



# Introduction to forest bathing

## Introduction

First, find a spot in nature. Make sure you are free from distractions. You are going to be walking aimlessly and slowly. Let your body be your guide. Listen to where your body wants to take you. Follow your nose. And take your time. It doesn't matter if you don't get anywhere. You are not going anywhere. You are savoring the sounds, smells and sights of nature and letting the forest in.

Use the following prompts which were inspired by the book "Your Guide to Forest Bathing" by M. Amos Clifford. You don't have to go far to forest bathe, just find a natural outdoor space, let go of expectations, and just be.

## Soil (smell, seeing, touch, taste)

Soil is such a marvelous substance that is bursting with life. Pause during your nature outing to pick up a handful of soil and notice its texture. What does it smell like? Does the smell bring up any memories for you (I always think of my Oma's garden when I sniff the soil). What do you see in the soil? Brush your hands off and taste the traces of soil left on your fingers. How does it taste? How would it taste if you were a tree?

## Call on the wood-wide web (imaginal)

The roots of plants and trees are tightly connected to the ancient and most powerful internet, a global system of communication linking all plants and soil organisms to the earth. Using the idea of the Wood-Wide-Web to guide you, think of a message you would like to send to the trees and plants around you.



## Barefoot walking (touch)

The soles of our feet are rich with nerves that stimulate the entire body. Root down into the earth with your bare feet. If the weather allows it (and it's safe) walk through the forest in bare feet. Notice what you feel. Imagine the network of roots and mycelium below your feet and try to imagine what the trees are talking about using this vast network.

## Reciprocity breathing (imaginal, heart sense)

Breathing in, be aware of what you are receiving from the trees. Breathing out, be aware of what you are returning. Breathing deeply, receive the gifts of the forest in your entire body. Breathing out, return the essence of your gift. Notice what you are noticing.

