

Branching Out Spiritually – A Guided Meditation

SDI Conference Workshop for St. Louis, MO
2018

(Start Song 1: “I Promise” by Alex Kozobolis)

Taking a deep breath in, inhale bringing the breath from the bottom of your feet all the way up your body through your spine and to the top of your head.

Then gently exhale, moving the breath all the way back down from the top of your head to the bottom of your feet.

Close your eyes gently when you are ready.

Take one more breath in, slowly, and this time when you exhale imagine the breath moving out the bottom of your feet and into the ground into the earth below you.

As you feel your feet connect to the ground, you begin to feel the rhythmic pulse of the earth, her heartbeat. She gently rocks your body.

As you become connected to the rhythm, you imagine roots moving from your feet into the ground, into the soil, the water, the nutrients below the surface.

You relax knowing you are grounded, safe and at peace.

You feel your torso, strong, your breath light like wind, your arms reach towards the sky feeling the air around you.

Inside you ask yourself, which tree in this present moment, has the teachings and wisdom that would most benefit me now?

As you breathe gently in and out, you feel a strong presence behind you. The presence feels loving and kind and you are curious. In your imagination, you slowly turn around and see the tree who has come to be with you during this time.

Take in the beauty of this tree. Do you already know it? Is it one you have seen before or is it new? It is a tree from real life or from your imagination? Either one is ok for they are both just as real as one another.

(PAUSE) (Song 2: “Nectar Drop” by DJ Drez)

To say hello and greet the tree, imagine stepping closer. You reach out, touching its bark – notice – is it smooth, soft, rugged, diveted, what does the texture feel like under your fingers?

(PAUSE)

Smell the air around you, does this tree have a particular smell like an Olive tree, Fir, Pine, Juniper ... is it a smell you recognize? What memories does it bring up for you?

(PAUSE)

Look up at the trunk – is it tall and slender, short and round, is the tree so tall it blocks the view of the sky or is it short and you can easily see the top of it from where you stand? Are you able to wrap your arms around the trunk or it is so big that is not possible?

(PAUSE)

Now look up at the canopy of the tree taking in its branches and leaves. What do they look like, what are the shapes of the leaves and size of the branches? What color are the leaves? What season does it seem to be?

You notice that one of the leaves has gently fallen to the ground next to you, you reach down and pick it up to study it more closely, what does it look like and feel like?

Now to spend some time with your tree, ask the tree where it wants you to sit or stand or lie? Does it tell you to lie inside the roots on the ground? Does it ask you to sit at the base of the trunk of the tree with your back up against it? Does it want you to climb up into its branches and sit in its arms? See what it tells you.

When you are ready, allow yourself to move into that place in the tree where it has asked you to be.

As you relax and let go and find comfort where you are, ask the tree to show you why it has presented itself to you. What does it want to share with you? It may speak with words or show you images or colors, it may sing to you or use the wind to bring a message. It may convey a feeling that is important for you to experience. It may also ask you to share with it.

For the next couple of minutes, allow the experience to flow freely without expectation.

(PAUSE 2 minutes) READ QUOTES ABOUT TREES IN THIS SECTION

(Song: “A Love Song” by Garth Stevenson)

Quote: “Trees are sanctuaries. Whoever knows how to speak to them. Whoever knows how to listen to them, can learn the truth. They do not preach learning and precepts, they preach undeterred by particulars, the ancient law of life. Every path leads homeward.” ~ Hermann Hesse ~

“Trees are poems

The earth writes upon the sky.” Kahlil Gibran

(Song: “Hourglass” by Garth Stevenson)

Now ask the tree if it can help you explore your roots. The roots of this tree have become your own roots. Your past, your ancestry lie in these roots. What does the tree want you to remember about your ancestors, about your past that make you the person you are today?

(Pause for 30 Seconds)

Now, ask it to take you into the core of the trunk of the tree, into the present moment, into the center that is yourself. What makes you and this tree bond together. What brings you life and motivates you?

(Pause for 30 Seconds)

Now ask the tree to help you explore its branches and leaves, where it is reaching out to, where you are reaching out to? What can the tree help you connect with to bring all that you have into the future for yourself and those around you?

(Pause for 30 Seconds)

As you explore the branches, you begin to look out around you, beyond your own branches. You see there is a community of other trees surrounding you, some will be from the same family and some will be from different families and communities. What does your tree ask you to notice about how you might be able to both give from your own tree to others and also what can you receive from other trees and bring back to your own?

(Song 4:”Flux” by Garth Stevenson)

Now take all of this wonderful information, sites, sounds, smells, memories and integrate it within yourself in a place of rest for the next couple of minutes. Feel the bark and the wind and the sun while you rest.

READ POEM HERE (POEM “BECOMING A TREE”) By Brian Beard

On a hill stands a forest of people who have all, one day or another, walked out of the nearby city to become trees. Of course, at first, burying your feet in rocky soil does not make them roots any more than stretching your arms makes them branches. But, gradually, ineluctably, with each successive day, you become less human and more tree.

You may feel foolish at having given up your right to move about and talk, but with time, the desire to take part in these and other activities begins to fade, and you learn the incomparable delights of rootedness, of bending, but not breaking, in the storm; of swallowing the mineral-filled beads of water in the dark soil and casting them up into the air one occupies with a certitude so immense you can only accept it as a gift.

From Bellevue Literary Review 2013

When you are ready, slowly take a breath in. Imagine that you are back to standing at the base of the tree. When you are ready, thank your tree for sharing with you. You may touch it gently letting it know that you are grateful.

Take a deep breath in, exhale slowly, Open your eyes when you are ready.