



OFFICE OF SOCIETAL HEALTH
AND WELL-BEING

Societal Health & Well-Being Director

Position description for Shambhala Centers

The role of the Societal Health & Well-Being (SHWB) Director is to promote and support the ongoing development of community within a local Shambhala Centre or Shambhala Meditation Group. The Director safeguards the view that a community that enjoys being together, celebrating together and taking care of one another is an integral part of our practice and is as important as meditating and studying together. Community reinforces the truth of interdependence and thus can be taken as a key component of our path to enlightenment. The SHWB Director holds the view that our mission, as Shambharians, is to create enlightened *society*, rather than to become a collection of enlightened *individuals*. Therefore, the purpose of this seat is to foster what the Sakyong has called “a culture of profound kindness” at the local Center level.

The appointment of local SHWB Directors is made centrally, by the Director of the Shambhala Office of Societal Health & Well-Being, who will have received a nomination of an individual from a local Center. The nomination process should include input from the entire local leadership body, if not the entire community, thereby providing this seat holder with a broad ground of local support from the outset. The SHWB Director holds a seat on the local Center’s Council, Board or other governing body.

The local SHWB Director would be the official liaison to the central Office of the same name. As such, he or she would be the communication conduit for matters pertaining to community, advising the central OSHWB Director about local matters and sharing with the local community pertinent information from the OSHWB.

Local Societal Health and Well-Being Committee

The Societal Health & Well-Being Director forms and leads a local committee dedicated to fostering a warm, inviting, and caring community of practitioners, thus polishing and shining the Third Jewel of Sangha. **Activities of this committee may include:**

- Fostering greater communication and contact among community members, including focused community building efforts.
- Ensuring there is a welcoming, hospitable environment for all who enter the Center.
- Developing awareness and pro-active sensitivity as regards all aspects of diversity: racial, ethnic, socio-economic, sexual orientation, age, gender, physical ability, etc.
- Making sure there are regular celebrations and social activities, including all Nyida Days (in collaboration with the Office of Culture and Decorum).
- Caring for the health and well-being of community members when illness, conflict or social difficulties arise (in collaboration with the Desung).

- Promoting responsiveness by the Center to local and global environmental and social issues.
- Ensuring that needs of families and children are completely interwoven into the fabric of community life.

Seats on this committee *could* include (depending on the structure and size of the local Center):

- Representatives who are working in the following areas: Families & Children, Care of the Aging, Accessibility, Diversity, Environmental Sustainability
- The Center's Desung
- If there are deleks, Dekyongs or the chair of the Dekyong Council
- The local liaison to the Office of Culture & Decorum, if such a person has been appointed
- The local Membership coordinator

Support from the Center of the Mandala

General support and mentoring for local SHWB Directors is available from the Shambhala Office of Societal Health & Wellbeing: Director, Mary Whetsell, mwhetsell@mindspring.com. Ms. Angela Belfor is the Shambhala Europe representative of this Office, and can be contacted at a.belfor@planet.nl

The Community Care Council functions from within the Office of Societal Health & Wellbeing. Following are the Chairpersons of the various working groups. They are all available for consultation about their areas of focus as applied at local Centers.

- Andrea Sherman – Aging - andreasherman@optonline.net
- Stefan Carmien – Accessibility and Disability - carmien@gmail.com
- Charlene Leung – Diversity - charleneleung.shambhala@gmail.com
- Cathy Conlin – Families and Children - crc3183@gmail.com
- Joel Shecter – Touching the Earth (environmental sustainability) - joelshecter@me.com
- Sophie Maclaren – Young Sangha Working Group - sophie_maclaren@shambhala-europe.org

Collaboration and cheerful cooperation is essential between Societal Health & Well-being Directors and their local Desung and Culture/Decorum representative. For information or consultation in these areas, contact:

- Shambhala Office of Culture and Decorum: Director, Wendy Friedman, wendy@biscuitland.net
- Desung Arm of the Dorje Kasung, Commander, Debbie Coats, dcoats01@denma.org