STRESS & ANXIETY

# Orienting Exercise Script

Written for somatic and trauma-informed therapists who want the wording for orienting rather than the theory behind it. Six minutes of deliberate visual scanning with slow head turns and eyes allowed to land where they want, framed throughout as the nervous system checking the room rather than as relaxation — the distinction that stops clients trying to perform it.

6 min · 6 segments

## 01. What this is

**45 sec**

*[Read this framing even if the client has done the exercise before — it is what stops them treating it as a relaxation task they can fail at. Keep your own eyes open and moving a little as you speak; clients tend to mirror the practitioner without noticing.]*

Keep your eyes open for this one. We are not going to close them, and we are not aiming to relax. *[pause for 5 seconds]*

What we are doing is letting your eyes and your head do something they already do all day on their own. Looking around. Checking where you are. We are just going to do it slowly enough that you can notice it happening. *[pause for 15 seconds]*

There is nothing to achieve. If not much happens, that is a perfectly ordinary result. *[pause for 10 seconds]*

## 02. Starting where your eyes already are

**1 min**

*[Do not direct their gaze. If they ask what they should be looking at, say 'whatever your eyes have already gone to' and leave it there — the choosing is the exercise, not the object.]*

Without moving yet, notice where your eyes have already settled. Somewhere on the floor, perhaps, or on me, or on something across the room. Wherever they are is fine. *[pause for 15 seconds]*

Let yourself actually see it. The colour of it. Whether it is near or far. Whether there is light on it or not. *[pause for 20 seconds]*

Now let your eyes drift off it again, without deciding where they go next. *[pause for 20 seconds]*

## 03. Turning the head

**1 min 30**

*[Slow your speech to the speed you want the movement to happen at — the sentence should take about as long as the turn. If they whip round quickly, ask for the next turn at half that speed rather than commenting on the last one. A client with neck injury, dizziness or vertigo can move only the eyes.]*

Let your head begin to turn slowly to one side. Slower than feels natural. Let your eyes travel with it, taking in whatever goes past. *[pause for 20 seconds]*

When you get to the end of the turn, stay there a moment. Look at what is behind you on that side. There is no hurry to come back. *[pause for 20 seconds]*

Then, at the same unhurried speed, let your head come back through the middle and turn the other way. Let the room go past. *[pause for 30 seconds]*

Stop wherever you end up, and rest there. *[pause for 15 seconds]*

## 04. Letting your eyes land

**1 min 30**

*[This is the part to protect. The eyes choosing for themselves is the whole exercise, so resist filling the silence or suggesting objects. If the client keeps checking your face for approval, look away slightly and let the room have them.]*

Now let your eyes wander. Not scanning as though you are searching for something. Just letting them go where they want to go. *[pause for 25 seconds]*

Sooner or later they will land somewhere and stay a little longer. A corner, an edge, a plant, a patch of light on the wall. Whatever it is, let them keep it for as long as they want it. *[pause for 30 seconds]*

You are not looking for danger and you are not looking for anything beautiful. Your eyes are doing the ordinary work of finding out where you are. *[pause for 30 seconds]*

## 05. What the body did on its own

**45 sec**

*[Ask about the body, not the feeling — a swallow, a deeper breath, a shoulder dropping is what you are listening for. If the client became more activated during the wide scanning, bring the field in close: one object at arm's length, feet on the floor. A wide visual field can be too much too soon.]*

Somewhere in the last few minutes your body may have done something small without being asked. A breath that went deeper on its own. A swallow. Shoulders coming down half an inch. A yawn. *[pause for 15 seconds]*

See whether you can find anything like that now, or anything that shifted while you were not watching for it. *[pause for 25 seconds]*

## 06. Taking it with you

**30 sec**

*[Let a beat of ordinary silence pass after the last line before you speak normally again. The return to conversation is part of the exercise, and rushing it undoes some of the settling.]*

Take one more look around, at your own speed. This room, today, with you in it. *[pause for 15 seconds]*

You can do this anywhere and nobody will know you are doing it. Waiting rooms, buses, your own kitchen. Slow head, unhurried eyes, landing where they land. *[pause for 10 seconds]*

That is all it is. Your eyes already knew how to do this. We have only given them the time.

---

**USAGE**

Record it, publish it, and monetise it — no credit required. You may not resell the script itself as a text product.

**Record it with Hilite — hellohilite.com**

Studio-quality audio from your laptop mic. Free to start.