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Refuse to Live Your Life Without Art, Poetry and Music

By Susan Dunn

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Psychology

Q: Why should an Internet course in Emotional Intelligence include art, poetry and music?

A: Because EQ involves understanding and being able to express your emotions, and art, poetry and music are the most suitable vehicles for this.

Art expresses emotions without words, and poetry, is, as someone said, "feelings through a crack pipe." While I haven't experienced anything through a crack pipe, I get the analogy, which is what poems, with their metaphors and analogies, are all about. It could also be said that good poetry "disturbs."

Music also goes where words can't. "Music is," said Ludwig van Beethoven, the dominant figure between the Classical and Romantic eras, who composed his Ninth Symphony when totally deaf, "the mediator between the spiritual and the sensual life."

"Music should strike fire from the heart of man, and bring tears from the eyes of woman," he said. To me, it has done both. I have turned to Beethoven's "Eroica" for inspiration in hard times, and put on a John Philip Sousa march when I didn't want to do housework.

Yet it was Beethoven who also said, "A great poet is the most precious jewel of a nation."

Poetry is unusual in that it's "measured"; it has a rhythm and a form. This somehow both contains the intense emotion, and also expresses it. It's one of those paradoxical things.

We often turn to poetry at major transitions in our life - when we fall in love, or out of love, or lose our love. Poetry seems the best vehicle, with it's eloquence, it's containment, it's ability to distill. The way the death of your child or the face of

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your beloved make you feel is beyond words, and so, in a paradoxical way, is poetry.

When my son died some years ago, at the age of 21, I started writing poetry, as I have at every turning point in my life. The words of Alfred Lord Tennyson reverberated in my mind:

But for the unquiet heart and brain
A use in measured language lies;
The sad mechanic exercise,
Like dull narcotics numbing pain.

Tennyson's poem, "In Memoriam," ends with the famous lines: "T is better to have loved and lost, Than never to have loved at all," which is what every parent struggling with the loss of a child must eventually reconcile.

Art, music and poetry are some of the ways we feel, learn about feeling, and express feelings. Indulge!

©Susan Dunn, MA Clinical Psychology, The EQ Coach, <http://www.susandunn.cc>, author of The EQ Foundation Course© on the Internet. EQ coaching to enhance all areas of your life – relationships, career, resiliency, leadership, positive psychology, optimism, balance. The Samuel Chester Dunn II EQ Memorial Foundation brings art, poetry and music to children who otherwise would not experience them. [Mailto:sdunn@susandunn.cc](mailto:sdunn@susandunn.cc) for free EQ ezines.

Poetry in a Nutshell

By Gary R. Hess

Poetry is more than just rhyming and prose that is in meters and verse. It is an art form. It is something that can not be judged by its cover and can not be criticized to the point where it just "sucks." Poetry is about expression. Poetry expresses the way we feel on a certain subject through imagery and other senses. It helps us deal with our daily problems, be it good or bad.

The emotion which is put within the poem brings it life. A poem without emotion is not a poem at all but simply prose. Poetry is what makes us feel happy or sad, mad or gleeful, loving or broken hearted. Poetry is life on paper. It does not need to be of a certain subject or even rhyme.

Poetry is poetry. It has its own mind. If it flows good if not... it needs work. The rules can be bent but not broken. Our life is our life and no one can tell us what we have been through but ourselves. We know best not some stranger reading our poems. Our poetry is our life, not what someone says.

Rhyming in poetry is not always the best way to express yourself. Rhyming actually takes away many words that could have been used. If you try to rhyme it cuts your dictionary into little pieces. It doesn't need to be this way, choose flow over rhyme.

As a result of this, poetry is defined as a way of putting flowing words together in meter and verse to

show emotion or tell a story.

Gary R. Hess is a webdesigner and writer for

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