

NEURODEFENSE

LAW ENFORCEMENT, LIE DETECTORS

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It's no secret that law enforcement deals daily with people who lie. They lie to try and get out of trouble or keep from getting into trouble. Law enforcement officers become very good at reading people's body language and understanding not only what someone says but how they say it.

An example is when a police officer stops a vehicle for a traffic violation. During the contact, the officer notices the driver will not look at him or her and their answers are very short. The officer further notices the driver is sweating profusely and it is not hot out. Suspecting there is something more, the officer gets the driver out of the vehicle, and they walk to the sidewalk for safety reasons. The officer noticed the driver was very nervous and asked the driver if there were any illegal substances in the vehicle. The driver swallows hard before looking at the vehicle and says, "No, I don't think so." The swallowing hard tells the officer the person is nervous about answering the question. Looking at the car before answering is a dead giveaway that something is in the vehicle the driver does not want the officer to find. These are involuntary gestures the driver would not even be aware of making.



The sympathetic nervous system (SNS) which controls the fight, flight, or freeze response, would be initiated when the officer first pulled the driver over and amplified when removed from the vehicle and questioned.

The driver would not know he or she was making those indicators the officer picked up. Another situation where body language helps is when someone is being questioned in an interrogation or interview room. Many people become nervous when put in a small room and questioned about a crime. Many times, they will pace back and forth, but some, after learning what they are being questioned about, fall asleep. Why is that?, Why would someone fall asleep during a break in the questioning about a crime that could send them to prison? It is because they know they have been caught. Whether they admit their wrongdoings or not, their body language gives them away.

Body language can sometimes mislead a trained observer because of some sort of physical issue, but most of the time, criminals will give themselves away without realizing it. A glance at a vehicle, tight jaw, hard swallow, or profuse sweating. When Warren Jeffs was arrested, the Nevada State Trooper noticed Jeffs sitting in the backseat sweating and that raised enough suspicion to investigate further and eventually arrest the fugitive. These are just some of the things officers look for when dealing with someone who is lying to get out of going to jail.



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