



About visiting a new setting...

Sometimes, visiting a new setting can feel overwhelming.

Being unfamiliar, there is a lot to take in: we don't yet know the layout of the place, there will be different people there and there may be all kinds of sounds and smells that bombard our senses.

Because of this, it can feel like an easier choice if we say, "no, thank you" and avoid going there altogether.

Some people make a habit of saying, "no, thank you." They feel safer if they can avoid all possibilities of **the unknown** and stick with **the known**.

When we stay with **the known**, we don't have to feel anxious because we know where we are, we know who we might meet, and we have some control over what we do.

But this has its drawbacks: we might not get to experience **new activities** that may be enjoyable. Who knows: in the end, they might make us laugh, relax us, invigorate us or cheer us up. They might even fascinate us or make us feel fulfilled.

Sometimes we meet **new people** whose company we like. Of course, we don't always know if we like someone straight away. It can take a little while to get to know someone, for "first meeting" nerves to settle down and for them to show their true colours. Equally, it can take us a little while to drop our guard and let others get to know us properly.

In a new setting, there will be different lighting, different furniture, different toilets and different routines. Expectations may be different and the background noises might seem loud and obvious. This can be a lot to take in. But we know that these things don't actually cause us harm. And once we've visited a place once, these things start to feel less abrasive and more familiar. We can cope with them better if we give ourselves time to simply notice them, acknowledge them and move on.

New settings open up **a whole world of new possibilities**.

Sometimes we encounter things that are not right for us – and even these are helpful! They help us to understand ourselves better, to narrow down our goals and aspirations, to make the right choices later on.

But as often as we encounter things that aren't right for us, so do we discover **new interests** and **great things about ourselves**: we find **inner strength**, pockets of **curiosity**, **talents** and **passions**. And these can provide us with the tools that drive us forward and help us shape our lives into exactly what we want them to be.

So, try the new setting. Open the door a crack to discover these great things. Allow the world a chance to meet you and for you to grow.