

LAYER SIX PROTOCOL

Narrative Identification Exercise

Most people do not realize they are living inside a script. This exercise helps you find yours.

The Invisible Script

'I am never enough.' 'If they see the real me, they will leave.' 'No matter how hard I work, I will always fall behind.'

These narratives do not sound dramatic anymore. They have been repeated so many years they just feel true. People build entire lives around them — choosing jobs, partners, and behaviors that confirm the story because the story feels like reality.

This exercise identifies the narrative so you can question it instead of obeying it.

THE CORE INSIGHT

You can question the story instead of obeying it.

Narratives are not facts. They are predictions your brain made long ago and never updated. This exercise makes the prediction visible so you can test it against current evidence.

THE MECHANICS

How Narratives Become Reality

The Three Narrative Patterns

● THE DEFICIENCY NARRATIVE

'I am not enough.' 'I am broken.' 'I am too much.' These stories originate in early experiences where love, safety, or acceptance felt conditional. The brain generalizes: 'If I was not enough then, I am not enough now.' The narrative becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy — you unconsciously seek confirmation and avoid situations that might disprove it.

● THE BETRAYAL NARRATIVE

'People always leave.' 'Trust is dangerous.' 'Everyone is selfish.' These stories form after experiences of abandonment, betrayal, or inconsistency. The narrative protects by pre-empting pain — if you expect betrayal, it hurts less when it comes. But it also prevents genuine connection because trust never gets a chance.

● THE FUTILITY NARRATIVE

'Nothing ever works out.' 'I am cursed.' 'The deck is stacked against me.' These stories develop after repeated setbacks or systemic obstacles. The narrative provides an explanation for suffering — but at the cost of agency. If nothing works, why try? The narrative becomes a justification for inaction that feels like wisdom.

THE EXERCISE

Part 1: Finding Your Narrative

1 The Recurring Theme

What is the story you tell yourself when things go wrong? Write it in one sentence.

Example: 'No matter what I do, I will always end up alone.'

2 The Origin Story

When did this narrative first feel true? What happened? How old were you?

Example: 'Age 12. My best friend moved away without saying goodbye. I decided people always leave.'

3 The Evidence Collector

How does this narrative get reinforced? What do you do that confirms it?

Example: 'I push people away before they can leave. Then I say 'See? People always leave.'

THE EXERCISE

Part 2: Testing the Narrative

4 The Counter-Evidence

List three times the narrative was NOT true. Be specific. What actually happened?

Counter-evidence:

5 The Cost of the Narrative

What has this narrative cost you? Opportunities, relationships, experiences, growth?

Example: 'I never applied for the promotion. I ended a good relationship preemptively. I do not try new things.'

6 The Alternative Narrative

If the old narrative is a prediction, what is a more accurate prediction based on current evidence?

Example: 'Some people leave. Some people stay. I cannot control which, but I can stop making it inevitable.'

THE EXERCISE

Part 3: Rewriting the Script

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The New Narrative

Write a new narrative that is: evidence-based, specific, and allows for possibility.

Example: 'I have been left before. It hurt. I survived. Some people have stayed. I am learning to let them.'

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The Behavioral Test

What is one small action you would take if the new narrative were true? Do it this week.

Example: 'I will ask a friend for help with something. I will not preemptively assume they will say no.'

THE PRINCIPLE

Narratives are not destiny. They are drafts. You can edit them.

The goal is not positive thinking. It is accurate thinking. The old narrative was accurate once, in a specific context, at a specific age. The question is: is it still accurate now?

ADVANCED PATTERNS

When Narratives Hide in Virtue

The Socially Approved Scripts

'I AM RESPONSIBLE'

Often hides: 'I cannot trust others to handle things.' 'If I do not do it, it will fail.' Cost: Burnout, resentment, inability to delegate.

'I AM INDEPENDENT'

Often hides: 'Needing help is weakness.' 'People will disappoint me.' Cost: Isolation, missed support, proving strength through suffering.

'I AM REALISTIC'

Often hides: 'Hope is dangerous.' 'Expecting good things leads to disappointment.' Cost: Pessimism disguised as wisdom, self-fulfilling negativity.

'I AM SELFLESS'

Often hides: 'My needs do not matter.' 'I am only worthy when serving others.' Cost: Depletion, lost identity, hidden resentment.

'I AM DISCIPLINED'

Often hides: 'Rest is laziness.' 'My value comes from output.' Cost: Inability to relax, guilt during downtime, conditional self-worth.

QUICK REFERENCE

The Narrative Exercise at a Glance

THE 8-QUESTION NARRATIVE EXERCISE

Use this card when you notice a recurring life pattern.

1. THE THEME

What story do you tell when things go wrong?

2. THE ORIGIN

When did this first feel true? How old were you?

3. THE EVIDENCE

How do you reinforce it? What confirms it?

4. COUNTER-EVIDENCE

List 3 times it was NOT true.

5. THE COST

What has this narrative cost you?

6. THE ALTERNATIVE

What is a more accurate prediction now?

7. THE NEW NARRATIVE

Write a specific, evidence-based replacement.

8. THE TEST

What small action would you take if the new story were true?

The Reset: Find → Test → Rewrite → Act

Best used: When stuck in repeating patterns, during transitions, or with a therapist/coach.

THE PRINCIPLE

You can question the story instead of obeying it.

The narrative was accurate once. The question is: is it still accurate now?

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The B.E.H.A.V.I.O.R. Method | Layer Six: Narrative Architecture