

GUIDES FOR LIVING CONNECTED

THE ASSUMPTION TRAP: A 3 PART SERIES

PART 1: WHY WE MIND-READ IN RELATIONSHIPS



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WHEN THIS IS USEFUL

This guide is especially helpful when:

- You often feel hurt or reactive without being sure why
- You assume you know what your partner is thinking
- You replay conversations and feel worse over time
- You jump quickly to conclusions about someone's intentions
- You feel emotionally triggered by small moments

KEY CONCEPTS

Assumptions vs. Facts

Facts are observable.
Assumptions are interpretations.

Story vs. Reality

Your mind creates a story to make sense of uncertainty.

A NOTICING QUESTION

Over the next few days, you might gently ask yourself:

“What story is my mind telling right now?”

No need to change anything yet.
Just notice what shows up.

Educational resource only. Not a substitute for therapy or professional care.

WHAT THIS IS ABOUT

Most relationship conflict doesn't start with what was said — it starts with what we think it means.

The Assumption Trap is the habit of filling in missing information about another person's thoughts, intentions, or feelings, and then reacting to those guesses as if they were facts.

Part 1 focuses on why this happens.

Not how to fix it yet — just understanding what your mind is doing and why it feels so convincing.

THE MAIN IDEA

Your brain is wired to reduce uncertainty.

When something feels ambiguous or emotionally charged, your nervous system automatically asks:

- “What does this mean?”
- “Am I safe?”
- “Am I being rejected?”

And then it answers those questions as fast as possible.

The problem is: it often uses old data.

- Past relationships.
- Childhood experiences.
- Previous conflicts.

So instead of responding to what's actually happening, you respond to a story your nervous system created to protect you.

That story feels true.
But it hasn't been checked.
That's the Assumption Trap.

RECAP

- Assumptions are interpretations, not facts
- Your brain creates stories to reduce uncertainty
- Emotional intensity is often a clue that a story is running
- Awareness is the first step out of the Assumption Trap

A GENTLE NOTE

Sometimes a small exercise opens up something deeper. That's not a sign you're doing it wrong — it's often a sign there's more to understand or discover. If you'd like support, feel free to reach out: manhattankansas.com

Get notified when new 5 minute guides are released or see the related video. manhattankansas.com/guides

The 5-Minute Relationship Guides are for educational and informational purposes only and are not a substitute for professional counseling or mental health treatment. Reading or using these guides does not establish a therapist-client relationship. If you are experiencing significant distress or mental health concerns, we encourage you to seek support from a qualified mental health professional.