

*Inside Out: Gradient of Emotions*

*Inside Out* is a heartwarming film telling the story of the inner workings and struggles of eleven year old Riley's mind. *Inside Out*'s use of color design effectively portrays abstract emotions and foreshadows the complexities of the story.

At the beginning of the film, Riley wears a rainbow shirt, indicating her emotional stability, as all of her emotions "do their jobs". As the plot progresses Joy takes complete control forcing Riley to feel happy despite difficulties in her life, and Riley wears a yellow sweater. Later when Joy and Sadness are "lost" and no longer in head quarters, Riley wears a mostly red and green sweater with some yellow accents, representing Anger and Disgust doing their best to be like Joy, unsuccessfully. When all hope is lost, Riley decides to run away wearing all black, illustrating she no longer feels anything.

The color design used for the characters perfectly depicts the emotions they represent. However, what *Inside Out* does differently is turns the expected on its head. Joy and Sadness reveal the true meaning of the film *Inside Out* - the complexity of human emotion. Sadness is blue, but it has meanings beyond sadness, blue stimulates feelings of relaxation and tranquility giving the character complexity beyond the obvious intent. This complexity is that blue simultaneously represents positivity and negativity, illustrating that positive can't exist without negative. In the resolution, Sadness takes control allowing Riley a well-needed cry. So, we see that the emotion of sadness can bring tranquility adding another view of the emotion.

In Joy's character design, color is used to represent emotion and create foreshadowing. Yellow is associated with happiness and is the obvious color choice for Joy. What makes Joy unique is her blue eyes and hair; the other emotions in the film don't possess a distinct second color. This is a conscious choice by the artists as Joy is a reflection of Riley, which is demonstrated through parallels in their design, including both having blue eyes. The small detail of Joy's eyes is also used to foreshadow the eventual internal conflict of her character. Joy transcends her initial representation displaying two strong emotions, giving her character depth and complexity. Joy's complex emotional struggle mirrors Riley's. At the film's climax, Joy, the embodiment of happiness, breaks down and cries. In this moment she doesn't represent happiness, she represents Riley. Sadness also shares the trait of blue eyes, connecting the three characters in a purposeful triangle. This through line between the characters supports the theme of the film that happiness cannot exist without sadness. The color choice in Joy's design effectively creates a tie to the characters Riley and Sadness while simultaneously foreshadowing the internal struggle Riley experiences.

*Inside Out* uses its characters and the language of color to explore the complex emotions of the human experience. Through the use of color, *Inside Out* uniquely portrays complex concepts of emotion and foreshadowing presented in the character design to show the character arc in the film.