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Crying helps most people let go of negative feelings  
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## [The Psychology of Crying](#)

### *Why some of us hate to cry*

There are numerous scientific studies that argue the benefits of crying for most people, in terms of letting go of their inner emotions and of whatever bothers them. But a new research, conducted by researchers at the University of South Florida and the Tilburg University, in The Netherlands, shows that these benefits depend entirely on when, where and why crying occurs. The study was based on the accounts of volunteers who experienced recent crying episodes.

Out of the 3,000 participants to the new study, most indeed reported improvements in their moods after crying, but there were those who said that they actually felt worse afterwards. The psychologists in charge determined that an important factor that triggered these emotions was social support. And while two thirds of those who received it felt better, one third reported no change in their state of mind.

An additional 10 percent said that they actually felt worse after crying, on account of the humiliation they experienced by crying in public, instead of when they are alone. This was especially true in the case of people suffering from anxiety and mood disorders. They reported none of the benefits of crying, and experienced only its negative effects.

The main positive aspect of crying is the fact that it calms the body, which enters a state of arousal when a person is upset or in distress. Heart rates go up, and excessive sweating sets in. While crying, breath normalizes and the heart rate slowly reverts to normal, causing the calming effect crying is renowned for.

Psychologists have been puzzled by crying for many years, as its effects, which vary considerably from individual to individual, are hard to catalog. The new finds, published in the December issue of the journal *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, show that the ability that the human mind has, of turning upsetting moments into positive thoughts via crying, is necessary, if crying is to be a calming experience. For those lacking this ability, crying will keep making things worse.