

- **Tool #2: Reading Body Language**

When it comes to body language, the first thing we may notice in a dishonest person is a display of discomfort and nervousness. There's a tendency to want to physically move away, sometimes literally run away from a situation if they've been caught or if they're being questioned for the truth.

What to look for:

- Signs of restlessness and fidgeting, such as rocking the body, finger drumming, nervous gesturing, feet shuffling, and toe-tapping.
- Physically leaning or moving away is a sign of discomfort.
- Body and/or feet pointed toward an exit.
- Exaggerated and/or aggressive gesturing, like finger-pointing.
- No gestures at all or delayed gestures.
- Shoulders hunched up and lopsided shrugs.
- Overly and awkwardly stiff torso.
- Locked crossed arms in front of chest.
- Hiding hands, such as pushing hands into pockets or moving them under a table.

- **Tool #3: Listening for the Words and Tone**

When it comes to listening for hints of deceit, it really is about listening *carefully*. Just like facial microexpressions and body language that can leak unconscious thoughts and emotions, liars have verbal leaks they make through their words and tone of voice.

What to listen for:

- Overelaborating a story with unnecessary detail.
- Shortening and/or slowing down a conversation with hesitation or long pauses: "Well, hmm. . .I don't really know. . .umm. . .what happened."
- Stalling tactics, such as unnecessary repeating or dodging questions by changing the subject.
- Using guilt-trip statements or protest statements: "I've dedicated 20 years to this company."
- Defensiveness or attitude of victimization: "How could you accuse me of that?"
- Overuse of credibility statements: "Honestly," "I swear to God," or "To tell you the truth."
- Distancing and/or depersonalizing language by avoiding "I" or "me" and instead using "they" or "them."
- Voice pitch may involuntarily rise to a higher frequency.
- Voice may become tense and/or quieter.

- Nervous laughter.

Verbal cues are much easier to detect if you can first get the person to open up, asking non-threatening questions that encourage him to talk more—the more he talks, the greater the chance he will let his guard down and say something revealing. The element of surprise is another tactic when questioning a potential liar. Asking an unexpected question could make him verbally slip up. For example, ask the person to retell his story backward or re-ask questions in nonchronological order to spot inconsistencies.

Remember, these three cues—facial cues, body language, words/tone—are patterns that provide clues, informing our brain and our intuition. By listening to our senses and gut feelings, we can pick up on something that doesn't feel right. Sometimes that feeling can be elusive, and we can't really place our finger on it, but something's warning us to be careful.

If you're sensing the signals of dishonesty, that's a red flag to move forward with caution. Your reaction might mean it's time for you to pay attention, stay open-minded, and self-reflect with honesty about the situation or person. What is your intuition telling you? What triggered your feelings? What's your part in this? Is there a bigger lesson to learn?

- **Tool #1: Detecting Facial Cues**

One key facial cue is a *microexpression*. A microexpression is a quick flash of an involuntary facial expression. Like a Freudian slip of the face, it's impossible to hide or fake a microexpression, and it offers signs to what the person is really feeling (and probably hiding) internally.

To learn how to detect a microexpression you must first be able to recognize seven universal facial expressions:

**Disgust:** Scrunched-up nose, cheeks, and upper lip raised

**Fear:** Eyebrows raised, mouth open with lips stretched, forehead wrinkled

**Anger:** Eyes in hard stare, lips pressed, nostrils dilated, pulled-down eyebrows

**Sadness:** Corners of lips curved down, lower lip pouty, eyes squinted

**Surprise:** Eyebrows raised, eyes wide, jaw open

**Contempt:** Asymmetrical face, one side of mouth raised

**Happiness:** Corners of lips curved up, cheeks raised, crow's feet around eyes

Along with microexpressions, other facial cues include:

- Deliberate facial expressions that tend to be asymmetrical—a crooked smile, one raised eyebrow or nostril.