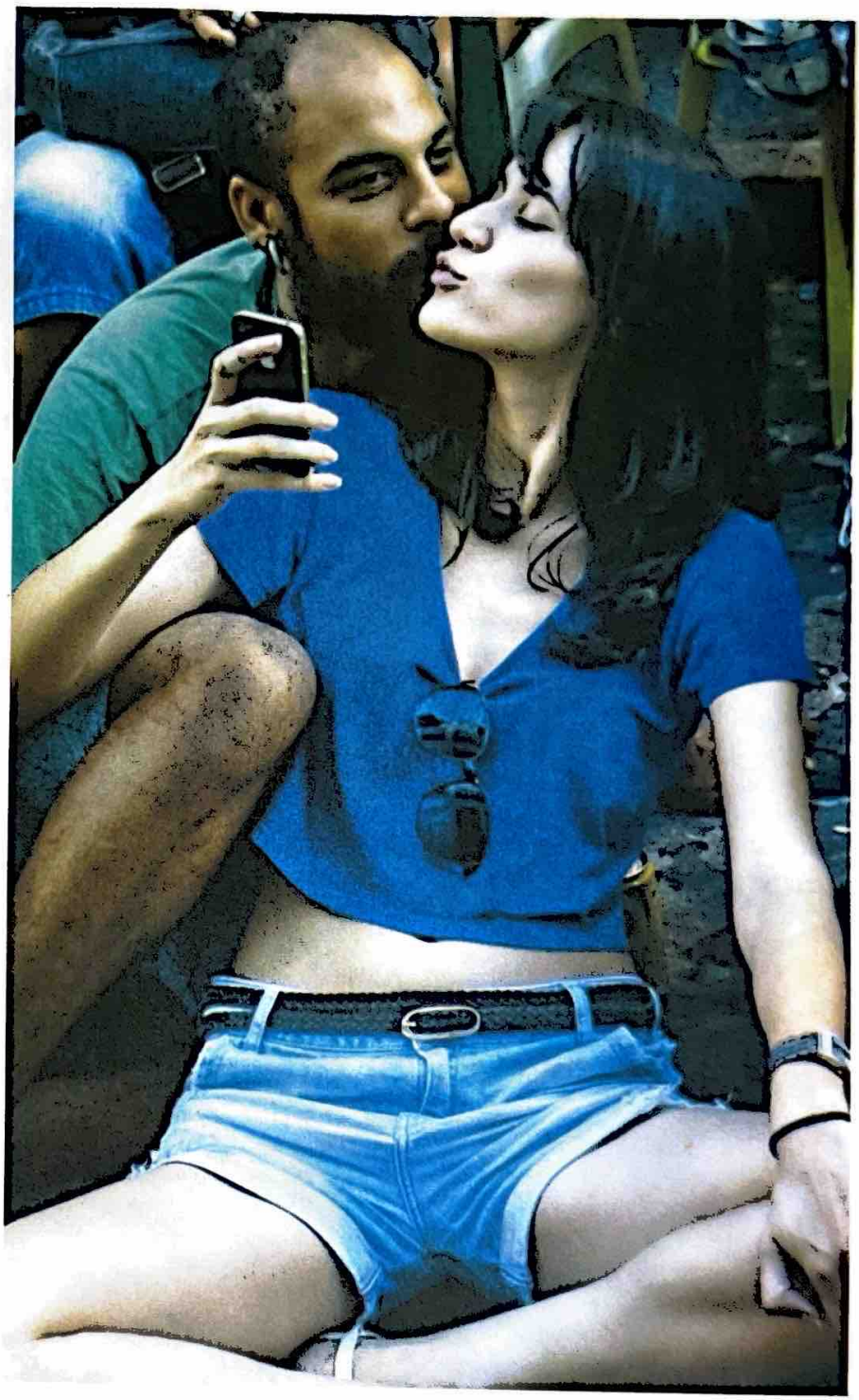
Kiss: Use it for special purposes

To kiss a miss is life's real bliss. ■ by Wg Cdr (Retd.) DP Sabharwal

Kissing is one of the most loving gestures we human beings can share with one another. It holds a world of meaning in one simple action. Remember your childhood and recall how you wished to be kissed by your parents even on flimsy grounds and trivial achievements.

It relieved our pains almost instantly, healed our bleeding wounds and did wonders to our self-confidence. That's perhaps the reason that Jackson opined: Always kiss your children goodnight, even if they are already asleep.



Teaching children something special

Long back, I saw a Punjabi play that taught me an unforgettable lesson regarding kissing. In one of the scenes, a small child of around 10 years tells his father, 'You do not love mama.' The father does not agree and tells his son repeatedly that it is not so and he really loves child's mother.

The child being a child did not seem to be convinced and kept repeating, 'no, you do not love mama.' Exasperated, the father asked in an infuriated tone, 'How do you say that? What is the basis of your judgment?' What the child replied still echoes in my ears even after more than four decades.

He said, 'Papa, you love me and my sister. You kiss both of us in the morning when we go to school and you kiss us again in the evening when you come back from office. But I have never seen you kissing mama.'

Just think about it and place yourself in child's shoes. The fault if any lies with us and not with child's thinking and the reason is simple. We adults consider kissing our children as an act of expressing our love while kissing our partners assumes the colour of intense passion involving sex. Just start considering kissing to be an act meant to express our love and you would see a whole world opening-up in front of you.

Kissing is a great way to connect with special ones. Many medical stud-

ies have proved that kissing is good for the soul and the body. It generates special bond between people. As per one study, the children who saw their parents kissing, grew up stronger in their later life relationships and showed a lesser rate of divorces.

It is not a sermon, but if you are an individual who is so busy that you forget to kiss your partner goodbye or claim to be too busy parents who think that having kids is a good excuse not to kiss each other anymore; maybe you need to change your mind for your own sake. Bernard Meltzer rightly said that "happiness is like a kiss, you must share it to enjoy it."

Achieving name and fame

Public display of affection through kissing is banned in many countries and is frowned upon in many other countries. Yet people have been devising ways and means to circumvent the customs and the laws to make news. Present day Hindi films have passionate kissing scenes involving hero-and-heroine; courtesy ingenious twists and turns in the script and story-telling.

It was not so till a decade ago and the old film that had such a scene was thronged by the film enthusiasts and used to be a hit, thus getting the director additional fame for being bold to show a kiss. Who can forget the instant fame that came to Shilpa Shetty and Rakhi Sawant when they were kissed on stage by Richard Gere and singer Mika.

The western films though never had any qualms about kissing, yet 213 seconds steamy kiss in *Elena Undone* released in 2010, earned it the longest movie kiss tag and associated publicity.

It is interesting to note that there have been competitions for creating a world record for longest kiss. Till a couple of years back it was in the name of an American couple for a session that lasted 30 hours and 59 minutes.

The current world record for the longest kiss in the real world is held by a young Thai couple Ekkachai and Laksana Tiranarat who locked lips continuously (without a break) in 2011 for nearly two days: 46 hours, 24 minutes and 9 seconds to be exact!

Kiss as a health-promoter

The ultimate form of kiss, the intimate and passionate kiss between the husband-wife and the lovers too has many uses, though people used to it, even for years might not be aware of it! There is a science of kissing known as philematology and the people involved in the study of kissing are known as Philematologists. They have discovered a wide range of benefits of passionate kissing.

Kissing boosts immunity as per a study reported in the journal *Medical Hypotheses*. Kissing burns calories which could be as much as 2-6 a minute depending on the intensity of kissing as per various reports. It doubles the metabolic rate as well.

Kissing keeps facial muscles strong and is an effective exercise to reduce wrinkles since an individual uses 29-30 muscles while kissing. Simple smooching helps keep cheeks tight.

Kissing can increase longevity as one study claimed that men who kiss their wife every morning before leaving for work live five years longer.

Kissing is a known stress-reliever. Passionate kissing relieves tension, reduces negative energy and produces a sense of well being, lowering your cortisol, a 'stress' hormone.

Kissing is good for the heart, as it creates an adrenaline rush which causes the heart to pump more blood around your body. Frequent kissing has scientifically been proven to stabilise cardiovascular activity, decrease blood pressure and cholesterol.

Kissing reduces anxiety and stops the 'noise' in your mind. It increases the levels of oxytocin, an extremely calming hormone that produces a feeling of peace.

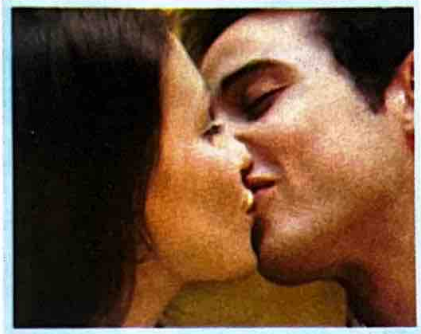
Yet some more learning

Like every other aspect of life, there is quite a bit to learn from kissing. It is an established fact that like snowflakes and fingerprints, no two lip impressions are the same. Kissing can spread germs and bacteria, but luckily, 95 per cent of those bacteria are not dangerous. Kissing is a sure remedy to stop hiccups. Then as Ingrid Bergman said, 'A kiss is a lovely trick designed by nature to stop speech when words become superfluous.'

Personally speaking, 'kissing' was put to perhaps the best use when in a state level poetry competition; the anchor asked the participants to complete the rhyme:

To kiss a miss is life's real bliss.
But to miss a kiss is... ■

Kissing as Custom



Every society has its methods of greetings; hand shakes, hugs, bows and nods being the most common customs in Asian and African countries. Nose rubbing is another acceptable greeting in many parts of the world and the Eskimos are known to 'kiss' by rubbing noses, hence known as an Eskimo kiss. The most common form of greeting in the western world undoubtedly, is a kiss.

A kiss as a part of a greeting involves the touching of one's lips to the lips or other body part, such as the cheek, head or hand of another person. Almost every country has its unique way of kissing. In Slovenia, Serbia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro the Netherlands and Egypt it is customary to 'kiss three times, on alternate cheeks.'

Italians usually kiss twice in a greeting while in Mexico and Belgium only one kiss is sufficient. France, geographically a small country has many cultures in this aspect. Two kisses are most common throughout France; in Provencal three kisses are given while in Nantes four kisses is the accepted norm.