Stanford students possess an intellectual vitality. Reflect on an idea or experience that has been important to your intellectual development. (250 words limit)

I used to worship rationality, contemplating pure reasoning as the ultimate solution to every problem. I disparaged those involving in writing and painting whose work was not to be trusted. Moreover, I engaged in programming, a procedure totally based on numbers and facts.

It was when I studied Machine Learning that I realized the limitation of computer. The "real" artificial intelligence, creating procedures imitating human reasoning, had long been considered an impossible solution to challenges like translating, gaming in chess - all feasible solutions rely on boring statistics. What makes us special on this planet is quite the opposite of what I am proud of – the emotion.

So I swerved focus. I started to involve in areas more humane, like literature and art. I stopped repressing anger, fear or depress overtly to maintain a statue of composure; I scuffle and tremble and cry as my mood directs. I spent less time struggling in dilemma; I follow my gut feeling whatever to its end.

And I find a whole new world, a simpler one without having to work out everything thoroughly. I start to see things in a more vivid way, rather than piles of cold facts. A bird sing or scent of spring will drag me out of quilt to start a colorful day. I trust my inner compass more, though sometimes messes up, but every setback can be treated as a reinforcement, and confidence come as a result.

Unlike computers that never make wrongs, emotion makes me vital, biologically and intellectually.