

A Year of Service to the Earth

resources and suggestions

for individuals and groups

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Suggestions for Groups and individuals Dedicated to a Year of Service to the Earth

Preparation: As a Group, Create a Mission Statement and Goals

- "2007 is likely to be a pivotal year for each of you..... know that the work you accomplish on behalf of earth is critical"
- "The point of forming a group is not to argue with the conventional reality..... Rather it is to enter the conventional reality with a combined and unified mind force that is capable of *transcending* the conventional reality."
- "Spend some time together talking about your goals or about why you're drawn to do this work but also spend some time meditating on actively preparing the earth and her inhabitants for the window openings that are coming this year."
- Realize that "for those spiritually mature enough, 2007's energy will likely accelerate the process of touching their own potentialities in a way that should be more direct than previously experienced."

General Group Suggestions:

- "Forming small groups of people to do the work actually enhances the efficacy of your meditations.
 - It also creates a shared love for earth and a shared dedication to be of some benefit to the world in a complicated time.
 -it allows for spiritual community to grow and develop and it offers a sense of shared accomplishment."
- "Meet with your group once a week.....discuss the insights you've had with your meditations or just in thinking about your joint work.....share your progress.....encourage one another.....Try to hold a field of celebration for the successful outcome you are together envisioning."
- "If it's not possible to meet every week.....try to have phone contact with each other at least that often to participate fully in joint service."
- Follow suggestions in the transcription and calendar notes found on the web.
- Meet more often during times of intensification.
- As a group, decide on a prayer or invocation to be said daily by all members to expand and increase the collective energy

- This is an important time....a time to give in appreciation for all we have received. (We can't give something that we don't already have.)

Suggestions For Practices And Meditations Relevant To Service To The Earth

(Also see Appendix A and C)

- Know that you came with a Divine mission. Live life as if that is true. Realize that "*you*, like every other profound spiritual master, has come to liberate sentient beings from their suffering,"
 - Apply "basic sanity": let the drama go, using highly engaged neutrality.
 - Know that enlightenment is trying to shine through the chaos and drama
 - Be high witness without falling prey to the gyrations of the collective ego mind.
 - Project "goodness of mind" (bodhichitta)
 - Teach the mind to project in a manner that results in enlightenment
 - Employ discriminating mind (In 2007, you will begin to see how your thoughts are able to manifest *instantly*)
 - See the application of karmic imprints as you witness the events of life
 - Discriminate between the causes of joy and the causes of suffering on behalf of the earth
 - Operate from a place of universality and what is good for the planet
- "Scrutinize what the mind clutches..... [and realize] the power of the mind to draw the objects of its focus."
 - "Consciously create positive visualizations on behalf of earth, and fill them with positive outcomes."
 - Remain open to the shifts and challenges of the moment
- Look through enlightened eyes and see beyond the trance of non-love.
 - Realize you had a part in "dreaming" the world as you see it
 - Love the Earth (situation/group/person that is a trigger) into wholeness
 - Dream a new Earth---see the perfection that is waiting to happen
 - Recognize that you came to facilitate and support change on the planet
 - Know that the Earth and humanity must be liberated from the stories of the past, and from the compulsion to hold history
 - Focus your intent on evolving consciousness
- Focus on purification
 - "Ponder the murky areas...., within the collective experience at this time, which no longer serve the planet....."
 - Make a list of those points of distortion, or non-clarity
 - Envision yourself as the planet, and see these areas as afflictions that are ripe for healing.
 - As earth, imagine going to a master eye surgeon to have the afflictions removed, much as cataracts are removed.

- Purify individual thoughts, words and actions
 - Focus on harmony, peace, honesty, integrity, and purity in the inner and outer world. Look for the Pure Land
 - Watch thoughts and projections: pull back those projections that are not helpful
 - See each other as enlightened beings in our Buddha Nature
 - Meditate on and visualize an enlightened planet and planetary society
 - Om Ah Hum Meditation: purifies body, speech, and mind. (See *A Dose of Karma*, and Appendix C)
 - Tonglen Meditation: Bring the energy to be purified into the fire of the heart, and send it out as a blessing to Earth. (See Appendix C)
 - Dedicate purified thoughts, feelings, words and actions to the liberation of all sentient beings
- Arise with the intention to live in such a way as to be worthy of the life you have been given and the resources you consume.
 - Be thankful for your fortunate birth and access to the Teachings and the Spiritual Teacher
 - Live with the recognition that this life is a precious gift
 - Invoke the appropriate leaders for the Aquarian age. (See *In Times of War*)
 - Invoke seeing the Truth every morning
 - Demand that the mind tell the truth with clarity
 - Ask "what am I learning?"
 - Tone: sing the vowels in the beginning of the day to open self and release patterns
 - Ah—opens
 - E—releases patterns, cuts through, energizes the system
 - Oh/U—comforts
 - lh—cuts through
 - (The vagus [wandering] nerve will carry the vibration into all areas of the body)
 - Talk to Gaia....tell her how much you love, appreciate, and support her.
 - Mindfully acknowledge, with gratitude, the beauty and gifts of Earth.
 - Effort to see things differently during the day. When driving, see how the traffic flows. See the bigger picture. Ask, how can I see this in a different light.
 - Start a journal. Dialogue with self regarding what is going on internally.
 - Focus on the issues of each quadrant.
 - Ask /review: Where did I feel violent/corrupt/tainted today? (or, where did I experience violence/ corruption/ pollution). Why am I experiencing this? How is it that I haven't gone beyond? What stops me from feeling peace/honesty/purity? Why do I see things this way?
 - Note where you see changes in the outer world: where is the "good news" in your personal life and in the larger world

- Journal about your use of the 6 perfections (see notes in Appendix C)
- Write down the Thought of the Day. Have it available upon waking. Come back to it mindfully during the day
- Read the Memoranda for the month, and listen to each Teaching with reverence and devotion to the Earth. Apply the Teaching to the best of your ability.

Other group and individual activities relevant to engaged spirituality. How to hold the Earth and her inhabitants in the highest of possibilities with joy:

- Focus on Purification:
 - Purify our “footprint” on the Earth
 - Reduce, Recycle, Reuse, Repair
 - Buy less, and buy “green”
 - Create a group recycling project
 - Purify the focus of what is going on the world. What/Where is the good news? How can we transform the “old” news by seeing it differently?
 - When hearing disturbing news, look beyond the narrow perspective of conventional reality, and hold the possibilities from the bigger picture. What is happening here from the expanded perspective?
 - Good news is happening all the time (most of the time) it simply isn’t seen as “newsworthy” because it is the norm.
 - Look for and collect the good news regarding peace, integrity, and cleansing the Earth (write about it in a journal, or on your computer; make a file from clippings, etc)
 - Bring a piece of “good news” to every meeting. Have the group focus on that news and see the good from it expanding. (what we focus upon we magnify)
 - Contact lawmakers on important issues
 - Vote
- Participate in enjoyable learning and bonding activities
 - Have pot luck dinners
 - Have meetings outdoors
 - Take hikes and field trips as a group to enjoy nature’s beauty first hand
 - Walk an outdoor labyrinth together and then meditate
 - Be fed by the nurturing beauty of the Earth and take time to express your gratitude
 - Engage in Service Projects

- Find a project the group wants to adopt for the year.....sponsoring a Tibetan Nun, or contributing to a microfinance loan project, the Sierra Club, the Nature Conservancy, the World Wildlife Fund, the Environmental Defense fund, etc.
 - Volunteer as a group for a local clean up project, trail improvement project, etc.
- Plant a garden, or do a beautification project in honor of the earth
 - Plant literal and virtual seeds of peace
 - Create art projects to honor the Earth
 - Create collages representing your relationship to Earth
 - Get out in nature and try drawing or watercolors of scenery
 - Or: Take photographs. Use the process to appreciate the beauty of the earth. Where do you focus?
 - Collect beautiful pictures of the Earth from calendars and magazines for inspiration in your personal and group environment
 - Collect inspiring pictures of the Earth from the internet (see sites below)
 - Make a file and play it as a slide show for your personal use or in the background during groups
 - Use the "Blue Marble" picture of earth for a screen saver or desk top wallpaper
 - Sing songs/read poetry and prayers together
 - Take an entire session, or part of every session to read/share poems, invocations, and prayers for Earth
 - Use Good Humor/ Curiosity/ Neutrality
 - Bring in healthy jokes and cartoons about the times. See the sense of the absurd and laugh.
 - How can we be curious and highly engaged with neutrality as we see the events around us?
 - Play games and use visual aids of the earth
 - Know Your Planet: generate questions from Blessing Earth, other Teachings, the news, etc. and create a Q&A game
 - Use games and products from www.earthseeds.net (Earth images available on: posters, post cards, flags, puzzles, a "blue marble" globe, etc.)
 - Find other products (lighted globes) etc. to use in earth education and appreciation
 - Celebrate
 - Create rituals and celebrations for the transitions and growth that we are experiencing at: the equinoxes and solstices, the New Year, the end

- of the year of service, etc.
- Acknowledge the power of this time, and the power of our participation in the healing process
 - Have a space for spontaneity and being in the moment

- Learn through internet sites:
 - April 14 national day of actions on Global Climate Change
 - www.stepitup07.org,
 - A totally grassroots effort with about a thousand local actions, in every state in the country, sponsorship from the Sierra Club, National Resources Defense Council, and National Wildlife Federation, to the National Council of Churches, and a sympathetic article in the [New York Times](#).
 - Visit the site, see who's doing actions in your area

 - Google Earth: to see the Earth, and specific locations, from Space. Get the big picture.

 - www.mother-earth.org
 - Morning Earth is an antidote to environmental despair. Morning Earth helps people renew and enhance their innate connections with the natural Earth.
 - Morning Earth Daily Photo/Poems celebrate nature. They are emailed daily free to subscribers.
 - Website contains introductions to Ecology, both text and graphic
 - Artist/Naturalist Pages celebrate the work of artists whose primary concern is our connection with Nature

 - NASA image sites: copy pictures of Earth and the vast universe in which she lives
 - Blue Marble, the Next Generation:
 - <http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/Newsroom/BlueMarble/>
 - Visible Earth: Pictures <http://visibleearth.nasa.gov/>
 - A catalog of NASA images and animations of our home planet
 - Earth Observatory: [earthobservatory.nasa.gov/Newsroom/NewImages/...](http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/Newsroom/NewImages/)
 - Earth from Space: <http://eol.jsc.nasa.gov/sseop/EFS/>
 - Astronomy picture of the day: <http://antwrp.gsfc.nasa.gov/apod/>
 - If you go down a bit from the picture of the day, you can click on Archive and spend the day going WOW! Very inspiring!

 - For fun and perspective: an enjoyable illustrated ditty packed with information about our place in the universe
 - <http://dingo.care-mail.com/cards/flash/5409/galaxy.swf>

 - The Power of 10

- o <http://www.micro.magnet.fsu.edu/primer/java/scienceopticsu/powersof10/index.html>
 - o Florida State University produced an amazing java applet tour of the cosmos, macro to micro, with each artist conception changing in size by a factor of 10. Travel from 10 million light years away to our galaxy, solar system, earth, a tree leaf, and eventually to the sub-atomic level. [The Power of Ten](#).

- To calculate your impact on the climate in terms of the total amount of greenhouse gases you produce, visit www.climatecrisis.net

- For ideas on how to reduce, recycle, and reuse: www.epa.gov/msw/reduce.htm

- For information on removing your name from mailing lists: www.newdream.org/junkmail or www.dmaconsumers.org/offmailinglists.html

- For information on eating local: www.climatebiz.com/sections/news_detail.cfm?NewsID=27338

- For information on carbon offsetting organizations: www.NativeEnergy.com/climatecrisis

- To learn more about climate change:
 - www.weathervane.rff.org
 - www.environet.policy.net
 - www.climateark.org
 - www.ucsusa.org/global_warming

- To learn where politicians and candidates stand on global warming: www.icv.org/scorecard

- Buddhist Peace Fellowship: <http://www.bpf.org>
 - Publishes the magazine: [Turning Wheel](#) that focuses on engaged Buddhism

- Learn through films and reading (see Appendix B for suggestions)
 - Bless the Earth as you see and read about it's fragile beauty
 - Allow yourselves to be entertained and inspired as you focus on the "big picture".
 - o See a movie together, and then discuss its implications. (or watch a given movie individually and come together as a group to discuss it later)
 - o Read part or all of a book, and discuss it in group sessions
 - Enjoy the process

Consider the “astronaut’s view of Earth”

"Astronauts who see Earth from space come back as changed people," says Carnegie Mellon University mapping specialist Randy Sargent in the January 2006 National Geographic.

We can't all go up into space, but many astronauts have returned from space to tell us how their view of the world has changed. Here are some of the things they had to say about their remarkable views of the spaceship we call Earth:

"Suddenly, from behind the rim of the moon, in long, slow-motion moments of immense majesty, there emerges a sparkling blue and white jewel, a light, delicate sky-blue sphere laced with slowly swirling veils of white, rising gradually like a small pearl in a thick sea of black mystery. It takes more than a moment to fully realize this is Earth . . . home."

- Edgar Mitchell, Astronaut, USA

"For the first time in my life I saw the horizon as a curved line. It was accentuated by a thin seam of dark blue light - our atmosphere. Obviously this was not the ocean of air I had been told it was so many times in my life. I was terrified by its fragile appearance."

- Ulf Merbold, Astronaut, Federal Republic of Germany

"Sometimes you can see how there is erosion, and you can see how there is deforestation. It's very widespread in some parts of the world. We would like to see, from the astronauts' point of view, people take good care of the Earth and replace the resources that have been used. The atmosphere almost looks like an eggshell on an egg, it's so very thin. We know that we don't have much air, we need to protect what we have."

- Eileen Collins, Astronaut, USA

"The first day or so we all pointed to our countries. The third day we were pointing to our continents. By the fourth day we were only aware of one Earth."

Bin Salman al-Saud, Astronaut, Saudi Arabia

"The Earth reminded us of a Christmas tree ornament hanging in the blackness of space. As we got farther and farther away it diminished in size. Finally it shrank to the size of a marble, the most beautiful marble you can imagine. That beautiful, warm, living object looked so fragile, so delicate, that if you touched it with a finger it would crumble and fall apart. Seeing this has to change a man, has to make a man appreciate the creation of God and the love of God."

- James Irwin, Astronaut, USA

"A Chinese tale tells of some men sent to harm a young girl who, upon seeing her beauty, become her protectors rather than her violators. That's how I felt seeing the Earth for the first time. I could not help but love and cherish her."

- Taylor Wang, Astronaut, China/USTBL