

The Vision of the Inner Landscape

Light a candle, sit down with the candle before you, close your eyes and be still. With your inner vision/in your mind, be aware of the candle flame burning before you, and see a flame burning quietly within you - the flame of your eternal self. In vision, reach into your inner flame and cup a fragment of it in your hand. Carefully in vision, add part of your inner flame to the candle flame.

With your inner vision, look at the candle flame that holds a fragment of your inner flame, and see how the flame grows bigger until it is big enough for you to step into. In vision stand up and step into the flame and let the flames lick around you. They do not burn you; they cleanse and refresh you as you bath in the sacred element. You stay in the flame for a moment, enjoying its power and bathing yourself in the flame of life.

When you are ready, step forward through the flame, stepping out of the flame on the other side of it and you will find yourself within a deep stillness and darkness: the void which is the nothing from which all flows to and returns to: a vast lake of darkness and silence. This is a place out of time, a place with no movement, no sound, no time. As you drift or float in this place you allow your daily life to fall away until it is only the 'eternal' you that drifts in this special place. You feel the potential of all things in this quiet space and you feel the stillness within yourself.

Form an intent in your mind to venture out of this stillness and to step into the inner landscape of the living land. With that intent, you move forward out of the void and find yourself stood on ground, with a slight wind in your face.

You find yourself on the edge of tall forest where the trees seem to stretch up to the clouds. The forest is silent except for the sound of running water and as you look around, you find a small stream that weaves its way through the forest: springs flow from the roots of the trees and join the stream which travels through the forest. You follow the water as it weaves in and out of the ancient trees, and you feel as if you are being watched as you walk. The deeper you get into the forest you go, the more your body starts to react to the surroundings: you begin to feel more awake, more alive and filled with vital force – the energy that flows within all living beings.

You begin to recognize certain scents and long buried memories that flit in and out of your mind, but they do not stay with you long enough for you to fully grasp what it is you are remembering. The more you walk, the deeper your memory of this place becomes, and the more of your everyday life falls away: *you know this place with some deep distant sense of memory.*

Eventually the stream tumbles into a clearing and you step in to the light after the cover of the forest. Before you is an image of intense beauty: an ancient gnarled and twisted tree sits upon a small outcrop of rock and earth, which in turn sits in a small lake of water. On the other side of the tree, is a horizon with a stunning sunrise and the waters of the lake seem to cascade over the horizon and tumble down into nothing. The tree emits its own light, which shines out among the clearing, lighting up the surrounding trees and in the shadows, tiny bright beings seem to dart and hide.

You walk to the edge of the water and put your left hand in the lake. The water feels bright, full of life and power. The tree senses your presence and you can feel the tree reaching out its thoughts to you. The tree asks you to sing. You begin to sing songs that you know but as the power of the water and ancient tree surround you, a deeper sound emerges from within you and you begin to sing the sound that is your soul.

Everything around you begins to emit a sound, and the sounds of each tree, each rock, the water, each being, joins with your sound to create a wonderful harmony. Out of the forest come beings that are a part of this land, of this world, and they each have a sound too. They sing their sound and the vibrations of their sound resonate deeply with yours - you realize that these beings are connected to you somehow: you are communicating through sound and energy. They are ancestors of your genetic line maybe going back millions of years but in this place there is no time - it is the eternal forest that walked across the face of the earth.

One of the beings comes forward and touches you and allows you to touch them. You commune together, telling each other about the way that you live. After the communion has ended, it is time to leave. You will be able to come back here whenever you need to, but always treat this place with respect: it is the sacred inner landscape of the planet and must be protected.

You have an urge deep within you to dive into the water, which you do. You swim towards the horizon and you find fishes swimming alongside you, who also communicate with you. They are the guardians of the Great Tree. You swim until you come to where the water falls into nothing and you fall with the water, falling through space, through time, falling through the stars until you find yourself drifting once more in the void.

As you drift, your mind becomes deeply peaceful and still, and the sound water laps all around you. The longer you drift the more you become aware of the darkness and water all around you. The water seems to flow through you, joining with the water within your body, filling you with life and vitality. You float and drift in the still dark waters, floating in timelessness and silence, a feeling that is familiar to you, and place that feels like home. Its soft silence fills you with a deep peace and you begin to lose the sense of being individual – you begin to join with the water and stillness as one. You are the stillness, you are the water, you are the silence.

Slowly you become aware of a gentle faint light like the sun, just above the water in the distance, and as it draws closer, you remember the flame burning within you, and you remember your humanity. The light grows stronger as it gets nearer to you and you want to join with that sun, with that bright burning light that pierces the darkness and silence. Your own inner flame grows stronger and stronger, and you remember your life, your body sat before a candle flame. You realise you must move towards the candle flame and not the bright sun that is drawing closer and closer to you. You start to swim in the stillness, swimming towards the candle flame that holds a fragment of your inner flame. As you get closer, the candle flame gets bigger and bigger until you swim into it and stand up on solid ground.

Standing in the flame, you look through the flame and see your body sat before the candle flame, sat in a space, and you can also the timeless forest: you can see both places together at once and you realise that the space where your body is sat and the timeless forest are within each other. Put

your focus on your body sat before the flame, and the timeless landscape falls away – all you can now see is your body, the candle flame and the room or space where you are seated. Spend a little time in silence before you open your eyes: feel into that mystery that the inner landscape is within everything on this planet, and everything on this planet is within the inner landscape. When you are ready, slowly open your eyes and think about your experiences.

About this vision

The vision of the inner land takes you into the heart of the inner landscape of our world as it is in our era. Obviously, it would have looked very different 100 million years ago, and the inner landscape slowly shifts and changes with the earth's surface. The inner interface of the land has many differing presentations, just like the outer landscape and the tree/lake/forest is just one of them. Working with that interface of the forest gives us a deeper connection to the living land, water and forests that are all around us. It takes us to the threshold of existence of the forest, where it flows in and out of the void, and allows us to interact with the consciousness of the land at a much deeper level.

Humanity historically has created animal/human images as deities, as interfaces or vessels, in an attempt to communicate with nature. Going into the inner land itself and communing with the inner forest/water in a more natural, non-verbal, non-ritualized communication allows us to truly connect energetically to the land and to interact with that power at a very deep level.

Once you are familiar with the vision, it is very rewarding to go and do this vision in a forest where there is water. Where I live there is a small ancient woodland with springs that emerge out of the roots of some of the trees, so that some of the trees are surrounded by water. Sitting in the silence of the woodland and doing this vision is extremely powerful and beautiful, and it has brought me much closer to the land around me. This vision connects us to the land upon which we live and helps to tune us into the earth that we serve.

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