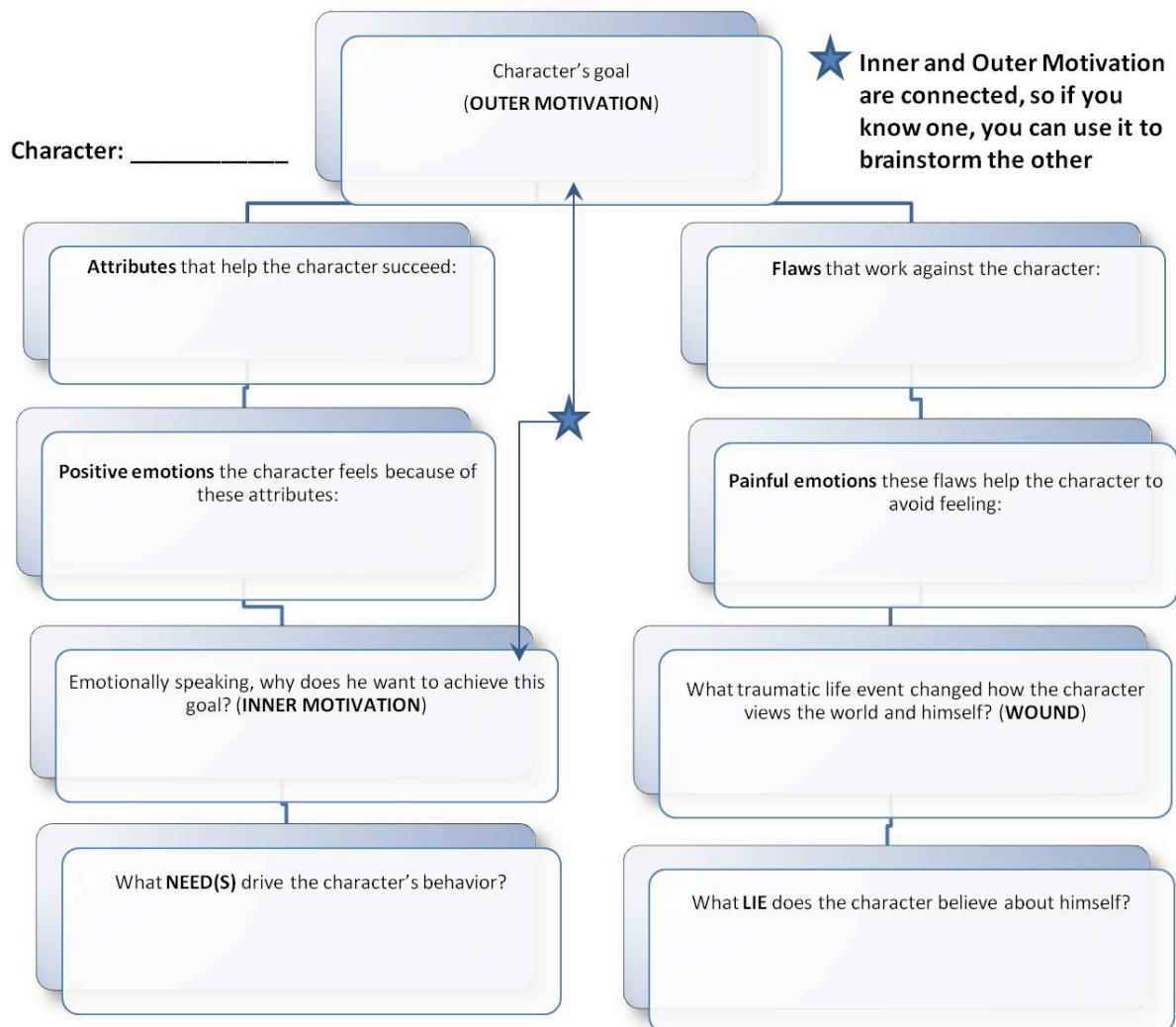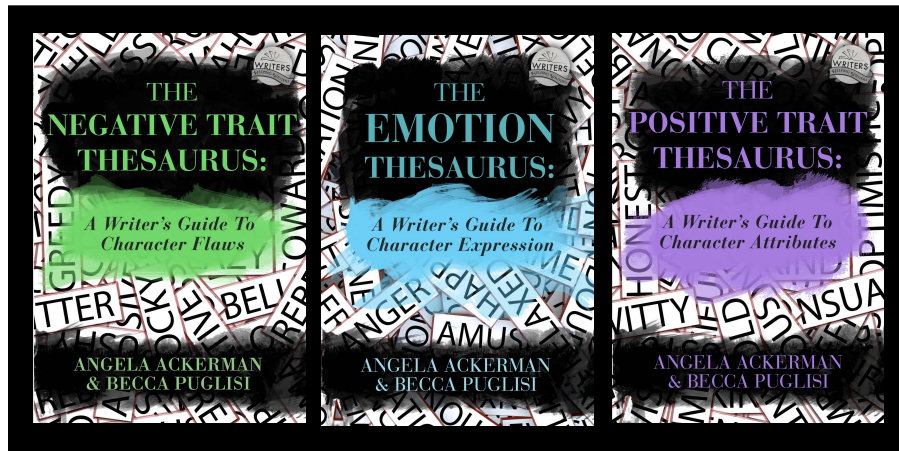# REVERSE BACKSTORY TOOL

Filling in this **Reverse Backstory Tool** for your characters will help you understand the big picture: what they want and need, what motivates them, what their backstories might be. Planning out their wounds and the lies they tell themselves will also help you choose what traits might help them succeed and which will get in the way. Plotting this information in the brainstorming stage (or even as you revise, to add depth to your character) will help you determine what sensitive areas to target, creating challenges for your hero.

Character: _____

Character's goal
(**OUTER MOTIVATION**)

⭐ Inner and Outer Motivation are connected, so if you know one, you can use it to brainstorm the other

Attributes that help the character succeed:

Flaws that work against the character:

Positive emotions the character feels because of these attributes:

Painful emotions these flaws help the character to avoid feeling:

Emotionally speaking, why does he want to achieve this goal? (**INNER MOTIVATION**)

What traumatic life event changed how the character views the world and himself? (**WOUND**)

What **NEED(S)** drive the character's behavior?

What **LIE** does the character believe about himself?

PRAISE FOR THE EMOTION THESAURUS

"One of the challenges a fiction writer faces, especially when prolific, is coming up with fresh ways to describe emotions. This handy compendium fills that need. It is both a reference and a brainstorming tool, and one of the resources I'll be turning to most often as I write my own books."

~ **James Scott Bell**, **best-selling author** of *Deceived* and *Plot & Structure*

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~ **Michael Hauge**, **Hollywood script consultant and story expert, author of** *Writing Screenplays That Sell* and *Selling Your Story in 60 Seconds: The Guaranteed Way to Get Your Screenplay or Novel Read*