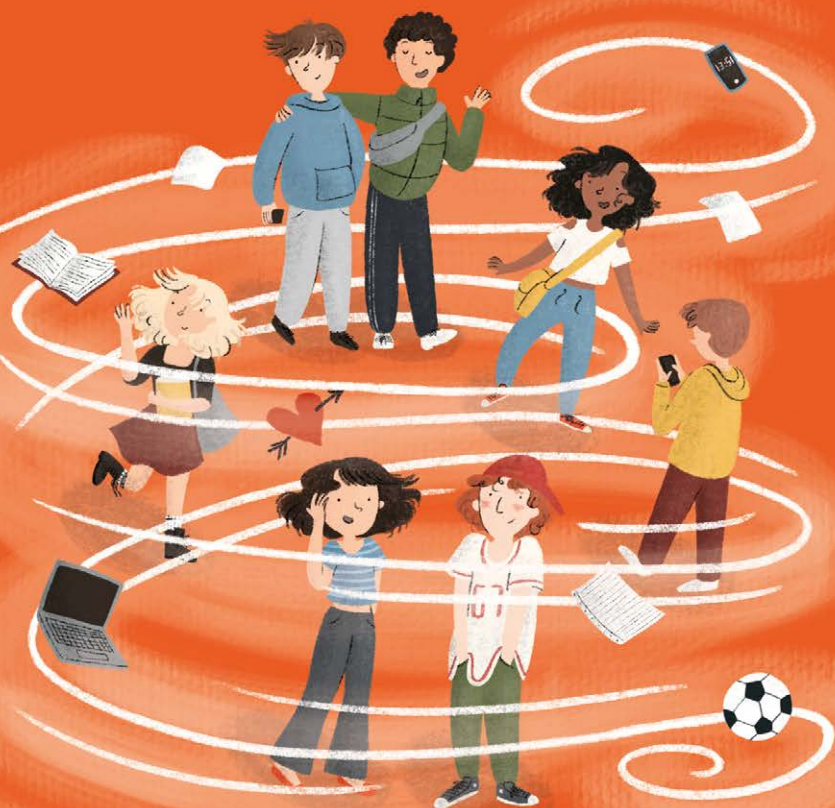


ANNA M. BALLERINI

LUIGI BALLERINI

INSIDE THE STORM

Feel, Think, Act



il castoro



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Leggere per crescere liberi

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Inside the Storm. Feel, Think, Act
Illustrated by Ilaria Perversi

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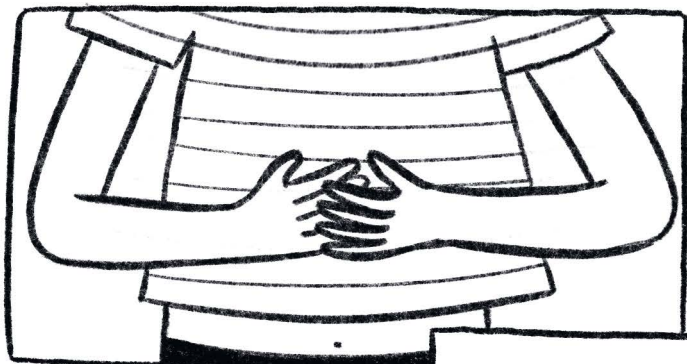
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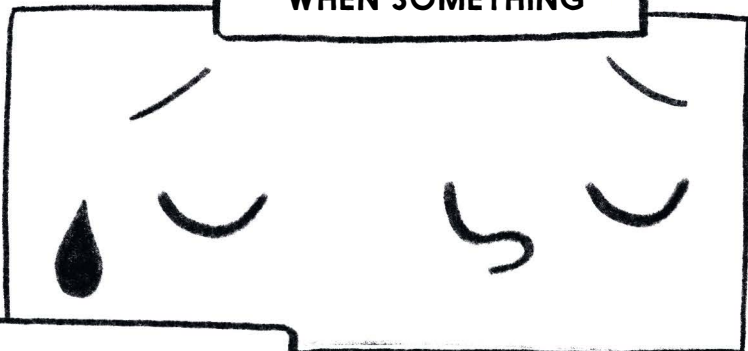


PART ONE





WHEN SOMETHING



FEELS WRONG, OR



I DON'T KNOW
WHAT'S GOING ON



1. I FEEL

Have you ever thought about how much your body “communicates” every day? Not, of course, like the conversations we usually hear: our body has a language of its own. A language made up of sensations and perceptions.

It’s kind of like having a hidden superpower that helps us perceive and understand the world around us better. Just think of common expressions to describe the atmosphere we breath at home, at school or with our friends: “You could cut the tension with a knife” “The air felt heavy as led”, “Her eyes were blazing with anger”.

Sentences like these show us something interesting: in order to explain how we *really* feel, we often need to use images tied to our bodies or, at any rate, to something physical.

And again, how often do you say or hear things like “They gave me a good vibe”, or maybe “There just wasn’t a good vibe”? Well, sensations are kind of like vibes. They’re something that we feel on our skin and that echoes deep inside us. Sensations, feelings and perceptions are messages our body sends us to warn us that something important is happening – to us *and* to the world we’re living in.

INSIDE THE STORM

A **sensation** is what happens when our sense organs – eyes, ears, skin, nose, mouth – receive signals from the world around us. It's like a “raw message” that reaches our brain: the warmth of the sun, a loud noise, a sharp smell, a sweet taste...

We constantly use our five senses to gather this information.

Perceptions exists right alongside our sensations – imagine them walking side by side like good friends.

Let's say that a sensation reaches our body through the senses, which are stimulated by what's happening outside of us (indeed, that's why it's called “sensation”).

A **perception**, on the other hand, is how we give meaning to those signals.

Thanks to perception, these raw bits of information turn into something we can understand.



THE MATHS TEST

11:25 AM. Year 9, Class C.



Ms. Langley's just entered the classroom with that usual expression of hers, you can never tell what she's thinking – she could be angry, happy, bored, sad, excited... and you'd never know, since her face never changes. My desk mate Izzy and I call her Ms. Neinor. It's got nothing to do with her real name, which we didn't shorten or mangle. Neinor is all about her being neither one thing nor another: she neither smiles nor frowns, she neither raises her eyebrows in surprise nor draws them together in anger, her eyes are neither dull nor bright, her skin is neither taut nor smooth. Basically, Neinor is the perfect nickname for her; I just know it.

*Ms. Neinor has put the pile of tests we're about to take on her desk, and from her expression we can't tell if the test will be either super hard or super easy. I bet we can rule out the second option, though! I studied for the test yesterday afternoon – some, not a lot. I didn't really feel like it and found something else to do. I did feel prepared, to be honest, but now – seeing that pile of paper – I'm getting nervous. All of a sudden, **my heart starts pounding**, kind of like when you're feeling scared of something – but you can't tell what – and the world seems come to a standstill for a moment. Plus, **my stomach suddenly feels empty**, and it's such a weird feeling! Ugh, **my palms are sweating so much** that my pen is sticky! **My mouth feels dry**; if I had my water bottle on my desk*

*I'd empty it in a flash – as if that could happen. Ms Langley doesn't let us use them during her classes because she says the bottles keep falling off our desks and making a racket, which distracts her from teaching. And that drinking is useless, anyway. Help, **I'm feeling dizzy**, a little more and I might faint...*

YOUR TURN!

- What sets off the reactions in Deborah's body?
- Have you ever felt the same way about a school test?
- Has something like this ever happened to you in a different situation?

A pounding heart, dry mouth, an empty feeling in her stomach, dizziness... These are all clues recorded by Deborah. They are signals that something is about to happen, signs that she's aware of a situation that makes her feel vulnerable, even if she knew about it beforehand (the Maths test was scheduled).

Of course, this doesn't only happen to Deborah! We all feel like this when we're upset, when something happens and we don't know what's going on, or when we feel put to the test – especially if we know we're not prepared. Almost all of Deborah's body is involved: hands, stomach, head, heart. It's as if her body reacted even before her mind

1. I feel

understood what was going on. And that's... amazing! It means we have an alarm system that is always working for us, even when we're not fully aware of it.





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teachers, and educators
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