

A young man and woman are standing in profile, facing each other and holding hands. They are both smiling. The man is on the left, wearing a grey long-sleeved shirt and light grey pants. The woman is on the right, wearing a light-colored long-sleeved shirt and light grey pants. The background is plain white.

DATING

BODY LANGUAGE BASICS

JOE NAVARRO

FBI Special Agent (Ret.)

*Author of **Louder Than Words** and **What Every Body is Saying***

A young man and woman are standing and holding hands, smiling at each other. They are dressed in light-colored, casual clothing. The man is on the left, and the woman is on the right. The background is plain white.

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Dating Body Language Basics

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Introduction

After studying nonverbal communications for over 35 years and writing several books on the subject, I can sympathize when people say they feel overwhelmed trying to understand the many thousands of messages our bodies transmit.

I am regularly asked if there were a handful of behaviors that everyone should know for dating, what would they be. In essence, which behaviors most accurately reflect what someone is feeling or thinking, even desiring. This brief guide aims to do just that; provide you with what I believe are the most important “must know” body language cues for dating and good relationships. These behaviors were chosen because they are often missed or not understood and yet, time and time again, they can be relied upon for their accuracy. They are universally useful in revealing the hidden meaning of what we feel and how others feel about us and unfortunately most books on body language and dating fail to mention them.

But before we get started, I want to share with you a useful model to use when reading a person’s body language. Those of you who are familiar with my international bestselling book, “*What Every Body Is Saying*,” will know that I believe it is essential to focus primarily on two fundamental areas when reading a person’s body language: *comfort* and *discomfort*.

Our brain’s limbic system, responsible for emotions and survival, communicates through our body language our emotions and how we feel about others; in essence, what is in our hearts and minds. For millions of years we have communicated our thoughts and sentiments to each other nonverbally this way and we still do. In fact, as much as 80% of what we say in dating or interpersonal communications is nonverbal.

Fortunately, our “*limbic brain*” is always “on,” subconsciously assessing for anything that might be a threat to us or which makes us uncomfortable and it will react immediately to any messages it receives. So when someone looks mean at us or turns away from us, it is our limbic system that reacts to that message and we feel a high degree of discomfort. Similarly