

Noticing Nature



Notice nature once a day. Serve yourself some fresh air. Notice trees, flowers, even insects. Nature gives the mind a nourishing break from its ruminations.

Literally come to your senses...I see...I hear...I smell...I taste...I feel...I sense...

Go on a Nature Walk

Finding the Infinite in the Finite

In this meditation, you'll be exploring finite life forms in nature as a way to connect with a sense of infinite oneness.

For example, when contemplating a tree, take some time to look at the leaves and sense how each leaf is singular and unique, its own particular life form. Then choose one leaf to study. Allow yourself plenty of time to examine this leaf in all of its individual detail, its shape, its textures, its various colors, its smells, and its sounds (when folded or crinkled).

Reflect on the truth that this leaf is not just connected to every leaf on the tree through all of the nutrients that flow up the branches and trunk; it is also connected to all the leaves of the forest and to the rich humus below, where centuries worth of leaves have quietly catalyzed sunlight, then fallen and nourished the soil. The same nutrients, and the same rain and sunlight, are absorbed by every leaf in the forest. The life force that animates this leaf, that allows it to be, is the same fire that breathes life into your body, heart, and lungs.

Now that you've expanded your awareness of this leaf to see how the infinite is expressed in it, notice if you regard this leaf as more sacred than you did before. Can you see how the leaf is both an expression of unique singularity, and at the same time part of the whole web of life?

As you continue on your nature walk, continue to notice the particularity of other life forms you encounter, whether it's a bird or a stream, an old tree stump, a pebble, or a blade of grass. Consider the ways in which each unique life form is an expression of the infinite creative force in the universe. And despite their obvious differences, all of the things you see can remind you of the inherent unity running through every living being.

Source: Coleman, M. *Awake in the Wild: Mindfulness in Nature as a Path of Self-Discovery*