

Connecting: Attitude of Gratitude

Name _____ Date _____

Understanding Gratitude in Nature

Connecting in the context of gratitude means expressing thanks for connections to nature and natural environments. An attitude of gratitude strengthens connection to nature. By acknowledging and honoring the natural world, you cultivate respect, humility, and awareness of the interdependence of all living things.

Gratitude in nature can involve:

- Asking permission to enter or interact with a natural space
- Offering something back: seeds, water, compost, litter removal, or mindful care
- Observing and appreciating gifts from the environment like shade, air, birdsong, water

The practice of gratitude reminds you that connection is reciprocal: you receive, and you give.

Reflection Questions

How do you typically show gratitude in your daily life?

How does acknowledging a natural space change your awareness of it?

What small gestures could you do to honor and give back to nature?

How does offering something to nature affect your sense of connection to your True Self or higher power (if you have one)?

Ecotherapy Exercise: Permission and Offering

Instructions

Go to a natural space (yard, park, garden, or local wild area). Pause at the edge of the space and ask permission silently or aloud to be present, to observe, or to interact. Take 2–3 slow grounding breaths and notice your surroundings.

Make an offering or perform an act of care:

- Sprinkle birdseed or feed small wildlife responsibly
- Remove litter or debris
- Water a plant or tend to the soil
- Leave a small biodegradable token if appropriate (stone, leaf, flower)

While doing this, focus on the feeling of gratitude:

1. Thank the space for what it provides
2. Notice the interconnectedness of life around you

Conclude the exercise by taking one slow breath and acknowledging the reciprocity: giving and receiving

Prompted Reflection

How did asking permission affect your awareness of the space?

What feelings arose while making the offering?

Did this exercise change your sense of connection to nature, your True Self, or a higher power?

How can you bring this attitude of gratitude into daily life?

Integration: Daily Gratitude in Nature

Journaling Prompts

Describe one act of giving or honoring you can do each day in nature

Reflect on moments when nature has supported or inspired you

How does expressing gratitude affect your connection to others and to yourself?

What does it feel like to be part of a reciprocal relationship with the natural world?

Micro-Practice

1. Pause outdoors for 1–2 minutes
2. Notice one small gift from nature (sound, sight, touch)
3. Offer a silent “thank you” or small gesture of care
4. Observe how this changes your attention, mood, and connection

Optional Challenge

1. Perform one act of gratitude in nature daily for a week
2. Notice changes in awareness, connection, and inner calm
3. Record experiences in a journal, noting which practices feel most meaningful

This practice is about mutual respect and presence: you honor nature, and nature honors you back by creating and nurturing a sense of connection, grounding, and awareness.