

BY TROY ANDERSON

CIA OFFICERS ARE masters at detecting lies and deceit. In fact, knowing the difference between truth and deception is often a matter of life or death for intelligence agents.

In a new book — *Spy the Lie: Former CIA Officers Teach You How to Detect Deception* — former CIA officers Philip Houston, Michael Floyd, and Susan Carnicero show how certain behaviors are indicators of deception.

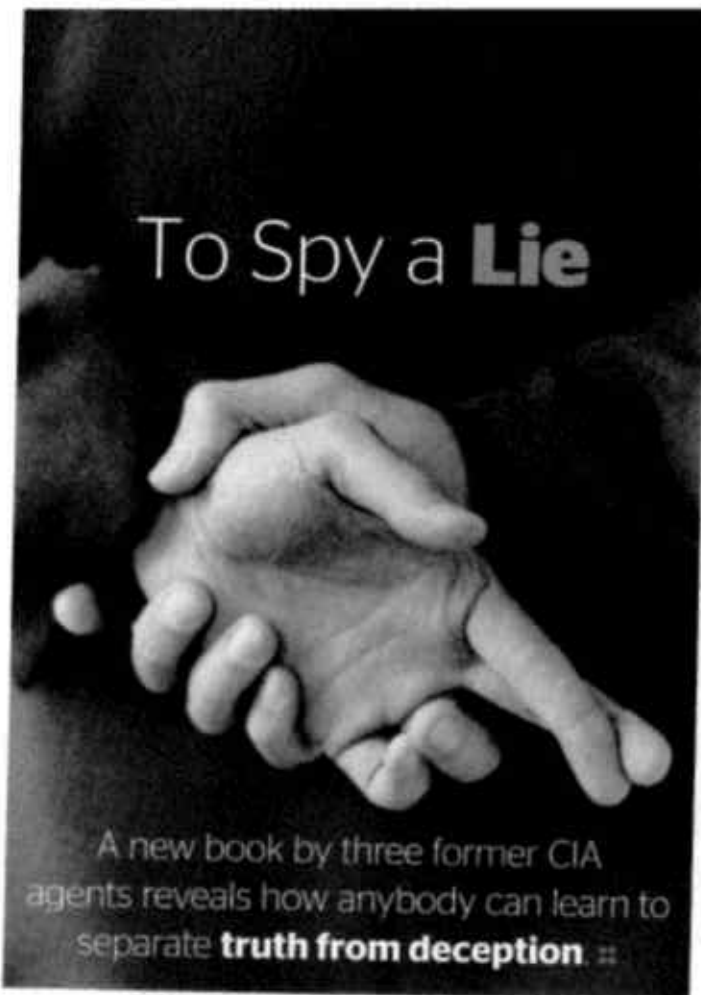
You don't have to be a trained spy to recognize lies in everyday encounters, they say. You just have to know what to look for. "The genius in the methodology is in its simplicity," says Houston, who developed the model while conducting thousands of interviews and interrogations during a 25-year career as a CIA investigator and polygraph examiner.

"When you think about the average person, lying is something they are affected by every day. Whether it's in their relationships, dealing with their kids, dealing with their boss and co-workers, buying a new car or buying a house — they are faced with deception. Research shows that people lie on average at least 10 times every day."

The most important clues for spotting lies, Houston tells Newsmax, occur in the first five seconds after asking a question. He also suggests looking for a "cluster of deceptive indicators" before concluding someone is lying.

"If I just see or hear one deceptive behavior, it really doesn't mean anything," says Houston, now the chief executive officer of QVerity, a Greenville, N.C.-based provider of behavioral analysis and screening services. "I need to see two or more in response, and obviously the more you see the higher the probability that you have a liar on your hands," he says.

Obvious signs of untruthfulness include failing to directly answer a question, repeating a question to stall for



time, making inconsistent statements, and going into attack mode against the questioner.

One surprising signal is invoking religion, he says. Saying things like, "I swear to God," or "As God is my witness" is often an attempt to "dress up a lie in its Sunday best," Houston says.

The nonverbal clues of lying include behaviors like hiding the mouth or eyes with a hand or object, throat-clearing or swallowing, and what Houston describes as "anchor-point movements" — physiological body

movements to dissipate anxiety.

"We are not worried about the traditional kind of nervous gesturing and fidgeting," Houston says. "What we are interested in is when the question or stimulus provokes someone to move what is anchoring them to the ground."

This means moving their chair if they are sitting, or taking a step if they are standing. Houston also looks for "grooming gestures."

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— Philip Houston, former CIA officer

For a man, this might involve adjusting his tie, shirt cuffs, glasses, or other such fidgeting responses. An untruthful woman might move a few strands of her hair behind her ear, or straighten her skirt.

"People also groom things around them," Houston says. "They'll straighten papers on a desk, move a bottle of water, adjust their coffee cup or any number of things of that nature. It's almost as if they are trying to dress up their surroundings so everything looks perfect as they tell a whopper." □

