

# Introduction to forest bathing

## Introduction

Use the following prompts or invitations with your students to compliment their sit spot practices.

First, find a spot in nature. This could be an established sit spot or you can encourage the students to take a few moments to find somewhere that is calling to them. Structure this by giving students a predetermined amount of time to find this special spot

Use the following prompts which were inspired by the book *“Your Guide to Forest Bathing”* by M. Amos Clifford.

## Barefoot Walking (Touch)

If it is safe and the weather allows, encourage students to take off their shoes and socks to explore their special spot.

- Preface the experience by talking about how there are over 7,000 nerves each of our feet that stimulate the entire body. Think about when you get tickled on the foot, and why you are so much more ticklish in that part of your body than others.
- 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 below your feet and try to imagine what the trees are talking about using this vast network.

## Soil (Smell, Seeing, Touch, Taste)

Soil is such a marvelous substance that is bursting with life. Encourage learners to pick up a handful of soil and notice it’s 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 (Tuning in to Imagination)

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. Just like we can send messages and emails through the internet, plants and roots can use roots and mycelium to talk to the plants and trees around them. 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.

## Reciprocity Breathing (Imaginal, Heart Sense)

At the end of your forest bathing or sit spot session, use the following breathing exercise with your learners to give gratitude to the special wild places that are all around us.

- 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.

