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THE WHY WE DO THAT SERIES | FREE READER COMPANION

The Observer

A Noticing Field Guide

A seven-day place to separate what you saw from what you assumed, hold more than one explanation, and notice what fuller attention changes.

THE QUESTION IT STARTS FROM

What becomes possible when I let the observation stay open a little longer?

NOTICE MORE. ASSUME LESS.

BEGIN HERE

Attention before interpretation

The book gives you Field Notes to try in ordinary life. This companion does something different. It helps you collect observations across a week and look for the gap between an event and the story your mind completed.

- Use one real, low-stakes moment at a time.
- Write only what a camera or microphone could have captured before adding meaning.
- Hold several explanations when the evidence is incomplete.
- Checking your read is optional. Some observations can remain open.

A NOTE ON PACE

This is not a guide to reading minds. Curiosity should make another person more human, not turn them into a puzzle you believe you have solved.

REFLECTION PAGE

1. What happened?

Begin with the visible event. Small details are useful. Verdicts are not.

What did I see or hear, in plain and observable language?

What happened immediately before it?

What happened immediately after it?

REFLECTION PAGE

2. Context before character

Behaviour changes with timing, pressure, history, role and environment.

What was happening around this person that I may have overlooked?

What demand, change or constraint might have shaped the moment?

Which part of the context is still unknown to me?

REFLECTION PAGE

3. The first story

The first explanation is data about your interpretation, not proof about another person.

What did I decide the behaviour meant?

What feeling arrived with that interpretation?

What past experience may have made this story feel convincing?

REFLECTION PAGE

4. Make room for three more

The goal is not to find the nicest explanation. It is to remember that one event can support more than one story.

A practical or situational explanation could be:

An emotional explanation could be:

An explanation that has nothing to do with me could be:

The explanation I cannot know yet is:

REFLECTION PAGE

5. Check gently, or leave it open

Accuracy sometimes requires a question. At other times, the respectful choice is uncertainty.

Is this mine to ask about? Why or why not?

What is one neutral, non-accusing question I could ask?

If I do not ask, what uncertainty can I allow to remain?

REFLECTION PAGE

6. What changed?

Return after the conversation, or simply after time has passed.

What new information appeared?

What did my first story get right, and what did it miss?

How would I read the moment now?

SEVEN-DAY RECORD

The seven-day record

One observation a day is enough. Repetition matters more than volume.

Day 1: What I noticed

Day 1: What else could be true

Day 2: What I noticed

Day 2: What else could be true

Day 3: What I noticed

Day 3: What else could be true

SEVEN-DAY RECORD

The seven-day record

One observation a day is enough. Repetition matters more than volume.

Day 4: What I noticed

Day 4: What else could be true

Day 5: What I noticed

Day 5: What else could be true

SEVEN-DAY RECORD

The seven-day record

One observation a day is enough. Repetition matters more than volume.

Day 6: What I noticed

Day 6: What else could be true

Day 7: What I noticed

Day 7: What else could be true

REFLECTION PAGE

The shape of the week

Look across the seven entries. This page is about your noticing habits, not the people you observed.

Which kinds of moments made me decide fastest?

Which explanation did I reach for most often?

Where did fuller context change my view?

What do I want to notice more carefully next week?

WHEN YOU ARE READY

Notice more. Assume less.

You do not need a perfect read of every room. The useful shift is smaller: a little more attention, a little less certainty, and enough room for another person to be more complicated than your first explanation.

[CONTINUE WITH THE BOOK](#)[LEAVE AN HONEST REVIEW](#)

A FINAL NOTE

This companion is for personal reflection and education. It is not therapy, diagnosis or medical advice. Keep what is useful, leave what is not, and seek qualified support when a question needs more than a page.