

The Visitor

This exercise helps to develop a mindful awareness of the environment, of the body, of the breath, and of thoughts and emotions. You can practice the exercise as a whole, or in parts – using any part of the exercise.



The Environment



As you're walking, or just sitting quietly somewhere, start to notice things as though you were a visitor to this place. As you look around you, notice sights, sounds and smells as though you had never seen, heard or smelled them before. You can imagine you are a visitor from another area or culture, or from a different species or even planet. Seeing or hearing things for the first time, from a completely different perspective. Spend a little time just looking and listening and noticing.

The Body

When 'Dr Who' regenerates, he immediately checks out his new body. As a newcomer or visitor, start to imagine being in your body for the first time. Notice what that feels like – what bodily sensations do you notice? How does it feel to move around, stretching those muscles, standing up or sitting down. What do those hands feel like as you move them about, stretching and wiggling those fingers, clenching those fists? As you start to walk, how is that? What do you notice about your legs – upper legs, feet and toes? Move your head around and notice what your neck and shoulders feel like. Bend, stretch and move about. What are those physical sensations? Spend a little time just noticing those bodily sensations, and imagine taking your body for its first ever walk, or any everyday activity.



The Breath



What would you, as a new awareness or visitor to this new body, notice about the sensations of breathing, as you breathe in, then out? Notice the sensations in the abdomen, the chest, the throat, the mouth and nose. You can notice how your attention wanders, as thoughts come in, sometimes crowding in, and your attention can follow those thoughts. Just notice as your attention wanders, then gently bring your focus back to your breath. Minds do wander, thoughts will come and thoughts will go, that is the nature of the human mind. As a visitor, you can stand back, notice those thoughts, feelings, sounds and sensations, and keep bringing your attention back to your breath.

Thoughts and Emotions

Then you can start to notice, as a visitor, the thoughts and images, feelings and emotions that come and go, in this your new body and mind. You're brand new to this body and mind, and there are no expectations for you to react to any thought, image or emotion – you can just notice them, and not respond. As a visitor, you can notice that they are just words and images, sensations, and feelings. Merely notice them as you would as a new visitor to this body and mind. Words and images, sensations and feelings: they come, and they go, and that's okay, because that's just what the human mind does.

