

WHY DID THAT BOTHER ME SO MUCH?

The Deep Dive Worksheet: Catching TATA's Translation Before You Believe It

This worksheet goes with the blog. It has 6 short sections. Each one tells you exactly what to do, and shows you a filled in example first, so you always know what your answer should look like. Take your time. There are no wrong answers here.

1. THIS WEEK IN TATA MOMENTS

Instructions: Over the next few days, watch for moments when something small bothers you more than it probably should. As soon as it happens, come back here and fill in one entry: the event, the meaning TATA assigned to it, the feeling underneath, and whether you actually checked if the meaning was true.

EXAMPLE ENTRY

The event: *My boss said, "I'm not so sure about that," in our meeting.*

The meaning TATA assigned: *They think I'm bad at my job.*

The feeling underneath: *Rejected, embarrassed.*

Did you check it? *No, I believed it all day.*

ENTRY 1

The event: _____

The meaning TATA assigned: _____

The feeling underneath: _____

Did you check it? _____

ENTRY 2

The event: _____

The meaning TATA assigned: _____

The feeling underneath: _____

Did you check it? _____

ENTRY 3

The event: _____

The meaning TATA assigned: _____

The feeling underneath: _____

Did you check it? _____

2. THE TRANSLATOR'S BIAS

Instructions: TATA works like a translator with a bias; she only ever hands you the worst-case version of what happened. In this section, you'll translate the same event three different ways, so you can see there was never just one option. Pick one event from your list above.

EXAMPLE: Event: *"My friend didn't text back for three hours."*

TATA's translation (worst case): *"I said something wrong, and now they're upset with me."*

A neutral translation: *"They're probably busy, or their phone died."*

A generous translation: "They're excited to tell me something in person instead of texting."

Event:

TATA's translation (worst case):

A neutral translation:

A generous translation:

Notice that TATA's version isn't more true than the other two; it's just the one your brain reached for first.

3. THE FRIEND TEST

Instructions: This is just one question, but it's a powerful one. Picture a friend telling you the exact same story about themselves. What meaning would you assign to their situation? We're usually kinder and more reasonable with other people's stories than we are with our own.

EXAMPLE: *My situation: "My friend didn't text back for three hours, and I assumed she was mad at me."*

If a friend told me this about themselves, I'd think: "She's probably just busy. That doesn't mean anything is wrong."

My situation:

If a friend told me this about themselves, I'd think:

Now ask yourself: why do I believe something different about my own story?

4. NAME IT BEFORE YOU ARGUE WITH IT

Instructions: TATA moves fast, from feeling to meaning, before you even notice she's talking. Before you question her story, name the feeling underneath it first. This one step alone calms your brain down.

EXAMPLE: *This is TATA, and what I'm actually feeling is embarrassed.*

Word bank, in case you're stuck: rejected, dismissed, small, foolish, not taken seriously, embarrassed, disrespected, unseen.

"This is TATA, and what I'm actually feeling is _____."

5. THE COST OF NOT CHECKING

Instructions: When TATA hands you a meaning, most people do one of two things: they accept it as fact, or they shove the feeling down without ever checking if the meaning was true. Circle whichever one you do most.

BELIEVE IT

SHOVE IT DOWN

EXAMPLE: *I believe it. Last month, I was sure a coworker was annoyed with me because she seemed quiet in a meeting. I avoided her for a week, feeling awkward, before I found out she'd just been stressed about something at home. I wasted a whole week upset over a meaning I never checked.*

What has this move cost you recently? Think about a friendship, your mood, or time you spent worrying over nothing.

If you had checked the meaning instead of accepting it, what might have gone differently?

6. THIS WEEK'S TINY EXPERIMENT

Instructions: Pick one small thing to try, the next time TATA hands you a meaning. Fill in the sentence below before you try it. Then come back afterward and write what actually happened.

EXAMPLE: *If I set a timer for five minutes and sit with the meaning, instead of spiraling for the rest of the day, I predict I'll feel calmer and less stuck.*

Result: I set the timer, and by the time it went off, the meaning felt a lot smaller than it did at first.

"If I _____ instead of _____, I predict I'll feel _____."

Result, after you try it:

CLOSING LINE

Nothing here proves you're too sensitive. It proves you've been trusting a translator with a grudge against good news, and now you know how to double check her work.

You got this! Nobody is coming to save you... you have to save yourself!

HAPPYISH HUMANS