

# Can Emotions be Trusted?

Post by “Joshua” of October 7, 2020 at 10:43 PM

Re: photos—I still have trouble embedding photos from Imgur when I'm using my cellphone. But that's mostly an Imgur problem. Much easier on the laptop!

Re: emotions—I like the distinction that Don is drawing between feelings/emotions and 'reactions'. But in a weird way, I can answer one of Susan's questions with a bit of a story. One of the most emotional people I've ever known seemed very happy.

He was a professor of Creative Writing and English Literature, as well as a musician, a poet, and a sort of hobby farmer. He was candid to a degree that was something formidable, bordering on gruff, and though clean-shaven, he looked as weathered as an old post. He had no time for bad writing; once when I was less wise but thought myself clever, I responded to a disagreeable essay assignment by writing it in Heroic Couplets—the most overwrought of verses. It was a cheap shot, which of course he saw right through. I received it back with copious notes, and a rubber-stamped, red ink heading at the top with these words: “**Are you sure you want to turn this in?**” I wondered how long it had been since he'd trotted that gem out. It didn't matter that I was among the best writers in my year. It was a bad essay, and we both knew it.

And yet, here's the thing; *good* writing was his claimed share of the food of the gods. It was what he seemed to live for, and when he found it, his haggard exterior quickened to a window into his soul. When I read Lucretius, where he writes that *the shape of ever-flourishing Homer arose and wept salt tears*, I see him still—intoning a few tender lines of poetry with a voice like a bassoon, as he clears his eyes by drying them.

## Quote

He will be more deeply moved by feelings than others, but this will not prove to be an obstacle to wisdom. Epicurus