

UNDERSTANDING TURNING POINTS

Definition of Turning Points

- They are the scenes or events that complicate the situation so it becomes harder for the characters to meet their original goals.
- They change the direction of the plot for the characters.
- They involve conflict, action, emotion and surprise.

Purposes of Turning Points

- Add surprise and excitement to the story
- Raise the stakes in the story
- Add depth to the characters by revealing something or changing them somehow
- Add depth to the internal and external conflicts

Basic Plot Structure with Turning Points

- Inciting incident—Main characters are introduced in their ordinary world, their individual goals are established, an incident that brings them together upsets their ordinary world, external and internal conflicts are revealed, and possible hints of attraction and resistance are shown.
- Adapting to the incident—A ticking clock of reaching goals is set, learn more about the characters and their conflicts, attraction grows as does resistance, and characters work toward goals midst the upheaval in their lives.
- First turning point—A major complication leads to a change in their relationship and the plot, the characters are forced into action toward meeting their goals, attraction grows stronger and frustrations are mounting
- Adapting to the turning point—Characters change emotionally, experience doubts and fear, there is a revelation of need, some initial bonding, conflict pressures grow, romance heats up, tension grows, and they continue on toward accomplishing their goals.
- Second turning point—Another major complication leads to more changes for the characters, feverish uncertainty, external pressures grow, internal pressures grow, confrontation, romance problems develop, and goals are more complicated.
- Adapting again to the new turning point—Characters reevaluate what has happened, external pressures grow, internal frustrations grow, romance problems intensify, fight attraction, goals even more complicated, and continue on with doubts.
- Third turning point—Another major complication develops for the characters, an intense setback for the characters, frustrations grow, romance sizzles but with potential problems, external demands grow, internal doubts grow, and goals are forced to change.
- Adapting again to the new turning point—Revelations cause damage in their relationship, they begin confronting primary conflict, external demands intensify, internal doubts intensify, romance seems doomed, continuing on and wondering if can obtain the goal.
- Black Moment (final turning point)—Primary conflict drives them apart, all seems lost in the relationship and meeting their goals, an irrevocable change is forced on the characters, and one character may flee.
- Climax—External conflicts are resolved, the characters determine what is important, consider compromises, modify goals, pursuit of each other, and romance blossoms again.
- Resolution—Internal conflicts are resolved, character growth is specified, new goals accepted, and the romance secured.