



In this January 2004 Cosmopolitan issue, Patti looks at “Little Clues That Show Your Love Is Deep”. The article features 9 ways to get a read on the strength of your romance. Article also features David B. Givens, PhD’s comments.



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LITTLE CLUES THAT SHOW YOUR LOVE IS DEEP

Wanna know how tight your twosome really is? Open your eyes. Here, Cosmo spells out nine surprisingly easy ways to get a read on the strength of your romance.

By Beth Whiffen

ANNA PALMA: Fashion editor: Elise Whoon. Hair: George Majouf at Bradley Curry, Malibu; Salsi Jodi; at de facto (from left) Sweatshirt: Diesel. Tank top: Mimi and Coco.



When you're in love, it's monkey see, monkey do.

picking up each other's style is a couple's way of communicating to the world that they're a unit."

■ Most of us could easily spend an entire girls' night out, road trip, or hell, even the length of a reality-TV series, analyzing our relationships. But sometimes all you need to suss out the strength of your twosome is simply to look around. There are tons of visual hints that give away how strong your love bond is.

Why pay attention to these optical markers? Well, for one, they don't lie. "Nonverbal signals are truth tellers in relationships," says Patti Wood, body-language expert and author of *Success Signals*. "It's the little things we do without thinking that can reveal how we really feel, because we're not consciously controlling those actions."

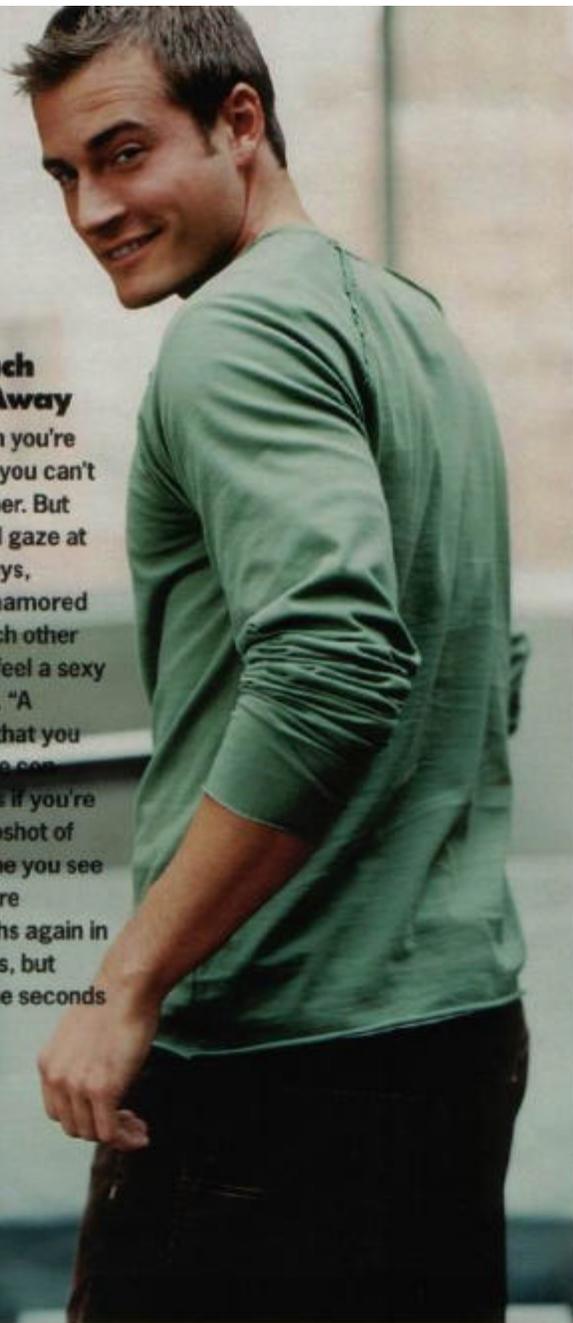
From decoding the way the two of you sit when you're out with pals to how your bed linens look postsex, our guide will clue you into the visual messages that can help you assess your couplehood.

You Mirror Each Other's Movements

Zero in on the gestures you make when you and your guy are together. It may seem like coincidence, but if the second he crosses his legs or reaches upward to stretch, you do too, it means you're totally in sync. "Biologically, there's a tendency to imitate what we find attractive," says David B. Givens, PhD, director of the Center for Nonverbal Studies, in Spokane. "Mirroring occurs in most animal—and human—courtships. For example, when a male and female duck are together, they bob their heads and dip their bills in the water in synchrony." It's a way of showing that you're like-minded, which gives you the warm feeling of safety and security that's an important aspect of love.

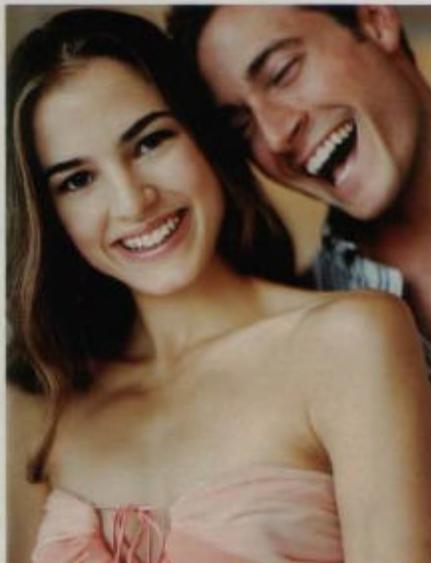
You Watch Each Other Walk Away

Yeah, yeah, we know—when you're first crushing on someone, you can't keep your eyes off each other. But when long-term couples still gaze at each other as they part ways, it shows they're beyond enamored because they don't take each other for granted, and they even feel a sexy sense of separation anxiety. "A lingering glance indicates that you want to relish and extend the connection," says Wood. "It's as if you're trying to take a mental snapshot of each other until the next time you see that person." You know you're probably going to cross paths again in a couple of hours or minutes, but you're still counting down the seconds until you can be together.



Your Pupils Enlarge When You Talk

Look in your guy's eyes while you're chatting. Do you notice his pupils expanding like black inkblots? If your pupils get bigger when you lock eyes, you're ultrahot for each other. "Dilated pupils show positive or provocative feelings," says Givens. "In fact, savvy poker players read pupil dilation as a 'tell' sign, meaning the opponent has a hand he's happy about." And while doe-eyed dilation usually tapers off over time, couples with a strong sexual and emotional bond continue to do it each time they lay eyes on each other.



You Sit Superclose in Social Settings

Quick—close your eyes and envision how you and your guy sit when you're out with friends. If you always sit side-by-side, you are each other's support system. "Anthropologically, it goes back to battle behavior, where you want your comrade by your side to face the enemy," says Wood. That isn't to say you're not tight with your pals; it just shows that you feel tighter with your man. Plus, the body contact you make (touching elbows and thighs) is a way of staying bonded.



It Looks Like a Tornado Hit Your Bed

If you and your guy wake up to find your sheets in a snarled, messy knot at the foot of the bed—and leave 'em there all day—you're totally wrapped up in each other. "When you're in love, you spend so much time tangled up in the sheets, you don't bother making the bed or even changing the linens as much," says Wood.

There's also a subconscious reason why couples forgo changing the linens frequently: Leaving them on the bed a little longer between washings lets your partner's scent linger. "This is a way to keep a part of him with you even when he's gone," says Wood. "When you're apart, you want something near you that signals the same chemical response that takes place in your body when you're snuggling in bed."

ANNA PALMA (top to bottom from left) Shirt: Juicy Couture; Pants: Polo Jeans Co.; Ralph Lauren; Dress: Foley; Shirt: Duvhill; Top: Philosophy of Alberta Ferretti; Jeans: Joe's Jeans; Shirt: Faccoballe; Pants: Juicy Couture; Top: Foley; Bedding: Garnet Hill; Sweater: J.Crew; Shirt: Faccoballe; Pants: Polo Jeans Co.; Ralph Lauren; Top: Philosophy of Alberta Ferretti; Skirt: J.Crew; Hooded sweatshirt: Caspion; White jeans: Juicy Couture; Top: Foley.



You're Happy to Lean Your Heads Together

Think about how annoying it is when someone you don't know well pats you on the head. That's because you're biologically wired to protect your noggin and you don't want just anyone getting close to it. "Touching heads together is one of the best indicators that a love relationship is real," says Givens. "It shows trust because we're making one of our most guarded body parts vulnerable to the other person."

So what gives us the urge to go tête-à-tête? "There's a special visceral nerve that responds to emotions when you're totally enamored that causes your shoulders to lift or flex forward while your head tilts to one side," says Givens. "It's called a cuddle reaction."

You Dress Alike on Weekends

Next time you run errands together or meet friends for lunch on the weekend, note: If the two of you are donning similar duds, chances are you can't get enough of each other. We're not talking exact matching here—like old couples with twin khakis and fanny packs. It could be as subtle as both of you putting on baseball caps and sneakers. "Subconsciously picking up each other's style is a couple's way of communicating that they're a unit, to each other and to the rest of the world," says Wood. "When a couple does this, it's a physical sign that they're converging." It hints that you'll be equally game to adopt each other's more personal penchants, whether it's as minor as food, music, and clothes—or as monumental as your life goals.



You Have a Special Tickle or Lip Bite

If you and your guy use a secret signal like a waist pinch or ear tug when you're stuck at a family gathering or work event to say "Let's blow this joint and get naked" or "Can you believe she just said that?" it's a clue you're totally tuned in to each other. "The closest couples tend to develop this type of 'tribal language' because they're so observant of each other," says Douglas Weiss, author of *Intimacy: A 100-Day Guide to Lasting Relationships*. They've learned how to read each other's reactions—like facial expressions and hand movements—and use them to communicate. This secret code shows that you're so close, you're practically telepathic. It also lets you create an elite club (membership: two), which deepens your connection.

You're Always Grooming Each Other

You might think that constantly running your fingers through each other's locks or picking lint off each other's clothes is a funny way of showing affection, but that's what the most crazy-in-love couples do. Blame it on evolution. "In primate courtship, the grooming phase is superimportant because it's a precursor to mating," says Givens. "It reaffirms that the animals care about each other because grooming keeps them clean and healthy."

For us more-evolved species, sweet gestures like gently sweeping hair out of your partner's face is more than a sign of TLC. It's a symbol of ownership—at least in public, says Wood. It sends a signal to everyone around that you are together and don't want anyone trying to move in. But if these tender, nonsexual gestures happen in private, they adopt a richer meaning: that you want to take care of each other.

