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## Symbolic Meanings Of High Five Gesture

I connect with people using a positive non-verbal communication gesture, a high five. A high five is a friendly and neutral action that occurs when two people simultaneously raise one hand and slap the upraised palm of the other person. High fives are commonly seen as a gesture of interaction that celebrates togetherness. The high five can have wide effect on people. A high five motion is symbolic for several of the Franciscan virtues including brotherhood, joy, acceptance, service, and peacemaking. Variations of the high five include “up high”, “down low”, and “air five” –where the hands of the participants never touch making it look like they are going to have contact. Another similar gesture to both the handshake and high five is the fist bump, a gesture in which two people bump their fist together.

This form of non-verbal communication can offer positive feedback. The high five gesture can be seen as a greeting, praise, encouragement, compliment, congratulations, or celebration. A high five touch can help people perform better and feel good about themselves. This hands-on connection can tell a teammate, classmate, teacher, coach, and friend that they are important and special. It is a gesture of approval and respect. Classmates can be seen around school offering each other a high five. A teacher can be greeted with a high five. When a friend says they accomplished something they didn't think that they could, a high five compliment is appropriate. These examples convey personal attention and positive emotions. They make people smile and it creates a healthy environment.

The majority of high fives given are in the athletic arena. A celebrational high five is more energized, electric, and exciting than that of an encouragement high five. In praising, both people are celebrating the accomplishment of one but with the same powerful enthusiasm. When playing on the football field, many high fives are exchanged. A touchdown, a good reception, a tackle, or a nice defensive play can all be recognized with a high five gesture. When playing baseball, a homerun, defensive catch, or a safe slide into a base are causes for a high five. When a free throw shot is made or a slam-dunk is made, you see the basketball players rush over and acknowledge the accomplishment with a high five touch. These mutual actions show camaraderie, high energy, and create team spirit. A high five is also used to pick someone up when they might be struggling. This is when athletes may need a teammate the most. The emotionally down athlete may not have made the tackle or may have hit into a double play. Or, the disappointed basketball player that missed the game-winning shoot as the buzzer sounded. This may cause a player to feel that they have let the team down. It feels good to give a gesture that means, “It's all right, I believe in you”.

This connection earns trust, creates team bonding, and builds relationships. This positive act

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can help the player and team perform better in their next competition. The high five gesture is more than raising your hand up and slapping the palm of another person. The action of the high five creates a sense of togetherness. The physical connection communicates trust and promotes positive reinforcement. For me, performing the skill of the high five gesture has power and is something I believe in. It gives me a meaning of service. Socially, it can put someone at ease. It can bring people together and bridge gaps. The spirit of a high five represents many of the Franciscan virtues including brotherhood, acceptance, and peacemaking.

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