



Fear of being discovered

I define fear of being discovered as the emotional and psychological state of someone who fears being caught doing something that they do not want to get caught doing. It is further defined as a person who is engaged in deception and suffering mental stress, fear and/or anxiety that is manifested through involuntary physical and physiological reactions that serve to dissipate the stress, fear and/or anxiety. Many of these involuntary physical and physiological reactions are observable. The sympathetic nervous system engages in response to fear of being discovered or caught, or a perceived threat, very quickly. When there is a challenge or interaction that triggers this mode, there are often observable and detectable changes in how we present ourselves. Everything that the stress hormones, including adrenaline, are going to do to your body to prepare for fight or flight happens extremely quickly. First the body decides which systems are needed for the perceived threat, then the body reacts in concert with the mind very quickly, and finally the mind and body are now prepared for the perceived encounter or “threat”.

There are inward and outward signs of this fear of discovery mode. The results of what is happening internally are often observable just as well as the outward signals discussed below. Hence, the value of Behavior Recognition is immense. Inwardly, the signs are the jittery, hypersensitive feelings that signal you are poised for action. Due to the lack of blood to the digestive system, you may get butterflies or a sick feeling. Your heart races with blood, leaving the skin so you get the feeling of a high core temperature and cool skin. In other words, you feel clammy. Your breathing is elevated, but constricted, so your heart and lungs race. This increased metabolism—as much as 100 percent—results in you feeling flushed and hot. Your focus becomes narrow and your hearing directed to the target. You can hear your heartbeat. Your mind recedes into a primitive state and emotions come to the fore. This explains why so many people cry when confronted. Don’t perceive this as weak or fragile.

Practicing a skill, sport or even martial arts under stress can make up for the fact that cognitive abilities are gone when high performance is needed the most? This is why athletes, MMA, boxers, martial artists and other professionals practice with the aggression and sounds associated with the real contest. When the time comes, their bodies automatically know what to do. It also applies to simulating an interview, security encounter or some type of personal scrutiny. Often because of their lack of training, it is very difficult for criminals and terrorists to successfully pass a security engagement that involves interview and Behavior scrutiny. Neurologist Antonio Damasio points out the difference between “feeling” and “knowing that we have a feeling.” He suggests, that, by the time we know we have a feeling, it’s too late to do anything about it. The body has already started giving responses to the emotions, whether they are primary ones such as surprise, fear or secondary emotions—Damasio calls them “social emotions”—such as guilt. Overall body posture and the range of motion of the limbs relative to the trunk; the spatial profile of limb movements, which can be smooth or jerky; the speed of motions; the congruence of movements occurring in different body tiers, such as face, hands, and legs; and last and perhaps most important, the sub conscious, cross cultural display of emotion across the face or microexpressions. Microexpressions are now widely used by foreign intelligence services as well as in the U.S.

Damasio’s categories of Behaviors that we all share, point out where to look for the differences in the way people express stress. Just how “smooth or jerky” you move your arms, or how you twist your face into a disgusted look add variations to basic Behavior patterns. Culture, training and everything that goes into making each of us unique can make it difficult to ascertain what specific body responses mean—with some exceptions. Which is why you can’t rely on observations only. You have to follow up with specific questions and engagement to help to confirm or dispel your initial observations. The first exception is, if you know what a person does with her arms, hands, legs and face under normal circumstances (the baseline), then you can spot deviations. People react differently to stressful situations so knowing how they react under stress can help us get a better read of what is causing them stress when we see it happening. You can’t do much to counter or cover up rapid eye blinks, dilated pupils, flaring nostrils, dilated facial pores and facial expressions.

Deception of the month: <https://www.tpidg.us/newsletters/downloads/NVC/deception-of-the-month-july.php>