

Anton Eckl

Nonverbal Patterns

and Their Effects
in Daily Life

EDITION eCKL

Publishing Information

Eckl, Anton: Nonverbal Patterns and Their Effects in Daily Life

April 2020

Published by Edition Eckl

Anton Eckl
Westerholzstraße 5
81245 Munich
<https://antoneckl.de>

Translation: Mclin Hawkins
Editing and Composition: Alexander Schmelzer
Cover Design: Joachim Heinze
Printed by docupoint GmbH, 39179 Barleben, Germany

The German National Library has recorded this publication
in the German National Library; detail biographical data are
available at <https://portal.dnb.de>

Place of Publication: Munich

First Edition: Munich, April 2020

All rights reserved.
© 2020 Anton Eckl

ISBN 978-3-944170-15-2

Table Of Contents

Introduction	11
The Essential Forms of Nonverbal Communication	15
Where do my assessments come from?	16
Tree of people	16
The human gesture in space	23
The positioning in space	24
Speaking	26
The Human: A Gesture in Space	27
Gestures	27
The four levels of gestures	29
The gestures' four energetic modes: closed—opening— open—closing	30
The symmetry orientation of the body	33
Major gesture: sitting	34
The quality of gestures	36
Steering energy and sensation	37
Bodily barriers that filter our sensations and feelings	40
The human being stretched between heaven and earth, open to all directions	42
The various major gestures and their effects	43
Standing	43
Where should the hands be placed when standing?	45
Sitting	47
Moving	49
Lying	50
Blocks and gestures that filter and close	51
Special detailed gestures	53
Hand gestures	53
Misuse of nonverbal gestures for 'stereotyping'	56

Positive anchoring through touch	57
Mimic and eyes	58
The mouth	60
The shoulders	60
Micro gestures	62
The inner gestures	67

Positions in Space **71**

The best place	71
What does this mean for our workplace?	72
Entry and exit defining the traffic routes	75
Positions for discussion at the table	78
The quadratic table for a maximum of 4 people	78
The round table	80
The rectangular land meeting table for a large number of personnel	80
The over and under	81
Positioning and room arrangement for meetings	83
Business lunch and small talk	85
Memory anchor through room positioning	86

Speaking **91**

Speaking on the telephone	93
Control filters and speech thinkers	96
For ‚advanced‘ speakers	99
The various pitches	100
Relaxation with sound	102

In Dialogue **105**

Intimate space and appropriate distance	103
The greeting	107
The look and eye contact	108
Adaptation	110
Scented space	113

Nonverbal Communication with Groups	115
Sender and receiver	115
Energy vampires	119
Holding tight and energetic blocks	120
How accessories become security anchors	120
What kind of effect does nonverbal presence have?	123
Nonverbal communication is the key to our vitality	123
What does nonverbal behavior have to do with exuding vitality?	125
Closing Remarks	127
Appendix	129
Voice and speech training	129
Voice training	129
Interaction between breath, voice, and words	130
Breath, voice, word supported with gestures	132
Particularities and variations	133
Speaking while seated	134
Preparation for suitable speaking when standing	135
Successful presentations and lectures	137
Giving presentations and lectures	137
Using the eyes	140
Using the voice with amplification	141
Using the hands and the body	141
Checklist for a general preparation for speeches and group discussions that you lead	143
Speech situation (ranked according to increasing difficulty)	145
An example from my coaching practice	146
Acknowledgements	151
The Author's Published Works	152

*Our perspective determines
what we experience,
and how we experience*

Introduction

I have always been interested in what is there—alongside the thinking process?

How do I perceive and how do I experience what I call life?

In my training as an actor, I found the ideal medium. What could I recognize when I collected thoughts and feelings for a certain role? What attitudes reinforced this inner form of experience and brought them to be expressed convincingly? The interplay of the inside and the external had to be cultivated, spontaneous and immediate for the actor to reach and affect the audience.

In the martial art Aikido I learned how this body-mind energy could be bundled and sent.

These experiences led me to the following thesis:

We human beings are space. This space is the carrier and arena for thoughts, emotions and energies. As people, we mutually penetrate each other with our space, while at the same time, the world surrounding us acts upon us: An interaction, open and only apparent with a middle point, called the ,I'.

This is the basis for my deliberations and behavior proposals for communicating with nonverbal patterns.

To what end did I write this book?

According to my observations, body language is mostly understood as sign language which helps us integrate with our counterpart. In the process, a canon of labels is developed in which nonverbal postures are being categorized. Many people think that those who understand these signs are able to influence and steer others.

For me, body language postures depict states of energy that filter and emit information.

Crossed-arms in front of the chest don't always necessarily indicate that a person is withdrawn. It could be a posture of composure or a block against an influx of energy that is too strong.

What do I understand energy to be? It is an expression of an emotional, mental and spiritual kind of flow. This flow of energy occupies the space within us and affects our counterpart. When we are suitably trained, we perceive and consciously employ this energy. However, this energy is always in effect, regardless of if we are aware of it or not.

If we are awake and vivacious, we act appropriately in a situation with our nonverbal possibilities of expression.

If we use stereotypical body postures, we have established patterns of routine and the quality of our communication declines.

If we want to communicate precisely with our conversational partner, we should know how to recognize their micro gestures. Micro gestures run parallel to our verbal communication in a fraction of a second. Thus, we can read if our statements are accepted or rejected. Micro gestures are e.g. fast movements of the eyelids and changes in the breathing pattern.

In my opinion, nonverbal communication is a sheer exchange of energy and information. If successfully done, the sender and receiver are one. We understand each other on all levels. The content of the conversation and the nonverbal are mutually correspondent and congruent. Externally observed, the body postures have become attuned to one another in form and rhythm. On the level of micro gestures one can recognize that there is a gleam to the skin and around the body. The breath is light and flowing. I have experienced nonverbal communication as an energetic dance between sending and receiving.

In this book I would like to present you with ideas concerning how you can perceive and successfully guide this energetic dance of sending and receiving, and thereby find harmony and balance.

The Essential Forms of Nonverbal Communication

The essential forms of nonverbal communication are:

- the gestures of a person in space
- the positioning of a person in space and
- the manner in which we use our voices

The interplay of these three elements determine the magic of a joyful and successfully conducted communication. For me, nonverbal communication is like a dance. We send energy through our posture and we receive energy that we absorb or moderate through movement effected by the corresponding reaction of our posture. We position ourselves in space in order to dominate or to protect ourselves. We color the ‚mood‘ between us in all emotional facets through the sound of our voice. We send and receive information and energy in a simultaneous exchange. In our Western civilization this occurs very often on a very subtle level, on the border of conscious perception, and is, therefore, extremely efficacious. When we can perceive these nonverbal fields, a fascinating act is open to us that offers an abundance of possibilities.

Where do my assessments come from?

The insights and proposals for exercises that I describe in this book are based on my experiences that I have made over the last 35 years as coach, actor, and director.

Of special significance are encounters I had with the actors of the Grotowski Ensemble. It was the initial spark to experience the world and its objects in a new way. I would like to tell about an example from the 'Tree of People' project, which opened my life for an energetic nonverbal communication.

Tree of people

In the avant-garde theater of the 1970s, there was interest in a method of acting that combined body and mind, and the actor's relationship with the audience. The Polish director Jerzy Grotowski dedicated himself to the research of the foundations of theater and thus called it 'Theater Laboratorium'. After achieving world-wide success with his unique stage productions he and his group left the traditional stage context and began to explore new forms of cultural encounter. This experimental form, the so-called paratheatrical projects, took place at special

locations with a select group of people. The focal point was the exploration of interaction and encounter in a cultural-archaic ,play.‘

The following text is an account of my experience in the project known as ,Tree of people‘.

...How does this wonder works that a person’s battery is continually filled with energy?, incidentally asked Jerzy Grotowski in a lecture that I listened to with fascination. At the same time, his eyes lit up...

...I and a group of 60 to 70 people, all artists/actors/interested parties, silently climbed a mountain at Lake Como where an abandoned sanatorium was enthroned on its peak.

There, Grotowski’s theater group awaited us. I felt chosen. I would work with these legendary people together on a project. In the beginning, we received our instructions: No drugs, no sex.

During the next 72 hours, we should keep the workshop—a room of circa 200 square meters—,alive‘. That was to be our task. And we had to be silent, yes, silent in the workshop. That meant to refrain from all

forms of verbal communication.

Two heavy Arri spotlights casted a frosted light on the shabby parquet floor in single herringbone pattern. The room was bleak, though freshly scrubbed, and as clean as a floor could be with decades of old patina.

At the scheduled time, the participants gathered. Everyone chose their place. We all had probably been reading Carlos Castaneda, which was ,in‘ at that time, and could remember the first lesson we learned from Don Juan: Find your place.

After a time everyone was either sitting, standing or lying somewhere. And the silence returned. In this silence full of expectation, something emerged... an ambiance which opened and unlocked the door to still to be recognized channels of perception. Today, I really can't remember how it began, what small movement or whispered sound got the ball rolling, which actor received and enlarged the impulse and unfolded it into the space.

After a fire had been set, it apprehended us, one after the other and pulled us into a frenzy of movement. This oscillated between eruptive, chaotic outbreaks and self-structured, archaic communal rituals.

The whole room was vibrating with an intensifying tempo, penetrating everything and everyone, and then, when it was enough, we all collapsed and every participant continued to smolder further within. Hours melting into the present.

There was no place for spectators in this scenario. Too shocking, crazy, confusing—loss of control apparently everywhere. What was just to be witnessed must have appealed to the deepest fear of a civilized, sober thinking European. Indeed, there were borders that at first glance were not apparent in such an ecstatic dance. Every form of individual reciprocal attention was led back into the collective by the actors of the Theater Laboratorium as an action changed by the happening. Hugging or other daily behaviors were blocked and transferred to more artificial forms of expressions by physical dialogue. Psychic material was the fuel for artistic composition. In that very moment, we all followed the siren call of the unknown.

What from the outside perhaps appeared as loss of control, I experienced myself as the subtle guidance from my own most inner source.

Of course, I dived into this sea of energy and drank to the fullest. I made sounds that I never had made before,

all while a pulsating power streamed through my body from head to toe. Assimilating and receiving, sending and sharing alternated with each other in this rhythmic play of mystery. I experienced maximum freedom and, at the same time, as if I had never done it before—major confidence.

Dancing like ‚shit‘ as some of the well-trained dancers have repeatedly showed doesn't really move you. Movements that come impetuously and creatively, spoke directly to the heart and friendly challenged me to find exactly that which moved me.

Then the power had been exhausted and the room became empty. We never came together again as we did in this unique moment which lasted four hours.

...

What I can still clearly remember was the last night on the mountain.

I sat with Theo Spichalski, one of the actors, alone in the workshop—very tired. The others were sleeping. A few candles had replaced the spotlights. While sitting and looking, I experienced Theo. Occasionally, a small

shifting of weight, forward or backward, this was all the interaction there was. The space around me seemed completely open—every impulse, every energy carrying movement reached me. My body was without boundaries. Thought and movement were one.

I could send beams of energy and took up the waves of Theo directly. Subsequently, every conversation had a deep and intensive quality, a kind of merging but with a clear beginning and end as soon as the flow of energy was over.

Where did this special perceptive ability come from?

I think it came through an intensive transcendence of the physical borders, the dissolution of physical and mental blockages, e.g. evoked through going beyond pain and the transformation process that is connected with this mental ‚No‘ into a clear ‚Yes‘. With every transit of this kind, new energy is set free and the consciousness refines itself.

I think the artists from the Theater Laboratorium were interested in the exploration of the human being and the cosmic laws that determine us. They wanted to develop a culture of encounter in which such discovered laws could be practiced in appropriate rituals. When the actress Rena Mireka put a flower in a vase and placed both

upon a table, then the beauty of the action was to be felt physically. Everyday art that referred to something more comprehensive. And still it was what one saw: Rena stuck a flower in a vase and placed it on a table.

On account of this and similar experiences, I began to discover nonverbal patterns beyond words which appear in every ,normal‘ daily conversation. The patterns convey content and structure and often dominate our acquaintanceship without our realizing it.

The following concretion of my explanations do not claim to completely describe all aspects but should rather serve as to give impulse for new assessments of our nonverbal ,energetic‘ communication.

Should you find my explanations too concrete and detailed, please by all means proceed to the next theme that interests you!

As I have already stated, I differentiate between three nonverbal forms and areas of action. Before I am going to discuss them in detail, I would like to offer a brief introduction and definition.

The human gesture in space

The human always assumes a posture in space: the gesture. Through our gesture we embody our current ‚state‘: mentally, emotionally and energetically. Through our gesture we express ourselves and at the same time shape the sensations and mental states within us.

When we do this with an awake consciousness, we are able to ‚cultivate‘ ourselves and broaden our scope of action. Thus, we have an appropriate gesture for every situation at our disposal, which allows us to master the situation with the required energy.

If we are absorbed by thought processes or blocked by muscular knots which are induced by psychic and physical stress, this natural flow of energy is, of course, impeded. In this case, it helps to adopt gestures—standing, sitting, or moving—to get our inner space permeable again. Then our space will be refilled with energy and we can share it with others.

In this permeable openness we can manage to interact with the world. Every gesture that we assume evokes an energetic state. When we listen carefully within we embody a certain posture which is also perceivable from

the outside. In communicating with others we send signals outside through eye contact or touch which our communication partner receives and ,processes‘.

Our five senses help us to develop the necessary sensitivity. They are the bridges between the outer impressions and our energetic experience in our interior. Thus we are able to process and act appropriately.

Gestures point to the inside and consolidate or weaken our own field of strength.

Gestures point to the outside and send our ,being‘ to our communication partner.

Through our gestures we receive and filter information made available by our environment.

The positioning in space

Our position in space defines power and influence. Who doesn't know this situation when entering a restaurant: Where do we want to sit? We look for a place where we will feel most comfortable. This, of course, depends on our situation. If we are going to a restaurant for dinner, we

will probably look for a quiet position in the room, and won't select a seat where there is a lot of noise especially from behind us.

Do we want to be seen or not?

Does the position offer a good view of the activity in the restaurant?

How are we seated together? If are we two people: Are we seated opposite one another or at an angle?

Or perhaps, seated next to each other with our backs against the wall?

The positions indicate the type of relationship. They are at the same time the starting point for the conversation that ensues. Does one want to touch the other or keep distance? Sitting at the corner of the table is a confusing and weak position energetically. In Bavaria we say: "Des gibt a böse Schweingamutta" or "One day you will get a troublesome mother-in-law."

In professional and daily life the positioning in space and to each other has a great influence on if we use our energy effectively.

Speaking

The sound of words is our instrument for reaching our fellowman directly and immediately. Language is the most important means of communication in our civilization. Its nonverbal aspects—tone, rhythm, vibration—are normally not perceived consciously. However, it affects us directly and deeply.

We are usually so concerned with the content of the conversation that we overhear the nonverbal information in the voice and, thus, are not able to use it. Nevertheless, the voice's quality of expression has a strong impact on us. Therefore, a pleasant voice beguiles us for the theme and for the person. However, what sounds 'good' depends on the person's preference and conditioning.

Yet, if we are able to attune ourselves to the voice of our conversation partner, we receive 'inner knowledge' about this person.

Is the voice spontaneous and direct? Calculating, fearful, impelled? Can we feel how the speaker talks to us and how he is assessing us? All these things and much more can be ascertained by the vocal expression of the speaker.

The Human: A Gesture in Space

Gestures

As previously described, the human being assumes a posture in space, the gesture.

In this way, we embody a present ‚state‘: mentally, emotionally and energetically.

By the term ‚gesture‘ I characterize what most people understand as body language. Using gesture and posture we control our inner sensations and simultaneously express them outwardly. The gesture works outwardly by occupying space and transporting what we want to convey. Perhaps one could say that gestures support the opening and pulsating, the expansion and contraction between communicating parties. At the same time, they depict our fears, inner barriers and avoidance strategies which we have developed during the course of our lives.

We use different gestures in public and private areas. In Germany gestures and loudness are significantly reduced at official and business occasions. Particularly in company and business meeting rooms I experience a controlled and

reserved body language which indicate a strong tension and ,pressure to conform'. This costs unnecessary energy and hinders our access to resourceful states. Spontaneity and the capacity for creative performance are limited. People who in this situation present themselves with great dissuading gestures, fill the space and raise their voices are mostly the people who have a strong position in the organization.

When we feel ,well' in private we reduce the physical tension and shift the weight downward. The gestures open and are more fluid. Possibly, we begin to play with our face with our hands. It is ideal for successful action to spend time in purposeful relaxation, free of fear and concentrated on the activity.

Once in training the Japanese Aikido master, Asai, asked why the Americans had won the war against the Japanese. He used a short pantomime to illustrate the difference: first he portrayed a formal, snappy acting Japanese soldier, and then a relaxed and laid back GI chewing gum shooting around with his weapon. What did our otherwise always formal and correct martial arts teacher want to tell us? Only in a calm and relaxed state energy can optimally flow to its target.

The four levels of gestures

Gestures are composed of the following levels:

The gestures:

These comprise all the forms in which our body shows itself as a whole in space.

The detail gestures:

These are the gestures when certain parts of the body take over the leadership of the gestures, principally hand, arm posture, head variations in arm positioning and shifting of weight.

The micro gestures

are subtle mimics and physical reactions which we don't usually recognize and are therefore not perceivable; such as eye patterns, eyelid movement, the lightening and darkening of the skin.

The inner gestures

include the processes in the interior field such as breathing, warmth sensitivity, tension, and pulsation.

The inner gestures are the impulses that lead to our overall expression. They activate the micro gestures,

detailed gestures and major gestures. Conversely, all information from external levels (major gestures, detail gestures) are reflected to the interior levels where they are received and processed.

When we relax our inner cells through inhaling and exhaling, simultaneously the other levels will be opened and readjusted positively. We can send our consciousness to each of these four levels and cause the energy to flow better. The energy follows the focus of our consciousness. In this way, we can address and stimulate the various levels.

The gestures' four energetic modes: closed—opening—open—closing

All gestures are sent as well as received unconsciously most of the time. Nevertheless, we can access the major gesture and detail gesture through developed wakefulness on the level of the inner gesture and direct our energy stream.

The micro gestures elude direct access, but are positively influenced by being 'brought into an energetic flow'.

Reposing, opening in pulsating expansion, the energy bestowing openness, and the condensing contraction and closing—all this is to be found in our basic rhythm of life: the four seasons or in the laws governing outer space. After the Big Bang an expansion, the light-filled radiating in openness, and then the contraction in an infinite density of black holes. This becoming and passing away is, for me, also present in every gesture.

Try it for yourself:

To what degree are your hands open at the moment?

Close both hands in a slow motion like movement to form a fist.

What sensations can you perceive?

Now open your hands as far as possible.

What can you experience now?

Are you sending energy through your hands?

Are you receiving energy in your hands?

In what areas of the hands can you do and perceive this?

What is the difference between the palms and the back of the hands?

Now observe what energetic movements go along with the opening and closing.

To what extent does this effect your entire body sensations?

How far does your spatial perception expand?

The symmetry orientation of the body

Energy flows unimpeded through our body when it is not ,congested‘ or ,twisted‘.

This is best achieved through a symmetrical and upright posture. Flowing occurs—according to my observation—in waves, vibrations and eddies, like in gases or water.

If we take up ,twisted‘ major gestures as a routine, our inner energy flow is weakened and our capacity for communication is hampered. A breathing exercise for the body can dissolve these blockades and negative preferences.

The goal of my coaching is to establish a resourceful mental attitude through appropriate body gestures that open up and make direct communication possible. To start one must develop self-critical perception and the recognition of the gestures that hinder us.

As we often sit by communicating, I would like to explain the effect of different postures on the major gesture.

Major gesture: sitting

1. Symmetry and balance, the „good seating posture“

- both feet on the earth
- upright, centered in the body axis
- weight on the stool and both legs
- hands placed concentric on each other

2. Out of balance

- head placed to the side: thinking posture and observation posture
- head right, thinking posture supported by the hand and arm (Rodin's sculpture: The Thinker)
- head left: observing and condescending
- head, jaw, throat pushed forward (listening with interest?)
- upper body laid back: casual, relaxed, disrespectful, powerless?
- upper body bent forward: participating, tense, aggressive?
- upper body left: dismissive?
- upper body right: questioning, unsure?

3. The closed gestures when seated

- goal: You keep your own energy with you, the sender's energy is filtered:
- one leg crossed over the other (how tight, how relaxed?)
- the feet are crossed
- the arms are crossed
- the hand is holding the arm
- hands folded, fingers touching each other

The quality of gestures

Each of these postures evoke its own energetic sensation that stimulates our sensations, feelings and thoughts through our inner gestures. Frequently, we feel especially comfortable in these postures because they depict a suitable mixture of protection and openness for us.

It makes sense to know the appropriate posture for various situations of communication, so we can then place ourselves in these powerful gestures and ,states‘.

I would propose that you test these various gestures and listen closely to your own inner gesture in order to determine which posture supports you best in different situations.

In spite of all its individuality, human beings are ,cut from the same cloth‘ and nonverbal gestures always have a common quality and effect. Thus, they can generalize and transfer their own energetic experience—to a certain point—onto the gestures of their communication partner. If you know yourself well, you can put yourself in the shoes of the communication partner and understand them.

The following alignments support a good energy flow:

- centering on the median
- a straightened back
- a balanced distribution of weight between left and right, forward and backward

The nonverbal is always a game of balance and imbalance. It is through this balancing that dynamic emerges. We move over the central axis of our body in the four cardinal directions. By using the head, upper body and the hand gestures, we project over the median and thus send out our information and energy to the communication partner, and then we return to a centered middle posture.

Steering energy and sensation

Many of our gestures reflect our energetic habits and conditionings. These express unconscious fixations and attitudes which prevent us from acting appropriately to the task nonverbally. Bodily tension, which is caused by gestures, ‚armor‘ us in certain situations so that we don't have to experience them. In this case, we are unable to ‚cultivate‘ our inner gestures. With their help we would be able to transform difficult sensations and successfully cope with the task at hand.

An example: Sensation steering with the head position

Try it for yourself! Lift your nose somewhat. What can you feel?

Tilt your head slightly to the side. What can you feel?

Each time, immerse yourself into the emerging sensations and try to experience how the energetic sensations in your bodily awareness changes.

You will discover that there are gestures that you find difficult or unpleasant. These have to do with our physical ‚barriers‘ which we have developed for our ‚protection‘.

What does protection mean for me in this situation?

This posture allows us to avoid feeling the ‚painful quality‘ intensively, i.e. the stress of this particular contact.

Let's stay with the head example: We push our head forward and take our body backward. We don't want to be emotionally affected by our communication partner.

This posture allows the mental thinking to be reinforced and reduces the influence of the gut instinct and feelings. The body is removed from the situation, but the head goes forward because it is responsible for handling this particular situation.

In such a posture the voice breaks and its sound is impeded. Therefore, more volume for the voice is needed and the vocal chords are overtaxed. Problems with the voice occur.

These types of impediments can be often observed with teachers who have the task to transmit information to the students orally. Inner conditions such as fear and aggression are not allowed to be shown because they are not appropriate for a teacher. Thus, we adopt a posture that suppresses these feelings.

Bodily barriers that filter our sensations and feelings

These physical restrictions often develop as barriers against a strong flow of sensation in the lower chin, in neck/throat, the shoulders, the lower abdomen, and the knees.

Blockages in the neck area and the throat cut off the ,head‘ from sensations and feelings from the body and heart.

By raising the shoulders, we try to protect the head.

Barriers in the lower abdomen prevent the perception and the development of strong sexual sensations.

Blockages in the knees and the manner in which we place the soles of our feet on the ground inhibit a good ,grounding‘ and stability in life.

By means of a suitable body therapy these blockages can be dispersed and the nonverbal game can be experienced vividly and proactively. We become more sensitive to the impulses and information that are sent and can therefore communicate precisely and successfully.

And the best part: Our ability to enjoy is completely accessible and alive again on account of this ‚cleansing‘. This is an essential methodological approach of MusterCoaching.

In this way inner gestures become more significant. I experience this as a feedback giver to our attitudes to external occurrences. We contract internally when ‚things‘ are unpleasant for us and we open ourselves when we like the ‚objects of our perception.‘ By using the ‚fine‘ breath, we can touch the subtle level of our inner gestures and open the contractions, independent from the external events, and transform them into a mild and enlightening flow. Normally, we attempt to achieve such a flow by unsuitable means. We are entangled in intellectual explanations, or we are searching for external stimulation to disperse our inner ‚discomfort‘. We look for salvation in consumption or in a frenzy of activity. However, the feeling of satisfaction that we experience is only temporary.

Nevertheless, when we examine our nonverbal gestures and their effect in our inner energy field, we obtain the key to a sensory, supporting self-control in which we are no longer able to distinguish between what is pleasant and what is disturbing. Without making distinctions, we immerse ourselves into the occurrence and connect with it,

regardless of whether it is unpleasant or not. This merging can revive the ‚flow‘.

If we are additionally able to bring our awareness to the beginning of the sensory impulse, and there anchor ourselves in the continually reoccurring present, we immerse ourselves in a light radiance regardless of the occasion of the energetic occurrence. You can obtain more information about this in my publication ‚Opening Patterns‘.

The human being stretched between heaven and earth, open to all directions

The median connects with earth and with heaven. The four cardinal points stretch us out in the world. The back symbolically stands for the past, the ancestors and one’s origin. The front side of the body represents today, now, and the communication with the world. Left and right offer the various possibilities of the path. Our spiritual-physical existence needs all six directions in order to nourish us from various sources of energy.

As a result, stability and steadfastness occur, and mobility and flexibility simultaneously: The possibility of the selection for independent life’s journey is open for us.

The various major gestures and their effects

Standing

When standing, the two essential factors are the establishment of the median by our backs and the weight distribution.

Is the center of gravity more toward the back or toward the front?

Does the gesture ,hang' toward the right or toward the left?

By using our legs we are able to move to the side, forward and backward in all directions at any time, when adopting an ideal standing posture. The precondition is that the weight is equally distributed on both legs.

The distribution of weight between the free leg and the standing leg brings dynamic into the personal presentation and communication. If we are standing broadly or with the legs close together; how the feet are situated in relation to one another—parallel, directed outwards or inwards, placed on top of each other—is an expression of our personality.

Is the weight balanced forward on the balls of the feet or backward or in the middle? This influences our good standing posture and gives us stability.

A flexible back allows a number of helpful gestures.

Exercise

Observe your standing posture in which area of the foot are you placing your weight.

Forward on the foot, or in the middle or on the soles of the foot? Make an experiment.

Which distribution of weight gives you more stability?

Which gesture more dynamic and mobility?

How do your gestures change when you shift your weight forward or backward?

Which is the leg where you rest your weight? Which is your free leg?

Test the shifting of weight to the left and to the right. What do you experience?

Experiment turning slightly while standing.

What kind of sensations do you have?

How does your head rest on the spine?

How are the shoulders positioned?

Forward or hunched high?

Middle, mobile?

Where should the hands be placed when standing?

If we don't know what to do with our hands, we will be insecure as soon as we have to speak in front of others and stand on a stage.

The hands are an energetic emitter with which we can support our performance purposefully.

The hands can also be used to stimulate calmness and stability within us, by leisurely placing them in the pants pockets or bracing the hands at our sides.

Perhaps, you can now test these gestures and at the same time observe the reactions of your inner gestures. Every gesture unfolds a different energy impulse.

The German chancellor is very respected in China because Ms Merkel diverts energy and consciousness in the lower Dantian through the posture of her hands, the ‚Merkel diamond‘.

This posture effects serenity, a quiet flowing emotions and, subsequently: a clear mind. In China it is presumed that Ms Merkel must have a good Qi Gong teacher.

Which posture allows you protection and security?

Experiment how you can create this while standing with detailed gestures of the arms and hands.

One of my actors was acting as a model to a painter once. He had to hold difficult poses without moving for many hours. He learned how to keep tense muscles relaxed through the inner gestures by breathing softly. When we send the breath very softly and mellifluous into the area of tension, and allow our observing ‚I‘ to be completely absorbed in it, the ‚pain‘ disappears and is transformed into a ‚thrilling‘ energy.

Sitting

For the most part, furniture determines the seated posture, if and how we lean against it. Because most of us spend a lot of time sitting, it is important to use appropriate chairs which allow our bodies to be mobile while seated.

Exercise

Try various sitting postures.

Make yourself aware of how you spend time while sitting in various places.

Which chairs hamper your flow of energy?

Which support it?

Observe the detailed gestures of your legs.

Are the legs closed or crossed?

Are the legs under each other?

Do you sit centered or leaning?

What is the position of your toes?

What sensations do you experience through various leg positions?

Does it make a difference if your feet are firmly on the ground or ,in the air'?

What is the posture of your upper body?

Are you leaning?

Are you leaning forward?

How are you able to relax?

When do you feel full of power?

You can find out more about this in the chapter on Major Gestures.

Moving

We reach our goals in space by walking and running, if we don't have a vehicle at our disposal. Our movement is flowing and balanced between steps toward the right and left when it is not restricted by injury, blockages or contractions.

In walking/running there is mostly a simultaneous movement of the left foot and the right arm forward, followed by the right foot and the left arm. Chest and pelvis are part of the movement. The weight distribution between the front and back foot lends the movement its particularity.

The stride punctuates the expression of the personality.

All of our blockages and moods effect the way we walk.

If the head is hanging or the shoulders immobile and stiff—this changes the rhythmic flow of our stride.

When walking we are able to continually bring ourselves into an inner flow. Some steps can transform our emotional-mental mode and resolve 'jams'.

When I am writing this book, I always stand up as soon as I feel ,tight'. I stretch and go for a walk in the garden until the compression in my inner gestures have been relieved.

Even in the coaching process, taking a simple walk can help the client to revitalize themselves and reacquire access to their resources.

Test

Try to move the hand and foot on the same side of the body forward, and then the hand and foot on the other side of the body.

What happens to your inner gestures when you do this?

Lying

For the purpose of completion, I will also include lying: The position of the stomach, the position of the back or both sides of the body. Each of these postures have a significant effect especially when sleeping because we are engaged in sleeping for many hours. They influence our breathing and, therefore, the quality of our sleep.

In dream-yoga of the Dzogchen, the sleeping posture as considerable importance because they activate the desired states of consciousness.

Blocks and gestures that filter and close

By placing the legs over one another or crossing the arms in front of the chest, we influence the field between the communication partners. We steer the density and energy of the exchange of information between the ,you-field‘ of the counterpart and our own ,I-field‘. If we feel overwhelmed by the amount and intensity of the information, we are thus able to retain our composure in a better way. We feel clear and can order our thoughts. If we close ourselves too much, we then block and weaken ourselves.

Therefore, ,open filter gestures‘, such as gently laying the fingertips upon each other, help reduce the stream of energy and at the same time leave the energy flow outward open.

This kind of dialogue constantly takes place between people communicating. The interchange of contact and boundary create the communication results.

However, we are often limited in our choice of nonverbal communication gestures because we are not aware of the pattern that is inhibiting us.

Still every one of us can wake up, perceive and review their mental pattern. We would thus be able to communicate actively, vitally, and effectively.

Special detailed gestures

Hand gestures

Our hands are the most important kinesthetic point of contact to the world. We use our hands to make contact. We touch the world and use tools. Hand gestures direct our energy. They prescribe a direction for all gestures. They initiate the opening and closing of the energetic occurrence. They are the creative expression of what is being said and a significant symbol. They are also pointers or the accepting hand.

A number of our hand gestures are loaded with meaning. The ,middle finger‘, ,the flip someone the bird sign‘ or the ,are you crazy‘ sign are aggressive gestures of disapproval.

Nevertheless, hand gestures can also be used to send a healing message such as symbolizing the resurrection of Jesus or the blessing of a Catholic priest at the end of mass.

In many traditions and cultures, the palm of the hand serves as an entry and exit point for energy. One absorbs energy through the palms and sends out energy as well. Depending on one’s inner posture and activation, certain

forms of energy can be stimulated. One handed gestures used in dialogue can reinforce the strength of the message. They have a signal effect and accent what is being said.

In my childhood, the raised finger was an unmistakable sign that one should change one's behavior. With the up and down movement of the index finger the personal field is ‚crashed in‘ and the energy is cut off.

Many regions hand gestures are developed and attached with a certain meaning. For example, in Germany there is a hand sign for ‚keeping fingers crossed‘: In a fist the thumb is hidden by all other fingers as a sign of support. In other countries, this is done by crossing the middle and index fingers. To hold the thumb upwards is today used as a sign of encouragement after an unsuccessful soccer play and ‚spread‘ around by the media.

As already described in the segment on ‚Blocks‘, we put the hands and fingers together to filter and deflect energy flowing in. If we want to center and collect ourselves, it helps if we position and lay our hands and fingers on the middle axis of our body—like Ms Merkel does. The fold the hands in front of the middle of the chest is a nonverbal ritual in many religions, which helps those in prayer to achieve the proper posture of reverence. When practiced

regularly, this can become a mental anchor for the state of consciousness in prayer.

When we put the thumb on the palm and then form a fist with the finger, we can seal our energy channels and avoid losing energy to the outside.

In order to protect ourselves, we place the hands and arms in front of the head and body like a boxer who uses his fists as defense.

Test the described hand gestures to acquire an impression of how they affect you. Then use the appropriate gestures to energetically enrich your daily life.

This is a selection of what I have found to be the most common hand gestures. There is a very large assortment expressing the various social groups and cultures of our world. In addition hand gestures are signs and rituals of belonging to a particular political movement or lifestyle such as the Hitler salutation or the 'high-five' greeting gesture.

They can also change their meaning over the course of time, such as Churchill's victory gesture became the peace sign of the Hippies.

Misuse of nonverbal gestures for ‚stereotyping‘

Besides making a statement, gestures also have a strong effect internally as well as externally. The raising of the arm for the fascist ‚Hitler Greeting‘ opens the armpit and prompts the inner gesture to an intensive flowing movement.

A strong current of energy is built up. When carried out in the company of others, the ‚Nazis‘ merge into a field of directed strength and dynamic. Performed by a group of thousands, this gesture emits a strong martial threat.

Also in the military drills of soldiers, the bodily energy is made uniform between marching in cadence and standing at attention, and guided in one direction. The individual that expresses itself through its own gestures is grinded away and eradicated, his critical resistance weakened, and overcome by exhaustion. Complemented common songs and music with especially emotionalizing rhythms, the power of nonverbal gestures are misused and employed for destructive purposes.

Positive anchoring through touch

We unconsciously touch certain parts of our body with our hands, for example, the face. We hold up our head with our hands to assume the pose of the thinker, we lay the hand on the ear in a listening pose, or place the hands in front of the chest. It is always contact and stimulation of our inner spaces. We activate resourceful states of comfort or special moods. The inner gestures relax and begin to pulsate.

Try to find out which touch is pleasant for you

*How does it feel if you lay your fingertips on each other?
Or touch a certain place on your head?*

What happens when you change the amount of pressure?

Find the resourceful gestures that support you in challenging situations. One of these gestures is the folding of the hands behind the head. This supports us and at the same time opens up the chest area.

Mimic and eyes

On account of the many poses for selfies, we have a precise idea of our appearance. As our visual feedback is very well trained, we have numerous mimic gestures at our disposal that we can put on as masks. We probably have a nice smile and a cool poker face in our selection. Our actual sensitivities are buried under the masks we wear. The essential giver of impulse for our facial mimics are the eyes and mouth. Here we can easily observe the behavior of the lightning fast micro gestures.

The eyes are the fastest and most direct contact between those communicating with each other. Like a laser they can bundle and send energy. They can just as well be soft and open and receive and send energy.

If you observe someone from behind, the person will often feel this and react, maybe with a quick backward movement or by changing their position.

We can see in various ways. Our glance can focus or also defocus. The defocusing glance is a type of wide-angle view, as if we could see more than 180 degrees. These gestures evoke relaxed inner gestures. We open ourselves for the entire energetic field.

On the other hand, the narrow focused glance, in my experience tries to control and reinforce the pattern of separation in an observing subject and an observing object.

Exercise

Narrowly focus your glance on an object in front of you.

Now widen your glance to a 'panorama' picture. The object is no longer part in this larger picture.

Do you see the objects flat or more spatially?

What happens if you try with a defocused glance to see people and things spatially?

Do you observe the borders and edges of the objects?

Is the world translucent and transparent?

From my experience seeing things spatially is a relaxing way of seeing.

The mouth

Another very expressive detailed gesture is the mouth.

Is it thin-lipped?

Or is it full-lipped?

Closed tightly or slightly opened?

In what position are the corners of the mouth?

Pointed upwards and friendly? The dolphin smile normally indicates a positive inner state.

Is it pointed downwards?

Does the conversation partner have this expression permanently, or does this only reflect the current situation?

The shoulders

Daily stress displays itself in the gestures of the shoulders. The shoulders and the back carry what we have loaded upon ourselves emotionally and mentally. If the shoulders

are held high, we want to protect our head and neck and maybe are afraid of losing them.

If we move our shoulders forward, we take our heart back—maybe in order not to be ‘touched’ too intensely.

If we take the shoulders broadly backward, our heart and chest are opened: With a broader chest we are confident and brave, and thus, open and sensitive.

If the shoulders and the head are hanging, this normally means that we are discouraged.

Micro gestures

The so-called micro gestures are the smaller and smallest movements of mimic and changes in breathing. The micro movements normally occur unconsciously. They indicate in which ‚state‘ we are in. They can indicate our reaction to external events as well as our inner sensitivities. When we are resourceful we radiate. When we are in ‚negative‘ stress, our bodily gestures are visibly darkened.

Micro gestures can change in the blink of an eye because the inner gestures can change very quickly. If the inner gestures pulsate in one direction, they produce a powerful resource state. If they contract and don't oscillate harmoniously, our access to our resources is hindered and weakened.

Micro gestures often display themselves in pairs of opposites which correspond to the inner features.

Examples:

- radiating – (vs) – darkening of the total bodily appearance
- body posture: flexible, agile – (vs) – stiff
- the face: relaxed, broad – (vs) – contracted,

- constricted
- change of color of the face and skin:
flush – (vs) – white
brighter – (vs) – darker
firm, but not tense – (vs) – sallow, flabby, pallid
 - the eyes:
radiating – (vs) – dim
clear – (vs) – bleary
 - the pupils:
defocused – (vs) – dot-like contracted
 - the lips:
full – (vs) – thin, pinched
 - corner of the mouth:
upwards (dolphin smile) – (vs) – downwards,
hanging
 - the wincing of the corner of the mouth
 - breathing:
deep – (vs) – flat, halted
 - sound of the voice:
husky, broken, sounds ‚breathy‘ – (vs) – begins to
modulate flowingly
 - sweating

However, it is not possible to generally categorize the meaning of micro gestures. A constriction can also indicate concentration and purposeful focusing on a goal. Therefore, micro gestures must always be viewed and scrutinized within a certain context. If we begin to perspire during a conversation, it can be a sign of excitement as well as a sign of fearful stress.

In addition, there are micro reactions such as eyelid movement which stops and interrupts the flow of energy by direct eye contact. Minimal 'wincing', as if energy was flowing quickly through the body, indicates that an expression, or a behavior has affected and touched us. Such reactions are only observable from a counterpart when they are keenly perceptive.

While asking a question in a conversation, we should be exactly observant, because parallel, before they are stopped by mental filters, minimal reactions take place. A brief, minimal jerk in the body can show that we have been on target with our question.

Mostly, there are extremely fast micro movements in the face which reflect a sudden realization or a flash of an idea or thought. In difficult situations during a discussion, the complete facial expression can become 'frozen' or dimmed.

Each of us has developed peculiarities: Plus and minus reactions which express micro movements. Find your discussion partner's corresponding micro signals and you will be able to ,read' them considerably well.

Take the time and pay attention to the mimic and micro gestures

What impulses can you perceive?

What radiates and energetically charged, friendly face?

How do the micro gestures influence us?

How can we trigger a ,radiating' response from our conversation partner?

What manner of our behavior triggers—perhaps regularly by our counterpart—a darkening?

How can we bring stiffness, and darkness into a flow?

What can we observe on ourselves when we ,come under pressure'?

Do we hold our breath?

Does tension arise in our jaw?

Are we pressing the teeth together?

Is there a tightness on our face?

Perhaps, we start to sweat a bit.

Antidote:

Breathe, two or three times and then observe how our breath rhythmically vitalizes our entire body and starts the gestures to pulsate.

*Let the jaw hang, so that the tongue fits between the teeth.
The mouth is slightly open so that air can enter.*

When we are sensitive to our inner gestures and recognize the ,no's' that are always present with negative stress, we can learn to cultivate our inner system. The great art is to be able to convert the no into a yes. If this is not possible, then we have to accept it as it is. These changes are possible as soon as we are familiar with our inner gestures.

The inner gestures

The inner gestures are a direct expression of our mental attitude. We experience them as fine sensations. Strain, tension, warmth, cold, the kind of breath etc.

When we reject something, the gestures compress. When we accept something, the inner gestures open and pulsate.

Many of our inner gestures that show our preferences and inner habits were conditioned during our childhood. Some are sensible and others hinder us massively.

For example, if we don't want something and reject it, the inner gestures mostly react with a strong contraction; we hold our breath; we feel hot; we feel pressure or a tightness in certain parts of our body. Thus, our entire system of expressions is impacted and confused.

Through breathing softly and a composed observation of the total occurrence, the pattern changes and slows down. There is then space and the possibilities of choice in the reaction patterns of our inner gestures. In this way, even the external gestures are made 'smooth and well-established' again.

An opening change is also possible from the outside to the inside. For example, we take a large gesture and a detail gesture and hold the for a certain period of time. Then the inner gestures will adapt themselves and align themselves positively. The old conditioning can be overcome.

Positions in Space

The best place

The positions of activities in space are normally ignored. If anything, people are familiar with Feng Shui and geomancy. Still, positions have a great influence on the quality of the interaction and the personal sense of well-being. The right positioning in the room and the positioning to the other parties involved defines and shapes the influence on the organizational framework. ‚Power‘ is established and solidified.

The best place is where we feel secure and protected. Furthermore, we have a free and broad overview. Maybe like a castle in the middle ages that rested high atop the landscape, protected by thick walls at the intersection of important trade routes which could be controlled. Its well-fortified visibility symbolized power. At the same time, the castle was exposed to the storms of nature and the covertness of rival groups. What criteria can we derive from this metaphor: protection, stability, perspective, quick ability to act, and control are factors for a strong positioning.

What does this mean for our workplace?

Ideally, you can see the door at a sufficient distance in order to react. You have rear cover. Sit at a stable desk that positively filters and screens the energy. You can look around in the room freely. You have a view of outside to the nature or the city landscape.

Your workplace is near a colleague. You can communicate with each other directly and quickly. Naturally, our digital media of today enables this independently from the location of the workplace. Nevertheless, it's a proven fact that spatial proximity with face-to-face contact to the places where the decision makers are located has great advantages.

In spite of the possibilities of working connected to 'every place in the world', for people who work in big cities we know that the best possibilities for participating in the game are there. I could observe how an 'office community' located on one floor collaborated well for many years. Then after moving into a modern building and being divided on two floors, the community fell apart into two groups just after one year. On the upper floor were the bosses and their familiars, and on the lower floor the others. Despite having the same furniture when moving, there emerge differences in the furnishings very quickly.

It makes no difference if one designs a large open office or a private home, it is important how the areas are structured with respect to each other.

Is there a central location like a reception or a cafeteria where the people can meet each other?

Is the location accessible for everyone?

Are the members of the organizational units situated so that they can meet each other regularly?

Cut off from the 'office traffic ways' we lose contact to the colleagues and cohabitants. It is also important to plan retreat areas where one can concentrate in peace and quiet.

Today, all of these considerations are included in the conceptions of the new workplace.

Modern offices create special areas for these various working conditions. Permanent jobs are becoming less and less, but rather different zones that should allow for various activities: Meeting rooms for the teams, conference rooms for conversations with customers, quiet work zones, telephone cells and café islands for voluntary contact set the scene.

Since many employees are out visiting customers or work in home offices, less office space is needed. The cost advantages of this can be enhanced by the flexible use of office space. In addition to the economic benefits, one can also reduce negative occurrences from the past. Many times special claims on certain workplaces or apparent privileges exist due to the office space having been used for many years. The changing of room and desk assignments was often seen as personal loss.

The openness for something new was lost. Flexible behavior was forgotten. Cliques and turf battles could be attributed to the assignment of office space and could, over time, lead to hindering the cooperation.

In addition to these positive effects, it remains to be seen if the flexible working landscape actually increases isolation and separation and therefore weakens the commitment to the company. Because the ‚home‘ feeling is lost from the workplace and the familiar colleagues are missing. ‚Fixed‘ workplaces, positively conditioned, help to establish a sense of well-being and a more rapid activation of the ‚work modus.‘ An employee sits down, turns on the computer and is already ‚at work‘.

Entry and exit defining the traffic routes

Imagine a straight river and a meandering river. The water in the straight river flows quickly through the land and carries 'the energy' away with it.

The river with curvature vitalizes the landscape and we find it to be beautiful and idyllic. We want to be close to it.

It is the same thing with traffic routes in a building: If they are set out in a clever way, they vitalize the work atmosphere and have a positive impact. Continuous movement by colleagues walking by can cause a disturbance and weaken our ability to concentrate. By contrast, the energy is outside the used 'traffic routes'.

In Hong Kong, the city where Feng Shui methods are utilized in most of the buildings, you will often find the reception areas recharged energetically with water gardens. The entrance itself is diverted by a block—somewhat massive reception counter—into a 'flowing', often curved paths that lead into the building.

In general, one can say that corners and spikes cause the energy to swirl and this disturbs the sense of well-being. Plants with sharp ends bring turmoil into our

homes and into the work place. In contrast, furniture and architectural elements with rounded corners bring harmony the spatial atmosphere.

Depending on the task, we need, on the one hand, a protected place where we have the feeling that we have things under control, and, on the other hand, freedom of movement, openness that enable communication and flexibility.

Check: Your workplace

How are the traffic routes set up?

Where is the door? Where are the ,emergency exits‘?

How are you seated with respect to your colleagues?

To the side or in the middle?

In which surroundings?

How are the people positioned with respect to each other?

What is your angle of view?

Do you sit near the supervisor? Is it helpful?

What are the strongest places in the room?

Are there places with a view to the door and a good overview?

What kind of solidarity emerges from close proximity or distance?

Find out for yourself where you feel most comfortable in the room.

What places are stimulating and full of energy?

Where is there turmoil and insecurity?

Where do you feel tired quickly?

Determine where your 'favorite place' is.

Can you find a connection (possibly chronologically) between your professional success and your current workplace?

Thus, we can change the existing space positively. We can use tables, chairs, closets or plants can divert, stop or stimulate energy, steer traffic routes, demarcate safe rooms, and create various types of zones.

Positions for discussion at the table

The quadratic table for a maximum of four people

Does one sit directly across or at the corner when one is at a quadratic table for a dialogue between two people?

When in direct opposition, one is sitting 'eye to eye' and there occurs a maximum exchange of energy. This directness can be very helpful for many conversations. It is close and intensive. However, it also harbors confrontational components. One is able to compete with the other and dominate the counterpart. If we want to withdraw the power from this sitting position and have to turn our body and bring one side forward. Because many people find this impolite, we can use gestures that filter to assist: Closed hands, crossed legs or constantly changing the position of the head and eyes.

If we are sitting at an angle this is not necessary because both conversation partners have much more leeway. We are not sitting in the energy flow of our counterpart and can face him as it suits us.

If three people are sitting at a table it is helpful if one has both conversation partners in view. Both can sit next to each other. If the two partners are sitting to our right and to our left, this means that we have to change directions if we want to have contact to both. This seating arrangement has the risk that we tend to turn to the person who is the most important for us. The other person can feel excluded through our physical aversion. Test this for yourself!

If there are four people at the table, there are numerous options. If all four are taking part in the discussion, it is possible to have intensive communication at every position at the table. Of course, one speaker at a time. One speaks and the other three listen. If there are two speakers, then the other two will be the audience.

With two conversations at the table simultaneously, which often happens in private meetings, this means that the seating places the our right and to our left are the most suitable for the exchange due to proximity and less loudness.

The round table

The round table has no limits. The parameters for the difference in quality at the table depends upon where it is placed in the room by parameters I understand: which seats have rear cover, is it cramped, is it near the door etc.

The distance between the seats is flexible, because the table doesn't have corners and edges. So there can be many constellations of arrangements. When there is need for more than four people, everyone can move closer together.

The rectangular land meeting table for a large number of personnel

This table has two heads. Traditionally, the chair of the meeting sits at the head of the table.

From these two positions, one has the optimal overview. One sits in the ‚middle‘ when the participants seated on the long side of the table have to look at us. There is a strong field of tension between the two ends of the table. This can be very helpful when both sides represent the same positions regarding content and have to pass the ball to each other. The people seated on the long side of the

table are ‚forced‘ to look to the right and to the left if they want to take in the entire discussion. If the two people seated at the ends of the table have a difference of opinion there is a podium for an intensive argument.

Of course, the chair of the discussion can be seated in the middle of the broadside. The sides and corners are the weakest places at the table. He sits like Jesus at the Last Supper in the middle of his disciples. One feels strong, but it is not able to see the reactions of those seated at his side.

Which end of the table has the strongest position, the head of the table or the side, depends on how the table is position in the room.

The over and under

Formerly, the chairman was sitting at a podium in a powerful position, in order to oversee the clerk/worker. It was the same in schools. Naturally, the throne of the king was on an elevated position.

Today, many heads of companies are very tall, 1.90 m and taller. Should the employees be able to look up, being assigned their place as in the old days? A female executive

prefers to receive people and carry out discussions at her desk. It is interesting that her seat has an essentially higher surface than the two chairs for the guests. Even I, with 1.84 m have to raise my glance in order to see her eye to eye.

It felt slightly disturbing and reminded me of the Charlie Chaplin film 'The Great Dictator', when he offered Mussolini a very low chair and at the end both are in barbershop chairs competing to see who can pump their chair higher than the other.

Whenever possible, managers should carry out their meetings with guests and staff in their own office. Small, round tables seating four people are appropriate for such meetings. This is a neutral place and doesn't impose any hierarchy. Therefore, it is also suitable for important 'high-ranking' guests. One starts each discussion at eye level without being restricted by insignia of power.

Positioning and room arrangement for meetings

The following should be taken into consideration when conducting a round of talks:

Where do I position myself in the room, so that I have contact, so that I can exercise influence and be in ,the midst of the occurrences'? Do I sit with friends and acquaintances in a corner, where we feel strong together? Or do I go the people that I want to become acquainted with? Do I sit with who makes the decisions and with opinion leaders? Who is the conversation partner that ,strengthens' or ,weakens' me? Can this be influenced by proximity or eye contact?

If you are leading the meeting, do the participants indicate limited interest by working with their smart phone or laptop parallel to the discussions? In oder to get complete attention, I propose that you work with the topic while standing at the flip chart or white board. This will prevent activities on the side and you can activate the participants.

Generally speaking, the person who stands at the flip chart discussing and outlining the theme assumes the role of ,lead'.

By consciously using the space for the meeting and changing the settings, you have many possibilities to influence the course of the discussions. It can be that you are able to act in a more precise way by using mobile media such as a cork board and adjusting the seating arrangements.

This can effectively structure the group process:

Where should certain people/groups of people sit?

What are the strong and weak places?

If you want to bring movement into the group and dissolve fixed opinions, you can change the normal seating arrangements and discuss in small groups at different points in the room.

How do I deal with ,above and below'?

Carrying out presentations while standing means towering over the group. This can trigger old patterns: we are looking up to the teacher, to the parents and other authority figures. Depending on the personality, we can be ,submissive' or ,aggressive'.

Is this what we want? Isn't it more sensible and constructive to create a setting ,at eye level'?

An assembly in a circle signifies: ,We are all equal'. There is no top or bottom.

Nevertheless, being seated in a circle is not very popular. Normal seating arrangements are not possible because the protective function of the table is missing. There arises insecurity. Suddenly, everyone is visible from head to toe and alleged physical shortcomings can no longer be hidden. Because there is no filter provided by the furniture, the gestures of the participants are conveyed directly and instantly. By using this new room structure creatively, we can break apart stiff postures and established structures. There is now place for new ideas and ways of working.

Business lunch and small talk

Whoever has taken part in a business lunch know how important the seating is for good conversations and interesting contacts. In order to create flexible opportunities for making contact, a bar table is used as part of such events. Now, one only needs the courage to

position oneself. The alpha male show their true colors in such situations. Many of my clients are irritated by this kind of style. However, the ones who dare to do this have a good chance of developing a network.

The table arrangement reflects the hierarchy and the influence of the participants. At the reception of a manager that I coached, I sat at a large table for eight people. Suddenly, an older gentleman came to my table, took the my place card and replaced it with his. He turned out to be the longtime mentor of my coachee and was very eager to make my acquaintance. And now he had the entire evening to accomplish this.

Memory anchor through room positioning

It seems that our consciousness was designed for us to link memories with the locations where occurrences have taken place. I just visited a beach where we went swimming with the children and played kicker. Immediately, sensations and memories arose that were connected to this place. Locations are then no longer neutral, but rather are preformatted by memories. This happens in a very subtle way. If these spatial points are connected to positive impacts they evoke strong resources via our inner

gestures. It is also true that places connected with negative experiences will activate stress within us: for example, places where we were criticized or experienced failure. My place at the dinner table in the home of my childhood still feels uncomfortable for me years later, because we often had vehement family arguments there.

So, it is necessary to consciously set the anchoring and activating points in the location.

Since I have been self-employed for many years next to the house where my family lives, I have deliberately made clear barriers between my office and the house. Thus, I carry out my work in a coaching pavilion. The pavilion is a private area where I can receive telephone calls, have discussions, and work on emails from work. My place at my desk is a wonderfully established anchor. I sit down and am immediately in work mode.

Thus, through this room anchor I am able to separate the professional from the private. Many people who today work in a home office use private areas for work with the smartphone or laptop. By doing this they lose out on having a space for relaxation and private matters, and they also don't develop a strong and effective anchor for focused work. This is one of the reasons why many of us

are not able to turn off. All of the private living areas are contaminated by ,work anchors'. The mental carousel is being constantly fed and burn out is near.

You should therefore try to identify a corner only for your professional work. This is also possible if there is not much space. Private areas should be taboo for smartphones and working on e-mails! This can be also possible to make clearly defined areas even when there isn't very much space. In this way you can benefit from the positive possibilities of a home office without experiencing negative consequences.

Therefore, try to select a location that is only used for work. This is also possible when there is not much space. Private areas should be taboo for a work smart phone and for working on emails! In this way you can define clear areas even when the space is limited and profit from the positives benefits of a home office without having suffering from disadvantages.

Teachers should also define locations in the classroom where they give praise and where they give criticism. When there is a clear separation the statements of the teacher are more distinct and understandable: the impact is effective—also without using a loud voice. When you

have established both position anchors, all you need do is approach the location for criticism and the students will notice this and check their behavior.

Speaking

In our civilization, the way we are speak and the type of language we use define our ancestry and status. Being eloquent is a sign of a successful personality.

The sound of our words is the medium we use to reach and affect our fellowman. In addition to the content of what is spoken, the ,how‘ of the voice transports our entire personality. The sound, the rhythm of our speech, the modulation in high and low, soft and loud is the Speech-Gestalt which invites our listener, and evokes enchanting or negative reactions.

Because we are focused on the content of what we are saying while speaking, we are often unable to discern the nonverbal aspect of what we are conveying. We neither notice the sound of our own words, nor are we attentive to the nonverbal information in the voice of conversation partner. Thus, we miss out on essential access points for making an optimal contact and exchange in the communication. We lack insight and knowledge concerning what we are conveying by the way we speak parallel to the contact that is being conveyed. Consequently, we limit the possibilities and limit the success of the communication.

If we can learn to attend to the sound of our voice while we are speaking by listening to ourselves, we could learn a great deal about our inner mood/gestures and the emanation of our voice.

When we are attentive to the sound and the nonverbal quality of our conversation partner, we receive a comprehensive access to the personality of our conversation partner. This information could help us to understand in what kind of situation they are in.

Observe yourself in a discussion:

How does your voice sound?

How does the voice of your conversation partner sound?

How is the speed of the conversation? Slow? Fast?

What kind of sensations do the various qualities of speech trigger in you?

The most important question:

Does the content correspond to the sound of the voice?

All these things can be ascertained and recognized by listening and feeling during the conversation.

Nonetheless: Clarify if your assessment is correct by using the magic formula of open questions.

You may also want to read the following chapters:

Voice and speech training (pages 129ff) and

Successful presentations and lectures (pages 137ff)

Speaking on the telephone

An ideal situation for experimenting with the sound and expressiveness of our voice is by using the telephone. Without visual information we are completely focused on our voice. Is the content consistent with the sound of our voice?

In addition, we are less controlled on the telephone in my opinion. We show emotions more quickly and speak more openly than in face-to-face contact. We probably feel freer, because we are not being observed.

In order to learn more about my contact person, I like to ask questions and then listen to their voice. I very often do this with my eyes closed. One can perceive the inner dialogue the speaker is having with themselves. Which themes cause a pause? Does the voice sound scratchy or tight? Is it monotone and stays on the same sound level? Is the theme conveyed without pause? Breathless?

New hints emerge within the context of the discussed content. New questions appear which I then address.

When I am speaking, I can hear the tone fluctuation in my voice and observe the interaction of my thoughts, words, and feelings. When do I control myself and disturb the flow of my expression? What are the symptoms that I am exercising control?

With telephone conversations that involve a challenging theme or when the call involves the first contact, it is advisable to conduct such a call in a quiet and closed room. Then you have the possibility to notice the overtones and be completely focused on the contact partner. This also helps your contact partner who is not distracted or annoyed by background noise.

I always prepare myself for important conversations. I relax and focus. I choose a suitable time and location.

The challenge presented by many large open offices is the high noise level. The feeling of being observed leads to self-censure in speech and posture. Thus, the optimal flow of energy is restricted. This is usually underestimated, because today we use the telephone in almost every work and personal situation. A completely focused conversation situation makes a critically difference and increases the chances for success.

I also think that it is helpful that we listen to ourselves when we speak, and learn to like the sound of our voice. When we are able to imbue our speech with rhythmic pauses, to modulate our voice harmoniously with high and low pitch, our voice would sound nicer and more melodic. This would please the listener and open them for us and for our themes. I occasionally introduce myself to my contact partner with a smile. I am convinced that this sets the stage for an open and positive conversation.

Use your next telephone call to experiment. Develop an enjoyment of working with your voice in order to make it more fluent and expressive.

Telephone conversations are the fastest and most direct channel of communication for clarifying themes, if our contact partner is available on the phone. Compared to e-mails which might lead to a delayed game of question and answer, on the telephone one can directly clarify an issue.

Control filters and speech thinkers

Many of us control every word we say. Everything is run through a mental pre-filter which is adjusted according to the situation of communication. In our heads, dialogues are taking place lightning fast, also when we are speaking and listening. This type of speaking requires a large amount of energy and seem less lively, and thus, less authentic. The listener reacts carefully because the signals of the bodily congruence are missing which convey consistency and credibility.

This comes back to the sender. The ‚message‘ isn't really assimilated. If this is the case, the nonverbal expression is hindered and the quality of the communication suffers.

The opposite are the so-called speak thinkers. They prattle whatever their brain spits out.

When they speak, they listen to themselves and contrive the next thoughts about it. They first notice what they think about the theme while they are speaking. This can be very exhausting for the listener, because they are often ignored through this process. Focused only on their own thoughts, the speak thinker turns the listener into a background actor, and the interaction between sender and receiver only takes place one-sidedly.

Exchange, contact, mutual empathy: no chance. Because we discuss everything in our head in this modus, we focus our entire energy in the mental thought processes and lose the connection to heart and body. Therefore, we have no contact to our inner feedback system, to our inner gestures.

In such a situation, how can we realize what is appropriate behavior for us and for our partner? However, when speaking, if we place and observe our awareness in the middle of our chest, our heart space, what sensations and thought forms are shown there, an alert presence and contact with the communication partner emerges. This is directly involved in the situation and immediately and congruently shows itself as in the nonverbal. This is when communication can be successful.

Nevertheless, practically all of us from time to time, regardless of the assumed roles and circumstances in which we communicate, filters which inhibit our direct communication. These affect the sound, pitch speed, and the rhythm of our speech. As soon as we can bring in line the flow of our thoughts/feelings with the dynamic of speaking, and the resonance of inner gestures, an authentic speaking arises that we experience as harmonious.

What do you perceive when observing yourself?

Is it possible to go into the heart center and listen to what sensations and words emerge there?

Do they come immediately?

From where?

How are they filtered?

What kind of speech do I find trustworthy?

For ,advanced‘ speakers

Depending on the pitch, our voices resonate with differing access channels by the receiver.

What does that mean?

The frequencies of our voice activate various areas of the body. This occurs with us through the inner gestures and also with the listener. Nonverbal resonance and contact occur between us. According to the pitch of the sound, our bodies vibrate from head to toe. Some are able to perceive this consciously.

At the beginning of my coaching career, a consultant wanted to hire me for his company. When we telephoned, I found him to be somewhat likeable. Why did I have such a good impression of him? Then I made the observation that in spite of his Northern German heritage, his speech and sound rhythm fit to my Bavarian singsong, without imitating me. I found this to be very pleasant and I could come to trust him.

Such assimilations normally occur unconsciously when we like someone. Professionals like him know about these things and can use these nonverbal reflections in order to

win over their contact person. Nonetheless, I like how he spoke and he remained a likeable person for me.

Isn't it nice when someone makes the effort and adapt themselves to me?

The various pitches

High, monotone voices which stay at the same pitch stimulate the visual within us and the mental level in the head area. Fast talkers and intellectual thinkers often speak like this. Talking without interruption, they formulate their visual perceptions. These often brilliant ,thinkers' are rather cut off from the sensation area of the body. Contact and feedback to the contact person is reduced. Their eyes are normally pointed upward.

Flowing and modulating voices with high and low pitch activate the chest and heart areas. They stimulate empathy and sympathy. Many times one can observe a de-focused look on such people, i.e. the eyes remain soft in a middle position without movement and focusing.

Low voices with clearly accented pauses stimulate calm and relaxation. They can possess sexual appeal. The eyes are often pointing down and to the left.

Each of these styles of speaking can have an effect outward for the recipient and inward for the sender.

What kind of modulation and pitch can you make with the sound of your voice?

What kind of resonance do you feel in your inner space?

How does your conversation partner react when your voice has a particular sound?

How do you react to the vibrations of your conversation partner that you observe?

When you notice a particular vibration pattern of your counterpart and speak in a similar way, what changes?

By using these different pitches and voice modulations, we can address and stimulate the desired areas of consciousness of our counterpart.

In this way, we are able to actively address the access areas of the heart, stomach, and head. Thereby, we harmonize ourselves on the same level through these vocal actions. New and immediate communication can be encouraged. When we open ourselves for the pitch level of our counterpart, we at the same time open new accesses of sensation and thinking spontaneously.

Relaxation with sound

Many people are able to relax with sounds and music very quickly and easily. Why is this so?

Our thought activity often occurs in a verbal discourse and narrative form in our head. As soon as we divert these auditive channels to other external tonal objects, this thought activity is overlaid, or replaced by the external sounds. When we allow the resonance of this music to affect our body, new joy and vitality arise.

In Dialogue

Intimate space and appropriate distance

The one-to-one dialogue is one of the most common constellations used in the Western world to communicate.

In Asian martial arts, the ideal distance separating two combatants is called ‚Ma-Ai‘. When we stand sideways, the leg and the arm on the same side brought forward, so that the palms touch each other, this is Ma-Ai. We have contact, and at the same time we have control. We can attack, block or flee. It is at this distance that we offer to shake hands.

Only those people who have a special relationship with us have access to our ‚intimate space‘. If a contact partner doesn't observe our ‚intimate space‘ and comes too close, our inner gestures contract and an unpleasant feeling arises. However, when we would like to share our intimate space when dancing, for example, our inner gestures open and a joyful pulsation spreads.

In order to break a person's resistance, the intimate space is encroached and shattered. For instance, by military

training when the drill sergeant comes only a few centimeters in front of the face of a soldier at standing at attention and shouts at him. This is an attempt to implement appropriate behavior by using fear as an anchor.

We can witness this in a milder form with parents and teachers showing the ‚index finger‘ to the children. They use this to intrude into the intimate space of the children. When they move the finger in an up and down movement, they are penetrating and weakening the child’s energy field. In my childhood, these gesture was the last warning before physical punishment.

A special form of opening the intimate space is when we greet and say farewell. Depending on the rules of the social environment, the following actions can be carried out: kissing, embracing, and different types of touching of the hands.

In archaic societies that appears to have been the necessity to maintain and protect the intimate space. This is less the case in societies that are heavily shaped by mental and rational influences. The more emotional and physical the group acts, the more frequent there is contact allowed and desired.

In general, physical contact and friendly touching strengthens a relationship. It was interesting to note that when the soccer coach of FC Bayern, Pep Guardiola, started with the team how he came close to the players and embraced them. This signaled two things: I am the boss and decide how close I can come (your intimate space also ‚belongs‘ to me), and I am well-disposed toward you, because I can touch you in an affectionate way. It appears to be the privilege of the ‚stronger‘ to intrude into the intimate space of others and to show affection openly. Whoever is able to come ‚too close‘ to another and get away with it, is demonstrating power.

If all of the discussion partners are able to touch each other, and anyone is able to start then the relationship is on an equal basis.

In trainings for team development the games and exercises are often arranged in a way that the participants must come closer to each other. In other words, to open their intimate space for the others in order to solve the task. Whether it be a rope course or being led blind, being physically close to one another is a way of testing trust, and checking nonverbal interactive agreement. If it succeeds then we feel assured. This feeling of trust, which is anchored deep in our body, ‚the inner gestures‘, can

effect stability and reliability in the relationship. Although we are unaware of it, this trust extends far beyond a verbal commitment. It is important that during the physical contact the inner gestures open and relax.

Apart from that, this kind of approach only occurs in love relationships, families, and close friendships in Western societies.

We also resort to a somewhat less controlled gesture in familiar surroundings as we do in a public setting. In public, the tone of our inner gestures is higher and we are more exact with our major gestures. This kind of control costs energy, because this subtle containment is an attempt to prohibit our natural reactions.

Observe yourself at home and in public.

What kind of differences do you discover?

The greeting

In our Western society, the handshake represents one of the few forms of bodily contact which is carried out with strangers in public. When we extend the open hand, we show that we ,are not armed‘ and signal ,peaceful intentions‘.

Depending on the group, there can be an embrace, kisses or something similar in addition to the handshake. As soon as there is contact, these gestures are also used to check the contact person. This sort of ,inventory‘ gives information on how we assess the person. Consciously or unconsciously, in this way we are presenting our personality. We perceive and make an assessment:

Is the handshake too weak or is our hand pressed if it was in a vice? Is the hand warm and pleasant? Or cold and wet, i.e. fearful? If it is weak, is this a wimp? The ,vice‘ insensitive. And much more.

An additional accent often accompanies a handshake: A person who feels superior will accompany his handshake with a pat on the shoulder. Meant in a friendly way, it indicates a subtle above and below.

If the second hand is placed above the handshake, this can represent a gesture of dominance and control. Somewhat similar is when the free hand is laid upon the shoulder of the person being greeted.

Some even pull the contact person toward them, and thereby intrude into the intimate space. One can, of course, hold the other person at bay by extending the hand with an outstretched arm.

You can test this for yourself.

When I meet someone for the first time, I like to mirror the strength of my counterparts handshake.

The look and eye contact

To look at another person is the most direct means of contact that we have next to bodily contact. In many societies in the world it is taboo to make direct eye contact. A focused stare is seen as aggressive, and one attempts to avoid it. This occurs minimal and unconsciously by blinking, which breaks the exchange of energy, more considerably by turning away the eyes, the head or the body. The inner gestures are contracted.

However, when we permit eye contact the energetic fields of both our personalities merge and sensations rise up. We perceive the other person intensively. People who are able to utilize eye contact dominate communication encounters. Those who can maintain eye contact have no fear. The eye contact accents our statements. We are received as honest and authentic.

When I was a child and someone had believed that I had cheated on something, they would say. ‚Look me in the eye!‘

When people avoid eye contact with us, we become cautious. If it happens often, one becomes suspicious. Does he have something against me? I sometimes hear the comment: ‚He can't even look me in the eye‘.

When we want to formulate something very precisely in a discussion, we look briefly to the side or above. We are creating space for uninfluenced thoughts.

These interruptions in eye contact is neither avoidance nor a disturbance of contact. Ideally, we come back to eye contact after having expressed the thoughts.

Adaptation

,Everyone talks about communication! But in fact, we all just want to be loved and not to hear any disagreement', a musician friend of mine said in a discussion.

How do we use nonverbal gestures to show that we are fond of each other and have the same opinions?

We adapt to each other: in our posture and in the way we speak. We even have the same rhythm of our breathing, and breathe in the same way. We feel comfortable, when we see ourselves confirmed in the expressions of others.

Observe how people in certain areas of life mimic one another and harmonize through clothing, ,wording', and behavior, have the same style and see things in a similar way.

When the diploma was being awarded for product design, three graduates were called to the stage and looked at each other astounded and confused. They were wearing the exact same type of clothing: each one of them wore a white shirt, which hung outside of the matching pants. It was interesting that the professor wore a black shirt.

Is one also allowed to imitate the powerful?

What would happen if many women started to wear the Angela Merkel dress?

One of my clients used to wear a bow tie, instead of a conventional tie at work. At first, people laughed at him somewhat, but later this became accepted and ended up becoming his own personal trademark. What was he trying to show?

People who criticize the current order of things and rebel against them, break the prevalent norms of adaptation.

In Western societies in the 60s, this was represented by wearing long hair, in order to effectively demonstrate that one has a different lifestyle. At the same time, those with long hair belonged together and showed solidarity for one another.

If we want to adapt to a contact partner or a group, we convey not only a feeling of agreement, but also put ourselves in their shoes. We open our inner gestures to receive all of the information unfiltered. Empathy and a deep understanding may emerge. We immerse ourselves as if we were the person. In order to have a successful

communication it is helpful include our ‚you-position‘ with our ‚I-perspective‘. However, if we are always in the other person’s perspective, we will lose ourselves. In worst case, we will completely lose our orientation.

This effect appears to occur in mass movements initiated by demagogues. By using the same nonverbal rituals (goose march, Hitler salute, uniforms and marching music) the entire energy is channeled into one direction and creates an undertow effect that very few can escape. It is a quite an accomplishment to follow one’s own ethical values in such situations, and to live with a clear orientation deviating from the general trend.

Some of the adaptations of the masses can be observed in modern consumer societies. New forms of behavior become self-evident: the smartphone which has to be continually checked, or young men with a full beard. Previously, every piece of body hair had to be fought rigorously. Without a coffee to go, one can hardly move in the morning. We feel like we belong and dance to the rhythm of the times.

The various forms of nonverbal adaptation are used by successful communicators—often unconsciously. A newly enamored couple doesn’t realize that they are moving synchronically.

The mutual adaptation of people engaged in communication can be like a cosmic dance, flowing, connecting our best with each other, so that something new spontaneously emerges upon common ground. We encounter the opposite with people who have contact disorders. They protect themselves through avoiding bodily contact. If people continually do this due to their personal disposition, they close themselves. Their outer and inner gestures are contracted and they lose access to the natural flow of life and their vitality.

Scented space

Everyone wants to smell good. Therefore, we use deodorants, shampoos, perfume, and aftershaves. Industrial produced scents and fragrances suppress our natural development of smell. They veil our body's own scent as if we wanted to hide it. Our scent is an immediate expression of our feelings, a micro gesture which directly corresponds to the situation.

As everyone knows, the important basis of a relationship is that 'the chemistry is right' (very true!). In other words, we can stand the smell of each other. However, we are suppressing the intuitive smell feedback and lose a tried

and true test criterion. Most importantly, when choosing a romantic partner, the smell plays a decisive role.

Aftershaves and perfumes fill the air of the intimate space and radiate beyond it, thus massively influencing the area of communication. I experience it as a kind of ‚space occupant‘, because people take up more space than they can fill up energetically. A person makes themselves appear stronger than they really are. One can only escape the effects of scent through distance, which is difficult to achieve in a discussion. Dominance arises.

Thus, in losing the ‚authentic smell‘ we move on shaky ground. We can only trust our senses to a certain extent. After the conversation, a whiff of scent remains calling out: Don't forget me!

Nonverbal communication with groups

Sender and receiver

People who send want to make an impact, and position their ideas and issues. They are shapers of opinions. People who receive or reject these impulses are receivers. Very often such people shy away from expressing themselves in a group publicly.

However, this doesn't mean that they don't have their own opinion which differs from the sender. If they don't express their opinion, then it is manifested as a gesture. The body turns away and deflects. Eye to eye contact is avoided. The posture often stiffens.

Staying still, one doesn't show any reaction in the major gestures as if they don't want to be discovered. Since there is no verbal objection the sender believes—especially when management is concerned—that one has agreed with him.

If we agree with the sender, we turn toward him with the front of our body, the face, and the eyes. A slight nodding

of the head or movement of the body in rhythm to the presentation confirms our agreement.

Sitting or standing, there probably occurs an adaptation of the major and detail gestures between the sender and the receiver. This is clear to see for a neutral observer. If the receiver and sender are in complete agreement, then synchronic changes in posture will occur. If the sender has the ,lead' then the receiver will immediately follow his movement impulses.

In a seated circle, one can observe by the leg positions who is mirroring the speaker. The others who are not in agreement with what he is saying take up an ,oppositional' posture: leaning back casually or bent forward aggressively.

The receiver has the power to weaken the sender through his nonverbal expressions. Especially when he shows a major gesture of rejection. If the sender notices it, he can best verbalize his observation by asking the question, ,Are you interested in this theme?'

Nonverbally, he can focus his eyes on the ,antagonist', or make a movement toward him to address or confuse him.

Many speakers don't accept questions during their speech, rather they handle them at the end so the flow of their speech isn't interrupted. If this is not accepted, and a person still interrupts, the speaker can reject this person by turning his body from him and ignoring him. If we do this at the same moment when the other person wants to intrude, we can block his energy flow. If this happens several times, it will be more and more difficult to say something. You show them the 'cold shoulder'. You look pass him as if he wasn't there. It doesn't happen very often that the one affect still is able to interrupt and say something. Mostly, when this happens the person is very emotional, which, of course, doesn't help his situation.

This nonverbal behavior is a massive confrontation and is recommended for emergencies. You will be able to protect yourself, but won't win any friends in the process.

Nonverbal action is especially used in decision meetings. The supporters join the sender. The opponent of the plan assume a dismissive or confrontational posture, including forms of 'disrespect' and disruption: chatting with the neighbor and checking one's smartphone.

In authoritarian communications systems showing clearly negative communication patterns is avoided: One is forced to ‚play along‘. Apparently, it is demanded that one shows a stereotypical smile. Incongruent behavior arises because the physical gestures are not identical with the thinking and feeling. Distrust, insecurity, and manipulative behavioral games dominate the communication and produce considerable stress.

Energy vampires

I have made the observation that many dialogues are actually monologues. One is gabbing about this and that and the other one is listening and nodding. The role of sender and receiver hardly changes. In fact, the parts of the one speaking and listening should be equal, but it appears that both are satisfied with the situation.

The listener doesn't have to show himself or convey anything. However, he is part of the communication. The speaker is happy that someone is interested in him. He can ‚release‘ himself through his flow of speech. He is being energetically ‚supported‘ and ‚nourished‘ by the care and attention of the receiver. There are many people who have had this experience that like to be the center of attention.

It's a little bit like being on stage: the actor sends information and dynamic. The enthusiastic audience is supporting the success by their attention and devotion to the piece being performed. An electrified situation can come about by the time this mutual exchange increases. If there is no change of roles there can be no balanced communication. In a balanced communication, the speaking part is even-keeled, let's say 50% to 50%.

Observe situations of a discussion:

Are the speaking parts balanced?

What kind of nonverbal communication pattern does the sender use?

Is the receiver ,really into it' and attentive?

Who turns from whom?

Is there adaptation and ,lead'?

Observe yourself in a small group conversation.

Which role do you normally take?

Holding tight and energetic blocks

How accessories become security anchors

I can use an example from my time in the theater to illustrate the almost magical effect things have that one is holding in one's hands during a speech or presentation. When I was rehearsing a theater play with a group of children and adolescents, I was faced with the challenge to get a small and astute young man fit for the role of king. He continually fidgeted and when he wanted to speak he giggled out of being insecure and no one could understand what he was saying. I decided to put something in his hand that he could play with.

On a rehearsal room, for some reason, I found a yellow turnip. I gave it to him asked him to nibble on it. He then nibbled on it a little and was transformed. With the turnip as a scepter in the hand, he spoke convincing and clear. His body was relaxed. In the premier he gave a sovereign performance, now and then nibbling on the turnip, and was showered with applause and awarded with many ,smiles'. In later plays, he acted with self-confidence and enjoyed performing to a public—also without a turnip.

In professional surroundings, if there is a pencil, a marker or a laser pointer: holding an object in the hand gives many people a calming and a positive anchor. Make a test to find out what object you can use for your next speech, even if they are small cards that can serve as a support or something completely different.

The 'docking' or attaching to an object is a special form of nonverbal communication. As already described, it appears that we feel more secure when we hold things in our hands. Maybe, we don't feel alone, as if we are holding the hand of our mother, or it suggests that we are holding a real object in the hand such as a stone or a club. Also the leaning against a wall or on a table or cane can give us the feeling of being in contact to something strong. Cigarettes, the key chain or a purse are very common objects of attaching. Meanwhile, coffee to go has usually replaced the cigarette.

The top tool to keep in the hand has definitely become the smartphone. Most people hold it with two hands in front of their body as a sort of protective gesture. In addition, we are able to leave the 'real situation' via the communication possibilities of the smartphone. We can beam ourselves into another world and communicate there. A new form of autonomy and freedom is born, which can

also be a form of escapism. Never bored, remaining out of confrontation with the current world. The constant preoccupation with the digital media reduces our sense channels especially to visual perception. This dissociation is significantly increased and the access to the bodily field and our inner gestures is reduced.

In addition to being props for beauty and elegance women's handbags, in my assessment, also serve as a protective function: women hold them tight and block themselves away if the bag is in front of the stomach or private area. The bag is a pantry and a mobile supply closet. It contains everything needed for ‚action‘. This is also true for the bags and backpacks carried by men. Moreover, shoulder bags and backpacks are symbols for a certain style of life and show that one belongs to certain ‚social groups‘. Playing with various accessories offers numerous possibilities in communicating and is an indispensable aspect of mental form language.

Of course, this all depends on the way we are dressed. A discussion of this doesn't happen to be part of my treatise.

What kind of effect does nonverbal presence have?

Nonverbal communication is the key to our vitality

Surely, all of us has observed what kind of conversations there are at parties or similar meetings. What do people talk about? And, most of all, how? Again and again I experience either dialogues or monologues that have lost all of its vitality: practiced poses and fossilized major gestures rule the scene. Only the micro gestures show what is really happening around us.

What do I conclude from this? As soon as the social position is firmly established through the founding of a family or a desired professional status is achieved, many of us draw on these ‚successful‘ experiences and continually repeat these ‚insights‘. In this way fixed behavior patterns emerge and we lose the measure of openness that each situation offers. Our fixed perceptions, such as how the world works, block our access to new terrain.

The question is how can we apply our knowledge of nonverbal communication? We shift our focus from the

content of the conversation to the nonverbal expression.
With our conversational partner and with ourselves.

What is the first thing we notice?

What patterns of behavior are noticeable?

What gesture is twisted and out of balance?

Who is approachable with eye contact?

How does the sender's voice sound?

Who is aware of their nonverbal message?

What is being sent?

What micro gestures can you observe from the conversational partners?

Where is it radiating, where is it obscure?

What places and positions are being taken by the people in the room?

What do these positions say about preferences, ,personality',

power and influence?

How do you react to this nonverbal ,ballet'?

How can you make an influence using positioning, posture, and gesture?

What does nonverbal behavior have to do with exuding vitality?

Charisma occurs when there is harmony between the bodily gestures and what the person thinks and feels. Programming and conditioning prevent the permeability between body and mind. The dialogue and exchange with the world develops spontaneously and directly without filters. The energy that flows through the person carries information directly to the recipient.

In acting training, we learned to allow the mental and emotional processes of the role to appear in the bodily expression. The energy radiated from this embodied disposition and attitude affects the audience and pulls them into the inner occurrences of the story being told.

When we have consciously integrated our nonverbal forms

of communication, we can also comprehensibly convey our issues as an authentic personality. When we are physically and mentally present, the energy flows and is convincing. We act as if we would experience each moment anew.

Not routine, but rather an expression utilizing all the senses involved with the situation. We show ,innocently‘ what moves us and what we stand for.

However, as soon as we are steered by calculation and control, and we wish to repeat our ,success‘ formula, our charisma is reduced. Old thought and behavior patterns are lifeless ossifications and boring.

We can observe this with many personalities in public life. Out of fear of being negatively portrayed by the media, they control themselves and therefore become lifeless, inauthentic zombies.

Closing Remarks

It is the goal of my coaching bring our mental processes in harmony with our nonverbal expression through subtle self-perception. We obtain clarity in communication and access to our counterpart through our awareness of our own ,inner processes'. We can recognize what is happening and we have the nonverbal means that help support the communication. Our alertness positively influences the field between us.

Through the immersion and embodiment in the soft movements of breath, the openness is continually renewed. It enables the appearance of suitable sensations and ideas that are appropriate for the communicative situation. Once again, our life becomes a natural adventure of a constantly rejuvenating presence. It is the moment in which we can open anxiety and restriction into wideness and flowing participation.

Appendix

Voice and speech training

Voice training

The value and the effect of our voice is often unknown. Its vibration and its sound can dissolve our inner tension and awaken joy and sense of well-being.

In order to realize this great potential, I propose the following series of exercises.

Listen to the sound of your voice when you speak.

Modulate the sound of your voice so that it sounds pleasant.

Speak as softly as possible and follow the sounds outward in space.

In what areas of your body does your voice resonate when you speak?

Intensify this 'inner vibration'.

Make loud and soft sounds with different directions.

To exercise this, use an object in the room or a remote wall, as if there is an echo and reverberation coming back from this object.

When conversing, send your tone directed on the conversation partner and observe the resonance and effect.

Interaction between breath, voice, and words

The breath carries the words and determines the rhythm of narrative speech. The beginning and end of the breath is like a period and comma when writing. You shape the rhythm of the presentation and accent the importance of what is being said through employing deliberate pause.

How do we do that?

To practice we can use a written text to present.

In the preparation we decide how many words we want to lay on one breath. In this way we bring about the context of meaning.

A rule of thumb: the fewer the words, the greater the effect,

the more words the more negligible.

Laying only one word on one breath means that stating the word is positioned maximally.

When we make a pause before the following word, we build up anticipation. When we make a pause after a word, we give importance to the words and increase their effect.

Find a sentence to use as an example.

Say the sentence yourself and test using other accents and pauses.

Maybe you will notice how automatic your speaking is intensified and the rhythm accented through the modulation.

Exercise instructions:

1. The long exhale

Imagine to breathe out over the base of the pelvis, and inhale through the nose.

2. When speaking lay some words on the breath out.

Inhale. Again lay some words on the breath out.

3. Practice with the written text

*Decide how many words you want to lay on the breath out.
At the end of the words a short inhale.*

4. Vary the number of words that you lay on the breath out. Observe the rhythm of speech that emerges from this.

5. Consciously set pauses in your speaking, so that you can inhale between the words. This gives the spoken words more weight and significance.

Breath, voice, word supported with gestures

When you have practiced the inhale and exhale, and have found the suitable speech rhythm, you can refine your speech with additional details in your gestures.

1. Support the rhythm of speaking by rhythmic body movements, such as swinging back and forth. Slightly accentuating by moving the head.

2. Rhythmic accentuation with the hand

3. Gestural shaping of a hand like the index finger on the thumb

4. Gestural employing both hands

5. The front of the body is directed toward the audience.

Particularities and variations

The size of each gesture and also the amplitude of the rhythm of movement must be changed depending on the situation, context, discussion topic, and the number of dialogue partners.

The cultural surroundings in which we usually live determine certain external conditions:

In “Northern” cultures in Europe, one loses credibility when one uses too many gestures, in „Southern cultures“ one is not convincing enough when there is a lack of expressiveness.

Speaking while seated

- 1. Well-seated: appropriate height when seated is beneficial. The seat with a vertical seating surface, where the height of our legs is from the soles up to the knees.*
- 2. Both soles firmly or easily on the ground*
- 3. Seated upright*
- 4. Free or well-supported by an upright chair back. The flow of energy will be better supported if the spine can swing freely without the back of the chair.*
- 5. Hold the neck straight when speaking so that there is no hyper extension.*
- 6. Keep the jaw loose (classic mistake; the chin is pushed forward so that there is a curvature to the neck. This tightens the throat and leads to hoarseness and blockages when speaking. The reason for this: One has to communicate forward, but keeping distance out of fear etc. with the rest of the body by leaning backward).*
- 7. Preparation: exhaling with tone for a few times*

As strange as it may seem: The exhale before one speaks is very important before one speaks. Because the body-space needs to fill itself with sufficient amount of air.

Preparation for suitable speaking when standing

1. Good shoes in which we feel strong, attractive and comfortable

2. Weight distribution on both feet (50:50)

3. Don't lock the knees.

4. Stand upright

5. Feel, see, and listen in all directions

vertical upwards, vertical downwards

to the front, to the back

to the left side. to the right side

to the front, diagonally left, to the front, diagonally right

diagonally to the back left, to the back right

6. Positioning the hands

In the middle in the style of German Chancellor Angela Merkel ‚diamond‘, or something similar

Test yourself with your own „sensation feedback“.

Remain with the hands in a mental expression upwards and downwards between neck and belt line.

7. Use objects such as a marker, pen, cards and other things that give you support.

8. When speaking, lead your breath as describe above.

Successful presentations and lectures

Giving presentations and lectures

When I give a lecture, I obtain information about the room in advance, about the arrangement and the technical equipment. I get to the location early in order to become familiar with the situation. Where will I be standing? What kind of view will I have of the audience? How are the media arranged that I will be using in my presentation?

Is there a table or a lectern where I can put my laptop? Where is the screen for my presentation? This is usually a fixed arrangement in an auditorium. Will it be helpful to speak with a headset, so that I have the flexibility of moving around and not be fixed to one spot because of a standing microphone. Some of us feel secure when we hold a microphone in the hand. If you show a presentation with PowerPoint, then your laptop should be positioned so that you can maintain eye contact with the audience and not be looking on a screen—behind you or to the side.

If you want to tell a 'convincing story', it can be very interesting to section off the stage relating to parts of the

story. In this way, you can illustrate how you arrived at today's statement. You use starting point A to describe the beginning of your project; then you go to point B (to describe the clarification of the assignment), over to point C (for the biggest challenges of the project), and then to point D to reach the conclusion of your message for the day.

You can visualize the entire development process with your movement in the room. The contents are made more impressive by the positioned points in the room. Such considerations taken ahead of time lead to success. Your theme will be understood.

Why the from left to right—from the viewpoint of the audience? In the Western world, we write from left to right and in this orientation we mentally experience progress/development.

A lectern can offer support. Try to stand firmly by feeling your legs and the weight evenly distributed 50 percent to 50 percent.

A firm, solid stance gives us security. The weight distribution between the free leg and the standing leg can bring rhythm and dynamic into the presentation.

If the stage is illuminated with light, become familiar with it and adjust the lighting that you don't feel blinded or uncomfortable. You can also use the light situationally by leaving and reentering the cone of light.

The apron can also be a further specialty in presentations, if you are on an elevated stage or a podium.

Use the possibility to act directly on the apron. Perhaps, you can walk along the apron or sue the depth of the room while holding distance to the apron.

Your personal way of making preparation and relaxation is treated on another place. Stage fright can be responsible for the last decisive kick. This is what actors often experience before a stage performance.

Always make clear: The audience sends you attention and energy which you, in case you are open and approachable, can you for shaping your presentation.

More about the memory anchor see pages 86 and 120.

Using the eyes

People who frequently work professionally as speakers should especially use our eyes to produce an energetic relationship with the audience. For those listening it is mostly extremely boring when the speaker is constantly looking at his manuscript and reading.

It is ideal to convey the message while looking at the audience without ‚fixing‘ your gaze on one particular person. When we concentrate our gaze on one person, the rest of the audience feels excluded.

Should you be speaking from an elevated stage, it is important to lower your gaze upon the audience. If you are speaking in an arena with elevated seating then it is naturally sensible to direct your gaze upwards.

In order to include the entire group, you can direct your glance with a certain progression: from front-right to behind-left, then from behind-right and diagonally front-left. It can be helpful if you have friends in the audience that you repeatedly use as anchor points. If you want to support a speaker from the audience, then nod affirmingly when they are performing well and send them energy and affection.

Using the voice with amplification

In lecture rooms you usually find equipment for supporting the speaker's voice, for example, a headset which is standard in most large auditoriums. Of course, it is better to test and try out the technical equipment in advance, if possible.

Nothing sounds as unprofessional as cracking and whistling noises from the speakers at the beginning of a speech. With little practice you can learn to use such technical support to wonderfully modulate your voice, and find a fitting dynamic between situations where you speak softly and situations where you raise your voice. These types of variations strengthen the connection between you and the audience.

Using the hands and the body

Often use your hands in order to strongly accentuate and support certain content. Think about an orchestra conductor whose hands and body are filled with continually new impulses through his back-and-forth movement. By moving the hands, one can intensify and give rhythm to what is simultaneously being spoken.

However, make sure that the hand gestures are carried out between the shoulder height and the waistline. This is acceptable in our Middle European culture.

There are certain hand positions and gestured that could be interpreted as negative:

extreme use of the index finger (suggests an aggressive posture)

gestures above shoulder height (agitative or a fanatical posture, see Donald Trump)

gestures below the waistline (are often interpreted insinuating something sexual)

gestures with outstretched arms which in some way resemble the Heil Hitler salute

also taboo: gestures with the fist (communist salute, see Donald Trump)

Checklist for a general preparation for speeches and group discussions that you lead

room, seating order

suitable and comfortable clothing

mental preparation i.e. what is the absolutely necessary result? What steps lead there?

define lines of argument and fallback plan, look for possibilities for win/win strategy

time, to be punctual and get a feel for the environment

What questions are there about you, the participants, the company? What can serve as an icebreaker for the discussion?

check the infrastructure in advance in order to be prepared for contingencies

send documents in advance, and also have table arrangements made

Shortly before: relax, take a deep breath, have something in the hand (pen, etc.)

,check' your body, particularly dehydration, going to the restroom, grooming

before the start, approach and make contact to decision makers, opinion leaders

Getting started: should be devoted to public relations

grasp the situation, daily events (share price, news reports)

show people your interest by asking questions

address previous topics

Objectives and time limits

draw attention to the theme

objective and timeframe of the discussion/event

questions about additional objectives

Speech situation (ranked according to increasing difficulty)

1. speaking to one person or small group

2. speaking to a group

sitting

standing

with media

3. presentation to 30 people

4. presentation to 300 people

on a stage

in an arena

An example from my coaching practice

I would like to use an example to illustrate the mode of action of speech and self-assurance. A client from the higher management level was looking for support because she was experiencing stress in presentation situations. Even with the first contact over the telephone, I could perceive a fluttering and a rough sound in her voice when she described her situation. When the client came to meet me for the first time, I saw a person with a charming personality standing before me. I thought this couldn't be the same woman that I had talked to on the phone. Her physical presence didn't betray anything of the issue she had. When she became seated, she spoke to me about herself and her work directly, open, in an approachable manner, and with self-confidence.

Following an impulse, I asked her to talk further while standing. Immediately, her voice modality changed, insecurity spread over her persona. The head and neck pushed forward. She didn't know how to sensibly balance her weight on her feet. The voice began to scratch and squeak. Her back was 'tight', and a small 'hump' appeared. She gave me the permission to touch her. I laid my hand on her back. Immediately, the weight was distributed backward and the 'hump' disappeared. Now, she stood

firmly. Through this small correction on her posture, her voice could fully express. After standing and walking in the room for some time, she was able to become more and more settled and got back her self-confidence. I sat down and looked at her in a challenging way, but she was able to hold eye contact.

And in this way, we were able to discuss the themes that she had wanted to present at our meeting. During this discussion, she was standing and walking through the room. We then analyzed the conflict between the participants and their relationship to each other. From chances and risks, the ‚turmoil potential‘ included, we could build a logical and convincing story for her presentation.

For the next step, I asked her to make a sketch of where the speech should be held. We defined where she would stand, and considered some changes in the presentation room through the rearranging of chairs, the position of laptops etc.

We adapted my coaching room to simulate these circumstances, as well possible, so that the client could ‚play with‘ the room’s points of reference with looking and gestures. I took the place where the main conversation

partner would be seated. At the conclusion, we defined together the wording for the potentially critically situations.

In addition, I suggested that during the presentation she should hold a pen as an anchor. Moreover, we made some cards for the presentation about the themes involved. I proposed that she would order the content of cards according the sequence of the presentation. We also determined how many words she should lay on one breath, when it was reasonable to make pauses, and similar techniques. The speech sequence should also be supported by gestures. We established points where the content could be accentuated by using the hands which could intensify what was being said. Finally, we defined a clear starting point for the speech and practice this several times until we were both satisfied. This helped her feel more secure. Then we found a metaphor for the exit, a clear end for the presentation. The metaphor gave the presentation a goal and orientation. This conclusion should leave the audience with an impressive image. The last impression is often anchored especially strong in our consciousness.

These were a variety of inputs for two coaching sessions that lasted for three hours each. Sometimes less is more, so that the attention span of the client is not overtaxed.

However, in this situation the amount of intervention was appropriate and helpful. The client could present her themes successfully and relatively relaxed. She booked two further sessions in order to deepen what she had learned. I later received the message from the decision making group that her performance was a positive surprise.

The crux of a career is speaking in front of the public. Many avoid this step because they are afraid of it. As a consequence, they hinder their development and their potential can not fully unfold.

A fear-free and convincing presentation of content before an audience is definitely something that should be learned.

Acknowledgments

My sincere gratitude and respect for their paratheatrical research and all the impulses and experience I was able to receive from them:

Rena Mirecka, Antoni Jaholkowski, Stachek Scierski,
Spichek Cyncutis und Teo Spychalski

Dear Alexander, thank you so much for your effort and assistance in connection with all my publications. It is great to be your friend.

The Author's Published Works

Anton Eckl, Coaching via Patterns. The Short-Breviary for Self-Guidance (2013)

Anton Eckl, Opening Patterns (2017)

and several German publications

About the Author

Anton Eckl has worked with people from all areas of life and in different situations for more than 35 years. In more than 2,000 coachings and for over 40,000 seminar participants, Anton Eckl has developed his own form of pedagogical access and support methodology, which he calls MusterCoaching®.

MusterCoaching® has been a registered trademark since the beginning of 2016. This method has provided proven results for private clients and companies daily and has supported people in rebalancing themselves and accomplishing their tasks successfully.

