

Can we know when to trust our emotions philosophy essay

[Philosophy](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Can we know when to trust our emotions in the pursuit of knowledge?

Consider history and one other area of knowledge. Shylock EdwardsLucaya International School 1937I believe there has to be some instances when we are able to trust our emotions when we are trying to acquire knowledge.

Emotions are just a display of the biological responses we has humans experience. Emotion is also as one of the ways of knowing in the IB theory of knowledge. When trusting someone or something, and you are able to build confidence in that object, allowing yourself to be less guarded around it, and allow it to influence us. The Merrier-Webster online dictionary, defines this as the " enabling other people to take advantage of your vulnerabilities—but expecting that they will not do this." So how does this compare with how we objectify our emotions? Is it something that can be characterized that something that is able to be trusted? Of course, because our emotions are closely linked with our personalities, because they feed off of who we are as people. It is seen as immature or undeveloped to allow emotions to influence you in any immense way, and this is why someone would even question arise this question. When you think of the phrase, of the pursuit of knowledge, some would believe that it is a person trying to discover or learn new things, but it can also be the gain of knowledge of self-awareness. Because of its ambiguous nature of emotions, it can be very hard to define them. Even more challenging would be to distinguish it from other sensations such as a temporary mood, or permanent sentimental trait. So with all these other terms in mind, emotion can be defined as the manifestation of the sensations we feel in reaction to our environments and situations around us, that linger for a long period of time. An easy example

such as being told unfortunate news or discover something joyful can make us feel different sensations of sadness or happiness. So if these sensations we call emotions are so accurate with the occurrences we face daily, why even question its reliability? Because we, as human beings have also been taught something that would not be considered as natural as the feeling of emotions; we have also been taught morality. The ability to distinguish what we believe is ethically right or wrong, regardless of our instinctive urges, is what makes us different than other forms of life, and the reason we are even able to ask this question. We combat with ourselves in order to achieve goals, defeat life's trials, and to pursue knowledge. So, maybe the reality of the question should be: is it even possible to know when to trust emotions? Or else it may be trying to explain that emotions have limited value for knowledge acquisition if any at all. When we think of the genocidal killings of the Jews by the Nazis during the Second World War, the mass slaughtering of the Tutsi, by the Hutu people in Rwanda in 1994, or even the Genocide of Cambodia, where the Khmer Rouge killed over 2 million people, one principle can be adopted, by the majority of human beings. The overwhelming sense of compassion for the dead and the suffering because these massacres. What the emotion of compassion brought to the rest of the world was this idea of a universal consciousness about what was going on around them. This new knowledge about the lives of other beings, allowed for the creation of international laws to protect any more people from the senseless violence and destruction of both their cultures and ways of life. When we think of The Arts as an area of knowledge, we seem to think of it as one of the areas that is linked closest with emotion. When trying to gain knowledge in the Arts, the

use of emotion is fundamental to understanding the pieces and the intentions of the artist. However with knowledge of human emotion, it is easy to understand how the intentions of the artist can be lost in the response of the spectators that view them. Our emotions during viewing different forms of the arts, such as music, literature or drama change with each person, because each person interprets the art differently. This can be seen with an example through music. Recently there has been a revolution of a new age brand of music called "dub step", which can be described as a form of electronic music characterized by heavy baselines. Many people find this type of music annoying and irritating, characterizing it with dark, negative emotions. Others enjoy it because they experience the music as a stress reliever, because they perceive the beats as melodious and peaceful way to have a cathartic experience. Associating these emotions with the people that enjoy this form of music, people make judgments about the "dub step" audience. Our emotional judgment of people would say that it gave aid in the process of gathering knowledge. But the stereotype given to these people are a "hasty generalization", therefore misleads one from obtaining knowledge. When we, as the knowers question our ability to trust our emotions in the pursuit of knowledge, what we are really trying to discover is our belief in humanity. How our personalities and human faults allow us to not only discover new aspects in the world around us; a higher awareness about ourselves, or just obstacles that we have to overcome. A way to know when our emotions can benefit our pursuit of knowledge is when we are consciously aware that our emotions influence that search. To know if an emotion will lead us down a negative or positive path in our quest

for information, can be judged on a person's level of emotional intelligence. Emotion intelligence can be understood by describing it as, a person's ability to monitor and control instinctive and natural urges brought out of us by our emotional state. An easy example to demonstrate emotional intelligence would ask a person to distinguish which emotions were being portrayed on another's face. But even with such tests, it is difficult to give an empirical value to something as inexpressible as emotional intelligence. In Conclusion, by saying that we should not allow our emotions to influence the pursuit of knowledge is to ask the impossible. As human beings our emotions contribute to the overall motivation in, not only our pursuit of knowledge, but in every endeavor we pursue. I believe it is possible to trust our emotions in every occurrence where knowledge can be gained, but the key is, to not allow your emotions to tamper with the intelligent voice of reason we all have developed due to our moral upbringings. Instead, the emotions will guide in us embracing the more natural inclinations and curiosities that we have instinctively. The value of emotion as a way of knowing depends on the kind of knowledge being pursued. If we classify knowledge by sections on the TOK wheel, the value of emotions are very high when concerning issues such as Ethics, The Arts, and Mathematics, but other areas that are based mainly off of factual data such as Natural Sciences and Mathematics. I would like to sum up my answer to this question in the form of a quote, said by the great philosopher Aristotle, " Anyone can be angry - that is easy. But to be angry with the right person to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose and in the right way - that is not easy." (Aristotle 384-322BCE) This

shows us that emotions can be used effectively as a tool in the pursuit of knowledge, but using them effectively calls for maturity and intelligence.