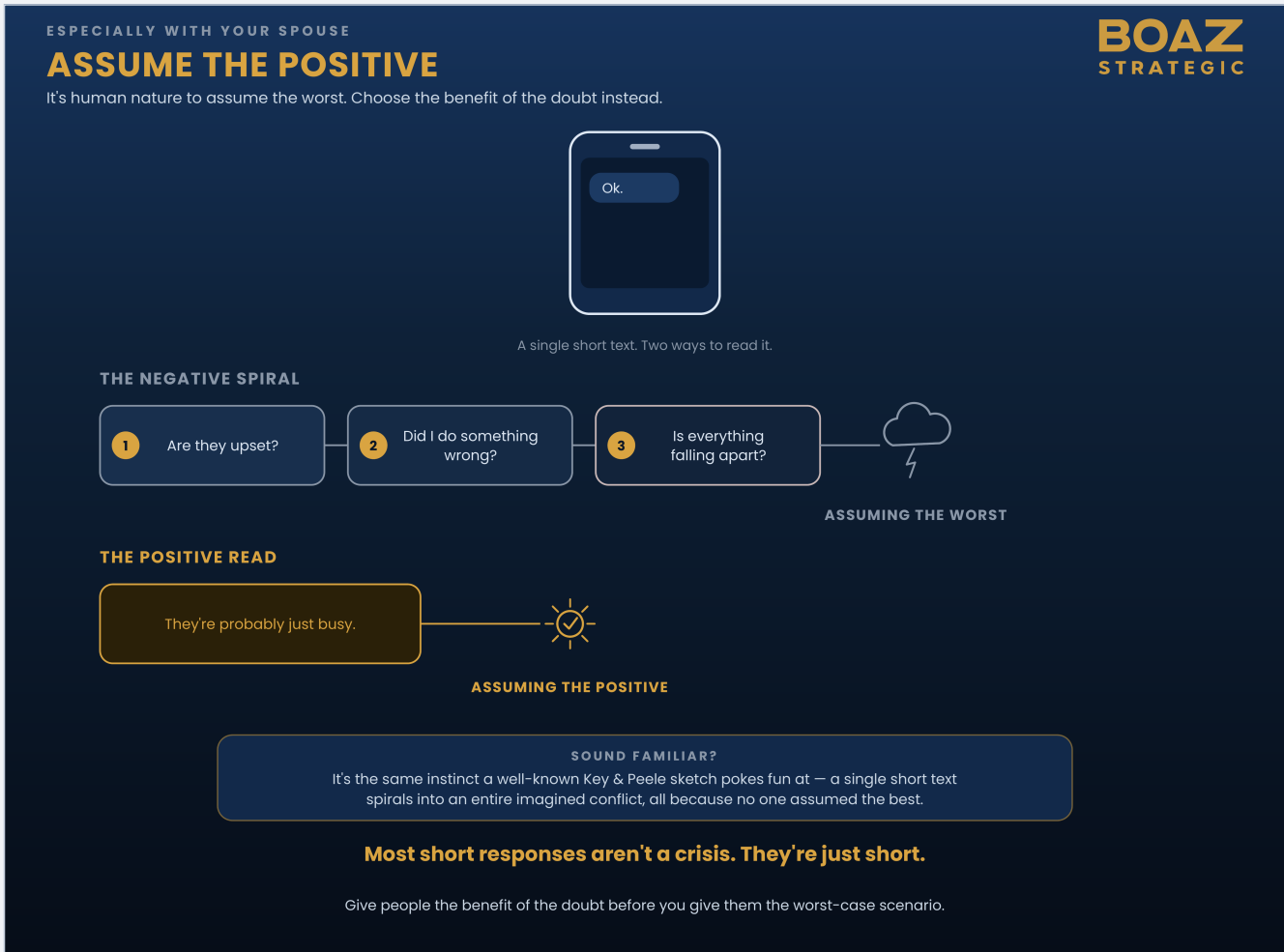




Positive until *proven negative*.

“ *Most short responses aren't a crisis. They're just short.* ”

It's human nature to assume the worst — especially when someone gives us a short response. A single “OK” can send us into a spiral: Are they upset? Did I do something wrong? Is everything falling apart?

That's what happens when we assume the worst in someone's behavior. The trouble is, we never really know why a person said or did something unless we ask.

If a reply seems short, don't assume they're upset. They may have just been busy and thought a quick reply was better than none.

This is why it's crucial to give people the benefit of the doubt and assume the best. And if you can't stop dwelling on how an exchange went, don't sit in the negative — simply and respectfully ask.

You might say: “When you said that, it made me feel you meant something by it. Can you help me get clarity on what you meant?”

We've all heard “innocent until proven guilty.” Apply the same principle to your assumptions:

Positive until proven negative.