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MAKING BEAUTY FOR A HURT PLACE

Choose a place near you has been hurt or is under threat and that calls your attention. It could be a single tree, a whole mountain range, a river, or a rose bush that honeybees no longer visit. Any place is the right place for this ceremony of grief and gratitude.

1. Make a threshold before entering your place. Pause before stepping across it.
2. State your intention. Speak out loud! Let the place know that you are coming to it, because it is important to you and you wish to offer it some attention and beauty. Then enter.
3. Sit in silence and meditative expectation. What calls your attention?
4. If you are with another person, take turns sharing what you feel, remember, sense.
5. Go off on your own for a while to get to know this place a little better. What do you notice that you've never noticed before? What do you see or hear that disturbs you? What pleases you? What emotions does being here bring up for you? Noticing your responses to these questions and what the place reveals next *is your dialogue* with where you are. You give and receive. The place gives and receives.
6. If you're with another person, share what you experienced during your time alone. If you are alone, speak your perceptions aloud *to the place*.
7. Make a gift of beauty for the place. Use materials the place itself offers you—sticks, stones, leaves. You could make a mandala, a symbol of what you love about the place (and what may no longer be there), a bird (the RadJoy symbol), a heart, or anything you like. An act of beauty could be a prayer, a song, a dance, an embrace of the trees, kissing the ground. You might also want to speak these prayers or wishes or blessings aloud to the place.

There is no right or wrong way to do this ceremony! Boredom is natural too! Remember that we are giving back to the Earth.

8. When your ceremony is complete, step back over the threshold and dismantle it