

Course Overview - Session 1 - Kristin Barker

Transcript of EcoSattva Training 2025-26 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 1: Course Overview

Session Resources: [Session One](#)

Speakers in this video

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

Transcript

Hello everyone. Welcome to the overview of the course, and as you can tell by this background that there's a little something different going on. Apologies for the abundance of orange. I love the color orange, but even I can see this is a little much orange lighting, orange shirt, orange background. Yeah, it's a whole lot of orange. Okay, so this, as I was saying, is to give you a sense of the journey that we're going to be taking and then just some ideas at the end about for what each one of the steps in the journey contains as elements. So you've maybe seen this image that's behind me right now on the course page, the Arc of the EcoSattva journey. And the idea here is that this is a map of transformation. It's a movement from the conventional mind into places of the unknown and the uncertain and hopefully really well-designed with invitations and challenges at



every turn as we move through the more difficult deep parts of the journey into returning to more conventional life and hopefully changed by that.

So into the wild, deep into the unknown, the return sort of an archetypal idea. And I'm inviting you to give yourself to that journey to the extent that you feel safe doing and to really watch that, as I was saying in the previous video, to stay close to yourself, be with yourself, really be mindful of all that you are holding in. Certainly just the challenges of everyday life and work and family and navigating in this incredible time of acceleration. So this is, I want to pay homage here to Otto Scharmer's work theory. You especially that idea of preparing and then a letting go, a letting go, a letting go of being with uncertainty, a certain kind of hopefully potent unfamiliarity. And then letting come, letting come, letting come. Because as Aja Shah, a teacher in my tradition says, letting go a little. There's a little bit of freedom letting go a lot.

There's a lot of freedom. Letting go completely. There's complete freedom. And so we're not looking to escape the reality that we are in, but we are looking to unbind our minds from the ways that we become trapped and can feel hopeless and helpless and we're never doing enough or it's all too big, or the structures are just overwhelming or whatever that is, that really renders us and robs us of the natural potency, the living force that we are. So you can think of it as this, generally speaking, the shape of the journey, setting the conditions for transformation, allowing disintegration on one side as we drop in, and then making a home in that place. Really becoming comfortable with the uncomfortable emergence and a sense of onward leading this, if you will, on the other side. That's the general shape. So here we are in session one.

Hi everybody. Welcome. Here's what we're doing. Here's how we're going to do it. That's what we're doing here. So you heard from Lou and I, and you're also coming together to meet one another, maybe gathering, settling, getting to know each other if you don't know each other, figuring out how you're going to meet, what the container needs to be like for you all to share vulnerably and really build some trust and doing that really consciously and carefully, maybe making some shared agreements. We have shared agreements on our site that came from Vision Incorporated and then through East Meditation Center in Oakland. So just answering this general question, how do we want to be together? How are we going to structure ourselves? What do we need to hear from each other? What agreements do we need to make? Whatever those are, in order for us to fully be here as much as we can, knowing of course there'll be limits to that.



And those limits are often very wise. So for those of you participating individually, identifying here, beginning to look around, what's going to support me, as I was saying in the previous video, with what beings will I be in conversation, maybe a trusted friend, maybe an ecological companion on the road, maybe an ancestor, someone with whom you can really be sharing along the way. A real dialogue. Really want to invite that. And here in this first session, our guiding teacher is Jewel and really excited to have you receive her teachings for the opening of this course. So grounding us in the wisdom and practice tradition that we're inside of here, Buddhism and what it offers, how it might support us. So overall purpose of this one, arriving, setting the course and gathering. Gathering ourselves and saying, yes, we're going to do this and bring some intention to that.

Session two, preparing for the journey. Setting the conditions. It's like we're packing our bags, we're getting ready, we have a sense of where we're going, and now we really are going to pull together the resources that we'll need. We are likely in this course to meet certain kinds of fear, maybe anger, grief, other difficult emotions in investigating those with strong energies. We can discover the spiritual resources, we can rely on the spiritual resources that can help us hold those. So what resources will you turn to? Where will you go when the squeeze is on? Really good to ask that question. It's like that wisdom of titration. The Len practice, for those of you who know that practice in the Tibetan tradition of the breathing through the touching, the beautiful and the difficult, just with the in-breath and outbreath in modern psychology, it's touching maybe the healthy resources, the calming, the regulating, and then turning back towards that which is difficult.

All of these things are really wise. The touching of the earth. As I mentioned in the previous video in classic Buddhism, the refuges are here for us. Budha, Dharma Sangha, it might be your practice, your community, nature, friends, animals, home. So Dcha, formerly a Tibetan nun and leading through it all, a beautiful community called Dharma. DTA is teaching a lot of eco dharma these days, and she's going to be our guide and helping us set the conditions of relative safety. So vulnerability can be held, what can that look like? What can we rely on? What stories might we want to really hold in our hearts that can help us through this? And then we begin, the dissent begins. So we begin it meeting just this heart. How are you doing? How are doing, dear heart? As I mentioned in the previous video, you might find like many of us that there's a lot of complexity there, maybe even confusion.



We turn towards our own hearts and especially what we might call the eco distress that lives there, naming it, saying hopefully with compassion. Of course, there you are, darling. Of course this is difficult, and yet we are not completely bound by this difficulty. There is power here. The recognition of the complexity, that's where it begins seeing our fear and our grief, not as weaknesses, but as evidence of our connection and care. Our guide for session three, Britt Ray, Dr. Britt, Ray, really so fantastic. If you don't know her book *Generation Dread* will provide that as a resource for session three. But it's really such an important work I feel, and really points to so much of what's going on in this field of eco psychology. So we'll also begin to look at our conditioning, the narratives and myths that we carry as individuals.

They seem so true, but they can be looked at, teased, apart, investigated, and all of them very much connected with our social locations, the relative power that we do or don't have in the wider culture. So we're going to practice softness around phone vulnerability, especially at that stage, we're really looking at our own conditioning. It's that in-breath of, oh, how is it right here? What is it like to be this human right now? And then we widen to session four, reckoning with entangled structures, moving from the individual to the collective, moving to what's here, to how did we get here, how could this come to be seeing not just the individual mind, but the collective mind. It's conditioning. How it both is conditioned by the participants of that culture and conditions them that come after that, participate in that culture. Inevitably, inevitably taking up the lens of the wider culture.

It's part of what it means to grow up, to become a human that belongs in a culture that identifies and has been shaped by that culture, of course. So we'll look at how that collective mind has created forms of separative, consciousness, hierarchy, habits of objectification, of even exploitation. So yes, those isms that we talk all about, if you've been part of social analysis, racism, patriarchy, colonialism, extraction, exploitation, this mining of the earth, each other, even ourselves. The idea here is that ecological harm is inextricably tied to the systems of objectification. Taking the unfathomable fully dimension, autonomous other and flattening them into something that then once I have established my superiority to I can use and abuse because the mind has made the way for that quite possible. So participants, you are invited to explore with compassion. Compassion and also accountability, compassionate accountability for how these dominant structures relate to life, earth and all her beings.



Our guides for session four, fantastic. The late and we have honored him in the beginning of this course. Maybe you saw it on the landing page. We are dedicating this course to Dr. Larry Ward as well as a longtime teacher friend, deep supporter of the EcoSattva Training, Joanna Macy. But we have a talk from Dr. Ward from a couple of years ago for this session. So he and Peggy Ward are holding that really beautiful turning towards the entangled structures here too. Is Dr and Zen teacher critique Kenko, bringing their perspectives, especially those perspectives outside of the dominant white sensibilities, white led, white dominated sensibilities that have formed who we take ourselves to be in my country, in this country, the us, and helping us to see what we need to release and remember recognizing that separative consciousness as the running theme. So there's a lot there. There's a lot there. And as John Cobain, I think invites in his writings around mindfulness potential to meet suffering, we really can find and surprise ourselves that we can open to the full catastrophe with support. And that's where those supports that we've identified in session two come in, we can be with it, even recognize ourselves in it and not be overwhelmed. Now we're at the bottom with session five, deepest, deepest part of attending the nadir, the bottom of the arc. Here we're going to make the aspiration here is to make a home in uncertainty.

Being with all of this that we sense is happening right now, knowing we don't necessarily understand it all, that's not the point. But we have some sense of the ways that, because hopefully in session three we've allowed ourselves to notice all that is here. And in session four, all that is here. There's an openness, a readiness to say this is not solvable, but I can be with it and I can invite a deep listening because we might want to rush forward somewhere in the first four or even here in session five, into what are we going to do about it? We don't have time for this. Be patient with that part of yourself that is impatient, to be authentically helpful, necessitates a radical comfort with the unknown. We have to metabolize this heart rendering sometimes mind boggling situation in order to find that steady root that can say yes, nonetheless, I am here and it is not over.

There is, as I was saying before, joy and possibility here. There is something deep to trust. So calling again on those sources of wisdom, the wisdom traditions, the natural world, community, ancestors, moving in and out, titrating, breathing and listening for what has yet to be spoken. What is not yet no to this mind, to this heart. It can be quite beautiful to give yourself a lot of space there at the bottom of the nadir to really take some time. Maybe you'll establish as we suggest early in one of the opening sessions, the sit spot, the place that you return to in nature, A cushion that you will return to with a lot of intention throughout the course. Our guest here, Lama Wille, Blythe baker, really excellent in her



conversation with Adam LaBelle and guiding us in the art of learning to stay, to be with uncertainty and trust that the concentrated mind, the gathered mind, the settled mind is really the way that natural wisdom has always been discovered. And this includes you. Okay, so then we start this subtle move. We're not rushing to the top, not rushing to the surface just yet. Nope. We're going to slowly ascend. And in that we begin by discovering, creating and discovering the way. So this is the rising.

We're in relationship. We're attuning to the unknown, and we're going to open to maybe what is so much more than that. Conventional conditioning might suggest welcoming whatever arises, maybe from a deep sense of space and openness, availability from a sense of really possibility that can even turn mystical, a mystical, everything from the quiet place of listening to hearing what wants to emerge, what's calling me, what is calling me? What do I really most deeply care about? What are, if you will, the angels that I want to be in relationship with? It can be very practical, right? Even from the very beginning, you might get something very practical or quite magical, always personal. So our guest here is Adam LaBelle, and he's really going to support us in this space of emerging listening for what's available to this one, how this one is being called. Okay?

So we continue to pull things together. As Sharar says, this is the space of let come, let come, let come. Maybe more threads are being pulled into the loom expressing our awakening agency. What might it look like for me to respond in maybe nothing on the outside looks different in the ways that I am involved in the world, but it's coming from a different place. Maybe more settled or true more sense that steadiness itself is really valuable or there might be new activities that you want to become involved in, things you want to start or join, things you want to research. Great. How can I learn how this is a whole area that's really calling me, but I don't know that much about it. Great.

There's a sense of maybe you might want to call on courage because some of it will feel maybe quite even if you're going to be doing sort of the same things, bringing those different energies can feel risky. So the courage, the heart that can hold that, and a sense of lightness, experimentation to let yourself learn and grow. Whoops, not quite that. Whoops, not quite. Yep, yep. This whoop, there it is. Like really moving, listening for what the earth is asking. That's one way to say it. Maybe it resonates with you, maybe it doesn't. Something calling you to enact, to participate in a way that feels really authentic to you and somehow respects the journey that you've been on.



So here our teachers are Valerie Brown, Marcella Gomez, and Tim Ree. In conversation, Valerie and Marcella and I talk about being in community, working together, the spirit that we want to hold in working together in some kind of cause, even as that cause may be the community itself. And then Tim Ream, it walks us through how Buddhist ideas really can compliment and deeply address some of the real vulnerabilities in what we might call more classical activism. All the while really hopefully deepening that sense of groundness steady, maybe even devoted participation. That's the energy here. Session eight, finally affirming and resolving this is the closing. And so a lot of this will name together what we've been through, what we've learned, what still maybe feel so jaggy and confused in our hearts. Maybe ways that we might want to stay connected with those we've been on the journey with what new forms we might take.

It's actually the EcoDharma Explorations are here because people would come through this whole training and say, wow, we did this whole training together, now we need something to gather around. So that was actually, we started the EcoDharma Explorations so that groups could join on Sundays live or just watch the recordings together. But it might be a book that you want to read together or you might want to do something together. But I would say be careful. Don't put too much pressure on deciding what we're all going to do together. It might not, the going through the journey together doesn't mean that you're called in similar ways. So it's not to say that that's not a possibility. Oh my gosh, I would love to hear that. But just an invitation to be gentle careful with that one. And a lot of you will have ways that you're already engaged, but this idea of coming back together and affirming and strengthening what you've learned together.

Beautiful. Mostly it's to honor the connections, the human connections and the ecological, the connections with ancestors, with a sense of, oh, I have a different kind of connection with myself because I've thought more about my own conditioning. So Myokei is our teacher here and guides us in a ritual as well as Mark Coleman helping us affirm the ways that nature itself can provide that pulse to return to that the earth. Whether we live in cities or have access to so-called great nature, it's all nature. I find myself that I see that sense of nature being something out there and in the woods and the unbelt is really starting to dissolve. When I really look around that my built environment here, I can see nature everywhere in it, but that returning, that knowing is helpful to me and that's what Mark will help us speak to here as well as May.



Okay, with beautiful, richer ritual. So this is what Joanna Macy calls the going forth phase. We kind of acknowledge that all these birds have flown together and come to this tree, rested on this tree for a while, and then we fly away maybe being changed by having been together on that tree. So that's the arc of the journey. And yeah, invite you again to just really be patient, stay with yourself, stay connected, nourish yourself along the way. And it's definitely one of those things that will give you lots of videos and resources. You'll have to figure out how much of those you want to do. And pressures of life are always there. But it's one of those things where the more you invest in it, the more it will yield. So every session includes an orientation, an introduction, then one or two core teachings, a guided meditation for the support of your practice, written inquiries for you to work with maybe in your groups with each other, to use those as ways to work with the material for journaling, for diads and triads, for conversations with friends and even ancestors, trees, rocks.

Then there's also always follow-up resources. Like if you want to go deeper with what's been shared along the way. We always give pointers to what maybe what's been brought up in the sessions, and then a feedback form to receive your ideas about that session, how it could be better. So the invitation here is to really work with the material as much as you can, experiment with practice, with dialogue, with journaling, all of those things to really integrate this material. This is a process. It takes time, participation, and patience. Again, there's so much of solution orientation in environmental movement and environmental sensibilities. Here's what we need to be doing differently. Really invite you to set that aside. Go slow and don't even rush into the deep unknown acclimate first.

In closing, I want to say, Hey, we want to hear how it's going, what works, what doesn't work? What really resonates, really calls in your heart. Send us a quick email, connect at one or SGA or fill out the form at the bottom of each session page. Yeah, like I said, really resonating, really calling a really falling flat. We want to hear it. Your experience matters and shapes the training for others who have yet to participate in it. Deep gratitude to each and every one of the teachers who have joined us here. Really, my heart is, so every person that we did, we did it with, was really glad, really happy to be part of the training. Like no one needed talking into, no one ever said no to us, and I'm so happy about that. And I'm really grateful for their offering of their wisdom and always our guiding teachers.

Those who have held us to the beginning, many of them are actually participating in this, but they have held us from the beginning, Warner Sangha. And we are here only really because of their guidance and support wisdom to our foundation partners and all the



Sangha members who have supported us over the years financially. Literally, we could not have done this without you. And then finally, to you, the participants in this EcoSattva training for taking the risk for diving into this, not knowing what the heck is going to happen for taking your precious time and energy to engage in this journey. So I wish you the best. Please reach out if there's anything we can do to support you.

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.