

# **SHAMBHALA MANDALA**

## **The Mandala Council**

### **Notes of the meeting of 18 February 2005, Halifax, Nova Scotia**

There were a large number in attendance at this first meeting of the new Mandala Council, the day after the 2005 Congress ended—estimate about 75 people, including center directors, practice center directors, members of the Sakyong's Council, and representatives from other bodies within the mandala.

#### **Introductions and getting to know each other**

First, people arranged themselves into a “map of the world” physically distributing themselves around the room in accordance with where they live. Then each person introduced themselves from their spot in the “map”.

Next we arranged ourselves into a circle in the order in which we came into the Shambhala mandala, however we defined that. The oldest and newest members were side by side and it fanned out into a circle from there. One person noted that halfway around the circle, at the pole, were the people who joined in 1987—noting the significance that most on that side of the room had met Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche, while the half on the other side had not.

We paired off and spent a bit of time sharing the most inspiring moments of community that we had experienced with Shambhala.

#### **Vision of Mandala Council**

Pairs formed into groups and considered what they hoped for from the Mandala Council. Some responses:

- reflect and work on the themes generated by Congress
- an early-warning system re problems developing in the Mandala
- demystifying the international mandala
- allowing a sense of belonging to a larger community, reducing isolation in centers as they plug into the whole
- better communication; a trust that everyone's wisdom is being heard
- a manifestation of “who we are”
- people can feel included
- education of leaders in the mandala
- a representative body that can take some decisions, vs an open Congress
- an opportunity to infuse masculine and feminine principle into the culture and style of Shambhala
- a place to develop regionalization

#### **Next steps**

The same groups discussed what were the most important things that the Sakyong's Council should focus on between now and the next Congress, based on what had transpired at the Congress. Then groups contributed their thoughts into a master list, which was prioritized by each person having three votes to allocate to what he/she thought were the key issues to focus on.

The list of areas to give attention to, in order of number of votes:

Look at recommendations from the topic groups  
Develop authentic leadership model for everyone/conflict resolution  
Regionalization: share resources to increase effectiveness; governance  
Clarify job description for Centre Warrior, better transmission of Shambhala forms  
Look at factionalism issue /more information on delegs and feminine principle might help  
Improved communication  
Family and children/social action working groups' recommendations implemented  
Membership policy/clear statement of what Shambhala is and isn't  
Diversity  
Translation process  
Financial policies re affording programs/programs in poor countries  
Practice policy/appointing senior teacher  
Mission statement for each level of governance  
More attention to the arts at Congress  
What shared services will we have and how will they be provided?  
Funding model  
"Don't forget Gampo Abbey"  
Simplicity/transparency  
What are the binding factors of our community?

### **Next Congress**

The two key questions are:

Should the next Congress be in 2006 or 2007? How often should the Congress be held in general?

And

Should it always be in Halifax, or perhaps alternate locations, with Halifax every second year?

Though votes were held on these topics, it was observed that the people in the room were the members of the Mandala Council that had the least trouble getting themselves to Halifax, and therefore might not be a representative sample. It was decided that the full Mandala Council would be polled over the next couple of months for decisions on these questions.

A group of people offered to help organize the next Congress: Alice Dan, Alice Haspray, Arawana Hayashi, Fred Jaben, Dian Martin, Betsy Pond, Ron Renz, Janet Solyntjes.

An email list is being set up for the Mandala Council and further information will come out using that channel.