

Centering through Sacred Space in Nature

Name _____ Date _____

Understanding Sacred Space and Centering

Centering means returning to a place of stability, safety, and balance inside yourself. A *sacred space* in nature is any place (real or imagined) that gives you a sense of grounding, calm, connection, and protection. It can be as simple as a quiet patch of grass, a tree you like, or a stretch of water. What's important is that it feels grounding, centered, and safe to you.

Your nervous system relaxes when it recognizes safety. Safe and sacred places are spaces where the “bad wolf” of your fight, flight, or freeze response feels calm. Over time, returning to the same space (or visualizing it) trains your mind and body to settle and center more quickly and reliably.

When you practice centering in your sacred space, you're giving yourself a stable place to return to so you can actually deal with reality without unraveling.

Reflection Questions

What environments naturally make you feel calm or safe?

Do you already have a place in nature that feels grounding?

What qualities make a place feel “safe” to you (quiet, open, shaded, etc.)?

How does your body respond when you feel safe?

What usually pulls you out of that feeling?

Ecotherapy Exercise: “Creating or Finding Your Sacred Space”

Instructions (Outdoor Version)

Go outside to a natural setting (yard, park, trail). Walk slowly and let yourself be drawn to a specific spot. Don't overthink it. When you find a place that feels even slightly calming, stop there.

Settle into the space:

1. Stand, sit, or lean comfortably
2. Take a few slow breaths

Begin observing:

1. What do you see, hear, and feel here?
2. What about this place feels safe or grounding?

Gently anchor yourself:

1. Place a hand on your body or touch something nearby (tree, ground, rock)
2. Notice the contact
3. Say silently (or out loud if you're comfortable with it): “This is a sacred place I can return to.”

Stay for a few minutes and allow your body to settle.

Alternative: Visualization Version (If You Can't Go Outside)

Close your eyes and imagine a natural place where you feel safe.

Build it in detail:

1. What does it look like?
2. What sounds are there?
3. What does the air feel like?
4. Imagine yourself there, grounded and supported
5. Stay with the image for a few minutes

Prompted Reflection

What made this space feel safe or grounding?

How did your body feel before and after?

Was it difficult or easy to stay present in the space? Why?

What (if anything) surprised you about the experience?

Integration: Returning to Your Center

Journaling Prompts

Describe your sacred space in detail so you can return to it mentally.

What elements of this space can you recreate in daily life?

How might this space support you during stress or overwhelm?

What would it look like to trust this space as a resource?

Micro-Practice

1. Pause
2. Recall your sacred space
3. Take one slow breath
4. Feel your body as if you are there

Optional Challenge

- Visit your sacred space (or visualize it) once a day for a week
- Spend 5–10 minutes there each time
- Notice if your ability to settle improves

You don't need a perfect place. You need a consistent one. Your nervous system isn't asking for enlightenment. It's asking for somewhere to land. Your sacred space can be that place that helps you to find your center.