

Lama Surya Das  
Week One, *Inter-Meditation: How to Co-Meditate with Everyone  
and Everything*  
June 1, 2015  
“Make Me One with Everything”  
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Welcome, friends, to Tricycle's Online Retreat. I'm going to be talking today, and over the next four weeks, about my new book, *Make Me One with Everything*, Buddhist meditations to awaken and see through the illusion of separation. I'm going to be talking about the subject of inter-meditation, co-meditation, and some other words that I've coined; convergitation, mergitation, momitations for moms with their sleeping children, natural meditations with nature, and so on. But before we begin, let's begin the slightly traditional fashion with a moment of mindfulness. Take a breath, you deserve it.

Ahhh, how sweet it is. Co-meditating together.

Ahhh, let go. And let come and go. Let be. That's the secret—not trying to suppress or get rid of anything, or avoid anything.

Inter-meditate, co-meditate with whatever is, whatever appears, beyond the illusion of separateness.

And I bow to the Buddha, the light, the divine in your seat. Don't overlook it.

Today I am going to be talking about what co-meditation and inter-meditation are. I am going to be talking about seeing through the illusion of separateness, recognizing that we are never alone; or put another way, we are all alone together here. That none of us can do it alone—take my word for it, I have tried. We need others to get enlightened, as His Holiness the Dalai Lama always says. Because we need to develop empathic, warm compassion and loving kindness, mutuality, and reciprocity. Which is our subject here of inter-meditation, co-meditation. It is shared spirituality, and awakening together.

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This is not just self-help, self-growth. In the Buddhist way of thinking, there is no separate, permanent self. And it can't really be helped. It's time to awaken together in our increasingly interdependent interconnected world. This is the antidote, this is the panacea and remedy for loneliness and alienation; overwhelming feelings. Because now-ness, awareness, incandescent presence, mindfulness, rather than mindlessly sleepwalking through life like heartless, soulless zombies. This now-ness awareness, this incandescent presence called mindfulness by many, is the ultimate therapy. It's the ultimate path of recovery from the human condition of discontent, dissatisfactoriness, and malaise.

I'm going to be covering various subjects, and I welcome you to this retreat. It is a time to go deeper, not just go inwards, but toward mutual reciprocity. Inwards and outwards; learning to, as we say in Tibetan, ride the breath, breathing in and breathing out together. And not just with each other or with our friends or loved ones or kindred spirits. Of course, that's part of it. But with everyone and everything, every moment in life. This is like learning how to meditate, co-meditate, commune, communitate, mergitate, with all and everything, every moment. Meditation for people who think they cannot stop, be still, stop thinking, or be quiet. This is much deeper and bigger, more gorgeous than just trying to stop thinking or be quiet. Inner peace and harmony, great peace as we call it in the Buddhist dharma tradition, nirvana peace is beyond the dichotomies of noise and quiet. Inner stillness is beyond the dichotomies of movement and inaction. Beyond action and inaction, the sublime truth or freedom and peace is realized.

I'm going to be covering a few points of meditation, co-meditation, inter-meditation, and inter-being. As I talk about in these teachings, in this book, in our course, we start with what is inter-meditation and co-meditation. We move on to relationships with others, with partners, colleagues, pets, nature, our inner feelings and moods, the inner weather. And then we move onto outer relationships and the relationship with—however you put it—that which is beyond us, yet imminent in each and all of us, your higher power or whatever you call your divine, Buddha nature.

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We are going to learn how to deal with the deeper issues of life and death and loss and grief, such as divorce, separation, illness, and tragedy. We will talk about why bad things happen to good people, as well as why good things happen to bad people if you worry about or resent that. We can deal with all these feelings through inter-meditation, co-meditating with our feelings. That way we are embracing and integrating them in a healthy way rather than suppressing or repressing or rejecting those aspects of ourselves, the dark areas of our psyche. And seeing more deeply into non-duality, non-separateness. How even the shadows are nothing but light.

Through these co-meditation practices, we learn to inter-be as the great master Thich Nhat Hanh has coined it. Inter-being, inter-meditating with all and everything, every moment. And realize, as we say in the non-dual tradition of *tantra*, the true co-meditation of mutual reciprocity. How to ride the breath and ride the energy, and share and go beyond the separateness that we make in our mind between inside and outside, self and other, liking and disliking, and so forth. As we start to realize that everyone is a Buddha by nature, we see the light in everyone and everything. And we truly comergitate with them through love, through opening our heart, seeing through the illusion of separateness.

I love to do it in nature. For example, we will learn how to co-meditate with the wind, with the sky, sky gazing, mergitation, co-meditating with the natural elements. I love water. When I sit near the ocean or a lake, a waterfall or a stream, I don't have to look inwards and try to concentrate and stop thinking. The waves do it for me, they meditate me, co-meditating with the water goddess, the water element. When I practice eye gazing with a partner or a loved one, similarly losing myself in that intimate embrace; or with a pet or a sleeping child, it is momitation.

Hugging is one of my favorite co-meditations. There's actual scientific research on this. Neuroscience is checking it out at UCLA; they've decided that three seconds is the average time of a hug, which is the time it takes for the oxytocin—the so-called love hormone—to get flowing

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in the brain. And that hugging someone you know—is welcoming it and makes that flow. It is not an unwanted physical assault. Hugging is a wonderful, natural co-meditation that anybody can do. And who doesn't have three seconds, even if you're busy and you don't have a half an hour in the morning to set aside for your spiritual practice.

I have a great joy, and this is a joyous meditation. It is not just trying to get away from it all or selfishly think about myself or just go inside and cut off the world. It is more like releasing and breathing out and in with everyone and everything, every moment with nature in all its forms, human and otherwise. And realizing, as we say in *tantra*, the whole world is my body; the whole universe is my body. All beings are my heart and soul, mind and spirit. One beyond separateness, and even notions of oneness. One from the very beginning, inseparable, interconnected, interwoven, inseparable. Even death is just a real illusion. We will get to that.

This breathing out and breathing in, is in a way the basis of this book. Although it is not really, but it is a form, it is a practice that we call in Tibetan, *tonglen*—sending and receiving the breath. But it is also the energy, or giving and taking, or putting yourself in the other's place, which helps us see through separation and reduce selfishness. It is part of the *lojong*, or attitude transforming mind training, the spiritual refinement practices of the universal vehicle Mahayana Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism. *Lojong*. Mind training. But it's really attitude transformation. Feeling what others feel and being moved to resonate similarly, like tuning forks; the tuning. That's an example of co-meditation. Feeling what others are feeling, and being moved to help. Empathizing. Empathy leads directly to compassion and compassionate action. From me to we.

So co-meditation is not just about being quiet or closing our eyes and going inward. We can do it with our eyes open, ears open, all of our five or six senses open, breathing out and letting go, merging into things. From I to we. From me to we. From meditation to we—weditation. I like that. From meditation me to weditation. We. Wedded together, inseparable, from the beginning. Breathing out and in, releasing into things, rather than trying to keep them out and get into our

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cocoon, our moated fortress of egotism, of selfishness, of self-separateness. This fresh and original, perhaps new—there is nothing new under the sun—but timeless and new, way of releasing into things and letting things in. It is really a great way to bring a spiritual practice, whatever you call it, mindful awareness, into every aspect of daily life. Integrate with daily life. Integration is the name of the game today. And it does not mean just trying to be monastic, alone, or separate in order to do spiritual things or be quiet. Of course, Sabbath is a great practice, and we can do it together. It is a day of rest, day of retreat every week, or shared silence.

But integrating into every aspect, every moment of daily life at home and at work—this is the great inter-meditation, community, and communitation. Togetherness. Love. Shared spirituality. Spirituality for couples, and shared spirituality. We can do co-yoga, yoga together. We can also be with our higher power, however we conceive it. Or meditate, co-meditate with Buddha, Jesus, God, whoever our archetype, our icon, our highest ideal is, in person or in spirit, wherever we may be. Whether they are alive, dead, or transcended, co-meditating with the Dalai Lama is a great thing to do when he is here, but also in spirit with his picture or his image and presence of mind. Whoever, whatever our archetypal icon, our highest vision of the higher power, inner power, deepest power as we might say, is.

So now we have talked about how to make me one with everything, and see through the illusion of separateness and some practical as well as theoretical aspects. I will be covering that more, so join me next week, and for the following weeks of this retreat, as we look at it from different angles. We will look at it from outer, inner, and secret or subtlest—as we call it in Tibetan—analysis. The outer behavioral, the inner attitude or consciousness level, and then the secret subtlest like non-dual or inexpressible, really mystical, spiritual, authenticity level. It is so hard to put into words.

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And some traditional and some more modern examples and practices, and some of my Bite-Sized Buddha Bites, one liners. Like it is now or never as always; like letting go means letting things come and go, letting be. These one-line slogans or aphorisms that can help us day to day to remember to live in a sacred manner, inseparable from others and from our life, one with our life, one with our karma, one with our dharma.

And we will go forward into talking about spiritualizing our relationships, our workplace, dealing with grief and loss, and the bigger issues also of the divine, of the infinite. But very practically I hope, so we can all awaken together like backyard Buddhas, like neighborhood bodhisattvas, like anonymous saints and beloveds together in our beloved community, our sangha, our *satsang*.

So join me and think about using my book, *Make Me One with Everything: Seeing Through the Illusion of Separateness* as a workbook for these practices and these ideas. And we're going to look at it from many different points of view, past and present. So join me.

We are going to end now with a little traditional chant, a Tibetan chant, prayer, and blessing, a moment of mindfulness, so co-meditate with me and all of us together, all joined here in spirit. Joined heads and hearts, hands, bodies, and minds for a better world, for a better future, or sustainable future on this endangered planet that we share. The future that begins right now.

May all beings everywhere with whom we are inseparably interconnected and who want and need the same as we do, may all be awakened, liberated, healed, fulfilled, and free. May there be peace, harmony, and happiness in this world. And may we altogether complete a spiritual journey all the way home, together. *Emaho*. Amen.