



One Earth Sangha

Lessons from a Solstice

Guided Contemplative Practice on Heat

This is a transcript of a practice given on June 27, 2021 to participants in Lessons from a Solstice, an EcoDharma Exploration led by Adam Lobel. Listen to the audio practice [here](#), or watch the full program recording [here](#).

Hello friends. This is Adam Lobel, and I will offer here a guided meditation inquiry and even a phenomenology for the next 10 minutes or so. It's best if you listen to and follow this guided practice in a good space. A place where you can sit quietly or lay down on your back. Probably best not to listen to this while driving. And find an atmosphere that feels supportive for contemplation. This could be a place where you meditate. It could be a room in your apartment or home, or perhaps out in a park or in the forest or on the beach. Whatever works for you.

We'll begin this practice by inviting our awareness to inhabit the space where we find ourselves. So first, after having taken our seat or laying down, just let your gaze look around the space. Let your visual field expand and notice specific objects. All the various things and phenomena around you. Ordinary things. Let your head and eyes move slowly and mindfully. Just looking at the specific objects, furniture, art, grass, whatever's around you. Just letting your eyes really slow down and see.

After looking for a while, you can now really listen. Listening to the sound of my voice, listening to ambient noises in the space around you. Listening to your own body. And listening into the background of silence that is there before sound.

And welcoming your body into this practice. Just feel your body, you can actually touch your knees, your thighs, maybe rubbing your hands, fingers. Perhaps



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massaging your jaw, rubbing your belly. Let's bring in some touch and physical sensation into the body. Really feeling this physical, material, flesh body that we are.

And closing your eyes, feeling the body from within, feeling your body from within. And now, as we are gathering our awareness, you can also feel your body breathing, feeling the breath flowing in and out, in and out. And feeling the abdomen expand and contract with each breath. Feeling the lungs fill with nourishing oxygen with each breath. Aware of your body moving and swaying with breath.

So now that we've gathered our awareness and are perhaps a little bit more grounded, settled and present, we can begin to feel the warmth of our body. Something that we rarely notice unless we have a fever or we're very cold. So just bringing a gentle awareness to the fact that your body, this organism, is generating heat at around 98 or so degrees Fahrenheit. We are generators of heat and warmth. There is warmth flowing through our blood, our heart, our belly, our skin. So bringing some awareness to the warmth of our body. And recognizing that, sometimes the way we feel warmth is through coolness. Through the contrast of our warm body meeting a cooler air temperature or places where we feel a chill. That is a contrast with a warmth generated from our living bodies.

So just with a sense of curiosity, exploring the tactile sensations of warmth and coolness within your body and on the skin and surface of your body. We are generating heat. And in some ways, this heat is inseparable from the heat around us, the warmth in the core of the planet, the heat of the sun, the heat of the season, and the warming of our climate. This is all part of warmth and heat.



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Within the context of this phenomenology and experience of warmth and heat, we can reflect on the fact that there has been a tremendous surge of heat in our planet. In the year 2020, there were unprecedented wildfires in the United States, over a million acres. There was a heating of Siberia. The past decade was the hottest decade on record. In 2020, Europe was the hottest year ever recorded.

When there are record temperatures, this usually coincides with an El Niño event or a large band of warm water that forms in the Pacific Ocean every few years. This leads to large-scale warming of ocean surface temperatures.

The exceptionally warm temperatures of this year or so have triggered these large wildfires and the Black Summer of fires in Eastern Australia. The heat is felt most intensely perhaps in the Arctic where the hottest ever recorded temperatures are melting the ice in the Arctic Circle. With the rising temperatures, there are heatwaves that affect all life, including humans.

So experiencing or contemplating, reflecting on this warming, as we feel the warmth of our body, the generation of heat, we might sense a nondual pervasive field of warmth and heat on our earth throughout our globe. That is life and the fragility of life. The fragility of our bodies, which need to be at a certain temperature. If it's too cold, we cannot live. If it's too hot, we cannot live.

So mindfully, without judgment, without fear, just feeling into heat. Making a relationship with a warming world. And this can extend to the heat of our computers. The hot cell phone. The heat in our buildings. Hot car engines and truck engines. The heat that is generated from the computer networks. The heat of the



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electric grid and all of the coal-fired plants. The heat of methane being burned off of fracking wells.

The heat from campfires crackling in the forest with perhaps a small family roasting marshmallows. The cozy heat of a candle or a lamp providing light and a welcoming glow. The heat and warmth of embarrassment or joy. Feeling hot after laughing really hard. The heat of sexual energy. I'm pausing for a moment to inquire into your relationship with heat, with warmth, with this phenomenon that we give the name heat.

And then again, coming back to feeling the warmth of your own body. What's your body temperature like now? Attuned to warmth and heat, as if there was something shared with the sun, the solstice, and all of the heat generated in the cosmos.

To close our practice, you can again feel our body breathing, just feeling the body swaying with breath. Enjoying the breath, coming in and flowing out, noticing coolness and warmth in the breath. And then again, taking a moment to perhaps massage or rub or move or stretch the body still with your eyes closed. Just bringing some life and tactile sensation to the body. And then listening, listening to your body, listening to your breath and your heartbeat. Listening to the space around you. Various noises, sounds, silence.

Then gently opening the eyes and just look around again at the world and space around you, objects, place, landscape, or architecture.



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And when you feel ready, closing this practice with perhaps a slightly transformed sense of the experience of warmth and heat on planet earth.