

# Nonverbal Communication

CHS 446

Communication Skills for the  
Healthcare Professional

Mohammed S. Alnaif, Ph.D.

[alnaif@ksu.edu.sa](mailto:alnaif@ksu.edu.sa)



# Nonverbal Communication

The process of sending and receiving messages without using words, either spoken or written. It begins when the HCP observed the body language of patient, and even when the patient observed the body language of the HCP



# Nonverbal Communication

Nonverbal communication which may be unintentional, includes body movement, gestures and facial expressions



# Nonverbal Communication

- ❖ We rely on nonverbal behaviors to give further meaning to the message
- ❖ It is generally accepted that 70% of communication is nonverbal



# Nonverbal Communication

- ❖ nonverbal behaviors exhibited by the patients may also be revealing such as nail-biting, toe-tapping, and leg-shaking. No interaction may take place; however, these observations may allow the HCP to begin formulating opinions about their patient and the patient's emotional state



# Nonverbal Communication

- ❖ As a result, the HCP can adapt there behavior and select responses with which to interact with the patient according to these impressions
- ❖ For example, the nonverbal behaviors displayed by a seriously ill patient may convey a build up of feelings, especially fear, anxiety, confusion, and anger.





# Nonverbal Communication

- ❖ Nonverbal messages can enhance or interfere with verbal messages that are delivered
- ❖ There must be congruency, or consistency between the verbal and nonverbal messages
- ❖ If there is a conflict, then the nonverbal message tends to be believed



# Types of Nonverbal Communication

- ❖ **Kinesics**, involving body movement in communication, for example, hand gestures or nodding or shaking the head
- ❖ **Proxemics**, involving the physical distance between people when they communicate, territoriality and personal space, position, and posture, how you stand or sit, whether your arms are crossed, and so on



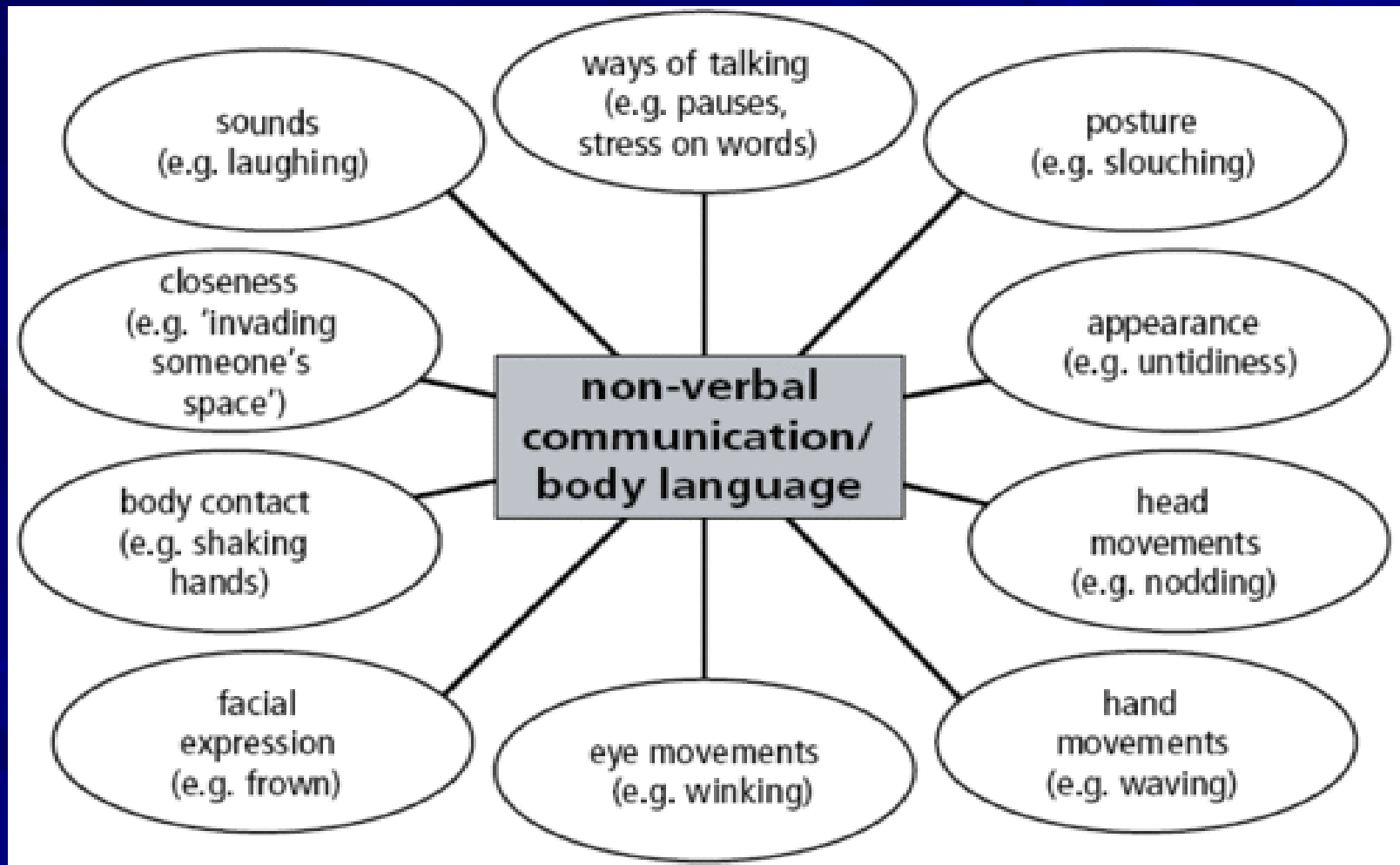


# Types of Nonverbal Communication

- ❖ **Haptic** communication **touching** as nonverbal communication, and haptic communication refers to how people and other animals communicate via touching.
- ❖ **Haptic** communication describes how we communicate with each other through the use of touch



# Types of Nonverbal Communication



# Why nonverbal communication matters

- ❖ The way you listen, look, move, and react tells the other person whether or not you care, if you're being truthful, and how well you're listening. When your nonverbal signals match up with the words you're saying, they increase trust, clarity, and rapport. When they don't, they generate tension, mistrust, and confusion.



# Why nonverbal communication matters

- ❖ If you want to become a better communicator, it's important to become more sensitive not only to the body language and nonverbal cues of others, but also to your own.



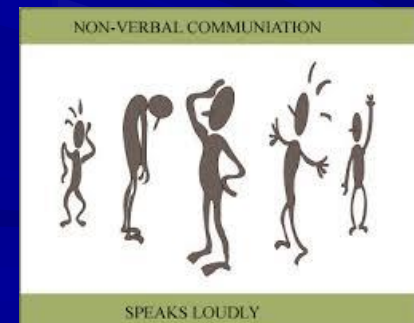
# Why nonverbal communication matters

- ❖ What you communicate through your body language and nonverbal signals affects how others see you, how well they like and respect you, and whether or not they trust you.



# Why nonverbal communication matters

- ❖ In order to send accurate nonverbal cues, you need to be aware of your emotions and how they influence you. You also need to be able to recognize the emotions of others and the true feelings behind the cues they are sending.





# Interpretation of nonverbal communication

- ❖ Successful communication requires similarity between the verbal and nonverbal messages, the two messages must be in agreement, or consistent with each other. For example, if a patient says “Okay” while shaking his head then he is sending mixed messages.
- ❖ The message of a patient’s nonverbal behavior is lost unless observed and interpreted correctly.



# Interpretation of nonverbal communication

- ❖ In some instances, behavioral observation may be the only mechanism by which Health Care Professional (HCP) may derive information from a patient. For example, a patient may be speech impaired (e.g., due to stroke or intubation), too young, too sick, or simply unwilling to communicate verbally.



***THANK YOU***