

Nature Gazing from Roots to Sky

Mindfulness Worksheet

Date / Time:

What have you brought mindful awareness to today? Check all that apply.

- Heart Mind Body Breath Environment

To begin this Meditation, please bring kind awareness to

- why you chose this topic
- how your belly, chest, and head each feel when you reflect on this topic
- the emotions that you can associate with these visceral feelings
- the positive or negative impact of any stories you believe in regarding this topic
- the fact that many others are feeling similarly about this topic as you
- how you might feel with increased awareness around this topic
- when you can apply increased mindfulness to this topic in your day-to-day life



Nature gazing is a practice that helps to remind us of our interconnectedness with the natural world. We are as much a part of it as the trees, the birds, and the butterflies, and so taking the time to be present with it is a deeply restorative practice.

This specific practice invites us to take a close look at a tree, opening our attention to it completely from roots to branches and then to the sky above. For this practice, you'll need to find a comfortable outdoor space where you can spend a few minutes offering the fullness of your attention to a tree of your choosing.

PRACTICE:

1. To begin, find a tree in an outdoor space where you can see the sky above or around it. Stand within a couple of metres of this tree, taking a moment to firmly root your feet into the earth beneath you. It can be helpful to take a few slow, mindful breaths to ground your energy.
2. Let your gaze land upon the earth, taking a few moments to notice the surface you stand on. Then, as you shift your attention to the base of the tree, consider the roots that extend from this tree and deep into the soil. Without seeing them, can you sense the support that these roots provide this tree? Consider both the structural support and the energetic support.

Nature Gazing from Roots to Sky

Mindfulness Worksheet

3. Slowly let your gaze move up the tree trunk, shifting your gaze quite slowly. Pause on any knots or patterns in the bark that are interesting to the eye, being completely present with the unique form this tree holds. If you'd like, you can extend your palms out to meet the tree trunk, exploring your sense of touch here as well.
4. Continue moving upwards at a slow and steady pace, inviting in a sense of reverence for this tree if it is not already present within you. Consider how majestic this tree is – or, if it is still young, consider how much it has weathered up until this point. Still, it stands.
5. Let your gaze continue until it reaches the wild and unpredictable web of branches above. Notice the textures, colours, and forms of these branches. Are there leaves or needles? Are they bare? What shape do they take? Take your time to explore this with curiosity.
6. Finally, when you are ready, let your sense of sight shift from the branches to the open sky. What feelings arise in you as you move your attention to the invisible realm of air? What energies or qualities do you sense are present in the sky?
7. To ground back into the earth and into your body, repeat the same pattern of observation but in reverse. As you move, consider all the qualities this tree embodies, noting where these qualities are present in you, too.
8. When you are finished, root yourself firmly through your feet before moving on. You might like to sit beneath the tree to reflect for a while.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

1. What was this practice like for you today? What feelings, thoughts, or energies did it stir within you?

Nature Gazing from Roots to Sky

Mindfulness Worksheet

2. What likeness did you find between yourself and the tree or between yourself and the sky?

3. What other objects or elements of nature might you like to bring this level of attention and openness to?