



One Earth Sangha

Connecting with Our Elders

Audio Transcript

Dacher Keltner: Leading this meditation is my dear colleague Yuria Celidwen. Yuria is an indigenous contemplative studies scholar of Nahua and Maya descent from Chiapas Mexico. She also works at the United Nations to advance the rights of Indigenous peoples and environmental sustainability. Yuria begins by speaking her Indigenous Maya Tzeltal language as a way to create an awareness of the massive cultural extinctions and biocultural loss we are experiencing at a global level.

Yuria Celidwen: *(Speaking in Indigenous Maya Tzeltal language)* Hello and welcome! I dearly hope you are doing well. My name is Yuria Celidwen, born and raised in the cloud forest of Chiapas, Mexico from the Indigenous Nahua and Maya Peoples. I honor the Xučyun territory of the Confederated Villages of Lisjan Ohlone Nation. We honor our Elders of the past, present, and those to soon emerge, while celebrating the richness of our cultural legacy.

(Speaking in English) What you just heard is my indigenous Maya Tzeltal language with which I honor the occupied territories of the Lisjan Ohlone Land of the Berkeley area from where I am speaking today. We lose an indigenous language every two weeks, so revitalizing our languages reclaims our presence and in that way generates places of belonging to an ever expanding circle of care and concern for Mother Earth, for all our systems and communities that we belong. And in that way, we ensure that we are creating the possibilities for planetary flourishing.

I'll ask you to bring your attention now into the center of your chest. Allow the chest to open, and relax. Try to find that moment, that very place in the center of your chest, that where you breathe in ... it opens. And there is a pause. And as you



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breathe out, it relaxes, until again it reaches that pause. Try to find and meet that pause, that bridge that connects the constant cycle. That constant flow between opening and returning. Never to the exact same place. There's always something changing. But there's always that pause, to rest.

So try to meet me in that pause. And in that pause we bring awareness of our lineage, our elders, past, present and emerging. In that pause we honor the richness of their legacy. So think of those elders that have been core to you. We realize as well the complexities of our lineages. So in that place of pause, in the center of your chest within your heart, aim to hold that complexity, with that openness, with that vastness, and with the return to the place of safety in the pause.

So think about those origin stories of your elders, their own elders, and their own, and their own back in time. To their respective places all around the world, wherever it may be, and connect those elders to their lands. The different lands that touched their feet. The different elder's feet that touched those lands until they came here to this place, to the ground under your feet, that now you so caringly touch.

And bring that land into the center of your chest, into your heart, and that place of pause, that place of safety, that place of opening and that place of returning to the pause. Home. Home. And let home reverberate, ripple in that pause through every breath, that place of vastness and possibility, and togetherness, and belonging, through a vast lineage of living beings and our Mother Earth, ever expanding, ever welcoming, in the center of your chest, within your heart, in the place of safety, breath, and home.

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