

Purpose

To be able to share my world (what's true for me) without being right.

Why Bother?

Many conflicts in relationships occur because we operate as if our stories are the “truth.” We've collapsed the facts with the meaning we've made of the facts.

Facts & Stories helps reduce this conflict and tension. For those of us who are more direct and candid, this tool helps us share honestly without pushing people away. For those of us who are afraid to say what's true for us, this tool can give us the courage to share directly without as much concern about causing upset.

Fundamentally, Facts and Stories is an effective tool for sharing our experience and perspective of the world without being right. It shifts how we show up - from being right to being open and curious. This makes room for others to express their unique interpretation of the situation. With the room to consider different interpretations of what is happening, we can step into partnership and creative problem solving.

How To Use

Practice separating the Facts in a situation from the Stories you are making up.

What to say when you're sharing the Facts:

- *“The facts are...”*
- *“The data says...”*
- *“What happened is...” (If you are referring to a fact or data)*

What to say when you're sharing the Stories:

- *“The story I am making up is...”*
- *“To me, this situation looks like...”*
- *“How I interpret this is...”*
- *“My perspective on this is...”*

TIPS

- Facts are what a video camera would record.
- Stories are our interpretations of and the meaning we make of the facts.
- Telling stories is a part of being human. The only problem we run into is when we pretend and talk like our stories are facts.
- After sharing your perspective ask, *“What is true for you?”*

WHEN TO USE

- When you are Expressing Your World in a Breakthrough Conversation.
- As a way to help you shift into more openness and curiosity.
- When you're triggered and need to share something difficult.
- When you imagine the other person might get defensive.



FACTS & STORIES

Example

Fact: There are 10 typos in this document

Story: She doesn't care about her work

Fact: Client wasn't smiling when we gave him the report

Story: They are never satisfied

Fact: Sales are up 20%

Story: We have a great sales team

Fact: Our attrition is at 2% above the market average

Story: People don't like working here

Fact: I feel angry

Story: It is my manager's fault

Fact: We have had 3 meetings

Story: This is taking too long

FACTS

What has happened without meaning

What a video camera would record

Data

What can't be argued with

STORIES

Adding meaning to what has happened

Opinions, beliefs, and assumptions

Interpretation of data

Can be argued with