



One Earth Sangha

# Session One: Core Offering

Transcript of EcoSattva Training 2022-23 Video

## Agreement

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## Session Profile

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Session One: Arriving and Setting a Course

[Session Resources](#)

## Speakers in this video

- Kristin Barker - director and co-founder, One Earth Sangha
- Kaira Jewel Lingo

## Transcript

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### Kristin Introduces Kaira Jewel

**Kristin:**

The first person that's going to offer to you the dharma teaching here in the EcoSattva Training Session One is Kaira Jewel Lingo. Kaira has been a guiding teacher for One Earth Sangha now for several years. And I've known Kaira Jewel for many, many years before that, and so deeply appreciate all that she brings together, including her background at Plum Village, having been a nun there and then trained in the Insight Tradition here in the US at Spirit Rock. For many of you, Kaira Jewel will not be a new face but we're so excited to have her join us and open this space of the EcoSattva Training and bring her particular spirit, her particular wisdom to that. So thank you so much, Kaira Jewel, for



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what you're offering here. And, I look forward to hearing how this lands for you, our community. Always welcome your feedback in the responses below, or send us an email. Okay. Thank you.

### The Courage to Begin

#### **Kaira Jewel:**

Thank you, Kristin. And it's so good to be with you and with all of the wonderful people putting this course together and with everybody who's taking the course. I'm so thrilled and this is such good virtuous action that we're all taking to take this course, to be on this journey together. I really want to celebrate each of us right at the beginning for taking the time, for the courage that doing this course represents because this is not easy, what we're taking on. And, you know, no other generation of humans has had to face what we're facing, and we really need to come together in spaces where we are supported in our depths, you know, where we create a sense of connection with each other, where we can be intimate and vulnerable and hold each other and tell our truth, you know?

And so, this is an act of great courage and great strength to do this course. So I really want to honor and deeply bow to everyone for your commitment to doing this course together. One of the things I've been reflecting on is that, you know, just coming together to have conversations about this is already transformative. We don't need to find all the answers. We need to be open. We need to come with our questions. We need to come with our, all of our distress, all of our grief, all of our anger, all of our numbness, you know? Whatever it is that we're feeling about the situation that our planet is facing, we just need to be together and to give space for that to, to be seen, to be acknowledged. We don't have to figure everything out in the coming together, in the allowing ourselves just to be, and held by real concrete tools.

That's, I think, the beauty of this training, this course. It's going to give us a real solid container into which we can put all of these things that we don't know what to do with. Because nothing in our lives as human species has prepared us. I mean, everything has prepared us for this moment truly. And that's, that's the beauty of the dharma, but nothing in our, you know, education, none of us got an education. None of us grew up in families that knew, you know, how to confront this moment, right? But the spiritual tools are there in all of our traditions in the, you know, birthright that is each of ours as humans, of mindfulness, of, you know, depth, understanding and wisdom. All of that has, they are the tools that we're going to need on this journey.



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### Global Trauma

So we have what we need, right. But we are facing a kind of, a kind of existential moment that is novel, and that does need simply coming together around, you know, the kitchen tables of our virtual rooms, our virtual community here. To listen, to be present to, to process together. And in that holding and exploring and deeply being present for each other we will find ways that we cannot find on our own to go forward and to really address things that each of us can do something to address. We each can do something right. But we need a space to simply be and to resource ourselves with each other, on our own. You know, we're going to be exploring practices, ways to take care of ourselves individually, and also to really take refuge in each other as a community to go through this moment as a species, as all living beings on earth that are now facing a great, great, great, disaster.

So just highlighting the importance of having the conversations that we're going to be having. One of the things I've also been reflecting on recently is, uh, collective trauma. I was, uh, able to take part in a wonderful collective trauma summit recently. And Thomas Hubel who hosted the event, he said, all of us pretty much live in societies that have been shaped deeply by trauma that is unhealed, that's been passed on from one generation to the next. And that all, you know, many of the structures in our societies reflect that trauma, that unhealed trauma. So the things we've come to take as normal, like homelessness, poverty, greed, you know, some people getting their needs met, many people not getting their needs met. Just the cruelty is based on generation after generation of suffering. So the structures we've created, I mean, of course a lot of beautiful structures have come out of the healed trauma that we have managed to heal like public education and, you know, the social nets that are there, still there in some societies.

Though they're being, you know, they're crumbling in many, in many places. But if we, you know, step back and look at sort of where we've come to as a human society now through the lens of a great deal of suffering that hasn't been healed and that that's what's been informing our choices of how we create our societies. To me, it's helpful to have that lens because it brings about compassion for the poor choices we've made that have led to us coming to a place of self-destructing. And that that's come out of things that we didn't choose necessarily—we didn't choose to inherit that suffering from our previous



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generations. And they didn't choose to receive it from the generations before them. So we are all responsible and it's not our fault, right?

So I think having the attitude of just forgiving ourselves from the outset for all the ways in which we've received and continued deep ignorance and harm. Not because we chose to do that, but because that's what was embedded in us before we could make choices. And it doesn't mean we can't make huge shifts now, and all of us are. I'm sure we're all deciding to live in ways that go very much counter to the ways we were trained, but sometimes we can't easily make other choices, right? We live within a structure where we're all dependent on fossil fuels. For the most part, it's very difficult not to live in a way that doesn't continue the harm of a fossil fuel addicted society. So let's have an attitude of holding ourselves with great compassion and the eye of interbeing, this lens of, you know, we are continuation of all previous generations and this stream flows into us that we, you know, we don't get to pick and choose. I want this part of the stream and not that part of the stream. Right.

### Unfreezing Ourselves

So all of it's informing us. It's all who we are as individuals, as a society. And we do get to choose now where we go with that water. But there is, you know, there are things in that water that we can't, we can't necessarily say no to because it is us. So one of the things Thomas Hubel was saying is that he gave this image of snowflake. So previous generations of their trauma is like snow that fell and it didn't melt, right? Because it wasn't healed. It wasn't understood. So the next generation, their trauma fell like snow on that first layer of snow and it accumulated and it accumulated. And now, you know, we have this very large block of ice of unhealed collective trauma.

And what he said is all of the things we need to heal our planet, to heal our social systems, to deal with poverty, to deal with injustice. They're all there underneath that frozen block of ice. I hate to use the metaphor of ice melting, because we really need the ice that's melting <laugh> for real, literally on the poles of our planet. But anyway, with, with the healing of the trauma, the innovations, the creativity, the will to act is all easily accessible. All of that's just buried just right under that layer of unhealed trauma. So this journey of this course is really about one of the things we get to explore is where, where are we frozen, where in our individual lives are we, tied up in knots that prevent us from accessing our highest wisdom about what we can do to respond to this time of crisis. And then where, you know, how can we help create healing on larger levels within our



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families, within our relationships, within our communities so that we can really look and access the energy, the insight, the joy that's also there, you know, we don't get that when we listen to the news about climate change, when we read, you know, it's all a pretty one, there's one narrative, you know, chaos is coming and there's not much we can do about it, or here is what we can do about it.

I mean, it's one message of, you know, basically speaking to the flight/fight/flight freeze response in us, right. Speaking to our reptilian brain, we're all going to, you know, big suffering is coming. And that's true. That is true. And we need to hear that message because many of us are in denial. Okay. But there is another piece that's also true, which is that, you know, we have the other aspects of our brain, the mammalian brain, the human prefrontal cortex with huge resources of creativity, of, you know, connectivity of insights that we also have as a resource. So we need to be able to bring those parts online as well. And that's part of the healing trauma. So the joy piece is something I want to touch on because we need to be able to connect with what it is that really motivates us to shift, to shift in our own lives, to shift in our collective response.

And that comes from... it doesn't only come from a place of urgency and fear and, you know, despair. It has to also be nourished by what it is we love about this planet. So that's a resource we're going to be cultivating and drawing on. What is it that, you know, what is a place that we knew, as we, when we were growing up as children that really nourished us, you know. Coming back to memories of times when we were in awe of nature and we had time and space to just be in a place and let nature teach us, let nature guide us, you know, let another animal species really teach us about our own humanity, right. Or a plant species. The slowing down of just taking in the truth of, you know, change and impermanence, you know, interdependence. And of our own belonging.

## Unconditional Belonging

When we're really in touch with some of those experiences, we've probably all had in nature or in connection with the earth, there's a deep sense of belonging. That we have a place, that we are wanted, that we do matter. And that we're, we are totally okay just the way we are. We don't have to become something else. We don't have to be something else. So that is a gift that nature shares with us. I'll just tell you a story, because it's what's arising as I share these things. When I was young, I lived in Kenya. And my dad took me to Mombasa to the coast and he was doing some development work. And I remember



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going off, we were in a village, and I remember going off to this huge tree. I don't know what kind of tree it was, but it had huge, huge branches that went quite horizontally.

And I remember just going and just finding a branch that was, you know, so big I could just lie on it, my whole body on it. And I looked up at the sky and I remember it was very hot and humid, very kind of close in atmosphere. And I remember hearing the crickets and the insects. And I remember really feeling the support of this tree. And I was in bliss, I could have been there the whole day. I had no sense of time. I had no sense of needing to do or be anything. I really felt held by this tree and by the whole, by the whole planet, you know, the whole piece around me was just, a place of deep rest and of deep belonging. And I just knew myself to be really okay.

You know, I knew that everything was okay in that moment. I've gone back and remembered that moment so many times in my life. And it continues to be a kind of teaching for me. Like I was eight, I was nine, but that's part of me. That will never leave me. That sense of what that tree, what nature in that moment taught me about who I really am. So we all want to be bringing to mind those kinds of resources as we go through this course together. We all have them. That truth is available to each of us. You know, it's part of who we are. It's part of how we are humans.

## Mutuality with Earth

So Thich Nhat Hanh has written this book, *The World We Have*, and there's this moment, there's this exchange where he talks about having a deep meditation with the earth where he asks the earth, you know, can we rely on you? Will you be there for us to help us through this? And the earth says (in his meditation), "Yes, for the most part." And then the earth asks Thay, Thich Nhat Hanh, "Will you all be there for me? Can I rely on you?" And in his meditation, the answer that arises for him is "Yes, for the most part." So it's this deep exchange of like, you know, the earth is our mother and we need to be in a very deep conversation with our mother at this point. Like the earth is asking us, you know, can I rely on you?

We're asking the earth, can I rely on you? How do we show up for each other? How do we be there in the fullest way possible? You know, coming from this deep understanding of deep time, you know, of our place on this planet of our actual belonging to the larger web of life. And how do we each tap into our joy, our sense of purpose, our sense of energy that's going to be able to bring us along on this journey where everything is possible.



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Everything is possible, you know. And all of ourselves are going to be needed. All of ourselves. All of the ways we know how to adapt that we have done as a species over millennia. All of our ancestor species have done. We can draw on that wisdom. We're all going to need to be adapting. We can do that. So it's such a joy to be on this journey with you. I'll be following the course as well. And I am really honored to be able to be alive at this moment in time with all of you, all of us, it's a big responsibility that we each have. And I know we're up to the task. So thank you so much. Let's do this.

## Dana

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We hope you have found this transcript helpful. We invite you to help offset the cost to produce this transcript and the rest of the training by [making a donation to One Earth Sangha](#). Whatever you offer will be used wisely and is deeply appreciated.