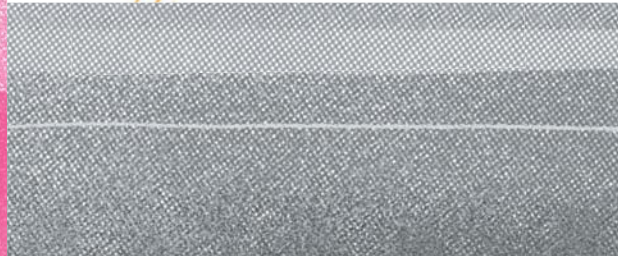
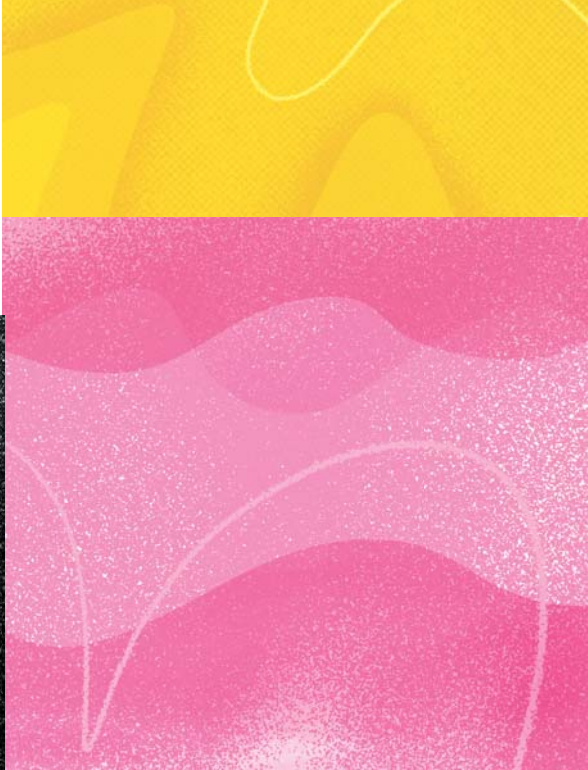
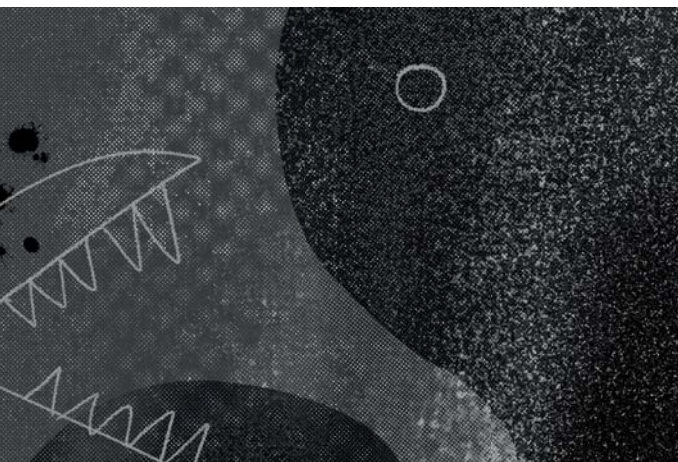


Ester Stará  
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# A BOOK OF FEELINGS

How to know yourself and others

A BOOK OF FEELINGS

Ester Stará



# CALM

Fingertips thawing,  
I dissolve honey in hot tea  
and a biscuit on my tongue.  
Wearing Mum's super-long T-shirt,  
I look out at the dark beyond my window.  
I'm glad to be here on my own.



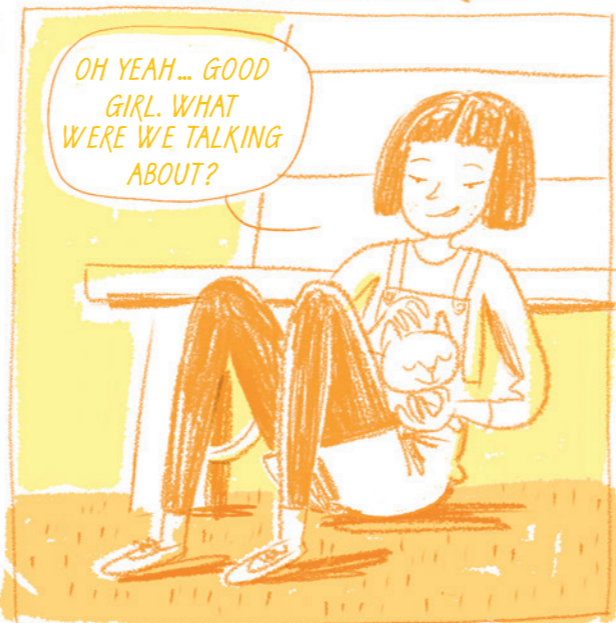
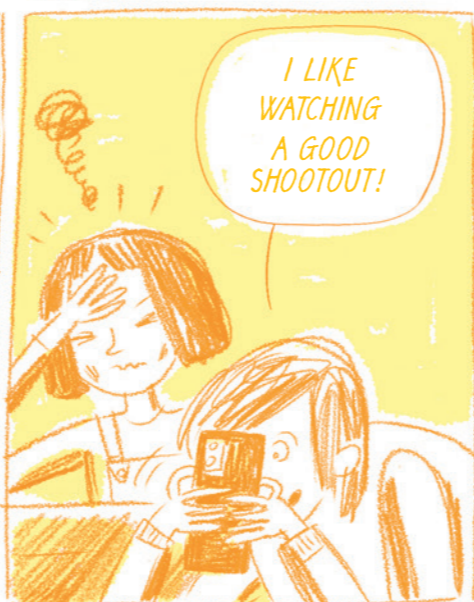
There are many situations in which we feel complete calm. Though each of us may imagine something different, the mere thought of that thing is cheering in every case. It can feel good to laze around in bed, chat with family over dinner, watch a great film with others, listen to Grandma read a story with a happy ending, lie in the meadow, or simply be with friends...

## What is calm?

To feel calm is pleasant. We feel good, and so do those around us. **All is as it should be.** The calm settles in our minds and bodies. We are enjoying the here and now, with no need to do anything else; we don't want any change. We trust in ourselves, our temper is even, our mood is relaxed; we have no need to confide anything in anyone. Our behaviour is natural. We feel safe.



**At moments such as this,  
we forget our obligations;  
we are in no hurry,  
and we have no worries.**



Read the comic strip once more and try to answer the following questions:

1. What is Carrie afraid of? What might she be imagining? What is a person likely to say in such a situation?
2. What more can her friends do to calm her down?
3. Why don't Carrie's friends' recommendations work?
4. Try giving Carrie some advice.
5. What helps Carrie in the end? Is it just the cat?
6. Have you ever been in a similar situation?
7. What do you do to calm yourself down?

## What does calm do for us?

We draw new **energy** and **strength** from calm. It allows our mind and body to rest. We relax and consequently feel refreshed, more carefree and readier to deal with what lies ahead. Sometimes the feeling of calm comes on its own. Often, though, it doesn't come when we need it most; at such times, we feel agitated and restless. To get our strength back, we need to create a feeling of calm in ourselves. As everyone is different, we each have a different way of doing this.



# SURPRISE

BOO

YUM! THIS IS DELICIOUS!



HEY ! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?



THERE'S MARBLE CAKE? !



## What is surprise?

When **something unexpected**, something we're not prepared for, happens, we experience surprise. The cause may be something we see. It may be an unexpected sound, smell, taste or thought. Surprise lasts for a few moments only. Our face takes on an expression of surprise, which disappears as quickly as it arrived. Another feeling comes hot on the heels of surprise. Depending on the cause of surprise, the new feeling may be delight, sorrow, disappointment, even anger.

YOU DON'T SAY !



Surprise is the forerunner of another feeling.





HORIZONTAL LINES APPEAR ON THE FOREHEAD.

WE OPEN OUR EYES WIDE, OUR PUPILS DILATE, WE RAISE OUR EYEBROWS, THE SKIN UNDER OUR EYEBROWS TIGHTENS.

WE OPEN OUR MOUTH AND "OUR JAW DROPS"

WE RAISE OUR SHOULDERS

WE TAKE A DEEP BREATH, OFTEN FOLLOWING THIS WITH A CRY OF JOY OR FRIGHT

OUR MUSCLES ARE BRIEFLY TENSED IN PREPARATION FOR WHAT MAY COME

Read the comic strip once more and try to answer the following questions:

1. What surprises Vince?
2. How does he react to the cause of surprise?
3. Does anything surprise Mum?
4. Do you think Mum knew that Vince's brother was already home?
5. If so, why didn't she tell Vince that he was back?
6. Can you think of anything that has surprised you recently? Was the surprise a pleasant one?

## How our body feels surprise

Not for nothing is it said that a person is numb with surprise. We react with the whole body to a surprise, perhaps making a sound or saying a word as we do so. When startled, we react with an **innate reflex**: we move our head forward and down, blink heavily, narrow our eyes, maybe even crouch or curl up for self-protection as we work out what is going on.

I'm sad again.  
I've a weight around my neck.  
Sitting there,  
waiting,  
too long.  
Pulling me down.  
I'm so tired of it.  
My arms feel heavier too.

I drag my feet,  
each step an effort.  
Why walk on when the sun is setting?  
And for how long still?  
Hours? Years?  
I'm a dry, barren garden.

# SORROW

WE'LL NEVER MEET AGAIN...



OH NO! I MISSED THE PENALTY!



HOW COULD I HAVE MESSED UP SO BADLY?



## What is sorrow?

Sorrow can creep up on us or come suddenly, out of the blue. Usually, it overwhelms us when we are **feeling the absence or loss of something or someone**. As everyone is different, we all feel sorrow in our own way. A small child will cry if they lose a favourite toy. One person is sorry when their favourite TV series ends. Someone else is sad to leave a summer camp they enjoyed. We feel sorry when something doesn't work out for us - when someone breaks a promise, or when a trip we'd been looking forward to is cancelled, for instance.

IF I'D KNOWN THEN THAT IT WAS THE LAST TIME...



We are sad when we can't be with a person we love. **We miss our grandma**, or a friend who lives in a distant town. When we go away for school camp, we miss our parents. Fortunately, such sorrow passes quickly, especially when we'll soon be back with the people we're missing. And what joy we feel when we see them again!

WHAT CAN IT BE LIKE IN HAMSTER HEAVEN?



When we lose someone close, we are engulfed by a great, deep sadness. This is followed by despair and a sense of hopelessness so strong that it hurts. We can't resist this sadness. Indeed, it is important that we go through it before it fades gradually. We may believe that it will be with us always, but it lessens over time until we again have the sense of purpose, calmness and happiness we need to get on with our lives.



Read the comic strip once more and try to answer the following questions:

1. What are all the things Sophie will miss now that Teri has moved away?
2. Can the new situation bring anything positive into Sophie's life?
3. What other feelings might Sophie have on learning that Teri is going to a new dance club?
4. What feelings does her mother have to deal with?
5. Do you remember the last time you felt really sad?
6. Who or what helps you when you feel sad?

## What does sorrow do for us?

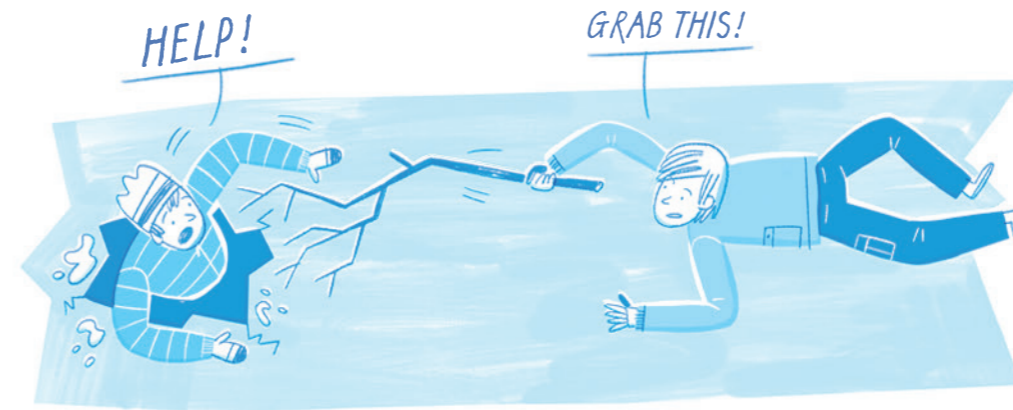
Sorrow forces us to **stop and think** about what has happened; to say goodbye. By allowing ourselves to be sad, we gradually feel relief, so creating space for something new to come. **Weeping** also brings relief. Don't listen to people who tell you that only weaklings and little girls cry, and that boys don't cry at all. Weeping is nothing to be ashamed of. Our weeping lets people around us know that something is happening to us, and that all is not well.

# COURAGE

Come on! It's easy!  
Everyone can do it!

That's right, everyone. Except me.  
I stand here frozen to the spot.  
It's time for me to show  
that I don't lack courage.

And so – can I do it?  
Breath in, breath out.  
Eyes are on me, but I ignore them.  
I raise my head. I step up...  
...and I did it! I can do it.



## What is courage?

In fairy tales it looks quite easy. The knight defeats the dragon and sets the princess free. Jack fights all the perils of Hell, then returns to his beloved. Do you think these two men lack courage? No way! Both worry more that they may never see their beloved again than about dragons and devils.

**The stakes are so high that they must muster all their courage before facing the enemy.**

We, too, may find ourselves in a situation where there is no escape from our fear, and so it must be faced. This can only be done with courage. Courage is needed when we decide to overcome an obstacle. For some, courage comes at a click of the fingers; for others, its arrival takes longer. Our courage grows as we familiarize ourselves with a situation, evaluate our options, and prepare to overcome obstacles. **If we succeed in all this, we can be proud of ourselves.**

Courage is also needed to do something we're not looking forward to – e.g. recite a poem in front of the class, strip down to a bathing suit, reach out to a complete stranger, even be totally honest.



YOU'RE NOT GOING TO CONFESS, ARE YOU?!



HEY, LET HIM GO!







Read the comic strip once more and try to answer the following questions:

1. Why does Mark first hide behind a tree?
2. What makes him leave his hiding place?
3. What feelings does the lady who owns the flowers have to deal with?
4. Might she have reacted differently?
5. Have you ever found yourself in a situation where confessing wasn't easy?
6. What helps you to pluck up courage?
7. What was one of your bravest acts?

## How our body feels courage

When we **feel brave**, we have evaluated a situation and **know ourselves to have enough** experience and ability (perhaps talent, too) to handle it. **We meet the new challenge with determination.**

*WE LOOK STRAIGHT AHEAD,  
MAINTAINING EYE CONTACT.*

*THE HEAD IS RAISED,  
AND THE CHIN IS UP.*

*WE STAND  
UP STRAIGHT,  
SHOULDERS BACK.*

*WE TAKE  
DEEP  
BREATHS.*

*WE FEEL MORE  
STRENGTH AND  
TENSION IN OUR  
MUSCLES.*



# SHAME

When a place is filled with people who stare at me, it terrifies me. I'm so embarrassed, I blush to the roots of my hair. And I can't get my words out. Shy people don't have things easy.



sister, speaking hurtful words that can't be taken back, appropriating something that doesn't belong to them. Or eating a whole chocolate bar without offering a piece to anyone else. Our transgressions stay with us. This is

## What are shame and embarrassment?

When we are ashamed or embarrassed, we feel the opposite of comfortable. We feel insecure and perplexed. We **wish the ground would swallow us up**. Shame and embarrassment have various causes. The most common cause is knowing that we have behaved badly or dishonourably and regretting this behaviour. Everyone has felt shame – e.g. for lying to a friend, being horrible to a brother or

because of our **conscience**, a nagging voice within that reminds us of right and wrong. After it points out that we have done wrong, we feel **remorse** and **guilt**. Sometimes this feeling is so strong that we are tempted to blame someone else. But if we did, rather than getting rid of our shame, we would only make it worse. Shame can be directed at others, too. We expect the principles and rules of our society to apply equally for everyone.



## For breaking rules and/or doing something silly



We may feel shame or embarrassment at the behaviour of a public figure, a friend, a sibling, or even our parents.

There is a kind of embarrassment connected not with wrongdoing but **shyness**. Some people revel in others' attention, but a shy person will often fidget, blush and stammer when others are looking at them. Some of us are simply shy by nature.



Read the comic strip once more and try to answer the following questions:

1. Iggy was supposed to unload the dishwasher. Do you think that he forgot about this chore or was putting it off till later?
2. Why did he lie to his mum?
3. What made him unload the dishwasher?
4. What do you think his mum thinks about the whole situation?
5. Can you remember when you last lied to your parents and why?
6. Think of a situation when you lied without feeling bad about it and another when you lied and felt bad.
7. Is there a lie more acceptable than the truth, of which we needn't feel ashamed?

## How our body feels shame/embarrassment

When we feel ashamed, we wish we could disappear, so avoiding an unpleasant situation. We wish it had never happened. Sometimes we are **angry with ourselves**.

WE LOWER OUR EYES/HEAD. WE DON'T WANT TO LOOK AT ANYONE.

OUR CHEEKS GO RED. A HOT FLUSH WASHES OVER US.

WE ARE "STRUCK DUMB": WE CAN'T GET A WORD OUT.

WE HUNCH OUR SHOULDERS AND SHRINK INTO OURSELVES.

WE FEEL PRESSURE IN OUR STOMACH OR LOWER ABDOMEN.



**A Book of Feelings** is intended for children aged eight and over, regardless of whether they are experts on their feelings or non-experts who often fail to understand or get lost in them. In thirteen chapters, they can explore calm, surprise, joy and happiness, sorrow, fear, courage, shame, anger, envy and jealousy, disgust, boredom, interest and love.

The feelings discussed in this book are shown through the experiences of five friends. As each is an individual, each feels a given situation differently. Readers compare the friends' experience with their own. They read about circumstances in which a particular feeling arrives, what it is good for, how our body perceives it, and what may be associated with it. They will also receive tips on how to work with a feeling, how to accept it for what it is, and what to learn from it.

