Discussion Question –

Considering the words of Charles Eisenstein below, spend some time with a tree. It may be a familiar tree to you, or one you encounter for the first time. As you are in the presence of the tree, approach it as if it were a "distinct individual" - a distinct individual that has a story. How old is it? Who was its mother? What has this tree experienced or "witnessed" in its lifetime? What does it need to thrive? What are its dreams for the future?

What is it like to relate to a tree as a distinct individual? What impact does this way of relating to a tree have on you? What difference do you think it would make if humans related to trees in this way?

**"I can imagine a time when a tree was not a tree, but a distinct individual. If it is just a tree, one among a whole forest of trees, it is no great matter to chop it down. Nothing unique is being removed from the world. But if we see it as a unique individual, sacred and irreplaceable, then we would chop it down only with great circumspection. We might, as many indigenous peoples do, meditate and pray before committing an act of such enormity. It would be an occasion for solemn ritual. Only a very worthy purpose would justify it. Now, having converted all of these unique, divine beings into just so many trees, we level entire forests with hardly a second thought." -** [**Charles Eisenstein**](http://www.ascentofhumanity.com/)