

This practice has been lovingly curated and communicated  
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“There is an intimate reciprocity to the senses; as we touch  
the bark of a tree, we feel the tree touching us; as we lend  
our ears to the local sounds and ally our nose to the seasonal  
scents, the terrain gradually tunes us in turn. The senses,  
that is, are the primary way that the earth has of informing  
our thoughts and of guiding our actions ... For it is only  
at the scale of our direct, sensorial interactions with the  
land around us that we can appropriately notice and respond  
to the immediate needs of the living world.

Yet at the scale of our sensing bodies the earth is astonishingly,  
irreducibly diverse. It discloses itself to our senses not as a  
uniform planet inviting global principles, but as this forested  
realm embraced by water, or a windswept prairie, or a desert  
silence. We can know the needs of any particular region  
only by participating in its specificity – by becoming familiar  
with its cycles and styles, awake and attentive to its other  
inhabitants”.

David Abrams - The Spell of the Sensuous



## A sensory awareness sit spot practice



Spending time in outer nature can be a powerful way to experience presence and connectedness through bringing mindful awareness to all of our senses while also deepening into our inter-dependent relationship with the other-than-human beings that form part of the greater web of life on Earth at this time.

By deliberately drawing on our innate capacities for curiosity, wonder and awe we can remember and directly experience our belonging to something larger than ourselves (the universe, web of life, great mystery etc...).



Choose a place in nature you can visit regularly where you can sit quietly with mindful sensory awareness connecting and communing with outer nature. A place where you can learn about the inhabitants of this place through paying attention through all of your senses.

You might discover that over time you begin to develop a bond with this place, where you feel included, accepted and witnessed just as you are.



Begin by bringing awareness to your 5 senses and the breath (if that feels right for you).

After a while notice which sense feels easiest to connect with at this time and rest your attention here for a little longer.

If this sensory awareness practice is new to you, you might want to use the concise grounding through the 5 senses handout in the resources section of the website as a helpful guide at [www.sacredinnerwild.com](http://www.sacredinnerwild.com)



Spend a few moments noticing any feelings and sensations in your body with a curious and caring attention (allowing and acknowledging what arises with acceptance rather than judgement as best you can).

Continue opening up to your inner and outer environment by watching, listening and sensing whatever is arising within you and around you as if witnessing it for the first time, with fresh eyes (some people find it helpful to approach this as if a child was experiencing something new to them for the first time).

Spend some time deliberately noticing the life that's here through all of your senses.

There may be birds, plants, insects, animals, trees, rocks, sky, water ... sense into any expressions of life here that draws your attention, moment by moment.



You might find that the first few times you visit your sit spot, the particular aspects of this place have little meaning to you. You might even find yourself thinking there's nothing to observe. As in any relationship it can take time to learn about each other, we most often do this by paying attention with openness, sincere interest, deep listening and sharing of ourselves.

As time goes on and with repetition and familiarity you may begin to feel a sense of kinship (connectedness/belonging/participation) with your surroundings.



This practice isn't limited to sitting and there are many ways you can cultivate a relationship with outer nature. You can develop a relationship with an area while walking or at home with a plant or view of nature out a window (tree or sky) if your access to outdoors is limited. You can also bring to mind a place in outer nature that you have visited before or would like to and do this as an inner practice connecting with your senses through imagery.

What matters most here is how you pay attention and your sincere intention to be in a reciprocal relationship. For many people this expresses as a felt sense of interconnectedness with and appreciation for the aspect of nature we are communing with.

If it feels right for you, as you leave this place you may want to extend appreciation for the expression of life here and for what has been shared between you through this relational experience.

Some people do this with words, sounds, songs or a gesture/movement. Your intention and sincerity is all that matters.