



Schema:

NEGATIVITY / PESSIMISM

This guide was designed to be used after watching the [Character Therapy 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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About Me

All About Sofiya

Sofiya is an award-winning author and mental health professional 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 basically everywhere!



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!).

For more fun and helpful writing information, check out my website and [subscribe to my newsletter!](#)

Negativity / Pessimism

EVERYTHING IS THE WORST

PEOPLE WITH the Negativity/ Pessimism schema see the world through dark colored glasses. They always assume the worst and minimize when good things happen to them.

THOSE WITH the Negativity/ Pessimism schema are constantly fearful making catastrophic mistakes that will result in financial ruin, social humiliation, abandonment, or anything else that is **THE WORST**. They default to being anxious about impending disaster, and are prone to rumination on possible bad events that are around every corner.

THIS SCHEMA may begin in childhood due to parents or other attachment figures being profoundly depressed or negative, or experiencing actual tragedy, hardship, or loss as a child.



Negativity / Pessimism

OVERCOMPENSATION: the opposite of the schema is true.

Acts unrealistically positive.

Denies any reality that is unpleasant.

AVOIDANCE: the schema does not exist.

Keeps expectations at rock-bottom.

Uses substances to block out negative feelings.

SURRENDER: the schema is true.

Minimizes positive events and emphasizes negative ones.

Expects and prepares for the worst.

Avoids possible negative outcomes by any means necessary.

Lie – Want – Truth – Wound

WHAT'S YOUR CHARACTER'S FUNDAMENTAL INCORRECT BELIEF?

"When things are going well, I know it's only temporary."

"One wrong decision could lead to disaster."

"I assume the worst so I won't be disappointed when things inevitably go sour."

"You can't be too careful."

WHAT DOES YOUR CHARACTER THINK THEY NEED TO BE HAPPY?

Ex: "Protection from the horrible things that are destined to happen."

WHAT DOES YOUR CHARACTER ACTUALLY NEED TO BE HAPPY?

Ex: "To understand that the world isn't horrible, and even though bad things happen, so do good things."

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 CHARACTER'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 Negativity/Pessimism 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 all tie into the schemas themselves, and how your character handles the emotions that come along with schema triggers.

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. Her website is super helpful. You won't regret taking a look!