

## Shoots and Roots – Journaling Exercise

“The soil, it appears, is suited to the seed, for it has sent its radicle downward, and it may now send its shoot upward also with confidence. Why has man rooted himself thus firmly in the earth, but that he may rise in the same proportion into the heavens above?”

Henry David Thoreau--*Walden*

**Journal Prompt:** Write a journal entry on what Thoreau means when he says man is rooted in the earth so that he can rise into the sky. What do you think makes humans feel rooted? In other words, what are those things that keep us planted “firmly in the earth”—values, people, things? In reading Thoreau’s words, do you think he sees it as a good or bad thing to be “rooted...thus firmly in the earth”? What do you think about being rooted? Is it necessary or limiting?

What do we do to rise to the “heavens above”—what elevates us as humans? For what do we “rise”? How do we rise? What are your feelings about Thoreau’s notion that the shoots rise “in the same proportion” upward as the roots go downward?



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