



One Earth Sangha

Session One: Course Overview

Transcript of EcoSattva Training 2022-23 Video

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Session Profile

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Speakers in this video

- Kristin Barker - director and co-founder, One Earth Sangha

Transcript

Sessions One and Two: Beginning the Journey

Kristin:

So in this segment, I'm going to orient us all to the journey that we're about to take together, give a kind of map for what's going on in each of these eight sessions. And also share a little bit about the resources that each session has to offer, the kind of template that it follows. So it begins with arriving, and that's what we're doing here. We're in a way preparing ourselves for the rest of the journey, gathering up our intentions, maybe forming our groups, setting about introducing you to the practices that we recommend. Just familiarizing ourselves with each other and this space.



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And it's critical at this point to say that we're setting the seeds in place for psychological safety. It's essential for the risk taking that we're asking, that we're putting forward as appropriate and necessary. We cannot be fooled that that risk is so tied to kindness that to the degree that we feel safe, we will take risks together. So this is what we're trying to do here in session one and two to some degree. Setting about the framework for group members, so that you can be vulnerable with each other. Setting about practices that you can do with yourself, so that you can go and feel really safe in the explorations that you are taking. Even as, of course, we're not ultimately safe, but we know that there's a relationship there. That the mind will open itself to new possibilities. If it has the ground that it can rely on, you know, even sometimes moment to moment in a kind of titration, moving in and out of what is difficult. So important. So here in **session one**, we arrive, we attune ourselves to this space. Then in **session two**, we're going to affirm the vital resources that can support our minds, our bodies, our hearts, along the way. Where are we gonna go when push comes to shove, when the squeeze is on? To what will you turn?

It's a time to be inspired and take stock of the full sense of what we're entering into, which is what Thanissara as our guiding teacher for that session will help us do. And also to draw on the sort of larger realms, the dharma itself. The mystical spaces, refuges, ancestors, benefactors, rituals, prayers, soundings. We're affirming those resources and feeling the inspiration and the support that they give us. This is a kind of "you can do it." <laugh> A call to ambition that knows goodness and a certain kind of essential power. It's also in session two that we'll be offering the space to open here to what is difficult for you. Maybe what we've been carrying with us in our hearts. The kind of psychological tax, this heaviness on our hearts, that climate crisis and ecological breakdown is, of course, rendering into this heart mind, citta.

So grief, fear, maybe some anger, maybe a lot of anger, what it is that we're carrying into this that's difficult. We're opening up to that, validating it, welcoming it with our minds, into our mindfulness practice and groups, if we have them, to affirm it, to normalize it, and again, affirming the role of kindness there. Okay. So that's sessions one and two, kind of resourcing ourselves to the journey, and then we begin to descend into this U shape, you know, as Otto Scharmer and others have talked about "Theory U," it's really like the hero's journey, right? It's very archetypal in that sense.



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Session Three: Compassionate Reflection

So we dive into this nadir, this moment of crisis, with a journey down, and in session three, that's where that begins. So that **session three** is focused on a kind of compassionate reflection at the level of the individual. Just looking at what it is we are up against just even in our own heart mind, what it is that's operating there in that dynamic. And this year we're so delighted to welcome Kritee Kanko to that. So Kritee is going to be delving with us into this realm of the kind of traumatizing experience, that is, even the knowledge of, not to mention the direct encounter with climate crisis, with climate shock, with other ecological crises, as they manifest before our very eyes and in our lives.

So we'll also bring in resources from climate psychology. Renee Lertzman will be a resource for that session, my conversation with her, as well as David Loy's essential, brilliant teachings around this. Okay. We're also going to be enabling this opening to depth, and looking at maybe the shadow side, holding wisdom and compassion, but seeing how as activists we can be activated and how as contemplatives, we can really retreat <laugh>. So we want to loosen that reactivity, maybe even loosen our sense of identity, increasingly, again, with lots and lots of safety, into the transformational space that we're headed towards.

Session Four: Intersections and Worldviews

So then to **session four**. We've been looking internally at the level of the individual kind of that inner zone, how we got here, how the mind gets us into this situation. Now we're going to open up to the intersectional lenses, the full catastrophe, the intersections of ecological crisis with racism, colonialism, patriarchy. We're going to see how over time and in the form of dominant institutions, how delusion about separation is codified, really becomes if you're familiar with the dharma notion of these grooves that are built into the mind, the samskaras, these habits of mind that get well worn, that we can see is the collective analogy is our institutional policies and practices, our laws. They codify our minds, solidify, spread, and perpetuate that delusion, the abstraction from earth.

And we'll clarify how it is the system allocates ecological injustice, where other forms of oppression already reside, how it further marginalizes and compounds injustice that's already in place. So we'll see with compassion the costs of that fragmentation, the weight of history, eons of objectification now coming due in this moment. Exploitation hitting its



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limit literally, literally hitting the carrying capacity of this earth. These are the generations faced with these tipping points. These state transitions, one realm, one regime of ecological dynamics to another. So we're going to allow the fullness of this situation, the awesome scale, only because we know we have the spiritual practices and one another, these foundations to support it, this tender space where the heart can break. And we can find that, oh my gosh, it's so hard, and we are still here.

Session Five: Making a Home in Uncertainty

We can survive this. And so then we enter with **session five** the nadir of our journey, supporting each other as much as possible in opening up the ways that we look, opening up the ways that we emotionally respond, opening up who we think we are and what it means to be human. What did I think my life was gonna be about? Not this, but here it is. This is. Can I open up my sense of what was supposed to be happening? What I'm supposed to be doing, what my life is supposed to be looking like, and just really get attuned and connected with this as it is. At all these different scales, from my personal situation to my response to what's going on in the larger world to the collective levels that we'll be exploring, that we will have explored by that point. Learning to stay. That's so beautifully what we're after here with this tender vulnerability, this deep uncertainty. Can we support each other in that?

Session Six: Creating and Discovering The Way

And then as we transition into **session six**, opening up the space of what wants to emerge, in that to the degree that we are able to be with that uncertainty and that emptiness and that not knowing, what wants to come in, because it's a different mind that can sense wholesome response. That can sense helpful speech in action that isn't coming from a place of reactivity, that isn't coming from needing things to be other than they are, in order for me to be okay. Now this is a place that's resting in something much deeper and can allow a kind of wisdom from who knows what realms to come through. What can be detected beyond the preconceptions that we have maybe let go of to some degree, to some degree those conceptualizations have dissolved. What can now emerge? That's the realm of session six. Okay, so having listened and attuned deeply to the unknown, maybe more than we have ever been able to before, can we start to discover this and nourish what wants to arise?



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Something mystical. No longer fighting with a fundamental truth of our situation, can we discover an agency we didn't know we had? A place for this life writ large in its crisis, a direction for our efforts, and a humility for what still needs to be known. And a sense so much better for my place in this and what my agency might be, where I belong in this, that isn't so much about the ego project of saving, but whether a participation, a participation with earth, with others, with being seen and unseen, that can be brought to a kind of resilient action, speech, direction, even.

Session Seven: Expressing Our Awakening Agency

Okay. So that's the space of moving from session six into **session seven**, where maybe on the downside of the slope we were letting go and letting go and letting go, and then in the upside, we're letting come and letting come and letting come. We're discovering in this upward journey a way for myself forward, even a sense of true north, what's gonna guide my efforts come what may, bumpy, smooth, not my business. That's where I'm headed, a sense of maybe even an awakening agency. And we can take this turn that is now upward and have it become more outward.

And that's where we want to talk about diverse forms of response. You know, it is in part a tragedy that we have such a narrow view of what activism looks like, what it means to care, what it looks like to care. Oh my gosh, can we please open that up? Not only discovering how much agency we have, but how many wild and wonderful ways we can respond. Yes to the protest moments, but so much more than that. So we can at the same time characterize what that agency looks like, at least when it's rooted in dharma. So it's not a kind of anything goes, so long as it's coming from your beautiful heart...I mean yeah, in a way. And we can say more than that.

Session Eight: Reflecting and Going Forth

So integrating the dharma into social and psychological research, we're going to get a clear sense for what works in creating change. So that's the last moment of this coming up and coming out, **session eight**, going forth and we'll return to these individual aspirations, confirm them, use maybe these Ecosattva vows that you can customize for yourself. And really confirm in that as well, sangha. How it is we can stay connected with each other and be part of a returning again and again, maybe to that, you know, in the One Earth Sangha triangle, that place of ecosangha. Maybe that's a bunch of, that's a group of people taking action together. Maybe it's just a resource for people who are



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involved in a myriad of ways. But so important to have that place of connection. So that's the journey. This is the journey that we want to go on with you and hope that you have everything you need to stay with it, even as who knows what will come about over the period of time that you are intending to participate.

Session Format

So you're starting, when it works for you, you'll go at a pace that works for you, and if you have one, a group. And keep coming back to community, either in your group and critically, if you're not in a group, we really want to invite you to those monthly gatherings where we'll really just be connecting with each other, no matter where you are in the Ecosattva training journey, really hope that you'll join us. So each session has this format that I want to talk about here for a minute, which is opening with this land acknowledgement and prayer, and how you choose to incorporate that in the exploration of these materials is of course, totally up to you as an individual, if you are doing it that way, or for your group. But I really want to invite a kind of ritual setting of intention and appreciation of the causes and conditions that make it possible for us to do that session's materials each time, and then there'll be a core dharma offering.

There's sometimes an introduction from me or from Lou and then a core dharma offering, and then practices. Really want to support you in taking time to do these inquiries, again as an individual or a group. We talk about these modalities and have a whole separate page on the resources for your journey. That's what that page is called. And it has all of these support pieces identified, inquiries and practices especially, discussed there. So then each session will have its own set of inquiries, and you can use those frameworks that we put forward to integrate those, a really really important part of this journey. And then there are follow up resources, you know, if you want to go deeper with any aspect of this particular session that you're on at that point. Then of course, we have the invitation for dana to support that session's teachers, as well as One Earth Sangha. You know, again, we just try to keep costs as low as we possibly can to make this is affordable to everyone, including offering scholarships for those who can't afford even the lowest rates. No problem, you know, we really want to support everyone and your donations really make this possible.

So inviting dana, generosity for One Earth Sangha, and of course the teachers who so generously give their time and wisdom. And then a dedication of merit is the last kind of piece of that template for every session. And we offer our particular dedication of merit as



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one that you might use if you don't have one, or you can customize whatever really works for you in that sense of whatever it is that's been accumulating, whatever goodness has been gathered, to give it back out into the world.

So that's what I wanted to lay out here, both the arc of the training and then what each session here looks like. I'm so grateful to be on this journey with you. I can't say it enough. And I look forward to how it's all landing for you. What you think might be more suitable, what worked really well for you, what really didn't work well at all. Really want to hear that. Thank you for being with me at this time, in this place, supported by dharma and sangha, and I'll see you next time for session two.

Dana

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.