

AMSSA Conference *Speaking the Silence*, Saturday 10 August 2019

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An environmental education, spirituality and advocacy ministry of ISMAPNG

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Rahamim *Speaking the Ecological Silence* Morning Meditation:

Composed by Sally Neaves

To begin our meditation, I'd like to invite everyone to spread out - to find some personal space and to all face the East as the sun greets us for a new day. Take a moment to become aware of the sights and sounds of our surroundings here.

(Allow a few moments for the group to find a spot and settle).

(Ring the bell)

Closing your eyes, put your hands on your heart and focus attention on your breathing. Just watch the breathing as it happens, in and out. Note the sensations at the nostrils, chest, abdomen and feel the sunlight and gentle breeze on your face. Feel the weight of your feet on the ground, gravity holding you in place...

Note that your breath is happening all by itself – as though you are being breathed by life... just as everyone around us here, in this city, in this planet now is being breathed by life....

Consider that every fourth breath you take is possible because the Amazon rainforest. Take a moment to give thanks for the Amazon. Imagine your breath is a ribbon of air connecting your body with the Amazon as you breathe in and out...

In the words of Pope Francis, "Nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves or as a mere setting in which we live. We are part of nature, included in it and thus in constant interaction with it."

Let's take a moment to breathe...

(1 min silence)

Now open your awareness to the suffering that is present in this world... for now, drop all defences and open to your knowledge of that suffering... allow images to arise as concretely as you can... This is Earth's silent cry...

A place or species under threat...

Earth's thin and fragile atmosphere – now an open sewer for our dirty greenhouse gases...

Precious topsoil from the West arriving in the sky in great dust storms...

The death of a million fish in a stagnant river...

You are asked to do nothing for now but to breathe it into your heart like granules on the stream of air... This is Earth's silent cry... it is within us... let's take a few minutes to stay with this ...

(3 mins of silence – use timer).

This is Earth's silent cry... our anguish is an integral part of the grief of our world...

In the words of the poet Rilke who uses the image of a great bell, "Let what batters me become my strength" ... (moment of silence)

Now take a moment to consider all the people immediately around you where you stand. These people also feel an aliveness to Earth's silent cry. Consider how good it would be to work together... on a joint project toward a common goal... perhaps something big. Feel what it would be like to plan and plot together... celebrating and consoling each other... speaking the silence... open to this possibility...

(1 min silence)

In silence, open your eyes and greet those around you without using words. Open to their great unique power to make a difference in this world...

Holding the silence, we will now walk back inside to begin our day.
(Ring the bell)