



Amos Clifford: Forest Bathing: The Pleasures of Presence



M. Amos Clifford is the founder of the Association of Nature and Forest Therapy Guides and Programs, a trained psychotherapist, a longtime student of Buddhist philosophy, and a restorative justice activist. **Learn how to activate and cultivate your relationship with the other-than-human world** through forest bathing and forest therapy practices.

**TOP EMBODIMENT TIP:** Allow Pleasure to Guide You

What Is Forest Bathing?

- Forest bathing is a **“gentle wander”** in a natural area, ideally one that’s ecologically diverse.
- It’s not hiking--you might travel no more than 200 meters in three hours--but instead is about immersing the senses in the natural world.
- **In forest bathing, you shift from the trance of “there-then-that” thinking to “here-now-this.”**
- Ultimately, forest bathing allows us to receive the invitation to be in relationship with nature.

Origins of Forest Bathing:

- It’s been studied and used worldwide; most people have heard of the Japanese practice of *shinrin-yoko*, also called forest bathing. **The practice is highly accessible and adaptable across cultures.**
- For example, see the work of the Korean leader in the field: Won Sop Shin.

Benefits of Forest Bathing:

- Early studies focused on the physical benefits for the human body, such as stress reduction. We now know that forest bathing also has other, far-reaching benefits. It improves self-awareness by helping us contextualize ourselves within the larger system; it gives us new perspectives; **it provides an antidote to the consequences of our technology addiction**; it allows for personal transformation; and it benefits the forests and natural landscapes as well.

The Sequence:

- Most forest bathing journeys follow this sequence: Pleasure of presence, slow wandering, imaginal explorations and play, sit spot, tea time in community.
- Between activities, the leader/mentor may inquire: **“What are you noticing?”**

Resources

- ❖ **Books:** *Your Guide to Forest Bathing*
- ❖ **Courses:** Forest Therapy Guides Training
- ❖ **Website:** <https://www.natureandforesttherapy.org/guides/amos-clifford-2>
- ❖ **Email:** [amos@natureandforesttherapy.org](mailto:amos@natureandforesttherapy.org)
- ❖ **References:** Work of others, recommendations, etc.



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Forests Without Frontiers is a non-profit CIC dedicated to planting trees and reforesting degraded landscapes with support from a network of artists and musicians, as well as businesses and individuals working to become carbon-positive.

The initiative was founded by Nicoleta Carpineanu (aka Nico de Transylvania), a Romanian, UK-based DJ/Producer who grew up in the forests of Transylvania. We began our first key project in Romania in April 2019 and in our first year planted over 25,000 trees. We reforest land that has been clear-cut, where natural reforestation would not occur. We only plant native, biodiverse species, grown locally and cared for until maturity in legally protected areas, adjacent to existing natural forests. Our aim is to plant one million trees in the Carpathians and beyond by 2025.

**OUR MISSION** is to preserve our forests and the people and wildlife they nurture, and to promote connection with nature through music, art, and culture.

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