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## HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT 2: SELF-AS-CONTEXT: LETTING GO OF IDENTITY

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**Instructions:** This exercise is designed to further your connection with the observer self. Give yourself about thirty to forty minutes to complete this exercise. Find a place where you will not be interrupted, a place where you can have some personal quiet time while doing the exercise.

Read the following passage and then complete the writing and meditation.

Sometimes when we buy our thoughts or emotions, it is because we are holding on to a particular aspect of ourselves. It's as if we have linked ourselves to a particular identity, and we hold on to that identity as if there were no other way to view ourselves. For example, sometimes holding the identity of being a victim can become such a part of you that other aspects of yourself get lost. We can do this with many kinds of identities or self-concepts. You can have a self-concept as a professional, or as a strong person or a weak person, or as a doer of good deeds, or as a victim, a survivor, or a mom or dad, and so forth. The list can be long. From the observer perspective, all self-concepts or identities are to be held lightly—none of them to be taken as literally true. The aim of this exercise is to contact the sense of self that is larger than any identity. Start by writing a description of yourself as each of the identities listed below. Include what that identity would think, feel and look like:

- Your best self
- Your struggling self
- Your \_\_\_\_\_ self (one of your choosing)

After you have a good description of each of those identities, find a quiet place to do a short meditation. As we have in session, take two to three minutes to observe your breath, allowing yourself to notice the breath as you follow it in and out. Then, gently shift your attention to your imagination and picture each of the identities that you have described, one at a time. As you picture each one individually, imagine what that image might say to you. Have that image say it as you practice just observing what is being said. After the image has said what you imagine it will say, imagine that you are holding a small version of the image in your hand. As you do this, say to yourself, "I hold this image lightly, as though I am a warm breeze holding a small floating feather. It is not me anyway." Do this with each of the images in turn. After you have gone through all of the images, say to yourself, "I hold these images lightly, like a warm breeze holding a small floating feather. They are not me anyway." Then gently shift your attention back to your breathing, taking two to three minutes to be aware of your breathing. Then return to the setting where you have chosen to do the exercise by gently opening your eyes.

Write a short reaction to the exercise.