

# Sacred Wild Service

## Bigfoot Nature Fellowship's Forest Bathing Ceremony

### A 3-hour journey inward thru outward action

#### FOREST BATHING FACTS

1. **PURPOSE** – To realign with nature and each other. Forest bathing, or shinrin-yoku, offers extensive physical and mental health benefits by reducing stress and fostering a deeper connection with nature. These benefits are attributed to the mindful immersion in a forest environment and the inhalation of natural compounds released by trees called phytoncides.

#### Physical Health Benefits

- **Boosted Immune Function:** Forest bathing can increase the number and activity of natural killer (NK) cells, which play a vital role in the body's defense against tumors and virus-infected cells. This effect can last for up to 30 days after a trip.
- **Lowered Blood Pressure and Heart Rate:** Time spent in the forest environment can lead to significant reductions in both systolic and diastolic blood pressure and a slower pulse rate, which may help prevent hypertension.
- **Reduced Stress Hormones:** The practice decreases the levels of stress hormones such as cortisol, adrenaline, and noradrenaline in the body, contributing to stress management and overall physical well-being.
- **Improved Sleep:** Studies show that forest bathing can lead to longer and more restful sleep, helping to regulate circadian rhythms and enhance recovery from fatigue.
- **Potential Anti-Cancer Effects:** By boosting the immune system's anti-cancer proteins, forest bathing may have a preventive effect on certain cancers.
- **Better Cardiovascular and Metabolic Health:** The practice has been linked to improved cardiovascular function, better-controlled BMI, and lower blood glucose levels, potentially helping to prevent type 2 diabetes.

#### Mental and Emotional Benefits

- **Stress and Anxiety Relief:** Forest bathing promotes a sense of tranquility and mindfulness, helping to alleviate symptoms of general anxiety, tension, and technostress (stress from digital burnout).
- **Improved Mood and Mental Well-being:** It has been shown to reduce negative feelings such as anger, depression, and confusion, while increasing feelings of vigor, energy, and overall happiness.
- **Enhanced Cognitive Function:** Exposure to nature has been associated with improved memory, concentration, creativity, and attentional control, providing a mental refresh from daily life's demands.
- **Increased Connection with Nature:** The mindful immersion encourages a deeper appreciation for the natural world, which can foster feelings of awe, gratitude, and interconnectedness.

# START

## Pre-Gathering (30min) – Newcomers Tour

### 1. (20min-1:20) – MEET AND GREET (Seating) – Fire Pit

a. PURPOSE – Feel Seen and connect to the tribe – Gives people time to arrive

#### i. Serve Tea during this time & Body-Check-In (Magda)

1. PURPOSE – Fill the body with real nutrition

Each participant quietly reflects and writes:

Where do I feel tension in my body?

What emotion did I bring today?

What's been weighing on me this week?

How stressed do I feel (1–10)?

Hands are placed on the body while breathing slowly.

#### ii. Barefoot encouraged –

1. PURPOSE – Reduces chronic pain, increases energy, Promotes eyesight, Reduces stress (anxiety, depression, irritability), Boosts immunity by increasing white blood cells, Improves mood by releasing endorphins, improves cardiovascular health thru influx of free electrons, Improves sleep quality by helping control circadian rhythm (bodies internal clock), Improves Proprioception AKA sense of body awareness and strengthens the tiny muscles in our legs and feet lowering the possibility of sprains and falls.

### 2. (5min-1:25) – WELCOME STATEMENT – Fire Pit

a. PURPOSE – Set Everyone in their bodies AKA get their blood/energy moving

A clear welcome from a Steward-Minister explaining (Ryan & Cory):

1. This is a voluntary, co-created Sacred Wild Service of Bigfoot Nature Fellowship.

“There is one thing stronger than all the armies in the world, and that is an idea whose time has come” - Victor Hugo. We are doing that right now.

Community agreements: Respect for all beliefs, optional participation.

2. An invitation to feel the land and respecting nature. This is a place for healing. We aim to do what Buckminster Fuller said, “You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete” and what MLK Jr. said “Those who love peace must learn to organize as effectively as those who love war” You coming here, inviting your friends and family. That's what we are doing. Our world needs this now more than ever.

### (10min-1:35) QIGONG (CORY)

### 3. (5min-1:40) - TALK + NEWS – Fire Pit

#### SITTING IN SILENCE – Fire Pit

a. PURPOSE – Make them more present in nature by cutting sight and engaging other senses so they can hear nature and their bodies.

- a. **PURPOSE** – Happy Talk – Encourage everyone to love themselves and their journey – Encourage everyone to set their intentions for the week, year, etc. Encourage focus on positive thinking and attraction/manifestation – We are what we ruminate on. Forgiveness is your first God. Once you have released all of it then you move on to your other Gods... Gluttony, Distraction, Doubt, etc.

## **i. Visualization**

1. **PURPOSE** – Guide everyone to visualize themselves as their best physical, mental, emotional, spiritual version of themselves. Tell them how beautiful they are and that the greatest bullies we will ever face will be ourselves. Learn to silence the bully and embrace their Sacred Wild – their true self.

### **(15min-1:55) SHARING CIRCLE: Go Around To Each Person & Share:**

1. Intentions. One thing they are ready to release, and one thing they are inviting in. Utilize Opposite Therapy (From Cory's Book): "What might be the opposite of that story?"

#### **Add explicit permission for:**

Naming grief and rage for what's happening in the world and in personal lives.

"Whatever you bring—joy, numbness, confusion, pain—is welcome here. There is no 'wrong' state to be in."

**Reminder:** "Whatever the mind can conceive and believe, it can achieve." - Napoleon Hill.

## **5. (5min-2:00) - BIGFOOT HOWL AS A GROUP – Fire Pit**

### **1st time release – 2nd time harmonize**

- a. **PURPOSE** – Release any remaining negative energy first and then align everyone's frequency/vibration by harmonizing together.

Letting the Bigfoot howl be a safe place for primal sound: "This is a space where any sound is welcome—grief, laughter, anger, relief."

## **SECTION 2: (1hr-3:00) - WORK THE EARTH & FEATURED STUFF**

### **Split Into Groups – Come Along / Workshops etc.**

**Why grow food?** "Though the problems of the world are increasingly complex, the solutions remain embarrassingly simple."- Bill Mollison. Food>Lawns. Prisons, Schools, Churches etc.

**Stewardship.** Serving the land to serve ourselves. Have fun with it.

- a. **PURPOSE** – Volunteerism practice and dirt play
- b. Working in the dirt, often through activities like gardening or yard work, offers a wide range of physical, mental, and social benefits. These benefits stem from physical activity, exposure to nature and specific soil bacteria, and a sense of purpose and community.
- c. **Physical Health Benefits**
  - **Physical Exercise:** Activities such as digging, weeding, and carrying supplies provide a full-body, moderate-intensity workout that builds muscle strength, flexibility, and balance.
  - **Disease Prevention:** Regular physical activity from yard work can help manage weight, lower blood pressure, and reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and certain cancers.

- **Improved Immune System:** Exposure to the diverse microbes in soil helps the immune system learn to regulate itself, potentially reducing the risk of allergies and autoimmune disorders.
  - **Increased Vitamin D:** Spending time outdoors in the sunlight naturally boosts vitamin D levels, which is essential for strong bones and a healthy immune system.
  - **Better Nutrition:** Growing your own fruits and vegetables often leads to a healthier, more nutrient-rich diet, as gardeners are more likely to eat fresh produce.
- d. **Mental and Emotional Benefits**
- **Stress and Anxiety Reduction:** Spending time in nature and engaging in the rhythmic, repetitive tasks of gardening has a calming, therapeutic effect that significantly reduces stress, anxiety, and muscle tension.
  - **Mood Enhancement:** Inhaling a natural bacterium found in soil, *Mycobacterium vaccae*, has been shown to stimulate serotonin production, a neurotransmitter that makes you feel happier and more relaxed, acting as a natural antidepressant.
  - **Sense of Purpose and Accomplishment:** Nurturing plants from a seed to a harvest provides a strong sense of responsibility and achievement, which can be particularly beneficial for individuals struggling with depression or low self-esteem.
  - **Improved Cognitive Function:** Time spent outdoors and away from screens can improve memory, attention span, and creativity, while the problem-solving involved in gardening can enhance cognitive function and potentially reduce the risk of dementia.
  - **Mindfulness:** Focusing on the present moment and the simple tasks in the garden helps clear the mind from daily worries and anxious thoughts.
- c. **Social and Developmental Benefits**
- **Social Connection:** Gardening can bring people together in a shared purpose, whether through community gardens or sharing knowledge and produce with neighbors, which helps combat isolation and builds support networks.
  - **Accountability and Structure:** A garden requires consistent maintenance, which helps create a rhythm and accountability that can positively overflow into other areas of life.
  - **Child Development:** For children, playing in the dirt stimulates their senses, enhances motor skills, and promotes creativity and imagination while also helping to build a robust immune system and a connection with the natural world.

## **SECTION 3: (10min-3:10) – BREATH WORK – Walk to Beach**

### **Whim Hoff Breathing for 3 sets OR Deep-Breathing (Belly Breathing)**

- a. **PURPOSE** – Reduce stress – boost energy – create plunge mindset
- i. **Power Breathes** – Inhale deep thru nose and out mouth in rhythmic motion for 30 breathes
- ii. **The Hold** – Hold the last breath for as long as you can or 30 or 1 minute or longer
- iii. **Recovery Breathe** – Take a deep breath thru nose and hold for 15 and then repeat

## **8. (15min-3:25) – COLD PLUNGE – Tommy T's Beach**

**(takes 3 minutes per person in the water and added time to dry off and redress)**

- a. **PURPOSE** – Power boost the immune system and create discipline – psychological stress resistance, faster recovery without excessive discomfort
- i. **Benefits** – Reduced muscle soreness, decreased inflammation, boosted mood (dopamine/endorphin release), improved mental focus (noradrenaline), better circulation and enhanced metabolism by activating brown fat, which generates heat, burning calories. Stronger immune system – stimulates white blood cells, increased alertness which is good for being aware and present in nature.

## **9. (15min-3:40) - BREAK BREAD –**

### **Gather at Campfire to share food and have open discussions**

- a. **PURPOSE** – To deepen community bonds thru sharing and story-telling and set intentions for a positive week

### **(15min) SHARING CIRCLE: Go Around To Each Person & Share:**

1. What they noticed in their body or emotions.  
Utilize Opposite Therapy (From Cory's Book): "What might be the opposite of that story?"
2. How can we make the world better and work together to do it?  
Optional Release Ceremony. Participants write what they're ready to release (fear, anger, doubt, exhaustion). They then: Tear the paper, Place it into the earth, Or release it symbolically to the woods  
Optional Body-Recheck

## **10. (5min-3:45) - HUG GOODBYE & CLOSING STATEMENT – Fire Pit**

- a. **PURPOSE** – Extended hugs, typically lasting 20 seconds or more, offer significant physical and emotional health benefits, primarily by triggering the release of the "cuddle hormone"
- b. **Emotional and Psychological Benefits**
  - **Reduced Stress and Anxiety:** Extended hugs lower levels of the stress hormone cortisol, which helps calm the nervous system and manage daily tension.
  - **Boosted Mood and Self-Esteem:** The release of oxytocin, serotonin, and dopamine during a prolonged embrace can elevate mood, fight off feelings of depression and loneliness, and improve self-worth.
  - **Deepened Connection and Trust:** Hugs are a wordless form of communication that foster a sense of safety, security, and emotional bonding, strengthening relationships with partners, family, and friends.
  - **Emotional Resilience:** Receiving affectionate touch can help buffer mood during conflict and build emotional resilience in the face of challenging emotions.
- c. **Physical Health Benefits**
  - **Lowered Blood Pressure and Heart Rate:** The calming effects of oxytocin help to regulate the cardiovascular system, leading to lower blood pressure and a stabilized heart rate.
  - **Strengthened Immune System:** By reducing stress and activating the thymus gland (which regulates white blood cell production), prolonged hugging may boost immune function and help the body fight off illness more effectively.

- **Pain and Tension Relief:** Hugs can relax tense muscles and alleviate both physical and emotional pain by increasing circulation to soft tissues and releasing endorphins, which are the body's natural painkillers.
  - **Improved Sleep Quality:** The calming and secure feelings promoted by extended hugs can lead to better sleep patterns and rest quality.
- d. **Key takeaway:** The duration and quality of the hug matter. While short hugs are good, holding a genuine embrace for at least 20 seconds is often cited by experts as the length required to stimulate the full range of therapeutic effects. It is important to ensure all physical touch is consensual to achieve these positive outcomes

## **A simple closing:**

Gratitude for the land, for each person's courage, for Bigfoot/nature as teacher, and an invitation to carry one simple practice home (e.g., 5 minutes barefoot, one intentional breath break, one hug per day; any other handouts).

Brief reminder of any events, opportunities to continue the path, We will change it up sometimes, do festivals, do seasonal events, do cultural events,

Life is a journey not a destination. Be devoted to coming back. To heal yourself and our world. Stewardship, serving others to serve ourselves.

# **END**

**Note: Everything is voluntary; people can opt out or modify any practice without judgment.**

### **Spiritual/Religious Nonprofit Disclaimer**

Bigfoot Nature Fellowship is a 508c1a religious nonprofit in Florida for nature-based spirituality. Our gatherings, ceremonies, and services are intended solely for spiritual growth, community connection, and personal reflection. They are not a substitute for medical care, psychological or psychiatric treatment, counseling, or any licensed professional services.

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Participation in any activity is completely voluntary, and you are free to opt out of any portion at any time for any reason. By choosing to participate, you acknowledge that you are responsible for your own physical, emotional, and mental well-being at all times.

### **Liability and Assumption of Risk Disclaimer**

By attending and participating in activities at Bigfoot Food Forest or any site affiliated with Bigfoot Nature Fellowship, you acknowledge and agree to the following:

1. You understand that activities may include, but are not limited to: walking on uneven ground, barefoot practices, light physical movement, gardening/yard work, breathwork, cold water exposure, group exercises, hugs or consensual touch, and other outdoor or nature-based activities.
2. You understand that these activities carry inherent risks, including but not limited to slips, trips, falls, insect bites or stings, exposure to sun and weather, physical strain, emotional release, and other unforeseen events.
3. You affirm that you are choosing to participate freely and that you are solely responsible for deciding what is appropriate for your body, your health, and your boundaries. You may decline or modify any activity at any time.
4. You agree to inform a steward or guide immediately if you feel unwell, unsafe, or overwhelmed, and to seek appropriate medical or psychological care when needed.
5. To the fullest extent permitted by law, you voluntarily assume all risks associated with your participation and agree to release, discharge, and hold harmless Bigfoot Nature Fellowship, its founders, stewards, ministers, volunteers, members, property owners, and affiliates from any and all claims, demands, or causes of action arising out of or related to your participation, except in cases of gross negligence or willful misconduct.

By remaining on the premises and/or participating in any activity, you acknowledge that you have read, understood, and voluntarily accepted the above terms.