

Holding space for a group means creating a loving, safe, and accepting environment where participants can truly be themselves and feel free to experience their emotions. It fosters presence, reflection and meaningful sharing, enhancing the group's overall experience and sense of connection.

PRACTICAL WAYS TO HOLD SPACE IN THE FOREST

Be fully present, without judgment.

Don't try to fix their problems or change them. Simply be there with full-hearted attention. Let nature support them too.

Keep safe and supportive boundaries.

Share the basic guidelines, not as strict rules but as a supportive frame. Clear boundaries can help participants feel safer to relax and open up.

Allow time and space.

Don't rush them. Don't expect everyone to open up in the same way or at the same time. Silence can also be valuable.

Offer invitations, not instructions.

Say things like "If it feels good to you..." or "You're welcome to try..." — so they can choose how and when to participate.



CLOSING REFLECTION QUESTIONS ON THE METHODOLOGY

- How did your presence and facilitation style influence the group's sense of safety and openness during the walk?
- Which of your actions helped participants connect more deeply with nature and with each other, and what could I improve next time?

Accept differences.

Be sensitive to their diverse life experiences. Not everyone feels comfortable with touch, long silence, or sharing personal stories.

Let nature be the guide.

You don't always need to lead or talk. The wind, the birds, the trees can guide them into deeper connection.

Focus on connection, not performance.

A forest session is not a task to complete, but an experience to explore. There is no right or wrong feeling or answer.

Be a role model.

When you also slow down, marvel at small details, sit on the ground, or touch a tree, they will feel more encouraged to do the same.

