

Say Goodbye to Embarrassment

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I've decided to stop being embarrassed. I'm saying goodbye to the whole thing: that growing suspicion as the moment approaches, that sense of realization when it comes, that rush of blood reddening your cheeks, that brief but powerful desire to jump out of your own skin, and then finally that attempt big fake smile trying to cover it all. Sure, it was fun for a while, but I think it's outlived its usefulness. It's time for embarrassment to go.

Turning off an emotion is always a tough decision. I remember how a couple years ago I decided to say goodbye to anger. Sure, anger has its bright moments — you haven't really lived until you've known that special joy of hurling a chair across the room — but it's also quite time-consuming. Every time someone comes up and hits you, you have to run around chasing after them. And once you start getting angry it's hard to stop — an angry person doesn't really want to calm down, it sort of *enjoys* being angry. So I finally decided to get rid of the whole thing. And you know what? I haven't regretted the decision one bit.

Regret — that's another interesting emotion. I mean, what purpose does it really serve? “There's no use crying over spilled milk,” my mom once told me when I started sobbing after I got milk all over the floor while trying to make cereal. “I suppose that's true,” I replied between sobs. “Although maybe my tears will dilute the milk and make it stick to the floor less.” But I was wrong — the milk stayed just as sticky. So maybe regret should be the next one to go.

But actually, I think it's going to be frustration. It's not discussed much, but frustration is really quite distracting. You're trying to solve some difficult problem but it's just not working. Instead of taking a moment to try and think of the solution, you just keep getting more and more frustrated until you start jumping up and down and smashing various things. So not only do you waste time jumping, but you also have to pay to replace the stuff you smashed. It's really a net loss.

But that's a decision for another time. Today it's time for embarrassment to join anger in the wastebasket of deactivated emotions. It might take some getting used to at first — when friends try to tease me about something I'll probably start to react before realizing there's just no need for it anymore — but before long I'm sure it will seem normal. Even if I'm a less normal person for it.