



TODAY'S TOPIC:
Golden Thread of Truth
Nature as a Spiritual Practice

You are welcome to use this lesson to inspire spiritual conversation in your family or youth classroom. It is written for elementary age, but could be adjusted as needed.

THINKING JOB: Ask a “thinking job question” to get everyone thinking about something pertinent to the lesson. This could be asked moments or hours before your conversation.

How do I feel when I spend time in nature?

Lesson

Materials	Things to Prepare	Today's Goal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	Know that spending time in nature is a great spiritual practice.

ASK: How do you feel when you spend time outside in nature, like the mountains, hikes, gardens, etc.

SAY: There are many religions where spending time in nature is very important because it's such a great way to connect to the world around you, to relax, to hear your thoughts, and to feel God. In fact, spending time in nature makes your body happy and your mind happy. Some people consider it their spiritual practice because they feel so good.

SAY: And there is spiritual practice called “forest bathing”. Do you think you can take a bath in a forest?

SAY: Forest Bathing is a Japanese practice of relaxation which lets you take in nature with all of your senses. You aren't just walking in the woods, but paying attending to the sights, sounds, smells, and how things feel all around you. A great thing about this is anyone can do it regardless of your age or health.

HOW DO YOU DO IT? If possible, go outside and to do this. Explain the process, then go outside and sit quietly for at least two minutes. What did you see, smell, feel, notice? How do you feel?

- Slow - Move slowly or sit in one spot.
- Breathe - Take long, deep, belly breaths, exhaling very slowly.
- Notice – What do you smell, how does the ground feel, what do you see, how is the light and the shadows, what colors do you see (all the shades of green or brown, all the colors in the sky)
- Feel – Notice how you are feeling.

AFFIRMATION – I use nature to connect with Spirit. repeat 4X

Note: Printable affirmations and coloring sheets for this lesson are available at <https://www.milehichurch.org/youth-family/>.