugging on the hand of a Swiss guard and playing behind the pope's chair.

The boy's mother tried to pull the child away, saying that he was mute. Pope Francis told her to let him carry on playing.

"This child cannot speak. He is mute. But he can communicate," the pope told hundreds of pilgrims. "And he has something that got me thinking: he is free. Unruly ... but he is free," he added to laughter.

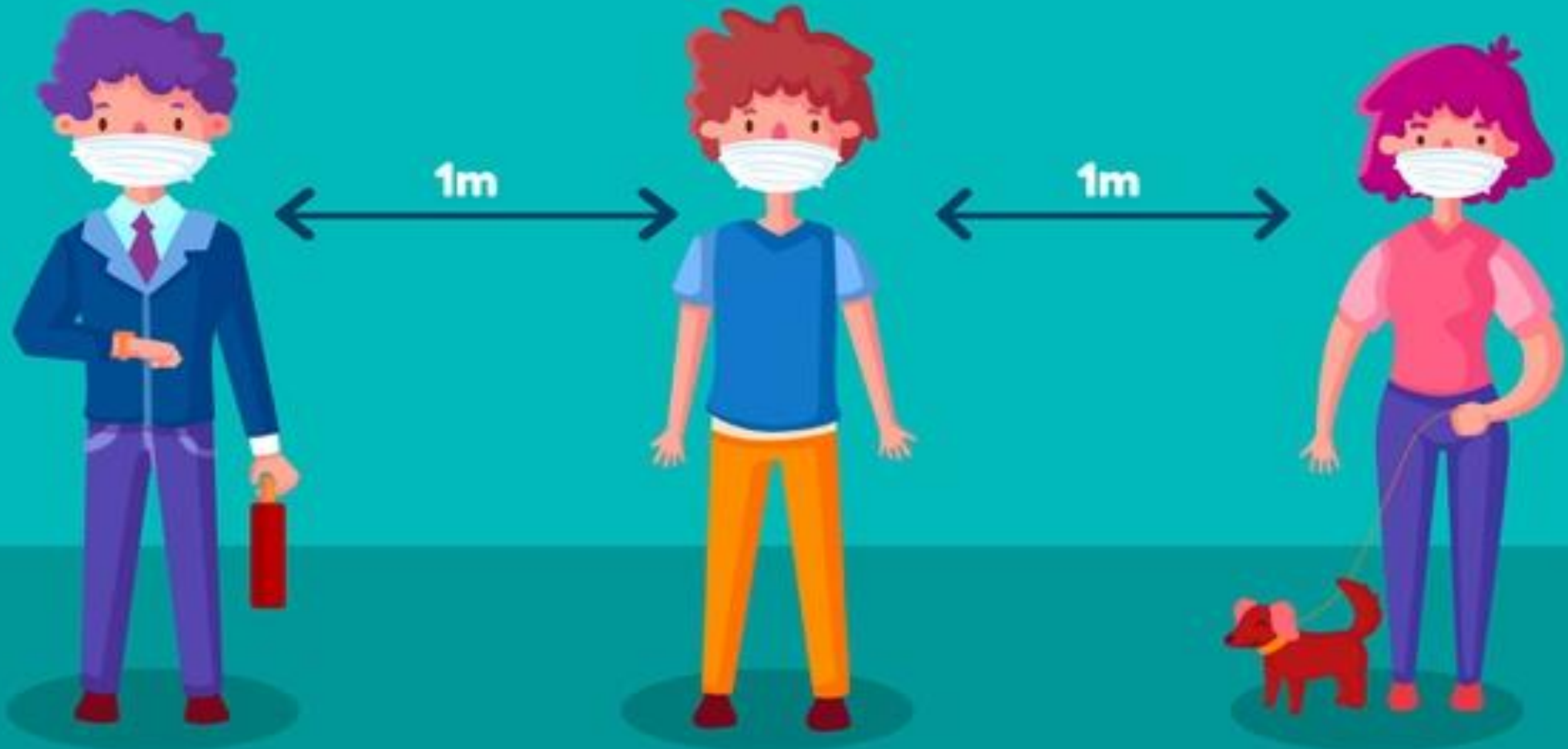
"Let's ask the grace (of God) that he may speak."

Pope Francis charmed by 'unruly' young boy playing on stage

video



Social Distancing

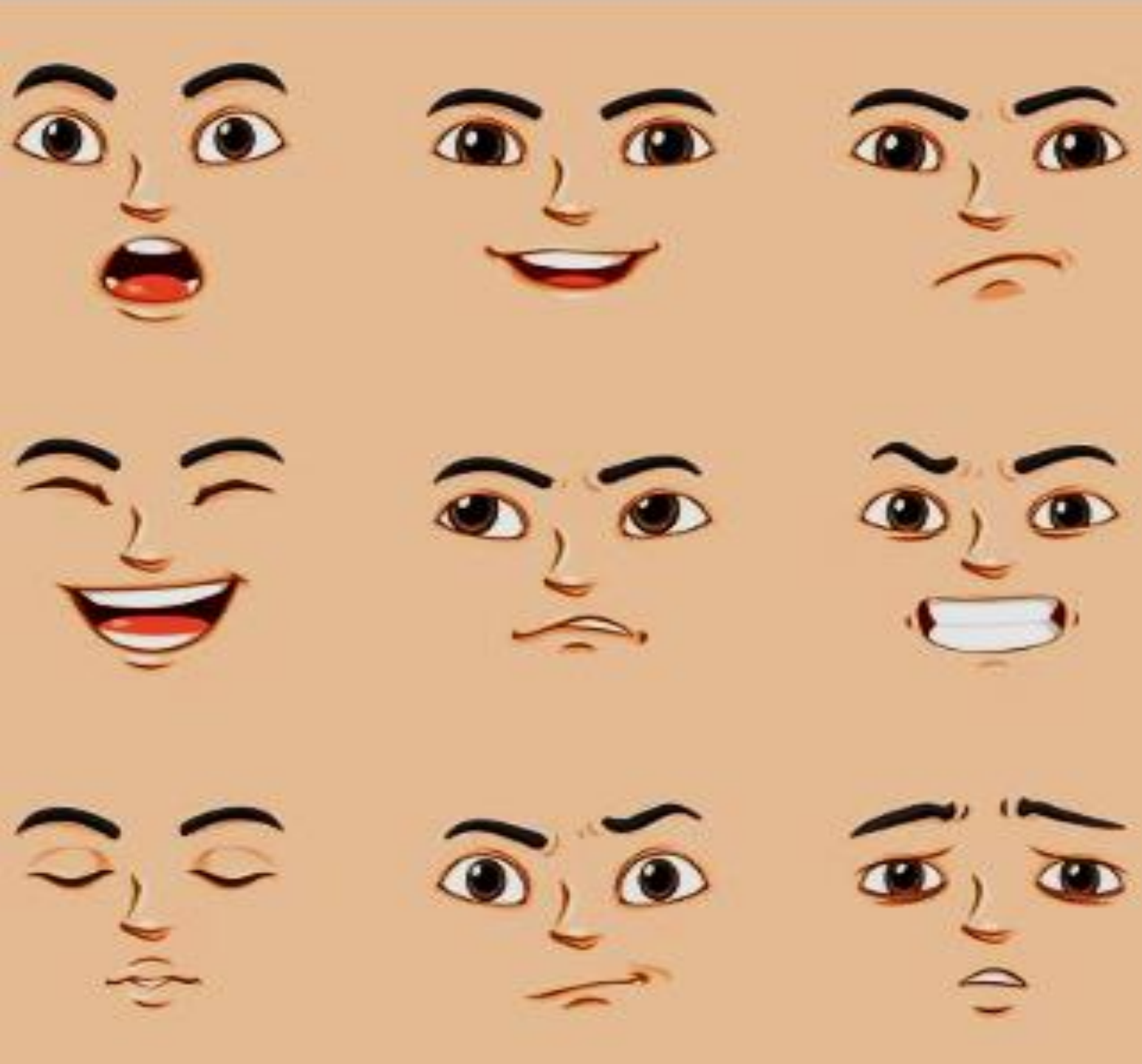




**Distancing can
become
discriminatory on
the basis of caste,
colour, lineage, work,
gender**



**It can become a tool
for domination,
superiority, elitism**



Facial expressions

**are responsible
for much of our
non-verbal
communication**

1. Angry
2. Anxious
3. Ashamed
4. Bored
5. Cautious
6. Confident
7. Confused
8. Depressed
9. Disgusted
10. Ecstatic
11. Embarrassed
12. Enraged
13. Exhausted
14. Frightened
15. Frustrated



- 16.. Guilty
17. Happy
18. Hopeful
19. Hysterical
20. Jealous
21. Lonely
22. Love-struck
23. Mischievous
24. Overwhelmed
25. Sad
26. Shocked
27. Shy
28. Smug
29. Surprised
30. Suspicious



A photographer in Kerala, India, has found a new way people who wear masks can be recognized by printing the face on the mask. Binesh Paul now can print people's faces on a mask for less than a dollar.

Appearance and Touch



**Communication
through touch**

TOUCH

- There is good touch and inappropriate touch. Even a child instinctively knows if the touch has sexual overtones.
- Touch and appropriateness vary in different cultures. But many things remain the same.
- A good touch can be affirmative.



Women tend to use touch to convey care, empathy...



**Men use touch
to assert power
and control over
others**

Color Psychology



Research on [color psychology](#) has demonstrated that different colors can evoke different moods.

RED

MEANS:

passionate
active
EXCITING
bold energy
youthful
physical
PIONEERING
leader willpower
confidence
ambition
POWER

BRANDS:



PINK

MEANS:

love **calm**
respect
WARMTH
longterm
feminine
intuitive **care**
assertive
sensitive
NURTURE
possibilities
UNCONDITIONAL

BRANDS:



PURPLE

MEANS:

DEEP
creativity
unconventional
original
stimulation
individual
WEALTHmodesty
compassion
DISTINGUISHED
respectable
fantasy

BRANDS:



NAVY

MEANS:

trust order
LOYALTY
sincere
authority
communication
confidence
PEACE integrity
control
responsible
success
CALM masculine

BRANDS:



GREEN

MEANS:

BALANCE
growth
restore
sanctuary
EQUILIBRIUM
positivityNATURE
generous
clarity
prosperity
good judgement
safety stable

BRANDS:



BLUE

MEANS:

spirit
perspective
CONTENT
control
rescue
determination
self-sufficient
modern goals
awarePURPOSE
OPEN
ambition

BRANDS:



ORANGE

MEANS:

INSTINCT
WARMTH
gut reaction
optimistic
spontaneity
extrovert
socialNEW DEAL
FREEDOM
impulse
motivation

BRANDS:



Body language is more than body positions and movements

- **Closeness and space between persons (proxemics)**
- **Our facial expressions**
- **Our eyes, especially how they move and focus**
- **How we touch ourselves and others**
- **How our bodies connect with other non-bodily things: pens, cigarettes, spectacles and clothing**
- **our breathing, and other less noticeable physical effects, for example our heartbeat and perspiration**

Why Study Non Verbal Communication?

- **A large Part of our life is ritualistic, symbolic
We express ourselves more by signs, action, behavior, manners, dress, gestures than sound, voice.**
- **We should not use non verbal com to judge people but to understand, reach out, love, serve them.**
- **Just like a mother looking at the child knows it is unwell or is hungry or sleepy, we can understand people through non verbal cues and signals.**
- **We can use this knowledge to be more caring. We can be more conscious of our own behavior, manners, conduct with others.**

Types of Nonverbal Communication

- ☞ **Facial Expression**
- ☞ **Gestures**
- ☞ **Paralinguistics**
- ☞ **Body Languages and Postures**
- ☞ **Proxemics**
- ☞ **Eye Gaze**
- ☞ **Touch**
- ☞ **Appearances**

Types of Nonverbal Communication

We also need to remember:

- **Body language is not an exact science.**
- **No single body language sign is an absolutely reliable indicator.**
- **Understanding body language involves interpretation of several consistent signals to come to a specific conclusion.**



Anger



Joy



Surprise



Disgust



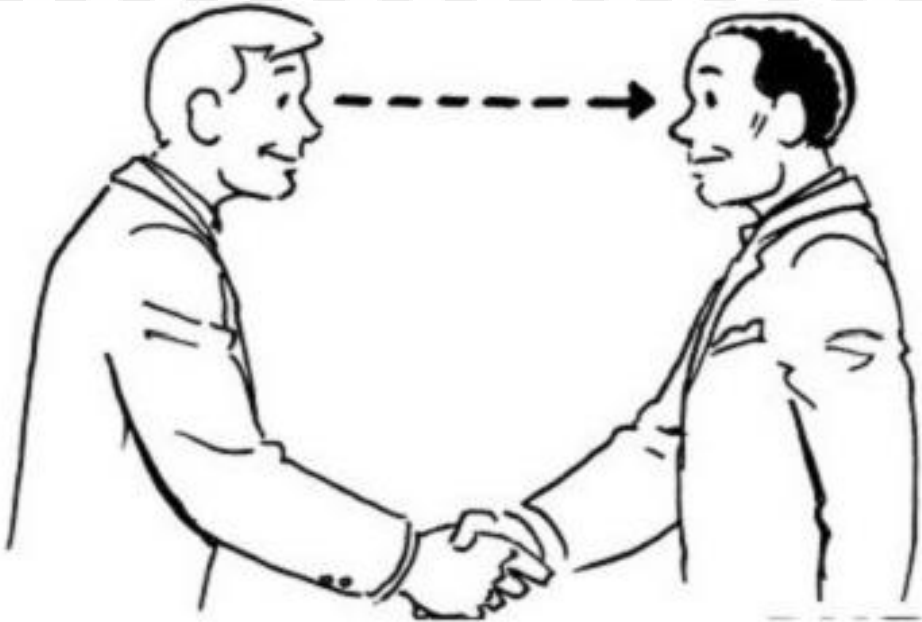
Sadness



Fear

The 6 basic human emotions universally recognized

Faking/deception



Firm handshake, eye contact

are examples of signals which can be quite easily be 'faked' - usually temporarily, but sometimes more consistently.

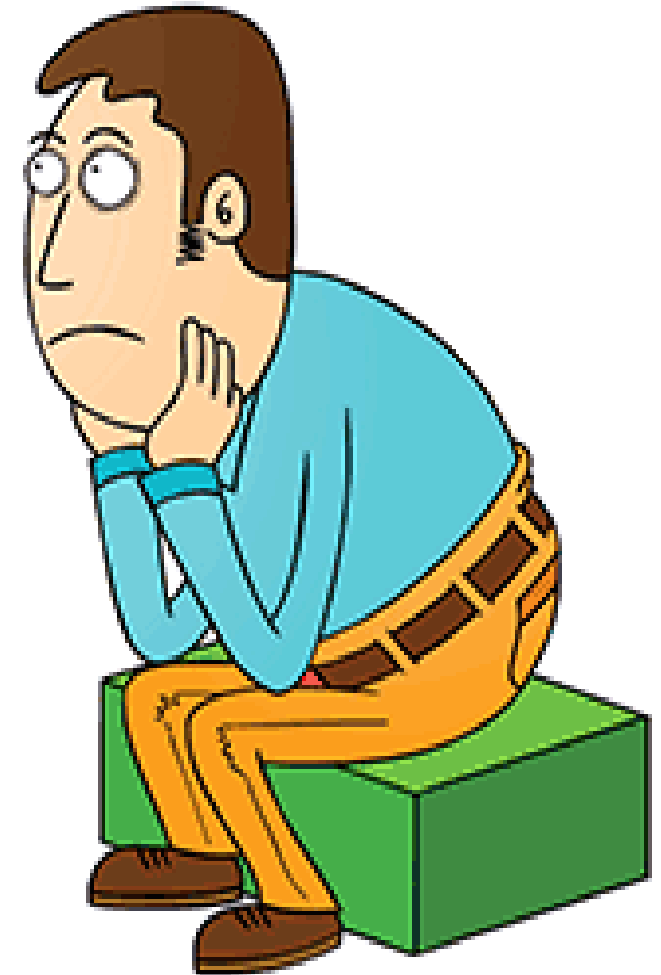
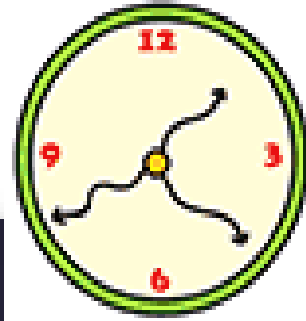


Faking/deception

Micro gestures (pupils contract)



Boredom, nervousness and insecurity signals



Anxiety, insecurity



**Negative feelings
give rise to negative signals.**

**If we can read these signals we can
help people sowing seeds of hope.**

Situations can produce negative feelings:

- . dominance of a boss or a teacher in authority**
- . overloading a person with new knowledge or learning**
- . tiredness**
- . stress caused by anything**
- . cold weather or heat conditions**
- . lack of food and drink**
- . illness or disability**
- . alcohol or drugs**
- . being in a minority or feeling excluded**
- . unfamiliarity - newness – change**



BODY LANGUAGE



Interpreting gestures, signs and other behaviors

8 Categories of body language



1. EYES

- ❑ Windows of the soul, best indicators of feelings.
- ❑ Shifty eyes, beady eyes and look of steel demonstrate awareness.
- ❑ Honest person has a tendency to look you straight in the eye when speaking.

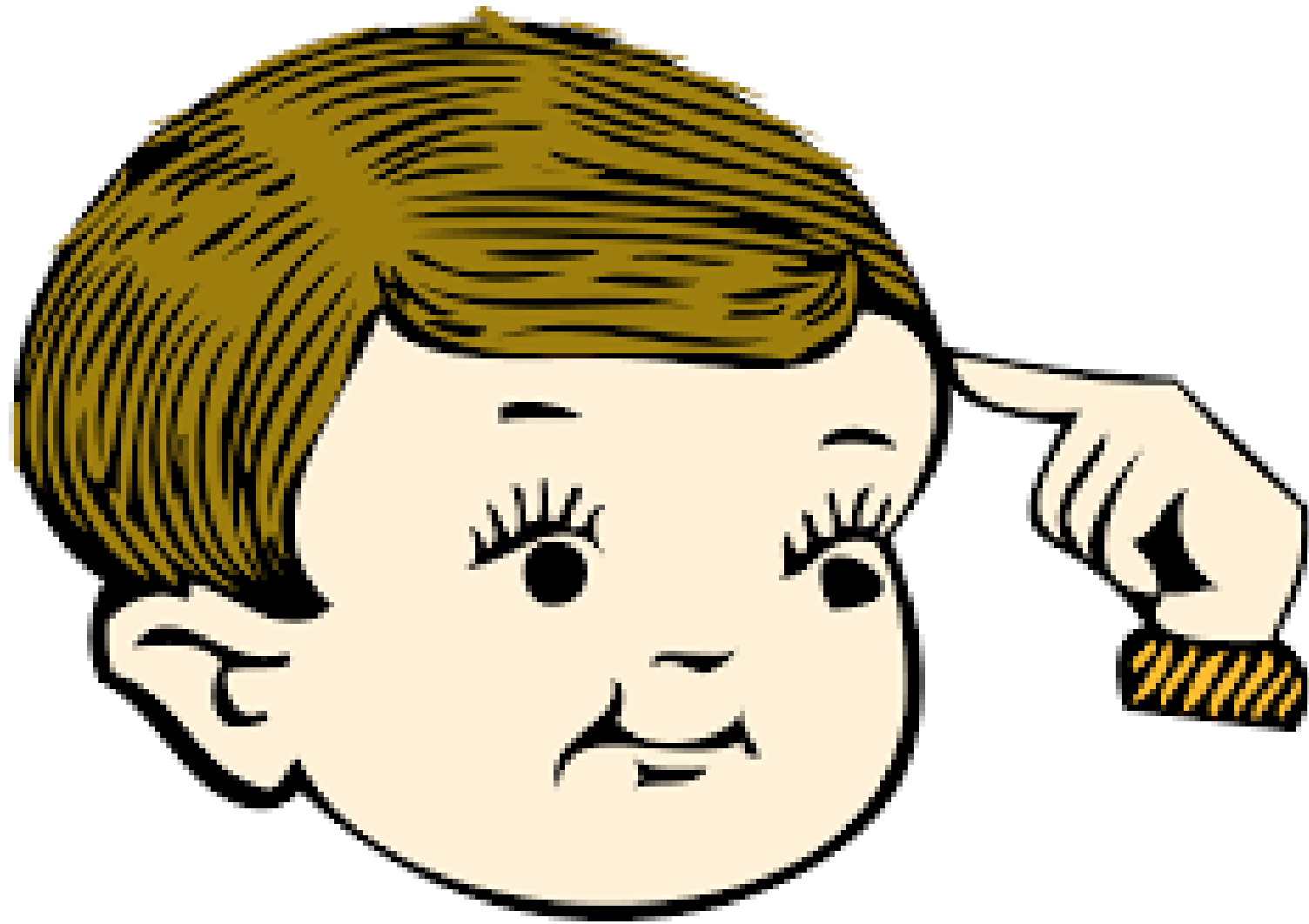
2. MOUTH



MOUTH

- ❑ The mouth is associated with many body language signals:
 - ❑ speech
 - ❑ infant feeding, psychological feelings of security and love
- ❑ The mouth can be touched or obscured by a person's own hands or fingers
- ❑ Unlike nose and ears, the mouth acts independently
- ❑ Smiling is a big part of facial body language.
- ❑ As a general rule real smiles are symmetrical and produce creases around the eyes and mouth.

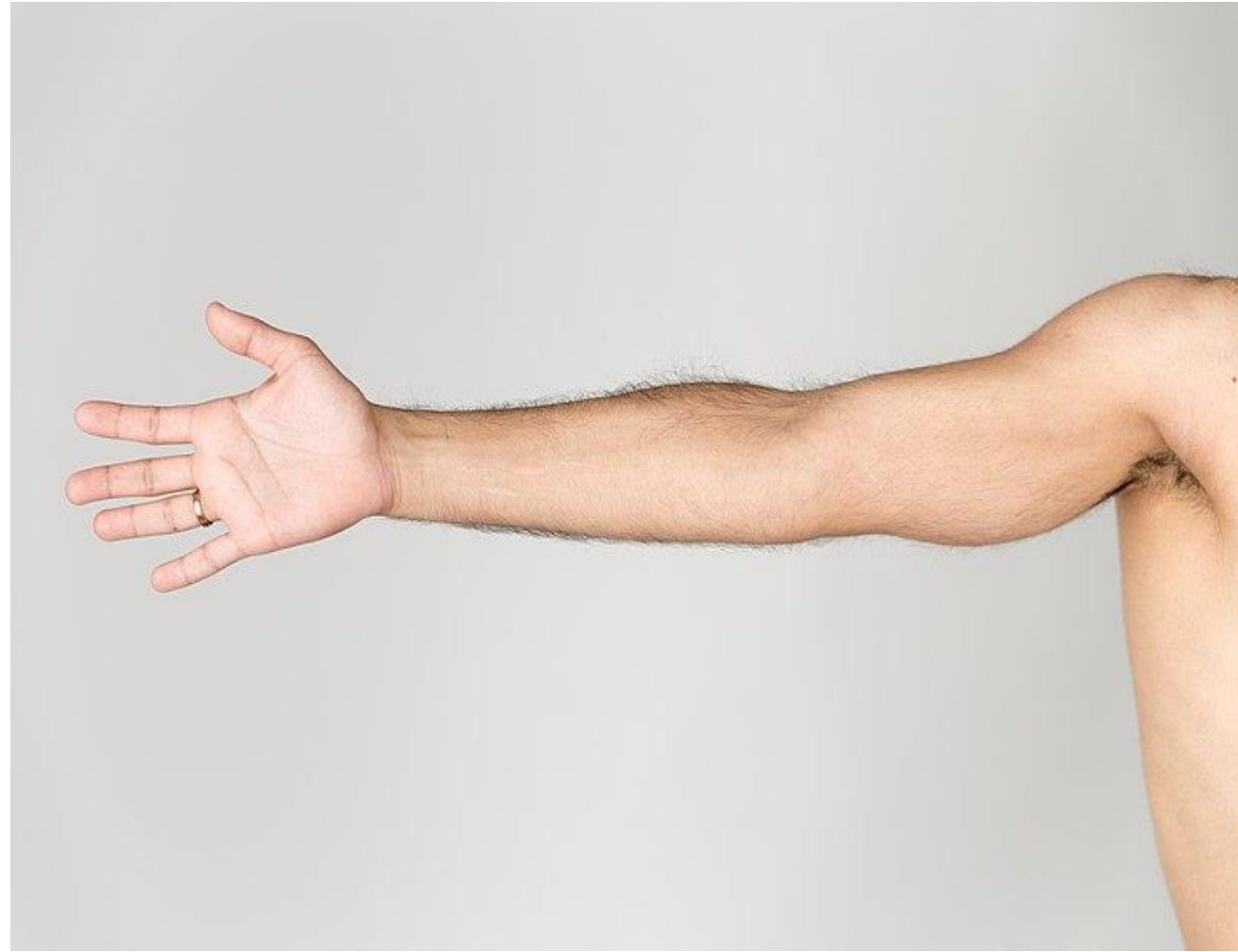
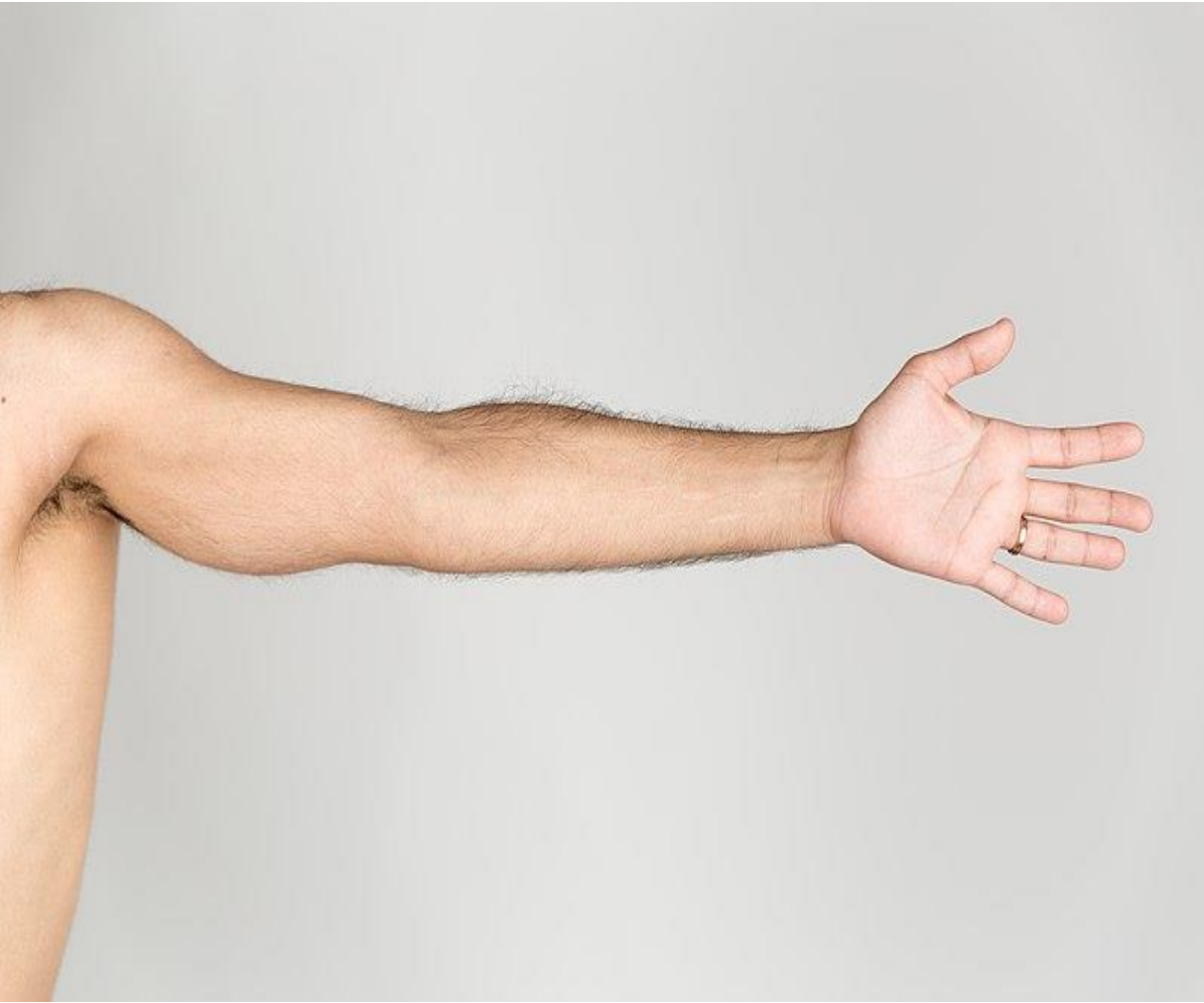
3. HEAD



HEAD

- ❑ The head tends to lead general body direction; it is also vital and vulnerable as the brain is located in the head
- ❑ Head has a very flexible neck structure, can turn, jut forward, withdraw, tilt sideways, forwards, backwards. These movements have meanings, which are related to other signals.
- ❑ The head usually has hair, ears, eyes, nose, and a face, which has more complex and visible muscular effects than any other area of the body.
- ❑ The head - when our hands interact with it – is dynamic and busy in communicating all sorts of messages - consciously and unconsciously.

4. ARMS



ARMS

- ❑ Arms act as defensive barriers when across the body, and conversely indicate feelings of openness and security when in open positions, especially combined with open palms.
- ❑ Arms are quite reliable indicators of mood and feeling, especially when interpreted with other body language.
- ❑ This provides a good opportunity to illustrate how signals combine to enable safer analysis.

5. HANDS



HANDS

Hands are very expressive part of the body and show:

- ❑ Emphasis (pointing, jabbing, and chopping actions, etc)
- ❑ illustration (drawing, shaping, mimicking)
- ❑ Conscious signals like the OK, thumbs-up, Victory-sign, and even rude gestures
- ❑ Greeting people and waving goodbye
- ❑ Also for unconscious signals showing joy, nervousness, including interaction with items like pens and cigarettes or other parts of the body

6. HANDSHAKES



HANDSHAKES

- ❑ Firm handshakes indicate confidence; used in business deals.
- ❑ Uncomfortably firm handshakes show lack of respect or awareness, especially if used in cultures- in the East especially where firm handshake is not normal.
- ❑ Handshaking evolved from ancient times as an initial gesture of trust (no hidden weapons)
- ❑ It signals trust and friendship, openness and welcome
- ❑ Handshaking by women became common practice much later, reflecting the change of social attitudes and the increasing equality of women.

7. LEGS AND FEET



LEGS AND FEET

- ❑ Legs and feet positions are more difficult to control consciously. They provide good clues to feelings and moods
- ❑ Men and women sit differently.
- ❑ Leg signals tend to be supported by corresponding arms signals, for example crossed arms and crossed legs, which aside from comfort reasons generally indicate detachment, disinterest, rejection or insecurity, etc.

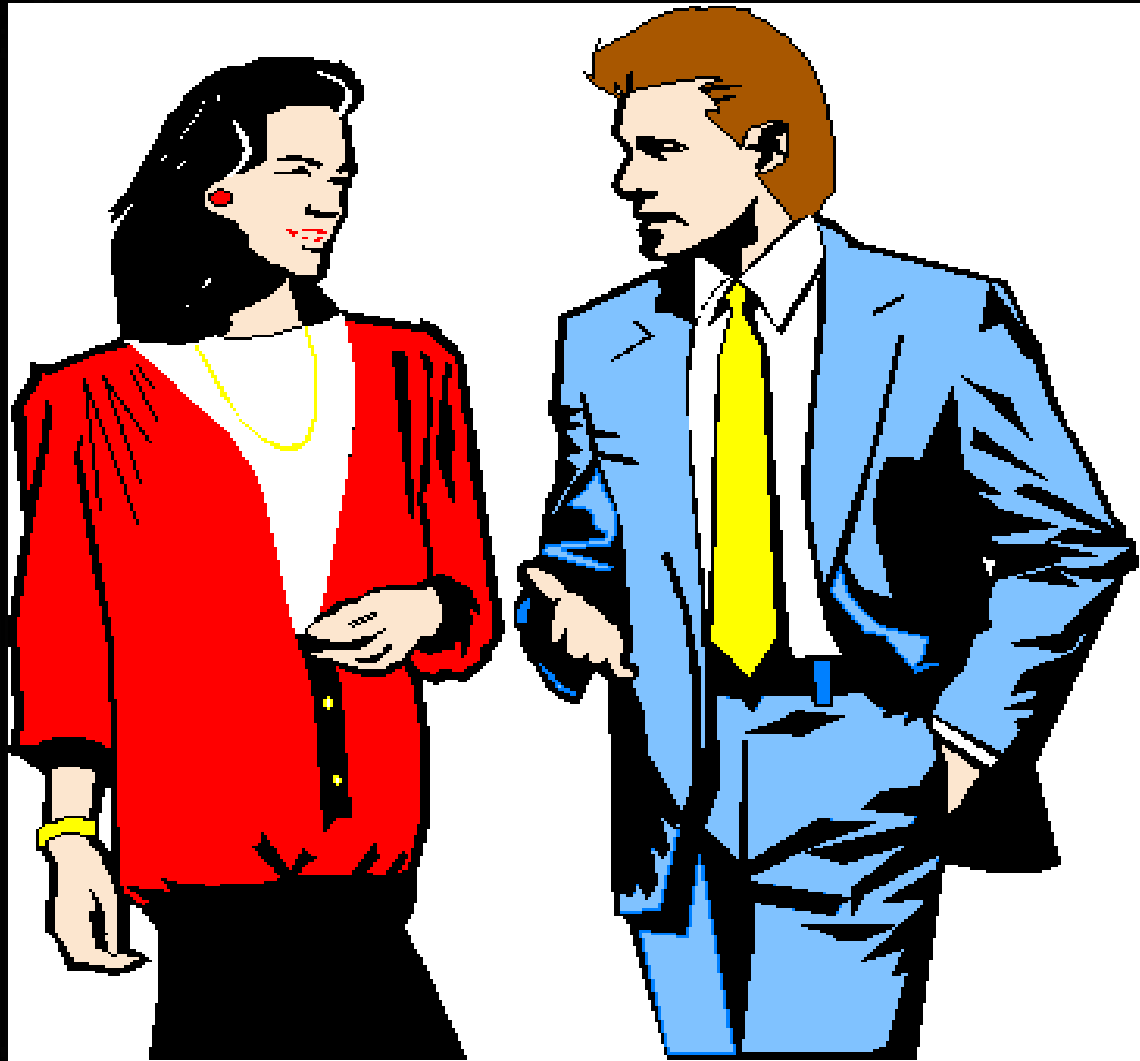
8. PERSONAL SPACE



Personal space is like an invisible bubble that surrounds you and makes you feel safe.

PERSONAL SPACE

- ❑ The technical term for the personal space aspect of body language is called **Proxemics**.
- ❑ Proxemics indicate the amount of space people find comfortable between themselves and others.
- ❑ Personal space dimensions depend on the individual, cultural background or situation
- ❑ Space needed when having a casual conversation with another varies between 18 inches to four feet.
- ❑ People often refer to their need for "personal space".
- ❑ Covid 19 has made it necessary to maintain social distancing.



**Social Distancing
COVID 19**

Take Aways:

- Develop greater awareness of non-verbal and body language communication
- Pay closer attention to understand non-verbal messages
- Use the knowledge to serve, help, affirm, support and not to judge condemn
- Practice “social distancing” without socially disconnecting
- Reduce social discrimination, hierarchies, bridge the gap
- Use communication skills to build community, home, self.

- Online platforms allow for wider and faster dissemination of information than ever before.
- Use technology to remain socially connected even when forced to remain physically distant.
- Mask wearing has made it necessary to read body language other than face
- Use platforms like video chat which convey non-verbal cues like tone of voice, facial expressions, and eye gaze, and less of text and e-mail which are lean.

**BODY LANGUAGE
ACROSS
DIFFERENT CULTURES**



People in parts of **India** may shake their head from side to side as a sign of agreement and active listening. In the west we tend to nod our head to agree to affirm.



Indian nod EXPLAINED



Filipinos find it offensive/uncomfortable when beckoned by a repeatedly curled index finger - the gesture evokes feelings of having done something wrong and being chastised for it.

In some **Australian Aboriginal cultures**, it is disrespectful to look an elder, or person of a rank above you, in the eyes. It is a sign of respect to drop your eyes. In Western culture not meeting somebody's gaze is commonly considered to be a negative sign.





Pointing the foot or feet at anyone or showing the soles of the feet is insulting and rude in many **Asian and Arab cultures.**

**In Arab
countries the
thumbs-up
gesture is rude.**



When our nonverbal communication contradicts our verbal communication, the nonverbal messages become more powerful.

“What you do speaks so loud that the world can’t hear what you say.”

FALSE
true

**Let us engage in communication
that builds community and
communion**

Thank you!