**The Role of Emotion in Writing: Tips to Make Your Reader Feel**

***Words by Andrew Baird***

*In our modern world of distraction and disconnection, writing with emotion develops a connection to your reader and makes them feel. It can also be an emotional release for the writer.*

*Let’s discover some emotion-fuelling tips for your writing!*

**Tip 1 –Journal**

Journaling is a super-charged tool to help understand your own emotions and release them into the world.

This process aids writing with emotion by uncovering the path that led to the emotional reaction and response. It also supports reflection on how your emotional response affected others.

With a clear understanding of how emotions brew and appear, it’s easier to describe emotion in a way your reader can relate to and connect to.

They’ll be more likely to feel what your words intend.

*Read more:*

[How to Write Emotion](https://www.masterclass.com/articles/how-to-write-emotion)

**Tip 2 – Dig deep**

William Wordsworth said, "Fill your paper with the breathings of your heart.”

To write with authentic emotion, it’s key to understand how emotions surface from the heart – and yes, the positive and the negative ones.

How do you react and respond when an emotion rises? Dig deep into your own patterns of emotions and explore that unique tapestry. Perhaps even discuss what you find with a therapist of a find to understand even more.

With these learnings applied, your writing will be more relatable to your reader. They’ll feel the raw and self-sourced emotion in your words.

*Discover more:*

[6 Ways to Infuse Your Writing With Emotion](https://medium.com/the-book-mechanic/6-ways-to-infuse-your-writing-with-emotion-cb39f5675a1d)

[How to Show Emotion in Writing and Make Readers Feel It](https://prowritingaid.com/how-to-show-emotion-in-writing#head0)

**Tip 3 – Use your own experiences**

Everyone has a myriad experiences from their life – some happy and triumphant, others sad, and some in-between. These experiences are a solid foundation for writing with emotion.

Your reader will feel and connect more deeply when emotions are described authentically from first-hand experiences. The writing doesn’t necessarily need to be about the experience itself. It can draw on those feelings to present a new story around that same emotion.

By example, when writing about my own separation from a long-term relationship, I allowed myself to go back into the past and feel the emotions of those moments once more. This was hard. On the plus, it enabled me to write more authentically about emotion.

Our own experiences are a powerful tool for writing with emotion.

*Read more:*

[Three Challenges of Writing a Human-Interest Story About Your Own Life](https://www.nzwriterscollege.co.nz/journalism/three-challenges-of-writing-a-human-interest-story-about-your-own-life/)

[Emotions in Writing: How to Make Your Readers Feel](https://jerichowriters.com/emotions-in-writing/)

[The Best Writing Tip I've Ever Received: Keep It Real](https://www.writerscollegeblog.com/the-best-writing-tip-ive-ever-received/)

**Tip 4 – Be deliberate with word choice**

‘The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and a lightning bug,’ wrote Mark Twain.

Once you’ve worked to understand your own emotions, thinking about word selection is essential to your reader’s emotional response.

Consider both the meaning and the connotation of words - ensure both are aligned with the emotion being described and your intent.

The English language is rich with synonyms. Select the best words to describe the way you want the emotion to be felt by your reader.

By example, when describing feelings from a connected conversation with a friend, the word *happiness* could be used. Alternatively, to give more emphasis to the feeling, *jubilation* or *joy* could be used instead. The latter words give a greater sense of happiness that is more true to feeling – the reader will likely feel more from this shift in wording.

*Explore more:*

[The Importance of Word Choice in Writing](https://writers.com/word-choice-in-writing)

**Tip 5 – Use your own emotions to develop characters for writing fiction**

The ideas for understanding your own emotions in the first four tips can apply to the development of characters for writing fiction – make the character real and believable through emotion.

Spend time developing a multi-dimensional character. Consider the character’s strengths, weaknesses, fears, flaws, desires, dreams, and motivation. Ponder where and how they grew up and what influenced them.

Perhaps imagine you’re a mad (or sane) scientist creating a Frankenstein that suits your story. Be bold and take time.

A well-thought-out and developed character will portray relatable emotion that connects the reader to the character’s feelings. Your reader will then feel what your character feels.

*Learn more:*

[How to Use the Wheel of Emotions to Write Better Fictional Characters](https://medium.com/swlh/how-to-use-the-wheel-of-emotions-to-write-better-fictional-characters-a86ba6381fe2)

[Emotions in Writing: The Author's Guide to Stirring Up Big Feels](https://www.dabblewriter.com/articles/emotions-in-writing)

Let’s go forth and conquer writing with emotion – here’s a recap of the tips:

1. Journal to first understand your own emotions – this will lead to more relatable descriptions of emotion.
2. Dig deep into your own emotions to observe how they surface – describe that process to your reader.
3. Draw on your own experience to bring emotions alive – your reader will connect and feel more.
4. Use words that align with the emotion to be felt by your reader – be conscious of meaning, connotations and synonyms.
5. When writing fiction, spend time developing the characters across many layers – this will make your character’s feelings and behaviours more relatable to your reader.