

7. Annual Observances

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7. Annual Observances

Scheduling Annual Observances

The following events are listed in chronological order, beginning with Shambhala Day. Vajradhatu follows the Tibetan calendar issued from Dharamsala, rather than the Tsurphu/Rumtek calendar.

Shambhala Day: Tibetan new year (losar)

Milarepa Day: 14th day of the first Tibetan month. Centers have the option of celebrating this day on the nearest weekend day, to encourage attendance.

Spring nyida day (equinox): circa March 21

Parinirvana of the eleventh Trungpa Tulku: April 4

Vaishakha Day: 15th day (full moon) of the 4th month of the Tibetan lunar calendar; often falls on the full-moon day of May

Midsummer Day: summer nyida day (solstice), circa June 21

Commemoration of the Vajra Regent: August 22 (his empowerment as Regent) or August 25 (his death)

The Harvest of Peace is celebrated on the fall nyida day, circa September 21.

Parinirvana of H. H. Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche: September 27

Parinirvana of H. H. Gyalwang Karmapa XVI: November 6.

Children's Day: winter nyida day (solstice), circa December 21

Mamo chants: End of the Tibetan year, beginning 11 days before Shambhala Day and lasting for 10 days. The chants are not done on the very day before Shambhala day.

The Rites of Passage for eight-year-olds is celebrated on either the fall or the spring nyida day (equinox)

Shambhala Day

All Shambhala centers celebrate Shambhala Day, which is the new year (Tib: losar) of the Tibetan calendar. In keeping with the Tibetan custom, centers are encouraged to schedule further celebratory events during the following week. The Shambhala Lodge ordinarily plans an event on Shambhala Day itself or on the following day, depending on whichever is more convenient.

Preparations

1. Shambhala Meditation Centers should construct a simple throne with a back, the seat about 30 inches high, covered with gold or yellow satin. A brocade skirt around the throne is optional. Place the throne on the left side of the shrine where the guru chair normally sits; move the guru chair and side table further to the left. Place a framed photograph of the Vidyadhara, draped with a khata, on the throne. Shambhala Meditation Groups may use the guru chair, perhaps draped with brocade, instead of a throne.
2. Place a nice tray, draped with a khata, on a table next to the throne, for people's Planned Annual Giving donations.
3. Centers need special telephone equipment to receive the Shambhala Day address. They must pay a certain fee for the telephone hook-up. Consult Vajradhatu Recordings in Halifax for further information.
4. Set up a lhasang at the shrine-hall door, just inside or outside, so that everyone who enters passes through its smoke. For this you will need: an incense burner filled with sand, charcoal, and powdered juniper. Ask one person to continue adding juniper to the lhasang while people are entering.

Morning Ceremony

Shambhala Day begins with a morning ceremony in the shrine hall. Tea, coffee, and muffins could be served.

1. *Roll down.* The gatekeeper rings a 20-minute rolldown on the gong, while chanting *The Four Dharmas of Gampopa*, to call the sangha to the shrine hall and begin the new year.
 2. *Chants.* The umdze strikes the gong to begin the ceremony. Perform the usual morning chants, followed by the longevity and rebirth supplications.
 3. *Shambhala Day Address.* It is traditional for the Sakyong to address the international sangha by means of a telephone broadcast. The time for this will vary according to the time zone of your center, but will be close to 12 noon Atlantic Standard Time. Each center will need to adjust its morning schedule according to the time of the address. This ceremony begins with 108 rings of the main gong, the Sakyong's processional entrance, the slow chanting of The Supplication to the Takpo Kagyü and the Short Lhasang Chant (Read by the Halifax umze), followed by the Sakyong's address.
 4. *Honoring the Vidyadhara.* In Halifax, the sangha receives a blessing from the Sakyong after the address. At Shambhala Meditation Centers and major contemplative centers:
 - Coordinator bows to the throne/chair
 - Places a ceremonial scarf over the seat of throne or chair, in front of a (optional) photograph of the Vidyadhara and/or the Sakyong.
 - Touches his or her forehead to the seat of the throne
 - Others line up, bow and touch their heads on the throne.
- Note:* Others do not present a scarf. In Shambhala Meditation Groups, the coordinator and others may simply bow to the photograph of the Vidyadhara.
5. *Support for International.* After bowing to the shrine or throne, all offer their Shambhala International Annual Giving donation and yearly pledge on a tray set up on a table in front of the shrine. (See below for details of fundraising organization.)
 6. *Practice Books.* After presenting donations, all receive their new practice books from the Coordinator or Practice Coordinator. Old practice books are no longer collected; individuals should dispose of their own.
 7. *Sangha brunch.* After the ceremony, the sangha could have brunch together at the center, in deleks, or in smaller groups at people's homes.

8. *Sadhana of Mahamudra.* After brunch, all should reassemble in the shrine hall to chant *The Sadhana of Mahamudra*.

Note: The sadhana may be scheduled earlier in the morning, before the address, if this is more convenient.

9. *Further celebration.* Centers are encouraged to schedule further events during the day, which emphasize celebration of family and community, upliftedness, and delight.

Gift Offering

Shambhala Day traditionally provides an opportunity for community members to make a financial donation for the upcoming year to the Sakyong and Shambhala International. Guidelines for this part of the day's events will be sent to Directors from the Shambhala International Development Office.

Milarepa Day

In general, the guidelines, shrine setup, and personnel are the same for Shambhala Meditation Centers and for smaller groups. However, centers which are not Shambhala Meditation Centers *do not* use the Milarepa sadhana, *Glorious Flame of Wisdom*, to begin and end the day.

Guidelines for Participation

The following guidelines should be announced in advance.

1. It is appropriate for participants to come for the entire day, approximately 9:00 am to 9:00 pm. Of course, there are exceptions to this. For example, parents with young children may be able to come for only part of the day.
2. Nice casual clothes which are comfortable for sitting are appropriate dress.
3. Once the practice has begun, a mandala is established in the shrine hall. Participants should enter or leave the hall only at break periods, not during chanting. It is best if participants are able to open the *Glorious Flame of Wisdom* mandala in the morning, and close it in the evening by chanting the Milarepa sadhana during the group practice. If this is not possible, it is acceptable for participants to enter and leave the shrine hall (during breaks) without having opened or closed the mandala.
4. When getting up to leave and when re-entering the shrine hall, practitioners should recite the Vajrasattva mantra to themselves. Those who do not know the hundred syllable mantra can recite the short form, OM VAJRASATTVA HUM. This procedure applies until the end of the day.
5. Breaks are scheduled about every 1 1/2 hours. During breaks, one can leave the shrine hall to use the bathroom and get a cup of tea; tea can be brought into the shrine hall. During breaks, functional silence is observed. Alternatively, the break could be eliminated and tea served in the shrine hall.

Shrine Hall Setup

1. A mandala plate with five piles of rice is placed at the center of the shrine. This represents the mandala of the three jewels and the three roots.
2. The seven outer Vajrayogini offerings are arranged at the front of the shrine. Just as in Vajrayogini practice, the order from shrine right to shrine left is: saffron water, flower, incense fence, votive candle, saffron water, naivedya torma, musical instrument,. A piece of fruit or a cookie can be used in place of a naivedya torma. No other tormas are necessary on the shrine. If you like, the usual offering bowls of pure water can remain on the shrine. In that case, they should be placed behind the more elaborate offerings described above.
3. A thangka, a photograph, or a rupa of Milarepa should be placed on the shrine, if available.
4. Arrange practice tables and cushions in front of the shrine, facing participants, for the reader and the umdze. Place a clock and a small bowl of rice for the mandala offering on the table. It would also be thoughtful to provide a glass of water at each seat.
5. If your center is large, microphones should be set up for both the reader and umdze.
6. Set out copies of *Glorious Flame of Wisdom*, copies of the short mandala offering verse, and a bowl of white rice near the entrance of the shrine hall.

Personnel

The chanting is led by two people: the reader and the umdze. Different pairs of people should be scheduled for these positions during the day.

1. *Reader.* The reader reads the prose sections of *The Rain of Wisdom*. A senior vajrayana student should be the reader in the morning, in order to give an explanation of the ceremony (see "Opening Remarks," below.)
2. *Umdze.* The umdze leads the chanting of the *Glorious Flame of Wisdom* and of the songs. Only the umdze needs a mala.
3. *Gatekeeper.* The gatekeeper prevents people entering or leaving during the reading.
4. *Tea servers.* People should be scheduled to prepare and set out tea in the reception area for breaks during the morning and afternoon sessions. If someone knows the recipe, it is nice to

prepare chai, spiced black tea with milk. At some centers, it may be convenient to serve tea in the shrine hall itself.

Opening Remarks

This day celebrates the enlightenment and life example of Milarepa. The celebration is an all day guru yoga practice, which includes chanting the Milarepa sadhana and reading the songs of the lineage fathers in *The Rain of Wisdom* (Tib: *Kagyü Gurtso*).

The actual title of *The Rain of Wisdom* is *The Essence of the Ocean of True Meaning*; the subtitle is *Bringing the Rain of Wisdom, the Spontaneous Self-Liberation, the Blazing Great Bliss, the Quick Path to Realization of the Supreme Siddhi, the Vajra Songs of the Kagyü Gurus*. These songs are the direct personal voices of the lineage holders, sharing their experiences of the path, practice, and realization. In chanting them, we attune our minds to theirs, invoking the inspiration of their sanity and devotion. This collection was first compiled by Mikyö Dorje, the eighth Karmapa.

Sadhakas should perform the visualizations that are described in the Milarepa sadhana. Ngöndro practitioners should visualize the lineage tree in front, with Milarepa in the center. Other practitioners should not try to visualize at all, but should connect as much as possible with a sense of openness and devotion to the lineage as a whole and to Milarepa in particular.

Outline of the Ceremony at Shambhala Meditation Centers

1. Opening remarks by the reader.
2. Chant the Supplication to the Takpo Kagyü and the Heart Sutra.
3. Sit for 20 minutes.
4. Chant *The Glorious Flame of Wisdom*.
page 1: "Instantly I become . . . skull cup." Chant the visualization, then skip to page 3, beginning with "I and all other beings . . ."

page 3: Recite the refuge and bodhisattva vows, 3x each, with hands in anjali. Continue with the sevenfold service, also in anjali, and the self-blessing, with no mudra.

page 5: OM . . . SVAHA: Recite the mantra 108x. The umdze uses a mala to count. Continue with the liturgy.

page 6, middle: The front visualization is the same as the one for prostrations, except that Milarepa is the central figure and that other lineage figures sit on clouds. Milarepa is blue in color like Vajradhara, because he is the embodiment of the dharmakaya guru. All vajrayana students should try to hold this visualization throughout the sadhana, especially during the mantra recitation on page 12.

page 7: At "inseparably with him," the shrine master offers more incense. At this point, the jnanasattvas, or "wisdom beings," are invited to empower our practice.

page 12: OM AH GURU HASAVAJRA HUM. Recite 5 malas of the Milarepa mantra semi-mentally. Your lips move, but you would not be heard by your neighbour. *Hasa-vajra* (San) means "Laughing Vajra." This is Milarepa's vajrayana name. Recite the four manams ("Those who have been my mothers...the compassion nirmanakaya") three times.

page 13: Change the text of the Four Dharmas of Gampopa to the currently used translation.

page 15: The line "crude appearance [sic] is transformed into profound, subtle bindu" should have been changed to "crude appearance is transformed by the refined, bindu, and profound yogas." Recite "I supplicate Lord Mila Shepa Dorje" 7x. *Shepa Dorje* (Tib) also means "Laughing Vajra."

page 17, middle: After chanting OM AH HUM GURURATNA SARVASIDDHI HUM, stop chanting the sadhana and start reading *The Rain of Wisdom*.

5. Chant *The Rain of Wisdom*. The reader reads the titles and the prose sections alone. If verses occur within prose sections, these also are read only by the reader; the group does not read them aloud. Examples are the verses at the bottom of pages 6 and 7, on page 8, and at the top of page 62, and page 102.

The umdze leads the chanting of the songs themselves. The community follows the umdze, not the reader.

page 1: The reader reads the title. The umdze leads the chanting of the first 4 verses, repeated 3x with hands in anjali. Then all chant the remaining two verses, as well as the prose section at the bottom of the page. End anjali at the end of the verse section. The shrine master lights incense at the bottom of page 1.

page 2 to top of page 5: All chant. *Note:* Do not read instructional notes in smaller type, such as "Then, offer a mandala," on page 5.

page 5, middle: Where the text indicates to offer a mandala, chant the short mandala offering liturgy ("The earth is perfumed with scented water . . . ") while holding hands in the mandala

offering mudra. Offering rice is optional. Omit reading the italicized title “Sanggye Nyenpa Supplication.” Note that the reader does read the italicized titles on pages 6 and 12.

page 11: Omit the abridged version: "Thus, one may do it this way . . . free all beings in the world."

page 292: The last song chanted is the "Colophon" by the Vidyadhara.

6. Return to the *Glorious Flame of Wisdom* on page 20, beginning with "May Jetsün Repa . . ." Omit the feast offering, from the middle of page 17 to the middle of page 20.

page 21, top: After chanting, "All phenomenal existence is mahamudra, E MA HO," sit for 20 minutes.

page 21, bottom: Chant the dedication and aspiration, and the auspicious verses.

7. To end, chant the longevity and rebirth supplications, and all the aspiration chants.

Protector chants. Chant the protector chants during the last 15 minutes of the afternoon session. At whatever point you are in the reading, insert the chants and offer the tea.

Suggested Schedule for Shambhala Meditation Centers

9:00-9:30 Instructions and morning chants

9:30-9:50 Sitting

9:50-11:00 Chant *Glorious Flame of Wisdom*, from page 1 to middle of page 17. Then begin reading *The Rain of Wisdom*.

11:00-11:15 Silent tea break

11:15-1:00 Continue *The Rain of Wisdom*

1:00-2:30 Lunch break

2:30-4:30 Continue *The Rain of Wisdom*

4:30-4:45 Silent tea break

4:45-5:50 Continue *The Rain of Wisdom*

5:50-6:00 Protector chants

6:00-7:30 Dinner break

7:30 - Finish reading *The Rain of Wisdom* and *The Glorious Flame of Wisdom*. End by chanting the longevity and rebirth supplications, and Fulfilling the Aspirations

Outline of the Ceremony at Non-Shambhala Meditation Centers

1. The reader makes opening remarks.
2. Chant Supplication to the Takpo Kagyü and the Heart Sutra.
3. Sit for 20 minutes.
4. Chant *The Rain of Wisdom*. Follow the instructions in number 4, above.
5. Sit for 20 minutes.
6. Conclude the day with longevity and rebirth supplications, and the aspiration chants. If your center does protector chants, do them at the end of the afternoon session.

Suggested Schedule for Non-Shambhala Meditation Centers

9:00-9:30 Opening remarks and chants

9:30-9:50 Sitting

9:50-11:00 Begin reading *The Rain of Wisdom*

11:00-11:15 Silent tea break

11:15-1:00 Continue *The Rain of Wisdom*

1:00-2:30 Lunch break

2:30-4:30 Continue *The Rain of Wisdom*

4:30-4:45 Silent tea break

4:45-6:00 Conclude *The Rain of Wisdom*. If you do not finish in the afternoon, schedule an evening session at 7:30 pm.

In either case, conclude with 20 minutes sitting and the longevity and rebirth supplications.

Nyida Days

Over the past several years our buddhist community has adopted a tradition of celebrating the changes of the seasons. These are called nyida days, from the Tibetan words *nyima* ("sun") and *dawa* ("moon"). Nyida days occur on or near the days of the equinoxes and solstices. All four nyida days are regarded as family-oriented celebrations.

Midsummer Day observes the summer solstice; the Harvest of Peace the autumn equinox; Children's Day, the winter solstice. It has become a custom to celebrate the Rites of Passage for eight-year-olds near the autumn equinox, although some Centers now use the spring nyida date for this ceremony. Either is acceptable. The spring equinox could also be celebrated by the family or delek in some festive way. A lhasang ceremony is a part of every nyida day celebration.

Parinirvana of the 11th Trungpa Tulku

The parinirvana of the Vidyadhara is commemorated on April 4. In general, the intention is for the sangha to do practices we have received from the Vidyadhara. Each session of practice is concluded by reading from works of the Vidyadhara. For a list of possible readings, see below. It would also be good to include readings from new works of the Vidyadhara as they are published.

In planning for the day, try to include as many sangha members as possible at each session. You may make changes in the schedule suggested below to suit the make-up of your local center.

If your center has more than one shrine hall, sitting practice could take place in one while vajrayana or Shambhala practice takes place in another. Then both groups could come together for readings at the end.

On this day, all students should practice together *The Sadhana of Mahamudra*, using the feast offering section which was written by His Holiness Khyentse Rinpoche. This feast section is usually performed only by tantrikas. On this one, very special occasion, the feast may be performed by the entire sangha. Centers should have copies of this liturgy, along with instructions for the practice. If not, please contact the Practice and Study Office well in advance.

Possible Schedule for the Day

The Vidyadhara's parinirvana has been recognized as a day of support for the Shambhala Archives, and some fundraising for the Archives is appropriate on this day. The Archives will contact centers about fundraising activities scheduled for this day. It is not appropriate for fundraising to happen during the *Sadhana of Mahamudra* feast practice itself; discussions of the Archives and opportunities for supporting it could be presented after closing the feast, or at some other time during the day.

Morning session: Shambhala Practice. Opening Shambhala chants and Werma Sadhana practice for Lodge members, Stroke Practice for Warrior Assembly graduates, and shamatha-vipashyana practice for shamatha students. These three practices would happen in separate rooms, with all three groups coming together for a selection of readings by the Vidyadhara.

Afternoon session: Shamatha-Vipashyana, videos, or readings (Optional)

Evening session: *The Sadhana of Mahamudra* (with feast) for the entire sangha, followed by readings by the Vidyadhara. End by chanting the longevity and rebirth supplications, and the Aspiration chants. Sing the Shambhala Anthem

Readings

Hinayana

Note: HMT is an abbreviation for *Hinayana-Mahayana Transcripts*.

"The Eightfold Path," *Garuda III*, pp. 12-21.

"The Four Foundations of Mindfulness," *The Heart of the Buddha*, pp. 28-36. Section on the first two foundations.

"The Life and Example of Buddha," *Meditation in Action*, pp. 9-18.

"Taking Refuge," *The Heart of the Buddha*, pp. 85-91 or pp. 91-101.

"The Eight States of Consciousness," 1973 HMT, pp. 21-24.

"Art in Everyday Life," 1973 HMT, pp. 122-26.

"The Development of Mindfulness," 1974 HMT, pp. 12-15. This material is the basis for the "Dathün Letter."

"Loneliness," 1974 HMT, pp. 30-33, including the first two questions of the discussion. Highly recommended.

"Becoming a Dharmic Person," 1979 HMT, pp. 10-16. Highly recommended.

"Humbleness is the Dwelling Place of the Forefathers," 1981 HMT, pp. 39-41. Highly recommended.

Mahayana

"The Bodhisattva Path," *Garuda I*, pp. 46-51. An early discussion of the paramitas.

"Shunyata," *Garuda III*, pp. 42-50.

"The Bodhisattva Vow," *The Heart of the Buddha*, pp. 108-115, or to p. 117.

"The Eleventh Bhumi: The Path of No More Learning," 1973 HMT, pp. 254-57.

"Absolute Bodhichitta," 1975 HMT, pp. 87-90. The first introduction of lojong practice.

"Sugatagarbha and the Five Categories of Mind," 1980 HMT, pp. 85-86. Up to "temporary hang-ups."

"Maitri and Karuna," 1984 HMT, pp. 39-40.

Vajrayana

"Visualization," *The Dawn of Tantra*, pp. 47-52.

"Tantra," *Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism*, pp. 217-30.
"Transmission," *Journey without Goal*, pp. 47-55.
"The Vajra Master," *Journey without Goal*, pp. 55-65.
"Abhisheka," *Journey without Goal*, pp. 87-99. Highly recommended.
"Being and Manifesting," *Journey without Goal*, pp. 101-109.
"Maha Ati," *Journey without Goal*, pp. 133-43. The famous "blue pancake" talk.
"HUM: An Approach to Mantra," *Garuda II*, pp. 9-11.
"Working with Negativity," *Garuda II*, pp. 39-43.

Shambhala

Note: All readings are from Shambhala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior.

"The Genuine Heart of Sadness," pp. 42-46.
"Fear and Fearlessness," pp. 47-50.
"Letting Go," pp. 77-86.
"Nowness," pp. 91-98.
"Discovering Magic," pp. 99-106.
"How to Rule," pp. 141-48.
"The Universal Monarch," pp. 153-57.
"Authentic Presence," pp. 159-72.

General

"In the Steps of the Tenth Trungpa," *Born in Tibet*, pp. 59-68. Biography of the Tenth Trungpa tulku.
"The Art of Milarepa," *Garuda II*, pp. 13-15. Short commentary on Milarepa's life and poetry.
"Work and Sex," *Garuda II*, pp. 31-34 (work) and pp. 34-37 (sex). Good substitute mahayana readings.
"The Way of the Buddha," *Garuda I*, pp. 12-16. An exposition of the nine yanas. Highly recommended.
"Ground, Path, and Fruition," *Collected Vajra Assemblies: Part I*, pp. 45-46. Short story about Jamgön Kongtrül Rinpoche.
"Nowness," *Discovering Magic Sourcebook*, pp. 13-17. Story about the Vidyadhara's mother, and learning about his family name.

Poetry Readings

Note: All readings are from First Thought, Best Thought.

3. Bhutan, p. 4
7. Chögyam's Odyssey, p. 9
15. "Cynical Letter," p. 23
19. "Letter to Marpa," p. 29
21. Prose poem, p. 33
23. Haiku, p. 37
27. Tibet, p. 42
31. "Glorious Bhagavad-Ghetto," p. 47
36. H. H. Karmapa, p. 60
45. Love poem, p. 75
46. "Victory Chatter," p. 79
47. "Wait and Think," p. 81
49. R.M.D.C., p. 85
50. Gesar, p. 87
52. Love affair, p. 90
59. Chogyie, p. 106
61. Love & heartbreak, p. 109
62. Pan-American Dharmadhatu III, p. 112
66. Nova Scotia, p. 117
67. Naropa Institute, p. 119
71. International Affairs, p. 120
73. Passion, p. 131
83. The Sawang, p. 155
96. Devotion, p. 175
100. The Vajra Regent, 100p. 185
101. Epigram # 101, p. 187
105. Shibata Sensei, p. 191

Vaishakha Day

Vaishakha Day, also called Wesak, is a major buddhist holiday which commemorates three major events in the life of Shakyamuni Buddha: his birth, enlightenment, and parinirvana.

All Vajradhatu centers should host Vaishakha celebrations in their area. The entire sangha, as well as friends, relatives, and other buddhist groups, should be invited. In Tibet, lay persons would traditionally bring gifts of food to offer to the monks and nuns; a feast would follow. Centers should create a celebratory atmosphere by offering a reception with food and nonalcoholic drink.

The central practice is recitation of The Prostration Offering to the Sthaviras. The sixteen sthaviras, or elders, were the major disciples of the Buddha whom he commanded to protect the teachings. This liturgy is frequently practiced by Tibetans, particularly on visits to holy places.

Date of the Celebration

The Tibetan tradition celebrates two different days: (1) the seventh day of the fourth month (called "Vaishakha" in Sanskrit), for the birth of Shakyamuni; and (2) the fifteenth day of the fourth month, for his enlightenment and parinirvana.

In the interest of pan-buddhist uniformity, Vajradhatu centers celebrate all three events on the fifteenth day, which is usually the full-moon day of May. The day of the celebration should not be moved. It is fine to schedule the ceremony in the evening. It takes about two hours.

Personnel

1. *Leader.* The director or other senior student should lead the celebration, explaining the significance of the day and procedures for the practice.
2. *Umdze.* Either the leader could serve as umdze, or there could be a separate umdze to lead the chanting.
3. *Readers.* Persons should be chosen to read various stories of the Buddha.

Shrine Hall Setup

1. *Rupa.* Place a blessed Buddha rupa prominently on the shrine, if available. Do not use the rupa if it is not blessed; instead, use a thangka or framed photograph of Shakyamuni Buddha.
2. *Offerings.* Place eight outer offerings at the front of the shrine, from left to right: two bowls of saffron water, flowers, incense fence, candle, saffron water, naivedya torma, and a conch or musical instrument. A fresh piece of fruit or a cookie can take the place of the naivedya torma.
3. *Flowers & candles.* Also place flowers and a generous number of votive candles on the shrine.
4. *Bathing ritual.* Place the following on a table just inside the shrine hall entrance: a Buddha rupa set in a container, a bowl of water, and a water dipper. As people enter, they bathe the rupa with a dipper of water. This Japanese ritual is optional.
5. *Chants.* Set out all the liturgies needed in addition to the daily chants: Praise to the Buddha, Shorter Praise to the Buddha, The Sutra of the Recollection of the Noble Three Jewels, The Prostration Offering to the Sthaviras (annotated), and the Mandala Offering for the Vaishakha Celebration.
6. *Rice.* Set out a bowl of rice for the mandala offering.
7. *Leader's seat.* Arrange a place for the leader/umdze, including chants, rice, a mala, and microphone (if needed).
8. *Mike.* Arrange a standing microphone for the readers (if needed).
9. *Readings.* For convenience, readings selected for the ceremony could be photocopied and placed in a notebook.
10. *Instruments.* If instruments and experienced musicians are available, set out drum, cymbals (silnyen), and gyalings (Tibetan horns). If your center does not use instruments, a tape of traditional Tibetan music could be played wherever music is called for. (A cassette is available from Vajradhatu Recordings.)

Procedures

1. Leader's opening remarks. If non-sangha are present, a short explanation of sitting practice would be appropriate.
2. Chant the usual morning chants, if it is morning.
3. Sit for 10 minutes.
4. Chant the following praises:
 - Praise to the Buddha
 - Shorter Praise to the Buddha
 - The Sutra of the Recollection of the Noble Three Jewels. This is the sutra used for oryoki practice; chant from the beginning through the line, "May I be born in a completely pure realm."
5. Chant The Prostration Offering to the Sthaviras.

page 1: Do not chant "om svasti." Recite the refuge and bodhisattva vow, 3x each, in anjali.

page 2: Repeat the mantra 3x. The shrine master lights incense. If there are instruments, play music after the mantra. (A tape of Tibetan horn music could be played here.)

page 3: Play music where the text indicates, if there are instruments.

page 4: Repeat 3x the supplication which begins at the top of page 4 and ends with the first paragraph on page 7.

page 7: Repeat the mantra 1x, beginning to play music around the word "mahabodhicitta." Insert the long mandala offering where the text indicates, tossing rice at the end. Use the same text as for vajra assemblies, but change the last four lines. Substitute the following lines for the last four lines of the usual text:

"Assembly of the incomparable king of the Shakyas,

Sixteen noble sthaviras

Along with your retinues of arhats,

Please accept it with kindness for the benefit of beings.

Having accepted it, may you cause the precious teachings of what has been taught and what has been realized to expand and flourish."

page 8: Repeat the mantra 108x. Roughly it means: "In such a way, O sage, sage, great sage, sage of the Shakyas, so be it." Sit for 5 minutes after the mantra; then chant the text until the end.

page 9: Play music at the end. Ignore the note to "chant other appropriate verses of auspiciousness."

1. *Readings.* Read stories of the Buddha's life, or tell stories in your own words. Take selections from *The Awakened One*, by Sherab Chodzin Kohn, *The Buddhacarita Or the Acts of the*

Buddha, translated by Johnston, *Buddhist Scriptures* by Conze, or *The Buddha: His Life Retold* by Robert Allen Mitchell (Paragon House, 1989). Include stories about the three major events in the Buddha's life: his birth, enlightenment, and parinirvana. Guests from other sanghas could be asked in advance to present a reading or to speak.

2. *Closing chants.* These vary according to the time of day:
3. Morning or early afternoon: Fulfilling the Aspirations of Gyalwang Karmapa or the dedication of merit ("By this merit . . .").
4. Late afternoon or evening: The protector chants, longevity and rebirth supplications, and Fulfilling the Aspirations of Gyalwang Karmapa. These can be abridged if there are guests from other buddhist groups. For example, one could simply do the Concluding Request to the Protectors and Fulfilling the Aspirations.
5. After the ceremony, adjourn to the reception area for tea and refreshments.

Midsummer Day

Midsummer Day is a celebration of the nyida day associated with the summer solstice. It should begin with a lhasang, preferably an elaborate outdoor lhasang. Otherwise, there are no specific required events. The main point is for families and deleks to enjoy summer fun together. Special attention should be paid to children and teenagers. Here are a few possibilities:

- barbecues
- swimming parties
- volleyball and outdoor sports of all kinds
- musical and dance performances
- bugaku demonstration
- kyudo, or other martial arts, demonstration
- ikebana demonstration
- viewing a Shambhalian film in the evening

Commemoration of the Vajra Regent Ösel Tendzin

Vajradhatu centers should commemorate the Vajra Regent Ösel Tendzin on either August 22 or 25, whichever is most convenient locally. The first date marks the anniversary of his empowerment as the Vidyadhara's regent; the second marks the anniversary of his passing.

For the commemoration, schedule a group practice. Following is a possible schedule:

1. The leader makes introductory remarks.
2. Sit 15-20 minutes.
3. Chant *The Sadhana of Mahamudra*.
4. Read selected poetry and teachings of the Vajra Regent and the Vidyadhara.
5. Chant the dedication of merit ("By this merit . . .").

Rite of Passage for Eight-Year-Olds

For the past several years, there has been a growing interest within the sangha in the welfare of our children and the quality of family life. Parents are interested in finding ways to establish Shambhalian households.

After talking about children with the Vidyadhara, interest was aroused in the possibility of conducting rites of passage for our children. These ceremonies mark the growth and changes in children and in their ways of relating to their world. The rites help both parents and children to become aware of differences and to investigate the meaning of these differences. They help children to look forward to accepting greater responsibility for their lives, rather than seeing these responsibilities as something to be dreaded.

The Vidyadhara told us that in Tibet there were two stages in the passage from childhood to adulthood. The first of these stages is at the age of eight and the second at sixteen. After the eight-year-old rite the children would, as a group, become responsible for the care of young animals. If they did not do this properly the animals would not survive. The responsibility was theirs. The issues for these eight-year-old children were earth, food, survival, and finding out about cause and effect. The sixteen-year-old rite involved the introduction to greater responsibilities, including that of relating to one another's minds.

Out of these conversations with the Vidyadhara has come the ceremony of Rites of Passage for eight-year-olds. The entire sangha is invited to this ceremony. Parents as well as children will take part. A celebratory dinner honoring the children who participate, in family or delek groups, is recommended for the evening. Congratulations and gifts to the children are also appropriate as part of the celebration.

In order to extend the meaning of the rite beyond the ceremony itself, parents need to discuss how the children can assume greater responsibilities and can be honored in our culture. How can the children's new status be acknowledged in our homes? And what does it mean for an eight-year-old to be responsible for his or her own karma?

History

Rites of Passage have been a helpful and integral part of most societies until modern times. A number of years ago, sangha members in Boulder met with the Vidyadhara, who explained that in Shambhalian Tibet there were rites of passage at two important junctures in a young person's development: eight years and sixteen years. With this in mind, Virginia Hilliker and Nancy Craig met with Dr. Frances Harwood, an anthropologist at Naropa Institute, and designed the basic rite of passage that has been enacted for several years. Dr. Harwood described three general stages of all rites of passage:

1. separation of children from their familiar society
2. transition period, when children receive sacred teachings
3. re-aggregation, or reappearance to their society in a changed form.

Another general feature of the rites are the Sacred Clowns, whose role is to somewhat irreverently point to the transparency of the teachings.

Following the instructions of the Vidyadhara and the suggestions of Dr. Harwood, an attempt was made to express the meaning of the rite through the environment, by utilizing space, props, music, symbols, and people. The whole rite emerged spontaneously as if by magic, as was sometimes the case when the Vidyadhara was alive.

1. *Separation.* This is shown by the enclosure or gates. The children are presented to an officiator by the parents. Then they are very clearly separated from their parents and others. It is necessary to create a physical barrier to show this separation.
2. *Sacred teachings.* The presentation of the secret teachings begins with the telling of The Story. The original story, about a boy and girl who save their starving people by learning how to grow food, was told spontaneously by Phyllis Ohm. At that time, no one knew what "the secret teachings" were supposed to be. The four elements, which appeared in The Story, seemed to relate to the themes of food, earth, and cause and effect; so The Story was accepted.
3. The Story should be told several days before the actual ceremony, in order to set the psychological stage for the reiteration of the teachings by the Sacred Clowns during the rite itself. Because the clowns' performance refers back to the story, which only the children have heard, it gains a secret aspect. The clowns do not actually mock the teachings of The Story; they simply act out the helpful and harmful aspects of the elements.

4. *Re-aggregation.* The final stage occurs when the children, having seen the clowns, re-emerge into their society and receive symbols of their new grown-up status.

The basic form of the rite was presented to David Rome, who approved it. Because he suggested that the children say something, a simple vow was added. Later it was also decided to have the children learn the Shambhala bow from the Earth Clown and to end the ceremony by bowing in adult warrior fashion.

At this same time, the Family Council was searching for ways to celebrate nyida days, which had just been introduced by the Vidyadhara through Dr. Mitchell Levy. As the Spring nyida day was approaching, the first rite of passage was held on that day.

Commentary

The rite as it exists today is obviously not divine revelation or cast in stone. Changes and additions have been made from the beginning. However, it is important to understand the spirit of the rite as it was first performed, in order to prevent additions which might change the original intent.

First and foremost, the rite is secular or Shambhalian rather than buddhist. Parents should be able to invite their neighbours and neighbours' children without hesitation. Over the years, many non-buddhist children have participated in the eight-year old Rites of Passage. It would, then, not be appropriate for someone like the coordinator to give a talk referring to the children as "the next generation of buddhists."

It is also inappropriate to use sections from a buddhist text, such as *The Sadhana of Mahamudra*, during the ceremony. The use of an "abhisheka" conferred by the four elements is not a part of the original rite and should be avoided.

In general, the original rite had a magical quality which should be preserved if possible. The ceremony should be fun, light-hearted, and short -- perhaps even a little chaotic. It should definitely be fast-paced and full of colour, music, and elegance. Music is a very important component, and the magnetizing effect of a colour guard cannot be replaced.

Most importantly, the children are the center of the ceremony, not the parents or the officiator. The parents should be told the meaning of the rite, but not during the actual ceremony. The officiator should be a Shambhala dignitary or someone well known as a friend of children. The officiator is not comparable, for example, to the preceptor of a vow ceremony. The children are not being empowered or given anything. They have already attained a certain maturity; the ceremony is merely an acknowledgment of what is already the case.

There is more than one version of The Story. The original story, as told by Phyllis Ohm, has many virtues. It works on the level of implication, but does not sermonize. It implies that children are good, competent, and eager to help. It uses universal mythic images that seem to work at a subconscious level. The story should not be printed or shown to parents. It must be told, rather than read, by someone who can communicate its original inspiration.

The Sacred Clowns

The Sacred Clowns of Water, Fire, Earth, and Air are an important part of the rite of passage. They point to the transparency of the ceremonial form and help to break down the boundary between the observers and participants.

The clowns use costume, dance, and imagery to invoke the energy of their particular element. They should communicate in a playful but straightforward way; no irony, please. Because children already know a great deal about the elements, the clowns do not need to give them instruction. The rite is a time for drawing out and calling attention to, rather than performing or lecturing. For instance, the clowns do not lecture on pollution. Rather, they offer images of the clear, unpolluted properties of the elements and let the children experience that.

Clowns should wear costumes which are archetypal, beautiful, and flowing, as well as eye masks, hats, and head-dresses. Costumes should be saved from year to year. Use the following colours:

- fire: red, orange
- water: blue, turquoise
- earth: yellow, gold, brown
- air: green, silver, white

Each element has a peaceful, wrathful, and purifying energy, as well as a quality of motion. For example: water flows, fire burns, air moves, earth is immovable. Water nourishes, floods, and cleans; fire heats, destroys, and purifies. Each element also exists within the child's body: water as flowing blood, fire as body heat, air as breath, and earth as solid matter. Similarly, each has an emotional and interpersonal aspect within the child's experience.

Clowns should touch their own experience of the elements and share that with the children in as improvised or rehearsed a way as they are comfortable. The following verses suggest ideas, images, feelings, movement, and emotions which pertain to each element. *They should not be memorized or read.* Clowns can use them as a guide for their own interpretation.

Elements

Water

I am water, the flowing one.
I circulate from sky to earth,
From mountain glacier to streams and rivers,
Moistening the earth.
Rising into air, awakened by thunder I fall
Raining down to run again, water on the land.

Splash me on your face.
Awake! Take my crisp, clear drink.
I flow and my song is flowing,
The trickle and roar of the stream,
The waves that beat in the surf draw back,
Dragging pebbles and sand.
I am still and my song is still,
Reflecting the clouds
And the trees that stand by the pond.
I am your blood, I join your flesh and bone.

In storm and rage I come, washing all life clean,
In mist and rain I fall, rinsing crystal clear,
Taking the shape of whatever I find,
Leaving what I leave behind
Refreshed as the rain-washed air.

Say my name clearly: Water!

Fire

Fire I am, the burning one!
Small as a spark, big as the sun,
Rising, dancing, laughing,
Lightfooted I go.
Radiant as the sun I bring to birth.
In my light all things grow.

Blazing as the fire I destroy,
Searing out the old, the dead, the gone,
To rise again to be reformed.

I am the heart of life, the heat to cook,
I warm the newborn child.
I am light to see the world's many faces:
The hair, the eyes, the smiles.
My light shines brightly off blades of grass
And casts them in shadows where it cannot pass.

I burn away the fog, all vanishes at my touch.
My warmth envelopes the earth
Touching the seeds to birth.
I reach inside and kindle the spark
Of interest, of life.

Say my name in an awesome breath: Fire!

Air

I am the moving one, spirit of life and seasons!
Ceaselessly I blow
Shadows across the land, sound across the silence.
Listen, chimes of China!
Listen, the wailing storm!
Listen, the distant ship approaches.
Bringing news of far away, I wander in tale and song,
I am the breath of the world.

Galloping across the fields, I am the energy of life,
Carrying seeds across the earth,
Swooping, swirling I lift to flight.
Rhythmically I give and take,
In and out all life I raise,
Breath of breath, ceaselessly I go.

Across the world I blow,
Cleansing, circling, sighing,
Breath of the world I blow,

In gentle breezes, restless winds
And raging storms I go.
Sweep clear the way!
Sweep clear the way!
Taste the clear and shifting flavor of your life.

Sound my light and tremulous name: Air!

Earth

I am earth, the immovable one.
The ground on which all arise, dwell and pass away.
Dark and light, warmth and cold, death and life
Equally I hold.
Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter,
Birth, Youth, Old Age and Death:
All things return to me to rest.

From my rocks and trees you make your dwellings,
From my grains you make your bread.
From deep within me gold and jewels
Become your precious ornaments.
Dig your fingers in my soil and stones.

Feel me, smell my richness.
In the life of the leaves and flowers I bear,
Feel your own roots in the earth,
This abundant home.

Carried in my vast expanse,
All things return to me to rest.
I stand steadfast,
Worthy of their trust.

Sound my solid and generous name: Earth!

Organizing the Rites

Areas of Responsibility

- overall coordinator
- master of ceremonies
- colour guard and ushers: Shambhala Sun Cadets if possible
- attendants to carry trays: appropriate for ten- or eleven-year-olds who have participated in the rite
- sashes (worn over one shoulder and across the chest), specially designed pins, and ceremonial arrows (with blunt tips). Consult Karma Dzong, Halifax or Boulder, for sources of pins and arrows; sashes are homemade.
- trays: four trays to carry pins, sashes, chrysanthemums, and arrows
- Sacred Clowns
- costumes for Clowns
- flowers: on shrine, plus chrysanthemums for ceremony
- lhasang
- music and sound system
- reception: food, service, setup, and cleanup
- art: display the calligraphy and poems by the children
- preliminary meetings: one for parents, at least one for children
- invitations
- photography and video
- setup and takedown

Suggested Music

- While parents and guests wait in the shrine hall: something light by Vivaldi, preferably not “The Four Seasons”
- First procession: “Colonel Bogey March,” which is lively and funny.
- Second procession: Gagaku music
- Recessional: Bizet's "Symphony in C."
- If a person of rank, such as the Sakyong, enters in procession: Handel's "Water Music."

Meeting with Parents

The following topics should be covered in the meeting with parents:

- explanation of the rite
- developmental stage of eight-year-olds
- gifts that children offer to the shrine; these should be symbolic of the early childhood they are leaving behind
- plans for family or delek celebrations, and gifts for the children

Class(es) for Children

These topics should be covered in class(es), scheduled a few days before the rite:

- telling of The Story, which is the most essential part of the meeting
- brush-stroke paintings, perhaps poems, with the themes of earth, fire, air, and water
- explanation of the rite
- discussion of gifts that the children are to offer
- learning Shambhala songs

Suggested Order of Events

1. Music
2. Welcome
 - Entrance procession with music, in this order:
 - children enter and sit with parents
 - Sacred Clowns
 - principals
 - attendants with trays
3. Colour guard: a brief military presentation of flags
4. Lhasang, located in front of the shrine. Attendants pass trays through the smoke containing: sashes, pins, arrows, and chrysanthemums.

5. Presentation of the children, accompanied by march music.
 - Master of Ceremonies calls each child's full name.
 - Parents and child go up to Shambhala shrine.
 - Child places gift on table in front of shrine.
 - Parents and child bow together to the shrine.
 - Parents introduce their child to the officiator, who places a sash on the child.
 - Child joins his peers in a segregated section in front.
 - Parents return to their seats.
6. Presentation by Sacred Clowns
7. Earth Clown teaches the warrior's bow to the children, which expresses their openness and respect for the world.
8. Children take the following vow in unison:
"Today I am born a warrior.
I acknowledge the dignity of man by bowing."
9. Very brief address by officiator.
10. Children receive sacred gifts, while music plays.
 - Children go up individually, bow to the shrine and to the principals.
 - They receive from the principals an arrow, a pin, and a chrysanthemum (signifying fearlessness and gentleness).
 - After all the children have returned to their seats, they bow to: (1) their parents and community, (2) each other, and (3) the shrine.
11. Sing the Shambhala Anthem: children sing once by themselves, then others join for second repetition.
12. All perform standing bow.
13. Recessional with music, in order:
 - principals
 - attendants
 - clowns
 - children
 - colour guard
14. Reception and celebration

Rite of Warriorship for 16-Year-Olds

This rite marks the culmination of the teenage years and the beginning of young warriorship. The rite itself takes the form of a "vision quest" and lasts two days; its content is considered secret. The prerequisite for taking part involves either previous experience with Shambhala Training levels or at least one Shambhala Sun Camp. Inquiries can be made to The Kasung Headquarters, 1084 Tower Road, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3H 2Y5

Parinirvana of H. H. Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche

Our sangha commemorates the parinirvana of His Holiness Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche on September 27. Vajradhatu centers should organize a special practice session on this date. Here is a possible outline:

1. Introductory remarks and explanation of the practice.
2. Chant the Seven-Line Supplication to Padmakara and the Supplication to the Takpo Kagyü.
3. Sit 15-20 minutes.
4. Slowly chant the Seven-Line Supplication to Padmakara for 20 minutes.
5. Practice the guru yoga for His Holiness, called *Guru Yoga: Life-Drop of Blessings*, for about 30 minutes. This includes a 10 minute mantra recitation.
6. Perform The *Sadhana of Mahamudra*.
7. Read selections from the writings of His Holiness.
8. Chant the rebirth supplication for His Holiness 3x in anjali.
9. Chant the dedication of merit: "By this merit . . ."

This session lasts approximately two hours. Centers should already have copies of *Guru Yoga: Life-Drop of Blessings*, which includes instructions for the practice. If not, contact the Practice and Study administrator.

Parinirvana of H. H. Gyalwang Karmapa

XVI

Shambhala Meditation Centers observe the parinirvana of His Holiness the XVIth Karmapa on or near November 6, depending on what is convenient. The ceremony takes about 1½ hours. Sadhakas should meet prior to the ceremony in order to review the visualizations used during the practice. If your center does not have copies of the guru yoga text annotated for sadhakas, contact the Practice and Study administrator.

Shrine Setup

Arrange the shrine with the seven outer Vajrayogini offerings, from left to right: small conch or musical instrument, naivedya torma, saffron water, candle, incense fence, flower, saffron water. A piece of fresh fruit or a cookie can substituted for the naivedya torma. Add many flowers and 108 or 21 extra votive candles to the shrine as further offerings.

Opening Remarks

When practicing *The Guru Yoga for the Four Sessions* by Mikyö Dorje, we open ourselves to the sanity and awakened mind of the lineage of Karmapas. We supplicate the Karmapa to be reborn in order to continue to teach us and help all sentient beings.

Students who have not received vajrayana transmission should simply chant, without trying to visualize. Ngöndro students should hold a front visualization of Mikyö Dorje as Rangjung Rikpe Dorje, Karmapa XVI, as a monk. Sadhakas should perform the secret visualization, which requires some previous instruction.

Procedures for the Ceremony

1. Opening remarks and explanation of the ceremony.
2. Sit for 20 minutes.
3. Chant *The Guru Yoga for the Four Sessions* by Mikyö Dorje. Page numbers refer to the printed version of 11 pages.

page 1: Chant the four manams 3x, hands in anjali.
page 2: Pause briefly before "Kye, when the gururatna approaches . . ."
page 4: Pause briefly before "AH Mikyö Dorje . . ."
page 5: Recite KARMAPA KHYEN NO for 45 minutes. The recitation is semi-mental; lips and vocal cords move, but your neighbour should not hear you.
page 7: Pause briefly after "As you have been blessed."
page 10: Chant "I supplicate the very powerful lord of dharma . . ." 3x, 21x, or 108x.
page 11: After the last line, chant the Supplication for the Rebirth of His Holiness Karmapa.

4. Sit for 20 minutes.
5. Chant Fulfilling the Aspirations of Gyalwang Karmapa.

Children's Day

Children's Day is the nyida day celebration that marks the winter solstice. It gives us an opportunity to express appreciation for and with our children, and to prepare psychologically for the winter months. Celebration of the winter solstice has its roots in many cultures. Children's Day is also inspired by the Japanese holidays of Boy's Day and Doll's Day.

This is a two-day celebration. The first day of the celebration is the ceremonial day, held at your local center and at home. The second day is family day, for opening gifts and family or delek dinners. The celebration can be scheduled either on the actual day of the solstice or on the weekend closest to it. If it is necessary to choose between weekends, it should occur on the weekend prior to December 21.

Children's Day Shrine

The shrine is a representation of the dignity of the family and a celebration of the senses. Both dharma centers and individual homes are encouraged to create a Children's Day shrine, which is modeled after the display of ancestral dolls traditional in homes on Doll's Day. Decorating the shrine is a family project, with special contributions from the children. Shrines should be set up well before Children's Day. Here are a few suggestions:

1. It would be good to have a shrine with tiers representing the principles of heaven, earth, and man. The shrine is often covered with red, gold, or white satin. A household Shambhala shrine could be refashioned, or a table placed beneath the fireplace mantle.
2. The King and Queen are the central focus of the shrine, representing the heaven principle. They are placed at the highest level, perhaps on wooden platforms. They may be special china dolls or statuary, or even standing paper dolls.
3. Arrange the Shambhala offerings just in front of the King and Queen. Place from left to right: a small mirror (sight), a conch or musical instrument (sound), saffron water (smell), fruit or sweets (taste), and a cloth ribbon tied on a stick (touch).
4. The children can place animal figurines on the shrine to represent the earth principle. These could be stuffed animals or handmade models of clay or papier maché. Any small precious household objects, such as a yumi, would also be appropriate. If your shrine has three tiers, these would go on the middle level.

5. Place flowers and candles on the shrine.
6. Children may place other offerings of their choice: handmade decorations, potted plants, home made cookies, bowls of candy, and special "treasures" such as dolls and toys.
7. Around the shrine could be placed lights, streamers, fans, flags, or paper ring chains in Shambhala colours. A large mirror could be placed behind the shrine, surrounded by green boughs and twinkling lights.
8. On the eve of Children's Day, children place sake or tea offerings and food, usually sweets, on the shrine for the King and Queen.
9. After the children have gone to bed, the King and Queen set out baskets of gifts for the children. *Note:* Giving gifts is not required; some feel this is too materialistic.

Other Preparations

1. *Invitations.* There should be some invitation to your sangha members to participate in the numerous preparatory activities and in the formal celebration.
2. *Activities.* Your sangha could sponsor activities to involve the children. A children's workshop could be organized one week before Children's Day. Here are some suggestions:
 - ikebana, with the arrangements displayed at your center
 - a children's choir learning Shambhala songs
 - drawings, which could be displayed at your center.

Children's Day Events: Day 1

The quality of this ceremony is light, cheerful and celebratory rather than ritual. Flowers, music, and candy set the tone. An emphasis on inviting all the sangha is important. The first event takes place in the main shrine hall and should last no more than forty-five minutes to an hour. Here is the order of events:

1. *Procession.* The director or coordinator leads the children into the shrine hall to lively music. All are seated. The lhasang is started and continues throughout the procession.

2. *Storytelling.* Someone could tell a short (five-minute) story from the heart. The story should not be read.
3. *Presentation of gifts.* Children pass their gifts through the lhasang and present them at the shrine. At smaller centers, gifts in the form of small toys can be saved and reused from year to year. At larger centers, parents should decide what kind of gift is appropriate.

Gift suggestions: Children could be involved in the selection of a gift for an underprivileged child in your area. Children could offer used clothing to an agency of your choice, or food to a Food Bank. Children could offer money, which would be given to a charitable organization.

4. *Blessing.* Children are lead past a shrine or chair on top of which a photograph of the Sakyong or Vidyadhara is placed. They touch their heads to the picture and proceed past the most distinguished lady of your sangha who offers them candy.
5. *Singing.* Shambhala songs, more than just the anthem, should be sung. The Shambhala Round is one possibility.
6. *Performance (optional).* Children could give some kind of performance. For example, they could be invited to bring their own poetry or read poetry by the Sakyong or Vidyadhara.

Reception. The second event is a reception for all children and their parents. This could be held at your center or at a large home of one of the sangha members. Food could be contributed by families and arranged in a festive manner.

Suggestions for entertainment: games such as "Pin the Tail on the Dragon" or "Musical Gomdens"; a puppet show or other play with some Shambhalian theme; a skating or swimming party.

Children's Day Events: Day 2

On the morning of Family Day, children open gifts left in front of the Children's shrine. The family enjoys the day together. In larger sanghas, the deleks could organize parties. They might enjoy sharing Shambhala songs and special stories around the shrine. There can be a feast at home or by delek, to which friends are generously invited. This should be a day for all sangha members, not just those with children.

Mamo Recitation

Pacifying the Turmoil of the Mamos is traditionally recited by vajrayana practitioners from the twentieth through the twenty-ninth days of the last lunar month of the Tibetan year. It is not recited on the day before Shambhala Day. All tantrikas at the Shambhala Meditation Center should be encouraged to attend.

The mamo chant is recited in order to pacify the karmic cause of personal, social, and environmental chaos that accumulates at the year's end. It is an elaborate protector offering. By reciting the chant, we tune into the protector principle of awareness and reconnect with sacred outlook.

Number of Recitations

Where a large number of vajrayana practitioners is present, such as at Karma Dzong or Karmê-Chöling, one thousand repetitions of the mamo chant are done on each of the ten days. This is the custom instituted by the Vidyadhara.

The number of repetitions chanted during a single session are multiplied by the number of practitioners present in order to calculate the total. For example, if there are forty practitioners present, the group would need to chant twenty-five repetitions (taking approximately forty-five minutes) to accomplish a total of one thousand.

At smaller centers where only a few tantrikas can attend, it would be fine to do twenty-one repetitions of the mamo chant per session. If necessary, the number of repetitions could even be reduced to seven. To make it possible for most tantrikas to attend, smaller centers could organize weekend group sessions: Friday night, Saturday and Sunday. In this case, you might decide to do a total of one thousand recitations over the three-day period.

Shrine Setup

Place a traditional mamo torma (if there is someone at your center who knows how to make one properly) or a plate of cookies and candy on the mahakala shrine. Each day, add a few more cookies and candy. On the last day of recitation, offer the torma and offerings into a stream or off a cliff or mountain top.

Leading the Practice

If possible, the umdze should be a sadhaka: the practice coordinator or other senior student. Where there are no sadhakas, a ngöndro practitioner could be umdze. Before the beginning of each practice session, the umdze should announce the format of the practice.

The umdze, if a sadhaka, can use vajra, ghanta, damaru and mala. Other sadhakas require only chant books and malas, although they may bring their practice materials if they wish. During the protector chants, the umdze holds vajra and ghanta, ringing during the lines and performing the mudra as indicated in the Vajrayogini Manual (section 4, p. 34). The umdze tosses rice in the direction of the tea offering at the beginning of the Concluding Request to the Protectors and plays the damaru at the end of that chant. Vajra and ghanta are not held during the mammo chant; pick them up during the concluding mantra. The umdze counts repetitions of the chant.

Recite the mammo chant briskly, but not so quickly that people have difficulty enunciating the words. By synchronizing body, speech, and mind, relate to the meaning of the words and to the environmental energy.

Outline of the Practice Session

The mammo chants are introduced by The Short Daily Practice of Vajrakilaya, written by Mipham Rinpoche, or by the abbreviated Vajrayogini practice. We recommend the following format, so that all tantrikas may practice the mammo chants. The practice will last about one and a half hours, depending on the number of repetitions.

1. Umdze announces the outline of the practice.
2. Sit 10-15 minutes.
3. Chant the Seven-Line Supplication to Padmakara (3x).
4. Chant The Short Daily Practice of Vajrakilaya.
 - Recite 5 malas of the first mantra, 1 mala of the second.
 - To close the practice, dissolve with HUM HUM HUM and rest briefly; rearise with PHAT PHAT PHAT.

1. Chant the protectors chants customary for your center, ringing the ghanta and performing the mudras at appropriate places. Do not chant monosyllabically with drum.
2. Chant the mammo chant before the Concluding Request. Calculate the number of chants to be done per session according to the above instructions.
3. Chant the Concluding Request and make the tea offering.
4. Chant the confession liturgy, the longevity and rebirth supplications, and finish with Fulfilling the Aspirations or the short dedication of merit.

Mamo Practice: Umdze's Instructions

Add cookies or candy to the mammo tormas on the mahakala shrine each day before beginning practice. The umdze, if a sadhaka, can have a vajra, ghanta, and damaru; protector chants annotated for playing ghanta and performing the mudras; mammo chant and vajrayana confession liturgy; a small bowl of rice.

1. Explain the sequence of the practice as necessary.
2. Sit 10 minutes.
3. Recite 3x the Seven-Line Supplication to Padmakara.
4. Recite The Short Daily Practice of Vajrakilaya.
 - Recite 5 malas of the first mantra and 1 mala of the second.
 - To close the practice, dissolve with HUM HUM HUM, rest briefly, and rearise with PHAT PHAT PHAT.
5. Chant the protector chants customary for your center, holding vajra and ghanta. Ring ghanta and perform the mudras as marked for each chant.
6. Chant Pacifying the Turmoil of the Mamos before the Concluding Request to the Protectors. Chant the agreed number of recitations (1,000 divided by the number of practitioners or 21 recommended).
7. Chant the Concluding Request. Toss rice towards the tea offering at "Accept this offering gift of tormas." Play ghanta and damaru at the end.

8. Chant the Confession Liturgy.
9. Chant the longevity and rebirth supplications.
10. End with Fulfilling the Aspirations or the short dedication of merit.

Short Vajrayogini Practice

If all practitioners participating in the Mamo Chants are sadhakas, you may do the abbreviated Vajrayogini practice, as follows:

1. Explain the sequence of the practice as necessary.
2. Sit 30 minutes.
3. Recite 3x the Seven-Line Supplication to Padmakara.
4. Recite the Lineage Supplication.
5. Recite refuge and bodhisattva vow from Vajrayogini sadhana.
6. Abbreviated Vajrayogini Practice on page 105-107, up to mantra recitation; 10-15 minutes of mantra recitation. Do not dissolve. (Front visualization is of Vetali, who is queen over the mamos. Self is Vajrayogini. Continue visualization through all protector chants.
7. Chant the protector chants customary for your center, holding vajra and ghanta. Ring ghanta and perform the mudras as marked for each chant.
8. Chant Pacifying the Turmoil of the Mamos before the Concluding Request to the Protectors. Chant the agreed number of recitations (1,000 divided by the number of practitioners or 21 recommended).
9. Chant the Concluding Request. Toss rice towards the tea offering at "Accept this offering gift of tormas." Play ghanta and damaru at the end.
10. Chant the Confession Liturgy.

11. Chant the longevity and rebirth supplications.
12. End with Fulfilling the Aspirations or the short dedication of merit.