

Plant Spirit Communication: Relearning the Language of the Green World



Cheyenne Jolene Yates, M.S.
Among Oaks & Owls



Where We Are Going Today

I. About Me

II. Science of Plant Intelligence

III. Returning to Relationship

IV. What is Plant Spirit Communication?

V. Practical Methods

VI. Plant Allies

VII. Safety & Ethics

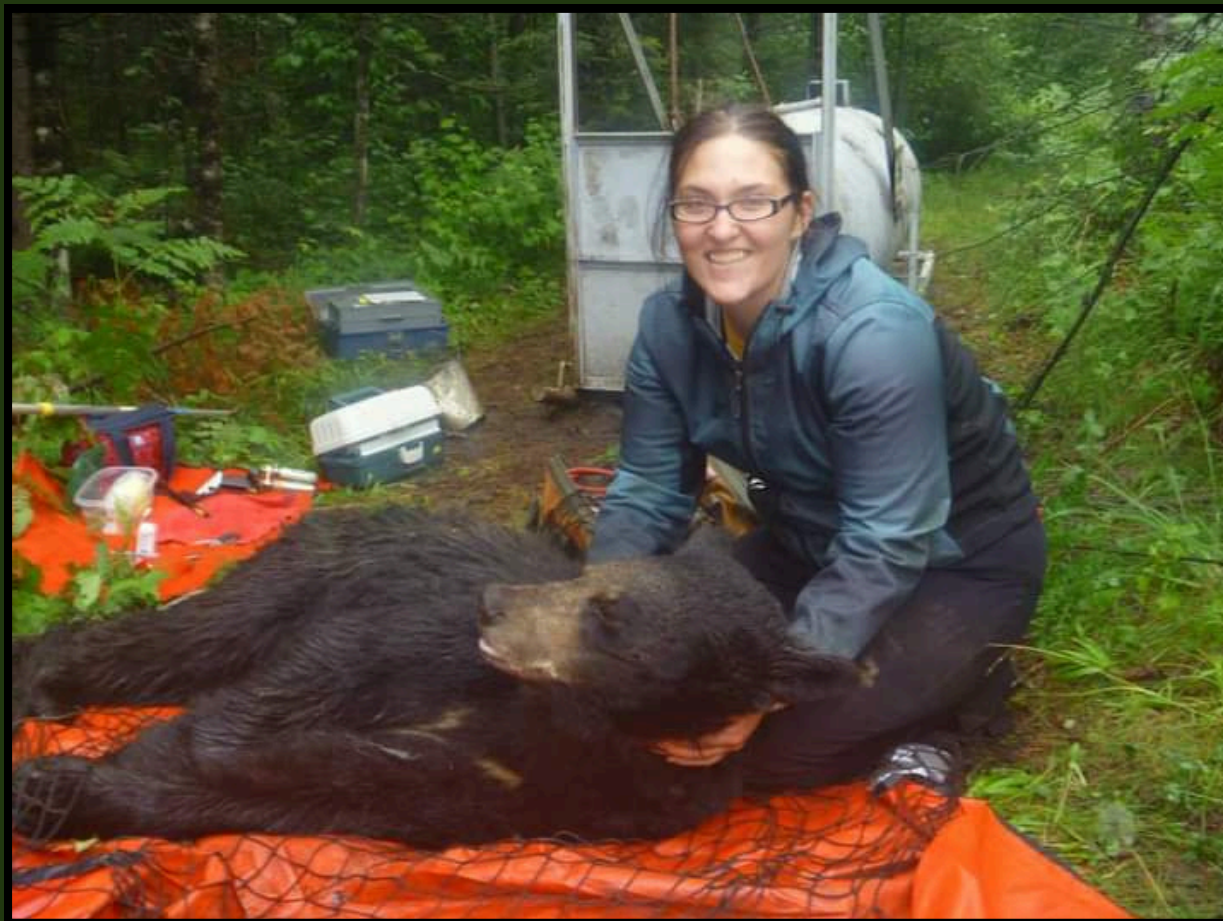
VIII. Common Challenges & Misconceptions

IX. Integrating Plant Spirits into the Everyday



Hello, I'm Cheyenne Jolene Yates

- Born and raised in Minnesota
- Bachelor's | Biology & Wildlife Ecology | University of Wisconsin – UWSP
- Master's | Wildlife Ecology | University of Georgia
- Ongoing: Certificate in Native Plants | University of Georgia



Herbalism & Foraging Education



- 3+ years clinical herbal mentorship with Camille Freeman
- Clinical Herbalism Practitioner Program | School of Evolutionary Herbalism
- Wild Tuning Foraging | Full Belly Foraging
- Medicinal Plants of the Southeast | Legacy Wilderness Academy
- Poisonous Plant Medicine Levels I – IV | Kathryn Solie
- Intermediate Western Herbalism | The Herbal Academy
- Introductory Western Herbalism | The Herbal Academy

My Business: Among Oaks & Owls



What I Do

- Foraging & Herbalism Education
- Plant Walks
- Gardening & Growing
- Harvesting & Making Herbal Medicines
- Plant Spirit Journeys
- 1:1 Herbal Consultations



Science of Plant Intelligence



Plants are Conscious Beings



- Plant perception & responsiveness
 - Stefano Mancuso
 - International Laboratory of Neurobiology
 - 22 neuroscience labs across U.S. & Europe
 - Light – quality, direction & duration
 - Gravity
 - Moisture
 - Temperature
 - Chemicals in soil and air
 - Touch
 - Mechanical vibrations
 - Electrical signals
 - Magnetic fields (some species)
- Constantly sampling their environment and making decisions
 - Roots – avoid obstacles, seek water, locate nutrients, and compare soil conditions

Plants Remember & Respond



- Sensitive Plant - *Mimosa pudica*
- Experiment: repeated harmless drops
 - At first they folded in their leaves
 - After they realized the drops were harmless, they stopped reacting
- Form of learning & memory
- Been responding and adapting for 500 million years
- Interact with other plants, insects & animals in environment

Plants Communicate



Photo: Tom Cowey



- Recognize their relatives
 - Warn of attack
 - Reduce competition
- Mycorrhizal networks
 - “Wood Wide Web”
 - Send nutrients
 - Send chemicals – beneficial or harmful
 - Influence neighboring plants

Plants are Aware & Perceptive



- For centuries, humans have measured intelligence by how closely another organism resembles us. Plants challenge that assumption. They remind us that there may be many ways of knowing, perceiving, and responding to the world.
- Intelligence does not require a brain

A photograph of a person's hand touching a tree trunk covered in moss. The hand is positioned in the upper left, with fingers spread. The tree trunk is dark and textured, with patches of bright green moss. The background is a blurred forest scene with green foliage. A black horizontal bar with white text is centered over the image.

Returning to Relationship

Human-Plant Relationships



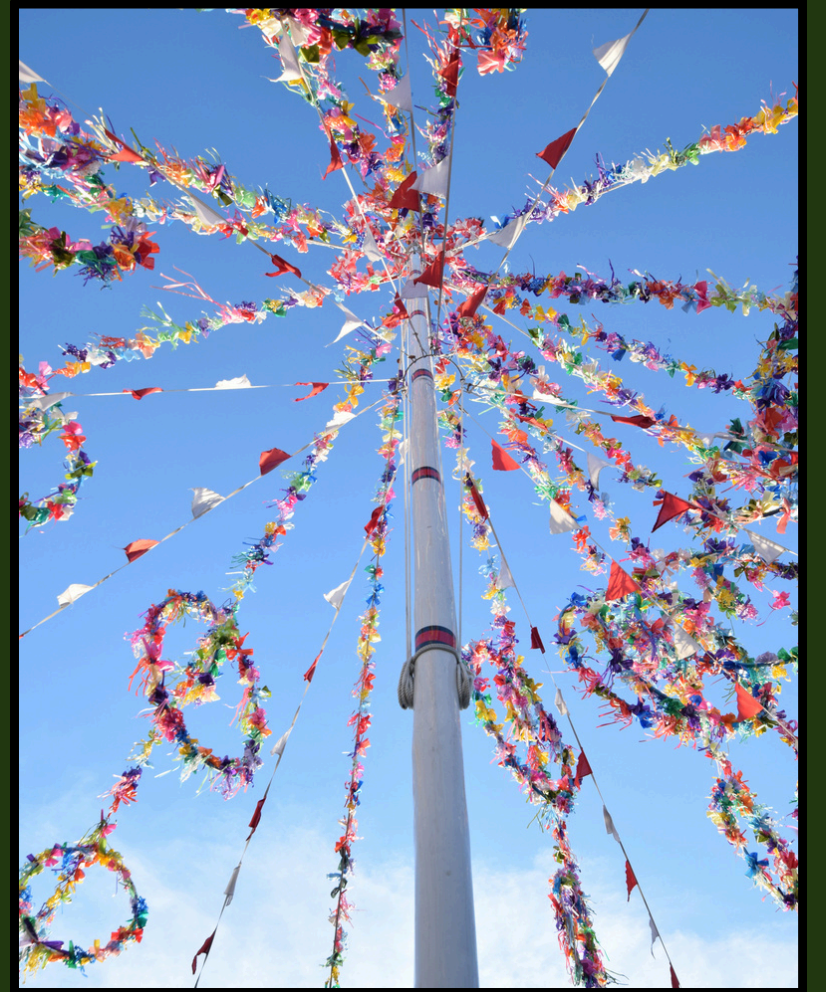
- Ancient Egyptians: cedar, frankenscence, & myrhh for mummification
- Mesoamerican cultures used damiana (*Turnera diffusa*) for over 1,000 years for enhancing dreams and promoting spiritual insight
- Indigenous: ceremony, dreams & teachings of the land
- Folklore



Plant Relationship Rememberance



- We rely on plants to live
 - Oxygen, food, & medicine
- Human-plant relationships are as old as humanity itself
- Evidence early Neanderthals used yarrow, chamomile, and *Penicillium* for infections
- Each culture has their own special relationship with plants
- Ancestral knowledge – in our blood & bones



Plant Spirits & Child-Like Wonder





What is Plant Spirit Communication?

Plant Spirit Communication



- Intuitive, spiritual practice that involves connecting with the consciousness or spirit of a plant
- “Spirit” – conscious, aware intelligence
- Communication beyond spoken language
- Opening yourself to plant presence and ways of communication
- “Animism” – belief that objects, places, and creatures all possess a distinct essence or soul

How Plants Speak to Us



- Requires shift in consciousness
- Presence practice – quiet the busy mind
- Speak in language older than words
 - Light or colors
 - Sound
 - Felt sensation
 - Inner knowing
- Stretch your awareness beyond the mundane



“In stillness, a subtle exchange begins to unfold.
And in that silence, the plants begin to speak.”

–Karine Gordiner

More on Plant Language



- Symbols/Imagery
 - cultural, animals, places, people
- Sound
 - whispers, bells, laughter, voice
- Scent
 - memory, ancestral
- Unique to you & your experiences

My Experiences with Plant Spirits

Henbane





Practical Methods to Communicate with Plant Spirits

Practice: Finding Stillness Within



1. Find a quiet place or seek quiet within
2. Close your eyes and notice your breathe
3. Let your breathe naturally deepen
4. Allow your thoughts to arrive and pass
5. Bring attention to your body/the present
6. Notice shifts within your body
7. Remain in state of open attention until you feel connected to yourself



“Quiet lets us be in deeper play with the world. It allows us to calm down, consigning to the back seat for a few minutes our chattering, anxious, gum-sapping minds. Plain and simple, mystery lives beyond the chatter.

–Gary Ferguson

Practice: Plant Spirit Communication

Getting Into Journey Space



- Be by plant or get into space you can relax
 - Playing drumming or ritual music
- Quiet the mind, focus on the present
- Protection
- Ask for the plant spirit to join your space
- Give offering & introduce yourself
- Ask for what you are seeking
- Notice: imagery, colors, sensations & sounds
- Thank them for their time

Plant Spirit Communication Outdoors

A person with short brown hair, wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and white pants, is sitting on the ground in a forest. They are leaning against a large tree trunk on their right side. The ground is covered with a dense carpet of small purple and white flowers. The background shows many thin tree trunks and a bright, hazy light filtering through the canopy, suggesting a sunrise or sunset. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

“Your very existence depends not so much on things as on rhythms of relationship that transcend the boundaries of your skin.” –Gary Ferguson

Plant Spirit Medicine: Essences

- Vibrational remedies made from the energetic imprint of a plant
- Made from flowers, leaves, or seeds
- Prepared by floating fresh plant parts in water and exposing to sunlight or moonlight
- Contain little to no measurable chemical constituents of the plant
- Work on energetic & emotional levels rather than through physical
- Used for emotional, personal, & spiritual growth



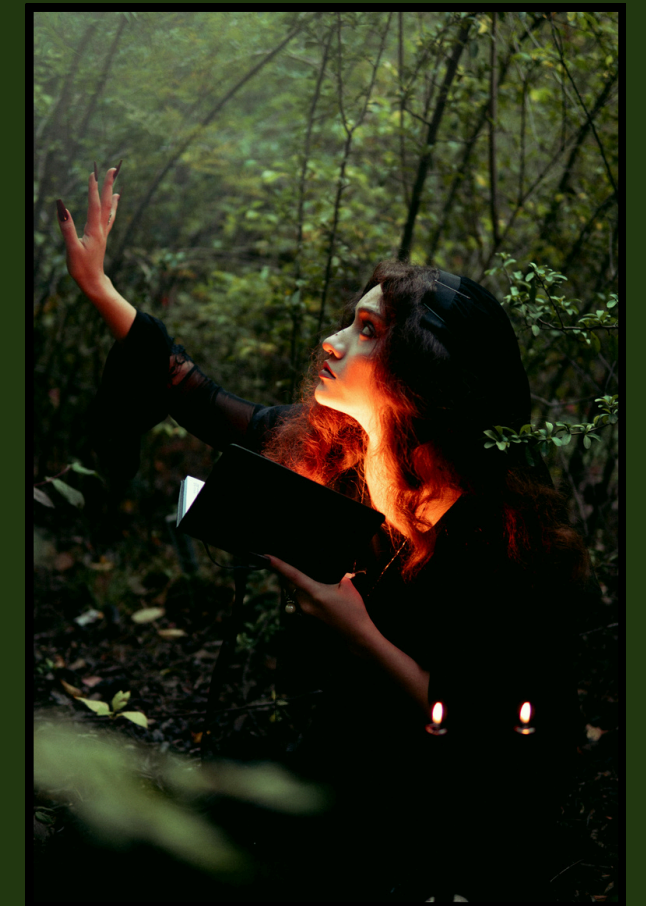
Eastern Redbud Flower Essence



Echinacea Flower Essence

Using Plant Essences

- Take internally 3–5x/day
 - Safe to take with medications
- Take prior to initiating plant spirit communication
- Use in ritual or spellwork
- Add several drops to bath water



Plant Altars

- Can be around a particular holiday
- Can create for the everyday
- Special if working with specific plant allies
- Dedicated devotion space
- Add: flowers, essences, important natural elements



Gardening

- Build relationships through consistent care
- Learn each plant's unique rhythms & preferences
- Slow down, cultivate presence, and listen
- Practice reciprocity, not just harvesting
- Allow plants to complete their life cycle
- Harvesting
 - Ask permission
 - Tell them what you hope to use them for
 - Gratitude





Plant Allies

What Are Plant Allies?



- A plant tuned to you & you tuned to them
- Ancient concept
- Plants as teachers & guides
- May be a plant that has:
 - Deeply impacted your health
 - Soothed your emotions
 - Aided in trauma healing
 - Fills you with joy
 - Called to you
 - Entered your dreams
 - Inspired creativity
 - Provided messages



Maintaining Relationships with Plant Allies



- Attention
- Consistency
- Approach with respect
- Reciprocity
- Reclaim our gifts & ancestral knowledge
- Repair our lineages & programming
- Reconnect with the Earth & ourselves

Approach plant spirits with respect, reverence, & ceremony to prove commitment to the relationship



Deepen Your Plant Relationships



- Sing
- Play music
- Send healing & loving energy to them
- Prayers of gratitude
- Feed them offerings
 - Special plant
 - Hair
 - Water
- Create
 - Poetry
 - Songs
 - Art



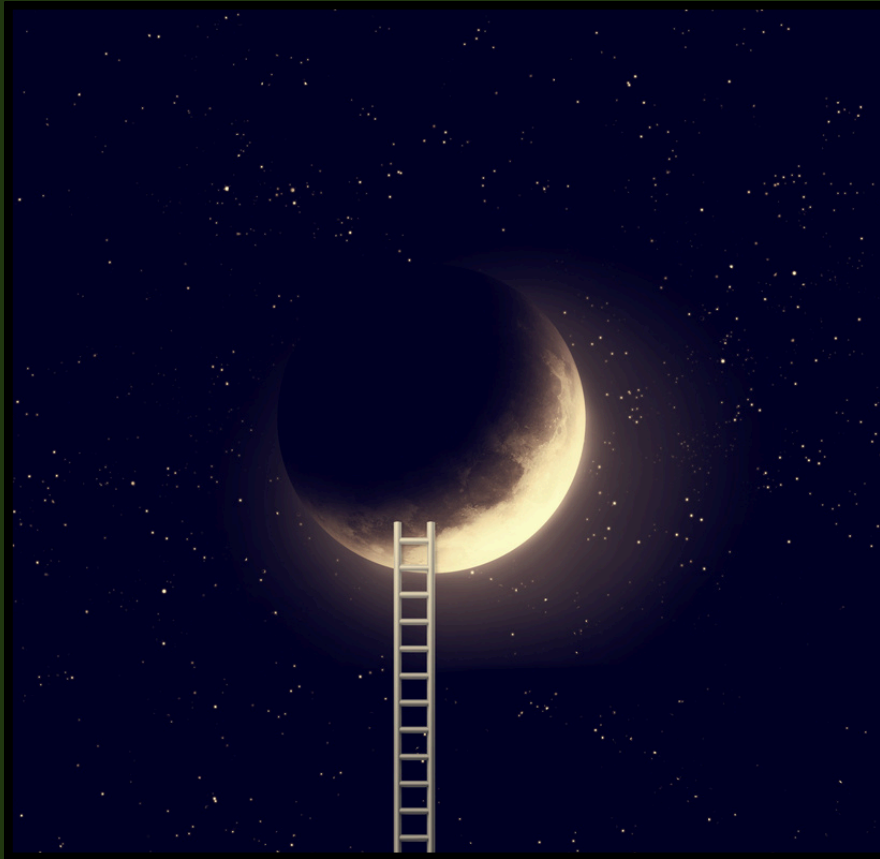
Tea Ceremony



- Relaxing nervines
 - Lavender
 - Lemon balm
 - Rose
- Slow down, prepare tea
- Take in the herbal tea with all of your senses:
 - Sight
 - Touch
 - Smell
 - Taste
 - Feeling
- Give gratitude for the plants in your cup
- Take your time to sip
- Follow with entering journey space



Dreaming with Plant Spirits



- Pair with prescence practice and/or tea ceremony
- Focus on breath
- Asking plant spirit to dream
- Ask for guidance and state your intention in dream space
- Optional: dried plant under pillow or live plant near bedside
- Keep journal to record observations





Safety & Ethics with Plants

Interacting with Live Plants



Warnings

- Be careful when touching plants
 - Some can be toxic
- Never touch or ingest plants you don't know
- Respect the space of plants
- Minimize disturbance

Consuming Plants as Medicine



Warnings

- Have correct identification
- Try small amounts at first
- Not all plants will be for you
 - Allergy
 - Can interact with medications
- Work with an herbalist to find the right herbs for you

Ethics & Responsibility



- Protect their habitat/homes
- Attend to their needs
 - Water
 - Spread seed
 - Weed
- Prioritize the local plants around you
- Needs of the ecosystems above your own personal need



Common Challenges & Misconceptions

Common Challenges

- Nothing happens
- Not enough presence practice
- Do not force a relationship
 - May not be right time for you
 - Other plants are meant to connect with you
- Feeling unsure of messages



Develop Your Intuition



- Less about acquiring a new ability and more about remembering how to listen
- Practice discernment
 - Feeling of “no”
 - Feeling of “yes”
- Balance with reason, experience, and humility
- Not every thought or feeling is necessarily guidance
- Strengthens through practice
- Actively listen to your body & gut responses
- Journal observations





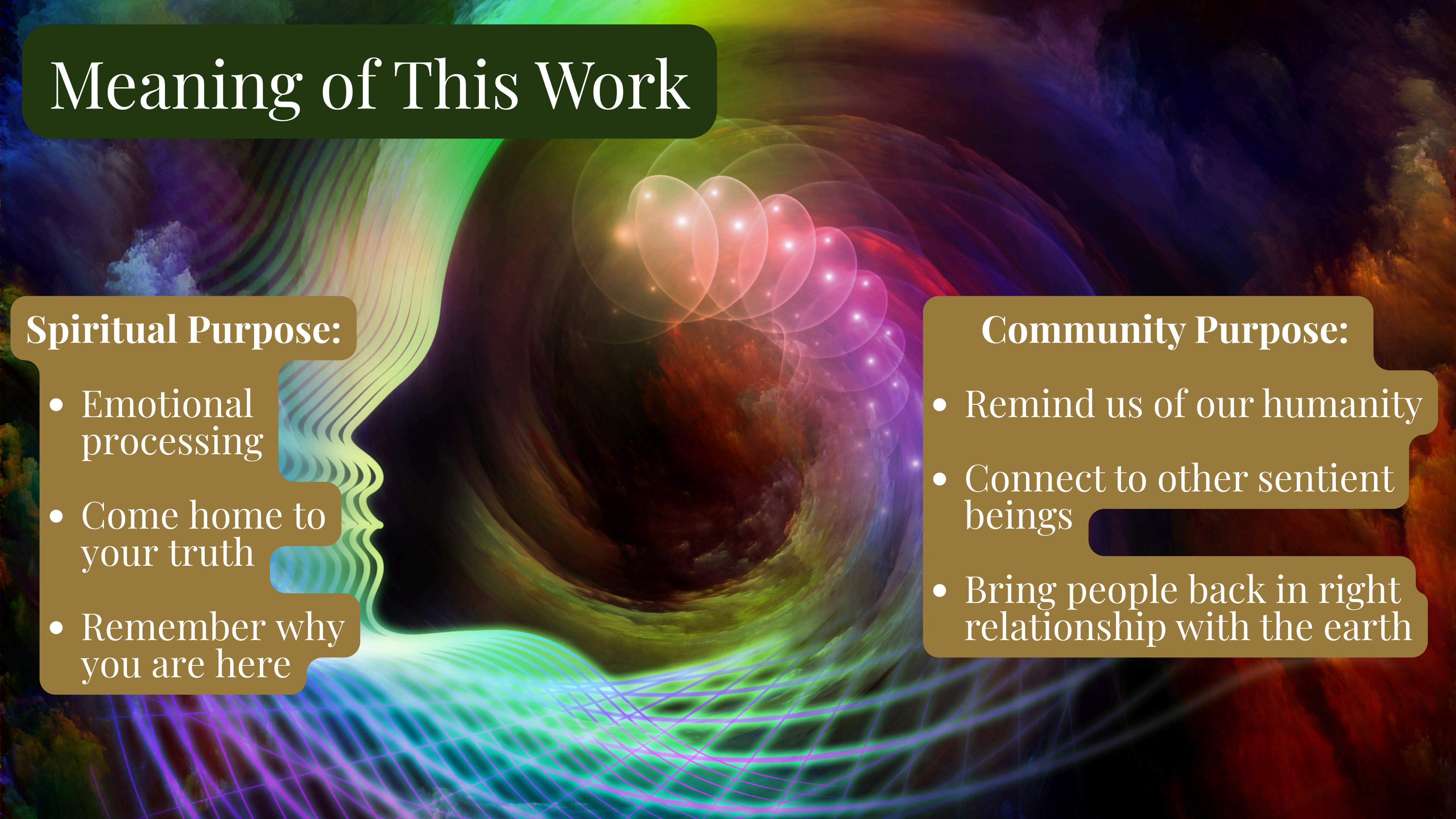
Integrating Plant Spirits into the Everyday

Plant Spirit Communication as a Practice



- Communication improves the more your practice
 - Doesn't have to be special ritual
- Helps to find different ways to connect with them
 - Dreaming
 - Tea Ceremony
 - Journeys
 - Altars
 - Gardening
- Build routines
- The plants will come to you the more you work with them

Meaning of This Work



Spiritual Purpose:

- Emotional processing
- Come home to your truth
- Remember why you are here

Community Purpose:

- Remind us of our humanity
- Connect to other sentient beings
- Bring people back in right relationship with the earth

Thank You!

info@amongoaksandowls.com

<https://www.amongoaksandowls.com>



@amongoaksandowls

Sign up for my newsletter!

Questions?

info@amongoaksandowls.com

<https://www.amongoaksandowls.com>



@amongoaksandowls

Sign up for my newsletter!

Sources

Baluška, F., & Mancuso, S. (2021). Individuality, self and sociality of vascular plants. *Philosophical transactions of the Royal Society of London. Series B, Biological sciences*, 376(1821), 20190760. <https://doi.org/10.1098/rstb.2019.0760>

Baluška, F., Mancuso, S., & Volkmann, D. (Eds.). (2006). *Communication in plants: Neuronal aspects of plant life*. Springer.

de la Forêt, R., & Han, E. (2020). *Wild remedies: How to forage healing foods and craft your own herbal medicine*. Hay House.

Ferguson, G. (2019). *The eight master lessons of nature: What nature teaches us about living well in the world*. Dutton.

Geniusz, M. S. (2015). *Plants have so much to give us, all we have to do is ask: Anishinaabe botanical teachings*. University of Minnesota Press.

Gordineer, K. (2026). *Plant spirit wisdom: Connect with your plant allies for powerful healing and guidance*. CICO Books.

Mancuso, S. (2018). *The revolutionary genius of plants: A new understanding of plant intelligence and behavior* (J. Benham, Trans.). Atria Books. (Original work published 2017).

Mazzolai, B., Laschi, C., Dario, P., Mugnai, S., & Mancuso, S. (2010). The plant as a biomechatronic system. *Plant Signaling & Behavior*, 5(2), 90–93. <https://doi.org/10.4161/psb.5.2.10457>

Solie, K. (2020). *Poisonous plant medicine: Level one* [Online course]. Kathryn Solie. [Kathryn Solie](#)

Solie, K. (2021). *Poisonous plant medicine: Level two* [Online course]. Kathryn Solie. [Kathryn Solie](#)

Solie, K. (2022). *Poisonous plant medicine: Levels three + four* [Online course]. Kathryn Solie. [Kathryn Solie](#)

Suler, A. (2022). *Mirrors in the earth: Reflections on self-healing from the living world*. North Atlantic Books.