



Therapist sees the sole and soul through toes

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If you really want to get to know someone, have her shuck her shoes to bare her soul.

That's because the toes tell all, from leadership potential to how you handle anger. Even corns say something other than your tendency to wear uncomfortable footwear.

So says Marie Bernat, a full-time spa therapist and part-time toe reader. Bernat, who manages the spa at CopperWynd resort in Paradise Valley, Ariz., reads toes instead of palms when she wants to know someone.

"One man told me after I read his toes that I knew more about him in 15 minutes than friends who had known him years," said Bernat, who has been probing podiatric appendages for five years after discovering the technique while studying reflexology, a homeopathic method in which practitioners apply pressure to spots on the foot that correlate to other parts of the body.

Bernat leaves no toe unturned, noting the bumps, curves, lengths and shapes that determine one's personality.

She also reads between the toes, saying the gaps are as revealing as the digits themselves.

Toe reading isn't unique, but it is rare. Bernat said she learned the craft from "Language of the Feet," a book not available in the United States (she ordered it on Amazon.com's United Kingdom site).

Bernat estimated she has read about 500 sets of toes over the years, including at a party when she was hired to read the toes of teens celebrating their high school graduation (with great interest placed on the big toe, the toe of destiny). She also had impromptu readings at an airport when she told someone in line that the reason she was staring at a young woman's feet was because she read toes.

"Pretty soon all the people around me had taken off their shoes wanting me to read their toes," Bernat said. "So I did."

She's aware of the many skeptics who believe pinched toes are not an indication of conformity (as Bernat indicates) but of too-tight shoes.

"But why wear shoes that are so uncomfortable unless you want to look good, conforming to society?" she asked.

Good point.

The art of toe reading has nothing to do with being psychic or other "out-there beliefs that make you look like a kook," Bernat said. It has to do with body language, your toes being an indication of the way you conduct yourself and your life. It's scientific, she said, not intuitive.

Janice Lennertz was surprised at the accuracy of a recent 30-minute reading, having no idea her toes would correctly indicate her to be a success-oriented, independent woman with a tendency to become sidetracked.

"There were a few things I didn't realize about myself until she (Bernat) pointed them out," Lennertz said. "Who knew the toes could tell you so much?"

Bernat, for one. Before she met her boyfriend, she would read the toes of prospective partners, often on the first date. Not one man, she said, declined to bare his toes.

But she has declined a date or two based on the tale of those toes. She has met men whose digit placement told her all she needed to know.

"They were players," she said. "It hit me right away."

While Bernat is happy to read anyone's toes, including as part of a spa treatment at CopperWynd, she won't do a reading of the left foot. Those are the spiritual toes.

"I don't want to talk religion or politics with my clients," she said. "It's not worth it."

Guide to basic toe reading

What each of the toes on the right foot stands for, according to toe reader Marie Bernat: Big toe: Destiny. Wrinkles indicate changes in your life. Second toe: Communication toe. If it is longer than your big toe, it indicates leadership potential. Third toe: Passion and anger. If it's squared-off, you tend to take your anger out on others. Fourth toe: Relationships. A squared-off toe says the person likes to play the field, while wrinkles indicate a lack of commitment. Fifth toe: Security (financial, physical and emotional). If it is straight with a rounded pad and thick trunk, you feel very good about the decisions you make. In evaluating a potential significant other, Bernat said to beware of "player toes," occurring when the third and fourth toes curve toward one another to form an "O." The curve on the passion and anger toe (the third) shows the person invests a lot of passion and emotion in relationships, but the curve on the fourth toe indicates relationships to be short-lived. The combination means a smooth-talking charmer who won't be around long.