

## FRIENDLY HANDS

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The first thing that comes to mind when I think of friendly hands is a friendly handshake. We shake hands when we meet people, as a way of saying "Howdy". We shake hands when we go through a reception line — a wedding reception is one of the nicest reception lines I can think of. We shake hands when we congratulate someone — unless they are close to heart and then they get a hug which could lead into loving hands.

I think many of our "hands~" topics can cross over into other areas, which points out how much our hands really do throughout our lives.

Everyone has given and received the friendly wave. I notice here in Kansas the rural folk's wave to each other and all other drivers' that pass through on their roads. I really thought that was a wonderful gesture of friendliness whenever I first came here. At first I thought maybe they thought we were someone they knew but finally figured out they just like to greet passersby with a wave.

Another friendly gesture we do with our hands is the "come on" wave. This can be done more frantically between teenagers but we usually do this to folks who might be out of our voice range (naturally we are too dignified to yell) as a sign to let them know we want them to come over or to come into the house, or come closer in order to share conversation.

Friendly hands welcome new neighbors, sometimes even include a baked goodie or plant as a welcome to the neighborhood gesture. Friendly hands can come over to water your plants (either in or out) while you are on vacation or in the hospital, and maybe even care for your pets.

Animals receive friendly pats and strokes as a way of showing you like them. Even little kids get a friendly pat on the head every now and again. Friends also share a friendly pat on the back — another gesture of ours that can mean "good for you", "I sympathize and support you", "glad to see you", etc.

People give each other a friendly hand squeeze which can mean lots of things, but I think basically it means I am your friend! This can mean a lot when you get that reassuring hand squeeze before you are about to embark on something that has you a little uptight — like talking in front of crowds, etc.

With our hands we write out letters or notes of friendship to those who do not live close. We send out friendly invitations to parties, or greetings to celebrate a special event.

Friendly hands can pitch in and become helping hands or a mother's caress

becomes the loving hand, or the smack on the bottom can be a loving hand too. As I said this is a broad topic and we do cross over from one area to another because our hands are so versatile and really a wonderful working mechanism.