



One Earth Sangha

A Path to Love and Regeneration

Losing the Taste for Destruction

Konda Mason offered this talk to participants in our September 2025 EcoDharma Exploration. Visit the program page for the full recorded gathering, as well as additional resources: [A Path Towards Trust & Equanimity](#).

It is so good to be here.

So this poly crisis, poly crisis. It's hitting hard. It's hitting hard. It's the climate realities. All the things that you mentioned, Carol, the right wing fascism in our country. I don't know how many people are here from out of the US, but I hope we have an international group here. This is about all of us.

There's so much going on that has gotten so many of us off balance, not knowing what to do. Does that sound familiar? I don't know what to do. Raise your hand. I don't know what to do. So many of us, right? You know, wanting to do something and you don't know what to do, or responding from a place of being off balance and a lot of fear. I know I have fear, and there are times when the fear grabs my heart. I'm not going to pretend that it doesn't. Fear.

And it's all real because this poly crisis, this interconnected web of catastrophes, is threatening our very existence, is real.

There is climate of course, as we know, that it's getting close to the place where the planet will not be livable.



One Earth Sangha

There's economic inequality that has its roots in so many of the things that are unraveling us around greed and money. And thinking about, that the opposite of poverty isn't wealth. The opposite of poverty is justice. I love that. Fascism is rising like, insanely, many ways here in this country. Racial injustice. It's like we're going back to the 1800s or before. It feels like to me the Confederates are in the White House saying, we didn't lose. We're not going to lose this time. So our liberties are being erased. All the gains that we've made over the years. Nationalism. Mass global breakdown in general. All of these things are what we're facing right now, and I just want us to reject a couple of ways of thinking about things.

One of them is that this crisis, this poly crisis, is separate. Each of these things are separate because no, they're not. It's reductive thinking. To put it like I'm only concerned about justice or I'm only concerned about climate, or I'm only concerned about economics and equality. They're all interconnected. Climate and social justice issues are all interconnected. We need to acknowledge the networks and relationships between all of it. Life on Earth in general is relational and networked. Everything touches the other. So this isolation of issues is a myth. It's false. When you touch one, you touch all of them. When you heal one, you heal all of them.

It reminds me of the Buddha with dependent origination. Those of you who know about dependent origination, basically it says that nothing exists in isolation, that something arises and it exists and it's dependent upon other conditions and phenomena. The universe is an interdependent web of phenomena and experiences influencing one another. Everything is in constant motion and flux. And that is the same with this poly crisis. So when we talk about one, we're talking about all of it.



One Earth Sangha

So one of the things that, there's so many folks who are working in climate and not doing anything with justice, and people working in injustice not doing anything with climate, and I really want to bust that.

So we are, as a whole, humanity has been disconnected from nature and we've been disconnected from each other, has led to this crazy ability of creating these things called hierarchies. Who's on top, who's on bottom, whether it's gender, race, country. We've created these hierarchies.

What ultimately leads to injustice, so all of it again, is just, if you follow the thread, you'll see everything is connected. The climate crisis is a systemic issue, and we can't solve it by focusing on just carbon capture or ... all that's important. But we can't do that. That can't be our only focus because it's all relational and systemic. And so our crises, underneath the climate crisis, underneath a lot of crises, has to do with greed. Money at the expense of everything. Money at the expense of everything. We are on this pathological unquenchable thirst to have more, more beyond what our planet can produce. And we have this one Earth, this one organism that's holding it all.

And so far, sometimes I think I'm going to wake up and we're falling out of the Milky Way, kick us out of the Milky Way or something. But here we are. We haven't tipped over. But what we know about the Earth is that there is this natural inclination, this impulse, this natural impulse, to right itself, to heal. Every organism has this natural impulse to heal, to be whole. And that is what I think of as regeneration. This impulse to regenerate wholeness and wellness. It's ingrained.



One Earth Sangha

I think about, you cut your finger and before you know it, there's a scab. The scab is coming to heal, and then it's, your fingers back. I work as a farmer, as Danny was saying in my bio, and I see it all the time with the Earth. The Earth. When we till and we pulverize the soil of the Earth, we disturb the microbial community that's underneath. The next thing you know is that it's covering itself. It's covering itself with what we call weeds. Weeds are a beautiful thing. It's the Earth covering itself. It's an impulse that is natural. So when interruption happens, life's response is to heal. Life regenerates life. I love how I'm able, by working the work that I do now. I'm so connected to the Earth in so many ways and I'm able to see way more than I did when I lived in Oakland and lived wherever, doing what I was doing in a building. It's amazing.

And the one thing that I've learned too is that we as humans can't heal the Earth. The Earth is going to heal itself. It's going to do its own thing, but we can be allies to her healing herself. Strong allies. Our allyship is vital. It's needed a lot right now. And we can't do it out of fear or imbalance or hate even. Because when you cut your finger, you do everything you can to create the conditions for healing. Like you'll go and get some salve and alcohol and bandaids, or even if you have to go to the doctor, whatever it is, but you create the conditions for your healing. You don't intentionally do anything to interrupt its healing. I mean not have this scab, take the scab off. We work towards healing. We create the conditions.

But when we are finding ourselves with hate in our hearts, we are actually destroying the conditions for healing. The Buddha said, hatred never ceases by hatred, but by love alone is it healed. That this is an ancient and internal law. And we know our planet and all life on Earth is hurting and WE need to create the



One Earth Sangha

conditions for healing. That's what allies do. If we stay off balance and stay in fear and hate, we can't heal like that. We can't.

The poet Robert Frost says, the best way out is always through. The best way out is always through. We can't go around this mess that we're in. Sometimes it feels like we're deer in headlights, and particularly with all the things that came down after January in this country, just one thing after the other, after the other, after the other. It's like a deer in headlights. But we have to go through it and to go through it, we have to fortify our hearts. We have to love harder, and we have to love harder together.

So this poly crisis is just a symptom of a broader crisis. It's not the thing. It's the symptom of the thing. The thing is disconnection and separation. So in order for us to create the conditions for healing, we have to focus on centering love. Why love? Think about it. Because love reconnects. Love reconnects. Think about when you're in a bad space with someone you love and you fall apart and this one's in that room and that one's in the other room and you're sleeping in another bed or whatever it might be, a friend, a lover. And then as soon as the love starts, the connection comes back.

Love reconnects. It's our crazy glue as humans. It really does. And if connection, if disconnection and separation is the underpinning problem and issue, then that which brings it back together is the answer. It's not something out there. It's right here, what we have to do first. At least we'll start working on it, right? Because when we reconnect, we regenerate life in a whole way. In its wholeness. The life that we have at home with our partner, the life that we have with our friends, our family, when we bring the love quotient in, that life. So that's actually the formula.



One Earth Sangha

Love equals reconnection, which equals regeneration. And we regenerate that which wants to be whole, whose impulse is to be whole. Y'all understand what I'm saying here? How it all works.

I want to think about, right now is a hard, hard time around Israel's leadership. I mean, it's the worst. And I want to lift up someone, a Jewish rabbi who I just absolutely love. And he passed away last year, Rabbi Michael Lerner. Rabbi Michael Lerner was a very progressive rabbi in Berkeley and Tikkun magazine. So I want to lift him up right now. And some of the work that he did. I followed him. I never met him. Well, I've met him online. I would show up at these online gatherings, and I'd be like the only non-Jewish person sometimes, but I loved him. And he wrote this book called *Revolutionary Love: A Political Manifesto to Heal and Transform the World*. I highly recommend it and I'm going to talk a lot about him because I talk typically about Buddhism and the Buddha or MLK, but I haven't lifted up a Jewish rabbi in a talk that I've had before. And I feel like right now is the time to do that, especially right now. I know he's had, oh my God, had such a hard time with what is happening in Israel before he passed.

So his whole thing is, he called about a revolutionary love consciousness is what we need to have to heal the world. A revolutionary love consciousness with the goal to create what he called the caring society, caring for each other and caring for the Earth. A lot similar to MLK's beloved community. And he did a whole prescription of how it works, the caring society, caring for each other and caring for the Earth. And he talked about compassion and empathy and this is his thesis. And I absolutely feel that this is workable. I think it's workable. I don't know what else is, to tell you the truth right now. It's such a mess. It's so hard.



One Earth Sangha

We have to, first of all, I'm going to ask you to reject the thinking of one other thing too. The one thing that I think is our biggest crisis, more than climate, more than justice, our biggest crisis is that we believe by and large that we are unable to change and transform the world. We believe we can't do it. That is our biggest crisis. And guess what? That's all we've done. That's all we've ever done is change the world, every moment, every day, big, small changes. That's all we do is change the world, but somehow we have it in our head, in our hearts that we can't do that. Yes, we can. Sí, se puede.

I'm thinking right now, I don't know if y'all have been paying attention to Nepal. Wow. Yikes. It's unbelievable what's happened there. In three days, the whole government has just turned over with the Gen Z. Now, I'm not at all suggesting the way that they did it. It was a lot of violence and people are dead, and that is not it. But talk about changing the world. The Gen Z folks got together. It all started with them taking away social media and stifling free speech, and they're like, I'm not having it. And within no time, everything has changed there.

That is not the way to do it. Again, not violence, but I do believe, and I've seen it and we've all seen it, that's all we do is change the world. So please let go of that thought: I can't do anything.

Michelle Alexander, who's the author of a book called *The New Jim Crow*, beautiful book, talks about the new Jim Crow, mass incarceration. She says, we need much more than a political revolution. We also need a moral, cultural, spiritual revolution and awakening to the dignity and value of each and every one of us. No matter who you are, where we come from or what we've done. It is this revolutionary spirit, a



One Earth Sangha

revolutionary love for all people and for life itself that will ultimately determine our collective fate, this revolutionary spirit, this revolutionary love for everyone that will ultimately determine our collective fate.

Michael Lerner goes on and he talks about this movement called the Love and Justice Movement, the Love and Justice Movement. And that Love and Justice Movement then morphs into the Love and Justice Party, the political party. I'm loving this, the Love and Justice Party. We know what's happening is all outdated. And that to me, when I think of those words, the love and justice party, I have the feeling of true democracy. Because it's going to embrace, he talks about embracing a new discourse of love, of kindness, of generosity, of awe. And how is he saying we should do this?

He's doing something that he calls the International Prophetic Empathy Tribes, that we create, internationally prophetic empathy tribes. Those tribes can start little and they grow, but they are prophetic empathy tribes. The mission is to increase the capacity of empathy that we hold, increase our generosity to create loving advocates for environmental, economic, and social justice. I'm going to read something from the book, a little excerpt. This is, can you all see this? This is the book, *Revolutionary Love*. Okay, and on page five, Cat, who is also the executive director of Tikkun, she says, in prophetic empathy, we speak to our collective responsibility to care for the wellbeing of each other and the planet. We speak to and about the suffering of people and humanity's need to restructure our society to address and alleviate that suffering. We say that there is something fundamentally wrong with the way our society is structured and that most people know it... . Prophetic empathy helps us overcome the lessons we've incorporated from the society that we live in a meritocracy, that there isn't enough, that we are alone and



One Earth Sangha

must act to protect ourselves from others who will otherwise use us to their own ends. Prophetic empathy encourages us to tap the truth that each of us comes into this world with a burning desire to manifest our most loving, kind, generous, just, playful and caring selves. That we want to connect with each other in caring, respectful, loving, and generous ways, and connect to the universe with awe and amazement.

That is the prophetic empathy.

Now, Buddhists, we talk about compassion more than empathy. Empathy, the difference is, empathy is understanding and standing in someone else's shoes, right? Being able to understand fully their emotions, their situation, and take it all in as opposed to separating. Compassion and empath, an empath is someone that can feel other people's pain. I think about anyone who's ever read *Parable of the Sower* and Olamina who takes on everything. As opposed to compassion.

Compassion. We say compassion is like that quivering of the heart at another person's suffering, where it makes your heart quiver and you're compelled to do something, to act. Compassion inspires action. And so I am going to take Rabbi Lerner's words of empathy and continue. But in there, there's that compassionate element. I think he means action when he talks about empathy.

And I think also when I think about the words, the prophetic compassion tribe versus the prophetic empathy tribe, somehow empathy feels like it is more approachable by more people. Maybe. Maybe I'm wrong, I'm still working it out in my head, but I'm just taking his words. Prophetic empathy tribe.



One Earth Sangha

So when I think about everything that Cat just, that I just read and what they're talking about, it's really paying attention and stepping into the sacred feminine. I think about Quan Yin, right? Avalokitesvara, the Bodhisattva of compassion in Buddhism. She who hears the cries of the world, she who hears the cries. She is known for her mercy, her kindness and her ability to relieve suffering. She who hears the cries of the world.

I have my Quan Yin statue. I think that creating an altar is a big part of this if you don't already have one. And to bring what brings that sense of empathy, compassion, love, radical, revolutionary love forward within you.

And this time of this administration, it couldn't be further apart. When I think about something that Elon Musk said, he said the fundamental weakness of Western civilization is empathy. We know we're on a different page there. The fundamental weakness of Western civilization is empathy. That's because when you have a lot and you want to hold onto a lot and you don't want to think about who doesn't have, that greed quotient just overwhelms your sensibility. So that's what, with this movement, this love and justice movement, is about.

And I want to be clear, not to be confused with, this is not like some pop spirituality or spiritual bypass, love and justice movement. It's not about this individual achievement of this inner mindfulness and equanimity. Like, I'm just going to sit on my cushion and work on my stuff and that's all I need to do. No, that's not what this movement is about. That's not what Buddhism is about. That's not what mindfulness is about. That's not what the Buddha was about. It's about taking, rearranging those molecules in us that allow us to be present, to feel our heart, to have an equanimous mind that can hold all things and then to take it into



One Earth Sangha

the world. That's the ultimate, is to take it into the world. This notion of change yourself and the world will be changed, not so much, if you are not taking it into the world. Because the world is not going to change if you are not aware of the capitalist systems, the racist systems of oppression, all that is happening. I mean, this is not, again, spiritual bypass. We must educate ourselves about the systems of oppression, about racism, about finance, about how all of it, the part that is destroying the planet, the media and all of its participation. This American hyper individualism. Or that social change must wait until I've worked out all of my stuff. No, we have to do it all together.

This love is rigorous. It's revolutionary love, right? And the way Rabbi Lerner talks about it, he goes into all of the systems of, that we have, all the institutions, the love and justice movement, how the corporations need to change their metrics, right? Right now the metrics are maximizing shareholder profit, money, separation. But no, you're saying, can we change those metrics to love, to generosity, to kindness, to ethical and environmental behavior, to social and economic justice. And he talks about the education system, the healthcare system, the business sector, all the sectors, how the metrics need to change and how we in our tribes, as we grow in these tribes, we can influence. We can influence it. I have a friend named Judy Komaki who, she's a behavioral psychologist and she created this metric for policing, for saving Black lives. And so right now, police, they are awarded by how many arrests they make. Trump had this 3000 undocumented people need to be arrested every day. That kind of metric is deadly. It incentivizes corruption and hate. But this rewarding system that she is creating for police departments, whereas rewarding good policing, deescalation of events that happen, coming out where nobody loses their lives ever.



One Earth Sangha

This is the kind of change that we're talking about. And when I'm talking about this, I want to add into Rabbi Lerner's theory of change. This idea of regeneration. Because we need to really understand the nature of regeneration. And I think that this love and justice movement needs to have regeneration as its religion, as its philosophy. Because regeneration is what life naturally does. We don't have to do anything. We just have to acknowledge it, get out of the way, create the conditions, create the conditions for regeneration, for humans, for Earth, for all species. But what we have done is we've interrupted that flow of regeneration.

When I'm calling for regeneration, I'm talking about Earth's natural ecosystems. I'm talking about how it integrates justice, climate action, of course, human dignity in all that we do. It honors that all the other species that we share this incredible planet with are vital to our lives, our ecosystem. And when I talk about regeneration, I have to talk about regenerative finance. Regenerative finance is a must. Money must be used to finance the future. The movement to make a more beautiful world must be funded. We need to redirect our funding that is harming towards healing. And I'm not talking about just harm reduction. A lot of people feel like, oh, well, I'm doing impact investing or ESG and all these things that are less harm. I'm talking about investing in a regenerative world. A hundred percent of your portfolio, should you have one. Regenerative finances at the bottom of it all has to happen.

And we all have a role to play whether we have a portfolio or not. I don't, but many people do. And some of you might. But what you do with your money, whether you have one or not, is about using it towards what puts life at the center of everything you do. Every choice you make, every product you buy. We have to leave this path of extraction and destruction and join this path of regeneration. And we get started



One Earth Sangha

now. We can start it right now. As a matter of fact, I'm going to ask that we do start it right now. We say we want to do something. We say we want to change the world. We say, I don't know what to do. What if we really tried creating prophetic empathy tribes?

It sounds crazy. What else are we doing? If these prophetic empathy tribes were powered by revolutionary love and the spirit of regeneration? Think about that. Feel into that. And I think in order for us to really create these tribes, I want to add another element that I feel is absolutely necessary, and that is the element of forgiveness. We must be able to let go and forgive ourselves and forgive others because non forgiveness blocks love. It blocks love when we have this element of non forgiveness. It's a stalemate, we can't go through.

So think about those places where you need to forgive yourself knowing that you're only human. We all make mistakes. It's okay knowing that others as well, they're only human. They have their context. They've made mistakes. Forgiveness has to be a part of this. That's a whole 'nother talk. I could go down that hole, rabbit hole, but that is a whole 'nother talk. I'm happy to have it. The importance of forgiveness.

So I want to end this talk right now with a quote by Rachel Carson. So I was in high school when *Silent Spring* came out and it changed my world. I, um, a bit of a radical. I bet you didn't know that. And I, in high school, did this whole environmental moment and Earth Day, the first Earth Day, I made sure we did all these things. She was an incredibly important person. The work that she's done and the awareness that she's made. She said, the more clearly we can focus our attention on the wonders and realities of the universe about us, the less taste we shall have for destruction.



One Earth Sangha

The more clearly we can focus our attention on the wonders and realities of the universe about us, the less taste we shall have for destruction.

Focus and attention on the beauty, on the love, on the joy. Yes, all this stuff is happening. It's distracting. Know that it's happening, stay on top of it. But we are going to create, if we don't create another world, when this thing topples, I'm talking about now, I'm talking about this regime. This is our opportunity. This is our opportunity to really create the democracy, the love and justice movement that we really want. Now's the time because it's all going to change and shift. And there we are, and there we are with each other, with groups of us, with tribes of us. Imagine that. If your mind is saying it's not possible, check it out. Look at the mind.

It's possible. It's possible.