



# Face Reading

By Lillian Bridges

Reading faces is an intrinsic action for human beings. Every time you meet someone new or engage in a conversation, you are reading someone's face. Specifically, most people are reading expressions. This can be called the universal language of the face that we come in to the world knowing how to use.

Babies are born hard-wired with the ability to read expressions and can see approximately 18 inches from their own faces so that they can gaze into the faces of their caregivers.

This ability to see faces significantly increases bonding through recognition and also gives babies the ability to monitor their emotional environment. The emotions that babies respond to are the simplest ones and any parent has seen that smiling at a baby will bring a positive response and scowling will create distress.

Most people still access this universal language everyday. But most of us forget to trust this primal knowledge and

instead rely on listening and analyzing what is being said rather than what is being expressed. The ancient art of Chinese face reading offers some valuable tools that can help you remember how to use the language of the face to enhance communication and understanding.

The primary way that the face expresses emotions is through the light of the eyes. The ancient face readers called this light, "Shen" and recognized five basic emotions that were expressed through it: fear, anger, excitement, worry and grief. These five primal emotions have specific characteristics that show in the light of the eyes and in facial expressions.

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Fear is the emotion that initially creates a startle response where the eyes open wide. Very quickly after, the light in the eyes darken and the person's energy and shen goes inward and down.

Anger causes the energy to focus and intensify. It becomes an outward expression of shen that attacks the recipient. Excitement is a lively light that is very engaging and the shen emanates outward with a sparkle.

Worry causes the light in the eyes to become muddy and the look is confused, whereas grief has a dull quality of shen with very little light showing. Shen can be seen as well as felt and is what most people call emotional intuition.

Reading the shen is not difficult, but requires practice to trust what one feels and sees. These emotions are necessary for human functioning, but in Chinese Medicine, overuse is considered very harmful. Good health is involved with managing the emotions and balance can be monitored in the shen.



## The most common lines on the face are the vertical ones between the eyebrows. These are a sign of impatience, irritability and/or annoyance

One of the classic books in Chinese Medicine is The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Medicine which states, "Overindulgence in the five emotions... can create imbalances.

Emotions can injure the chi... Failing to regulate one's emotions can be likened to summer and winter failing to regulate each other, threatening life itself." However, under use or suppression of emotions is also considered dangerous to health. Managing the expression of emotions is one of the fundamental principles underlying good health, and the lines on the face show how much emotion has been used.

Horizontal and diagonal wrinkles are caused by the constant and repeated use of expression. The face is like a topographical map of previously expressed emotions.

Therefore, the more emotional a person is, the more lines will be on his or her face. Contrary to popular belief, the sun

does not cause wrinkles; it causes the wrinkles that were already going to form to become deeper and stronger because the skin hardens.

Of course, it is impossible to go through life without gaining a few wrinkles and some wrinkles are better than others. But wrinkles also tell a story of a person's emotional life history and some of them may be easier to minimize or lessen than you think.

It is therefore helpful to learn what some of the different lines mean. Some of the best lines are the ones at the corner of the eyes, known as "crow's feet." In face reading, they are known as joy lines.

These are very special lines that are involved in smiling and laughing and are a sign of a good sense of humor. They are also the significant markers for what scientists have termed the "Duchenne's smile," which is the smile that involves the eyes. Studies have shown that this particular kind of smile releases

endorphins, the body's own natural pain killers. From anecdotal evidence, it is clear that laughing a lot - especially at yourself makes life less painful and more fun!

The most common lines on the face are the vertical ones between the eyebrows. These are a sign of impatience, irritability and/or annoyance.

Since life can be very irritating, people can be very annoying and traffic jams are sure to cause impatience, it is no wonder that so many people bear these lines. However, they can also develop because of excessive concentration. These lines are not very easy to lessen as they are such automatic reactions to living. But, if you pay attention to how often you make the expression that consists of rumpling and lowering your eyebrows, you can stop the further progress of these lines.

A very useful set of lines are the ones that go from the nose to the mouth and

in face reading are called purpose lines. These are considered very positive lines because having them means you have a life purpose. They are not expected to be strong until you reach mid life. So, if you have them before that, consider yourself to be on track.

One set of lines that is worth working with are the ones on the upper lip. These lines are a sign of over nurturing others and under nurturing oneself.

They are very common on people who are caretakers and quite commonly found on women. What is fascinating about these lines is the fact that they seem to lessen so easily when a woman takes the time to pamper and nourish herself.

Lines that cross over the cheekbones are grief lines and also very common. Although they too can lessen in severity when the emotion of grief is worked with, grief is a deep emotion that is hard to release and it takes time to process.

However, these are lines that seem to be impacted by the ability to experience gratitude, which is one of the best antidotes to grief.

As a face reader, my favorite lines are the ones that occur on the forehead and are called transformation lines. They usually radiate upward from the eyebrows on a slight diagonal toward the hairline. Often they look a little more like indentations than wrinkles. These

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transformation lines are a sign that the individual who possesses them has gained some hard fought wisdom acquired from having gone through some tough times. They truly have come out of some dark nights, days, months or even years.

These lines are a powerful symbol of having learned valuable lessons from life. Like badges of courage, the bearer of these lines has ultimately gained the prize of expanded consciousness.

There are many other lines on the face corresponding to the many facets of emotion. Lines are never bad; they are just signs of emotions used frequently and possibly even overused. If you have some lines that are very deep or wrinkles

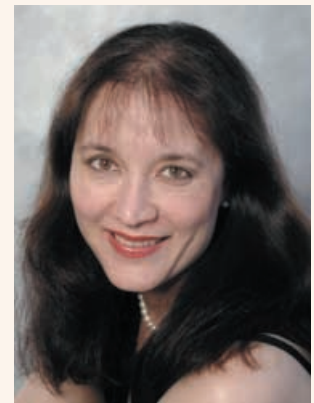
that are quite pronounced, use the map of the changing face to discover what they mean.

Then, determine whether you are overusing these emotions or if they are a positive sign of life experiences.

It is possible to lessen wrinkles on the face by managing your emotions, expressing them less or releasing long held ones.

However, some lines you do not want to lose as they prove you have lived and show what you have learned.

Wrinkles can be seen as the manuscript written on the skin that shows how any one individual has been expressing their life through the language of the face.



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