



Truth Mining –

When a miner digs for gold, sometimes he finds fool's gold and sometimes he finds the real thing. He may have to take an extra few seconds to examine any gold shiny rocks to know the difference. In order to do that the minor must pay attention to anything that shines like gold with an open mind considering that he may have found the real thing. Only after inspection will he throw away a piece of fool's gold or keep the gold if its real.

Truth mining is similar. It involves digging in your head to find little nuggets of truth, however, it may take a little bit of time to inspect each “nugget” you find. If you keep digging you will eventually reveal some truth.

Warning: Not everyone has what it take to be successful at truth mining as it can be very challenging. In order to be successful at it an individual needs the following qualities:

- **Open mindedness** – You need to be able to open to the fact that some things you may find are true, even if it is uncomfortable. If you are the type of person who cannot handle a little discomfort or if you are just quick to deny anything that you may not like hearing, then truth mining will not work
- **Insight** – You need to be able to “look inside”. Truth mining is an exercise in insightfulness so if you are not the type of person is ready to “dig” and learn a little more than truth mining may be difficult
- **Self-Honesty** – For truth mining to work, you need to be honest with yourself rather than make excuses for uncomfortable truths

Truth Mining Exercise –

1. Pick a topic – You shouldn't just dig aimlessly in your head. It can be good to focus on a specific area or topic that you may need to know more about. A good area to choose can be often be one that is a challenge in your life at this time, like when you have different views with someone else whom you care about
 - Example – “I feel like I am doing ok overall with substance use, but certain members of my family are concerned about how I have been acting and they are acting like they think I am going to relapse. It feels like they are just overreacting”
2. “Mine” (or mentally dig) for specific thoughts and especially for feelings. The rule of thumb is to just accept whatever comes to mind regardless of whether or not you believe it at first. When you dig out a thought or feeling, try to continue to dig deeper by thinking about some of the reasons “why” you may think of feel that way. Also try digging some “what if” scenarios. Again, don't avoid your thoughts and feelings even if you are not fully comfortable with them at first. When you come to what sounds like a possibly true conclusion, take note of it (This requires self-honesty)
 - Same Example (continued from the example in #1) – Some thoughts and feelings:
 - i. I am annoyed with my family for thinking I might relapse
 - ii. (Why...?) - I think my family is being overly cautious and suspicious
 - iii. (Why...?) -My family cares about me
 - iv. (Why...?) -**My family loves me and they want me to succeed (TRUTH)**
 - v. *What if* my family is right and they see something in me that I don't see?
 - vi. *What if* there is something that they are saying that I should be listening to?
 - vii. *What if I need to listen closer to what they are saying and change something soon to avoid relapse? (TRUTH)*



3. Consider your conclusions and take action – When you have dug down within your own mind for some nuggets of truth, it is important to take some time to come up with ways that you can take action based on what you have learned. Knowledge is much more useful when it is put into practice so see what kind of plan you can come up with
 - Continuing with the Same Example –
 - i. **TRUTHs - My family loves me and they want me to succeed AND I need to listen closer to what they are saying and change something soon to avoid relapse**
 - *Action Plan –*
 - a. *“I will try to be more patient with my family and instead of getting annoyed I will do my best to calmly listen to their concerns”*
 - b. *“Once I have heard their concerns, if they are reasonable I will try my best to make an effort to follow them and increase my efforts to prevent relapse”*

This truth mining exercise does not have to be limited to just issues with substance use or addiction. It can be done to dig deeper into your true feelings and thoughts about any topic including relationships, anxieties, fears, goals and many other topics. Increasing insight by looking into what is inside your mind can be an incredibly beneficial learning experience.

Group Exercise – Truth Mining Dyads

Directions – The group should break into pairs of two. One person should come up with a situation in their life that can be used for truth mining. The other person can help with some questions that can aid in truth mining. Take a look at the example below which involves two people doing the truth dyad:

Person 1 (Thinker)	Person 2 (Helper)
Pick Topic – “My girlfriend and I have been arguing a lot lately”	Arguing?...Why?
“I get upset with her often when she gets home”	“Why is that?...Can you think of any feelings?”
“To be honest, I can be jealous and sometimes we fight because I accuse her of cheating”	“Jealous?...Why?”
She has never really done anything to actually show she is cheating so I am not sure	Really, Why? – think of feelings
I guess I am a little bit insecure in relationships so that is why I get jealous	We may have found a truth - What <u>action</u> are you going to take?
To take <u>action</u> to change this I need to try to stop being jealous and starting fights with my girlfriend. I should talk with my therapist about my feelings of insecurity	Good plan!

If there is time, switch places and repeat this exercise with your partner by trading places

Of course it may not go as smoothly as in the example, but give it a try. Afterward, when the group reconvenes together as a whole, discuss:

- **What truth(s) were you able to dig up?**
- **What action plan did you come up with?**