

Story Sorting

by L. Carol Scott, PhD

This **Development Do-Over** uses the strategy of “two-column journaling” to return you to an experience in “real” life and strengthen your **Toddler Success Strategy of Independence**. Unpacking a story you created to fit the experience into your existing story of *Life and People and Me*, we take a look at the actual experience to find “just the facts, ma’am.”



Here’s the easy tool:

The Story I’ve Been Telling	Just the Facts, Ma’am

Two columns, as many rows as you have items to enter in either column. Create it in a word processing app, draw it with a pen and paper, paint it on the basement floor...

The harder tool is self-examination, increasing your self-awareness through practice. So, here’s an example of the tool, as it could have been used for this first step in a repatterning process:

The Story I’ve Been Telling	Just the Facts, Ma’am
<i>She doesn’t like me.</i>	<i>All the below items, as a mélange.</i>
<i>She is jealous of my relationships with people she feels close to and proprietary about.</i>	<i>She was responsive (nodded, laughed, answered) with those people but ignored me. Five times observed, across three multi-hour gatherings.</i>
<i>She sees me as beneath her, in a class sense.</i>	<i>She said, “Isn’t that the same jacket you had on last time you saw me?” She is wealthy and has a history of privilege, relative to me.</i>
<i>She is rude to me.</i>	<i>She got up and walked away right after I joined her and another person in their ongoing and non-private conversation, first asking, “May I join you?” Three times in one evening</i>

Sometimes, the facts and my story are similar; sometimes wildly different. *Always* they are different. *Always*, I find myself at least more likely to say, of my story, “Well, it *might* have been something else.”

In truth, the facts here were hard enough to experience, why enhance them with an even uglier story set on constant replay? *And* in truth, my self-awareness is nuanced enough to know that I *do* own a sensitive spot about being outclassed in money and privilege—family issues from way back. After growing up mid-pack among a five-sibling group with a harried single parent, I also know I might own a pattern of feeling ignored when that’s not what’s going on at all.

This Do-Over invites you to return to an experience with as much neutrality you can, as a videocam recording movements of body parts, facial expressions, and audio of exactly what was said and in what tones of voice. When you achieve real neutrality, you can *always* see far more interpretation options than the first meaning you made of it. *Always*. I promise.

Let me help you rewrite the painful stories of your life. Locate the strengths of the **Self-Aware Success Strategies** where they lie dormant within you and get more **SASS** in your life!