

Creativity Prompt

Hug a Tree, Make a Friend

Description

In honor of 50th anniversary of earth day and the joy of a hug, try hugging a tree.

Time to complete

Up to 5 minutes

Materials

A tree or other plant (avoid cacti). Paper and Pencil (Optional).

Instructions

There really couldn't be a better time to take the opportunity to reflect our personal relationship with nature. Not only do recent studies show that being in nature is good for your physical health, it is also a great source of artistic and creative inspiration!

For this activity you're going to find a tree or another plant and hug it! As you head outside, or around your house, to find a plant to embrace take a second to think about these lines from Ralph Waldo Emerson's essay, *Nature*,

The tempered light of the woods is like a perpetual morning and is stimulating and heroic. The ancient lay reported spells of these places creep on us. The stems of pines, hemlocks, and oaks, almost gleam like iron on the excited eye. The incommunicable trees begin to persuade us to live with them and quit our life of solemn trifles. Here no history, or church, or state, is interpolated on the divine sky and the immortal year.

It's no wonder that "forest bathing" is currently so popular!

Once you find the perfect plant to hug, wrap your arms around it and hold on tight! Let the feeling flow up from your toes, then up your legs, into your chest, and then flood your head. Close your eyes and lean into the bark and feel its roughness, breathe in the smells of wood and earth.

In a recent article from the Iceland Review, forest ranger Þór Þorfinnsson recommends taking your time while hugging trees. He says,

Five minutes is really good, if you can give yourself five minutes of your day to hug [a tree], that's definitely enough. You can also do it many times a day—that wouldn't hurt. But once a day will definitely do the trick, even for just a few days.

Optional

Take a minute or two to write down your thoughts about what it felt like to hug a tree and reflect on them.

For more information on this topic:

[Health benefits of being in nature](#)

[Forest bathing](#)

[Hug a tree](#)

Sharing Suggestions

Ask a friend or family member to participate in this activity with you! Share your experience with them and dialogue about the answers to your questions. Comment on this activity's Facebook post or tag @OperaOmaha in an Instagram Story with #hcofcreativityprompts.