



One Earth Sangha

Session Eight: Guided Meditation

Transcript of EcoSattva Training 2023-24 Video

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Session Profile

Session Eight: Affirming and Resolving

[Session Resources](#)

Speakers in this video

- Mark Coleman

Transcript

Mark Coleman:

Beginning this meditation by finding a posture that's comfortable, where you can sit with ease, relaxation. Allowing the body to orient towards stillness. And lowering your gaze or closing your eyes and tuning to the felt sense of your body sitting. Sitting on the earth, your body as earth, resting on the earth.

Aware of yourself as part of the ecosystem in which you live. Part of the watershed where you abide. Permeating the body with awareness, feeling all the sensations as your body sits on the earth, as the skin is in touch with the air element, sensing temperature, coolness, warmth, moisture.



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Aware of the natural cycle of breathing. How each breath connects you to your immediate environment, to the air element, and to all the life that's photosynthesizing, releasing oxygen into the air, allowing us to breathe. Sensing how each breath can connect you to your local environment, to the trees, plants, grasses, all around.

Widening the field of attention to include the soundscape. Sounds inside, sounds outside, sounds of your environment.

And noticing how through our bodies, through your senses, always in connection, always in relationship with what's around us. And if you're sitting outside very immediately, directly sensing the sensory environment around you.

And extending attention further, perhaps through imagination, through remembering, but also through seeing and hearing and sensing and attuning to your local ecology, to what's around you. Around you in the house, in your neighborhood, what's living in the natural world around you. And beginning to attune to a sense of place. In all the various ways you're in connection with the nature around you.

And as you attune to the body, to the senses: seeing, hearing, sensing, also smelling. And being mindful that as well as knowing, we are always being known. We are always in relationship. There's always a reciprocal dance between ourselves and the life around us. So at times we're seeing and being seen. At times we're hearing and being heard. At times we're sensing--through the body, through touch--and at times our presence is sensed. Perhaps with the beings under us in the soil, in the ground. As well as smelling. We are being smelt, our scent is being known by creatures near and far. And as we inhale, as we breathe, taking in oxygen, as we exhale, that carbon dioxide at some point may become the inhale of another being, absorbed through leaves and grasses.

And feeling into what it's like to live with an awareness of reciprocity. That we live in a deep relationality with what's immediately around us in our environment. And we live in a relationality with a broader environment: illumination of the sun, warming earth and our bodies through space. Aware of the weather patterns and the movement of wind and moisture and rain. And now we can feel those experiences intimately with our body and our skin, reminding us that we're connected to macro conditions of elements, weather, stars.



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And now for a time, inclining your attention towards something, some experience in your local habitat that brings a sense of open-heartedness or joy or delight. Maybe the listening to the sound of morning song or watching the rain fall across the landscape or sensing the grounded tenacity of trees.

Letting your mind free associate and remembering experiences, connections with living beings around you. Maybe the winged world or the four-legged world, the grasses, wild flowers. And recalling some specific experience, some being—perhaps a tree, a stone, stream, a place that’s mossy and whatever’s alluring. Calling this experience, this being to mind, this place and noticing how you feel in your body and heart as you recollect an aspect of nature that you love, that you feel delight in, nourished by. Calling to mind aspects of this experience, this being that evokes curiosity or happiness or a sense of wellbeing, pleasure. Or may evoke a sense of gratitude and appreciation.

So letting this experience or any other experience, memory of the natural world around you, either directly in this moment or from recent experience, let those images, memories, felt-sense connections nourish your heart, rekindle that sense of warmth or love. And if the attention wanders, natural, just redirecting the attention back here: sitting, sensing, opening to your sense experience. Reattuning to aspects of nature that bring delight or joy of a sunrise or the awe of the night sky or the tenderness of a fawn or moss-covered stone.

In the times when we’re attuned to the natural world in an immediate environment or recollecting times and places where you love and cherish, there can also be a twinge—or more than a twinge—of tenderness or vulnerability or heartache. As we know that these beings, these places, these ecosystems we love are often struggling in the impacts of climate change, of drought, disrupted weather patterns, of lower air quality. And so we can also hold that within our heart. Can hold our fondness and care, love for the earth, and the species and beings that are here. And with—mindfulness trains us to be present and steady also including any tenderness, any sadness or pain in the heart.

And if that tenderness or pain is strong, drawing on the breath, taking some deeper, slower breaths to breathe into, breathe through whatever difficulty or tenderness is here. Remembering that a heartache comes from our love, from our love of this earth and all the beings here, all the places of beauty and wonder.



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Now returning to our heart's connection to place, to beauty, to the joy and wonder of nature. But making this reflection, contemplation, very specific. Calling to mind perhaps a favorite tree or particular grove or woodland that calls to you, or perhaps it's a stream or by the ocean. Or out amidst farm fields or meadows. Or could even be in the pleasure of your own garden. The light in a local park. Letting your nervous system bathe in the goodness of this place, of these beings. Or perhaps this meditation--you're already sitting in a place that is enchanting and heart-opening for you. So feeling into the goodness, the nourishment, the joy that the earth and all these places, these ecosystems, beings can bring.

And as you attune, feeling into connection, felt sense, relationship or reciprocity with these places, this moment, these beings, whatever's present for you in your heart. At times it can be helpful to ask a question to inquire, "What is the earth or what are these particular places, trees, forests, gardens, streams, oceans. What are they asking of me? What is the love and the care in the heart?" How does that evoke a sense of responsiveness? Perhaps a sense of responsibility and the care or compassionate action that may want to arise from that connection, from that love. How is the earth moving through you? How does the earth wish to move through you? What are these trees, these grasses, plants, birds, animals, mountains, oceans? What are they inviting within us? What may they be asking of us to engage, to live our life in harmony with this earth?

I'm not looking for any specific answer, but really just holding the question. Given one's connection, care, and love for this earth and the species here, how may we choose to respond, to act, to care? What does our love in action look like, feel like? How does it want to express itself?

So sitting quietly with this reflection, letting the environment, your own body and senses inform the question, inform the response.

Then as we draw this meditation to a close feeling the influence of this practice, of these reflections and inquiry. Noticing what remains or if there's anything wishing to come forth from this meditation that you may wish to share, to reflect on, to act upon. And it may be that what arises is to keep rekindling and deepening that lived experiential, sensory, reciprocal relationship with the earth, with the local ecology where you are, and letting that contact, that intimacy and that love inform how you are, what you say, how you act.



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And then finally, calling forth any quality of gratitude that may be here for the earth, for the wondrous and beautiful beings of this earth. And may gratitude nourish us. Remind us of the blessing of this earth and inspire us to engage, to take care.

Dana

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