

Katharina von der Gathen ★ Anke Kuhl

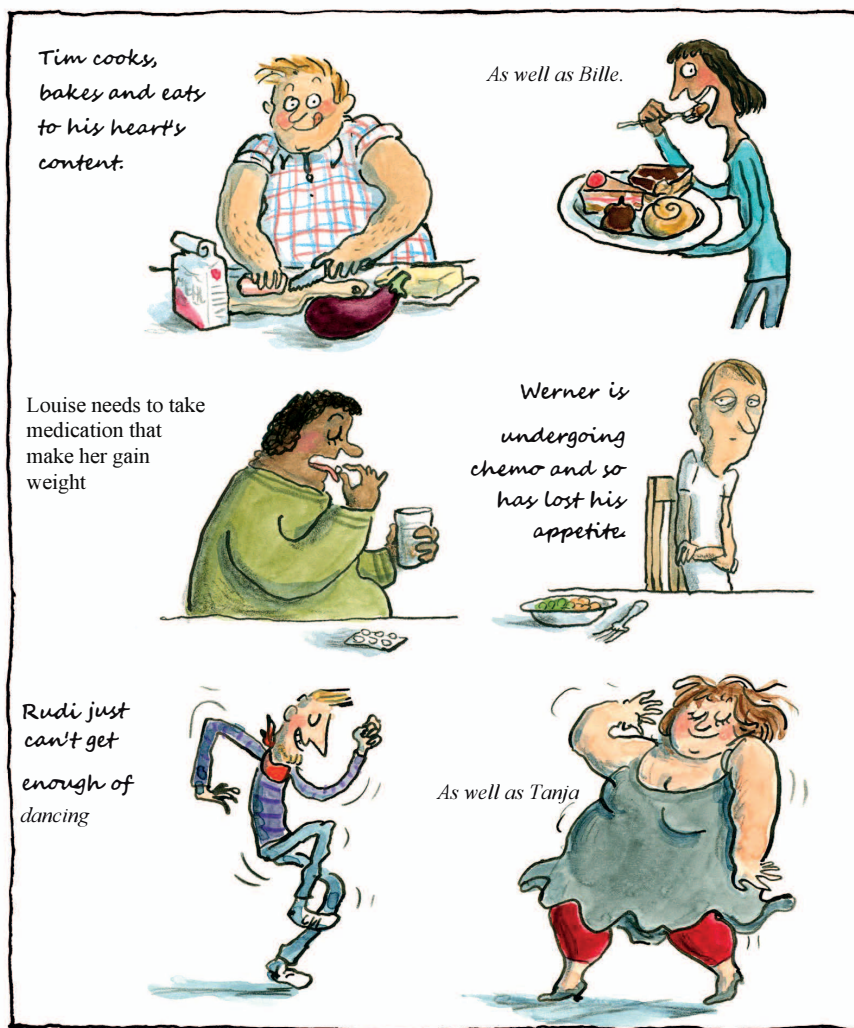
AnyBody

Dick & dünn & Haut & Haar:

das große **Abc** von unserem Körper-Zuhause

English Sample translation by Alice Thornton





Fat and thin

Over the course of their lives, most people will have fluctuating weights – sometimes they will be thinner and sometimes they will be fatter, all depending on their circumstances.

There is an infinite number of reasons for someone being either fat or thin. You can never know what somebody's situation is when you first meet them. Only they themselves can know that. It can be quite annoying for people – some even find it extremely frustrating – to have others focusing their weight too much.

If someone gets way too thin because they don't eat enough, it can be very dangerous. One particular disease where this happens is called 'anorexia'. Both the body and the soul suffer from anorexia at the same time. In the same way, being very fat can be unhealthy and make you unhappy, too. A counselling service, therapists, and doctors are all good sources of support in such cases.

Intersex

Sometimes, when someone is born, you can't really tell if they are a girl or a boy. A baby's body can develop in such a way that they have both male and female characteristics. For example, a newborn could have a penis on the outside and ovaries on the inside. Or sometimes, it's difficult to tell if a baby has a very small penis or a very long clitoris. They can look very similar! So, there are some children that are both boys and girls at the same time – these children's sex can be called 'intersex'. This word means 'between'.

Intersex children should be then allowed to grow and develop in peace. Maybe they will remain 'between' forever, or maybe one day the child will realise that they feel best as a boy or as a girl.

Goosebumps

They are called goosebumps because they make your skin look like a plucked goose's skin. When you are cold or scared, the skin contracts with a shiver. Goosebumps are a reminder of prehistoric times when our bodies were still completely covered in fur – a warming layer of air would build up under the thick, raised hairs. Not only that: when our hair was raised, it would make the body appear larger than it really is, intimidating scary animals and other enemies.

Scars

When the skin has been badly injured – after a cut, burn, disease, inflammation or an accident – you are often left with a scar. Behind every scar is a story of pain and adventure. For women who have given birth by caesarean, for example, the short scar below their belly button can be seen as a souvenir of a very special event in their lives. After a painful operation, the scar can be a sign saying, “I made it!”

Spots

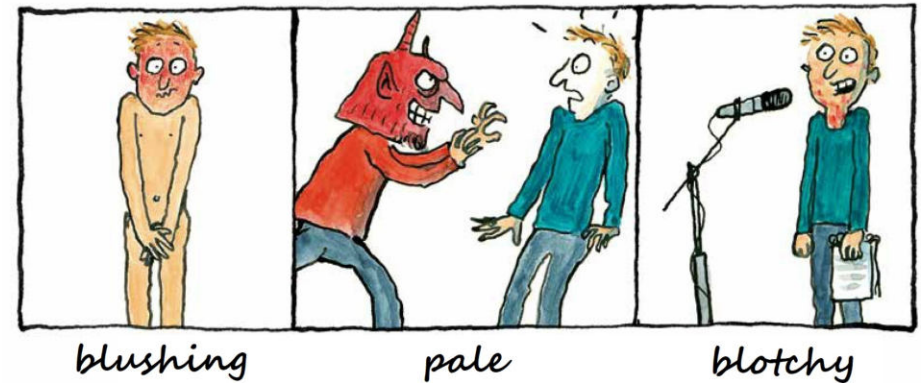
Almost all teenagers will have to deal with spots. They are mostly due to the hormones that become active during puberty. But some adults also have to deal with spots from time to time. These can be caused by stress, bacteria, too much sun, diet or even genes. When you have a particularly large number of stubborn spots, it is called acne.

Sometimes regularly cleansing your skin or eating healthy food can help, sometimes you need to see a dermatologist, and sometimes you just need to wait for the skin to heal by itself. People usually think about their spots a lot: we need to remember that most people don't even notice them on us!

Warts

Warts are little bumps that can form on the fingers, between the toes, or on the soles of the feet. Almost every child gets them. Even though they don't hurt in most cases, they're still pretty funny-looking and can be very contagious. To get rid of them, you usually have to wipe them with chemical liquid, or freeze them off. If you wait long enough, warts will disappear on their own. Scientists have worked out that it can be really helpful to banish them with magic spells.

Skin responses



Bodily fluids

Fluids flow, drip, and run from our orifices. Some of them often, some of them only at specific times. They are either slimy or thick, watery or dried up. The body produces them to help fight off bacteria, to get rid of waste products by transporting them away, and to keep certain body parts moist.

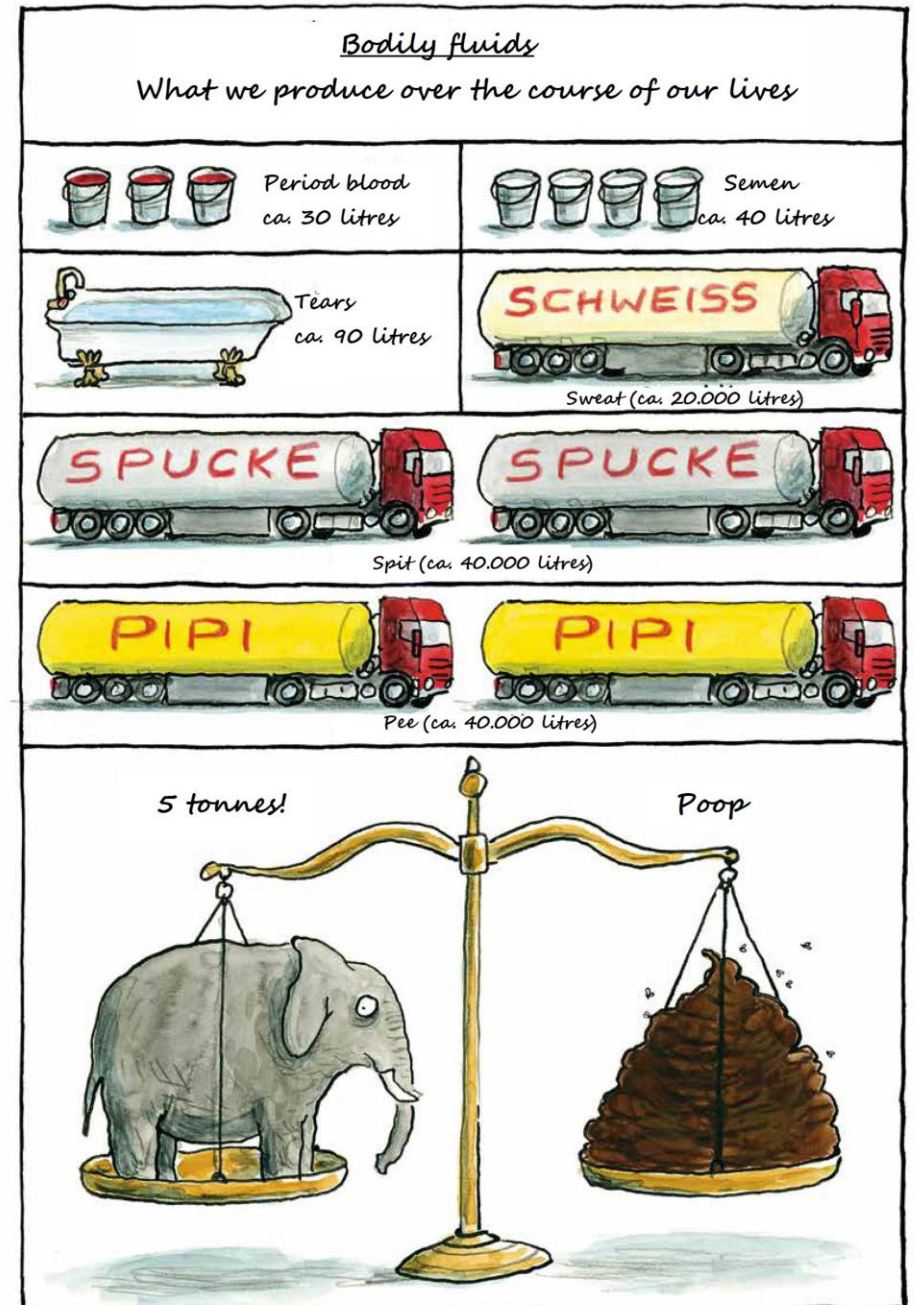
Breast milk is only produced by the body when a baby needs it. It tastes a little different every day depending on what the mother has been eating.

When a girl has her period, it's not just normal blood that flows from her vagina, but rather a mixture of mucous membrane, fluids, and blood. Both girls and women see discharge in their underwear on some days. It looks like a white streak.

Smegma is a whitish, somewhat crumbly goo that has a special smell that can be described as cheesy. Boys can have it sometimes between their glans and their foreskin, whereas girls will often have it between the skin folds of the vulva.

During ejaculation, a blob of semen suddenly comes out of the penis. Some people say it smells like chestnut blossom, while others think that it smells like chlorine.

It is normal, and even helpful, sometimes, to feel a little disgust for bodily fluids – especially when they aren't yours! Indeed, bodily fluids often transmit bacteria and diseases.



No!

It is good for you to have friends and other people you trust near you: whether you're being a couch potato with your friends, reading to someone, cuddling or comforting someone. It makes you feel protected and safe. But this is not always the case.

Sometimes someone's touches or even their words can suddenly feel too close, or too much. Even if they are coming from someone who is familiar to you, you can still feel strange and uncertain. **Sometimes** touches and words can even be very unpleasant. When this happens, it is natural to feel uncomfortable and to want to run away. You want to defend yourself, but a lot of the time you don't dare to. **Sometimes** when someone touches you, it can hurt you or even injure you. This is violence. And violence is forbidden.



As soon as you start feeling weird or uncomfortable, as soon as someone comes too close, you are allowed to say 'NO!' loudly – in fact, it's important that you do! Even if the person making you feel uncomfortable is an adult. Everyone has the right to say 'no'. Getting support from a friend, parent or other trusted adult is also a good idea. Every person has their own sense of how close others are allowed to be to them. This varies greatly from person to person and can even be different depending on the day. Every person is allowed to decide who can get close to them and in what way. And everyone has to respect that.

Not normal

If you look at your friends' videos or posts online, you can sometimes get the feeling that you are different from everyone else: the only one who is not happy with your looks, the only one who feels insecure, the only one who is not sporty, the only one who doesn't have twelve best friends, the only one who can't do something, the only one who argues with their family. In moments like this, you will often feel lonely and sad. Everyone else is normal, except for me!

But even your own friends know what it's like to compare themselves to others. They know that feeling too. It can help to tell each other about it. It will make you quickly realise that it's actually quite normal to not feel normal.

Cosmetic surgery

Some people are so unhappy with parts of their body that they decide to have an operation. For example, someone who has always been teased for how much his ears stick out can get an operation to fix it. Or an adult who has a very big nose that they are really unhappy about can also get operated on. Some people have these operations because they want to look prettier, for example because they think their skin is too wrinkly or their breasts are too small. But an operation is something that you always need to think about really carefully. It almost always involves pain, bleeding, and permanent scars. Only a doctor can advise you to find out if an operation would actually help to make you feel better about your body.

Try it yourself

Try out the “Boss Massage”: lie on your stomach and get someone else to massage you, knead you, pat you, or cuddle you just the way you like it. The other person has to do everything you say – “A little harder, please...”, “a little further up...”, “Yes, stay right there...”. When you feel satisfied, you can swap places!

Decide for yourself



A body belongs solely to the person who lives in it, and to nobody else.

Despite all this, sometimes parents still try and have control over their child's body. For example, they want their child to learn to be polite, or to be considerate towards others. But parents can forget that it is just as important for their child to develop their own feelings and boundaries. Even if it can sometimes be exhausting for adults, every child still has the right to decide what happens with their own body.

Try it yourself

Every so often, take a whole day to try out new things – dare to be different, and even a little crazy! This might mean putting your little sister's pink glittery clips in your hair or wearing two odd shoes to school. Maybe try out a different way of walking or chat to someone new.

Self-confidence

When you do something well, or you're finally able to accomplish something you haven't had the courage to do for a while, you feel strong and confident. Other times when you can feel confident are when you bake a cake on your own or when, after hesitating for ages, you jump off the three-metre-high diving board. The more often you overcome these feelings of doubt, the more courageous you become over time. It is just as important as getting encouragement or praise from others.

Self-confidence means finding out what you are able to do and what you like about yourself – and also what doesn't suit you so well. It doesn't matter what others can do or what others are like, and it also doesn't matter what they think of you. In many cases, simply climbing down again from the three-metre-high diving board is a sign of self-confidence: you don't care what others think!

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