Epistemic Emotions: The Building Blocks Of Intellectual Virtues

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Abstract:

Discussing the notion of “epistemic emotions” as proposed by Morton (2010), and his argument for which intellectual virtues will be “hard to attain” without those emotions, I introduce the thesis for which epistemic emotions constitute one of the building blocks of intellectual virtues, in order to provide an explanation of the cognitive process that binds the two. Epistemic emotions are building blocks, as:

(1) motivational component and (2) transformative component, and they assay their causal role as necessary components (but not sufficient) of intellectual virtues. Framing the argument within virtue responsibilism, I explain the machinery that leads from epistemic emotions to intellectual virtues, and then from those to affective abilities, stressing the role of training in the process of transformation of the agent in the epistemic journey. Affective abilities, as the refined epistemic emotions that are ready to use within the practice of intellectual virtues, are the secure and beneficial dispositions that enhance the responsible practice of cognition.