

Transcript for AoC Toolbox | Five Fundamentals of a Solid Approach (Episode 664)  
Full show notes found here: <https://theartofcharm.com/664/>

**AJ:** What does that appear like? Welcome to AoC dojo. It looks like they're ready to fight each other and if I say, "Okay, get closer," it's like, whoa, everyone starts laughing.

**JORDAN:** Welcome to The Art of Charm. I'm Jordan Harbinger and today is a special Toolbox episode of The Art of Charm podcast, your favorite. On this episode, we're talking with AJ and Johnny, head coaches over at The Art of Charm boot camps. Today centers around the five fundamentals of a solid approach. And what we mean by that, is starting conversations for personal and professional reasons. We'll talk about smiling, I know everyone thinks they can do this, but there are different types of smiles, they mean different things, and for those of us guys and gals who write in about resting mean face, this one is for you.

Eye contact, how to know what's too much or too little, and some drills on how to improve enthusiasm and high energy. This isn't about being over the top or fake, and we'll explore some ways in which we can generate a better vibe during conversations and first impressions. All this and a whole lot more on this AoC Toolbox episode with AJ and Johnny, over here at The Art of Charm.

A lot of people get their first impressions going, they heard the Toolbox from last month, they've got their nonverbal communication they've been working on, they've been working on getting their diet and sleep together, but now they're wondering, "Okay, how do I take maybe some initiative with these social interactions?" Or maybe they find themselves propping up the upholstery or the tapestries on the wall or holding down the fort in the corner and they want to learn how to take the initiative socially and become somebody who can really make the first move in an interaction. So, let's go over some of the fundamentals of a solid approach, for people who

really want to be more assertive when it comes to the sort of thing.

**AJ:** Yeah, I think one of the main reasons that people come to see us in L.A. and work with us and take our online courses is they want to learn how to approach people confidently. Hope is not a strategy. You're hoping that people are going to approach you and that's it. You're going to be hurting when it comes to your social life, your business life, and your ability to spark interest in the opposite sex. So, we definitely want to understand how to approach people with confidence so that we can have those amazing conversations.

**JOHNNY:** Yeah, in the last podcast we talked about getting your first impression. So, some things that you can take care of to get you ready to make this approach. Now, we have some simple steps that you do to get this moving and then that way, we can start correcting it.

**AJ:** I like to think of this as a checklist. These are just five easy check boxes for you to mentally click in your head as you walk up to someone so that you know you are taking that first impression to the next level and ultimately you're going to get that positive response when you do open your mouth. Now, as we've talked about in previous shows, we've gone over the conversation formula, this dovetails with the conversation formula so that now your body language is sending the right signals. It starts with that smile. We are such huge advocates of smiling because a lot of have resting \*\*\*\*\* face. We are processing, we are analytical, and we close our face off to people. We do not seem approachable when we are frowning, when we are stoic, when we have that poker face.

**JOHNNY:** And also, growing up as children, you learn how to maneuver socially by the other kids reaction to you. And let's just say that perhaps you had a very introverted upbringing. I remember growing up, you would always see kids outside playing. That isn't the case anymore. They get interested in computers very early and though you may be on a chat board, that is not

chipping away at how you should be acting socially, because you can't see any responses. You can't gauge. I can certainly tell you some things on a chat board that I would never say to you face to face. It's hard now. It's a more difficult thing and it's just the way society has developed. In order for us to make our way through and make sure we're making that great impression --

**AJ:** I love the metaphor of when an airplane is landing, what is the first thing that happens? They deploy the wheels. The wheels on your landing are going to be that smile. It's the very first signal you want to send as you're walking over to someone, to make sure that you appear open and ultimately comfortable. Everyone wants to feel comfortable, socially. And if we can send the signal that we already feel comfortable socially, they're going to be ready for that approach in the right way. They're going to be looking forward to that conversation.

**JOHNNY:** Absolutely. You're trying to allow others around you to feel at ease. You need to lead it first. Rather than looking at everyone else to see where they are, you need to go into it.

**AJ:** We're talking about a full face smile here, not the smile I give to my dentist when he's about to clean my teeth. I want the wrinkles next to your eyes to form. That person knows it's a genuine enjoyment that you're having and you're looking forward to the conversation you're going to have with them. That's going to set the tone properly so that the receive you properly.

**JORDAN:** I think for a lot of people, they think that they're going to worry about whether or not their smile seems forced or fake and I think the smizing exercise that we've talked about can really alleviate that. But, how do we practice that? I think a lot of people -- the idea of smiling at themselves in the mirror just seems really creepy.

**JOHNNY:** Well, we said it in the previous podcast, how a lot of people think that they're smiling until we do some video work and they find out that they're not. Or, that our smile is engaging and

it may come off a little intense. So, everyone has a mirror, everyone has a computer nowadays, you can videotape yourself on your phone practicing this smile. And then, AJ you had made a mention of breaking the chain. So, if you're building a new habit that you feel that every day, you know what? "I worked on smiling today and I felt I completed it. I can put an 'X' there and then tomorrow I can do the same thing." And as I mentioned in the last podcast, one of the easiest things to change, your default, is body language. And it only takes a few weeks. So, if you get started right now, you could start fixing it.

**AJ:** What generates a smile? Laughter.

**JOHNNY:** There you go.

**AJ:** So, a lot of what we do here before we go out with the clients to take them out on the town to socialize, is we do some silly improv games that make everyone laugh. And immediately, they're going to have that full face smile. So, what I love doing is listening to my favorite comedian. You go on Netflix, there are a zillion and one comedy specials, I'll throw on Aziz, he gets me laughing, and next thing you know, I'm wearing that smile. I'm ready to go.

The other thing is start those interactions early. Start talking to the people that are staff there. Give them that smile, warm up your smile with the people that you know are paid to talk to you before you start walking over and talking to other people. That's a great exercise if you're not sure of your smile because guess what? If you're wearing the right smile, those people that are paid to interact with you are going to respond mirroring that smile.

**JOHNNY:** Oh, yeah.

**AJ:** If they respond not smiling back, you can pretty much assume that you weren't wearing the smile the right way. So, that's a great way to really start focusing and working on that smile. And as Tyra Banks said, "smizing." It's all about giving that

**smile with your eyes included, allowing that person to know you are genuinely excited to be talking with them.**

**JOHNNY:** On Facebook we have 30 day challenge, and one of those challenges is smizing. There have been a few people who had posted these videos of them with the sheet in front of their face and so that you could see the corner of the eyes go and there is a drastic difference.

**AJ:** You can see that someone's smiling even if they cover that mouth with that sheet because those wrinkles form next to your eyes. If you're worried about your smile and you aren't on the challenge, go to [theartofcharm.com/challenge](http://theartofcharm.com/challenge), join our Facebook group with thousands of people all over the world working on their first impressions and breaking through some social anxiety and you will encounter this smizing exercise that Johnny highlighted.

Now, the second fundamental is eye contact, and this is one that a lot of people get confused on. They get worried about staring too much, not making enough eye contact. So, I want to give you a really simple rule of thumb that makes it easy so you can take that stress off of you when it comes to eye contact. But, if we're not smiling, the eye contact is not going to work. So, that's why the first fundamental is smile. Now, we're going to start using our eye contact to let people know that we are engaging with them. And what I like to think about eye contact is, is that spotlight. It's using your eyes to shine a spotlight on the other person. Now, if you were out and someone was shining a spotlight on you the entire night, how would you feel?

**JOHNNY:** I'd be creeped out.

**AJ:** Yeah, you'd feel awkward like, "What is this spotlight? What's going on?"

**JOHNNY:** It's just too much.

**AJ:** So, we know that staring for long, staring with full eye contact the entire time is too much eye contact. But how much is enough? The rule of thumb is, I make eye contact when I'm talking to someone. And if I make eye contact when I'm talking to someone, I know that I have them engaged and I can communicate, and then I break my eye contact when I'm listening. And I know while you're listening to this, you're going, "Whoa, wait a second. That seems a little off to me. I don't understand."

But actually, if we prolong our eye contact with someone when we're listening, it makes it difficult for us to actually process what they're saying. Instead, we're focusing on their face and we're not processing the words that we're hearing. So, that's why that breaking of eye contact while we're listening allows our mind to catch up and put the other person at ease.

And especially with a stranger, we don't want to come into an interaction with someone we've never met before and just shine that spotlight on them for the first five minutes. They're going to feel uncomfortable and they're going to withdraw from the interaction and we see this in video work. When we have too much eye contact, the person will start to drift away, start to pull away from us because they can feel that pressure.

**JOHNNY:** The analogy of the spotlight is such a good thing because it allows you to understand why you'd want to turn away from it. It's just too much on you. And that eye contact and being that close is that same thing.

**AJ:** So, when we're breaking eye contact, it is very important that we break our eye contact at eye level. Now, what I mean is, I don't want you to break your eye contact and look at your feet -- look at the floor. And a lot of us have this bad habit of when we're listening, when we're breaking eye contact, we look down. But when we look down, we actually appear disinterested. We appear that we're not paying attention to what the person has to say, we don't really care.

**JOHNNY:** Well, disinterested and not in a good mood.

**AJ:** Right, so if we break our eye contact at eye level, what I'm actually doing is I'm moving my ear closer to the person's mouth so that I can actually hear the word that they're saying and I'm taking some of that stress off of me. Now, we all know the power of eye contact and the way I like to visualize this is if I'm walking down the street and there's a vagrant who is laying on the ground, maybe looks a little sketchy, dangerous, what am I going to do to avoid interacting with that person?

**JORDAN:** Break eye contact.

**AJ:** I'm going to not look at them, right?

**JORDAN:** Yeah.

**AJ:** I'm going to do my best to avoid eye contact. So, we know that eye contact is that universal way to engage someone. So, we want to use it to our advantage. We want to walk up to someone, make eye contact when we're talking to them, and then we want to break eye contact when we're listening.

**JOHNNY:** And this is why it gets a little bit difficult because as growing up, you're always told to make -- "Make sure you have good eye contact and a firm handshake." So, we have it in our mind to meet this person, shake their hand, and just beam on them. That's where we have to look at this break of, "What is too much and what is too little? And why that initial smizing will even soften that.

**AJ:** Here's the thing, as the conversation progresses, your eye contact is going to increase. You're going to be making more and more eye contact on the person you're talking to. But in the beginning, no one wants that spotlight on them the entire interaction. So, breaking the eye contact as well as making good eye contact are a very important fundamental of a solid approach.

**JOHNNY:** Well, it's also showing that you're interested in the person that you're going to talk to, which always is the first step of attraction, but not so much that it's a shoe-in. It's just like, "I'm interested. I'm here to check you out and see if you're a cool person."

**AJ:** And the more interested I am, the more eye contact I'm going to give.

**JOHNNY:** And you will get more of that when I see that you're a cool person.

**AJ:** Exactly. So now we're rewarding them with eye contact.

**JOHNNY:** There you go.

**(COMMERCIAL BREAK)**

**JORDAN:** And I think the break eye contact at eye level or above is genius. I used to -- One, I used to just not make eye contact at all when I was really young, and then after a while, I was like, "Okay, got to have solid eye contact." And I remember going on dates and girls were like, "Wow, you've got some pretty strong eye contact," and I was like, "That's my cue that I'm over doing it here. Then, I decided, "Okay, I've got to break eye contact," and it was like look at them and then look at my shoes or look at the ground, look at them, look at the ground, and it looks awkward and forced and manufactured, but if you break eye contact at eye level or above, it looks natural, it looks normal, and it feels better.

**JOHNNY:** And we're talking about this in meeting lots of different people, but obviously we do have a lot of male listeners who are trying to get over the whole approaching a girl. So, obviously for the most part, they're going to be taller and bigger than the woman, and so if that spotlight, as you said, is --

**AJ:** Coming from above, beaming completely down --



**JOHNNY:** Absolutely, and obviously she has a safety concern that she needs to feel safe in order to reciprocate. And if you're beaming on her, she can't.

**AJ:** And all of a sudden, you're going to see them close off and move away from you because it's too much eye contact. So, we know that too much eye contact pushes people away, but we've got to get them engaged. And in a loud, crazy, environment -- stimulating environment -- you're going to find that people are not really sure if you're talking to them, unless you're making that eye contact. So, that's why I make eye contact while I'm speaking, and I break eye contact while I'm listening. Now, the third fundamental, we get a lot of confusion on, because when we say high energy, people think, "Oh, I've got to dance like I had seven Red Bulls." That's not what we're looking for.

**JOHNNY:** Have you ever met that guy?

**AJ:** I was that guy. Six, maybe not seven. But, my doctor might be listening, so it's probably three, but the point is, high energy means enthusiasm. That you are enthusiastic about your evening and about the opportunity to talk to this person.

And we all have that response that we give to our best friend when they show up, whether it's at an event or they come over to our house. We're not like, "Sup, man? How's it going?" We're always excited to be hanging out with our friends so we give that enthusiasm to our friends, but when it comes to meeting strangers, we often hide that enthusiasm because we don't want to appear that we're too interested. But in actuality, enthusiasm is what's going to hook the other person, because in a crowded environment, where maybe not all of the words are being heard, it's not clear what's being said, that energy is going to carry you through the interaction so that that person knows, "Hey, this guy is excited to be here. I'm going to get excited to have this conversation."

**JOHNNY:** I think a lot of people should look at it in this manner where it's a switch that you turn on. "Okay, I have to make a great

**impression tonight. I want to make this approach and I want to show this enthusiasm, so I'm going to click this on." It should feel like you've turned on a switch.**

**AJ: Yes, it should feel like they won. They won your energy and enthusiasm at the start of the interaction because all of a sudden, you are going to hook them with your energy and allow the words to carry more weight.**

**JOHNNY: No, we were talking in the last month's episode -- We were talking about the first impressions and you made the word 'aloof' a point in my direction. Absolutely, I could totally have been told that in the past. And, I remember the day that I changed this to show more enthusiasm and approaching and meeting people, how they responded. And once they responded so favorably, why would I ever go back to making this difficult?**

**AJ: And for me, I actually got feedback from some of our clients here at AoC, as I was transitioning from managing the team to actually teaching in class. My head was elsewhere, I'm focused on all the different processes that we need to get done so that the programs are great. But, I wasn't delivering that energy and enthusiasm towards our clients, and they said, "Wow, AJ feels kind of rude. He feels standoffish," and I was like, "What is that about?" And I just realized that that little initial burst of energy and enthusiasm, when the other person is feeling a little anxious, a little unsure of themselves, can go a long way to making them feel comfortable.**

**JOHNNY: Well, here's another little behind the scenes thing from the guys. You came to me like, "Wow, whether there's one guy or 10 guys in that room, that energy still has to be as if there are 10 guys." And so, it is that switch that you're turning on and it's a big deal.**

**AJ: And I got that feedback and I thought about it a lot and then I realized that, "Hey, when it comes to my friends and the way that I interact with them versus strangers, I'm not delivering that energy or enthusiasm and the other person starts to**

wonder, 'Does AJ care about me? Is he even interested in me being here?'" when in reality, I was, but obviously with other things going on mentally, you have to be there. You have to be fully present with that energy. Not the dancing monkey, but allowing yourself to be enthusiastic with every person you're interacting with.

**JOHNNY:** And choosing the right venue. Because there's going to be nights if you go to a certain spot, that you're going to have to bring more energy than you wouldn't have to go to someplace else. And I know that after -- For a lot of you guys, after having a large, long day's work, that turning on a lot of this energy is going to seem daunting. So maybe hanging out at the corner bar, grabbing a pint with your buddy might be better than going out to this loud banging club. The coffee shop might be more conducive to how you're feeling.

**JORDAN:** I think a lot of people are thinking, "I'm just trying to get the energy to think about going out after work, not trying to go out and do head spins on a table some place."

**AJ:** And I think -- Listen, we all have this battery of enthusiasm and it wears down.

**JOHNNY:** Yeah.

**AJ:** So, don't beat yourself up if there are some nights where you are not delivering the enthusiasm. But, set yourself up for success. Be selective about the venues you're going to socialize and make sure that on those nights when you are going out, that this is aware -- that you are aware of, "Hey, if I'm not enthusiastic, people are not going to receive me well."

**JOHNNY:** I get asked a lot through programs. The guys are like, "I don't know how you have your energy to such a degree."

**AJ:** Practice.

**JORDAN:** Practice.

**JOHNNY:** It's practice but it's something that I don't have to think about. Why? Because that practice has been put in. I never have to think about it. And I also know what it's going to take for me to have that energy all day long and it's certainly not being out until 3 in the morning, the night before, drinking. I'm not getting a full night's sleep.

**AJ:** These are cues. Mental cues. And, I'm trying to learn how to play golf, struggling a little bit, and obviously there's a lot of mechanics in the swing and a lot of those mechanics start to fall into place through hundreds and hundreds and thousands of attempts at swinging a golf ball. But, there are these few things that you have to key into, mentally, to set your swing up for success, and if you don't do these things, then nothing else you're worried about is actually going to impact the swing. And that's what these five things are. So, energy is one of those things. If you raise awareness around your energy, knowing that, "Hey, enthusiasm hooks people in," you're going to start to see better results. And you don't have to stay out until 2 am, you just have to go out that first hour, bring the enthusiasm, do that for a week, and then the next week, "Okay, let me amp it up to an hour and a half." Practice is going to make perfect.

**JORDAN:** Yeah, you don't have to get on the treadmill for five hours at the gym. I think a lot of people beat themselves up because they go out, 20 minutes after they're exhausted, and they go, "I just can't do this. I can't keep up this level of energy. I've only been here for 20 minutes and I'm ready to go home." And that's totally fine. We used to go out a lot every night and it took a long time before we could even stay out for the whole night. Not that that should be your goal. If you're in your forties and your fifties, or something like that, or you're recently single or you're trying to figure out our networking game, there's no reason for you to have three hours of reserved tank energy. It's not an aspiration you need to fulfill.

**AJ:** And as we talked about last month's Toolbox episode -- hitting the gym. If you hit the gym, that's how you can extend that

**battery life that we're talking about. You start working out, you start feeling better, taking care of your body, you're going to have more of this energy to expend on that enthusiasm when you go out.**

**JOHNNY:**

**And don't think that you need to go in the gym for two hours if you haven't been there at all. As I mentioned in the last one, we have this train that is moving in a certain direction and we have to slow it down and slowly get it going in the other direction, and that takes time. But, every day that you practice these things, you're going to get better. ANd if you notice the small little winds, you can feel really good that you're moving in the right direction. So, guess what? As an introverted person, you do have this new found energy that you've worked on cultivating and getting it to where it needs to be.**

**AJ:**

**The fourth fundamental of a solid approach goes back to those nonverbal signals. And, if you remember from last month's episode on first impressions, we talked about that body check exercise, to make sure that we're sending the right signals before we approach them. Now, let's talk about body language on the actual approach, because this is where we see our clients trip up over and over and over again. And it all comes down to positive versus neutral body language.**

**So, positive body language is when you're fully facing someone. Very, very rarely will we do this with our friends. We're comfortable with our friends, we don't have to face them to have a conversation. We end up standing side by side with our friends, which is neutral body language.**

**But for whatever reason, when we're meeting a stranger, we like to come in with positive body language and think, "All of a sudden, I have to showcase that I'm interested in this person and present myself fully." And what you're actually doing is shooting yourself in the foot. Because if you stay in positive body language, fully facing the other person -- again, much like that eye contact -- you're putting that spotlight on them and they're going to get tense.**

And when they get tense, they're going to wonder, it's not them, it must be you, "I've got to get out here. I'm not interested in this person anymore." So, in order to release that tension upon meeting someone, move side by side. Move to neutral body language.

**JOHNNY:** Well I've also got to mention that we have a lot of military guys who listen to this show, and you've been through the military, your higher ups wanted to see you give them attention as they're talking to you all the time. And so, I see these guys who have to soften that approach up because they've been programmed in a certain manner, to when they see somebody, to give them this full attention.

**(COMMERCIAL BREAK)**

**AJ:** The example that we always give in the room is we ask two guys to hop up and face each other. And what does that appear like? Welcome to AoC dojo. It looks like they're ready to fight each other. And if I say, "Okay, get closer," it's like, "Whoa." Everyone starts laughing. And we're laughing because we're breaking the tension. It's like, "AJ, why are these two guys facing each other? They're going to fight. They're going to throw down." It's a very visceral reaction that we have when someone gets in our space and stands fully in front of us, which is why, when you get on a crowded elevator and the doors open, you don't just walk in and stand directly in front of someone. What do you do? You wedge yourself in there, side by side. Neutral with the people in the elevator.

**JOHNNY:** I think the elevator is the best example of that so you can look at it socially of why you wouldn't do the same thing on your approach.

**AJ:** And here's why it works so well. If we can move side by side, it allows us to comfortably touch the other person really easily without having to make it obvious or weird. And also, if the tension is being relieved, all of a sudden it feels like, "Well I've

known this person for a while. I'm comfortable with this person," and we can read the room. We can see what else is going on. We can feel more comfortable in the interaction.

**JOHNNY:** Well, let's just say that we're introverted or we're shy and we're trying to work through some anxiety. If that's going on, you're focused inward. And so, if you're focused inward, it's hard for you to see the result that you're having on the other person until we start to get comfortable with this until we go from going inward to then start thinking outward so you can start to see the other person and see their face and see their body language. But, if you're nervous, you can't see the effect you're having on the other person.

**AJ:** So, I love to think of this as a two step dance. We walk up to someone, we get their attention, we're very briefly in positive body language, and then we move to neutral body language as quickly and as comfortably as we can. Now again, I know a lot of listeners are like, "But AJ, what if they're seated? Do I gotta squat down to be next to them?" Remember, everything we're telling you is to allow you to get more comfortable. Because if you're comfortable, the other person you're talking to for the first time, is going to be comfortable. So there are going to be times where neutral is impossible, I understand that. Don't put yourself in a catcher's stance and get uncomfortable trying to go neutral. But just realize that if we stay in positive body language, we are going to increase tension, so it's in our best interest to move to neutral to allow the other person to get comfortable.

**JOHNNY:** And I know for a lot of guys out there, the one thing that they do not want to come off as on their approach is creepy. That's a huge deal because it's like, "Well I'd make this approach but I don't want to come off creepy." I get it.

**JORDAN:** It's better to do nothing than to make yourself into a creep, yeah?

**JOHNNY:** The thing about this that I really enjoy is the girls that we have who do video work with us who help with us here at The Art of Charm -- It's always the same thing their first or second day when they start to see how these few things taken apart actually affects that communication. And they're like, "Wow, I always had a creepy vibe or a creepy feeling, but I didn't know what made it that way. You guys totally broke it down." They can see how each point allows them to feel --

**AJ:** More comfortable. Every single step that we're talking about allows the other person to feel more comfortable. If you're smiling while you walk up to them, they're going to feel more comfortable. If you make eye contact while you're talking, direct your conversation at them, they're going to start to feel like, "I need to pay attention to this person," and listen better. And then if you move to neutral body language with some enthusiasm, it's going to make breaking eye contact while you're listening a lot easier, it's going to move your ear closer to them so you can hear things more effectively, and ultimately, when everyone in the room is looking at you, you're going to appear like you already know this person. You're not going to appear like a stranger, you're going to appear like, "Wow, AJ knows everyone here, because every time I see AJ in conversation, he's standing neutral."

**JOHNNY:** And then it also allows for the other person to reciprocate back and start showing some interest your way.

**AJ:** So that is the key. I wanted to focus on this. The one question we all have going through our head is, "Does this person like me? Are they interested in me? Is this going well?" And with all these signals going on, it's very easy to get confused and worried about that. But, if you move to neutral and you're having a conversation and you're making eye contact while you're talking, and you break eye contact, guess what's going to happen? As they take interest in you, they're going to turn to face you. They're going to give you positive body language. And now, you can go, "Wow, this person is interested."



**JOHNNY:** Great, fantastic. And they can't do that if you're giving all positive body language.

**AJ:** See, you can't even pick up on these signals of interest if you just come in guns blazing, fully positive. And that's what we've found. The guys who end up in prolonged eye contact, leering, staring too much, they also end up in positive body language. They are putting themselves in front of the person in a way that viscerally makes them uncomfortable.

The other great part about understanding neutral versus positive body language comes into play in those moments of conflict. Whether you're a doctor and you have to deliver bad news to the patient or you're a lawyer and you have to deliver bad news to your client about the result, or in a work setting, where you and a co-worker are just having a go. You're not happy with each other's work, you're not happy with someone's performance -- We all know what conflict feels like and the easiest way to alleviate that conflict situation for the other person and allow them to feel good about the resolution, is to move to neutral. What that does, by moving to neutral and standing side by side, is the conflict now is not between the two of you.

**JOHNNY:** Yeah, you're working together on the solution to the problem.

**AJ:** The best part is now we're on the same team, the conflict is out in front of us, we're trying to figure out how to handle this conflict together. That person is going to be more at ease and it's going to be easier for you to get to that high value resolution. So, a lot of our clients who are doctors and lawyers love this body language stuff because it has such a strong impact in their daily lives. Not only when they're approaching strangers, but when they have to deliver that bad news.

**JOHNNY:** The most natural thing to do is to close off to protect yourself to get guarding. And so, if you do that, it's only going to reflect on the other person because then they're like, "If there's a problem and they're guarding themselves," --

**AJ:** I better guard myself.

**JOHNNY:** -- "I better guard myself." And now, you have two people standing in front of each other, guarding themselves, trying to work through a problem.

**AJ:** Guess what? The solution to that problem is going to become a lot more difficult than either party anticipated.

**JOHNNY:** Also science stated that if you have a closed off body and a closed off mind, then they're linked. So, if you're trying to work through a problem with somebody who's also on guard, they're not listening to the full potential.

**AJ:** Right, so they feel attacked, you feel attacked, you close each other off, and the solution is never found. What we're saying is move to neutral with strangers and also with co-workers, friends, family, anyone you might be in conflict with, and allow the problem to be out in front of you instead of directly between the two of you, and you're going to see better results.

**JOHNNY:** Well, and I as I mentioned last month that a stronger frame always dissolved the weaker one, so you have to be ready to lead in that situation.

**AJ:** And the last, final fundamental on this checklist that we want you to consider when you're approaching someone, is commitment. And what that means is getting close to the person. For a lot of us, when it comes to interacting with strangers, we have this personal space issue, this giant bubble that extends well past our arms, and we'll often stop short and create so much distance and the other person, that we're not actually committed to the interaction.

**JOHNNY:** There's two parts to the interaction. There's your actual approach and your commitment to you staying in there, but then choosing your words and things and committing to the enthusiasm. Because the one thing that everyone's scared of is

that they're not going to be that same reciprocation is going to come back their own way.

**AJ:** Right. And if you're not committed, if you have one foot out the door, then why is this person you just approached going to be committed? Why are they going to want to take action?

**JOHNNY:** And it's such a small risk. It's a very small risk.

**AJ:** It's even smaller now that we went over how to nail that first impression and all these other nonverbal signals that are going to set you up for success. So, being committed to the interaction, closing off that personal place. So, what I mean by closing off personal space is I mean getting close enough to someone that, in conversation, you could put your arm around them without having to move. Imagine that. If I'm standing next to someone and I want to put my arm around them, well I'm going to have to be pretty darn close to them to do so. So getting committed in these interactions, both with men, with women -- closing that personal space. You would be amazed at just closing that space, signifies to the other person that you're comfortable with them and now they're going to start to feel more comfortable with you.

**JORDAN:** This is great. Commitment seems like something that we don't think about very often, and I think for a lot of us, if our interactions are going south, I think we do well to examine whether or not we're committing and adding that little sub skill set into the mix.

**AJ:** Those five things that we just covered, when it comes to smile, eye contact, high energy, neutral body language, and being committed to the interaction, if you think of those as a checklist, you are armed and ready to approach with confidence and now, you don't have to worry about, "What are people thinking about me?" You've nailed that first impression and now you know that, "This approach is going to go as well as I can possibly hope," and then all you have to worry about is the words -- listening. Being a better listener and communicating.

So, taking those five things into account, not complicating it, not trying to walk over there with some crazy stride or do something out of your comfort zone, but instead, focusing in on these five signals that send to the other person, "This guy is a confident communicator," are going to make you charismatic and ultimately, memorable.

**JOHNNY:** You certainly don't want to have to think about these things afterwards because I can tell you this, if you ask yourself, "Did I make a good impression? Was I okay?" eventually you're going to start filling that gap, and it's never good.

**AJ:** And ultimately, people don't remember what you do.

**JOHNNY:** Nope.

**AJ:** They don't remember what you say. They only remember how you made them feel and these five things on that approach are going to make them feel comfortable and make them feel like they've known you for years. And when you're working from that position, you're going to be that memorable person that people want to be around.

**JOHNNY:** Well, you don't want to be remembered as the high maintenance guy. You want to be remembered as the laid back cool guy. And so, having that come off as easy going -- "It was easy going because when I was around you, I didn't have to do a lot of work. It was easy going because while I was around you, it was comfortable. I was just there. I was just hanging out," and that is what's always being remembered.

**AJ:** Yeah, and 9 times out of 10, when people aren't responding to your texts, as Johnny was saying, and they don't want to hang out with you, and they don't want to go on that date with you, it's because you made them uncomfortable. And they don't know why. They can't pinpoint what it was particularly, but they'll use the word vibe, they'll use the word feeling, but ultimately you made them uncomfortable.

**JOHNNY:** If I'm going to hang out with somebody, I don't want to have to think about the work that I'm going to have to put in to be around them for that period of time. That should be the last thing on my mind.

**AJ:** Right.

**JOHNNY:** I want to be able to focus on having a good time, not just feeling comfortable around this person.

**AJ:** We all have those friends. It's a visceral feeling. "I'm not in the mood to hang out with this guy. It takes a lot of effort and energy to have a good time." With these five fundamentals, we are setting you up for success on any approach, whether it's work, business, professional, or romantic.

**JORDAN:** All right guys, thank you so much. There's a lot here. Of course we go into really deep detail on a lot of this stuff throughout the other Toolbox episodes. So, if this stuff resonated with you, make sure you consume all of the Toolbox episodes at [theartofcharm.com/toolbox](http://theartofcharm.com/toolbox) is where you find those headquartered. They're also in our iPhone and Android apps in a separate tab. Thanks so much.

Great big thank you to AJ and Johnny. If you enjoyed this one, I would love to hear your number one takeaway from AJ and Johnny here. I'm @theartofcharm on Twitter. Don't forget, we'll have a worksheet for today's episode so you can make sure you solidify your understanding of the key takeaways from AJ and Johnny and myself, for that matter. That link is in the show notes at [theartofcharm.com/podcast](http://theartofcharm.com/podcast).

I also want to encourage you to join is in the AoC challenge at [theartofcharm.com/challenge](http://theartofcharm.com/challenge) or text, 'AoC' that's A-O-C, to the number 38470. The challenge is about improving your networking skills, your connection skills, the skills of solid approaches and the fundamentals, the things we learned here on the show. It's free, if you don't know that, and it's a fun way to start the ball rolling, get some forward momentum, and apply

**the things you're learning here on the show to your life here every day. We'll also send you our fundamentals Toolbox, that I mentioned earlier on the show, which includes some great practical stuff, ready to apply, right out of the box, on reading body language and having charismatic nonverbal communication, the science of attraction, negotiation techniques, networking and influence strategies, persuasion tactics, and everything else that we teach here on the show and at our live programs here at The Art of Charm. All this will make you a better networker, a better connector, and a better thinker. That's all over at [theartofcharm.com/challenge](http://theartofcharm.com/challenge), or text, 'AoC' to the number 38470.**

**This episode of The Art of Charm was produced by Jason DeFillippo, Jason Sanderson is our audio engineer and editor, show notes on the website are by Robert Fogarty, transcriptions by [TranscriptionOutsourcing.net](http://TranscriptionOutsourcing.net), I'm your host Jordan Harbinger -- If you can think of anyone who might benefit from the episode you've just heard, and I know you can, come on, please pay AoC the highest compliment and pay it forward by sharing this episode with that person. It only takes a moment and great ideas are meant to be shared. So, share the show with friends and enemies, stay charming, and leave everything and everyone better than you found them.**



