

## **Imagine you are a strong and sturdy Tree**

Imagine your body as a tree, alone in the forest. You are a big tree with a big sturdy trunk, numerous branches, and luscious leaves, reaching toward the sky and outward toward the surrounding atmosphere. Plant your feet a few inches apart, firmly on—seemingly *in*—the ground. Bend your knees slightly.

Place your palms against your lower abdomen, and monitor your breathing. Deflate your abdomen as you exhale, and inflate as you inhale. Do this several times. Then let your hands fall easily to your sides. Continue to breathe to and from your abdomen.

Imagine a breeze approaches and all your leaves rustle and your branches wave gently. Feel all your body joints relaxing, and let your body parts relax and move with the breeze. Let your shoulders rotate freely. Let your arms, hands, and fingers flow freely like the branches and leaves of your tree.

Now notice a stronger breeze approaching, and your branches and leaves move more distinctly. The top of the tree (your head) sways easily in any or all directions—Backwards, forward, sideways, and even in rotation—as your feelings lead. Let your neck and shoulders respond to the movements. Connect the movements to your upper spine and gradually down the spinal column through your tailbone. Now imagine that your tree has a flexible trunk, like a birch, that blows in the wind. Imagine a tail extending from your tailbone. Sway your tailbone and swish your tail in any direction your mind suggests. Let your hips, knees, and ankle joints relax and cooperate with your swaying movements.

Be certain that you are breathing abdominally. Inflate as you inhale, and deflate as you exhale. You may even imagine that your entire tree is inhaling and exhaling through its very pores. This is very important. Not breathing this way will leave you without the support of your core, and ultimately without the continuous generating and circulating of *chi* energy throughout your body, and unable to take full advantage of this imagery drill.

You can do this inbetween a caretaking chore to revitalize your energy. I do it inbetween client sessions to loosen up my stiff muscles and clear my mind for the next session.