



Schema:

ENMESHMENT/ UNDEVELOPED SELF

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!](#)

Enmeshment / Undeveloped Self

**WE CAN'T SURVIVE
WITHOUT EACH OTHER**

PEOPLE WITH the Enmeshment/ Undeveloped Self schema are so closely attached to another person that it's difficult to see where the loved one begins and the character ends.

THOSE WITH the Enmeshment/ Undeveloped Self schema believe that neither they nor their enmeshed loved on could be happy without the presence and/or support of the other. The person will share the same opinions, interests, goals, and even clothing or food tastes with the enmeshed loved one. The person will not have a personality of their own. They will suppress any thoughts or feelings that are in opposition to the enmeshed loved one. If they begin to part, the person will be overcome with guilt.

THIS SCHEMA may begin in childhood due to parents or other attachment figures being very overbearing and smothering, not allowing the child to develop their own sense of self or identity.

Enmeshment/Underdeveloped Self

OVERCOMPENSATION: the opposite of the schema is true.

Is excessively autonomous.

Works to be the opposite of their loved ones in all possible ways.

Doesn't "need" anyone.

AVOIDANCE: the schema does not exist.

Will not date anyone who does not enmesh with them.

Avoids people who value independence.

SURRENDER: the schema is true.

Imitates behavior and mannerisms of the enmeshed loved one.

Does not develop a separate identity with unique preferences.

Lives vicariously through their enmeshed loved one.

Lie – Want – Truth – Wound

WHAT'S YOUR CHARACTER'S FUNDAMENTAL INCORRECT BELIEF?

"I don't have a separate identity from my loved one."

"I have trouble keeping a separate sense of myself."

"I'm so involved with my loved one that I don't know who I am or what I want."

"I can't separate my point of view or opinions from those of my loved one."

WHAT DOES YOUR CHARACTER THINK THEY NEED TO BE HAPPY?

Ex: "To find someone worth my undivided love and affection."

WHAT DOES YOUR CHARACTER ACTUALLY NEED TO BE HAPPY?

Ex: "To understand that I am my own person."

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 Enmeshment/ Undeveloped Self 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!