

The Search for THE EVENT

An *emotional event* is something that brings about a change in a character. If the character is exactly the same after as before it happens, then the character or story hasn't moved forward emotionally. It hasn't developed in a new direction. Without locating that component of change, a scene becomes merely an assemblage of plot points.

In order to find the emotional change, carefully examine (write down in a list) what the character has done before the scene in question, and then examine (list) what the character does after the scene. If there is no change, just more examples of the same behavior, your story and character aren't really progressing. SO, if you understand what the character did before, and you can identify the change in his behavior afterward, you can probably figure out what occurred emotionally to make him change his behavior.

Don't be discouraged if you don't feel you are able to find it yet. It is a subtle and elusive concept. Here's the thing: the very act of searching for the event will elevate your work and give it purpose and direction. If you aren't searching for something your work will appear aimless. If you are searching your work will be DIRECTED whether or not you can give the event a name.

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