

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 intricate centers, interspersed with scrolling vines and leaves.

SCHEMA:

SOCIAL ISOLATION / ALIENATION

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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SOCIAL ISOLATION / ALIENATION

THERE IS SOMETHING DIFFERENT ABOUT ME

PEOPLE WITH the Social Isolation/ Alienation schema believe they are different from other people and that no one wants them as part of their group. They can be described as loners and spend life on the periphery.

THOSE WITH the Social Isolation/ Alienation schema believe they are excluded from social groups that they otherwise should belong to. They worry about what others think of them and always assume no one wants them around. Some people with this schema can belong to a small subculture, but the more severe manifestations of this schema will lead to a person without relationships with even a single other person.

THIS SCHEMA may begin in childhood due to an actual difference: being the child of a celebrity, very rich (or very impoverished), an ethnic or religious minority, a gifted child, and so on.

SOCIAL ISOLATION / ALIENATION

OVERCOMPENSATION: the opposite of the schema is true.

Social chameleon; will put on a fake persona in order to fit in.

Even with a fake persona, they still feel like an intruder or imposter.

AVOIDANCE: the schema does not exist.

Avoids groups or individual people.

Stays isolated and convinces themselves they enjoy being alone.

SURRENDER: the schema is true.

Joins a group but does not interact with it; stays on the periphery.

Focuses on how different they are from others versus any similarities they have.

LIE - WANT - TRUTH - WOUND

WHAT'S YOUR CHARACTER'S FUNDAMENTAL INCORRECT BELIEF?

"I don't belong anywhere."

"I'm fundamentally different from other people."

"If I disappeared, no one would notice."

"I feel alone."

WHAT DOES YOUR CHARACTER THINK THEY NEED TO BE HAPPY?

Ex: "To find a special group I can belong to."

WHAT DOES YOUR CHARACTER ACTUALLY NEED TO BE HAPPY?

Ex: "To understand that I'm more similar to others than I am different."

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 Social Isolation/Alienation 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!