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Mechanisms, development, phylogeny and functions of emotional expressions

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About this issue

When we smile, sigh, cry, or blush, we do not only communicate our emotions to others – these emotional expressions also help regulate our bodies, prepare our actions, and shape our relationships. Much previous research has examined how people read others' emotions from expressions, but we know relatively little about how these expressions are generated and what they do for the person expressing them. This theme issue brings together novel insights from psychology, neuroscience, biology, and philosophy about how emotional expressions arise in the brain and body, how they develop and evolve, and how they support daily functioning of human and non-human animals.

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