

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:

EMOTIONAL INHIBITION

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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EMOTIONAL INHIBITION

THE WORST THING EVER IS TO LOSE CONTROL

PEOPLE WITH the Emotional Inhibition schema believe expression emotions is embarrassing or shameful, and fear they will be ridiculed or ostracized for showing those emotions.

THOSE WITH the Emotional Inhibition schema value self-control above intimacy, and inhibit emotions that would be healthy to express. They inhibit every emotion that comes up: anger, joy, love, frustration, and even sexual excitement. They may adhere very strictly to rules and rituals, and may be overly dependent upon “rationality” while disregarding emotions. Sometimes, these people will even try to control the emotional experience of those around them.

THIS SCHEMA may begin in childhood due to parents or other attachment figures being highly critical of spontaneous emotional expression. It can also be a result of emotionally repressive cultural norms.

EMOTIONAL INHIBITION

OVERCOMPENSATION: the opposite of the schema is true.

Acts impulsively, sometimes under the influence of disinhibiting substances.

Tries to be emotionally expressive even though it is forced and unnatural.

AVOIDANCE: the schema does not exist.

Avoids activities that involve emotional expression, like expressing love.

Avoids activities that promote disinhibition, like dancing.

Will not discuss or express feelings.

SURRENDER: the schema is true.

Emphasizes rationalization over emotion.

Acts in an overly controlled and flat manner.

Does not show spontaneous emotions or behavior.

LIE - WANT - TRUTH - WOUND

WHAT'S YOUR CHARACTER'S FUNDAMENTAL INCORRECT BELIEF?

"I worry about losing control of my actions."
"It's embarrassing to express my feelings to others."
"I have a lot of anger built up inside me, but I can't express it."
"If I lose control of my emotions, something bad will happen."

WHAT DOES YOUR CHARACTER THINK THEY NEED TO BE HAPPY?

Ex: "If I can keep control of my emotions, everything will be okay."

WHAT DOES YOUR CHARACTER ACTUALLY NEED TO BE HAPPY?

Ex: "To be capable of experiencing emotions in a full and healthy way."

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 Emotional Inhibition 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!