



# **Supporting Community Wellness Through Forest Therapy**

**Presenters:**

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**and**

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INFTA-Certified Nature and Forest Therapy Guide**





Video from: <https://youtu.be/2G8LaiHSCAs>



A lush green forest with sunlight filtering through the trees. The background is a soft-focus image of a forest with tall trees and dense foliage. Sunlight is streaming through the canopy in the upper right corner, creating a bright, hazy effect. The ground is covered in fallen leaves and forest floor debris.

**How did that feel?**

**What did you notice?**

**Did you see the movement? Hear the different sounds?**

**When you spend time in nature, allowing yourself to slow down, to be fully present, and engage your senses in the surrounding atmosphere, you can connect more deeply with the natural world. This time also improves your health and well-being.**

**This is the basis of Forest Therapy.**



## ***Shinrin-yoku*** (森林浴)

**Originating in Japan as *Shinrin-yoku*, the term translates as “bathing in the forest atmosphere”, also called forest bathing. This gentle, stress relieving practice was introduced in early 1980s to combat rising levels of chronic work-related stress and anxiety in government workers and administrators.**

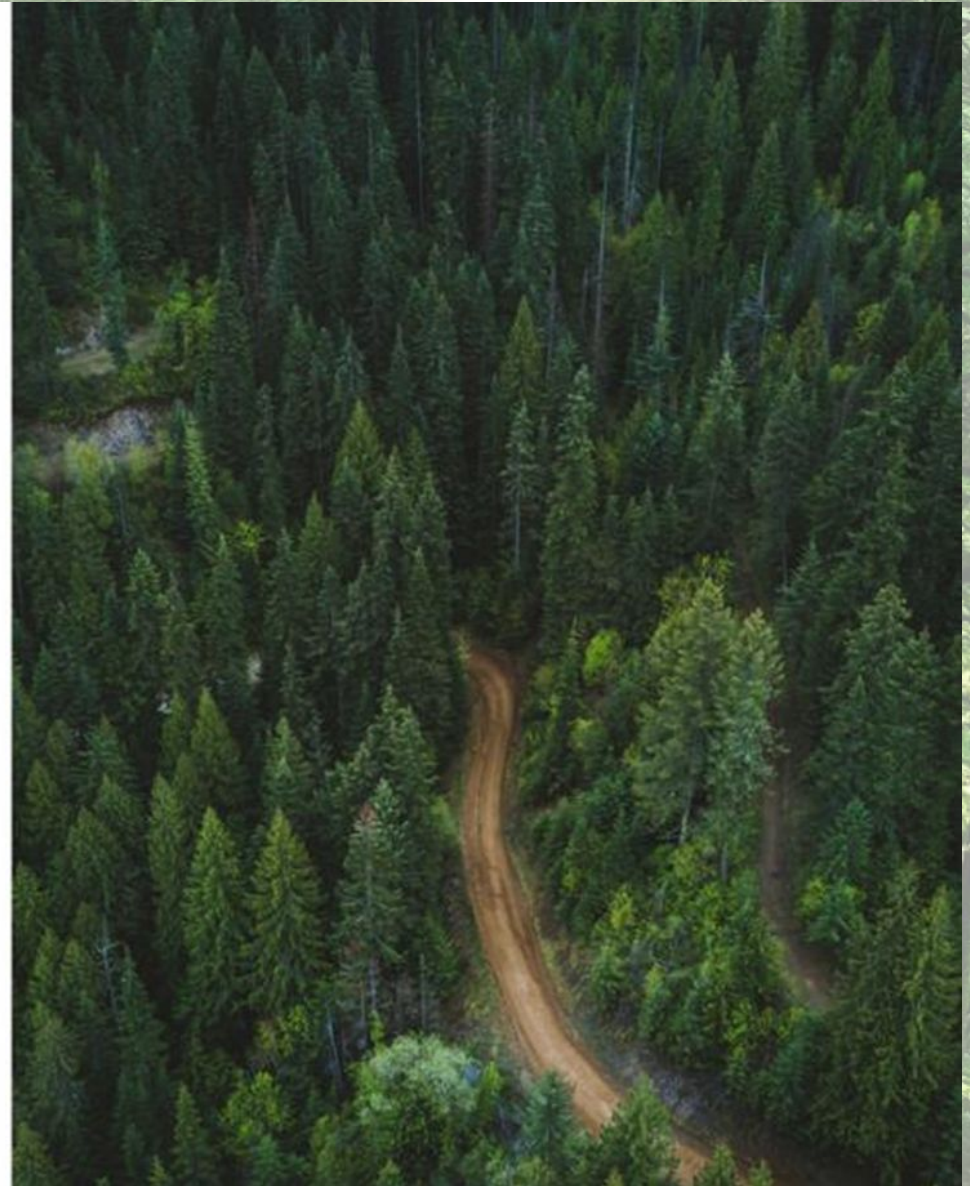
**Over time, Forest Therapy has become a cornerstone of preventive health care and healing in Japanese medicine. The practice of *shinrin-yoku* has since spread widely across the planet as a research-based, affordable, and effective public health practice for all ages.**

**Forest Therapy lends its scientific underpinning from a variety of disciplines, such as medicine, physiology, psychology, and forestry.**



"*SHINRIN-YOKU* MEANS BATHING IN THE FOREST ATMOSPHERE, OR TAKING IN THE FOREST THROUGH OUR SENSES. THIS IS NOT EXERCISE, OR HIKING, OR JOGGING. IT IS SIMPLY BEING IN NATURE, CONNECTING WITH IT THROUGH OUR SENSE OF SIGHT, HEARING, TASTE, SMELL AND TOUCH. IT IS LIKE A BRIDGE. BY OPENING OUR SENSES, IT BRIDGES THE GAP BETWEEN US AND THE NATURAL WORLD."

QING LI, AUTHOR OF *THE ART AND SCIENCE OF FOREST BATHING*





## **Public & Community wellness outreach to various audiences:**

- 1. Outreach at the local arboretum and Audubon Center**
- 2. University's affiliated Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI)**
- 3. Regional and local native plant society meetings.**
- 4. Regional public libraries**
- 5. Personnel development training at a University libraries**
- 6. University's AOP (Association of Office Professionals)**







## **Methods of Interaction:**

**In-person - 3 hour walks designed to allow for progressive relaxation; also 6 hour workshop & walk**

**Virtual - 1 hour informational including visual media and sound**

**Hybrid - 1 hour in person and 2-3 hour walks**





## **Forest Bathing Health Benefits**

- **Healthy microbiome**
- **Decrease blood pressure**
- **Improves immune function**
- **Decreases cortisol**
- **Better sleep**
- **Reduces anxiety**
- **Improves creativity**
- **Helps depression**

**Timko Olson, E. R., Hansen, M. M., & Vermeesch, A. (2020). Mindfulness and Shinrin-Yoku: Potential for Physiological and Psychological Interventions during Uncertain Times. International journal of environmental research and public health, 17(24), 9340. <https://doi-org.ezp2.lib.umn.edu/10.3390/ijerph17249340>**



# University of Minnesota

## •Course Integrations

- **Architecture**
- **Public Health**
- **Environmental Sciences**
- **Social Work**





## University of Minnesota

### •Department & Programmatic Outreach

- **Student Services**
- **Extension**
- **Continuing Education**
- **CBS Conservatory**
- **Boyton Mental Health Services**
- **PhD student project**





A photograph of a dense forest with tall, slender trees and vibrant green foliage. Sunlight filters through the canopy, creating a bright, glowing effect in the upper right corner. The forest floor is covered in fallen leaves and moss. A semi-transparent green rectangular box is centered over the image, containing the text.

# Questions?

Enjoy a little nature break today!