

Beyond Words . . .

*Understanding and Interpreting
Body Language*



Introduction

- **Humans pride themselves on their seemingly unique ability to verbalize feelings and ideas.**
- **While the mouth tells one story, gestures and posture may tell a different story.**

Taking Gestures Out of Context

(attaching significance to a single gesture)

- Gestures should be observed in clusters to provide a more accurate picture of person being observed
- Each gesture is like a sentence
- The sum total of postures and gestures relate a non-verbal story

“Gut Feelings” & Congruence

- When intuition tells you that certain people are not being straightforward even though they sound logical & appropriate
- This “intuition” or gut feeling results from subconscious ability to read another person’s body language

Evolution and Refinement of Inherent Gestures

- Behavioral scientists have found that some basic communication gestures are universal and believed to be inherent
- Examples are: smiling, shrugging, nodding
- Children tend to exaggerate these gestures making their body language easy to read

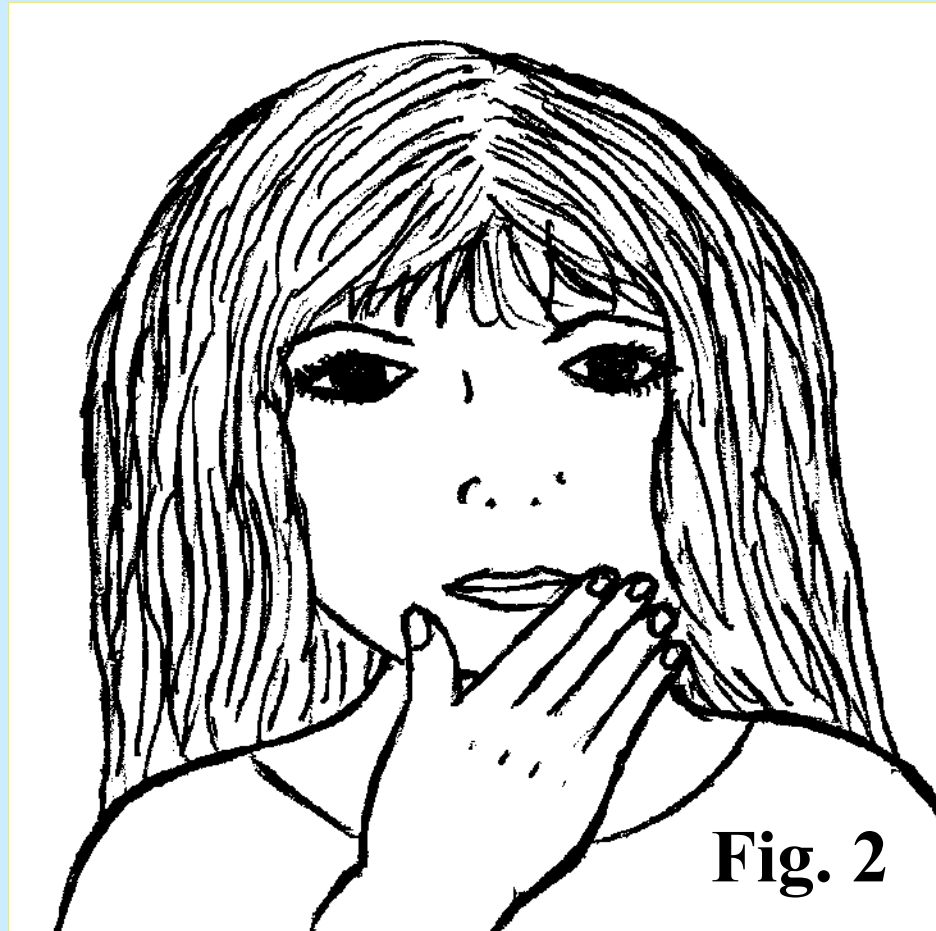
(See Fig. 1)

When children are small and tell a lie, their hands fly over their mouth.



Fig. 1

A teenager might “refine” this inherent gesture by simply bringing tips of fingers to the mouth



An adult may bring the little finger to edge of mouth.

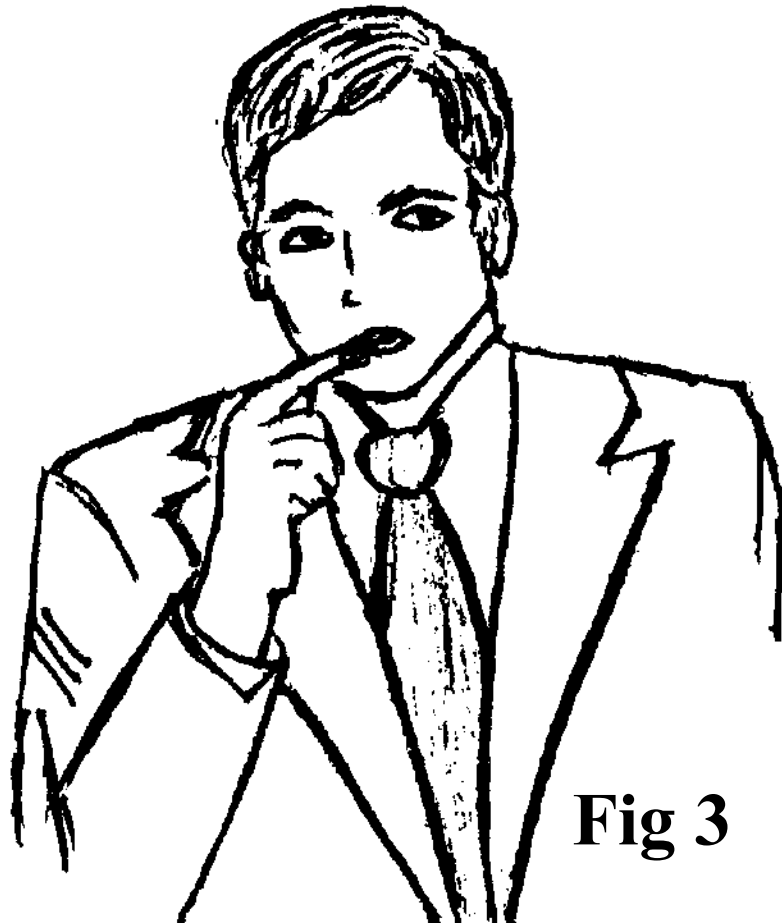


Fig 3

The Palm

**Historically, an open palm has
signified honesty, truth,
allegiance, and submission.**

Two Basic Palm Positions:

- **Open palm in upward position-** gesture signifies appeal or request to others
- **Open palm facing outward or downward-**a gesture that indicates desire to stop or hold something down; signal of restraint

(Fig. 4 & Fig. 5)

An Appeal or Request to Others

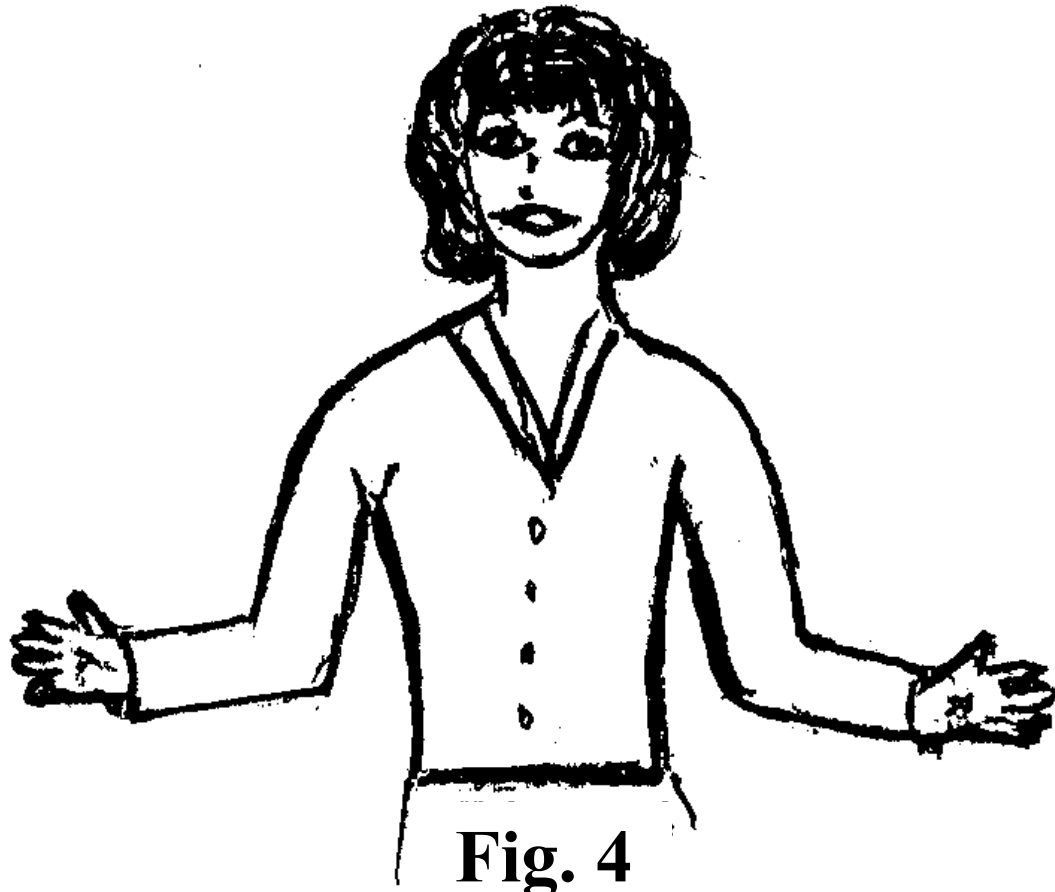


Fig. 4

A Desire to Stop or Hold Something Down

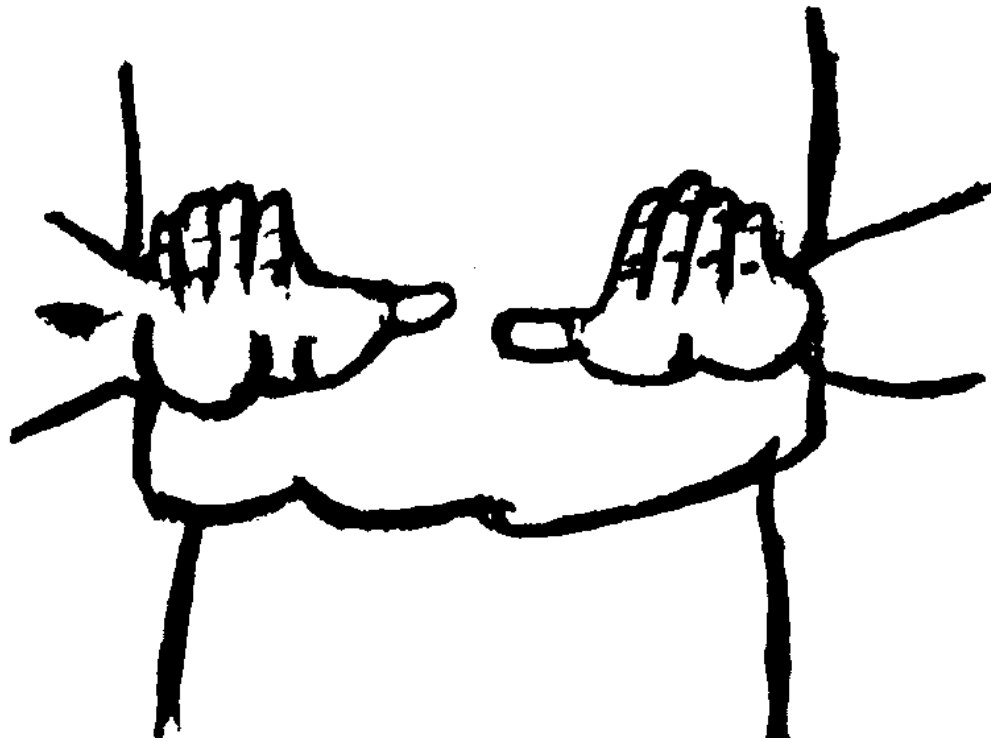


Fig. 5

Palms-up Expresses Submission



Fig. 6

Palms-down Expresses Authority



Fig. 7

Closed Palm With Extended Finger



Fig. 8

Expresses Authority That Borders on Tyranny

Veterans of Palm Deception!

Body language is an important consideration for certain individuals:

- Politicians – generally expose palms of hands as though appealing to public
- Remember—this is a position of submissiveness and demonstrates to voters that he/she is their public servant!

Handshakes

- Three basic attitudes are transmitted through the handshake:

Dominance

Submission

Equality

Dominance is shown by turning hand so that palm is facing down during the handshake.

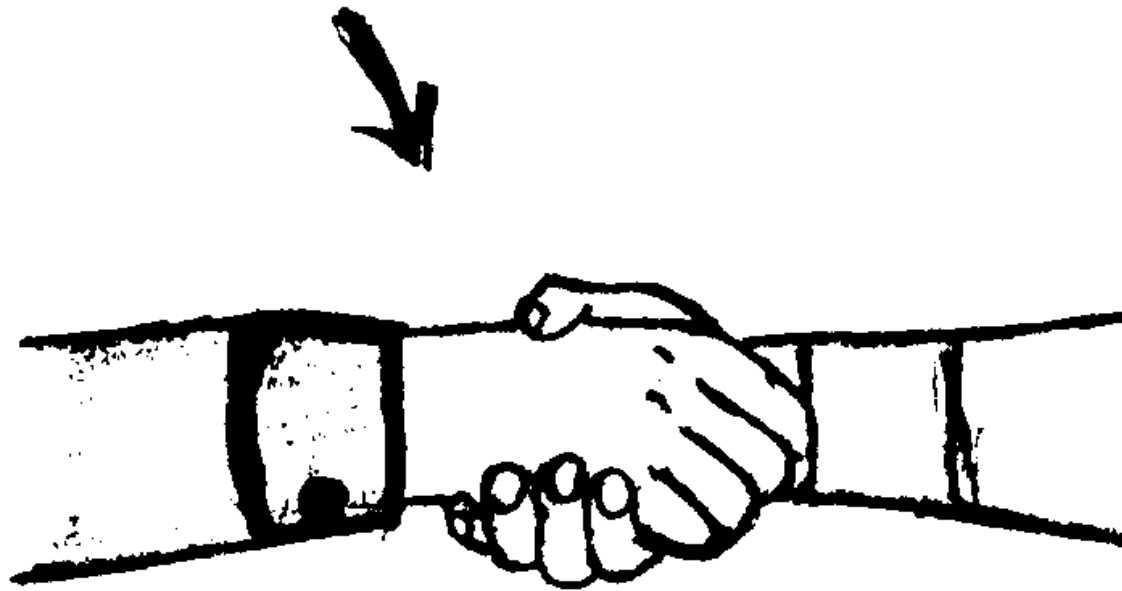


Fig. 9

Submission is shown by turning hand so that palm is facing upwards during the handshake

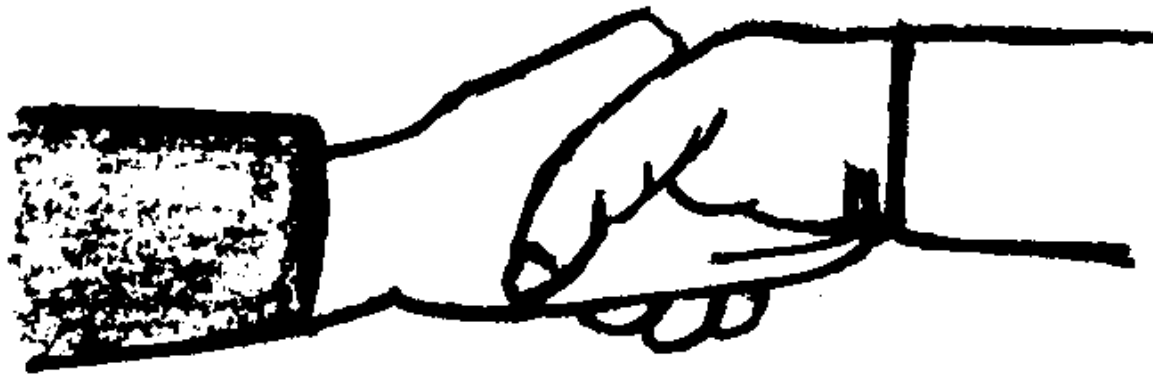


Fig. 10

Equality is shown by turning palm so that it faces neither up nor downwards.

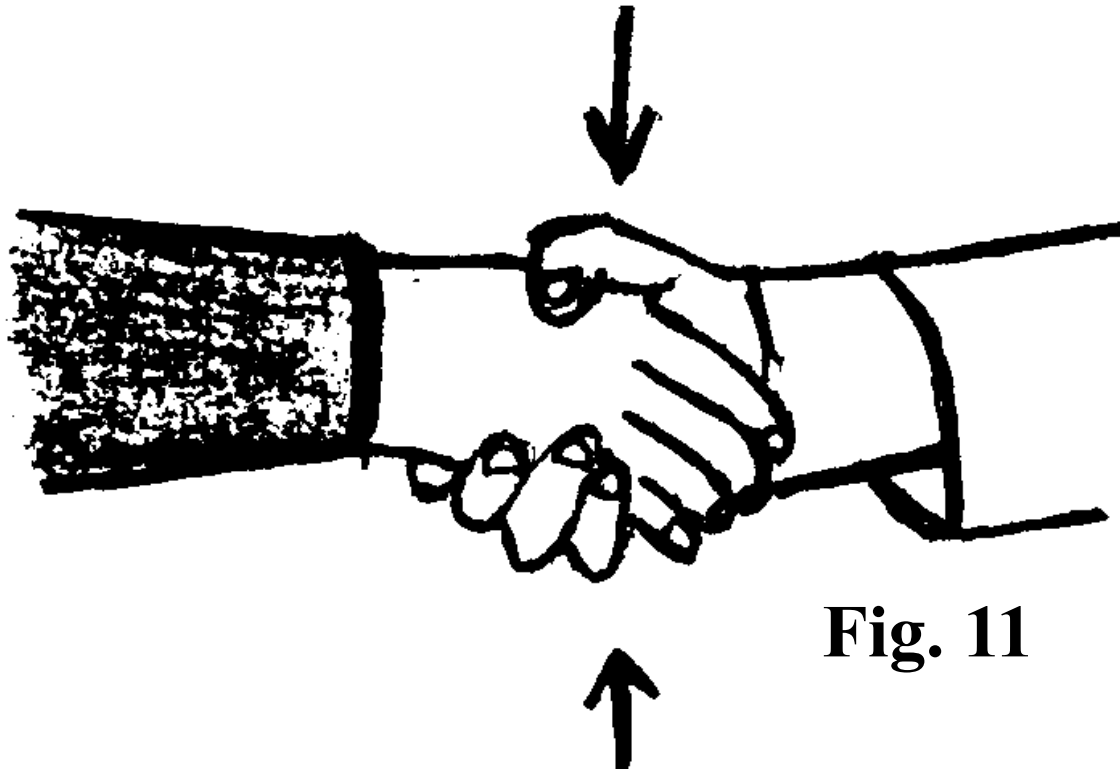


Fig. 11

Hybrid Handshakes

The “Glove” Handshake

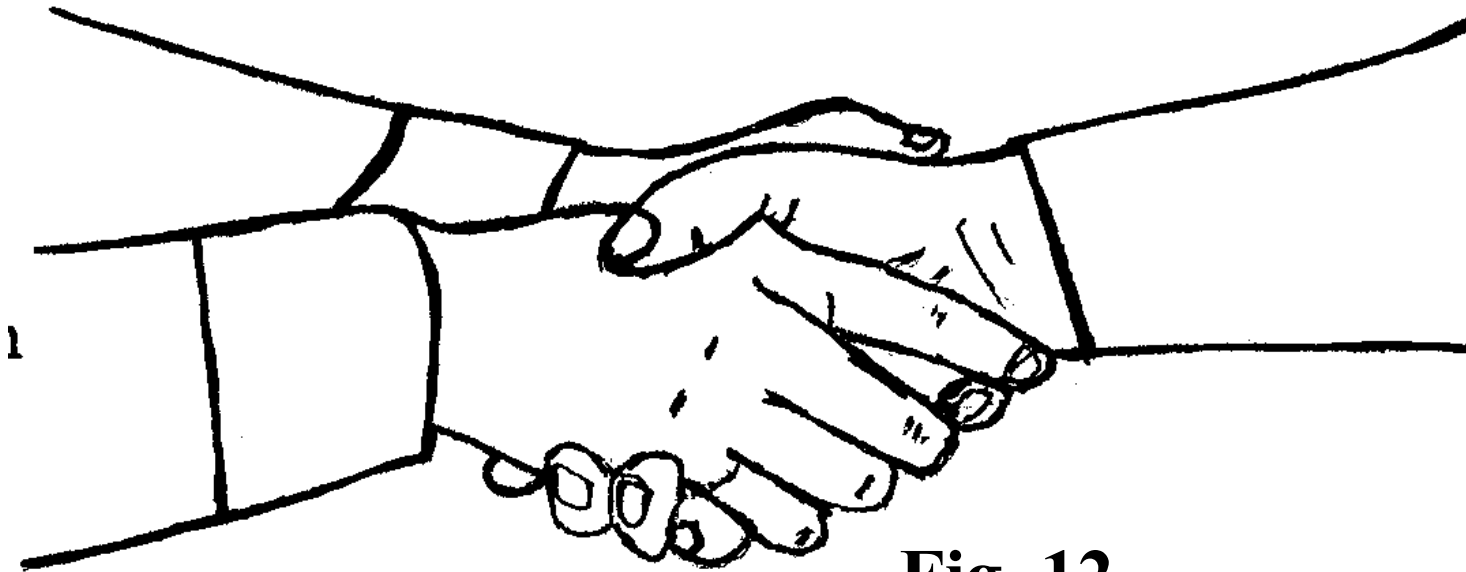


Fig. 12

Clasping the Arm Handshake

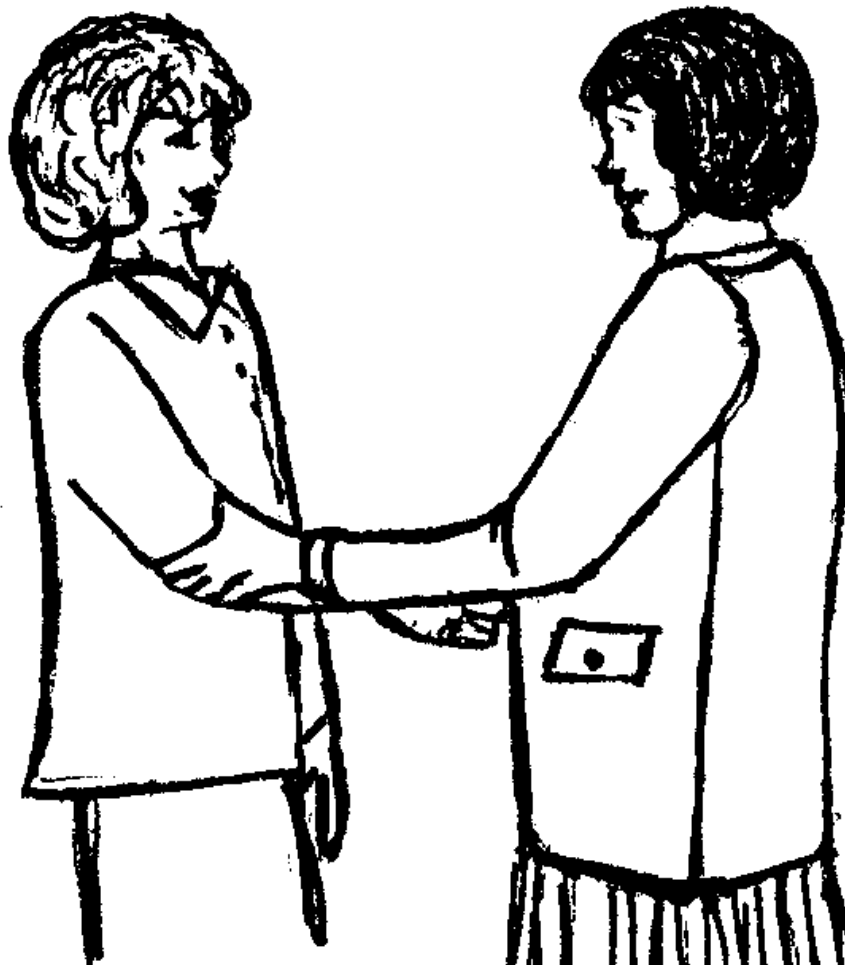


Fig.
13

Knuckle Cruncher Handshake

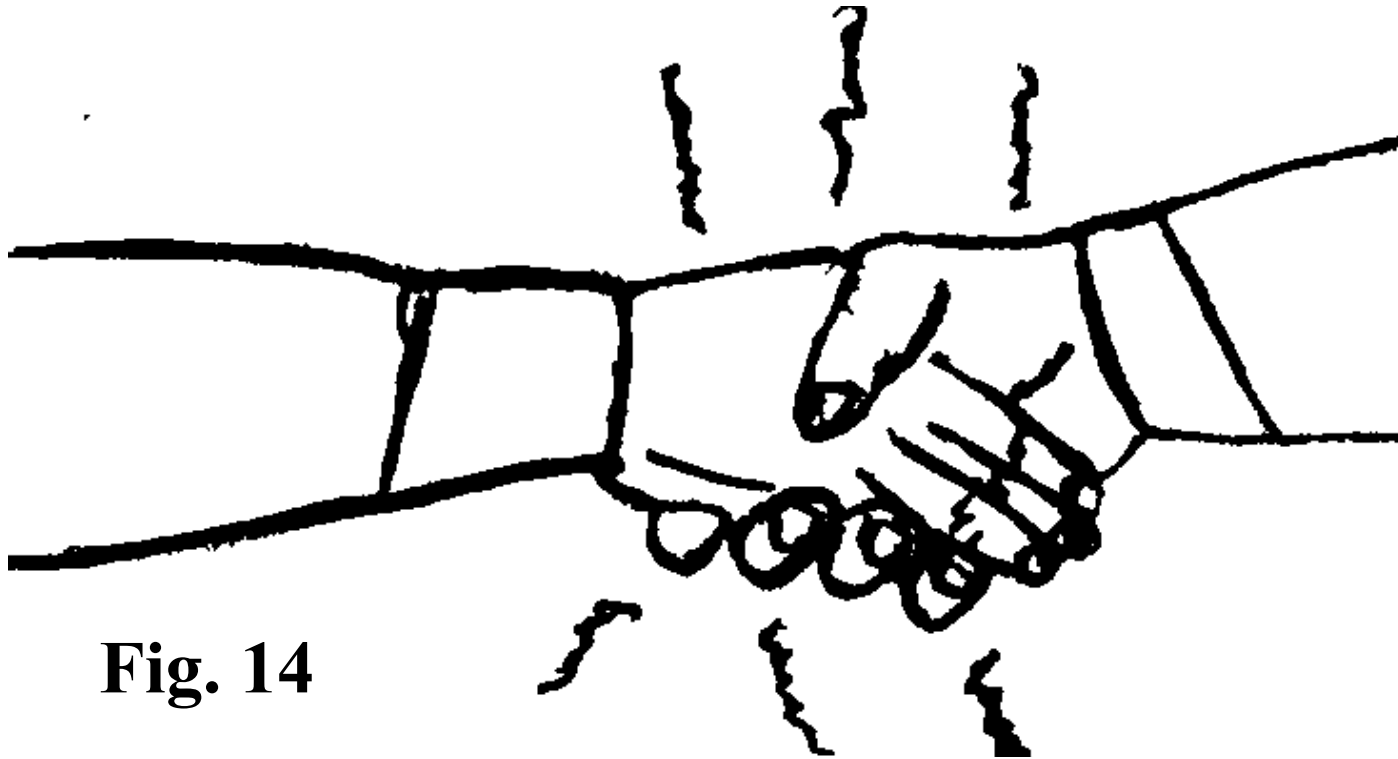


Fig. 14

“Dead Fish” Handshake



Fig. 15

Fingertip Clasp



Fig. 16

Straight-Arm Extension Handshake

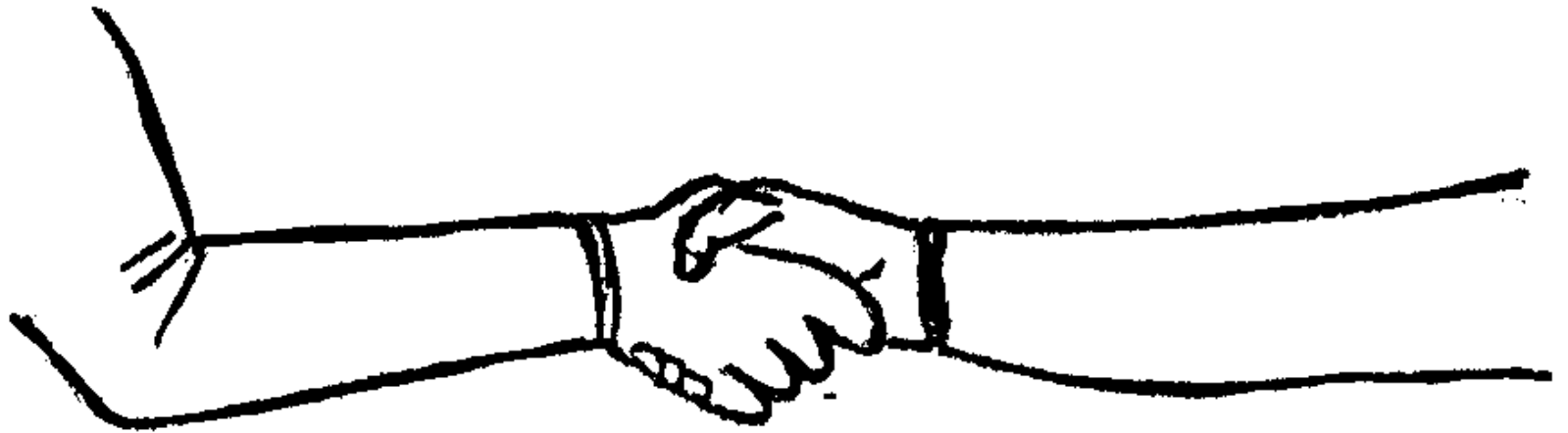


Fig. 17

The Hands

Hand Clenching



Fig. 18

Hand clenching not next to body is a signal of frustration or negativity.

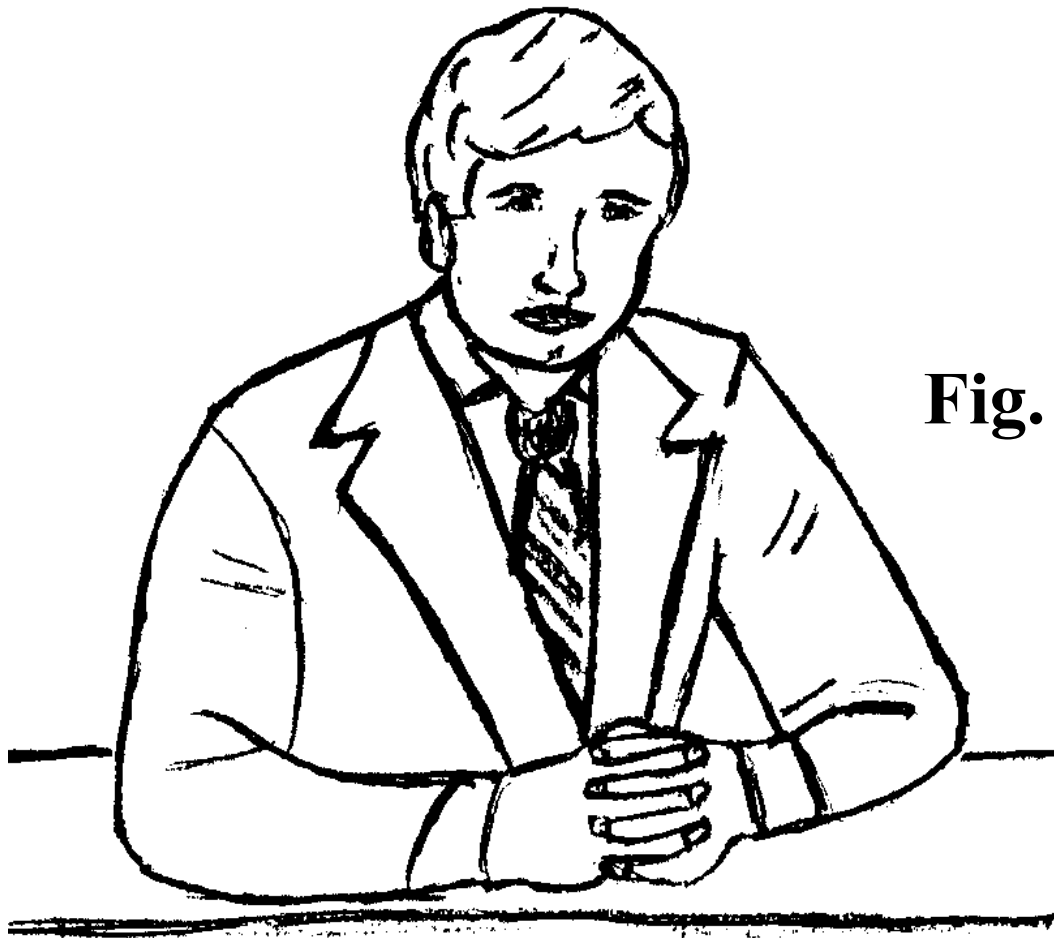


Fig. 19

Hand Chop



Fig. 20

Hand Steepling

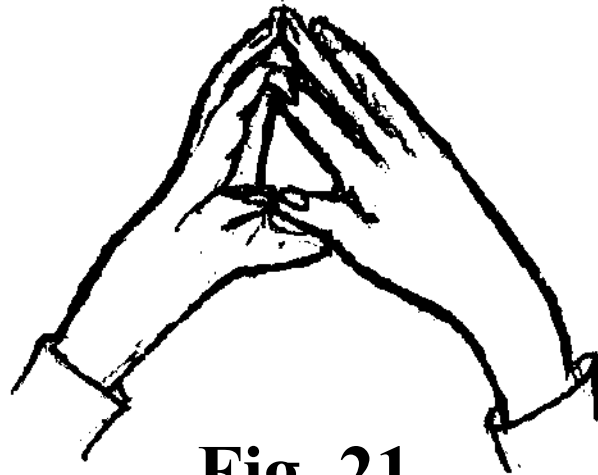


Fig. 21

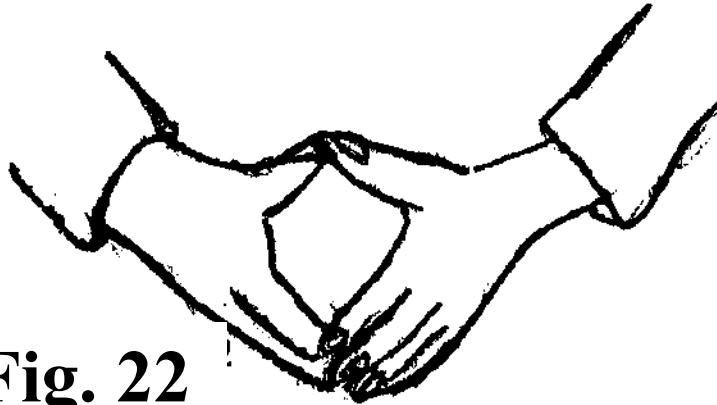


Fig. 22

Hand-Holding Behind the Back

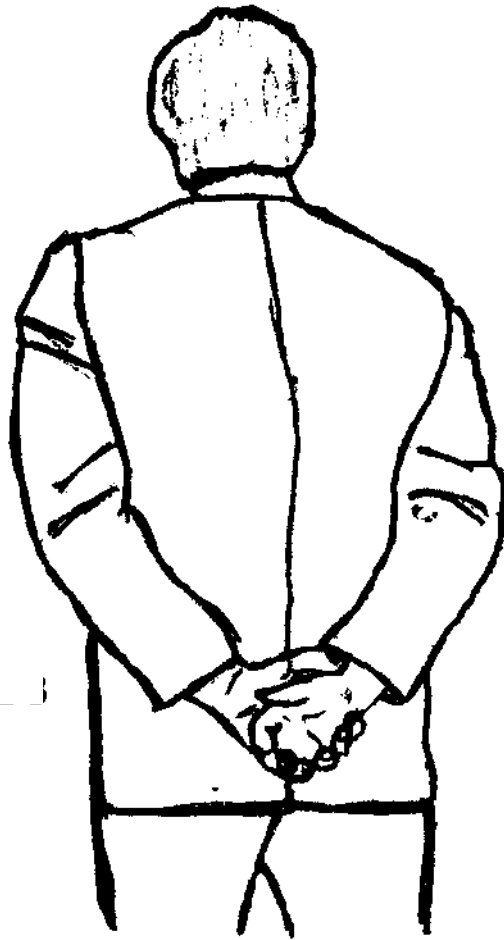
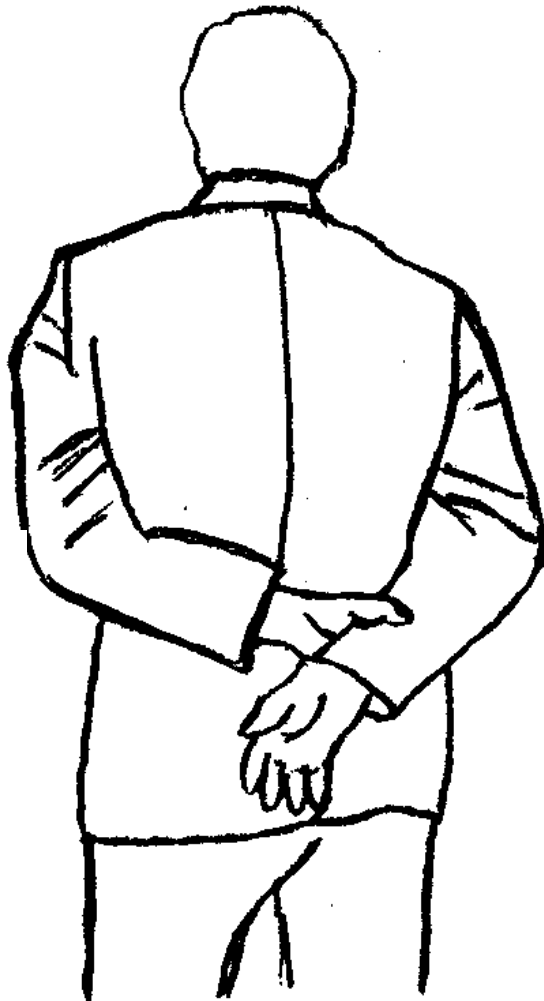


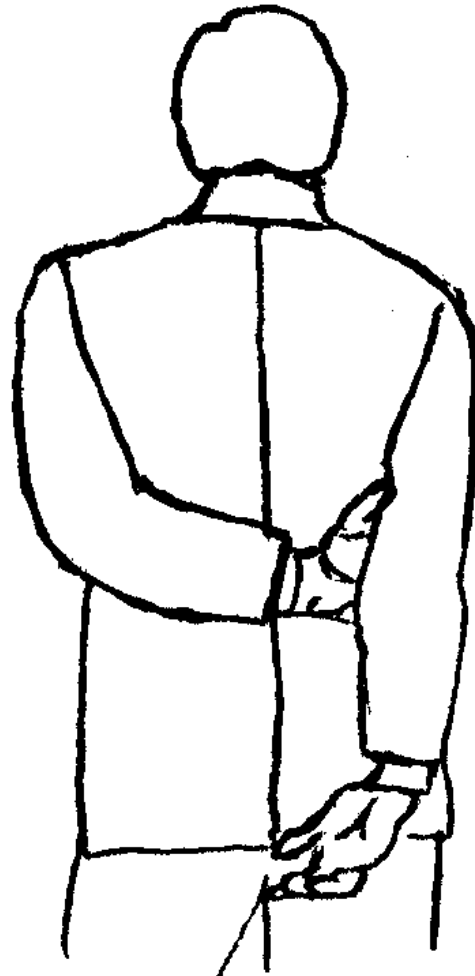
Fig. 23

Don't confuse handholding behind back with wrist or arm holding!

**Fig.
24**



**Fig.
25**



Thumb Presentation

Fig. 26



**Fingers & Hand
To Face, Head, & Neck**

Finger(s) to Mouth

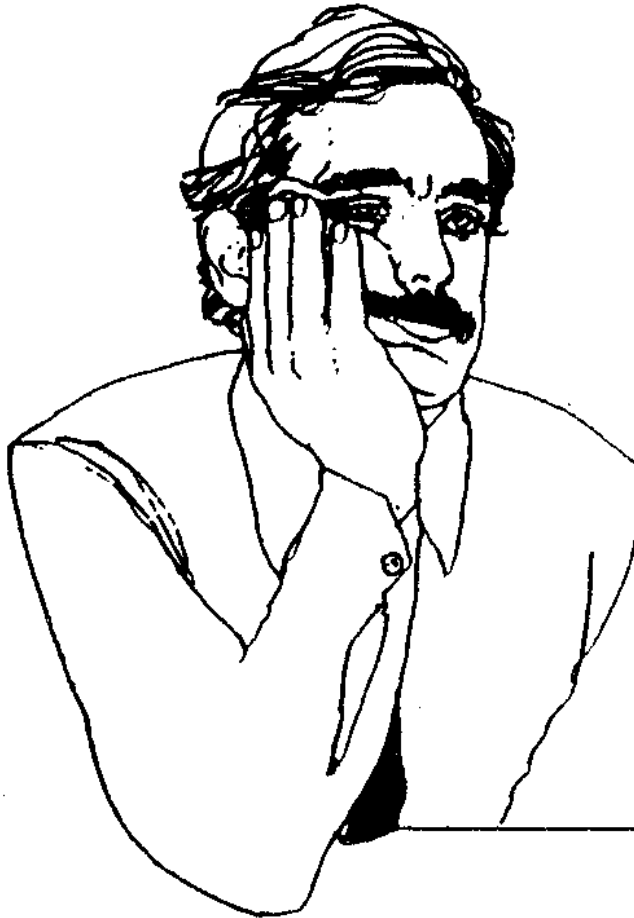
Fig.
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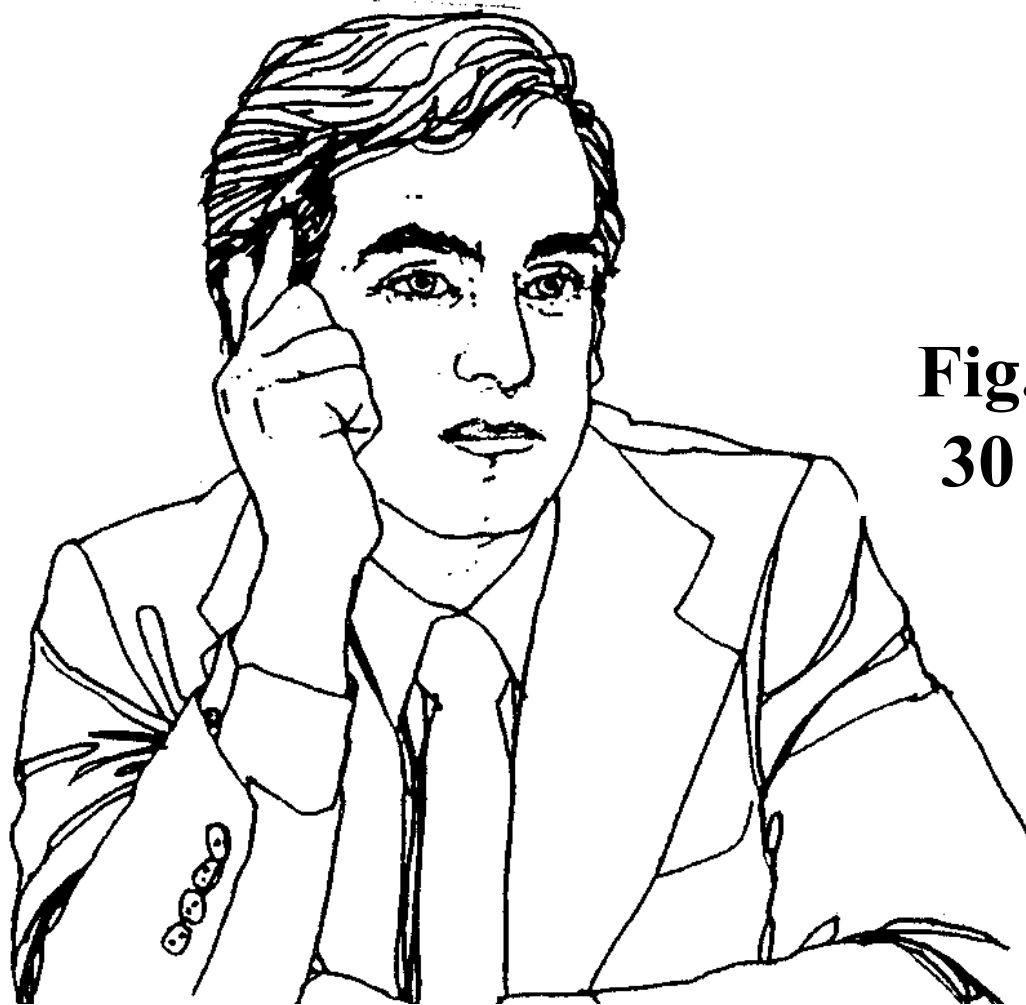
Hand to Chin & Cheek

Indifference/Boredom Gesture

Fig.
28



Gesture of Interest



**Fig.
30**

Forming a Decision Gesture



Fig. 31

Deceit Gestures

Hand to Mouth, Ear, or Eye

Hear no evil, speak no evil, see no evil . . .

The Mouth Guard Gesture

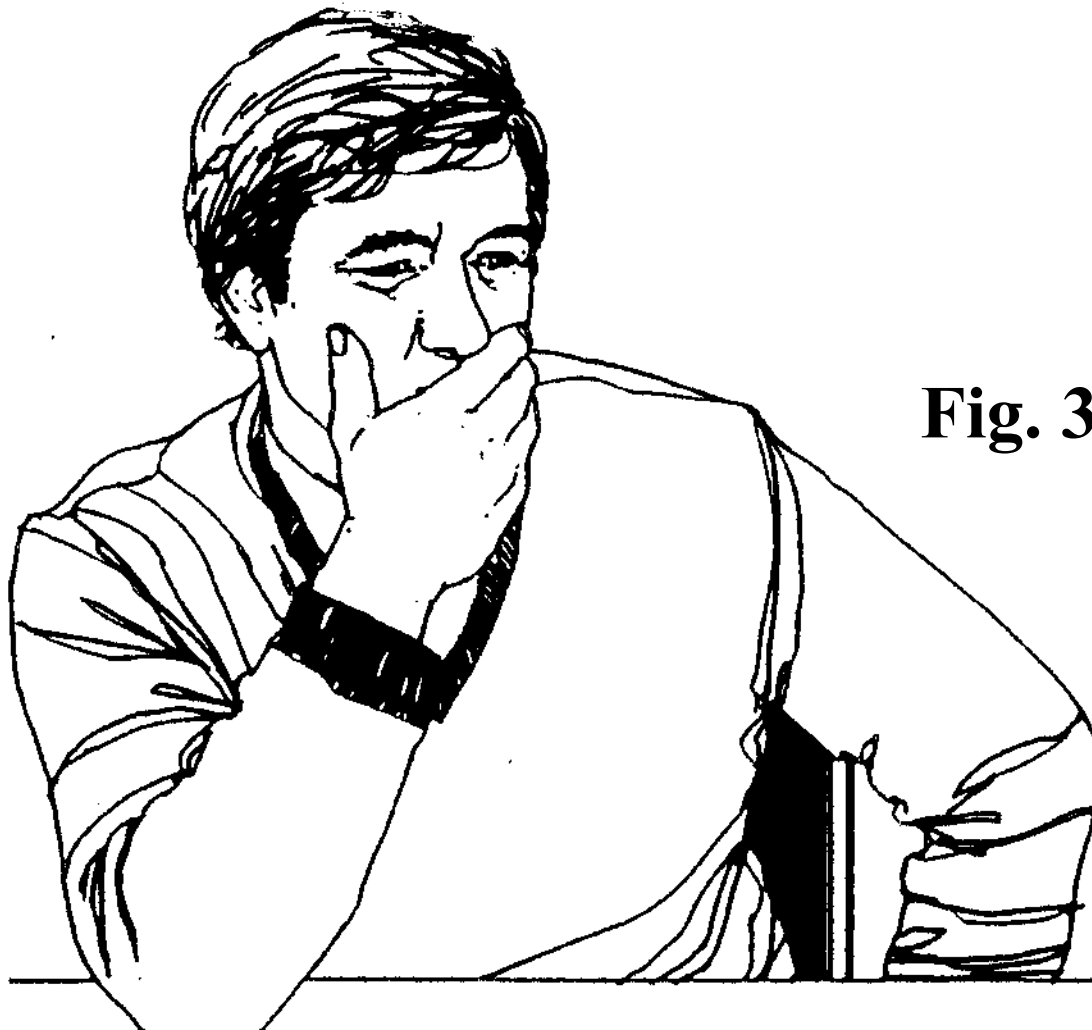


Fig. 32

The Nose Touch Gesture

Fig. 33



The Eye Rub



**Fig.
34**

The Ear Rub

Fig.
35



Hand to Neck: Back Neck Rub

**Fig.
36**



Hands Behind Head



Fig. 37

Language of the Arms

Folded Arms

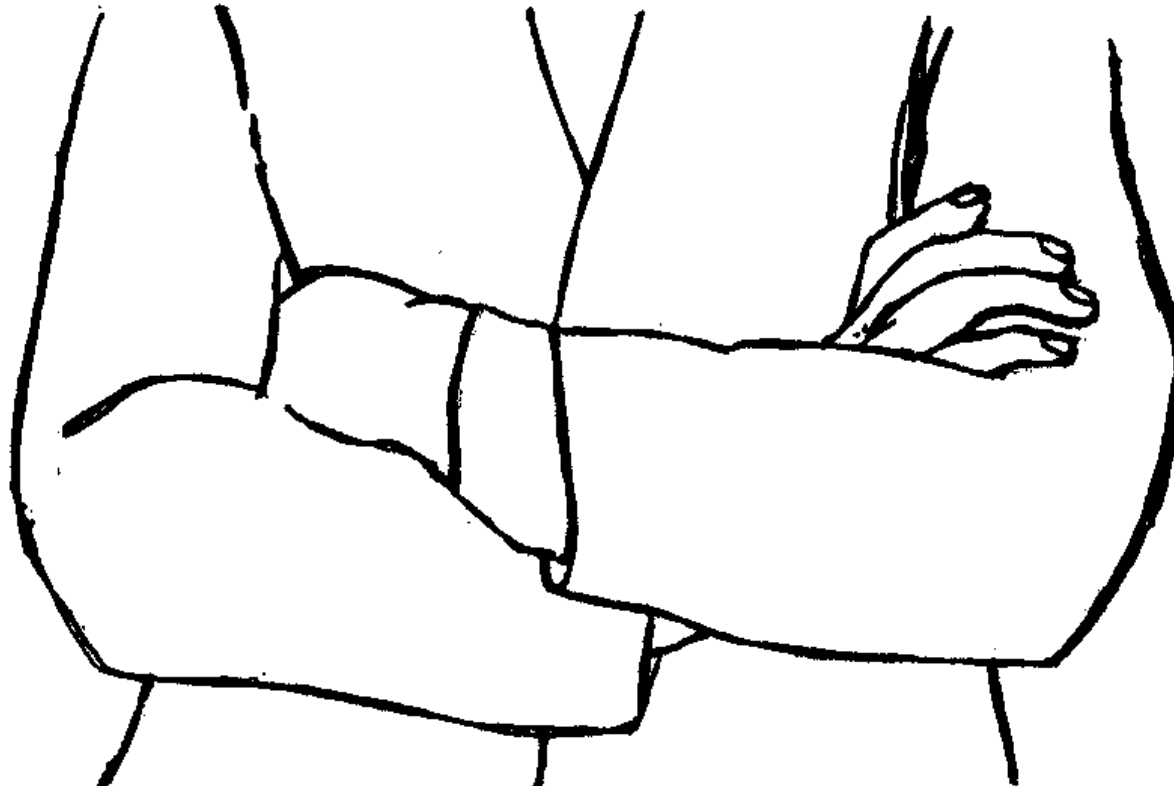


Fig. 38

Folded Arms With Clenched Fists

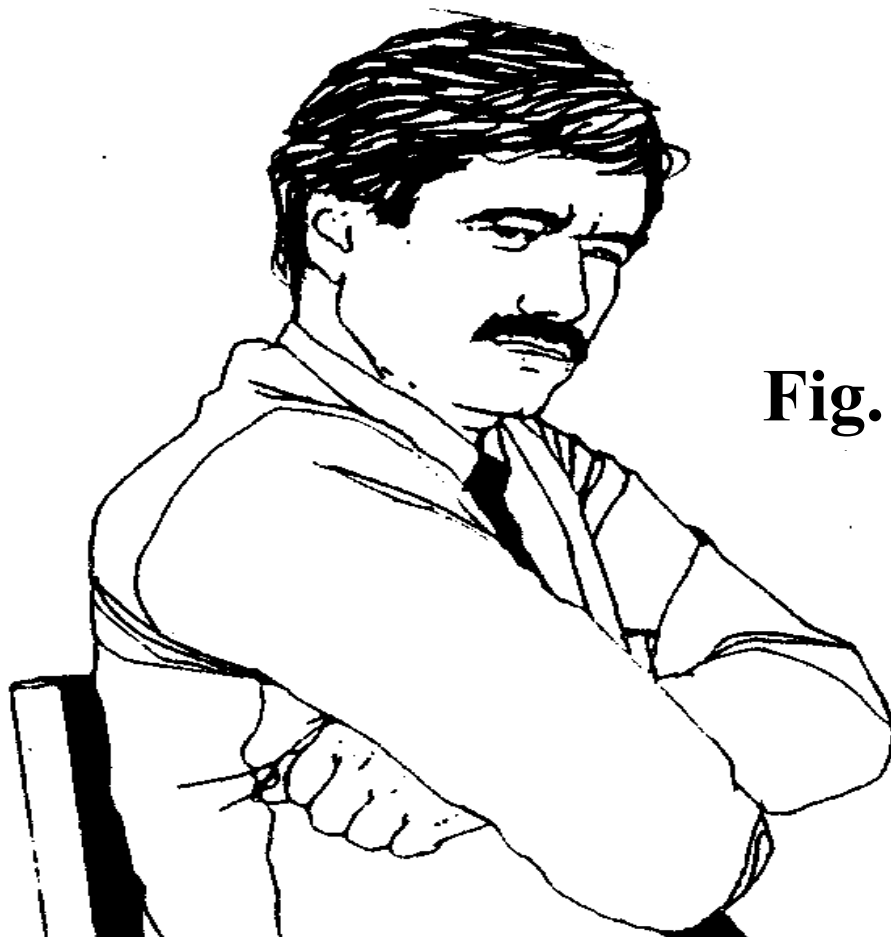


Fig. 39

Arm Gripping



Fig.
40

Single Arm Cross

Fig.
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Sophisticated Arm Cross Barriers

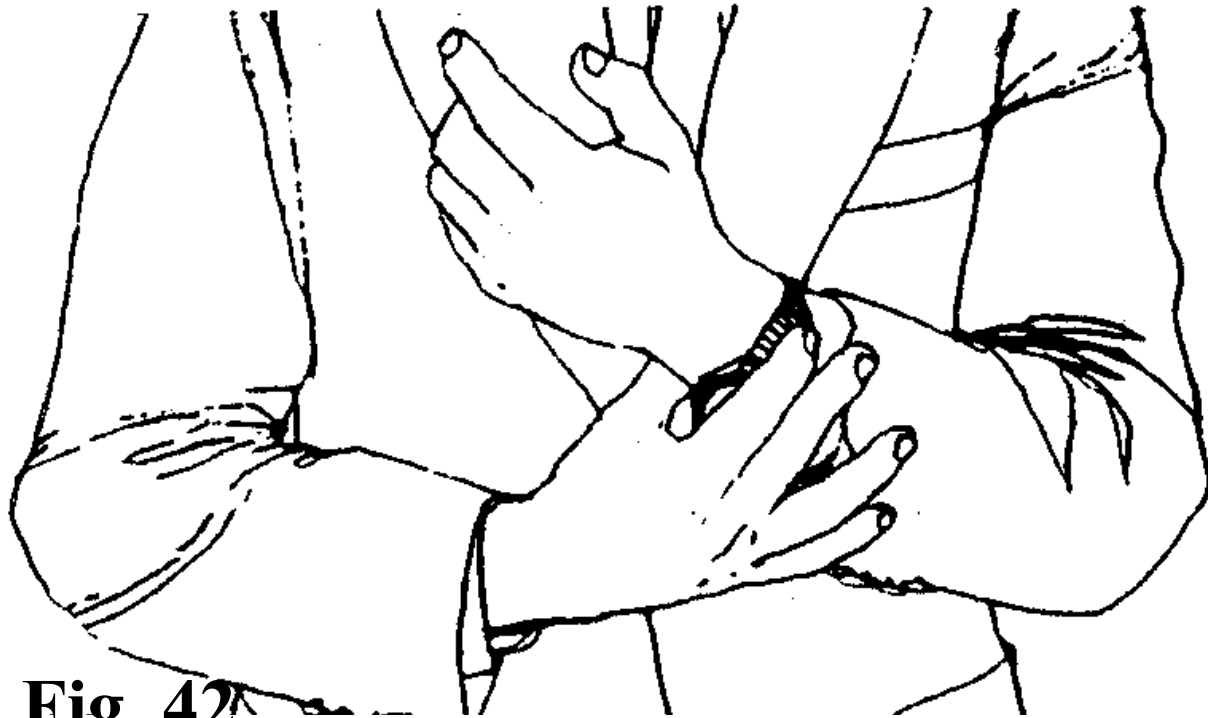


Fig. 42

Language of the Legs and Feet

Crossing at the Knee

Fig. 43



Ankle on Knee

Fig. 44



Leg Lock Position

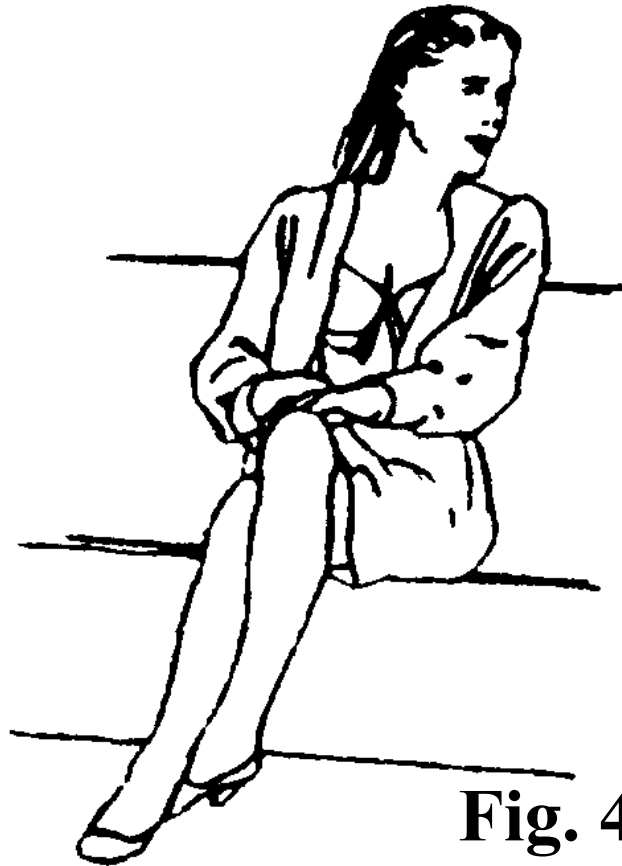
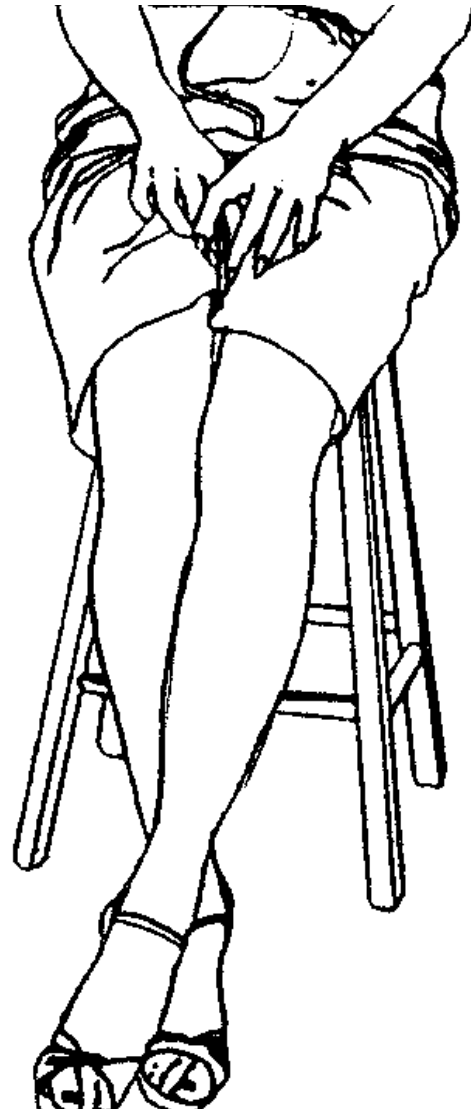


Fig. 45

Ankle to Ankle Leg Cross

Fig. 46



Foot Tapping or Wagging

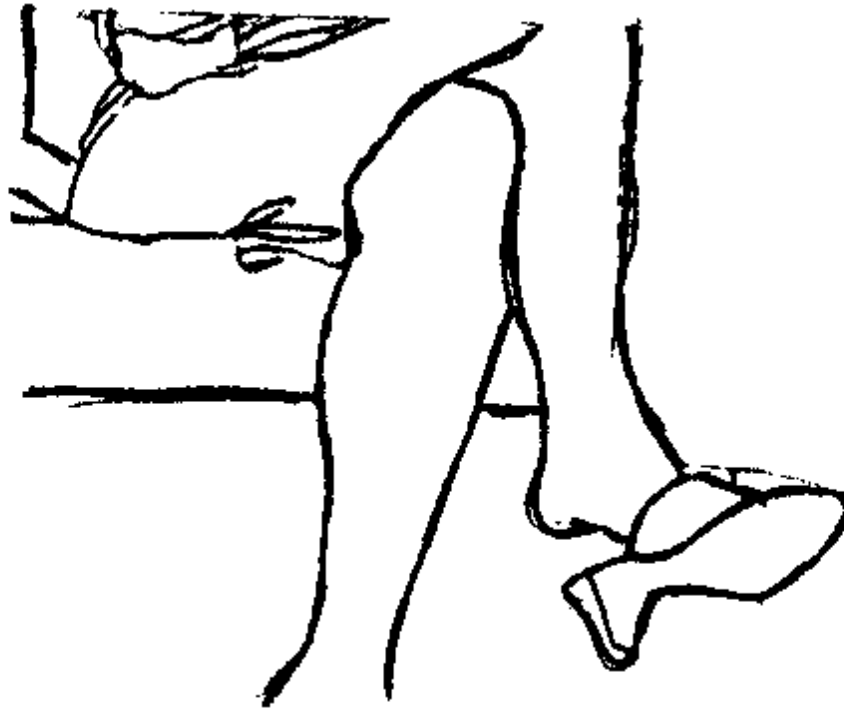


Fig. 47

Language of the Hair, Head, and Face

Hair Stroking and Head Tossing

Fig. 48



Hair Twisting

Fig. 49



Head Tilt

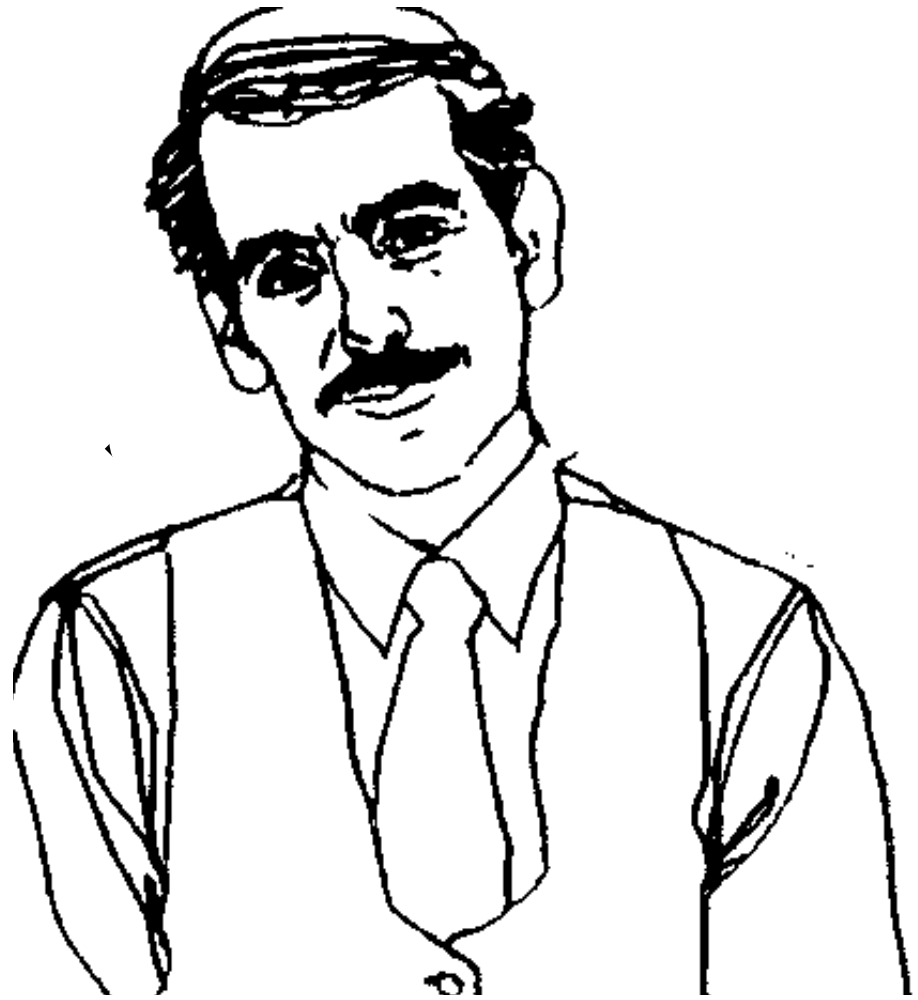


Fig. 50

Backward Head Tilt

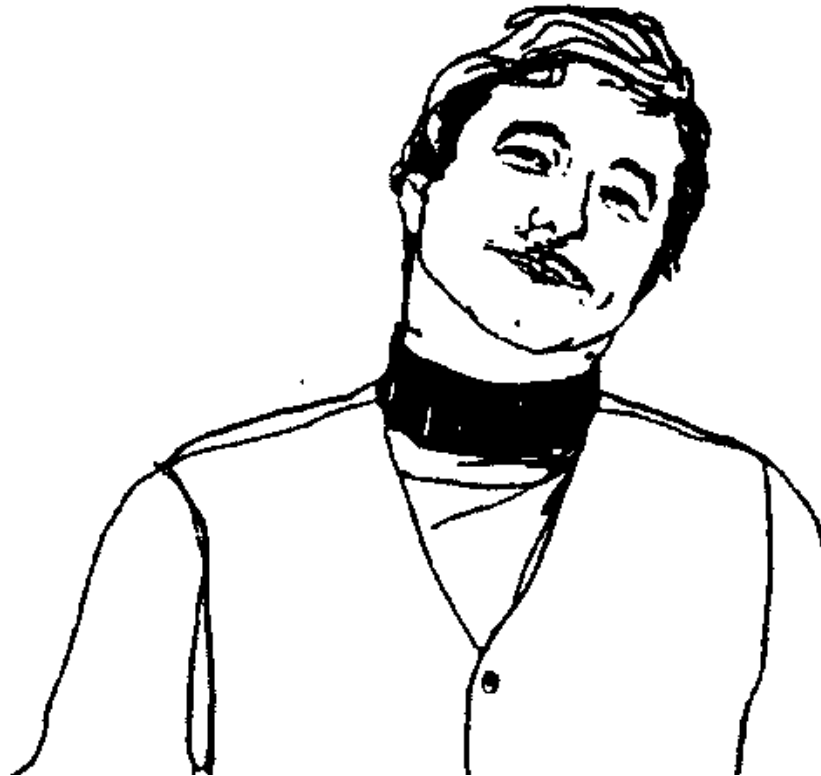


Fig. 51

Lifted Eyebrow

Fig.
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Raised Eyebrows

Fig.
53



Wide-Eyes

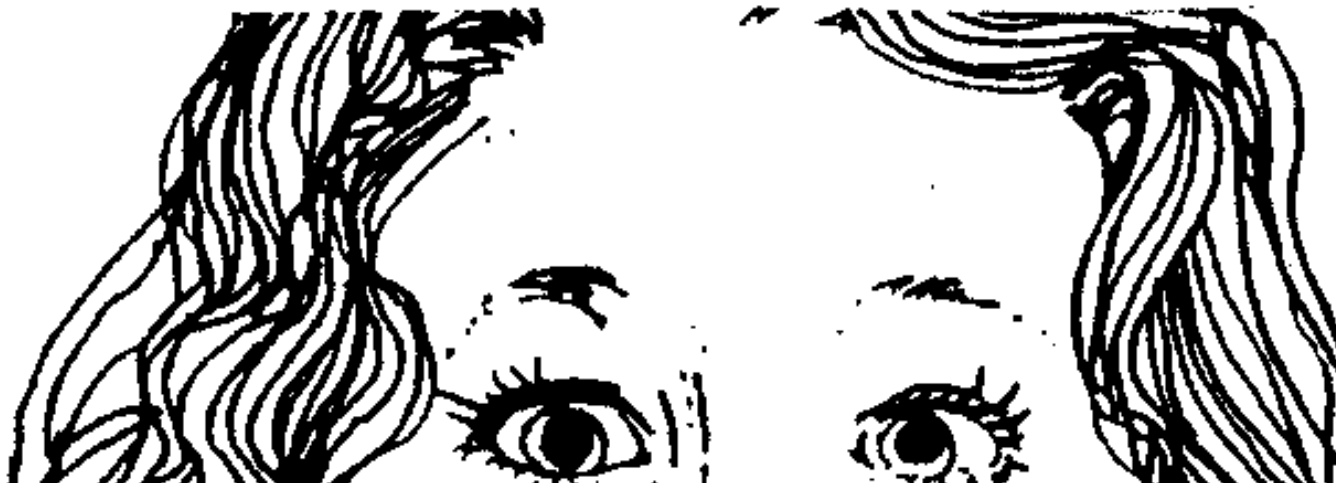


Fig. 54

Nose Flare



Fig. 55

Skewed Mouth

Fig.
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