



One Earth Sangha

# Session Four: Core Offering 1

Transcript of EcoSattva Training 2023-24 Video

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## Session Profile

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Session Four: Reckoning with Entangled Structures

[Session Resources](#)

## Speakers in this video

- Kristin Barker - director and co-founder, One Earth Sangha
- Dr. Larry Ward

## Transcript

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### Welcome

**Kristin:**

All right, welcome Dr. Ward. It's so good to have you here with us as part of the EcoSattva Training, and to support us in this particular place in the training where we're reckoning with entangled structures — that's what this session is about. And I've heard you speak so beautifully to this that we were really excited to have you agree to be part of this and speak to this place in the EcoSattva journey. So thank you again.

**Larry:**

It's my pleasure to be with you.



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**Kristin:**

If there's anything else that you want to say or offer into the space before I ask my first question, I certainly welcome that.

**Larry:**

I want to read a poem I wrote for you and all EcoSattvas.

*I am the Earth even when I wake up crying.  
These are the Earth's tears.  
Even the ocean of suffering belongs to her.  
I am the Earth speaking to you now, and you are the Earth  
listening with your precious ears.  
I am the Earth walking through my doubts, my fears, my sadness,  
my loneliness and my suffering.  
But I am also the rain falling, and the birds singing,  
with joys that bless the world day and night.  
I'm getting washed all over by my tears and my hope as the rain continues to fall.  
I am celebrating the miracle of every Earth breath, every Earth sigh, every Earth smile,  
every Earth hug, and every Earth touch of kindness.  
They bring me home to deep justice.  
I am the Earth.  
And so are you.*

**Kristin:**

Beautiful. What a wonderful way to open up the session. Thank you.

**Larry:**

Sure, thank you.

## World as Mind

**Kristin:**

So I want to start by asking what can Dharma wisdom offer to us in this moment, all these beautiful traditions that we have, and what do we really need to hear as we face this moment on planet Earth where we seem to be, with such great conviction, destroying our one and only home.



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### **Larry:**

Well, my understanding at the moment, of course, is only partial, but it is the wisdom of impermanence, that life is flow. And that's not just a statement about our individual lives. That's a statement about history, about civilizations, and people, and species. Change is a constant, but it's not our problem. The problem is how we respond to change. Do we respond to change to the impermanence of life, beyond reactivity and beyond our habitual patterns of behavior, institutionally as well as individually, as well as culturally. So we are in a revolution of perception of what it really means to even be human, because the world we have inherited from whomever, culturally, institutionally, geographically, has all been created by the mind.

And so until we get more and more understanding of how our minds work, we will just stay in the zone of our habits of war, and our habits of peace that are often just indifference. And so we do not understand how we think about our world, and how we think about our world is what we see in our behavior. It's not an abstraction. Look at what we do. Just the whole meaning of karma is doing, is action. And that action lives on; that is both good news and bad news. Good action lives on and so does unwholesome action. We can see this in examples of racism, on and on, every kind of -ism there is on the planet.

And so that's a couple of things. The other thing that the Dharma can offer is an understanding that we have constructed things. And for a long time, we thought what we constructed with our own minds, our institutions, our philosophies, our stories about the universe, our stories about the Earth, we thought that was a divine eternal pattern when in fact it was just a temporary model.

Being human is difficult, and so we live having to create little maps for ourselves to try to make it. But none of our maps are real. Thích Nhất Hạnh used to love to say, a map of Paris is not Paris. And having been to Paris many times myself, I can say that a map can help point toward Paris, but unless you walk the streets, you're not in Paris. And part of our dilemma today, to me, that the Dharma addresses is we have become caught up in our signs of things, our labels for things, without understanding we're having a living experience. We're not just having an experience of thought or constructs or ideologies. We have a living experience on a living planet. And that is a dramatic change in how we perceive the planet we live on. And so for me, there's that interconnection. Thích Nhất Hạnh liked to call it Interbeing, in classic Buddhism, emptiness, sunyata. But sunyata, if



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applied to our actual lived experience, is a very revolutionary thing. It means we can't live and think in silos. We can't live simply in tactics. We have to dare to look at the big picture of where we are and not get trapped in our old stories, our old maps, our old signs of what we thought the world was like.

### Liberation and Reconciliation

There is a growing vocation that in religious life used to be the spiritual path, the monastic path, many, many forms of the path. I think what's happening in our world today that the Dharma can help us appreciate deeply is that we have an ecological path. We have a religious path in the sense that is about protecting the sacred, naming what is holy, creating the values that — creating new conditioning of our minds and of our emotions so that we can learn how to be safe with one another, learn how to be safe on the Earth. I think we have overemphasized our protection, and protection is not the same as safety. Otherwise, why would we need so much protection and we still feel unsafe. And for me, this is connected to being unsafe as an Earthling. We have not been able to come to terms with this life. Its transience, its impermanence, its sorrow, and unable to touch what Thích Nhất Hạnh would call the Ultimate Dimension. In our daily lives, we are caught in the historical theater of samsara, of recurring patterns of suffering that I like to say need not be.

So for me, there's the suffering of life itself. Unavoidable. I'm getting old. I feel it every day. It's not personal. It feels personal, but it's not personal. You get to the point where you start to realize, well, maybe evolution is done with me. And it's a shocking thing to realize you won't always be in this manifestation. And the anxiety created from that, at the unconscious level of our lives, is creating the kind of thinking and behaviors we are seeing across the world today. We see it in our politics, which is there's not quite words to it, unless you go into clinical descriptions of not being well, to describe what's going on. Both here, where we live in the US and across our planet.

I used to work in church renewal years and years ago during the ecumenical movement and one of the lectures we did was on the church. And we began by going to the blackboard and drawing a big machine with lots of wheels. And we said, nobody knows how to cut this thing off. Whenever I read or study or end a conversation about what we do about fossil fuels, what do we do about the economy that runs on automatic weapons, it's like we don't know how to cut this thing off. And so for me, another way the Dharma is very important is you can withdraw your energy from something. You can learn how to



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withdraw your energy. You can learn how to withdraw your thoughts, learn how to withdraw your language, learn how to withdraw your behaviors. Actually, that's what the Buddha did. He looked at society and said, I don't want to live this way, so I'm going to experiment and create my own experimental society. Thus, the sangha's born, not from an institutional point of view, but in the evolutionary — that was a revolutionary act. And so in my mind, across the world, there are many, many Bodhisattvas who never have heard that word, who need our encouragement, who need our celebration, and who need, to me, an understanding of the power of energy, that our actions, every one of our actions, carry energy with them. And so what kind of energy do we bring in our actions, in serving the world, in loving the planet?

Thích Nhất Hạnh told the story many years ago about the first time he came to the US and joined in the peace movement marches and demonstrations. He was in New York. He said he figured out he had to go to the park every day to play with kids in order to get over how angry everybody was. This is the least peaceful place he'd ever been. And from his point of view, you can't dismantle what needs to be dismantled if you can't see it clearly. If you can't see yourself clearly to protect yourself from passing on what you are trying to get rid of. To me, we see this so much in the world. People are traumatized and what do they do? They traumatize someone else. And this pattern of — this is mindfulness of the body work, which I've been focused on for a long time now, but the healing of stored trauma, both through meditation and traumatic practices of resilience, and for me, enhancement, it's not just getting over trauma. Trauma has stored energy in it, not just stored pain. And the more you can release that pain, the more energy you actually have to bring to the party of your life.

So there's tools and resources in the Dharma. And what I appreciate most about the Dharma for me is that it is unlimited. It is not a club. Nobody owns it. You can't buy it, you can't sell it. It is the nature of life itself. And the nature of life itself is the Earth herself. And so for me, our reconciliation work — Paul Tillich, a theologian I studied many years ago, used to describe sin differently. He said sin was a state of being in separation. Separation from three things: separation from yourself — your own true nature, your own deep value, your own holiness. Separation from others — in the same way, you cannot recognize the glory of your neighbors, or the glory of the elk, or the hawk, or the hummingbird, or the cricket, or the roach. All our neighbors, all our relations. And you cannot — and so you're separated from all of that. The natural world is a living thing. And you are separated from the ultimate dimension of life. You're separated from that which has no name. You're cut off from the awe of living. And so living becomes a tedious



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process of repeating the same thing over and over, that every now and then you catch a whiff of meaning. But that's not enough to sustain the great souls we all have.

And so for me, the Dharma can offer a way to sustain and nourish as well as train. How many people need to go through mind training as the Tibetans call it. And it's amazing how you can change your mind if you know how, in the very moment you're in. This is not a long-term thing. This is one of the great things about the mindfulness tradition for those who practice and understand it deeply. You can shape your mind. Not only be aware of your mind, you can actually shape your mind.

### Awakening to Our Power

I read a paper by a Chinese scholar recently. It was her PhD dissertation. Her central question was, what kind of mind do we need to have to create the future we want? So I've been asking people every now and then recently, what is the world you want? What is the planet you want? What is the relationship with other people on this planet, other species? What do you want? I asked that question because what I learned a long time ago — it's only the person who answers that question is in charge. They control the narrative. We do not need to let the narrative of the last 500 years dominate our future. The reactivity, the hatred, the insensitivity, the violence, the insincerity, the corruption. I've heard someone say, well, they're all corrupt. No, they're not all corrupt. Who told you that? Why would you believe that? Are you corrupt? You have to come home to yourself and ask that question before you stand and talk about someone else.

So understanding the systemic nature of all of this is the key. Systems are not personal. You may think they are. But I've worked in corporate consulting and Fortune 500 companies, I've worked in rural villages in India, and Africa, and Mexico, and Guatemala, and many other places. And I will tell you, every place has a system. And to change that system, you have to have enough courage to do little things that upset it. Example, my first trip to a village project we were working on in northern India, outside of Delhi. And this was a standing tradition in the villages in the morning, women and children follow the cows and oxen to pick up dung to mix it with straw, to have what burns for fuel. So I saw this on my first morning, and the second morning I joined them. And later at lunchtime I was called before the panchayat — the group of men who were in charge of the village's life. They basically said, you're ruining it for us. That is not men's work. And I just asked a simple question, who told you that?



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We are learning that so much of what we've been taught and what we've been told is incomplete. It's not that it's all wrong, though some of it is. But much of it. Every day — I think science is important. And so every day I take a look at the news, the scientific news, and every day we keep having to unlearn what we thought we learned. And that's exciting. That's lived impermanence. That's the willingness to be open and have your mind changed over and over again by your own experience of life, by your own encounters with life and not get caught in an idea because it's only an idea.

I was telling a story about Thích Nhất Hạnh. Peggy and I were with him in Korea on a book tour. His book on anger became a bestseller in South Korea, and we were there for 15 days or something, a small group of us. And someone asked him — he often had children have Q&A at the beginning of a retreat. And the little boy asked, how did you get to be so peaceful? And he said, well, first I decided I wanted to be peaceful. That's back to my question. What do you want? What is the planet you want? What is the planet you want your children to live on, grandchildren to live on, and people and species you have never met and will never know to live on? What is that? How would you answer that very concretely? And then he said, well, I decided I wanted to be peaceful, and then I decided to engage with peaceful people.

So in order to accelerate this work, I think we have to align ourselves with one another beyond our old stories about who we are and what we're doing. Because the Earth — I have flown a lot around the world. I see no maps. I see no nations. And this is not new. And [inaudible] talked about the end of the nation state years ago, and economic model of the world is already beyond the nation state. And that is part of the challenge. There's linkages and connections and money flowing here and there in places we don't even know. And that can only change if our minds change about living in that kind of a world. But in order for our minds to change, we have to have a proposal. We have to have our intentions, not perfectly clear, but aligned with the Earth, aligned with one another beyond our — whatever groups other people decide we are. We have to watch out for that.

### **Kristin:**

So let's talk about that in particular because I do want to ask you to comment on how our situation, how in particular our relationship with Earth and the rest of nature, the more-than-human, how does that reflect and reverberate with our relationships with one another? Especially across these lines of apparent difference, whether race or gender or class or otherwise? What does a Dharma perspective illuminate in those reverberations?



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### **Larry:**

Well, one thing it illuminates is the power of action. Every action is like a wave that goes out. So it's not just that I'm unhappy, if that's the case. It's the fact that my unhappiness spills out. Spills out at home, spills out at work, spills out in my neighborhood, spills out in my nation, my country, wherever I may be. And so the art of learning how to take care of your own pain, learning how to handle your own suffering, not discarding it, but caring for it, is fundamental in how we relate to one another and to the Earth, because we're not disconnected. And so our joy can spill out. Our hope can spill out, but so can our fear, and our anger, and our greed, and our hatred. And so being able to transform these energies in ourselves as individuals gives us a chance to transform those energies when we are together, in ourselves, without blame and without judgment. And this is hard, because there's a lot to be judged and a lot to be blamed, but that won't move us through. That to me is the difference. I can critique. I have historical knowledge about what's happened in the world. So have many people, but that will not stop it from happening.

So for me, the Dharma in the Eightfold Path tells us about right action, and right thinking, and right speech, and right livelihood. This is part of where the rubber hits the road, so to speak. How can I have a livelihood that does not damage the planet, when traditionally that's all that's been available is a livelihood that damages the planet, but it not only damages the planet, it damages you. And that damage spills out in society, on the streets, in our neighborhoods and at home. And so the more we can learn to shape our own minds, master our own feelings, as we can learn to do these things, we become safer to be with, energetically. We become more easy to be with and the more safety and energy in our own presence, exuding from our own presence calls, in my experience, calls in animals, it calls in all kinds of creatures cause they can feel safety and it calls in people who may not know why they're feeling the way they're feeling, but they feel safe enough to begin to repair and begin, to use an old Baptist term to repent, to change the future based on what they've learned about the suffering created by the past.

And in Buddhism, we call that beginning anew, and there are many ceremonies and practices they talk about, but we don't have a way of beginning anew collectively, and I'm speaking in the US specifically because we have never begun anew. We don't know what that means. We've only tried to begin anew, the reconstruction period, the civil rights period, women's suffrage period, all important, all critical. But what's important right now is the whole planet is at stake. All of our causes are at stake. And so the idea of the Sangha in Buddhism, a community that practices with a context of love and





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understanding at its core, where however it shows up locally, is the key to the future. And how we nourish that is the key to our activity.

### **Kristin:**

And so just to build on that a little more, at the particular moment when you and I are meeting to do this recording, just this rising manifestation of violence and threat of violence in, as we've been talking about, the collective mind, where groups of people are feeling more empowered to be violent, you in your distinguishing between safety and protection. Just this sense that I need to protect me and mine and those who look and believe, whether that's spiritually or politically, if they're on my side. And so this quite naturally creates fear in the being for the ways that violence is increasingly condoned and even encouraged. So what do you think the Buddha would be saying right now? What do you think Thích Nhất Hạnh? What would be emphasized in a place where we conceive of ourselves as individuals and yet we feel threatened by a collective. There's an interesting juxtaposition even there, and we feel afraid. And that might cause us, as you're talking about the ways these things leak out, might cause us to behave in ways that make matters worse. So what do you think the Buddha would be emphasizing? What do we need to be emphasizing whether from Thích Nhất Hạnh or the Buddha or other leaders right now in this moment of rising stress, the threat of violence?

### **Larry:**

Well, I think we need to enhance our practice in whatever forms that might emerge. But in the four foundations of mindfulness, the body is the first foundation. I cannot tell you how many people don't realize that they are actually living on the Earth. They're living in their head, they're living in an ideology, in the policy, but it is not grounded in reality. And that's what happens when what, for lack of a better term, what has been the sacred canopy that we all held, that we lived in the same world with the same understanding as we became aware that all this stuff we created, it lost its legitimacy. And when legitimacy is lost, uncertainty follows. And where there is uncertainty, there is insanity. And secondly, I would say, Carl Jung in an interview once said that institutions don't have consciousness, only individuals have consciousness. And that's why he devoted his work at the individual level.

And only individuals can then therefore change institutions. But not if they don't have consciousness different from the institution itself, a different set of values, a different way of seeing the world. And so everywhere we work, everywhere we shop, everywhere



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we engage with the quote unquote process of governance, we need to be bringing our whole game.

The second thing about the body is we have to recognize that we have all been traumatized. The last 500 years of history and its use of violence and its conditioning of violence. I don't mean, I know about history and different samurais, and warriors, etcetera. I'm talking about institutionalized violence, profitable violence. And once weapons entered the realm of commerce, we all became less safe. And we're at the whims of any person, me or anyone else who cannot handle themselves, cannot respond to the pain inside of themselves, whatever the factors were that created a traumatic memory storage in their bodies. So there is deep work to do there.

Second area is we have to learn to work with our feelings. We have to learn to master our reactivity to, oh boy, that's wonderful, I'll chase that down the hall. Or, oh boy, that's terrible, I'll run away. Or being able to tell the difference between people saying I'm neutral, often that means I'm indifferent. And so to know how we feel and how to deal with our feelings when we feel these different ways in this term, Buddhism and feelings, and then our perceptions, how we see the world, how we see one another, how we see ourselves, because they're all connected. We can't think the world is beautiful if we don't think we ourselves are beautiful. We can't think the world is worthy if we don't see ourselves as worthy and our consciousness, I mean this is everything from the work people are doing across the world on archetypes. We have to learn how to deal with the depth level of our inner life below our daily consciousness, our ordinary consciousness.

We have a lot to do to tame our unconscious. And that's just scary. It's like, I don't want to know. But it's running our lives. The habit energies I'm talking about are below the surface, pushing us to commercialism, to consumerism, even in the midst of knowing what we know about the state of the Earth at this time. And so learning how to recognize this energy pushing on you and having the courage to figure out what to do about it and to know you can do something about it, that may mean, I know it's difficult, that may mean you have to change jobs. That may mean you have to live somewhere else. And so I think we're at a point that we used to say in the civil rights movement, it's time for bodies on the line. We have to put our bodies where we think they can make the most difference in the future of this planet and the future of our society. So pretty much I think that's what the Buddha tried to do.

**Kristin:**



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There's the four word teaching from Thay that I love so much. No mud, no lotus. And I feel the relevance of that in my own practice. The endlessness you talked about, the Dharma is endless, the endlessness of that, and for me that reverberates so much in so many ways for this moment that we're in. And I wonder if it does for you and if you could speak to that.

### Reckoning with Collective Mind

**Larry:**

Sure, it does for me. The language I created for myself, which was scary to other people, but I called it we're in the time, perception wise, of the apocalypse moon. The most important thing to remember is, however the moon appears is always the whole moon. And so our natural tendency and our conditioning socially, scientifically and otherwise, that dualism is the way we should understand reality is a major part of what the Dharma transforms, the we-they the self-other, the not-me, the only-me. And so we really have not developed, in my view, even though I know about social psychology, etcetera, we have not really in the Western world developed a theoretical understanding of the collective mind. We have only really worked on the individual mind. And I don't want to say this comes out wrong, but part of the reason is, I mean that's where the work was done. That's where the research has been done and not a lot has been applied to the collective mind. I did a talk once in Claremont, California at a university on the collective mind. And people were like, what?

It was amazing because it's so obvious and so maybe we have to call it the cultural mind. The condition mind is language and Buddhism, but we must take charge by first understanding how our minds have been conditioned because we can't see beyond that. We really cannot see beyond that. And I wake up every day and go, oh wow, I thought this and that's not real. That's in my head. And so there's that part of it. We need what Margaret Wheatley I think called Islands of Sanity. We need, I think small groups and Margaret Mead said that only small groups can change the world. I think if a group is not small enough, we end up having to have a mayor and we have to build an institution. So it has to be small enough where there can be enough familiarity that people can experience enough safety to be honest about their own experience and the capacity to help each other through that journey. And for me, the more of us can learn how to help each other through the journey, the greater the chance. And so with the dualistic mind, the world's either all going to hell or not. Only two choices. And I use the word apocalypse on purpose because in the New Testament, apocalypse really means not destruction, but revelation.



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We are now seeing things we thought we would never see. We're now understanding things we thought we would never understand.

**Kristin:**

I love that framing of this moment of revelation, this being a moment of so many dimensions, impermanence, undeniable in multiple scales that our interbeing revealed, revealed, revealed, revealed. That karma is being revealed. What I do to this Earth I do to myself. I love that framing. I love it. Thank you.

**Larry:**

One story I have about that that I got from others is first Copernicus screwed up our idea of being the center of the universe. And then Darwin came along and told us we were related to monkeys, which some of us are still upset about, which is a good thing. I like monkeys. And then Freud, that we have an unconscious, we have all these things under the ocean of our lives influencing us. And for me, the fourth one is actually the Buddha, that we are empty of a separate self. That impermanence is the natural way of the universe. It is not a political policy or any other kind of policy. It is the nature of things.

**Kristin:**

I love your recounting of the insults. One after another, it began with Galileo, right? Like the insult of like, oh, it's not the center of the Earth. And then the insult that Darwin brought and the insult that Freud brought and the insult to the ego, right, to the ...

**Larry:**

That's correct.

**Kristin:**

That each one of those brings. And also one might say, the gold that was in each one of those, pointing to our belonging to something so much more vast and mysterious than what this mind has been trained to conceive and perceive.

**Larry:**

And that is no mud, no lotus. Without our own experience of what we would call suffering, the lotus flower comes out of the mud overnight. And it's the ingredients of the mud and the nutrients of the mud that actually allows the flower to grow. My best contemporary example of that is Nelson Mandela. What a beautiful example of a lotus blooming out of the mud. Martin ... I can go through many names and so can you. But it is



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important to know that for me, the way I use the word suffering is in two ways. It's the natural order of things. Our mind is always dissatisfied. We go to buy an ice cream cone, we get a chocolate one, and before we get back to the car, we're thinking about the vanilla one. So our mind is like that. So we have to tame it, tame it and without blaming ourselves for having a mind, it's one of the gifts of being human.

I think one of the things that Dharma can offer us is to recognize when our mind is putting on a show which it's always doing and to recognize when the mind of our society is putting on a show, which it's always doing. And so that means our work is to recognize what is this show? Is it wholesome? Will it lead to justice? Will it lead to wellness? Will it lead to harmony or will it lead to the suffering we can't seem to get away from? And so for me, that's an option that's different than birth, life and death. That's going to happen anyway. But we don't have to live like this.

I was quite young when I realized that. We were going to my grandfather, my mother's father's funeral in Georgia, so we made our own food and everything so we wouldn't have to stop at any place to eat. And we started driving at midnight so we didn't have to show up in the daylight. And when we got to the little farm where my mom grew up and the family that was there, I was like, what is this race thing? What is this? This doesn't make any sense to me. I was six or seven, I could tell then this is not well.

And our conditioning of our social imagination is to blame the victim. Our social imagination has been in the land of dualism. So there's two things. There's public issues and personal troubles. We've all been conditioned to think that is how society works. So if I'm out of a job, it's my fault. If I can't afford to pay my student loan back, it's my fault. Everything in the model we have inherited separates what's called public issues, except when the public issues want you to go fight for it, and individual troubles. And so if you're raped, that's your problem. You must have done something, said something, looked a certain way, that excuses that behavior as a society and so on and on and on. We've even been conditioned to think as a dualistic paradigm of our social values and structures. If you're in prison, it's because you did something wrong. It's not because somebody framed you, which we discover over and over again is often the case. And so I'm working on a new book toward this end. We have to transform our social imagination from what it has been, which is primarily commercial and industrial, to an Earth centered social imagination. It is not simply public issues and personal troubles. It is the Earth. It is our bodies, it is our economy, it is our education. It is the whole system. And we've been



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conditioned not to think of the whole, only think of the parts and only parts which can be advantageous to us.

### Practices for Healing

**Kristin:**

Beautiful. So my last question for you, I've heard you speak about the importance of joy and awe and gratitude. How important are these for this moment and how do you suggest we can authentically practice them as part of social and ecological healing?

**Larry:**

Well, I think that's why small group relationships are so important, where we can develop a sense of intimacy that we may not be accustomed to, develop a sense of respect, learn how to listen deeply to what is said and not said. And to learn how to use our own speech in ways that do not harm. And if we can create environments where we can experience that quality of safety of being with one another. For me, that's the key. It gets us out of our head into a lived experience with a real group of breathing human beings. And I know the species extinction rate is just unbelievable, but that is not going to change until we change ourselves. We have so much put in motion harm. I agree. If you look at it clearly, it's overwhelming. But what I've discovered is the energy I need to transform myself and continue to transform my world only comes from awe, from wonder, from mystery.

I begin every day before checking the news or anything else, with making sure I have a chance to touch the wonders of life. It is so easy to forget. And the Dharma also talks about the two realms, the historical realm and the ultimate realm. It is so easy to forget in the moment we are in such historical chaos that there is an ultimate realm. But if we don't learn how to access that realm, experience that realm in our steps and in our breathing and in our stillness, we will not find joy in our changing of history. We will find burnout, we'll find bitterness, we'll find projection and miss the joy of even being able to do what we're trying to do.

My father never had a chance to do this. My grandfather never had a chance to do this. So I am having a chance in my little world to do something that's unheard of in my lineage, in my capacity to contribute to the whole world, which I would not be able to do without my father and my mother and my grandmother and my grandmother and host of other people's who have helped me become who I'm still becoming.



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**Kristin:**

Well I am grateful to them for the conditions that they set in motion that would lead to you and all that you are bringing and all the conditions that have come together for you to offer what you've offered us here today. Thank you. Thank you, thank you. Is there anything else that you want to say as we come to a close here?

**Larry:**

One more story. This is about my mother, Viola Paris, whose name I've always envied. But anyway, at our little church, she was a person who would dance at church and my sister and I used to sit there every Sunday and watch her like we watched a pot on the stove and we turned to each other about midday before the sermon and the music was playing and the choir was singing and we'd go, she's about to blow. And up she'd come full of joy. And it was only years later that I understood what she was doing from a traumatic point of view. She was transforming her stored trauma and every time she found a piece of that disappear, she rose in the air. That's the power of joy, which we think is entertainment and pleasure. Not that there can't be joy in those contexts, but I'm talking about a joy that does not disappoint.

**Kristin:**

Wow, that's beautiful. And such necessary nourishment and touching the deathless too. I loved your framing of the three separations and one of the separations being from this realm of awe, to the ultimate as being part of what we need to remember to reconnect with.

**Larry:**

Because we keep trying to replace it with things that are not it. We keep trying to buy it, anyway.

**Kristin:**

Achieve it. Yes.

**Larry:**

Achieve it.

**Kristin:**

Beautiful. Thank you. Well, thank you again, Dr. Ward. I am so grateful for your offering today.



## One Earth Sangha

**Larry:**

I'm grateful for your energy and your effort and your wonderful work in the world.

**Kristin:**

Wow. We're doing this together.

**Larry:**

Yes we are.

**Kristin:**

Yes, we are. Alright, thank you.

**Larry:**

Thank you. Take good care.

## 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.