**Strong Tree Meditation**

Close your eyes and take three long deep breathes as you feel yourself sink deeply into the ground and your body becomes relaxed.

Now, imagine that you are standing on a path at the edge of a small forest. The bright sun warms your back as you face the opening in the trees. The cool breeze from the forest is inviting you to enter. The path is clear and broad. It is easy to follow. And so you step into the forest.

All around you, you can hear birds calling to one another. Their sounds are gentle and sweet. It is as if they are encouraging you to take a few more steps into their home. And so you do.

The peace in the forest is total. You are aware of small animals around you. You see rabbits and squirrels romping and playing. You can hear the sounds of more birds hidden in the dense canopy of the forest.

As you continue to walk forward, there before you is a beautiful, massive, strong tree. It has a strong root system coming out of the earth, anchoring it in place. You decide to climb into the roots, and it’s as if the roots create a special natural bench for you to sit. You notice that the roots connect to a small creek of cool running water near where you are sitting, so you dangle your feet into the water below, sending a cool, pleasant tingle up from your feet to your ankles, then up your legs to your tummy, now you feel the coolness touching your fingers and then up your arms, into your chest, neck, then your forehead feels cool and calm. Breath in this cool, refreshing feeling.

Your entire body feels refreshed and relaxed as you dangle your feet in the river, sitting on the strong roots of the tree. Your mind begins to focus on strength of the tree, its power and stability. You think about how it is deeply rooted into the ground and how it is connected to the earth. Your thoughts drift to how the tree gives its shade, its oxygen to the air we breathe, how it provides a home to birds and other animals, and how it gives you a sense of being strong, stable, and protected.

You take one last deep breath in the forest and know it is time to leave. You begin to start walking down the forest path, feeling the sun warm your body again. You turn around to bid your tree good-bye. You know that you can return to the strong stability of the tree, and it’s refreshing waters below whenever you need to. Take a deep breath in and return to the room when you are ready.

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