

# Forest Bathing

Forest Bathing or Shinrin-yoku is a Japanese form of healing and wellness, research into it started around the 1970s in Japan. Shinrin means “forest” and Yoku means “bath”.

Shinrin-yoku is bathing in the forest atmosphere, taking in the forest through your senses. We know the forest is good for us, you can feel it inside of you. But did you know that there is evidence of a physiological response from our bodies when we connect with nature?



*Healing Forest* reports the benefits include:

- Learning to switch off unwanted thoughts;
- Increased self-worth and confidence;
- Overcoming fear, self-doubt, depression, anxiety, and worry;
- Improved sleep and rest;
- Finding peace and happiness in the present moment;
- Increased empathy and improve relationships;
- Enhance emotional intelligence;
- Boosted creativity.

## Mindfulness In Nature Scavenger Hunt

- One thing that makes you smile.
- One thing that brings you calm.
- One that fills you with hope.
- One thing that makes you curious.
- One thing that fills you with awe.
- One thing that you are thankful for in nature.

## Principles to Guide You

**Senses:** Use your senses to bridge outer and inner nature

**Slow:** Walk slow. Think less. Feel more.

**Safety:** Be prepared. Stay alert. Stay calm.

**Sharing:** Share insights in small circles. Listen like trees.

**Silence:** Find the stillness. Experience the oneness

## Use Your Senses

**Sound:** Listen to the rustling leaves, chirps of birds and other wildlife, the movement of water.

**Sight:** Observe colours, textures, interesting sights, and fractal patterns.

**Smell:** Breathe in earthy scents, smell the leaves and needles of surrounding trees

**Touch:** Touch and notice the textures of the life around you

**Taste:** Find a quiet spot and enjoy a snack outdoors, take your time as you mindfully chew and taste every flavour. Experience oneness with the earth.

## Tips for beginners

1. Turn off your devices to give yourself the best chance of relaxing, being mindful and enjoying a sensory forest-based experience.
2. Slow down.
3. Move through the forest slowly so you can see and feel more.
4. Take long breaths deep into the abdomen.
5. Extending the exhalation of air to twice the length of the inhalation sends a message to the body that it can relax.