

As part of the growing interest in emotions and their normative significance, several philosophers have recently argued against a widespread Kantian conception of emotion as being antithetical to personal autonomy. These authors contend that emotions can be importantly conducive to autonomous agency (cf. e.g. Shoemaker 2003; Tappolet 2014). In this paper, I sympathize with this concern, but argue for a far more intimate connection between emotion and autonomy. As I propose, emotions can themselves be expressions of personal autonomy, regardless of their impact on action. Autonomy will here generally be conceived in the (broadly) Kantian sense of governing one's life in conformity with self-imposed normative constraints.

I begin with the observation that emotions are had for reasons (cf. e.g. Mulligan 2010; Deonna & Teroni 2012, ch. 6). Elaborating on this observation, I argue that emotions are, by conceptual necessity, responses to apparent normative reasons in the form of apparent exemplifications of specific value properties (known as their 'formal objects'). I go on to show that the authority of formal objects as normative reasons to have a particular emotion varies depending on their relation to our normative self-conception. For example, a good

prospect (the formal object of hope) *merits* or *entices* hope depending on whether it is good relative to concerns that are integral to or conflict with this conception. On this basis, I propose that emotional responses are autonomous when they comply with demands of value properties that are determined by our normative self-conception. In these cases, there is a substantial sense in which we are ourselves the source of the constraint to which we thereby subject ourselves.