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# What's this Activity About?

This is a Question and Answer Activity that will lead you to understand (initial and ongoing) greeting gestures. Whether you are young or quite mature, we all greet others upon first meeting. Greeting another is a common occurrence, something we take for granted. However, have you ever experienced discomfort when another person wants to handle your first greeting differently? Perhaps it is their custom to hug you. And perhaps, you are uncomfortable about body contact when being greeted.

This guidebook will help you examine yours—and others' greeting gestures. And, if necessary, help you to change your habits and behaviors when greeting another.

## Activity Objectives

Let's look at the objectives! This question and answer activity is designed to:

1. Bring awareness to your meeting behaviors.
2. Help you build confidence when greeting others.
3. Questions will help you assess your personal comfort level when greeting others for the first time, or thereafter.
4. You will receive suggestions and ideas for sharing a greeting.
5. Help you to become aware and mindful of personal boundaries concerning body contact during a greeting.
6. Help you to appreciate and respect others behaviors, comfort, and desires during the greeting stage.
7. Enable you to define and set your preferred personal greeting behaviors in any situation.



## Who Taught You How to Greet Others?

Greeting another person (or may not ) be something you were taught to do. Proper greeting etiquette and customs often established in families—or in cultures. Greeting a person, a guest, a long time friend or family member may come perfectly natural to some. And, be very awkward for others.

In some cultures it is customary to offer a kissing gesture on both sides of the cheek to acknowledge another person. Many youngsters in America greet with a high-5 hand slap. Business peers typically always meet and greet with a handshake. Close friends and family often hug.

This exercise will bring awareness to greeting customs and behaviors. This simple but important communication skill sets the stage for all future interactions with another human being. At the end of this exercise you will gain appreciation and respect for yours—and others greeting styles. Let's begin!

**#1** Where did you learn your greeting behaviors? Check all that apply.  
Then circle one mentor that influenced how you greet others the most.

☐ My parents and/or grandparents.

☐ It is the custom of our culture.

☐ No one taught me. I just mimicked what I saw.

☐ My friendships taught me.

☐ Other-Please be specific: \_\_\_\_\_

**#2** What greeting behavior(s) have you adopted and use most often?  
There are many greeting behaviors, just name your most frequently used .

These questions help you understand how you developed your habits. There are no right or wrong answers to any of these questions. They are offered to help you learn and discover what is right for YOU.

# What are Your Personal Greeting Preferences?

**#3** What is your preferred greeting? One you give to someone you just met and do NOT know. Check off all that apply. Then circle the one that happens most often.

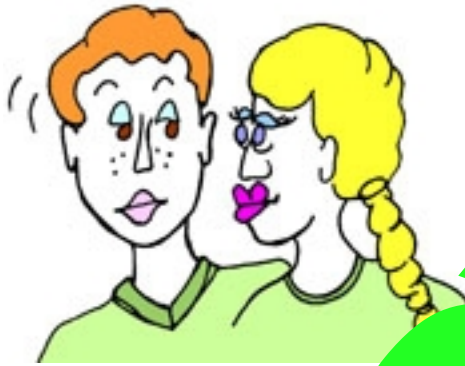
- ☐ A handshake
- ☐ A High-5
- ☐ A hug
- ☐ A verbal greeting only, no physical contact
- ☐ A kiss on the cheek
- ☐ A head nod

☐ Explain another greeting custom: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



*What's your personal preference? To kiss or not!*

**#4** What is your preferred greeting you give when meeting someone you know well. Check off all that apply then circle the one that happens most often.

- ☐ A handshake
  - ☐ A High-5
  - ☐ A hug
  - ☐ A verbal greeting only, no body contact
  - ☐ A cheek
  - ☐ A head nod
  - ☐ Specify and explain another greeting habit: \_\_\_\_\_
-

# Communicate Your Intentions

**#10** How do you want to communicate future greeting messages to another? Or have them react to you? What feels best for your comfort level?

Let's make a list of behaviors that you may (or may not) want to use in the future. While words convey 10% of your intention, body language is a sincere behavior gesture that conveys your personal desire 90% of all!

Often we need to look, listen and take cues from other people when learning how to respond to them appropriately. Sharing a greeting with another person takes practice. And, each new person you will meet will show you another way to be greeted. So enjoy this communication learning experience. And, remember first impressions are lasting!

Check off all behaviors that feel like your comfort level and good sense when greeting another.

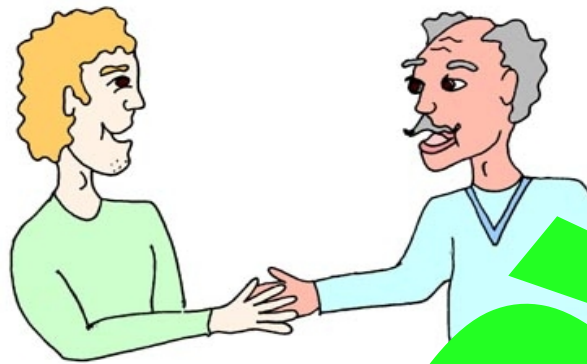
☐ Say upfront with a gesture: "I am happy to meet you! Please respect my personal space- and touch me." (You can also be very specific and say "Please, don't hug me".)

☐ Say "I am happy to meet you," with a smile; no other gesture offered.

☐ Simply Smile; then nod . Do not extend your hands or arms for contact.

☐ Say a simple, friendly "Hello" then redirect the greeting right into a positive conversation which can be an inquiry such as: "So tell me about your latest adventures." or "Did you get a chance to go on your trip?" (Or whatever event you both may have talked about last time you met.)





## Great Greeting Etiquette

There are so many unique and special ways to greet another person. Generally if you are comfortable, confident and relaxed, most any friendly greeting is appropriate. Here are some proactive greetings that will put another at ease.

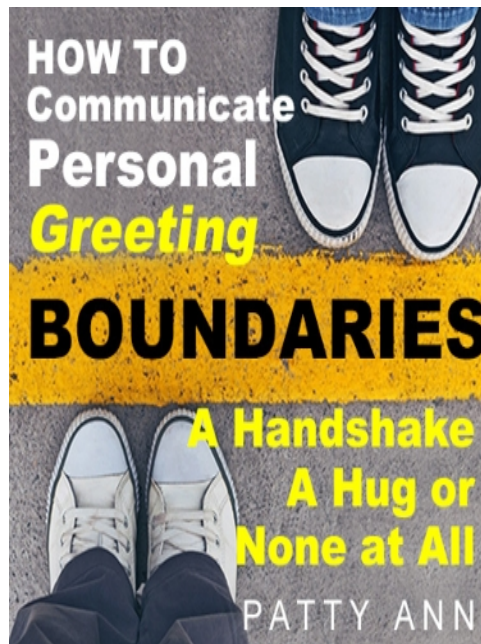
- Have direct eye contact when greeting. This shows sincere interest for the person you are greeting.
- If you initiate body contact, a simple firm handshake as you look into their eyes builds trust. Often greeters say, "I am happy to meet you!"
- Be sincere in your verbal greeting. When you are first getting acquainted with a new comer, best to save the jokes for another time.

People appreciate that you own and honor your feelings. When you are honest, communicate explicitly that your desires are important to you. Do not worry about hurting anyone's feelings. How they chose to react is their choice. You are only responsible for how you conduct yourself. You can be very direct—and ending in words such as "Please" - "Thank you" - "I appreciate you ": All create a cooperative environment and respond to others accordingly. Here are some examples that get the point across in a nice manner. Always use a cheerful voice!

- No Hugs today, Please!
- Thanks, but I am not a hugging type of person.



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