



## Researching Darkness

If you're writing about a subject you're not personally familiar with, you'll want to research the topic so your story feels authentic. You don't need to become an expert in the field, but the key details need to be right. Also, you want to know how the darkness your character is suffering would affect their life. Get the details right.

### Tips for Researching Darkness

- Talk to people with experience.
- Find experts to interview. If you read a magazine article or a book on a subject that interests you, investigate the citations.
- Join HARO (help a reporter out) and put out a call.
- Ask questions on Quora.
- Read some basic psychology books.
- Investigate a few of the better self-help titles out there, those delving deep into topics ranging from mental illness to abuse to crime.
- Read biographies and online posts.
- Watch documentaries and Youtube videos of accounts from or about people who are going through what your character will be going through. If you're curious, there's a good chance you can find an existing conversation around the topic. Though there's still a stigma around some issues, particularly mental health, many people are coming forward to share their stories, because they see the power in sharing and the power of being less alone.

Always respect those who are sharing their lives with you or the world. Never co-opt someone else's pain or life for your story. Your job is to tell a story as authentically as you can without lifting another person's experience for your book.

Your character should be your creation.

You just want enough details of similar things people have gone through without telling that person's story. Go through many accounts to find the common elements that will create a general representation rather than a copy and paste experience.

While diving in on your research, consider some opposition. If there's a bad guy in your story, investigate what made them that way. Monsters are made more than born.

If you're writing about a topic with several sides, research them all.

**This isn't something you learn and move on from, it's a prism through which you view the world to elevate your work. And that's a perspective that's always worth feeding.**

Click [here](#) for the full book *Into the Darkness* by David Wright