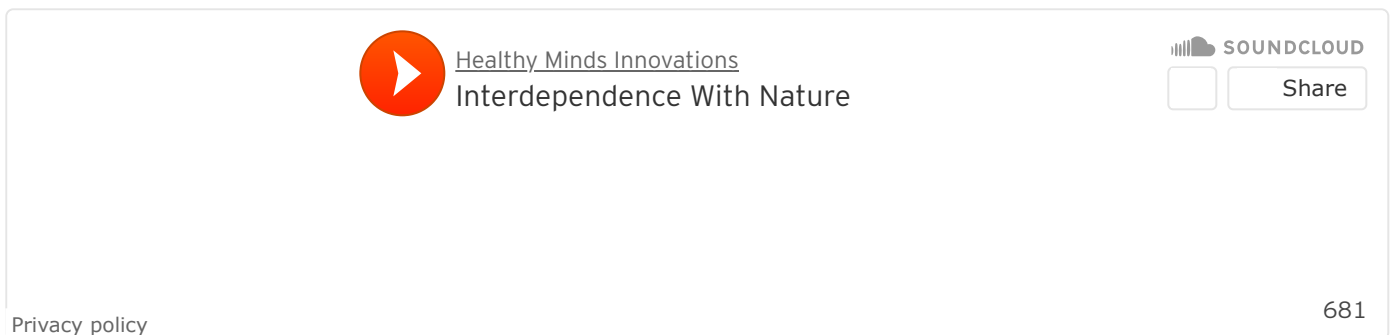


Reawakening a sense of connection to all beings on the earth is a way to feel part of something bigger, and can help enhance awareness as we notice the ways in which our lives are deeply connected with everything on the planet. [Dekila Chungyalpa](#), Director of the [Loka Initiative](#), shares a five-minute practice designed to strengthen your experience of interconnectedness with the natural world using breath and awareness.



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## Guided Practice: Interdependence With Nature

*Led by Dekila Chungyalpa*

Hi, this is Dekila. Thank you for joining me. Together we will meditate on our interconnectedness with nature using awareness and breathing. You can start by closing your eyes. Sit comfortably with your spine straight but relaxed. Extend your awareness to the ground beneath you. Notice where your body touches your seat or the floor, and feel how through that layer you are connected to the earth. Be aware of how you are rooted and grounded with the earth.

Take a few deep breaths here. As you inhale, observe how your breath moves to different parts of your body. And as you exhale, do the same. Stay with your breath.

We are here to remember and reawaken our connection with nature and with the earth.

Notice your incoming breath. The air entering your nostrils, your mouth, filling up your belly. All of that oxygen that keeps you alive comes from forest, plants, ocean and lakes around you. Just as the carbon dioxide you exhale, nourishes them. This is interdependence.

Relax here, in the awareness of this physical manifestation of the earth's compassion for you.

As you breathe, allow your awareness to extend beyond your immediate surroundings. Imagine the forest and oceans inhaling as you exhale, and exhaling as you inhale. Whales, tigers, deer, wild rice and bees. The Great Lakes, the Amazon and the grasslands of Tibet. All of us are breathing in tandem, receiving life as we inhale, and offering life as we exhale. All of us are transferring energy and nutrients, and in that effortless process, participating naturally as part of one vast ecosystem.

You may be experiencing, gratitude, sadness, grief or something else entirely. Whatever arises, this is a natural empathic response when you open up your heart and experience another's compassion or suffering. Take however long you need to honor these emotions without letting them carry you away.

Breathe in the earth's compassion and breathe out gratitude. You are part of nature, and you belong here. This is interdependence.

Whenever you feel overwhelmed by your emotions or become distracted, simply return to the sensation of being rooted to the earth.

Wonderful. As you emerge from this practice, notice how it feels to be aware of your interdependence with all life forms, surrounding ecosystems and the earth. You can return to this simple practice whenever you feel overwhelmed during your day.

May this practice help you, and through you, may it heal the earth.

*Awareness. Connection. Insight. Purpose. We consider these to be four ingredients of a healthy mind. You can train yourself to improve these skills, just like you can develop any habit. This audio practice is provided by Healthy Minds Innovations (HMI), an external, affiliated nonprofit dedicated to supporting the mission of the Center for Healthy Minds. Want more practices? Try the Healthy Minds Program App.*

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