

Life Mastery 2



Session 8 Observation

By Mark Fournier

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Observation

Observation

The Bright Train isn't the *only* 'empowered state'. As we covered in LM-1, there *is* another 'state' with even greater power. It is relatively advanced and only a master can spend more than moments at a time in this state, but for the times when you *are* there, it's glorious. We call it 'Observation', and even the few moments per day where you can go there *now*, will be worth the effort and worth taking others there as well!

Just as you imagined two very different trains running along their tracks through the countryside of Maine, imagine now, a *third* point of view... this view is not from either train, but rather, from *outside* the trains, atop a hill far above the tracks, sitting on an 'Observation Platform' at the train station. I call the person sitting there the 'Observer'.

As you may recall, from this platform the Observer can easily see the trains, the tracks, the countryside and all that 'is'... it is similar to the view of the 'switch operator' in as much as it is outside of the trains, but in reality, 'switch operators' (members of your Support Community who help you off the Dark Train) are on a train as well (hopefully a Bright Train).

The Observer however, isn't looking through any 'window's or 'filters' at all. They are not seeing things as 'good' or 'bad'... not even the Dark Train appears to them as being 'bad'... it's just 'different' from the Bright Train and clearly less 'desirable'.

The Observer views the trains below (and the entire world) from a non-judgmental place of being. They tend to look at everything in awe, and say things like "That's interesting, or, fascinating", rather than "that is 'good' or 'bad'". And they ask questions such as "Is this serving you, how did that work out for you, or, how do you feel about that?"

Even 'pain and suffering' are viewed by an 'Observer' as 'interesting', for they realize that some of our greatest growth and gains are a result of 'pain and suffering'.

This doesn't mean that they don't 'care' or have 'preferences', (such as *preferring* to be on the Bright Train over the Dark Train and preferring that others do no harm). And yet, because they make no judgment, they have compassion and love for *everyone*... even for those who are creating pain and suffering for themselves and others.

You might think of the Observation Platform as being a very boring and unfulfilling place, but it is actually just the opposite; it is a calm and peaceful, euphoric place. Although Observers don't judge, they do 'appreciate', in fact they appreciate everything... which is why they feel euphoric.

Happiness is just another word for ‘Appreciation’.

‘Observation’ is where a Master Leader often goes *while* they are leading others. You may never ‘master’ the state of Observation, however, you *will* need to *understand* it, and have the ability at the very least to step into it for a few moments at a time (preferably ‘at will’) if you wish to be a highly effective leader or coach, or capable of being your own ‘best’. And the rest of the time, you will do all you can to remain on the *Bright Train*.

How you get onto the Observation Platform is what you will be learning in this session. And how you *stay* on this platform is what you will be learning for the rest of your life.

Why would you *want* to be in a state of Observation? The main reason is because it stops us from believing our Stories. Although it’s nice when we have ‘good’ Stories, they are still Stories... they still aren’t THE *real* reality. And although that may not matter much of the time since we are clearly capable of living our lives without ever knowing THE *real* reality, there are times when being able to go into Observation can be invaluable.

For instance, by now you know, when you’re on the Dark Train you find that moving either onto the Bright Train, or onto the Observation Platform is far more desirable than staying on the Dark Train and living as a Victim.

Another advantage for being ‘in Observation’ occurs when you’re leading, coaching or guiding *others* because it allows you to leave your own issues, judgments, preferences and ‘conflicts of interest’ off the table:

When we are in Observation we see things as they really are (or much closer to how they really are than when we believe our Stories). And by seeing things more closely to how they really are, it is much easier for us to see the possibilities in every situation; instead of seeing problems as being ‘problems’ for instance, we see them simply as ‘what happened’ or ‘what is happening’... neither good nor bad.

Being in this non-judgmental state makes it easier for us to make empowered choices and decisions because we are basing them more on what is really happening, than on our Stories, interpretations, and fears. It also keeps us from becoming upset over what is happening, since we don’t interpret what is happening in a way that would upset us.

Eventually, you may even find it easier to go from the Dark Train into *Observation* than going from the Dark Train onto *the Bright Train*, because when you go into Observation you get to skip the step of writing a new Bright Train Story; instead, you just turn the Stories off completely. And with no Stories... you have nothing left but ‘what is’.

To get an idea of what it feels like to be on the Observation Platform, just picture a time when you weren’t ‘thinking’ at all, no Story of any kind, you were just ‘noticing’ something, like a child at play, a sunset or nature. You might for instance, notice that it is 3:00 in the afternoon, but if you have no place to go or nothing to do (such as when you’re on a vacation), ‘3:00’ might not mean anything to you, which places you in

‘Observation’ (as opposed to *being at work* where 3:00 could mean that you only have two hours left to finish that huge report, or you only have two hours left before you can get out of there. And in either of *these* two cases, you are not in Observation).

Wouldn’t it be incredible if you could just stop your mind at any given moment and turn everything off... stop the Stories, the Self-Talk, the ‘meaning’, the worries and concerns, all of it, and just ‘BE’? THAT is the state of Observation and we’ll show you how to get there now. Helping others get there works in the same way. In classic meditation, the goal isn’t to ‘stop’ the Stories and ‘Self-Talk, but to see them for what they are, and then, to just observe them as they float in and out of your mind. In a sense, this is still ‘observation’ for you are ‘observing’ the Stories without writing Stores about the Stories.

The Observation Platform is the ultimate *destination*, and paradoxically, it’s where your life journey *began*... when you were an infant, before you began placing a ‘meaning’ on everything that is.

Exercise

Make a list of five ‘good’ things in (or about) your life, and five ‘bad’ things (but leave the line below each item blank:

1	_____

2	_____

3	_____

4	_____

5	_____

1	_____

2	_____

3	_____

4	_____

5	_____

Exercise

Next, go back to the list above and rewrite or imagine each statement again, but add the words “It seems like” to the beginning of each statement and “which doesn’t mean anything to me (unless I say so).” to the end of each statement.

Once you've finished this exercise, you will notice that in most cases your first statement isn't a fact at all, it's only a 'Story' and you realize this by adding the words 'It seems like' to your statement. Being in Observation is when you are able to add the words "It seems like" to every thought, and then follow up by thinking "which doesn't mean anything to me... unless I say so." Hence, the statement "She tricked me" becomes: "It seems like she tricked me, which doesn't mean anything to me (unless I say so)."

One of the few exceptions to this exercise might be statements involving a *physical* fact such as 'My arm hurts' or 'My windshield is broken'. But even in the case of the physical fact you will most likely follow up with a Story about it: "My windshield is broken ... *which is terrible because I don't have the time or money to fix it.*" In a state of Observation we might say "My arm/windshield appears to be broken." And then we would follow up with "I will get it repaired." That's all... no Story. Just 'what is'.

You can add 'It seems like' to almost every 'non-physical' statement because we rarely ever state *ONLY* the facts, and even when we *do*, there is nearly *always* a 'Story' that follows them. Ideally we will finish the statement with 'which doesn't mean anything to me unless I say so.' because it's the truth; nothing has meaning to us until we *give* it meaning. When we refuse to give it meaning, we are able to enter the state of Observation (and we can stay there...right up until we start giving things meaning again).

In its purest form, being in Observation is like being in a state of bliss. It feels as though everything is exactly the way it is meant to be. No 'right' or 'wrong' ... it just 'is'. And in this state we can create almost any possibility!

The Shift

Observation

This Shift is primarily used for helping yourself and others:

- Overcome Stress, Fear, Anxiety and Overwhelm
- Let go and create a peaceful sense of calm acceptance
- Get off the 'Dark Train'
- Problem Solve
- Achieve a 'blissful' state

This Shift requires that you do most of the talking.

Vocal style: Calm and Soothing

Music: Calm and Soothing

Set Up

As a reminder, one of the first things you need to do is to find out what State you or others are in 'now' so you know where you need to 'take' them. And you do this by asking the following simple questions:

- 1) How are you feeling today (mentally and emotionally)?
- 2) How would you *like* to be feeling?

If you decide on the ‘Observation’ Shift you will move to Step #1 below, however, if your subject is highly agitated, distracted or unable to fully relax for some reason, you may wish to combine this with another ‘calming’ Shift such as *Focused Breathing*.

Step #1

What’s your Story?

Ask them to share their ‘Story’ with you. Recognize that whatever they tell you, it is still just a ‘Story’. Make sure they tell you what their concerns, fears or issues are before moving on.

Once you believe you understand what their Story is, repeat it back to them to make certain that you fully understand it. Paraphrase if possible. If they tell you they have a ‘problem’ make sure you clearly identify what they believe the ‘problem’ is and what they are concerned will ‘happen’ as a result of this ‘problem’.

After they confirm that you fully understand what their Story is, and if you believe they are ready to let go of their Story and start feeling better NOW, move to Step #2 below:

Step #2

Letting Go

- Ask them if they would be willing to let go of their Story if it resulted in eliminating their problems and finding bliss.
- If they say ‘NO’, go to a different Shift such as ‘Bright Train / Dark Train’, ‘SWAP’, or ‘What’s Great about this?’
- However, if they tell you ‘Yes’ move on to Step #3:

Step #3

The Observation Platform

- Ask them to consider the possibility that whatever they are experiencing, (regardless of how real it *seems*), that it is only their interpretation of the facts.
- Once they’ve considered this and acknowledged that this could be true, ask them to imagine themselves sitting high atop a hillside on an observation platform, watching the valley down below. Running through the valley are two very different trains. One of these trains is filled with people who are very upset while the other is filled with people who are very happy. These people all share identical blessings and challenges, but the difference between them are in how they look at their issues. As they observe these ‘train-riders’ they realize that the world itself is perfect just the way it is...with a perfect balance between blessings and challenges and that the people down below could change trains any time they wanted by choosing which aspects of their life to focus on. However, your subject is in the unique position of choosing neither. By being on the platform, they can simply enjoy the world exactly as it is.

- Next, ask them if they are ready to do just that... enjoy the world ‘as it is’ without focusing on any one issue in their life. When they say ‘Yes’ go to Step #4:

Step #4

Nothingness

You now say the following in your own words: ‘Imagine yourself reclining comfortably in a hammock or lounge chair on the observation platform, there is a mild balmy breeze keeping you comfortable and refreshed, the temperature is perfect, the valley below is beautiful, lush and green, dappled with colorful bursts of flowers. A mountain brook runs through the valley with soothing waterfalls. As you observe the valley in all its splendor, you notice tiny people far away in the two different trains. However, being so far away, you are unable to discern the details of their lives, you only know that whatever they are feeling it is entirely determined by the train they are on and not by the issue itself. And realizing this, allows you to sit back and smile, knowing that whatever their issues, they could be turned into something else in the blink of an eye by either changing their focus or joining you on the Observation Platform. So you sit and quietly observe the beautiful valley without getting caught up in the individual details of the people and their trains.

After a few moments you notice yourself in a blissful state. It comes on almost unexpectedly because you weren’t thinking any particular thoughts at all... you were merely observing the beauty all around. And it is in this moment that you realize there is always beauty everywhere, and all we need to do is notice. You also realize that our ‘natural’ state is one of ‘bliss’ and whenever we turn off our ‘Stories’ and attachments and just ‘Be’ we get to experience it.’

Step #5

Let it Go

Once the client appears to have moved into this blissful state, you suggest that from this point forward, any time they are feeling stressed out or upset all they need to do is imagine themselves tossing their issue onto the Dark Train, then taking a fun gondola ride up the hill and onto the Observation Platform, where they can then, watch far off in the distance as their issue disappears on the Dark Train off into the forest, or they can watch it move onto the Bright Train, and leave it there for when they return from the Observation Platform to enjoy the blessings attached to the issue. They can also take a look at the issue NOW while it is so far away... they can pull it off of both trains, look at just the ‘facts’ (such as “I seem to have a broken arm.”) and decide what they would like to do next (such as “I will get it repaired.”) with no Story. Or they could use this State to solve any number of ‘problems’ as they will be able to see so much more clearly once the Stories are turned off.

You can then ask your Subject if they would like to practice that *now* with one of their challenges or if they would like to simply remain in the state they have already reached.

Follow their lead.

Step #6 (Client Assignments)

Before releasing your subject, recommend that in order to sustain and build upon the positive feelings you've created together, that they do the following after they go home:

- When they notice themselves writing negative Stories, stop and add the words “It seems like” to the beginning and “which doesn't mean anything to me unless I say so.” to the end.
- Practice picturing themselves on the Observation Platform as often as possible.
- Get others in their life practicing this as well.

Summary:

Being in a state of Observation is powerful. Masters have been doing it for thousands of years and it is the highest realization of meditation. And although it could take a lifetime to *master* it, it is possible right here and now for anyone to attain it for brief periods at a time. And for most of us, that might be all we need.

Assignments

Take on as many of these assignments as possible (remember, it isn't what you *learn* that will help you master this process, it's what you *DO*).

Continuing Assignments:

Continue enrolling others into your Support Community.

Continuing Assignments:

Continue sharing the lessons you've learned thus far with as many members of your Support Community as possible.

Continuing Assignments:

Practice applying the 'Loving What Is' Shift to your own life throughout the week

Continuing Assignments:

Do the 'Loving What Is' *assignments* for yourself (as listed above under Client Assignments).

Continuing Assignments:

Practice applying the 'Loving What Is' Shift with members of your Support Community throughout the week

Continuing Assignments:

Continue applying the 'Focused Breathing' Shift to your own life throughout the week

Continuing Assignments:

Continue applying the 'Focused Breathing' Shift with members of your Support Community throughout the week

Continuing Assignments:

Practice applying the ‘S.W.A.P.’ Shift to your own life throughout the week

Continuing Assignments:

Do the ‘S.W.A.P.’ *assignments* for yourself (as listed above).

Continuing Assignments:

Practice applying the ‘S.W.A.P.’ Shift with members of your Support Community throughout the week

Continuing Assignments:

Create your own EAWO Journal, use it not only for yourself but to show your clients what to create for themselves.

Continuing Assignments:

Practice Focused Breathing while using the phrase ‘Everything Always Works Out’ as you inhale, and ‘Letting Go, Letting Go, Letting Go’ as you exhale.

Continuing Assignments:

Practice applying the E.A.W.O Shift with members of your Support Community throughout the week.

Continuing Assignments:

- All week long ask yourself... What is GREAT about this?
- Share it with others all week long and help them find ‘what’s GREAT’ too!

Continuing Assignments:

Any time you find yourself (or others) looking at the worst case scenario do two things:

- 1) Keep going... once you get to the worst case scenario, ask what would be GREAT if that happened... and keep asking until you don’t care if the worst case occurs because the outcome will still be GREAT.
- 2) Once you’ve figured out what would be GREAT about the worst case scenario, ask what would be the *best* case scenario... what if the worst case never happened?

Continuing Assignments:

- All week long pay attention to whether you or others are on the Dark Train.
- When you see someone on the Dark Train (including yourself), practice helping them off.

Continuing Assignments:

Share the steps with your Support Community for getting YOU off the Dark Train so they can help YOU off the Dark Train in the future.

Assignment #1:

- All week long pay attention to whether you or others are on the Dark Train or the Bright Train while seeing if you can then move onto the Observation Platform using these tools.

Assignment #2:

Share the steps with your Support Community for moving onto the Observation Platform.

Optional Assignment:

‘Think about your Thinking’: For the next week, pay attention to your *conscious* ‘thoughts, Stories and Self Talk’, notice throughout the day the kind of things you *tell yourself, think about* and *focus on*, then experiment by replacing any *negative* ‘Focus, Thought, Self Talk or Stories’ with more *positive* ones and see how differently this makes you feel and behave.

Optional Assignment:

‘Pay Attention to what you Pay Attention to ... Notice what you’re Noticing’: For the next week, be aware of what you are ‘looking for’ in your circumstances and in others, next, experiment by *looking for* new more positive things in each of these scenarios and see how this changes what you ‘see’ and consequently how you feel and behave.

Optional Assignment:

For the next week, pay attention to the difference between ‘what is happening’ and your *interpretation* of what is happening. See if you can remove your interpretations from the equation and see things for what they ‘really’ are. This is nearly an impossible feat, but just see how close you can come to pulling it off.

Optional Assignment:

For the next week, pretend that it’s all just a game... and view each challenge that comes along as you would if it were only Hide-N-Seek, and would all work out in the end.

Optional Assignment:

For the next week, begin figuring out how you can eliminate the things in your life that wouldn’t really matter if you knew you had only a year to live, and begin focusing more on the ones that *would* still matter.

Optional Assignment:

For the next week, refuse to look at anything negative that happens as being a catastrophe, see it instead as nothing more than an inconvenience... or better still as a catalyst for something wonderful.

Optional Assignment:

For the next week, do everything in your power to keep from judging others... accept that their behavior is appropriate for their perceptions and programs. And whenever you get the opportunity, ASK them to describe ‘what they see and how they feel’ so you can too can see inside of *their* Glass Box. Make sure you paraphrase what you’ve heard.

Optional Assignment:

For the next week, any time you feel yourself slipping into fear or self-pity, pretend that you are a 'wild animal'... then go about your day as they would and just refuse to give it another thought.

Optional Assignment:

For the next week, take every single dark or negative thought as it occurs and immediately replace it with a better, more positive one, and then act upon it.

Optional Assignment:

For the next week, practice replacing your vacation-hells with vacation-heavens. Then once you've affectively climbed aboard the Bright Train, practice returning to NOW and appreciating the moment.