

Who Am I Now?

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Uses: Meaning Reconstruction, Self-Compassion, Post-Traumatic Growth, Resilience

In the midst of this transformative period, there's a unique opportunity – and a burning desire for many – to know *How has this experience changed me? What should I be doing with my life? Will I ever be the same again?* And perhaps the most frequently asked question of all – *Who am I NOW?*

Know that it's okay for answers to remain elusive, for they are seeds of contemplation to nurture over time. This practice will move you towards deeper insight into who you are becoming, but it is a question you may wish to ask again and again over time.

This self-inquiry bears a dual advantage. First, it enables you to reaffirm the core of who you are, allowing you to persist in your journey with resilience and grace. Or, it could shed light on the need to shift your path, encouraging you to embrace change and welcome growth. Reflection enables you to fully inhabit your current self and envision your future self, creating a bridge between the two.

Find a comfortable place to rest, be it on your meditation mat or a chair, and allow your eyes to softly shut or gently focus on a spot ahead of you. Initiate a body scan, beginning at the crown of your head, journeying downwards over the span of approximately 10 breaths. Observe the sensations that arise, whether they are enjoyable, discomforting, or neutral.

Once your awareness reaches the soles of your feet, journey upwards once again for another set of 10 breaths. As you return to the pinnacle of your head, become aware of your entire being in this current moment, here and now.

Start to connect with your vitality, channeled through your breath and other sensations such as a tingling sensation, warmth or cold, a pulsating rhythm, or the beat of your heart. Become attuned to what feels alive within your body right now.

This could appear like a choreography of sensations that move through different areas of your body. In one moment, a particular spot may demand attention before fading, replaced by a new sensation elsewhere. Use the forthcoming period to observe this choreography of sensations, without seeking to control or alter it.

If sounds emerge, perhaps from within your body like swallowing or the grumble of your stomach, recognize these as part of your personal experience, of your unique existence, and allow them to be. Notice your breath, whether you perceive it as entering and exiting your body, or rising and falling, or as another type of flow. Attune to each inhale and exhale.

If your attention wanders, simply return to the rhythm of your breath, starting anew with each cycle. Gradually, you may start to simultaneously observe your breath, sensations, and sounds. Allow space for all experiences to enter your awareness.

Whenever your connection to the present moment wanes, gently return to your breath and begin anew. Now, turn your attention to the aspect of you that is conscious of being conscious, the part of you that transcends thought or sensation, the part of you that is the observant witness. Observe who is experiencing this moment. Which part of you is the observer?

As we shift into a phase of self-reflection, understand that these queries need not be answered right now. Instead, think of them as seeds planted for contemplation when time and space permit. From the perspective of the observer, pose these questions to yourself:

- What does my heart yearn for?
- What purpose do I want to serve in this one precious life?
- What fills me with gratitude?
- What do I know to be truth, or even beyond truth?
- Who am I in this moment?
- Who am I now?

Picture yourself at your best and identify one word that captures your essence, and dedicate the next moments to silently repeating that word with each exhalation, over and over again.

Contemplating who you are in this moment requires vulnerability, wisdom, and courage. Take a moment to appreciate yourself for engaging in this self-reflection meditation. If you wish, place your hand on your heart or anywhere else that feels right, and offer yourself comforting words.