BACKSTORY WOUND PROFILE

Identifying the wounding event and mapping out its effects is crucial for creating a believable character whose inner journey is a reflection of the ones we so often travel in the real world. To help you build these relatable characters that readers will respond to, we’ve created the Backstory Wound Profile, a tool to help you figure out all the moving parts associated with this important event. Fill it out in its entirety or explore only the fields that are necessary. If you need help coming up with ideas for your character’s traumatic experience, the Emotional Wound Thesaurus is a good starting point.

The person who hurt your character in the past: ____________________________

What happened (the wounding event or situation): ____________________________

Where it happened: ____________________________

It was a □ single □ ongoing □ repeated event.

Factors that made the situation more difficult:
- □ Personality
- □ Physical Proximity
- □ Responsibility
- □ Support
- □ Recurrence
- □ Justice
- □ Compounding Events
- □ Invasiveness
- □ Emotional proximity
- □ Emotional State

Details: ____________________________

Fallout resulting from this experience (flaws, behaviors, sensitivities, relationship issues, insecurities, etc.): ____________________________

Negative life lessons this situation taught the character: ____________________________

Trust issues that developed: ____________________________

Ways the character’s self-worth was damaged: ____________________________

The fear that emerged: ____________________________

Flaws that developed to keep people and painful situations at a distance: ____________________________

Biases that developed due to this experience: ____________________________

Negative attitudes or outlooks that resulted: ____________________________

The lie the character now believes (that contributes to self-blame, self-worth, disillusionment, etc.): ____________________________

Emotions the character now avoids: ____________________________

Triggers for this wound: ____________________________

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PRAISE FOR THE RURAL AND URBAN SETTING THESAURUSES

“Thorough as ever. Author advocates Ackerman and Puglisi have added yet another comprehensive guide to their wonderful Thesauri series. This one has obviously been researched with sterling care and provides authors with a quick and handy reference and/or reminder of any and all imaginable settings they might need for their latest book.


PRAISE FOR THE EMOTIONAL WOUND THESAURUS

“This is far more than a brilliant, thorough, insightful and unique thesaurus, this is the best primer on story -- and what it is REALLY hooks and holds readers -- that I have ever read. What good is “writing well” if you haven’t zeroed in on the essence of the story you’re telling? This book peels back the layers to reveal not only where the beating heart of your story lies, but how to then get it onto the page. It won’t just make your writing deeper, richer and more gripping, it very well may transform how you see the world – it doesn’t get better than that.

~Lisa Cron, story coach and best-selling author of Story Genius: How to Use Brain Science to Go Beyond Outlining and Write a Riveting Novel (Before You Waste Three Years Writing 327 Pages That Go Nowhere)

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