



## Mindful Witness role in action by Linda Ciotola

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Remember that the Mindful Witness role is a role of safety – the part of us that can observe without judgment and with compassion our thoughts, feelings and act hungers. Use this role to observe your limits and to remind yourself “safety prevails”. When you notice any uncomfortable feelings, return to the place of safety – the Mindful Witness role.

### **Option One: When alone**

1. Place two chairs facing each other – one for your SELF, one for Mindful Witness role.
2. Choose an item like a special nature card, e.g. to concretize the Mindful Witness role.
3. Stand or sit in the designated spot for the Mindful Witness role while holding the card.
4. From that place imagine seeing yourself in the empty chair and speak to yourself from the Mindful Witness role, e.g. “I am your Mindful Witness,     Name    , and I observe you without judgment and with compassion – your thoughts, feelings, and act hungers. Is there anything you need from me in this moment?”
5. Reverse roles. Leave the card in the chair of the Mindful Witness to hold the role and go sit in the Self chair and answer the Mindful Witness question: e.g. “What I need in this moment is for you to help me see clearly what I most need regarding \_\_\_\_\_ (e.g. self-care).”
6. Role Reverse back into Mindful Witness role holding card and answer the Self’s question from the Mindful Witness role.
7. Continue Role Reversing in this fashion until you feel the process coming to a natural close.
8. Make a final statement to Self from the Mindful Witness role.
9. Role Reverse into Self and make a final statement to Mindful Witness from Self.
10. You may wish to journal following this exercise to record any insights gained.

Option Two: Self coaching for doing this exercise with the help of a friend.

1. Have your friend listen to the interview about the Mindful Witness on the Active Pause website and have them read the Transcript and self-coaching tips.
2. Ask friend if she/he is willing to participate in this with you by taking the role of the Mindful Witness and your "Self" role as needed.
3. If the friend agrees, ask for a mutual pledge of confidentiality as well as mutual permission to call for a "Stop Action" if needed.
4. Ask your friend to begin by taking on your "Self" role and have him/her say "I am \_\_ (Your Name) \_\_ and I came to speak to my Mindful Witness".
5. Then you, in Mindful Witness role say, "I am your Mindful Witness. What do you need from me in this moment?"
6. Do NOT let the friend in the role of your Self answer the question. Instead,
7. Role Reverse – your friend takes the Mindful Witness role while you are in your "Self" role. The friend repeats the question you posed while in the role of the Mindful Witness.
8. You answer from your "Self" role
9. Role Reversals continue – you always ask and answer your own questions regardless of which role you are in. The friend just repeats what you just said immediately prior to the Role Reversal.
10. Continue until process comes to a close – always ending with yourself in the "Self" role.
11. Thank your friend. Have him/her say, "I am \_\_ (his/her Name) \_\_. I am not \_\_ (your Name) \_\_ your Mindful Witness. I am \_\_ (his/her Name) \_\_ and have my own Mindful Witness. (This process is called – de-roling and is very important – DO NOT OMIT IT.)
12. Sharing – your friend may share from the heart with you anything that resonated with him/her from the work. Not a time for advice giving! Just sharing from the heart how the process touched him/her.
13. Bring to a close with renewed pledge of confidentiality and self-care. Express gratitude.
14. Follow up with journaling.

You may wish to keep the card with you that holds the Mindful Witness role as a reminder to “tune in” to that part of yourself as needed.

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