

The Dap

The “dap” – two fists bumped together, knuckle to knuckle -- originated in the battlefields of the Vietnam War. However, the “dap” was not just a way of showing friendship. The fist-to-fist tap symbolized togetherness in combat. If the other guy knew the “secret greeting ritual”, it helped them identify friend from foe.

The Thumb Over Thumb Wrist Wrap

The thumb over thumb wrap was developed by the counterculture of the 1960s when peace activists, young blacks, and youth needed a way to differentiate themselves from the dominant culture. These days, you may see it with a complex set of variations and other movements, but the message and ritual meaning is the same – “We are different than the other guys.

The Chest Bump

Most likely, you have seen its more modern version in professional sports, especially since the 1990s. The symbolism of the chest bump is one of vulnerability and elation. The chest bumpers jump up, showing jubilation. They throw their arms back and spread their hands open, revealing they have no weapons. They push up and out with their chests, exposing and touching hearts, showing they feel safe being vulnerable, and wanting to join hearts.

The High-Five

While the handshake can be sterile and perfunctory, the high-five symbolizes joy, elation, and power. It is also very different from the “dap”. Since the palm is open and the fingers spread out, the high-five conveys an open, unadulterated win.

The Peace Sign or Victory Sign

My friend Carl is a biker. He is smart and cool, and he greets fellow bikers on the road with a peace sign. Who knew that the hippy greeting would be still cool to do today? This is important not just because the “V” is considered a universally recognized hand gesture for anyone that comes in peace; for some it is a show of forceful victory over others and signifies brotherhood, in Carl’s case, of bikers.

Man Hugs

In the 1980s, twenty years after the feminist movement encouraged women to embrace their stronger, traditionally male side, men began their own revolution. Men began to embrace one another to show their softer side. Prior to this, the only time you typically saw men in North America hugging was when they played sports, attended a funeral, or got married.

© Patti Wood visit Patti on the web at www.pattiwood.net and call her about booking speeches, training and interviews

In man hug the male first sticks out his hand for a handshake and then with the right hand locks in the handshake (to keep them from getting too close), he wraps one arm around the other's shoulder and hug. The two men hug with only their upper bodies touching and their lower torsos held out and away. Finally, to insure no one can misconstrue this partial hug as a sissy move, they take the hand that they had briefly held around the back on the fellow teammate and strike up and down hard three or four times. The two extended right arms block any symbolic joining of the two bodies and involve the aggressive act of strikes to the back to insure each man knows the other is still a testosterone, card-carrying member of the "Man club".

The Pound Hug or Man Hug is exclusively performed between two males. It goes by other names, including "pound shake," "dude hug," "shrug," or the "bro hug," It is a greeting or parting ritual showing a certain level of intimacy typically reserved for close friends and family.

The Plain Old Hug

A hug fully breaks the intimate zone boundaries of the body while other greetings, from the handshake to the bow to the upheld palms high-five are designed to keep people apart outside the intimate zero to fourteen-inch zone. A hug is a greeting of friend-to-friend. While people are avoiding handshakes, hugging seems to be increasing in popularity. Some say the increase came after the tragedy of 9/11 as the need for comfort and bonding increased. My Fortune 500 audience members say the change to casual dress in corporate America has brought a desire for a more casual greeting ritual. My high school and college student audiences share with me that hugging makes them feel accepted and loved by their friends in a way they don't feel with their parents. My audiences that include principals and schoolteachers share that with two-parent working families, kids hugging each other helps them get the healthy touch they are missing out on at home.

Romantic Hugs

There are messages in the embraces you receive from your significant other.

The Sneak Attack

Your partner comes up from behind and places his arm around your chest, blanketing your body with his. This is one of the most revealing of all hugs. It says, "I am in love with you and want to protect you". This is his display of strength and dominance in an intimate setting.

The Back Rub Embrace

Gently rubbing and stroking your back while embracing you offers multiple indications. This affectionate touch indicates your partner's emotional desire to nurture and protect you. It is also a prelude to intimate contact. The back is a very vulnerable part of the body and is subject to a number of emotional responses. Your partner may be feeling sad and desires this comfort from you, so he initiates the action in hope you will return the gesture. Some insight into your partner's emotional state is necessary to interpret the back rub embrace.

© Patti Wood visit Patti on the web at www.pattiwood.net and call her about booking speeches, training and interviews

The Pat on the Back Hug

If done with frequency, alone and in public, the pat on the back hug can be a sign of relationship woes. However, there are also times when your partner is preoccupied and will quickly give you a pat embrace so she can return her focus to whatever it was you interrupted. Some men are uncomfortable with public displays of affection and may use this type of hug when around others.