Self-guided Forest Therapy Activities

*Activity 1: Sit in Silence with Open Senses*

You're invited to:

- find a comfortable spot and sit down for at least 15 minutes

- it works best when your eyes are closed

- take 5 consecutive deep breaths, pausing ever so slightly in between inhale and exhale

- for a couple of minutes each, move from hearing, to touch (wind or sun on your exposed cheek), smell, and taste (yes, open your mouth and stick out your tongue!)

- after sampling those senses, sit for a few more minutes in silence and with your eyes closed and then, open your eyes

- again, take 5 consecutive deep breaths, pausing ever so slightly in between inhale and exhale; does the world look any differently now after having had your eyes closed?

*Activity 2: Introduction to a Tree*

You are invited to find a tree that you are called to; it can be big or small, alive or dead.

- remember how trees are in reciprocal relationship with us; they make oxygen, we breathe it. We make carbon dioxide, they breathe it

- take 5 consecutive deep breaths, pausing ever so slightly in between inhale and exhale

- seeing our connected relationship through the air, approach this specific tree and imagine it can sense your name and maybe a short story you convey to it

- in relationship, or reciprocation, imagine the tree has a name and that it has a story specifically for you; if this tree was to impart any wisdom to you, for any of your challenges, what might it be?

- after this invitation feels complete, sit in silence leaning against the tree for sometime; when you feel complete, you're invited to make a gesture of gratitude towards the tree

*Activity 3: Mirrors of My Life*

You are invited to reflect upon what you see in the forest with a statement out loud, saying 'The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of my life." The blank is for you to fill in as you come across things in the forest that catch your attention. For example, you might see bark peeling off a tree and you might say, "The peeling bark of my life." After saying this, pause with a deep breath and reflect how these words may have relevance for your life, or how they may 'strike you funny' or make you feel pensive, happy, or any other emotion. Other examples are, "The dead wood of my life....." or "The gentle dew of my life...." Take about 15 minutes walking slowly through the woodland, possibly reflecting on things you may not normally notice.

Generously provided by the Global Institute of Forest Therapy in honour of Woodlands Appreciation Week.