

The Service of Tree Planting



Spiritual Foundation for Planting Trees

“Lord Krishna told Arjuna: ‘I am in the tree that you see. I am in the ocean. I am in the earth. See Me in everything.’”

Verily God resides in the tree, *is* the tree.

- The Buddha attained Enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree.
- Africans revere the baobab tree as the tree of life.
- The Shinto religion gives reverence to pine trees into which they say the souls of gods descend.
- The Druids of Ireland hold all trees as sacred, especially the oaks within ceremonial groves.
- The Jewish tradition honors the image of the Tree of Life, the *Sefirot*, which represents the way in which Consciousness expresses Itself in Creation.

Quotes

“The world’s forests are a shared stolen treasure that we must put back for our children’s future.” *Desmond Tutu*

“A man is ethical only when life, as such, is sacred to him, that of plants and animals as that of his fellow men, and when he devotes himself helpfully to all life that is in need of help.” *Albert Schweitzer*

“I dream of our vast deserts, of our forests, of all our great wildernesses. We must never forget that it is our duty to protect this environment.” *Nelson Mandela*

Trees Helps Us Grow Spiritually

“ By its forbearance, adherence to its genuineness, unselfish bounty, serenity, Nature is continually patience and proclaiming its inherent and real role of preacher of spiritual truths.” *Sri Sathya Sai Baba*

A forest of trees is an interconnected, multi-specie family communing and caring for one another through a broad communication and nutrient exchange network underground.



Trees Help Us Grow Spiritually

“Trees teach the lesson of sacrifice in that they not only bear fruits while they are alive, but also give away their body to be used as firewood once the life goes out of them. Amongst teachers, a tree is the greatest.” *Sri Sathya Sai Baba*

Trees freely give O₂ while absorbing CO₂; draw moisture and help create clouds and rain; shelter birds, animals, and us; moderate temperature and provide shade; provide valuable windbreaks; give up their sap and bark, and more. And they ask nothing in return; it is simply their nature, their *dharma*, to give.



Trees Helps Us Grow Spiritually



Through the process of planting trees, and maintaining them until they can sustain themselves, we serve as God and Nature serve. We express the Love that we are and behave as the Selfless beings God intended us to be.



Trees Helps Us Grow Spiritually

“Ultimately, the decision to save the environment must come from the human heart. The key point is a call for a genuine sense of universal responsibility that is based on love, compassion, and clear awareness.” *Dalai Lama*

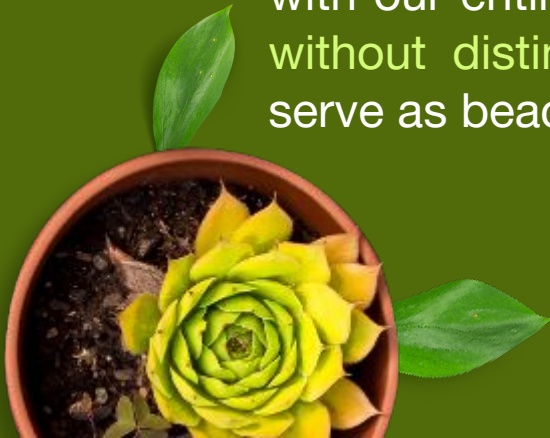
In developing a closer relationship with trees through planting and nurturing them, we not only become more compassionate and aware of our responsibility to the Earth, we may also develop a **sacred kinship** that helps our own spiritual growth.

Building Unity through Tree Planting

“What we are doing to the forests of the world is but a mirror reflection of what we are doing to ourselves and to one another.”

Mahatma Gandhi

When we plant and protect trees, we cultivate forests and good relations with our entire world family. Such forests serve life in a non-violent way without distinction of species, country, race, class, or religion. They serve as beacons of nonviolence and role models for us all.



“*Vasudhaiva kutumbakam...* ‘The whole world is one family.’ This unity must be experienced by everyone. Natural resources and wealth are now being misused for the boosting of one's ego. But, when the *Athmic* Unity is realised, they will [be used to] promote the new way of life through Love.” *Sri Sathya Sai Baba*

Through this planting effort, in unity with many outside the Sai organization, we spread the message that protecting the environment is not only an ethical and practical thing to do, it is a rewarding spiritual practice.

