

CHARACTER THERAPY

USING REAL PSYCHOTHERAPY

ON IMAGINARY PEOPLE

WWW.SOFIYAPASTERNAK.COM

ABOUT ME

ALL ABOUT SOFIYA

Sofiya is an author and a psychotherapist who loves baking, hiking, and doing things with her family.

Her debut novel ANYA AND THE DRAGON is a Sydney Taylor Book Award Honor. The sequel is pretty good, too.

Find her online on her [website](#), [YouTube](#), or being a goblin @sofipasternack on Twitter!



ABOUT SCHEMA THERAPY

Schemas are not diagnoses, even though you can use them to inform or elaborate upon diagnoses. Essentially, they're a way to focus therapy on particular topics or experiences, and can give the therapist a road map to follow. The schemas in this guide are simplified and are not for use on real humans (just imaginary ones!).

The background of the entire page is a repeating red floral pattern on a white background. The pattern consists of stylized flowers with multiple petals and leaves, arranged in a grid-like fashion.

SCHEMA:

DEFECTIVENESS/ SHAME

This guide was designed to be used after watching the Character Therapy YouTube series found on [Sofiya's YouTube channel](#). Please watch that as you're doing these worksheets, or you may get stuck on something you don't understand!

DEEP DIVE INTO SCHEMAS FOR CHARACTERS

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DEFECTIVENESS / SHAME

I AM DEFECTIVE AND UNLOVABLE

PEOPLE WITH the Defectiveness/Shame schema believe there is something fundamentally wrong with them. They may feel ashamed of themselves, and believe they are defective, inferior, worthless, or unlovable.

THOSE WITH the Defectiveness/Shame schema are convinced they are “too” something: too fat, too skinny, too passive, too aggressive, too stupid, too boring, and so on. They’re constantly afraid that the people in their life will find out how “too” they are, and will leave them because of it. They can be very sensitive to criticism, and will either react with extreme sadness or extreme anger.

THIS SCHEMA may begin in childhood due to parents or other attachment figures being hypercritical or judgemental of them.

DEFECTIVENESS / SHAME

OVERCOMPENSATION: the opposite of the schema is true.

Presents themselves as "perfect."

Is very critical of other people or acts superior.

Criticizes and rejects others.

AVOIDANCE: the schema does not exist.

Avoids sharing anything that could reveal their defect or be shameful.

Withholds thoughts and feelings.

Doesn't let others get close.

SURRENDER: the schema is true.

Chooses critical loved ones who will comment negatively about them.

Puts self down; engages in severe negative self-talk.

LIE - WANT - TRUTH - WOUND

WHAT'S YOUR CHARACTER'S FUNDAMENTAL INCORRECT BELIEF?

"No one would love me if they knew how defective I am."
"I don't let people know the real me."
"If someone likes me, it's because I've fooled them somehow."
"I don't understand how someone could love me."

WHAT DOES YOUR CHARACTER THINK THEY NEED TO BE HAPPY?

Ex: "To find someone who can love me in spite of my defects."

WHAT DOES YOUR CHARACTER ACTUALLY NEED TO BE HAPPY?

Ex: "To understand that I'm not fundamentally broken or bad."

WHAT CAUSED THIS BELIEF IN THE FIRST PLACE?

CHARACTER ARC OUTLINE

INCORPORATING SCHEMAS INTO THE OUTLINE

HOOK: THE LIE IS INTRODUCED VIA THE CHARACTERISTIC MOMENT AND REINFORCED BY THE “NORMAL WORLD.”

PLOT TURN 1: THE LIE IS CHALLENGED WITH THE “NEW WORLD,” THE MC CONTINUES TO BELIEVE THE LIE AND PURSUE THE WANT.

PINCH 1: MC UNABLE TO PURSUE THE LIE; FAILS WITHOUT REALIZING WHY; EVOLVES BELIEF IN THE LIE.

MIDPOINT: MC SEES THE TRUTH BUT STILL FOLLOWS THE LIE.

PINCH 2: ANTAGONIST REINFORCES THE LIE; MC TRAPPED BETWEEN THE LIE AND THE TRUTH.

PLOT TURN 2: THE WANT IS WITHIN REACH, BUT NOW THE MC UNDERSTANDS THAT THE TRUTH IS THE BETTER WAY.

RESOLUTION: MC REJECTS THE LIE FOR THE GREATER TRUTH.

THE SEVEN POINT PLOT OUTLINE

Unfamiliar with the Seven Point Plot outline? Check out my video on it, or Dan Wells' video series of his presentation given at the LTUE Conference in Provo, UT.



SCHEMA OPERATIONS

USING SCHEMAS TO OVERCOME WRITER'S BLOCK

WHAT IS YOUR MC'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LIE?

WHAT COULD HAPPEN TO ENFORCE THE LIE?

WHAT COULD HAPPEN TO CHALLENGE THE LIE?



CHARACTER THERAPY

I HOPE YOU LEARNED SOMETHING COOL!

NOW YOU SHOULD have an idea of what the Defectiveness/Shame schema is, how it relates to your character's Lie, and also what the Lie, Want, Truth/Need, and Wound are.

YOU SHOULD ALSO understand schema coping modes, and how overcompensation, avoidance, and surrender can each take this schema in different directions depending on the character's personality.

REMEMBER TO USE this guide with the YouTube Character Therapy series!

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED in learning more in-depth about Schema Therapy, the following books are amazing resources:

[SCHEMA THERAPY: A PRACTITIONER'S GUIDE](#)
[EXPERIENCING SCHEMA THERAPY FROM THE INSIDE OUT](#)

ALSO, PLEASE CHECK OUT K.M. Weiland's website, www.helpingwritersbecomeauthors.com, especially her Character Arcs series. That's where I got the bulk of my information about Lie, Want, Truth/Need, and Ghost! Her website is super helpful. You won't regret taking a look!