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## 668: If You Go Out In The Woods Today ... Read This!

THURSDAY, APRIL 22, 2010 AT 12:00AM

Parents and grandparents, here's a great "find" for family fun this spring and summer—and especially for this week celebrating Earth Day 40. (Monday, [we featured 3 other recommended books](#). Tuesday, [3 films](#). Wednesday, [Matthew Sleeth's latest book](#).)

"PersonaliTrees" is the creation of writer, musician, teacher and all-around creative life coach Joan Klostermann-Ketels. She's also a parent and grandparent—and you can tell that the moment you open the cover and begin to explore the 50 creative photographs from her adventures in the woods.

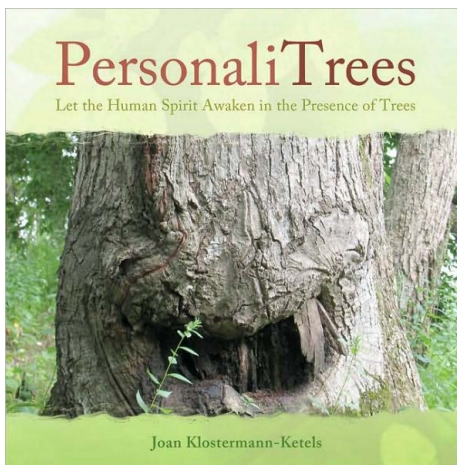
This is such a simple idea—as the best creative brainstorms usually appear to be! Look at a tree. Envision its personality. Imagine a story, a song or—in the pages of this picture book—a poem. Pretty soon, the woods spring to life!

Now, you may be smiling already. You may be saying: Fun, but is it truly a spiritual exercise? Our answer: Of course it is! Jump back and [read the interview with Matthew Sleeth](#) if you're unsure about the spiritual calling to reconnect ourselves with the natural world. Think about those hymn titles he mentions: "For the Beauty of the Earth" and "All Creatures of Our God and King."

But we don't have to be that literal, do we? If your family "grew up" with favorites like "Lord of the Rings," "Chronicles of Narnia" or even "Winnie the Pooh," the idea of trees having a lively character shouldn't be foreign at all.

In her introduction, Joan writes: "Trees strike human forms. They speak our language. They have faces. They are animated. A message that is there one day may be gone the next. Long after they stop spouting leaves or needles, they continue to act out their stories. They smile, point, pose and play charades. Sometimes subtle, sometimes raucous, they express every human emotion and condition. They hold each other up, and shelter those who need it. It is with the greatest dignity—and even humor—that they show us the way to live, and die."

See the photo at right? In "PersonaliTrees," this full-page photo is labeled "Loving." Can you see the story there in the image? Perhaps you can tell right away why you need this book, if this idea intrigues you. Sit with people you love—or simply sit down alone with a cup of tea—and immerse yourself in these 50 photos, 50 captions and 50 bits of poetry. Soon you'll be out in



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the woods yourself! This can become a family favorite year after year.

You can [order a copy of "PersonalTrees: Let the Human Spirit Awaken in the Presence of Trees" from Amazon.](#)

Joan Klostermann-Ketels also has launched [BeingOfSoundSpirit, a Web site and an introduction to some of her work in training and teaching.](#)

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## READER COMMENTS (1)

I love this idea! I'm suggesting it to my highschool women friends for our annual get together this summer. Think we'll do some bark and leaf rubbings, too!

Dee Chapell

April 22, 2010 | [Dee Chapell](#)

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