

# The crying game

*New research says men find crying a real turn-off, but how do you feel when you see another woman sob? Is it OK to use crying as a cunning way to get what you want? Two writers battle it out...*

## Yes

SAYS SARAH MORGAN

Admission: I once fake-cried at the film *Amelie* to get lucky. (I was on a date with a drippy indie shoe-gazer.) But is it bad feminism to weep to get what you want? I once had a boss who hardly ever ate food but who feasted on raw emotion. A personal crisis, preferably embarrassing, was like a Lindt bunny with a Baileys on top to her – she gobbled it up with a spoon. The office was one big over-share. Boyfriend problems, late periods, cystitis that could strip paint – she insisted on every juicy detail. But the thing is, it was a brilliant place to work, since you could get away with murder *just by crying*.

If I missed a deadline, I'd blub like Gwyneth getting an Oscar: "He forgot our anniversary! The bastard!" or, "I just saw some tiny shoes in Baby Gap – when will it be *my* turn?! Waaaahh!" and my boss would simply forget

all about the deadline and drag us off for Chardonnay and Bonnie Tyler karaoke. She wasn't a nightmare as such: she just wanted to feel close to her staff – like a big sister we could all turn to. And we just had to show a little vulnerability for an easier work life. It was effective – so we did it.

And who says crying is weak, anyway? We go gooey when a bloke is 'strong enough' to shed a tear during *Toy Story 3*, so why are we so disappointed when women blub? It takes buckets of strength to let someone see you all exposed and helpless, like a raw tortoise out of its shell. When we cry on a mate's shoulder, we're sharing something incredibly intimate with them. That's an enormous power. And if we occasionally (ab)use that power to get out of a parking ticket, so what?

## No

SAYS SALI HUGHES

A girlfriend of mine works with a woman who weeps as often as Cheryl Cole checks her lippy. Someone questions a decision and she's welling up as if someone's kicked her puppy into oncoming traffic. And yet the tears miraculously dry up when the boss suggests she goes home early, leaving my friend to get the job done. *She* saves any blubbing for when she's clocked off and happens to catch an episode of *One Born Every Minute*.

Crying is part of life. No one should make a regular point of holding in their feelings, and we all know a big-of-box-of-Kleenex-and-tub-of-Cherry-Garcia blub-fest once in a while is positively good for the soul. But there's a difference between getting swept along in emotion and turning on the taps to get our own way. The latter just isn't playing by the rules.

Crying to get what you want is like winning an

argument by resorting to hair pulling – the act of a desperate woman who's out of her depth. And people will remember it. A sob-related victory is hollow and short-lived. You will *always* be the girl who couldn't succeed without regressing to childhood. And, more importantly, it doesn't do the rest of us any favours. We are grown women, not toddlers. How can we expect to be taken seriously if, whenever things get tricky, we cry until someone comes running to save the day?

Not all women are naturally emotionally expressive. But just because it takes more than a chipped fingernail to get our necks wet, we're no less feeling than the next girl. We're just trying to put one foot in front of the other without making the world think we need crutches. And that's the spirit that *really* brings a tear to my eye.