

## Emotional Wound #3 Give Your Character Agency Transcript

SHEILA: Hey, welcome back. Sheila and Tobi here with another emotional wound short. You know emotional wounds is a big topic and we have a full workshop on it but there's a lot of little things we can share quickly so you can kind of get back to work. A big one for me is giving your character agency this is part of their emotional wound

TOBI: I really hate it when I'm watching the movie and the secondary characters helping the main character are doing the work. I hate that.

SHEILA: Or they're just sitting back and people are being mean to them, or people are being kind to them, or people are opening doors for them. The thing about not giving your character agency is you separate yourself from the reader. We want to see your character screwing it up.

TOBI: I mean that's really why we're reading a book is to live vicariously through your character. So if they're just hanging out it's not as much fun as watching them you know rappel down a building or something. But also I want them to have a reason to repel them down the building right

SHEILA: And you can tie this in with their emotional wound why do they make the choices they make, because they're carrying this baggage, they're telling themselves this lie. But having that lie is not going to help your narrative move forward if they're not making bad choices and good choices because of it. They should make bad choices, better choices, good choices, and then they find wisdom. That's the arc of a story. This is specially applies with chosen one stories

TOBI: Yes. I love Harry Potter. I think it's an amazing story, Harry does a lot of stuff in that book, in fact it even like points to the fact—like hey you have friends to help you out—because if Harry just like let Hermione and Ron do everything, it wouldn't be as interesting. And the readers, those middle school students and adults, wouldn't have felt so deeply connected with Harry and his struggle. Because we love the struggle. We love to read about the struggle.

SHEILA: And in our workshops one of the big issues that comes up with beginning writers is my side characters are more fun than my main character, they're taking over the story, they're taking my story hostage, and it's usually because you haven't when your main character agency. They've gotta be doing the weird things making the bad choices

TOBI: And they should make at least one really bad choice and then have to deal with the consequences because that's life.

SHEILA: And that's how you grow, and that's why emotional wounds drive a story. For more information...

TOBI: Check us out at [AskIGW.com](http://AskIGW.com).