

BBC Learning English
6 Minute English
13 June 2013
Crying men



NB: This is not a word for word transcript

- Neil:** Hello and welcome to 6 Minute English with me, Neil, and a very sad looking Finn.
- Finn:** Hi Neil.
- Neil:** Oh dear, what's wrong Finn?
- Finn:** It's just this beautiful piece of classical music always makes me cry.
- Neil:** Ah... I see! Finn is a man who cries. That is interesting because this programme is all about men who cry.
- Finn:** Well, I don't cry all the time, Neil!
- Neil:** We can talk more about your crying later, but first it's our quiz question. And, of course, it's about crying. Finn, take this tissue and dry your eyes and answer this...
- Finn:** Thank you. I'll try my best.
- Neil:** An organisation of eye scientists, called the German Society of Ophthalmology, did some research about male crying habits. I want to know how often men cry every year. Is it:
- a) Between one and five times.
 - b) Between six and 17 times.
 - c) Between 18 and 25 times.
- Finn:** I think it's b): six and 17 times.
- Neil:** OK, we will find out at the end of the programme. But back to your classical music now Finn. Do you often cry when you hear a piece of music you love?

Finn: Well, not always. It depends on a few different things. And if the music reminds me of something, I can become **emotional**.

Neil: You can say someone is 'emotional' if they are showing strong feelings. Well, Finn, you are not the only man who has cried in public recently. David Beckham cried at the end of the final football match of his career. And George Osborne, who is the British finance minister, was recently seen on TV crying. He was at the **funeral** of the former British prime minister, Margaret Thatcher.

Finn: A funeral is the ceremony people go to when someone has died. But why do you sound surprised? It's normal to cry – especially at a funeral.

Neil: But, is it normal for men to cry? People thought it was so strange for the finance minister George Osborne to cry in public that they asked him why he did it. Listen to his answer. He uses that word we talked about - 'emotional'. Listen for it.

British finance minister, George Osborne:

I guess I welled up a bit because I thought it was a very emotional and moving occasion and at times overwhelming.

Neil: So, he cried because it was an emotional occasion. He used another two words to describe the funeral. Now let's listen again. Can you hear what they are?

British finance minister, George Osborne:

I guess I welled up a bit because I thought it was a very emotional and moving occasion and at times overwhelming.

Neil: What did he say, Finn?

Finn: He said it was **moving**. If something is moving, it means that it makes you feel sad.

Neil: Just like that piece of music that makes you cry, Finn.

Finn: OK, Neil. That piece of music is very moving for me.

Neil: He also said that the ceremony was **overwhelming**. When something is overwhelming it makes you feel so emotional, you can't cope! You have to cry.

Finn: Come on, Neil. It's time for me to ask you some questions. Don't you ever **well up** – meaning your eyes fill with tears? You must have had a moving or overwhelming experience.

Neil: Of course I have. I welled up when I got married and I cried like a baby when my children were born – but that was because I was so happy.

Finn: Ah, so are you saying that it's OK to cry from happiness?

Neil: Maybe that's true. Lots of men cried during the London Olympics in 2012. Perhaps it's becoming more normal, but it still seems that if you are a man and you cry in public, it will be talked about in the media as if it is strange or wrong. But, enough about me...

Finn: I can see you are trying to avoid talking about this subject, Neil. Does it make you feel uncomfortable or **embarrassed**?

Neil: Not at all. I am a modern man. But just let me turn this on again and see what happens.

Finn: Ah, that's not fair, Neil.

Neil: He's going to start again. Yes, I can see tears – he's welling up. Here's the answer to our quiz question. How often do men cry every year?

Finn: I said between b) six and 17 times.

Neil: And you are right. Join us again for 6 Minute English.

Vocabulary and definitions

emotional	showing strong feelings
funeral	the ceremony people go to when someone has died
moving	something, like a piece of music or an event, that makes you feel sad
overwhelming	describes something so emotional you can't cope
well up	to have tears in your eyes/ to begin to cry
embarrassed	ashamed

Read and listen to the story online:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/general/sixminute/2013/06/130613_6min_crying_men.shtml

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