

# What makes you cry?



**“You’ll lose weight on any strict diet,  
but it’s mostly water...from crying.”**

I am a Stoic by nature and by choice. I choose to view life, primarily, through the lens of rationality instead of emotionality. When reflecting on any given moment in time I am comfortable with the phrase “it is what it is.” So I seldom weep. ([Here's](#) a brief summary of stoicism.)

But several weeks ago I was driving down Highway 175 heading to my vineyard, listening to a podcast, and upon hearing a particular story, I felt a swelling in my chest and throat, and I started to weep.

That got me thinking. What makes me cry, and why?

- When I see pictures of starving children in third world countries, I don’t weep, I get angry.
- When I experience loss, I usually become quiet and withdrawn.
- When I watch a romantic comedy (which is seldom) I want to gag on a spoon, not cry.

I have, however, identified two situations which stir me deeply.

1. **When I observe a common, ordinary person extending a simple act of kindness to someone and that action brings about a significant transformation in the person’s life.** For instance, my favorite movie scene is in the 1978 version of Les Miserables. When Jean Valjean is caught stealing silver flatware from a priest, he is arrested. When the priest is asked to testify against him, the priest says, “Jean, I’m glad you remembered to take the silver pieces I gave you.” This act of

grace changes his life. Another example is the incident that changed Desmond Tutu's life (click [here](#) for the story).

2. **When a highly capable and productive person demonstrates true humility and is self-effacing.** (See my post titled "[Have more behind the counter than you put on the shelf](#)".)

I recently asked my staff the question, "What makes you cry?"; everyone's answer was unique.

Discovering what stirs you deeply will give you keen insight into your identity and your values. It's one of many ways in which you have been "fearfully and wonderfully made."