

Observer Self Script

Written for ACT therapists delivering self-as-context aloud, built on concrete memory rather than abstraction: the body at six, the roles picked up and put down, the feelings that arrived and left. Nine minutes with the eyes-open option offered at the start and a deliberate grounding at the end, because the client who goes hunting for the observing self as a thing is the one who comes out of it feeling unmoored.

9 min · 6 segments

01. Settling

1 min

[keep your voice ordinary and grounded all the way through this script — a hushed, floaty delivery makes the middle section harder to stay with]

Sit upright, feet flat, hands resting. Close your eyes if that is comfortable. If closing them makes you feel unmoored, keep them open and rest your gaze low on the floor. This works just as well with the eyes open, and staying anchored matters more than the eyes. *[pause for 15 seconds]*

Feel the places where you meet the chair and the floor. Two or three points of contact. Let them be obvious. *[pause for 20 seconds]*

02. Noticing that you are noticing

1 min 30

[give the full beat after each instruction — the pause is what turns this into an experience rather than a description]

Notice the sounds in the room. Nearer ones, and further ones behind them. *[pause for 15 seconds]*

Now notice something else. Notice that you are the one noticing the sounds. There is hearing going on, and there is someone here aware of the hearing. *[pause for 20 seconds]*

Do it once more with something you can feel. Notice the weight of your hands. Then notice that you are aware of noticing the weight of your hands. That second part is what we are going to spend the next few minutes with. *[pause for 20 seconds]*

03. The body that has changed

2 min

[ask for actual memories, not ideas — if they answer in generalities, give them a longer silence rather than moving on]

Bring to mind something you can remember from when you were about six. A room, a smell, the walk to school, somebody's kitchen. Find one concrete detail rather than a summary. *[pause for 30 seconds]*

That body was a different size, in different clothes, made of cells that have all since been replaced, standing in a place you may not be able to visit any more. Almost nothing physical about it is still here. *[pause for 15 seconds]*

But whoever was behind your eyes looking out at that kitchen is behind your eyes now, listening to me. Not the memory. The one who was there for it. That has not aged, or changed size, or been replaced. *[pause for 25 seconds]*

Try one from around fifteen. Then one from last year. Different bodies, different rooms, same vantage point. *[pause for 30 seconds]*

04. The roles and the feelings

2 min

[read the list of roles slowly enough that they can test each one against their own life]

The same is true of the parts you play. You have been a child, and probably a pupil, an employee, a friend, a patient, someone's partner, someone's parent. Some of those you have finished with. Some you took up recently. You could lose any one of them and still be here to notice the loss. *[pause for 25 seconds]*

And feelings. Think of a time you were furious about something. You cannot climb back into that fury now just by wanting to. It went. Think of a time you were flooded with relief. That went too. Every feeling you have ever had arrived and then left. *[pause for 25 seconds]*

Thoughts do the same, faster. You have had thousands today and can recall almost none of them. They came through and moved on. And there was something they were all moving through. *[pause for 20 seconds]*

If you go looking for that something, you will not find an object. There is nothing there to hold. It is not a thing you have, it is the place you are looking from. If that feels slippery, it is meant to. Put your attention back on the chair underneath you, and carry on. *[pause for 15 seconds]*

05. Sky and weather

1 min 30

[this metaphor does the work of the whole script for some clients and nothing at all for others — read it evenly and let them tell you afterwards which]

Picture the sky. Then put weather in it. Cloud, rain, a clear cold morning, a storm that closes the airports. *[pause for 20 seconds]*

The weather is real. It soaks people. It cancels things. It is not to be argued with. And it does no damage to the sky. However heavy it gets there is always room for it, and the sky is unharmed when it clears. *[pause for 25 seconds]*

Your thoughts and feelings are the weather. Not always mild, and not always brief. The part of you noticing them is the sky. You have been the sky since that kitchen when you

were six. *[pause for 20 seconds]*

06. Coming back down

1 min

[take your pace and volume all the way back to ordinary conversation — after this exercise people can feel a little untethered, and your voice is the quickest way to bring them back]

Let the sky go and come back to something plain. Press your feet into the floor. Feel your hands. Name three things you can hear. *[pause for 20 seconds]*

Take a fuller breath. Open your eyes, or lift your gaze off the floor. *[pause for 10 seconds]*

Nothing about you had to change for that to be worth doing. You got rid of no weather. You spent nine minutes finding out there is somewhere to stand that is not inside the storm. It was there long before today. You will not always remember it, and it will still be there on the days you do.

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