



JULIA BROOK

*Body language in  
Flirt & Romance*

# **Body language in Flirt & Romance**

Julia Brook

Translated by Jonathan Kalman and Magnus Ligi

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This book serves as an objective reference source for the science and art of Body Language and Nonverbal Communication. In an effort to be both practical and academic, many examples from/of varied cultures, politicians, professional athletes, legal cases, public figures, etc. are cited in order to teach and illustrate both the interpretation of others' body language as well as the projection of one's own nonverbal skills in many different contexts - not to advance any political or religious agenda.

Cover design by Scarlett Rutgers

I believe in the kindness of saints and that  
there is someone out there for everyone...

To my loved ones...

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## **For whom is this book meant and for what purpose...**

For many of us, the most important and difficult to fulfil desire in life is that of finding a partner – someone to share our happiest moments with and someone to lean on during difficult times.

We all wish to love and be loved, yet we often experience our beloved becoming our greatest enemy. The person we expect to be supporting us becomes someone that destroys us, weakens our self-esteem, crushes our dreams and betrays our most intimate secrets.

The ones close to us strongly influence how we are, who we can be and what we can achieve. They are the most important partners, friends and soul-mates in our lives.

Human relations are one of the most challenging aspects of life for everyone. Working in adult training and education, as well as counselling people who have found themselves in relationship dilemmas, I have often noticed how badly intelligent and educated people read others or adequately interpret the behaviour of the opposing party.

Verbal information is usually understood very narrow-mindedly. On top of this we badly interpret body language. Without understanding what is actually being said we find ourselves acting poorly in conflict situations. All of this, unfortunately, can have irreversible consequences in our lives - broken relationships and broken-up families. Living alone may seem rosy only for those who don't know what they are missing. Most of us would choose cohabitation with a loving person.

One of the reasons that we fail in relationships is that we assume that others think, feel and interpret information like we do, while forgetting that we all come from different backgrounds, past experiences, and have varying capacities for empathy. Because of this we all have a different understanding of what is going on around us and what others mean and are experiencing.

We tend to forget that we all have different 'reference systems,' due to differences in our growth environment and our past experiences.

Another reason for failed relationships is the so called 'desperation' factor, meaning that when we desperately want someone in our lives, we are able to imagine all kinds of idealised things about our partner. We close our eyes to the reality in front of us, not wishing to see people and situations as they really are.

The third stumbling block involves our experiences from the past – our previous relationships and their influence on our current relationship. This obstacle is often the most difficult one to overcome for those who have had previous experiences of breaking up with former partners.

Additionally we are haunted by our parents' perception of relationships, and their opinion of our partner plays its own role. How our parents accept and appreciate our partner's suitability for us has its influence. Not to mention the impact of the 'family model' developed by our parents, which undoubtedly overshadows the way that we think about love and marriage.

So how do we make sure that our significant other is the true love we are looking for and not in fact someone who will become a nuisance from hell? The answer lies in our ability to read body language and interpret nonverbal behaviour.

Body language is the key to understanding hidden attitudes and feelings. People instantly react to events whether they want to or not and these automatic reactions leak information about our most secret feelings, even those we want to hide.

What we feel determines our attitudes towards things and that in turn influences our conscious and unconscious behaviours. By being able to read body language, we are able to get a glimpse of the sometimes shocking hidden reality.

If words express what a person is thinking about, then body language reveals what the person is actually feeling and what he or she is trying to cover up. By interpreting body language we are able to see 99% of what is going on in people's conscious and unconscious thoughts.

But let's not forget – body language needs to be analysed according to context. The body signals immediate feelings and we need to take into account all of the body signals present in response to a certain situation. Body language analysis cannot be made on the basis of one single expression.

Ignoring context and not analysing a collection of signals as a whole, you will most likely get a wrong final result. So – always consider a collection of signals and their suitability for the context.

By trusting our instincts, and adequately identifying what kind of feeling the counterpart creates in us, we will make fewer bad choices, and be much more likely to find the 'love of our life,' whom we can love and be loved by for our whole life.



## **What nonverbal behaviour tells us...**

Reading people's minds is not a magic trick, it's a science. By learning to perceive non-verbal signals, and by being able to analyse body language in context, we can identify the psychological reasons and covert attitudes of a person's behaviour, and we are able to more than 90% of the time anticipate the person's potential behaviour in the near future.

Nature has supplied us with empathy, which helps us to intuitively sense what is happening within others. Unfortunately, most of us trust ourselves too little and we are rather inclined to believe what we are told from the opposite side, i.e., 'closing our eyes' to the reality in front of us.

Emotions like fear, hatred, happiness, sadness, etc., arise from the brain. Our brain controls how we express these emotions through our body language and facial expressions. The tone of our voice, our posture and facial expressions are all a result of our brain's complicated processing of information.

There are four 'signal systems' in human interaction, processed by our brain. Speech and sounds are processed with hearing; facial expressions and body language with eyesight. We use different parts of the brain to process this information, but our mind will use these processes to form a unified opinion of what our body feels.

The tone of someone's voice tells us whether the person is cold, glad, serious, dull, etc. The tempo of their voice reveals whether the person is irritated, tense, calm, confident, insecure, etc. Low voices seem trustworthy to us and high screechy voices make us want to leave the room.

Both facial expressions and the expressiveness of someone's voice are caused and controlled by the cranial nerves in the brain. So even if we try to hide our feelings, they still always 'leak' out.

The words that we use speak of our thoughts, ideas, problems, wishes, etc. If we learn to listen properly, we can receive information about what is happening with the person we are talking to. Are their words sincere or in fact ambiguous? Is the agent of

the sentence left out? Are we spoken to in the 'we' form or the 'me' form? Why are some words repeated and some endings of sentences silenced? How we speak and what we speak of both leak information about what we are thinking.

Body language and facial expressions mirror feelings and attitudes, and tell us what kind of a person we are dealing with. Could this person be patronising to others, sick, afraid, dangerous, dominant, sporty, dominant, etc.?

First, our subconscious mind and body react, and then based on our attitude we begin to consciously think and act.

The first thing we need to ask ourselves when meeting a stranger is - what do I feel around them? Our intuition informs us of potential threats and we sense when something is out of order.

If we know how to interpret body language and nonverbal behaviour, we can focus on the actual reasons why we feel the way we do around this person, and what are the reasons behind their behaviour?

In conclusion - what happens in our conscious and subconscious minds will always be reflected in our body and vice versa. What we feel in the body, influences what we think. Everything is visible and detectable. This is how to prevent many problems in life, both emotional and material, and we are also able to avoid dangerous people.

## **What it means to love...**

Love is one of the primary and most emotional ways of being human. Love is a necessity. Love makes us creative and pushes us to act in ways that would otherwise seem impossible. It opens up new dimensions inside of us which we never knew existed.

When we fall in love our body goes through certain chemical reactions and we are overwhelmed by strong emotions.

Love, of all psychological states, has the biggest ability to change our behaviour. The wave of feelings that strikes us when falling in love makes us experience the most powerful emotions known to man.

But what is love? Is it an existing reality or just a part of our imagination? Do we love a person as they truly are or just the delusional idea we have of who we think that person is or could be?

From a biological standpoint, love is a very real physiological process where dopamine and serotonin, which are released in our bodies, make strong reactions in our brain and body in general.

Falling in love is for us a condition that makes in us 'a quantum addiction and something that we do not have control over. Even though we cannot define love in a precise manner, we always surely know when it starts. This begins with our birth.

The first and most fundamental experience of love is experienced between a newborn and a mother. The mother touches, hugs, kisses, and fondles the baby in different ways starting from the moment of birth. She speaks with the baby in a soft, calm and melodic way by using 'baby language'. The mother and child will look at each other with enthusiasm. They mimic each other's facial expressions and synchronise movements, creating a strong physical and mental-emotional bond between them.

The behavioural expressions used between a mother and a child are in their nature similar to the expressions that we use in our intimate relationships, with the person we love.

Our childlike playful behaviours - sitting on someone's lap, cuddling, rubbing noses, fondling, holding hands and other similar activities – all are derived from childhood and have been transferred to our intimate relationships

When infants grow up, they express their love and affection in the same ways as they experienced it with their mother during their childhood.



What does it mean to truly love someone? And why do we need love in our lives? When loving someone we wish to know them, take care of them, respect them, share their values, accept their shortcomings and evolve with them. Quite a lot of voluntary obligations and commitment, don't you think?

Why does the universe give us the possibility to love and the ability to experience that we are loved? There are many reasons, but the main reason is to survive and produce offspring. We also need partners to socialise and to confirm our existence. There are surely lots of different 'reasons' to love someone. We are after all very

different from each other. Each one of us has different needs and a different background.

Just so you know, only 2-3 percent of people who use online dating sites are looking for a one night stand. Most of us are looking for a life partner.

## **Falling in love...**

Affection and intimacy are human needs, and wonderful examples of human interaction. These experiences arise in us from interaction with our beloved. And let's not forget the feeling of butterflies in our stomach when we feel new love, the lightness in our body, and the anticipation which holds us when we are waiting for a meeting with our beloved one. The more you interact with a loved one, the more it becomes a dependency on each other.

Brain scientists claim that the average person processes around 50,000 different thoughts during a day. Of these thoughts only 2500 are consciously identified.

We are the most aware of our thoughts when we have fallen in love. This is because our thoughts are constantly revolving around the person we have fallen in love with. We recall how they looked at us, what they said, how they behaved, etc. Isn't that wonderful?

Each of these thoughts makes us more dependent on their personality and the feelings which they triggered in us.

The symptoms of romantic love are similar to the symptoms of many common psychiatric diseases like:

- Mania – which leads to heightened excitement levels, lower self-esteem and a wish to give presents, irrationally commit, etc.
- Symptoms involved with depression – like insomnia, increased sadness, difficulties in concentration, loss of appetite, etc.
- Obsessive thoughts analogous to those associated with addictive disorders (revolving around the target of affection), a need for control (has s/he called or texted?), and rituals concerned with hygiene (am I clean enough and good looking for this person?).

Heavenly pleasure, manic addiction, pain and suffering - only being in love can give us the whole palette of feelings and experiences! What would life be without the roller-coaster ride of romantic love?

## **Looking for a potential partner...**

It is often wrongfully thought that it is the man who chooses the partner. The reality is different. Just as in the wild, it is the female who communicates mating signals and males react to them. Ninety percent of all signals concerning finding a partner are given by women.

Nature has provided us with a wonderful attention span for noticing every representative of the opposite sex, whether we want to do that deliberately or not.

All men and women notice when a person from the opposite sex enters the room. Our eyes quickly scan the person, assessing the entrant.

This scanning is done quicker by women than men, and this is also why men so often more readily 'get caught' looking at an attractive woman. Women carry out their own review, only faster and in a far more subtle way.

While men are more oriented toward a woman's looks during the initial meeting, women make an assessment of how well a man is capable of protecting offspring. This means that women are more oriented toward the man's social position and power. But remember, exceptions are the rule.

Clothing is one of those silent signals that influence our visual sense. Bright, contrasted clothing attracts more attention than clothing with more modest colours.

Our sense of sight perceives bright colours as more exciting and intriguing. These colours make us feel stronger emotions, while darker tones keep our feelings more restrained.

Research has shown that women who wear red clothing are more likely to be looking for a sexual partner. At the same time, men also feel that women who wear red are more attractive and more likely to be interested in sex than women who wear other colours.

This of course does not mean that all women who wear red are 'on the prowl'. But it does seem that courageous, active and attention seeking women tend to wear red.

The colour red, especially in sultry overtones, is the most attention grabbing of all the colours. Red always sticks out and who can deny its passionate undertone.





In the picture we see fashion designer and singer Victoria Beckham walking towards her car in New York City.

Her feminine red dress and classic high heels make her timelessly elegant, eye-catching and enviable for passersby. The close-fitting top of her dress paints a feminine silhouette and her exposed arms make her vulnerably attractive. Victoria is adjusting her sunglasses with her left hand – a movement that we all make when our glasses slip down. But we also do the same thing with our glasses, watches, and jewellery, etc., when we feel insecure. Victoria's shoulders are slightly pulled together and her chin is directed downward. This also indicates insecurity.

So – we can see, even if we are in eye-catching red, we don't necessarily want to be noticed!

We wear sunglasses to protect our eyes from the sun, and we also use them as accessories that add attractiveness to our look. But we also wear sunglasses to cover our eyes.

Celebrities are constantly under the looking glass and there is a heightened interest in their private lives. After a while this kind of following becomes stressful and tiresome. Most of the stars would like more privacy and respect for their private life from the Press. The wish to remain anonymous is one of the reasons why we so often see celebrities hiding behind sunglasses.

The situation is completely different when you see an acquaintance wearing sunglasses on a rainy day. In this case you can be almost completely sure that this person is hiding something. It could be from being ashamed about having a black eye or something else that they do not want to show.

The lengths of ladies' skirts vary with current fashion trends, age and societal norms, religious beliefs, etc. But according to a study carried out in different nightclubs, it was discovered that women who are ovulating wear shorter skirts and expose more of their arms, cleavage and back. This kind of behaviour can be interpreted as the woman saying, "Come and get me!"

In experiment, men were asked to choose between the faces of two similar looking women, and decide which of the pair seemed more attractive.



The pairs of women in the pictures were identical twin sisters. One of the sisters in the picture was photographed at her time of ovulation, and the other wasn't.

All the men who participated in the experiment found the woman who was ovulating more attractive.

What were the differences between the women's faces? When a woman is ovulating, her skin becomes pinker, her lips are brighter and her eyes shimmer more, thus making her more attractive to men.

Additionally one of two female 'assistants' passed through the experiment. The two assistants were also identical twin-sisters. One of the sisters was having her ovulation time, the second was not.

The men's heart rates and sweating increased significantly if they were supervised by the nurse who was ovulating at that time. Conversely, in the presence of the other twin, the men did not show any signs of excitement in their bodies.

Nature has created us to multiply and whether we are aware of it or not our bodies react.

Our clothing sends the first messages to strangers about our gender, material wealth, social status, club memberships, views of the world, preferences, etc. Our wardrobe reveals a lot about us, including how we feel about ourselves and what our hygiene is like.

In an experiment where women were asked to rate men as potential dating partners, it was noticed that if a man was wearing cheap everyday clothes - creating the impression that he had a lower than average income - the women rated him with two to four points on a ten point scale. If the same man was wearing an elegant suit, the ratings and the women's desire to meet him were substantially higher, rising to seven to nine points out of ten.

Therefore, we must note that the average woman tends to prefer men who seem to have more tangible ways and possibilities for caring for potential future offspring.

Women prefer a man's body to have a wedge-shaped physique. The wedge-shaped body is treated as a sign of a man's capability of protecting her in dangerous situations.

Assessing the ratings of a woman's appearance - men preferred body proportions and sexiness, but the body parts which men favoured varied. But they all agreed on one thing – the ratio of a woman's hips to her waist should be below one, i.e., her hips should be wider than her waist.

It should be added that we must always consider social and historical factors, which affect the roles taken by men and women in relationships.

Every relationship is different and in different periods of our lives, the criteria that we value in our partner's personal characteristics and appearance can change quite a lot.

## **Eyes, smiles and laughter...**

We perceive 90 percent of the world around us visually. We can also call eye-contact the 'permission' to communicate. It is very hard to talk to someone who refrains from eye-contact. This is usually a sign of insecurity. The reason for the insecurity could be shyness, wanting to hide something, having taken offence, fear, or other factors that might be disturbing us at the moment.

We usually keep eye-contact for 30-70% of a conversation. Conventionally, the speaker looks around more and the listener monitors the speaker. The speaker checks from time to time, by fixing their gaze on the listener, to see whether the listener understands and is following along.

During a conversation our eyes usually move to the area between our partner's eyes and mouth. After looking at the person's one eye, we circulate our look elliptically over the person's face, and back to same eye or stopping on the other eye. We usually never stop at a certain part of the face for too long.

The more attractive the person we are speaking to seems to us, the more we stop at their eyes and sustain eye-contact.

When meeting someone who we find attractive our first glances will be 'crossed'. We can see how a woman's look repeatedly moves over the man in a zigzag fashion, not stopping on the man's eyes. This kind of look attracts the man's interest and arouses his curiosity. The man's eyes then move in a similar trajectory over the woman with their eyes meeting 'randomly'. The eye-contact is the 'permission' to start communicating.

It is worth knowing that refraining from eye-contact does not always mean lack of interest, but is also part of being shy. Our self-esteem and how 'unobtainable' we perceive someone to be play their parts. Studies show that nearly 50 percent of adults, regardless of gender, are shy and could therefore be scared of eye-contact. Things like a general lack of movement, holding one's head down, biting one's lips, looking down or looking away, and doing compulsive anxiety alleviating activities are

signs accompanying shyness. Also, abnormal sweating and a lower tone of voice can occur when shy.



In the early stages of a relationship we can see that people who are interested in each other open their eyes wider than usual and their bodies lean toward each other.

It must be noted, that in the initial phases we may not even notice what the object of our attraction is specifically talking about, but rather we are entranced.

The longer we hold eye-contact with the other, the more we draw them towards us, if they are attracted to us as well.

When we are close to something we desire, our eyes widen. This makes us more appealing to others as well.

The widening of our eyes happens automatically because our central nervous system is stimulated and this causes the eyelids' visceral muscles to move by

themselves, thus widening our eyes. The widening of pupils occurs automatically when we see something appealing.

With the dilation of our eyes, our eyebrows rise automatically. Our pupils expand, and there will be a glistening look in our eyes. You may have heard the saying, "S/he will make your eyes shine and your soul sing." Our eyes express the most about what we feel, think and experience.

In a study where men were asked to rate different photos of women, it was discovered that men, without exception, prefer women's faces with dilated pupils.

This might explain why belladonna juice was used to dilate pupils throughout the centuries. The words 'Bella Donna' mean 'a beautiful woman' in Italian.

An interesting fact is that when our pupils dilate, it causes the pupils of the other to dilate as well. Nobody knows exactly why this happens. It's as if our subconscious mind picks up on what is making the other person's pupils dilate, and automatically answers by doing the same thing. This makes for an amazing situation - while being attracted to someone we also make ourselves more attractive to them!

In a state of arousal we blink more often. If a person looks us in the eye, quickly blinks and then looks away, we can be almost certain that they like us.

A quick blink which we could also call a flicker of the eyelashes, informs us that the person has a heightened level of arousal.

Batting eyelashes, although more pronounced in women, is in reality a universal flirting signal used by both men and women. In women's behaviour, it is simply easier to identify, thanks to the assistance of the cosmetics industry. Eyelash extensions and mascara help women artificially make their eyes more appealing and expressive.

Anxiety stimulates the reticular brainstem over which we do not have conscious control. That in turn affects our midbrain which starts to emit the catalysing chemical dopamine into our visual centre. These systems, refractory to the thinking centres, control the blinking reflex subconsciously and are not consciously controlled by us.

In order for our eyes to shine, our smile has to be sincere. A partial closing of eyes always accompanies a sincere smile. Our eyelids move slightly downwards and small pads form under our eyes. This is because our cheeks move upwards when we smile. The muscles on our forehead are also relaxed when smiling sincerely.

Our lower teeth are never visible while we are smiling sincerely. The smile appears and disappears slowly and we can smile widely or barely noticeably. This kind of

cooperation between different muscles in our face is only possible when we are truly feeling joy.

Aren't there a lot of factors which all together signal whether we truly feel joy when smiling or if we are just faking it? This is exactly why it is practically impossible to fake a sincere smile. We always detect sincerity and insincerity intuitively.

During basic social communication, our eyes often move between the mouth and eyebrows of the person we are talking to. In the case of someone who we are attracted to, we also tend to look at their body.

Not looking at a woman's breasts is a hard task for many men and the more attractive the woman is for the man, the more likely he is to look in that direction.

In an experiment performed in a mall, men's gazes were monitored when they were stopped by a busty, delightful woman. The woman was dressed in a red dress with a low-cut, revealing neckline. She spoke to men passing by, asking for the way to different stores. It turned out that exclusively all of the filmed men looked, within four seconds, covertly or obviously, at the breasts of the woman. The same applied with their gazes at her bottom, when she turned to walk away.

If a man is talking to a busty and sexy woman, he often forms his palms into a round shape as if to mimic the round shape of her breasts.

Nature has created us to multiply, and whether we want to or not we notice the opposite sex and react to their presence. Besides – isn't it nice when we are noticed and there is interest shown toward us?

In the picture we see the singer Usher flirting with a busty woman in a nightclub. Both of their bodies are directed towards each other and their heads are leaning toward one another, which is a sign of attraction.

Both Usher and the woman have stepped into each other's intimate zone, where we only allow strangers whom we see as safe or attractive.

Their bodies are touching each other's. There is a sincere smile on the woman's face. The muscles of her face and forehead are relaxed. With half-opened lips, she encourages the man to approach her. A half-open mouth is a signal that our interlocutor wants us to continue with our talk.

Usher is looking down towards the woman's chest. With all these nonverbal clues we can guess that the conversation went on for longer.





A woman's bottom, regardless of whether it is big or small, is another body part which attracts a man's eye-sight. All that moves attracts our attention and every woman knows how to move her bottom seductively, so as to catch a man's eyes. If you add a cat-like springy walk and tidy clothes, then the picture of a 'calling siren' is complete.

I like the saying: "What we see can be tempting. But what we can only see empowers our fantasies and attracts us even more." This means that in the battle between the 'naked reality' versus 'hidden temptation,' the latter will win.

The photographer has captured a cute little boy keenly looking at something exciting. What is your feeling - which of the three possible objects is attracting his attention? Is he concentrating on the candy bag, the play of colours on her dress or on something else?