

## Massage and storytelling- The Swallow of the Forest



**Objective:** The aim is to promote relaxation, reduce tension and promote well-being. Combining massage with a story creates a meaningful and relaxing experience that benefits the body and mind. This activity is designed to be done together with one person or in a group and can be performed sitting or lying down, depending on the functional capacity of the participants.

### Introduction:

- Create a calm and relaxing environment with an audio file of natural sounds (e.g. Relax with soothing forest sounds: <https://youtu.be/GBlpZD3sYXg?si=qjIOTqm0lsa2LNjJ>).
- Start by explaining the activity

### Story: The Swallow of the Forest

Join the Swallow on a relaxing journey through the enchanted forest. Sit back, close your eyes and relax as you listen to the sound of water and the birds singing.

- Take a comfortable position and breathe deeply. Feel the air fill your lungs and exhale slowly.
- The Swallow begins its journey by following the path of the water. The swallow lowers its feathers softly on your back (lower your fingertips on the elderly's back) and swims along the soft currents of the river (make light circles).
- We reach a hidden spring of water in the forest (use your fingertips to create small circular movements on the elderly's back, as if the water from the spring is flowing). Feel the cool and clean water soothing your body.
- Listen to the birds singing as they fly from one treetop to another (use your fingertips to mimic the bird's footprints on the elderly's back and shoulders).
- Then the swallow flies to an open meadow where lots of flowers grow(create gentle sweeping movements across the back). The swallow lands in the meadow of flowers and soft grass.
- The clouds in the sky float above the swallow (use your fingertips to create long, soft movements with the palm of your hand across the elderly's back, like the clouds in the sky).
- Next to the meadow is a forest glade. The swallow becomes curious and flies closer. The swallow flies along the forest paths (use your palms to create pressure next to the spine, on both sides).
- The night is approaching, and the Swallow of the Forest sits on a tree branch (now make soft, circular movements with your fingertips along the elderly's back). The swallow feels the sense of stillness in the night. The forest becomes silent, (use gentle, sweeping movements with the palms of your hands across the elderly's back) the swallow breathes in deeply.
- Now the story has come to an end - slowly open your eyes when you are ready.

**Time required:**

Massage and storytelling usually takes 15-30 minutes, depending on the participants' wishes.

**Alone or in a Group:**

This activity is a group activity or with at least two participants. If there are not two participants, the massage can be realized with one participant and one health professional.

Source: The activity is created with inspiration from models and ideas from national material banks. [Äldreinstitutets material på svenska](#), [Hyvä mieli – Pohdintoja mielen hyvinvointiin -työkirja ikäihmisille](#), [Vahvike-aineistopankki](#)) and ChatGTP's proposal