

BASELINES: a framework for observing non-verbal behaviours

(from E. Shepherd & A. Griffiths (2021) *Investigative Interviewing: The Conversation Management Approach. Third Edition.* Oxford: Oxford University Press)

	FOCUS	DESCRIPTION AND REMARKS
B	BLINK RATE	Increases.
	BLOOD VESSELS [carotid arteries in neck]	Swelling/pulsing (visible around Adam's apple region, and upwards to base of ear).
	BLUSHING	
	BODY CLASPING	<i>Common parallel behaviour</i> Rocking.
	BODY SHIFTING	When completing the speaking turn, shifting orientation of sitting position to an angle away from direct view. <i>Common parallel behaviour</i> Gaze aversion; pushing chair backwards; refusing to say anything else.
	BREATHING	Increased rate; shallow; difficulty in breathing.
	BROW	Creasing (called an "omega" – after the shape of the Greek letter).
A	ADAPTORS [unconscious: self-grooming; rubbing, e.g. below eye, brow, ear lobe, hair, head, neck, nose; biting/picking - nails, fingers, skin/flesh; removing real/imagined 'lint' - from clothing/surface; tugging clothing; manipulating an item]	Increase in most people, decrease in some people.
S	SHAKING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head • Body • Limbs • Hands 	Deliberate - side-to-side or up and down – slowly or rapidly; involuntary – twitching. Involuntary – shivering, twitching, trembling. Involuntary – twitching, trembling. Involuntary – twitching, trembling.
	SMILING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real smile • Insincere/feigned smile • Incongruous • Smirk • Sneer 	<i>Duchenne</i> : broad curvature of mouth, raising of cheek muscles creating "crow's feet" – becomes a grin when jaws are clenched - with teeth shown or not shown. <i>Non-Duchenne</i> : fleeting mouth movement, little or no muscle movement – hence no "crow's feet". Inappropriate relative to topic/circumstances. Unpleasant contortion (asymmetric, quasi-smile – "half a smile", corners of mouth partially turned up). Unpleasant facial contortion (alienating – condescending, disdainful, mocking, scornful).
	SNIFFING [where no indication of having an illness characterised by sniffing]	<i>Common parallel behaviour</i> Glistening in nostril/lip area (called a "dew drop").
	SWALLOWING	Movement of throat/gullet.
	SWEATING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Armpits • Chest/small of back • Hands 	Detected when shaking hands (meeting; departing).
	EYES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaze • Pupil size • Tearfulness • Crying
EYEBROWS	Rapid rising (called an eyebrow "flash").	

L	LAUGHTER	Inappropriate relative to topic <i>Common parallel behaviour</i> Smiling. Slight shaking.
	“LEAKAGE” [movement] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body • Face • Arms • Hand • Finger • Legs • Ankle • Foot 	Fidgeting, rocking, swaying; tensed (absence of movement) Grimace (“flash” of disgust, displeasure). Crossing. Covering mouth; clenching and unclenching fist(s). Tapping. Jigging (twitching up and down knee movement – toe touching ground); crossing and uncrossing legs repeatedly. Rotating (“axling”). Tapping.
	LIPS	Biting, licking, tightening, trembling.
I	ILLUSTRATORS [hand/finger movements that describe shape, dimension, direction, velocity, impact]	Verbal description without illustration or accompanied by gross hand movement = doubtful validity of description/experience.
N	NODS [= non-vocal “guggles”]	Increase; decrease.
	NOISES	Many kinds. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belching (burping). • Chuckling or chortling (sound of restrained, suppressed laughing – usually with closed mouth). <i>Common parallel behaviour</i> Slight shaking of body. Holding stomach (one or both hands). • Coughing. • Giggling (sound of partial or distorted laughing). <i>Common parallel behaviour</i> Slight shaking of body. Hand covering mouth (concealed amusement). • Groaning (long, low inarticulate sound). • Grunting. • Sighing (slow, long, audible drawing in and exhaling a deep breath). • Sniggering/snickering (half-suppressed, quiet laughing). • Snorting (explosive sound of air forced through the nose). • Whistling.
E	EXPRESSIVE BEHAVIOURS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound pattern • Speech pattern • Words 	Vocal change. [Useful acronym: RSVP] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Rhythm – Speed - Increased speed (gabbling) – decreased speed (drawing). – Volume – raised, lowered – Pitch – intonation/stress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty enunciating particular words: <u>st</u>tuttering (STart of word), and <u>stam</u>mering (Middle of word). • Dysfluency – difficulty saying words. • Muffled (indistinct) speech. • Stretching the enunciation of a particular word or words to create emphasis, e.g. <i>I never touched her.</i> • Full form to create emphasis, e.g. <i>I did not have sex with that woman.</i> • Immediate self-correction of word, words or phrase. • Repetition of word, words or phrase. • Lack of connectors (conjunctions), e.g. <i>and, but, or, so</i> (= asyndesis: incoherent/illogical utterances).
S	SILENCE	Protracted pause. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before/during the individual’s speaking turn • Failure to respond, i.e. rejecting the speaking turn.
	SPACE	Physically (and psychologically) disengaging behaviour. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating distance moving chair backwards • Orientation: turning away; moving chair - through an angle; completely turning around. <i>Common parallel behaviour</i> Gaze aversion; body shift; refusing to say anything at all or in addition.

Indicators of vulnerable mental state

In the case of an individual with a past or present mental health disorder you need to look for indicators that they are in a vulnerable mental state.

Non-verbal behaviour	Dress	Self-neglect
		Unusual combinations of clothing and colours
		Age-inappropriate
	Gait	Unusually slow
		Unusually fast
	Motor activity	Under-active
		Over-active; walking around; unable to remain seated
		Moving lips but not talking (i.e. talking to self)
		Tilting/turning head (to someone/something not there)
	Social manner	Getting up suddenly (as if by command)
		Diminished: withdrawn, guarded, hesitant
		Over-effusive, over-familiar
		Puzzlement
		Absence of expected response
	Emotional expression	Inappropriate response: suspicion, hostility
		Depressed
Anxious		
Attentiveness	Perplexed	
	Poor concentration	
Verbal behaviour	Rate and quantity of speech	Distractible
		Pressure of speech
	Volume and tone	Reduced; louder
	Non-social speech	Talking to self (indicative of hallucination)
	Content clues to disordered thought	Shifts in topic: derailment, word salad, flight of ideas, clang association
		Vagueness
		Asyndesis (no connectors – conjunctions – “chopped up”)
		Disclosed delusion (false belief)
Disclosed hallucination (sensory experience in the absence of real stimuli)		

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The individual's mental state may be further affected by ingestion of alcohol, drugs or both and by the effects of drug withdrawal.

Useful journal article for those working in forensic settings

E. Shepherd (2019) The Hunt for Non-Barking Dogs and Other Curiosities: Identifying and Managing Anomaly Within Forensic Interviews, *International Journal of Forensic Mental Health*, **18**, 66-84. DOI: 10.1080/14999013.2019.1577316

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