

Practice: “Flowering Tree Ceremony”

For the Flowering Tree ceremony you let yourself find a tree that „speaks to you“. The size of the tree should be sufficient for sitting underneath, and your tree ideally stands in a remote area, so you can be by yourself in your ceremony without interruption.

Whatever age, type or size of your tree is perfect whenever you feel that you have a relationship to your tree. It can be an evergreen or a fruit tree, an old oak or Christmas tree.

It is important that that you can stand and face each of the four directions. Before you start, connect with your tree and ask for permission for your ceremony. You´ll feel the response in your center, inside your body.

Bring a pen and paper with you as well as some pieces of tobacco which is a traditional Native offering of gratitude.

Determine the cardinal directions, and then first sit on the East side of the tree (that´s where the sun rises) with your back pressing up against the trunk. Feel the tree and get in touch with your spine. Notice the texture of the trunk, the branches and the leaves.

These are the questions to ask in each direction:

East: Who am I?

South: Where have I come from?

West: Where am I now? What am I dreaming about?

North: Where am I going? What is the gift that I want to share?

Take as long as you like and need with your tree and your questions. Maybe there are spontaneous answers that “come to you” maybe there is silence. Watch the surrounding, listen to the wind and feel your connection with the trunk of the tree behind you. You can take notes and write down whatever comes up.

Stay with each direction until you feel an urge to move to another place. This is the moment for the next question. All of the surroundings deliver answers: the tree with its leaves whispering to you, the soil underneath you and the sky above you.

When you’ve finished the round and have asked all of your questions, listened to all answers and written them down, take a little bit of tobacco, and sprinkle it on your tree while you express your gratitude. You can finish with, “Aho Mitakuye Oyasin” (To all my relations) to close the ceremony.