unlike the verbal signals, they emerge without training and they mean the same in all cultures. The scream, the whimper, the laugh, the roar, the moan and the rhythmic crying convey the same message to everyone everywhere. Like the sounds of other animals, they relate to basic emotional moods and give us an immediate impression of the motivational state of the vocaliser. In the same way we have retained our instinctive expressions, the smile, the grin, the frown, the fixed stare, the panic face and the angry face. These, too, are common to all societies and persist despite the acquisition of many cultural gestures.

It is intriguing to see how these basic species-sounds and species-faces originate during our early development. The rhythmic crying response is (as we know all too well) present from birth. Smiling arrives later, at about five weeks. Laughing and temper tantrums do not appear until the third or fourth month. It is worth taking a closer look at these patterns.

Crying is not only the earliest mood signal we give, it is also the most basic. Smiling and laughing are unique and rather specialised signals, but crying we share with thousands of other species. Virtually all mammals (not to mention birds) give vent to highpitched screams, squeaks, shrieks, or squeals when they are frightened or in pain. Amongst the higher mammals, where facial expressions have evolved as visual signalling devices, these messages of alarm are accompanied by characteristic `fear-faces'. Whether performed by a young animal or an adult, these responses indicate that something is seriously wrong. The juvenile alerts its parents, the adult alerts the other members of its social group.

As infants a number of things make us cry. We cry if we are in pain, if we are hungry, if we are left alone, if we are faced with a strange and unfamiliar stimulus, if we suddenly lose our source of physical support, or if we are thwarted in attaining an urgent goal. These categories boil down to two important factors: physical pain and insecurity. In either case, when the signal is given, it produces (or should produce) protective responses in the parent. If the child is separated from the parent at the time the signal is given, it