

Cultural Daily

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10 Benefits of Holding Hands With Someone You Love

Our Friends · Friday, October 29th, 2021

Holding hands with a loved one isn't just comforting — there are actual benefits! In fact, University of Virginia psychology professor James Coan has dedicated a whole college class to exploring why we do it. He explains that humans hold hands for many reasons, but the biggest one is a sense of security.

Here's a look at 10 surprising benefits of [holding hands](#) with someone you love:

1. Provides a Sense of Security

According to Professor Coan, “humans are adapted to each other not unlike the way that salamanders are adapted to cool, dark damp environments. We are each other's habitat.” When we feel unsure, holding hands provides immediate feedback that we are accepted and belong.

2. Decreases Stress

Studies have shown that when people in stressful situations hold their partner's hand, their heart rate and blood pressure are lowered. Their cortisol (stress hormone) level was also significantly reduced. Reaching for a loved one's hand is a natural reaction when [you're anxious](#), and doing so can definitely calm you down!

3. Boosts Oxytocin

Holding hands makes you feel good! Physical touch with a partner like cuddling, hugging, and hand-holding triggers the release of oxytocin, also known as “the love hormone.” Holding hands can also help strengthen feelings of closeness and connection.

4. Strengthens Your Bond

Oxytocin is associated with [feelings of empathy](#), compassion, and trust, which are crucial for a strong, lasting relationship. Holding hands with your partner regularly strengthens your connection and encourages the development of those essential feelings.

5. Relieves Pain

Physical touch, especially empathetic touch like holding hands, has been shown to reduce the experience of pain. Reaching for your partner's hand when you are in distress helps you experience less discomfort and greater security.

6. A Language of Love

Physical touch is one of the five love languages developed by relationship expert Dr. Gary Chapman. People with this love language feel loved (and often express their love) through physical touch with their partner. A simple way to show affection using physical touch is holding hands!

LEARN MORE: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w0eBKtYXqqo>

7. Heart Healthy

Holding hands can reduce blood pressure and lower your heart rate, which leads to lower stress and better heart health. This can help reduce your risk of health episodes over time. Ultimately, holding hands can help save your life!

8. Soothes Anxiety

If holding hands can reduce stress, it makes sense that it would soothe anxiety, right?

Physical touch, like holding hands, can do just that before it becomes overwhelming.

9. Counteracts Loneliness

As UVA professor James Coan believes, the underlying reason why people hold hands is the sense of belonging and security. It is entirely possible for people to feel alone even when they are in the presence of others, so holding hands is a great way to alleviate those feelings and replace them with acceptance and love.

10. Syncs Brain Waves

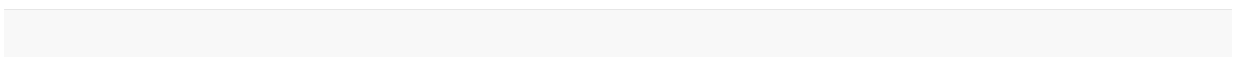
Science has shown that a couple's brainwaves sync up when they are touching. One of the best ways to do that? Holding hands! Synced brainwaves mean partners feel a greater sense of connection and empathy for one another.

Touch is it's own language that can be perceived and read by the receiver. The following hand holding styles hold unique, communicable meanings:

- Loosely intertwined fingers: endearment and security
- Wrapping hands: strong and protective bond
- Firm hold: taking charge in the relationship
- Interlaced finger: sense of need and love for the other
- Hand on top: feelings of protection for the other
- Relaxed interlocked fingers: fun and flirtatious relationship
- Holding wrist: passionate relationship

Holding hands is a common part of a secure relationship. It allows couples to communicate love, trust, and empathy as well as promote physical health, reduce pain and stress, and build intimacy. The bottom line? The next time you have the urge to grab your partner's hand, do it!

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