



One Earth Sangha

Session Four: Practices

Transcript of EcoSattva Training 2023-24 Video

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Session Profile

Session Four: Reckoning with Entangled Structures

[Session Resources](#)

Speakers in this video

- Peggy Rowe Ward

Transcript

Vagus Nerve Exercise

Peggy Rowe:

A good day to you. This is Peggy Rowe with you. We're going to begin with just a very simple vagus nerve exercise that can help us at our core to let go of fear and things we're holding.

So very simple. Just begin by warming up your hands, just rubbing them and enjoying the sensation of the rub and the sound. And just noticing the temperature shift, maybe, maybe not. So we're going to begin by using both hands with the ears, just to rub the full ear as we're breathing, behind it and the little curve, a very light and loving touch. And



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then can also do some tugs, pulling our ears out to the side as you breathe. Feeling the stretch, kind of like that.

And then we're going to use our pointer fingers to new slow circles on the top part of the ear. Any direction, because we're going to go both ways. Breathing and knowing the vagus nerve is the longest nerve in the body. Both directions. Good. We're going to rub our hands again, but just notice what you notice. You've just given some loving care to your ears and the vagus nerve. We're rubbing our hands again and getting them warm. Then we're going to cup both hands over our eyes, a hand over each eye, feeling the warmth of the hand penetrating the eyes, enjoying the darkness. And three breaths.

And then we're going to move to the jaws, both hands over the jaw, feeling the warmth, breathing. Three breaths. Now the heart, both hands on top of each other on the heart, over the heart center, and aware of the front and backside of the heart. Now we're going to move one hand to the belly, keeping one on the heart. This for me is the Thich Nhat Hanh, "I have arrived, I am home" posture. "I have arrived, I am home." Good. Again. Both hands over the eyes again. Cupped over the eyes. Now over the jaw. Both hands over the heart. And a hand on the heart, a hand on the belly. Good, one more time. Both hands cupped over the eyes, letting the eyes rest in the watery sockets. And the jaw. And the heart, both hands over the heart. Okay. Noticing what you notice. I'm noticing I'm a little warmer. And then the heart and the belly. I have arrived, I am home.

Grounding

And for the next practice, you can keep your hands here or rest them on your thighs, whatever feels more comfortable. Good. Here we're going to work with energies of grounding. This is from Master Dogen, a 14th century Japanese Zen master. Become aware of the vertical energy that runs through your whole body, earth to sky. Becoming aware of your feet, and the bubbling spring at the bottom of the feet.

You can also do this standing, but now we're seated. Feel the aliveness of the earth beneath your feet. Earth energy moving through the body, earth energy grounding us, nourishing us, sustaining us. Mother Earth, here I am. And in my own practice, I had to open up the channels and the legs more. So in my own practice, I imagine I have a cosmic bottle brush that opens that channel. I've also had friends that use a special tool, like a magical crystal. But whatever works for you to get a sense of encouraging more opening. This helps us ground.



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It's our vertical energy. I often feel my heart lifting a little and my shoulders dropping. But just notice what you notice. I feel a little taller. I'm aware of the vertebrae, my back a little bit more. And this energy is always running. We're just tuning into it, earth to sky. Good. Now, the horizontal energy that runs through our whole body from the side. And this energy connects us with people, animals, plants, and minerals. And lately I've been reminding myself that I used to be a fish according to science. So feel those gills on the side of the body that can breathe.

I often forget the side seams. Again, our connection with all of nature, with each other. Here I often feel my hips and shoulders just feeling a little wider. Notice what you notice. Again, this energy's flowing, we're just opening to it. Good. And now we're going to tip back and forth a little bit on our pelvis and rocking. And then lean into the back side of the body and tipping forward and leaning into the front side of the body. Good. And then coming back to whatever feels like center and your plumb line as we're aware of the depth.

Culturally, in the United States, we're a lot more open on the front side than we are on the backside. So just be patient. And with my own practice, I often imagine ancestors behind me with soft and loving touch, a light touch on my shoulders. Good. Now the whole body, see if you can get a sense of the whole body here. The shape of your body. The space of your body in the room. Okay, noticing what you notice. Each day we're a little different. Sometimes I notice I'm a little, a shoulder's higher on one side than the other, or that I'm leaning a little, naming that. Just notice. You don't have to correct yourself, but notice it. Today I am leaning a little to the left. Okay. And if you need any more grounding help, this is for grounding. You can imagine that you've got a big T-Rex tail. Notice what you notice. And we notice with curiosity and love. Oh, really aware of this. Or, oh, this is missing, or whatever you noticed. Just love it. Good.

Guided Meditation

Now we're going to move into a short guided meditation following our warmup of the vagus nerve and then our practice of grounding. So please enjoy three sounds of the bell. The sound of the bell is the voice of the Buddha within, calling us back to our true home. Listen, listen, listen to this wonderful sound. May all hearers awaken from forgetfulness and transcend all sorrow and anxiety.



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Invite your body to relax. And see yourself in a sacred circle or a circle of love. And for this practice, I'd really like you to stay on the ground in this circle. This circle can be light or can be ancestors or angels or spirit guides, or it can be trees, rocks, plants, and animals. Find yourself on the earth in a beautiful and safe place. It might be a place of your imagination or a place you've been to before. You can tune in with your senses if you care to, any sounds, smells, temperatures, again aware of the earth beneath your feet, the quality and what you notice, whether it's dirt or sand or grass, pine needles, just notice what you notice.

So we're going to begin here with safety. You can either look slowly to all directions or move in a slow way to make sure you're safe. To the left, to the right, above, below, front, around, and say to yourself, silently or out loud, I am safe. Anchor that in. And if you don't feel it, see what your body would like. I am safe. And just notice what you notice with your body as you anchor in safety. We are teaching our body and mind to notice safety, to be safety, to be peace. And now I want to invite you to bring to your circle in nature a resource for wellbeing for you today. A resource is something positive and lovely.

And some days a resource might be peace or humor or health. It might be a positive memory capsule or a favorite smell or song or person or pet. But a resource for wellbeing for you today. And welcome this, whether you see it or just know it. And this resource, whether it's doing a yoga pose or cooking with a friend, just bring that memory into your whole body, not just an idea. This resource for wellbeing.

And as you sit with this knowing or memory or even visualization of a resource, just notice what you notice with your body, a body that's been warmed up and grounded and in a safe place. See if you can bring the resource into your whole body, breathing it in, lighting up the incense of your heart. Noticing what you notice with your breath, with your heart. Maybe even that T-Rex tail. But notice what you notice. I just noticed I took what the kids call an elevator breath where there's that kind of catch and then your breath deepens. Okay, we give thanks for whatever resource for wellbeing appeared today. Person, animal, plant, mineral, memory. We took the time to savor and soak in it with our body, our mind. Coming back from the place on earth where you had your circle, thanking any guides that helped you finding your way back to where you're seated. Mother Earth, here I am.



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Dana

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