

**A Restorative Reading of  
*The Man Who Planted Trees*  
By Jean Giono**

***Prompting Questions***

***Special Notes About Answering Questions:***

- *These questions are optional and meant to prompt a deeper understanding of the story and its restorative aspects for you, others, and the world around you. You may want to answer just a few or all of them.*
- *Restorative Reading goes beyond understanding a story from a literary perspective or reading it to escape. Instead, it is meant to bring you to a place where your imagination gets to reshape a meaning that supports you and inspires you to face challenges in a new way, and make a positive transition in your life.*
- *Keep in mind, there are no right or wrong answers, only curiously curative ones. It is optional to share answers with the group when we meet. You may want to share some and allow others to remain just for you.*

Read the opening paragraph of the story silently or aloud. Is there someone in your life who comes to mind with exceptional qualities who you have been able to observe over time? If so, write a line or two about them.

The land our narrator encounters on his first trip to the mountains of Provence is a disserted, baron land. Recall an early encounter with our land, particularly the land of our upper campus where our homes are before we began to plant. Write a line or two about how you responded to it.

*Instead of the harsh dry winds that used to attack me, a gentle breeze was blowing, laden with scents.* Over time, even the winds change as a result of the way Elzeard Boufeir tends to the land. Write a line or two about the potential you imagine for positive change on our land as we continue to tend to it.

*As the water reappeared, so there reappeared willows, rushes, meadows, gardens, flowers, and a certain purpose in being alive.* What changes do you imagine could take place on our *land based on your own actions* that would bring more life.

*Who in the villages or in the administration could have dreamed of such perseverance in a magnificent generosity.* Write a line or two about what “perseverance in a magnificent generosity” might mean to you in the context of life at Hager Homestead.

If after three years, from 1910 to 1913, Elzeard Bouffier planted 100,000 trees of which 10,000 survived. How many trees could be calculated to survive by 1945 if he plants at the same rate?

*Peaceful, regular toil, the vigorous mountain air, frugality and, above all serenity of spirit had endowed this old man with awe inspiring health.* Do any of these qualities contribute to your own wellbeing? If so, write a line or two about how they are alive in your own life, or write about a different quality that enhances your health.

*He discovered a wonderful way to be happy.* How have you discovered happiness at Hager Homestead?

Pick a paragraph or two that especially resonates for you and then read this passage aloud. Pause after reading to reflect on why these particular words inspire you. Consider reading the passage aloud to someone you know and sharing why it inspires you.