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## Student Observation Protocol #8 Self Observation

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*Developed in the field by educators affiliated with NSRF.*

Finding the time to observe and debrief can be a real problem in the daily madness of schools. This protocol addresses the time issue, cutting the time in half in that there is no observation. Or perhaps more precisely, the observation is self-observation. "Self-Observation" also addresses the fact that often the most interesting lessons, the ones that seem to have so much potential for learning, just happen, and aren't necessarily planned.

### **Pre-Observation Conference**

There is no pre-observation conference in this protocol. Instead, the teacher lets the debriefer know that a debriefing session is needed, that something interesting has come up that might benefit from a debriefing.

### **Observation**

We are all observing all of the time. Usually most of what we observe is placed in short-term memory and is soon lost to us. Telling the story of our observations both helps us retain the memories and gives us a chance to make sense of what we have seen. What is important is that we recognize when an event feels important and find someone with whom we can debrief.

### **Debriefing**

As the debriefer is not present at the event, the debriefing needs to start with the story. The debriefer asks the kinds of questions that will help the teacher to pull out the details of the event. Other questions, the kind that will help search for meaning, should be jotted down. It is important that the story is told first. Then the teacher and the debriefer can decide how to proceed. The "Focus Point" and "Interesting Moments" protocols provide two models for the kinds of questioning that could come next.