



One Earth Sangha

Session One: Course Overview

Transcript of EcoSattva Training 2023-24 Video

Agreement

First, a little business. By accepting this document, you agree not to share with anyone who is not registered for the EcoSattva Training. No one is turned away from the training due to lack of funds, so if you would like to share it with someone who cannot afford the registration, please let them know they can [request discounted or free registration](#).

Session Profile

Session One: Arriving and Setting a Course

[Session Resources](#)

Speakers in this video

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

Transcript

The Arc of the Journey

Kristin Barker:

Okay, so in this video we are going to look at the shape of the journey, how those eight sessions fit together, how they inform and lead to each other, and what that whole process is going to look like. I'm going to share an [image on the background here](#) that will kind of give you a graphical view of that. And then I'm going to talk a little bit about what each session contains. Those of you who've done the training before, hopefully this will be helpful a little bit in terms of what's different, but I'm not going to spend a lot of time contrasting this. So this will be largely familiar to you, although the content will be new



One Earth Sangha

in each one of these sessions, and in particular, some very new voices. So with that said, let's get started.

So this is the shape of the EcoSattva journey. You may recognize this from the course resources page and for those who have done the training before, you'll recognize this shape, the approach, and of course the content will be different because we've made a lot of changes for this year. But first to the shape itself, I want to say a little bit about the arc of this journey. So this is very archetypal. It's the kind of out into the wild, into the unknown and the return, with the shifts that can only come from an embodied experience. And we are really giving ourselves over to that experience, to the extent that we feel safe to do so. And so a lot of what we are going to attend to is supporting the being and opening up to this incredible moment on planet earth.

There's a little bit of modeling after Otto Scharmer's work, the [Theory U](#) stuff, if you're familiar with that. Also archetypally the Hero's Journey. And so these kinds of things can give us some framing and language for this process of setting the conditions for transformation, letting go, being with uncertainty as we descend. Then being at home, making a home in that place, and then letting come and letting things take shape and form, where we were letting them sort of disintegrate on the other side here, we're letting them come together and rise and form, and then finally resolving, affirming and dedicating.

Session One

So we start out, "Hey everybody, welcome. This is what's happening. This is what we're trying to do. Here's a map, and here's the way that we're going to work." And Kaira Jewel Lingo is offering here, "what is this wisdom and practice tradition? How does it support us?" You're meeting people, you're meeting Lou and myself, and if you're in a group, members of your group. Lots of affirmation and context setting in groups for people to get to know each other and about the process. Maybe doing some shared agreements. How are we going to hold this container?

And then for individuals, what are the resources? Can you start to think about the resources and affirming how you're going to connect with us? Maybe in the monthly gatherings. Of course, everyone is invited, but we really hope the people who are doing this as an individual join those monthly gatherings.



One Earth Sangha

Session Two

The second session is packing your bags, preparing ourselves, setting the conditions for cultivations. What resources are you going to turn to in terms of your practice, your community, nature, friends, animals, your beloved animals in your home? Maybe where will you go when the squeeze is on? What will you turn to when you encounter the difficult? We want to set the conditions in our psyche for relative safety so that when we become vulnerable with ourselves and one another, that can really be held.

So here we have Damchö, first time offering to the EcoSattva Training, as are many of the leaders here. A former Tibetan nun who leads this amazing community, Dharmadatta, she will be supporting us in setting these kinds of conditions for what this looks like, can look like, as a group and for me as an individual, and offering some metaphors for how we might think about what we're attending to here that might be helpful to you.

Session Three

And then the descent begins. So for me as an individual, this turning towards, in particular, turning towards this very heart and maybe the eco-distress that we might find there, naming it, saying, "of course, darling." Framing it, yes, as fear, but also how it is a testament to our connection and compassion? All the difficulty that's there, and also the goodness that is there.

So with the help of author Britt Wray, who has written *Generation Dread* — and you might be familiar with her work with youth in particular, and she is such a great communicator about the ways that our hearts and minds are taking shape right now — recognizing the impacts of eco-distress and how we can meet it, how we can give it the care that it needs, and also what insights are there.

We'll explore here in Session Three as well the role of our conditioning in some of the perspectives that I might have about this life. What are the narratives, myths and misconceptions that I might be bringing that seem helpful, seem true, but on closer inspection, may need to be teased apart. So some softness around vulnerability inherent in our lives, just having a body, and also specifically in this time. This and more, we will explore in Session Three at the individual level of opening to this moment.



One Earth Sangha

Session Four

And then with Session Four, Reckoning with Entangled Structures, we look at the collective level. Now we're looking at culture and history, if you will. This is a way of seeing the dynamics of mind. Those of you who are quite familiar with Buddhist wisdom and practices, I invite you to really lean into how what we learn about the dynamics of the individual mind can be applied to the collective mind. Accumulated over history, the mind writ large when it takes on and becomes codified in institutional practices, cultural ways of looking – we get things like racism, patriarchy, colonialism, military, industrial complex, and we get things like the slow violence of extraction, industrialized, supercharged.

Here we will be supported by Drs. Larry and Peggy Ward and Dr. Michael Yellow Bird, both amazing teachers who bring together these perspectives that are outside of the dominant white forms and can help all of us see each other, see ourselves within this, and recognize what needs to be released and maybe what needs to be remembered. These are interactions and echoes over time and space. This amplified separative consciousness that characterizes dominant culture. We're opening, in a way, to borrow Jon Kabat-Zinn, to the full catastrophe. With support, wow, we can actually be with this. It's hard. It's challenging, but we can, despite what the culture tells us, we can actually be with this moment. And we can recognize ourselves in it, participating even, inevitably entangled within this. But mindfulness, all helpful. Recognition, so powerful.

Session Five

Okay, that brings us to the bottom of the U, the bottom of the journey, the nadir of our arc. We're supported in going deep, in being with this moment as we perceive it, with a wisdom and practice that will support us, whether that's Buddhist as especially offered here, but also that of the natural world. What's coming through? Community, friends, places that are ancestors, descendants, allowing the beyonds.

We can be with this space in skillful attending, titration, working with our windows of tolerance. We're moving in and out with breathing, holding the difficulty, being with and listening, listening, listening deeply to what hasn't been spoken, that wants to be felt, that wants to be known. The wisdom that wants to be heard. Listening and listening, a trust can come with the support of ourselves, our practice, one another, in what Pema



One Earth Sangha

Chödrön might call learning to stay, the art of learning to stay. And then we begin the ascendance.

Oh, I forgot to say it's Lama Willa Blythe Baker, amazing teacher who's been with us many times and will be supporting us in that process of being with the deep uncertainty, listening deeply for what's there.

Session Six

And then in the rising, Creating and Discovering the Way, we will be supported by Adam Lobel here. Going from sort of this very, very quiet space of being with, now, allowing us to see what's coming through, to hear what voices may be speaking to us. The emergence that recognizes what changes might be called for, what's calling me in terms of engagement. This can be very magical. It also can be very practical. I mean, it's so personal, this piece. The whole journey really is so personal, but this especially of listening, what is this being, what is available to this one? Really making space for emergence here with the support of Adam Lobel.

Session Seven

And this next stage is looking at forms of response or really pulling things together. If the other side of the U was letting go, now, really letting come, letting things take shape. Having a wide lens of generous conception of what it means to be engaged on ecocrises, polycrises in general. But characteristics that are especially called for the courage, the risk taking, without hardening into a particular archetype of activism. What am I really being called to lean into such that the letting go of whatever needs to be let go of is really quite natural and easy. This is listening for what the earth is calling to be named, shared, and enacted. We're supporting ourselves and one another. And yes, experimenting. That's what life does. Experiment, with edges. Participating in a way that is grounded, steady, and we could even say, for those who might like this language, devoted.

The folks who are supporting us in Session Seven, Kritee Kanko speaking to us about all that, the Indigenous communities in particular, how much we can learn from, and listen to and support and collaborate with. And then Tim Ream is going to support us with — both of them Zen teachers — Tim, bringing his Zen teaching into how even classical forms of activism can really deeply be informed by Buddhist ways of looking and practices.



One Earth Sangha

Session Eight

So then Session Eight, this last piece affirming one another, here with Thanissara and Myokei, we're naming the gifts that we're bringing back for ourselves and one another, resolving to remain steady and to rely on the practices that we have found to be useful. The connections that seem really important and nourishing to us, whether that's with the ecological other or the human other. The communities that need to be nourished in order for all of us to continue in this work and those kinds of ideas of what Joanna Macy might call "going forth."

Resources for the Training

So that's the shape of the journey. And within each one of these sessions, we'll do an introduction. There'll be one or two core offerings, like here in Session One, we have just one from Kaira Jewel, although we're doing all this other kind of housekeeping as well. Then there's a guided meditation that we hope that you'll try out, especially if you're relatively new to Buddhist practices. But those guided meditations are there to support you on particular aspects of what's being offered and to work with them in a practice contemplative setting. Similarly, there are also inquiries just written out in text on each one of the pages for kind of self-study contemplation, or if you're in a group, working in dyads or triads, just those three or four questions, journaling with them, working with them in your group, really allowing yourself to experiment with these various modalities, not just listening to the talk and moving on, but working them. Okay. Then there's also follow-up resources, and at the very bottom of this session, each session page is a feedback form that we really invite you to spend some time with whatever you want to say, positive, negative, constructive, whatever, complain. It's all good. We really want to hear from you how it's going.

I want to say one more thing. Given this shape, I just want to establish here from the beginning that this is a process, one that takes our participation and our patience. So to those of you attracted to the emotional and psychological challenges that are inherent in this work, the wild difficulty — oh, I think that's me, I think I'm one of you — we're not going to rush into the unknown depths from the very beginning. No. We're going to give ourselves time to acclimate, to connect, to establish the elements of what it is to make that really, really powerful and potent. Nor will we rush to the known, the answers, the solutions. There is so much that we want to know, especially the anxious minds that are still understandably here, want to know what do we do? How do we get out of this? Give



One Earth Sangha

me the answers, just tell me what to do. Nope. We're going to acknowledge those voices and put those aside and say, I hear you. We'll get there, darling.

Nor will we rush right to action. Well, yes, yes, yes, we are surrounded by inaction and insufficient, even token, action. So to those who want to get active now, I totally hear you. And yet, and yet, this is a process that with patience and participation, we can avail ourselves, enable even, adjusted, if not very different, more effective action. More full, clear seeing, coming from a different place, kind of action, with more of the deeply needed resources that can make that action truly helpful, responsive to this moment.

Okay, so hopefully that's some good orientation, and I really hope that you enjoy the talk from Kaira Jewel. We are so grateful to be in continued relationship with her as one of our guiding teachers and a longtime offer to this EcoSattva Training. And again, really invite your feedback as well as your practice. Okay, see you soon.

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.