



S H A M B H A L A

Dear Centre Directors, Teachers, Group Coordinators and Practice and Study Leaders:

Greetings and cheerful New Year! Winter in Kalapa is nearing the end and, as some like to call it, sprinter is approaching. Spring is elusive here, though the crocuses seem to know when it's time to make an appearance.

Since our last newsletter (over a year ago!) there have been more changes, new initiatives, as well as several online mandala-wide talks by the Sakyong – the most recent being the first of the Three Pillars talks.

The one recently given was for the Pillar of Practice and Education. The video recording of the Sakyong's address to the Pillar of Practice and Education is now available here: [http://www.shambhalaonline.org/archives/125956\\_1.mp4](http://www.shambhalaonline.org/archives/125956_1.mp4)

The next talks will be for the Pillar of Government, followed by the Pillar of Protection. For more information about these talks and other upcoming events go to - <http://www.shambhala.org/community/SpecialEvents.php>

As previously announced, some changes to the order of core path programs have been made. See the recap below so you can advise your members appropriately about the next steps along their path.

A series of Meditation Instructor Gatherings have been scheduled across the mandala for already authorized instructors (tantrikas only for now) to deepen their understanding and refine their skills. More information and dates for these first gatherings are below.

With recent budget cuts, the Office of Practice and Education now consists of a full time International Program Manager, Maggie Colby, and a half time Associate Director, Jill Scott.

There continue to be a number of projects we simply do not have time to address, most urgently the updating of various manuals to reflect the changes in the past few years. We do, however, post addendums on the website with up to date information.

This and the hundreds of emails that we try our best to respond to in a timely manner fill our days to overflowing. I recently did a bit of research into numbers related to the work we do. Since my computer was purchased in 2006, I have responded to 17,245 emails

(about 3000 a year)!

If my responding to your emails is a bit slower than in the past it is because of the reduced hours and ever increasing tasks to attend to. As always, thank you all for your understanding and patience.

If you have questions about **practice and education and can't find the answers in online resources**, please contact either [Jill Scott](#)

If you have a question about **a core path programs that you can't find an answer to on the [advanced program page](#)**, please refer to [Maggie Colby](#) (who has written a brief letter to you all below).

This newsletter is one of our various tools for communication. To ensure that the messages and newsletters from the Office of Practice and Education get to the right people, **please make sure that those people at your centre who are directors, practice and education directors and coordinators, teachers, and meditation instructors are appropriately designated in the Shambhala Database.**

So that everyone receives important information, we sometimes include information that may have been sent to you in other contexts.

This newsletter is a bit long, but we hope that you find it helpful.

With warm regards,

Jill Scott

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*From the International Program Manager:*

March 5, 2013

Dear Noble, Hard-working Practice leaders,

I hope this finds you all well. I'm well -- getting fully introduced to my first Halifax winter! Needless to say, I'm looking forward to the summer.

I am also currently planning for the summer, and working with the various Land Centers to staff the 2013 international programs.

This summer, we hope to create staff mandalas for the large core path programs that consist of experienced Directors and Assistant Directors, combined with aspiring teachers and newer MI's, AD's and general staff. The hope is that this more balanced mix will not only enrich and support the program and participants, but will create an atmosphere

where the path of learning and mentorship can unfold.

One of the biggest challenges to the success of international programs is having enough good, keen, tuned in staff. As Practice leaders in your various centers, I would ask that you keep an eye out for potential staff candidates for these summer programs, and encourage them to apply to staff if they can. Of course, if you yourself have time, please get engaged and come staff a summer program!

Staffing these beautiful programs provides a wonderful opportunity to explore creating Enlightened Society. There, one can hear the dharma, reconnect to practice in a group setting, and deepen one's own path and training, while supporting the path of others. It's a lot of work, but really good work! And it's fun.

The staff for Enlightened Society Assembly and Warrior Assembly, I should add, is not charged anything by the Land Center.

**I have included the staff application links for Enlightened Society Assembly, Warrior Assembly and Scorpion Seal Assembly (for those of you attending an SSA this summer) in the “Programs” section below. Please share accordingly.**

I hope to hear from some of you!

With great appreciation and warmth,  
Maggie Colby

International Programs Manager, Shambhala

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## **In This Issue**

- 1. Curriculum**
- 2. New Order of Core Path Programs**
- 3. Vows and the Shambhala Sadhana**
- 4. Programs**
- 5. Meditation Instructors and Teachers**
- 6. Practice News**
- 7. OPE Miscellany**

## **Curriculum**

### **Way of Shambhala**

#### **Requirements**

Now that the transition period has past, students are now required to have taken the Everyday Life Series of courses, Levels I-V, the Basic Goodness Series and the Rigden weekend before proceeding to the Sacred Path program (WOS 2). Sacred Path weekends can be taken before or after Enlightened Society Assembly

If these courses are not being offered at your centre or group, students can register to take them through [Shambhala Online](#). Contact [Barbara Zielinski](#) for more information. If taking the Rigden weekend is not possible before the start of Great Eastern Sun, then students can move ahead with a commitment to do Rigden weekend when it is next offered.

The Basic Goodness series is currently in a pilot phase with some of the classes available through Shambhala Online

#### **New Basic Goodness Series**

The intention of this series is to create an opportunity to personally and experientially explore some of the most important questions arising in our own lives.

The Basic Goodness Series will be open to all. That is, we have designed the Basic Goodness Series to be another gateway. We are trying to make our path and centres more accessible, without as many hurdles and prerequisites. Therefore, these courses will be open to the public; students do not have to complete Rigden or the Everyday Life series before participating.

We strongly recommended that students first receive basic meditation instruction during an open house, a Heart of Warriorship program, or a Learn to Meditate Day. It would also be good if a student could attend a Meditation in Everyday Life course before entering the Basic Goodness Series. However, these are not prerequisites.

### **New Order of Core Path Programs**

As you know, changes have been made to the order of core path programs and to the preparation for each.

As Acharya Lobel wrote recently , we are working to find the right balance between depth and breadth, especially given that our time is increasingly limited as householders living in the world. We have so much to offer, and we want our path to have integrity, authenticity, and the right amount of rigor. This is the depth.

At the same time, our offerings must respond directly to the social and ecological challenges that mark our world. There is a need for breadth and reaching many people. The Shambhala teachings provide a unique way to unite breadth and depth.

We are also still working on bringing together what had been two separate streams: the Shambhala Training path and the Buddhist path to seminary. These are now one, single journey.

The following is an overview of the path. You have already received a more detailed description of the view of each phase. The full document is posted on this web page - [shambhala.org/members/ps/](http://shambhala.org/members/ps/)

The Sakyong describes four phases in the logic of the Shambhala path. Each of these phases represents a sequential step on the journey.

#### Overview

#### **Phase 1**

The Way of Shambhala: Levels 1-5, Everyday Life Series and Basic Goodness Series

Unconditional Confidence: The Rigden

Shambhala Vow

1 Weekthün

#### **Phase 2**

Enlightened Society Assembly

Enlightened Society Vow

Period of Service, Household Practice

Shambhala Sadhana Practice

#### **Phase 3**

Sacred Path weekends

Golden Key and Golden Key Course (forthcoming)

1 Weekthün

Warrior Assembly

#### **Phase 4**

2 consecutive Weekthüns

Entering the Vajra World (and Lineage and Devotion)

Sacred World Assembly

Primordial Rigden Ngondro

Rigden Abhisheka

Werma Sadhana

Scorpion Seal Assembly

Scorpion Seal

**Please note:**

- Warrior Assembly is required for acceptance to attend Sacred World Assembly. Warrior Assembly or Kalapa Assembly is required to attend Rigden Abhisheka. We will not consider applications from students for Rigden Abhisheka who have not attended one of these programs and will only rarely consider exceptions for Sacred World Assembly.

**Advising Students and Submitting Recommendations**

- Understand the order of courses and programs that provide a foundation and sequential presentation of teachings that will stabilize a student's meditation practice and deepen their understanding.
- When you meet with your students, ensure that you know the preparation required for any program they may be interested in attending. It is not helpful to recommend a student who is missing prerequisites and not fully prepared to take the next step on his/her path.
- We consider exceptions on an individual basis, but only if the student has a clear plan for completing the requirements, has other equivalent experience, and there aren't too many requirements missing.
- Please ensure that the student you are advising is psychologically stable enough to participate in an intensive program.

**Go to this web page for more details about core path programs -**

**<https://apas.shambhala.info/>**

**The New Vows and The Shambhala Sadhana**

**The vows**

The Sakya composed two new vows while on retreat in Nepal: **the Shambhala Vow** and **the Enlightened Society Vow** that were introduced and offered during the Shambhala Lineage Festival in the fall of 2011.

**The Shambhala Vow** is an acknowledgement and proclamation that basic goodness is the essential nature of humanity. Further, this vow celebrates one's connection to the Shambhala community and to the practice of meditation as a way to realize that goodness

more fully. It is open to people of any religion who have made such a connection to Shambhala.

**The Enlightened Society Vow** goes further, stating that basic goodness is the nature of society itself. Taking this vow is making a commitment to work tirelessly towards realizing a society of greater goodness.

**From now on, the Shambhala Vow will be introduced at the Rigden Weekend and the Enlightened Society Vow will be introduced at the Enlightened Society Assembly, along with the Shambhala Sadhana.**

### **The Shambhala Sadhana**

On March 17-18, 2012 the Shambhala Sadhana, a new practice, written by Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, was formally introduced to the Shambhala community during a two day retreat.

The Sakyong composed this practice to support our Shambhala and Enlightened Society Vows by deepening our personal and social connection with basic goodness.

From now on, this sadhana will be introduced to students at Enlightened Society Assembly (ESA).

If you have students at your centres who are either tantrikas or who attended Sutrayana Seminary (before Enlightened Society Assembly was introduced) and were unable to take the new vows and/or attend the Shambhala Sadhana retreat, you may schedule another opportunity for them to take the vows and receive the lung from an acharya.

They can be invited to attend a day-long Shambhala Sadhana program. This should, ideally, be led by an acharya, but could be led by a shastri if an acharya is not available.

Elements of the day will include one or more of the following four, *as needed*: Shambhala Vow, Enlightened Society Vow, Shambhala Sadhana lung and Sun Transmission (the last two are always given together), one or two practice sessions, and feast or a celebratory event.

This day-long program can also be held in advance of a Shambhala Sadhana weekend program or longer Shambhala Sadhana program or intensive.

### **Programs**

You may submit applications and recommendations for core path programs on this web page - <https://apas.shambhala.info/>.

**How do I submit a recommendation?**

If you have been asked to submit a recommendation, go to the link above, click on the program the student is applying to, scroll down and click “submit recommendation” at the relevant land center and follow the prompts.

**Please note:** You must have a Shambhala Member's account for the website to access these applications. If you are having trouble with your existing login or need to create a new account, go to this web page - <http://www.shambhala.org/community/passwords.php>

We strongly encourage people to apply for and register (once accepted) for programs as early as possible. Applications can be canceled later if necessary.

**Deadlines for submitting applications will be no later than one month before the start of a program.** This will help the host centre plan well in advance to have everything necessary for a successful program.

As well, it will give accepted participants enough time to study in preparation for the program.

### **Program Staffing:**

*Enlightened Society Assembly*

*Warrior Assembly*

*Scorpion Seal Assembly*

Staffing these beautiful programs provides a wonderful opportunity to explore creating Enlightened Society. Here, you can hear the dharma, tune back in, reconnect to practice in a group setting, and deepen your own path and training, while supporting the path of others. It's a lot of work, but really good work! And it's fun.

To apply to staff Enlightened Society Assembly, please go here:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dDl3d2Rvd052S1hZaW5nelpkRlIVaEE6MQ#gid=0>

To apply to staff Warrior Assembly, please go here:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1HYOeEqHW7PN9TLaj3A15y-aknd5g8nOyxVvr7z8eRUc/viewform>

If you are attending a Scorpion Seal Assembly this summer as a participant, and wish to staff, please apply here:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1zd1IoVQU3a4F3\\_iauGBHu8kJq-7vaPSOov-\\_0h2HvLU/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1zd1IoVQU3a4F3_iauGBHu8kJq-7vaPSOov-_0h2HvLU/viewform)

### **Membership Policy for Core Path Programs**



As a reminder, membership in a Shambhala centre is required for anyone applying to Enlightened Society Assembly (Sutrayana Seminary), Warrior Assembly and any core path program that follows these.

Students who don't live near a centre can become a member of Shambhala by contacting Adrienne Gauthier at [ace17@cox.net](mailto:ace17@cox.net)

## **International Database of programs**

Many people write to us wanting to locate programs that may be scheduled in various places around the mandala.

The Shambhala.org website has a searchable database of programs by category and region. We encourage all centres hosting programs to which people may want to travel to – meditation instructor/teacher trainings or vajrayana practice intensives, for example – and who are **using the Shambhala web template**, to remember to enter these programs into the Shambhala Database so they will appear on this page - <http://www.shambhala.org/programs/>

Go to this web page to enter a program - <https://shambhala.name/calendar.php>

## **Meditation Instructors and Teachers**

### **Meditation Instructor and Teacher Trainings**

Kalapa Acharya Adam Lobel and Acharya Dale Asrael have requested that no new Meditation Instructor Trainings or Teacher Trainings be scheduled for the next year. They are working on revising the content of these trainings to be more synchronized with the current curriculum and path and to develop programs that are more comprehensive, deeper and ongoing.

### **Teacher authorization upgrades**

**Please note:** We recognize that there are areas where centres do not have many authorized teachers or because of their geographic location don't have easy access to teachers at other centres.

At this point, we are unable to consider individual requests for upgrading authorizations, but Shastris or Practice and Education Directors from regions where the lack of advanced teacher trainings or the limited number of authorized teachers causes hardship (during this transition phase) in putting on the desirable number of programs can contact the Office of Practice and Education to work out a personalized upgrade plan for an individual teacher.

**This must be initiated by a Shastri or Practice and Education Director and only because of the needs of the region and not for individuals' personal aspiration to progress further on the teaching path.**

## **Meditation Instructor Gatherings**

The Sakyong's address to MIs on March 10, 2012 was the first in a series of Meditation Instructor gatherings and events. This talk is still available online - Click here to register - [http://www.shambhalaonline.org/details\\_program.php?id=86776](http://www.shambhalaonline.org/details_program.php?id=86776)

This talk is for Shambhala Assistant Directors, Meditation Instructors, and Shambhala Guides

COST: It would be much appreciated if centres and groups could offer \$20 to Shambhala Online to cover the cost of providing this broadcast.

A teaching gift to the Sakyong may be offered here  
[http://www.shambhalaonline.org/details\\_gifts2.php?id=13589](http://www.shambhalaonline.org/details_gifts2.php?id=13589).

With the new curriculum in place, please continue to explore your own understanding and questions about a unified Shambhala and Buddhist path. A useful resource is *Shambhala and Buddhism: A Teacher's Sourcebook*, available from Shambhala Media for MIs and teachers - (<http://www.shambhalamedia.org/Default.asp?Redirected=Y>). This sourcebook gathers much of what the Druk Sakyong said about the relationship between Buddhism and Shambhala.

Familiarize yourself with the Shambhala Care and Conduct procedures.  
(<http://www.shambhala.org/congress/>)

## **Practice News**

### **Kurukulla Abhisheka**

The Sakyong will be offering the Kurukulla Abhisheka twice in 2013. Please go to the advanced programs page to find out about dates and locations.

The main reason the Kurukulla practice was introduced by the Sakyong was to magnetize people with a connection to warriorship in Shambhala. His Majesty specifically invited leaders in the community to receive the practice when he gave the empowerment in Boulder.

There is no practice requirement for Kurukulla. Rinpoche wants people to make their own relationship with the practice. There are no mantra requirements or number of

sessions to do. It can be done in a long session or a relatively short one. In some centres, where there are a number of Kurukulla practitioners, there is group practice and a monthly feast along with occasional longer practice sessions. This has grown organically because of people's interest in the sadhana.

## **Office of Practice and Education Miscellany**

### **Vow Paper**

In part because of the shortened hours and the difficulty of responding to last minute requests, we have created a “watermarked” version of the knot of eternity paper to use for bodhisattva and refuge vows..

You can download the paper on this web page, under Practice and Ceremony Protocols and print what you need - <http://www.shambhala.org/members/ps/>

### **Special Events**

#### **Spring Nyida Day address by the Sakyong**

The Sakyong will give an online address in honour of the spring nyida day at 2pm Atlantic time, Saturday 30 March.

**Online broadcast:** Register your centre or group for the online broadcast (whether you plan to attend live or watch the recording):

[http://www.shambhalaonline.org/details\\_program.php?id=125960](http://www.shambhalaonline.org/details_program.php?id=125960)

More information about this event will be posted here as it becomes available.

#### **Parinirvana of the Vidyadhara Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche –**

The parinirvana of the Vidyadhara, Chögyam Trungpa, Rinpoche is commemorated on April 4 (though many centres choose to hold their events on the closest weekend). It is a day for the Shambhala sangha to gather together to celebrate the life and teachings of the Vidyadhara.

In general, the intention is for the sangha to do practices we have received from the Vidyadhara. In particular, students practice *The Sadhana of Mahamudra*. Trungpa Rinpoche received this sadhana while he was on retreat in Bhutan in 1968 and it has been practiced by Shambhala students since he introduced it soon after his arrival in North America.

This year, there are several additional elements that you may choose to incorporate to celebrate the life and teachings of the Vidyadhara: Go to this web page for more details <http://www.shambhala.org/community/SpecialEvents.php>