

## **Japanese Ancient Arts and Shinrin-Yoku**

Forest bathing (taking in the forest environment through our senses) (shinrin-yoku) (FB) has gained popularity throughout the world recently as research has demonstrated its benefits to health. In Japan FB can be practiced in isolation, or with activities such as gazing at landscapes (Miyazaki 2018). This research seeks to establish whether practicing ancient art forms during a FB session can provide any added benefit to the experience. This is based on the assumption that these arts come from a meditative perspective, and that some of these practices have already been shown to improve health. It is proposed that traditions such as haiku, or the creation of small Japanese style rock gardens (within the forest), or learning basic moves in the way of the Japanese sword (iaido) using a wooded bokken (training sword) are included in a traditional FB session. A trained forest bathing guide, and staff who can provide insights into these arts prior to and during the session will be present. Adopting a constructivist perspective and using semi-structured interviews the authors will seek insights relating to health from those who have attended these sessions. The findings will be compared to those related to traditional forest bathing. It is anticipated that the results will add to the growing corpus of research relating to forests and nature, and also, importantly, consider how practices from the ancient arts can further contribute to understandings of wellbeing within a modern setting.

Miyazaki, Y. 2018. Shinrin-yoku. Octopus Publishing.