

# JUICY CHARACTERS

Give your character some depth. Perfect characters are boring and unrelatable. Who are they? What do they want? What would make them feel whole? What would they die to protect?

When shaping your character, think of ways they can *show* these characteristics instead of broadcasting them. For instance, don't tell the reader your character is impulsive. Show them being impulsive – bonus points if it gets the character into trouble!

SKILLS/GOOD TRAITS	FLAWS
<p><i>Lots of the “good” traits will be shared across characters. But they may not show up in the same way. Some people say “I love you” with hugs, and others say it by saying “text me when you get home.” Think about how your character will express these various traits.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Honesty</li><li>• Selflessness – giving to others</li><li>• Self-sacrifice</li><li>• Loyalty</li><li>• Charm/Charisma</li><li>• Perseverance</li><li>• Generosity</li></ul>	<p><i>Don't make your characters perfect! Their flaws create tension, make them relatable, and make it that much more enjoyable when they get out of their own way to overcome the story's obstacle!</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Being socially awkward/poor at communicating</li><li>• Being judgmental</li><li>• Not trusting others</li><li>• Arrogance</li><li>• Impulsiveness</li><li>• Laziness</li><li>• Selfishness – “me first”</li></ul>
INTERNAL MOTIVATIONS	FEARS/WOUNDS
<p><i>These are not necessarily story-specific, but they drive a character to make choices. Sometimes they conflict with the external story!</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To find love</li><li>• To belong to a team or family</li><li>• To experience spiritual enlightenment</li><li>• To atone for past mistakes/sins</li><li>• To explore new ideas or places</li><li>• To protect a loved one</li></ul>	<p><i>These things can crop up and create tension by forcing your character to confront them. These are negative experiences that have shaped the character.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Being betrayed by someone they trusted</li><li>• The untimely death of a loved one</li><li>• Being rejected by a romantic partner</li><li>• A failure or mistake</li><li>• Being bullied or isolated by others</li><li>• A physical wound that caused lasting disability or negative self-image</li></ul>

# CHARACTER TRUTH OR DARE

Get to know your character better by writing 20 things that the reader will never know. Those things will help you get to know the character and feel more like you're in their head as you write. (*Inspired by Barbara Poelle*)

Think about things like...

- What's a recurring dream they have?
- If they got their 10-year high school reunion invitation in the mail, what would their reaction be?
- If they were going to die tomorrow, what would they do with the rest of today?
- If they could only eat one food forever, what would it be?
- If they found an anonymous note on their door step that said *I saw what you did and I'm going to tell everyone*, what would they immediately think of?

Some of these questions are silly, but they'll get you thinking, and may lead you down some paths you wouldn't have explored before!

# CHARACTER BREAKDOWN

Character's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>What is your inner need?</b> <i>(What is it that you want most?)</i>	
<b>What do you fear?</b> <i>(Deep, emotional fear – failure? Losing the one you love? Never finding love?)</i>	
<b>What past wounds are you carrying and how has it changed how you feel about yourself?</b> <i>(Losses, failures, emotional wounds inflicted by others?)</i>	

<b>What is your outer need?</b> <i>(Come from the plot of your particular story)</i>	
<b>What is one unique skill/trait that makes you the best person to accomplish the goals of the story?</b>	
<b>What is one flaw that could ultimately get in your way?</b> <i>(This may develop as you plot your story.)</i>	