

# Experts explain why some videos make you cry

12:00 AEDT Fri Mar 30 2012

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<http://news.ninemsn.com.au/health/> (link to article no longer active)

**The captain of a US high school speech club bursts into tears on stage as her dad appears in the audience of a packed auditorium, after returning home early from serving in Afghanistan.**

The crowd erupts in rapturous applause as the two embrace for the first time in a year.

This emotional reunion will no doubt be a tear-jerker for many people watching at home. But others will watch it with dry eyes and emotional detachment.

What is it exactly that makes some people cry at the drop of a hat — at an ad, a movie or a YouTube clip?

According to Sydney-based psychologist and communications expert Dr Clare Mann, it is usually a reflection of some pent-up emotion.

"There is a variation in terms of what people respond to. It can be near and dear to their hearts, which can give rise to unresolved issues," she told ninemsn.

"Then there are other people who get upset at everything who are just very emotionally orientated."

Dr Mann said stories involving children and animals were the most likely culprits to bring on the waterworks and the viewer would be more susceptible to emotion if they had recently experienced grief.

"If somebody has unresolved, general grief like death, then when something new comes in, all the other stuff comes tumbling out," she said.

"It is more than a trigger."

Counsellor and psychotherapist Christine Bennett said pent-up grief could surface without warning.

"It's that far removed part when someone has deliberately got on with life ... And they've been told 'Get on with it' and they've got on with life and deliberately put it aside," she said.

"So when's something been pushed down it can come up when they least expect it."

Such as when they are watching a movie.

People may be more likely to cry in movies as opposed to real life events because it is considered a socially acceptable and "safe" outlet for emotion.

"If they cry in everyday life, they are often more controlled as there are implications and consequences," Dr Mann said.

"But with movies they can cry in a cathartic way."

And the old stereotype of the teary girl and the dry-eyed boy actually has some truth to it.

According to Dr Mann, there is less of a social stigma attached to girls crying.

Females are brought up to speak openly about their feelings and emotions whereas a conversation between males is usually focused on goals and ambition.

Gender aside, both experts agree it is healthy to shed a few tears once in a while.