

**The Shambhala Congress 2007**  
**Kalapa Centre (Europe)**  
**3-7 May 2007**

**Provisional Report**

***Sakyong sets out ground, path and fruition for Shambhala's  
global development***

In his opening address to the Third Shambhala Congress the Sakyong, Jamgon Mipham Rinpoche, offered a three-fold approach to the development of Shambhala worldwide.

The ground, he said, is making sure we know who we are. The path is our personal effort and how we engage. The fruition is the creation of an enlightened culture -- which, he said, is what the world needs.

The question for all of us is how we present this. He added that while the notion of enlightened culture may not be the monopoly of our tradition, we have "a lot of it" and "that needs to be expressed".

In addition to discussions on the seven major themes described in this provisional report, the Congress as a whole discussed:

- Taking steps now to address Shambhala's role in protecting our global environment;
- Welcoming Khandro Tseyang who will be enthroned as the next Sakyong Wangmo, and how to ensure that all parts of the mandala are involved in celebrating and supporting this significant event;
- Finding ways to stabilize the central finances of the mandala to ensure a firm foundation for the work of the Sakyong and Sakyong Wangmo, as well as the mandala services that support centres and groups worldwide.

The congress, held in Cologne, Germany, was attended by some 180 people. They came from 68 Shambhala centres and groups in 19 countries. The four-and-a-half-day event was the third congress to be held since the Sakyong, Jamgon Mipham Rinpoche, introduced these mandala-wide gatherings in 2003.

Recordings of many of the proceedings, including the Sakyong's opening address and the Question and Answer session are on the home page of the Congress website, [www.congress.shambhala.info](http://www.congress.shambhala.info), in the "News and Updates" box in the upper right corner.

The recordings include:

- a presentation by Carolyn Mandelker, Director of the Shambhala Office of Practice and Education, on the work being done to introduce a new curriculum,
- a presentation by Shambhala Europe Director, Chris Tamdjidi, on the development of the mandala in Europe.
- short talks by President Reoch on the initiatives resulting from the Shambhala Congresses and on the mandala-wide aspirations of centres for growth and expansion over the next five years.

The Congress discussed seven main themes:

1. Lineage and Blessings (practice, education and our inheritance)
2. Mother's Milk (finance, financial transparency and mandala resources)
3. The Third Jewel (sangha care and community development)
4. Turning the Flower Outward (social service and outreach to new people)
5. Governance as Path (improving mandala governance and communication)
6. Nurturing the Future (supporting small groups and centres, mentoring and regionalization)
7. Touching the Earth (ecology, sustainability and responsibility)

***LINEAGE & BLESSINGS:  
Practice, education and our inheritance***

***Topic 1: New Curriculum***

- Carolyn Mandelker, Director of Practice and Education for Shambhala, presented the new curriculum to the entire Congress, and attended this discussion group to answer further questions. (Please see MP3 of her talk for a thorough presentation of the basics of the new curriculum).
- **One main point that emerged is that this is very much a work in progress, and Ms. Mandelker is not suggesting Shambhala Centres begin to offer the new curriculum at this time. If Centers are interested in offering all or part of this curriculum, they should contact her directly.**
  - The *Shambhala Buddhist Sourcebook*, a compilation of quotes from the Vidyadhara's on the relationship of Buddhism and Shambhala, will be available from Shambhala Shop soon; groups could study this as view for the new curriculum.
- The new curriculum is currently being offered in pilot programs in a large center (Halifax), a medium size center (Boston) and a small center (Albany).
- Concern was expressed that Shambhala Training is very simple and direct, and builds community among groups of students moving along the path – will the same be true of the new curriculum?

- Although the curriculum may seem more complex, it still incorporates ST levels I-V in the same form, and these can still be done independently if the student prefers. However, the view of the new curriculum is to study meditation within the full richness of our Shambhala Buddhist tradition.
- It's too soon to say about the community aspect, but in Halifax, a group of 25 or so is entering the fourth (final) series of the Stage 2 curriculum (begun in October) and the students seem very connected as a group.
- This bonding was not experienced at most centers with the Shambhala School of Buddhist Studies (SSBS), where the courses were not sequential; the Halifax group is essentially moving through both curriculums together and the sense of community seems intact.
- The overall number of weekends and classes required for a student to attend seminary has not actually increased, but decreased; the sequential nature of the Stage 2 curriculum may make the curriculum more intensive.
- The material currently presented in the ST Sacred Path levels will be presented in Stage 3 of the new curriculum, which is still under development. Until this becomes available and goes through the piloting process, the Sacred Path will be taught as usual.
  - In plans for Stage 3 currently, it is not required for a student to become a Buddhist to receive the Sacred Path terma texts, although they will study meditation from Buddhist sources in Stage 2; members of any (or no) religion are still welcome on the Shambhala path.
- Although the Shambhala transmission (formerly given at Kalapa Assembly and available to non-Buddhists attending that program) is currently being given in the context of the Rigden Abhisheka, the Sakyong is committed to offering this transmission in other circumstances, to a wider group.

### ***Topic 2: Dharma Art***

- An introduction to Shambhala Art is incorporated in the new pilot curriculum as one class in each series, with simple exercises developed by Acharya Arawana Hayashi, and may be taught by teachers not specifically trained in Dharma Art if necessary.
- There is not widespread understanding of the definition of Shambhala Art (as opposed to Dharma Art and other art programs) or the qualifications for Dharma Art instructors. Very few instructors are available in Europe or North America, although the demand for Dharma Art programs is increasing.
- There is a Shambhala Art program available; a nine yana approach taught in five parts.

***Recommendation:* We need clarification about the many programs usually lumped together as Dharma Art, as well as resources for Centers as to what programs are available and what teachers are authorized as Dharma Art instructors, as well as more clarity about the training of new Shambhala Art teachers.**

### ***Topic 3: Connecting to Lineage***

- Many Centers (especially small or geographically isolated) have little access to lineage teachers.
- Gampo Abbey is also feeling the absence of a resident teacher.
- Some students can practice for years without meeting the Sakyong; Acharyas may visit once or twice a year, but their schedules and finances don't usually allow long stays.
- The mentorship system has been quite successful in Europe, where experienced teachers are mentors to small, forming groups. These relationships are recognized by Shambhala Europe, who helps support these visits financially. The mentors take an oath, and are committed to specific centers.
- This relationship often develops organically, from connections a teacher has in an area already.

***Recommendation:* We strongly recommend implementing a mentorship system in North America, where there are many experienced teachers who would enjoy developing an ongoing relationship to a group in their region (or one they visit regularly).**

### ***Topic 4: Staff & Training***

- Difficulty in finding staff for programs, both ST and other practice and study programs.
- Possibility of participation in staff roles at a much earlier stage in path; participation creates a feeling of ownership in local center; some experienced staff is still necessary to create a proper container, and

- to educate students in the culture and atmosphere of Shambhala.
- Directors and teachers should present participation to both staff and participants as an enjoyable aspect of meditation in action, not just ‘getting the work done.’
- Coordinators are very important; they join the heaven of teachings to earth of program details.
  - Good coordinators are sometimes relied on too much and burn out; some sort of program for training and mentoring new coordinators is important; teachers must provide a seat for coordinators, and be trained in working with staff in general and coordinators specifically.
  - For large programs, it is helpful to have two coordinators.
  - Some centers have had training weekends for assistant directors and coordinators at the same time, with role playing of each position.
- Centers have widely varied experiences in the area of paying staff. Some centers pay core staff; some provide honoraria for different levels of staff. This seems to be more a function of local culture than policy.

### ***Topic 5: Meditation Instructors***

- In many centers it is very difficult to keep up with meditation instructors and their students.
- There are problems with consistency; some MIs are more up to date than others on current recommendations from the Sakyong on technique as it applies to different practice situations.
- The role of Shambhala Guides needs clarification; the point at which students are passed on to more experienced MIs is not clear and needs to be re-examined.
- There are questions about how to deal with students who have more than one teacher. If students are doing vajrayana practices with another teacher, we should not give them instruction, as they should follow the instructions of the teacher who gave them the practice.
  - Students may take teachings with more than one teacher, but only with the knowledge and permission of both.
- Meditation instructors need continuing education and to meet together as a group for support.
  - In small centers this happens organically; in larger centers some sort of steering committee or head MI is necessary to keep up with changing status and needs of MIs.

## **Shambhala Congress 2007**

### **Mother’s Milk (Finance group)**

5 sessions on the 4.5.2007, the 5.5.2007 and the 6.5.2007

chair : Ernst

minutes : Christian (EDG)

participants: Alan (SMC), Kiaron (Dublin), maria Jose (Segovia), Jan Willem (Amsterdam), Judith (Lexington), Ben (shambhala archives), Ed Keizer (former Finance Dir. SE), Giseltraut (Frankfurt), Terry (Comptroller), Chappa (Gampo Abbey), Lodro (Boston), Willem (Finance Dir. SE, Sakyong's Council), Connie (Minneapolis, SC), Susanne (DCL), Jan (Prague), Cyprian (New York), Gerda (Marburg), Mary (Birmingham, Alabama),

### **Questions, which have been posed:**

- **competition between centers:** should the number and the location of practice centers outside cities be regulated, so that investments can be focussed and income streams are bundled?
- **Locating centers:** Should there be rules where centers are located, or are we just creating centers as a matter of opportunity?
- **Broadening versus deepening:** is it appropriate, that some very busy centers get into the spiral to increase programs as demanded, increase staff for it and push the revenues by further program increase to cover costs?
- **Program pricing and teachers payments:** Is it appropriate that programs are profitable, are there

programs, which should not be profit-driven at all? How should pricing rules for programs look like, if they should exist at all? Should the program pricing be fixed or should people give as much as they think they can? How should teachers be paid for programs and shall there be a special regulation for those, who make their living from teaching?

- **Fringe income:** which income can be created aside membership and sponsorship in order to fill the gap between income and expenses, from which quite a few centers suffer? Can we produce a catalogue of ideas for activities, which are appropriate and worthwhile to be created? Are there rules given by the Sakyong about absolute no-nos?
- **Financial support systems:** Are the financial support systems existing sufficient or should they be broadened or individualized (e.g. Dublin Irish in US)?
- **Transparency of finances:** can we make a set up of key financial and general business data which every center should report in order to get a clear overview on the actual situation regularly?
- **Education of finance directors in the centers:** Should a special training be created to improve the standard of accounting and reporting in the centers?
- **Dues payment discipline:** Why do many members in our sangha don't pay their dues?
- **High debts of Shambhala:** how can we reduce the high debts of Shambhala, which seem to concern quite a few members?
- **Costs of the Kalapa court and for the living of the Sakyong and his family:** are the relatively high costs of the court sustainable? To which extent do we have to support the Sakyong and his family as our spiritual and political leader?
- **Costs for a program with the Sakyong:** how high are they and can a relatively small center such as Prague afford it?
- **Lungta and finances**
- **commitment and membership**

## Discussion:

- **Raising lungta and finances:** it is a question of view, we have to overcome poverty mentality and see money as something positive, energetic, as a flow, nurturing the forthcoming of our vision. For example you can pose the question whether we use too much money for the Kalapa Court, which might even be true in comparison with the total of our budget. But we could also ask ourselves how we could best support the Sakyong, who has dedicated his whole life for the wellbeing of sentient beings. The basis of our confidence will come from practice and we have to extend our vision as much as we can. **We recommend** to set up a program, in which members, teachers and directors and MIs are supported how to work with money in a positive manner. For that a format and teachers are needed. One acharya with a healthy relation to money himself/herself should mentor this effort. For the format a part of the program on governance training in Europe could be a blue print. The Sakyong should be asked to grant us general teachings on generosity and how to work with money. A document should be prepared with excerpts of teachings of the Sakyong and the Druk Sakyong to be used for teaching and training purposes.
- **Membership and finances:** the group thinks that membership is an important way to show one's commitment to the view of Shambhala not only from a financial point of view. **We recommend** to actively invite people to become members as soon as they show commitment through the appropriate channels (MI, teachers, center directors, membership directors), to offer clear rules how someone can enter the community and be flexible in the fee question, to set a strict border, when membership becomes obligatory (after Step II). (The last recommendation not 100% but large majority). The way to convey this should be skillful.
- **Transparency:** as well in US/Canada as in Europe a format for reporting is available. **We recommend** that a common format should be developed, some narrative comments should be given in reports to interpret the figures, that finance directors should show more discipline in on time reporting, that reports should be distributed regularly by internet to inform the sangha, that finance directors should be supported by a special training such as done in Europe in the governance program,

that a help desk should be installed for finance directors of small centers.

- **Creativity and fringe income:** There are a lot of possibilities to create income for our community besides membership fee, donations and program income. All of these activities have to be in accordance with our vision, nevertheless they can be profitable and support us. These activities can be directed to the sangha (such as Shambhala school, day care) or to the outside world (such as managers training, Karuna and Upaya) or to both (bookstore, Traveling agency, Kalapa hotels, art trade, care for old people). **We recommend** that a list of these activities should be put together and filled with life. Also a help organization could be installed supporting the start up new businesses for this purpose.
- **Trusts and Funds:** Many people in the sangha might be prepared to provide at least part of their monetary resources without interest or with low interest to investments, which could support sangha projects, if the capital could be guaranteed. **We recommend** that a group should be installed to investigate the possibilities to set up such fund structures.
- **Program pricing and level of membership fees:** This is a discussion since long time how to work with the amount of program fees. The model of “pay as you can” was discussed as well as models with scholarships and special reduction. As principle everyone agreed, that the sangha wants people to come in, that money should not be an obstacle, but that finally people should take on the responsibility of what they pay and can afford according to their personal situation and commitment to the Sakyong, the dharma and the sangha. **We recommend** that this question should be handled flexible and according to local cultural and economical situation.
- **Taking care of the Center of the Mandala:** It is essential for all of us to understand that we live in a Mandala and that we are on the one hand nurtured by the center and we have to nurture the center vice versa on the other hand. **We recommend** that everyone participates in providing a stable financial basis for the Center of the Mandala (CoM) as a starting point. In order to do that the European model of regular dues should be further extended in North America so that the income from this rises to at least 500.000.- US\$ in the next year. A support has to be established in order to help centers to implement this model. Europe has to deliver a fair and sustainable contribution to the CoM. A working group should clarify in which ways the recent participation has to be increased. Contributions of practice centers should continue or be established if they don't exist now. Ways have to be defined how the existing operating debts of the CoM can be paid off within three years. On the other hand the CoM should give regular reports about its budgets and its income and expense statements. **We strongly support** the set up of a professional committee which collects the bigger projects of Shambhala, checks on their feasibility and coordinates the total volume. Project representatives should have a direct possibility to be involved in this process. A system to plan the financing of this major projects has to be installed.
- **Working groups for financial issues should be installed!**

## The Third Jewel

### I. Basic Atmosphere of the Group-

The group was composed of individuals from centers large, medium and small. Boulder and Halifax are large centers with 600 members. Lexington and Los Angeles are medium sized with 80 and 140 members respectively while Bristol, UK and Kamloops, Canada are small centers with less than 20 members. All of us had a curiosity for each other's experience, a dedication to the subject and shared our experiences. In the beginning of our discussions we allowed a lot of space and we were not goal oriented.

This allowed us to know who we are. We made an effort to engage and the result was the understanding that every center regardless of the size felt the need for community care at all levels.

### II. View –Feminine principal –

Taking care of the community embodies the feminine energy of the Sakyong Wangmo and the accommodating energy of space.

### III. Topics Discussed

1. How we communicate
  2. How Delegs work or don't
  3. Burnout
  4. Death and dying
  5. Aging and illness
  6. How we celebrate
  7. Calamity
  8. Connecting with the disenfranchised and discontented
- A. From our discussion we realized that the deleg system for large or small communities was the best system to take care of each other.

### IV. Suggested Resources

- A. Contemplative Communication- Listening circle
- B. Karuna teachings
- C. Desung training
- D. Shambhala Website 2003 community care group report

### VI. Questions

1. Is someone in charge of caring in your community?
2. Is there a person that represents community care in the larger mandala?
3. Is there a chain of care?

We recommend the following:

- A. Each congress have a representative from the previous congress when there are similar topics discussed.
- B. That there be a seat on the Sakyong's council to represent the third jewel and community care.
- C. Every community have a person who is in charge of community care.
- D. Communications training be done with leaders and within their communities.
- E. To offer desung training for view and practice of community care.
- F. For centers to begin developing a deleg system for communities.
- G. The mandate for delegs is to care for each other from the cradle to the grave, to create space by bringing people together for celebration, encouraging communication both within the deleg and the

mandala at large.

H. To avoid burn out, by knowing ourselves and our basic goodness; knowing our own limits and taking care of ourselves.

I. To adopt “bodhi/buddy” system and cultivate that relationship.

Shambhala Congress 2007  
**Working Group 4: *Turning the Flower Outward***  
(Social service and outreach to new people)

***Guiding Questions:***

1. **Outreach:** How can we improve our methods for attracting and welcoming people to Shambhala?
2. **Social Engagement:** What should the role of social service be within Shambhala?

**Outreach**

Two aspects of this topic were discussed by the group: **1) attracting new people** and **2) retaining them**. The following practices either already exist and work well for Centers and groups or could be explored and experimented with:

**Attracting new people**

- Ways people come to Shambhala: books (e.g. by Pema, VCTR, and the Sakyong); websites, web ads (e.g., Google ad campaigns); use of mailing lists; one night a week as more “social night”; ads in free newspapers; having a magnetizing space in a visible place as a gateway to our Centers; dharma art and kado demonstrations or classes as gateway programs; be listed with your local “speakers bureau”.
- More outreach is needed to diverse groups of people, beyond white middle class.
- Realize that outreach to many more people, organizations, businesses is now more possible than before as meditation has become more understood and acceptable as being healthy and helpful in work and life. So get out more! And be willing to adapt instruction to the needs and abilities of the audience (e.g., children/adolescents and their shorter attention spans).
- Explore possibilities for being open during alternative times (e.g., lunch time).
- Reach out to interfaith groups (raising visibility of Shambhala among the faith communities)

**Retaining new people:**

- Not everyone is interested in the same thing (e.g., Buddhism or meditation)—while some groups may be popular (e.g., “under-30” group in Boston), we must keep in mind how integrated they are or are not within the sangha and if there is an identifiable “path” for them.
- Sometimes people’s first touch with Shambhala can be a program or special event and it can feel awkward. Following up with phone calls, e-mails, or directly with a *social* event can create more

relaxation and comfort—which helps people keep coming back.

- Open house nights led by the same person for a certain period of time. Madrid has an “instructor of the month” who leads meditation, gives a talk, and leads discussion on same night of the week for a month.
- Dinners at the Center followed by a talk.
- Go where people are—need to extend ourselves outside of our Centers more often, offering Learn to Meditate workshops, etc.
- Personal follow-up with people *after* programs.
- Provide opportunities to socialize.
- Cafés in the Centers for socializing before or after programs/sitting sessions

### ***Recommendations:***

1. If Shambhala wants to continue to attract new and younger people, we need to stay up-to-date on the uses of *technology* as well as the community forums being used by this audience. Promoting Shambhala, its teachings, and cultural components via today’s global media distribution tools (e.g., podcasts, MySpace, Facebook, YouTube, etc.) can create faster and broader exposure to Shambhala than traditional media outlets (e.g., newspapers, mailings). *A permanent Outreach Committee should be formed that will make use of technology and assist others in using it for outreach and retention activities.*
2. Welcome and care for people through personal attention. Social activities, personal phone calls and e-mails can newcomers quickly feel that they are welcomed additions to the Shambhala community.

### **Social Engagement**

*What should Shambhala Centers do as an institution and what kinds of activities or positions should they avoid?* It was suggested that collectively Shambhala should raise its gaze and not act so much like an island—only focusing on it’s own curriculum, programs, and events but could and should consider the interests and needs that exist “outside” of the Shambhala mandala.

With regard to confronting social issues, however the general consensus of the group was that Shambhala *as a institution* should not “pick sides” on specific political, social, or moral issues but should stay someone above the fray, as an advocate for fostering the conditions that will erode all sources of suffering (e.g., mindfulness and awareness). That is our particular niche.

There was a shared sense in the group that as an *institution* we provide the conditions—such as mindfulness/awareness training as well as the necessary space—for the inspiration for *individuals* to take action on their own to arise. We should also recognize that the hours we volunteer to our Centers should be considered as “social service” in and of itself.

We should remember always to working “from the heart” rather than from “obligation” (such as, “I’m doing this for Shambhala in order to complete my requirement for...”)

We don’t need to wait for an institutional mandate (or manual) from Shambhala before engaging in compassionate service. If you find a solution or want to address a problem as an individual, or combining with others, you can just do it!

(Note: We don’t know what became of the “year of social service” idea after finishing the Rigden Ngöndro. We suspect that it was a first “push” by the Sakyong in this area, but that it was left too loose and so people may have forgotten about it.)

### ***Ideas:***

- Let’s be outrageous in helping the world! (For example, advertise a “Service-of-the-Month” presenting a different service activity that each Shambhalian could engage in each month, then report afterward on how it went.)

- Invite people who provide social services in your community to come to the Center and tell people about them.
- Have a service component as part of the next Shambhala Congress (e.g., a half-day of participation cleaning up the local neighborhood, painting or construction work; visiting a hospital or retirement home).
- Create linkages between Shambhala and other service organizations, and opportunities to engage in joint activities.
- Explore what more we can do to reach out and budding Shambhala groups in E. Europe and other places.
- Shambhala Centers could plan for and budget a certain level activity financial support for social causes.
- We should use existing online forums (e.g., MySpace, Friendster) or set up our own where Shambhalians can identify social service needs or opportunities and also create and maintain affinity groups that can communicate about issues of interest to them.

## **Governance as Path Discussion Group**

May 2007

I. During the first two days, our discussions related to 3 themes:  
Governance as Path, Taking Our Seat, and Best Practices

### Governance as Path

Several people emphasized taking seriously the path of leadership, including studying, contemplating and meditating. Manifesting the teachings as Director is most important. The ability to 'be' and create space is more important than doing everything. As one person noted, "The more I work on it as my path, the better things go." Relax into a bigger space, the more you feel what's happening, the more effective you are. Another aspect of this path is appreciation for diversity in many aspects, including levels of students and all the other dimensions (see Agness Au, Going Beyond Bias).

### Taking Our Seat

How are Directors empowered? Both from earth—the community--and from Heaven—the Sakyong. In addition to their own practice, various support systems can help directors take their seat. Mentors are needed for new or smaller or struggling centers. Another example is groups of elders or trustees who support the director. Legitimacy of the process for choosing new directors is also important.

### Best Practices

Many problem-solving approaches were shared, and it was noted that Best Practices are available on the

Shambhala website. These include such things as job or role descriptions, strategic planning tools, manuals for leadership training and for European Center Directors.

- On Sunday, Structural and financial issues were discussed, including Concerns about the Corporate Board model, Communication issues, and the Limitation of some programs to land centers. Finally, reflections on the Congress process was discussed, and several requests were expressed to the Center of the Mandala

### Boards

Available legal structures in the U.S. usually encourage a type of board that focuses on financial and materialistic values. These boards serve continuity for the entity as well as providing a legal shield for individuals in case of financial difficulty of the entity. Several organizations originally part of Vajradhatu have created independent boards of directors, most recently the Shambhala Sun, and longer ago Naropa University. It is important that, regardless of legal requirements, governing bodies maintain their connection with and protection of the lineage and its spiritual purpose. **Since we understand that the Sakyong is reviewing the legal aspects of Board vs. Court Structure, we would like to request advice from the Sakyong's office on how best to work with legal structures to protect our lineage.**

### Other models

There is need for serious study of what the Vidyadhara taught about governance—much of which is only available as oral transmission, in minutes of Dharmadhatu conferences, or minutes of Board meetings. **Request to the new Governance as Path Working Group to make these teachings more available, perhaps in a sourcebook, or as a leadership curriculum.** Note that a leadership manual available from Shambhala Europe focuses on the Shambhala terma as the basis. It is suggested that all centers hold annual leadership programs, as well as that regions conduct leadership training regionally.

### Communication

Difficulties between older and newer students were raised many times. One suggestion was to 'rescript' this conflict, because the current script solidifies the differences. Another approach was to place older students on an Elder Council where they would serve an advisory and possibly financial role. Languages were also raised as communication problem—it was noted that rather than many manuals in English, non-English-speaking centers would appreciate the personal mentor approach. A mentor can translate available wisdom to the specific situation of each center. Also, short slogans for shambhala leaders would serve better than lengthier texts. **We supplicate the Sakyong for a set of slogans for leadership in Shambhala.**

### Land Center vs. Local or regional programs

Several regions far from land retreat centers are interested in offering advanced programs such as Warrior Assemblies, dathuns, or even sutrayana seminaries. They have many students who are waiting to take these programs who cannot afford the expensive travel or cannot attend land centers for other reasons. But currently most of these programs are centrally planned to take place at land centers. Realizing the economic impact of moving these programs to the regions, can some solution be worked out? Land centers also offer very special experiences and training not available elsewhere. **We recommend that all centers transition to the new database as soon as possible so that we can collect data on program participation and easilz communicate with members about advanced programs. These data will help planning of programs regionallz and for the whole mandala.**

### Congress

In general, the group was very positive about the current model for Congresses. The pre-congress information was helpful, but might be sent somewhat less often. It would also be helpful to provide links to relevant documents and to indicate which are necessary to read ahead and which only recommended. **In particular we recommend that the post-congress website be managed to clean up irrelevant or old materials and to make clear what are the official summaries and which are individual opinion.**

## THEME SIX

### **NURTURING THE FUTURE**

(Supporting small groups and centres, mentoring and regionalization)

2007-05/Cologne

#### **Needs & Resources**

- Course outline and sourcebooks for basic study in all different mother-languages as a basis to have study courses without teachers, so that students can study the dharma and also accomplish the new curriculum
- Building partnerships between small and big/experienced groups where the small groups could be supported by more experienced people
- Mentorship: Mentor as an adviser, one who offers help, not as a person who makes decisions (mentor-training could be necessary). The centres should be involved in choosing mentor/s.
- Raising own teachers (basic level, for open house, leading discussion, etc.) as a possibility for new groups/small groups
- Teaching and training groups by experienced practitioners in how to work with newcomers (pre-shambhala guide training) in small/far away groups
- Visits from sangha—friendship from other centres on a regular basis
- Simplified curriculum as a complete package for small centres (David Hope has offered to work on this./DCL)

#### **Joining the Mandala & Feeling Separate**

- Networking: on a global (or regional) basis, raising awareness of different centres of different sizes
- Information: i. e. in the DOT about centres who need teachers, centre-friends, partnerships and also teachers/other sangha members who offer their help (“Come along...”)
- Building funds for travel costs for people in distant regions or for those who would visit and help (including teachers)
- A coordinator/centre resource person to relate to for help, information, mentors, teachers etc. and who keeps an overview
- Coordinating/sharing/publishing teacher visits among centres so that other centres could join in / teachers can visit neighbouring centres in the region, to pool resources (save money, make it possible to have more teacher visits, etc.)

#### **Path & Inspiration**

- Cultivating our own vision of basic goodness
- Creating a good atmosphere
- Having a good social situation, having fun together (music etc.)
- Creating an informal open space (for all human beings)
- Open houses on a regular basis, emphasize importance of community participation

## Touching the Earth

We would like all the participants of this congress to make a commitment to **discovering** that ecological principles are and always have been inherent in the Shambhala Buddhist teachings.

**Ground:** Caretaking of our centers  
**Path:** Engagement  
**Fruition:** Transformation on a societal level

Dharmic Level	Practical Application Level
<u>Ground:</u> Seeing and exploring the connection between the Shambhala Buddhist Teachings and ecological principles.	<u>Ground:</u> Assessing our centers. <i><u>Our next meeting we will develop a framework for assessing where our centers are right now.</u></i>
<u>Path:</u> ***Continually enrich our commitment and awareness by teaching and studying how Shambhala Buddhism and ecological principles can be infused in all our activities, programs and events.	<u>Path:</u> Planning the changes and making the changes.
<u>Fruition:</u> Our Shambhala centers can manifest Enlightened Society and be examples for the world.	<u>Fruition:</u> Shambhala will find a way to bring this into the world. We can be a force in the world and engage beyond our centers.

We would like to propose an ongoing working group that would discuss how Shambhala can plan to change, to actually make changes, and finally how we can transform our centers and the world.

\*\*\*What are the dharmic principles we should refer to when we say *ecological principles*? The following are some examples we discussed.

- Hinayana/ Meek level  
Clean up your mess.  
Simplicity
- Mahayana/ Perky level  
Interdependence. Not separating ourselves from others.  
Consider the effect our actions have on others.

Sadhana of mahamudra mentions te environment. When the space is clean, awareness arises.  
Dralas also arise when space is uplifted: Sacred World.

### 3) Vajarayana/Garuda level

Going beyond.

Imagining a city where these principles apply, how it would effect others.

We need to relate with the difficulties of these topics with fearlessness and gentleness and the gravity of the situation at the same time. Let us not create another platform for aggression.