



THE SHAMBHALA MEDITATION
CENTER
OF ST. JOHNSBURY

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MAY NEWSLETTER 2004

FROM THE EDITOR:

Getting a newsletter out seems to require someone with an enjoyment and talent for editorial work and writing, and who also has the time and energy to make it happen. If that person might be you, please contact Barry, Tune or Newcomb.

We would like to see us have a newsletter that matters; that connects the community and also is interesting to those on the fringe, that has both dharmic and community appeal. Our community has access to a lot of writing talent that could be harnessed to produce a a newsletter with quality:

- What would it look like?
- What would it be about?
- What would it be called?

These are all open questions. If you have a vision, please tell us about it. David Wilde remains available for the layout and design work.

This Shambhala Center Newsletter is highly compacted so that it should not be too much to receive electronically even with a dial-up connection. We would like to keep hard copy mailing to a minimum. However, if you would still prefer not to get the Calendar electronically, please let Barry know. barry@hereandnow.com

THURSDAY NIGHT TALKS:

On Thursday May 6th at 7:30 the Green Sangha group will sponsor a talk on Radical Simplicity with Jim Merkel and Rowan Sherwood of the Global Living Project. It will include a slide show and discussion of the ideas described in Jim's new book.

Jim Merkel quit his job as a military engineer following the Exxon Valdez disaster, and for the past 14 years has lived on \$5,000 per year, volunteering his time in community environmental projects. He founded the Global Living Project (GLP) and has led hundreds of workshops on "Your Money or Your Life" and sustainable lifestyles. Rowan Sherwood grew up in the suburbs of Long Island hunting and gathering the latest fashions at the Smith Haven Mall. After earning a B. S. in speech-language pathology she began studying permaculture, organic gardening and earth-based spirituality. She joined the GLP in 1998 and co-facilitates educational programs and the Cycling for a Sustainable Future tours.

May 13 Gerry Haase will lead a discussion of the Mahakala chants.

May 20 Newcomb Greenleaf will be discussion the Lineage chants.

May 27 Tell us your ideas, suggestions or just jump in.

PROGRAMS

May 7-9 Maitri: Five Wisdom Energies; Friday at 6:30, Saturday and Sunday from 9 Am to 5 PM with a 1 hour lunch break.

Presented by Ms. Claudette Rodruque and Ms. Suzann Duquette

Cost: \$30.00

Pre-Registration: \$20.00

Program Limited to 15 participants

Please RSVP to Ms. Sophie Cohen if you are planning to attend: sophieatkarmeholding@yahoo.com

View:

Maitri: Five Wisdom Energies is a meditation practice that was created in 1973 by the Vidyadhara Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche based on the traditional principles of the five buddha families and a vajrayana approach to mind, energy, and space. Though it has a strong vajrayana flavor, Maitri has been a practice available to the public and practitioners of all levels. In particular, it has been used in a therapeutic community setting for in-depth training in Buddhist psychology, as well as the arts, at Naropa University.

Maitri practice essentially highlights and tunes us directly into our different psychological styles or energies. This allows us to clearly see and experience how we embody and relate to them in either a sane or neurotic fashion. Gradually, we open up and embrace these energies in ourselves and our world with friendliness or maitri. This warmth helps us transform the frozen energy of self-centeredness into the flowing creativity of compassionate wisdom.

This practice is generally done in an intensive group format. It both needs and creates a strong container and sense of community. There are many ways to approach the practice. In this context, we are using it as an experiential introduction to the principles of vajrayana.

Vajrayana is primarily known for its skillful means, and Maitri is an excellent example of the Vidyadhara's genius in transmitting the essence of the tradition in "new" creative forms.

"Good Medicine"

There will be a new Pema Chodron 2-tape video, called "Good Medicine", shown on Saturday May 15; one at 10 AM, with a break for lunch and one about 1PM

In this three hour workshop Pema Chodron shares the gift of tonglen, a simple and elegant meditation system "for ordinary people like ourselves." Through tonglen we can use the difficulties of life - those that cause the most suffering - as a way to befriend ourselves, accept the past we have rejected, and widen our circle of compassion. These traditional breathing meditations cut through obstacles "on the spot."

The Khandro Rinpoche study group will continue to meet on Tuesday May 4 & 18 at 7PM. Please contact Vickie Schafer at 633-3939 vickieinbarnet@aol.com for more information.

CENTER ACTIVITIES:

Open House

Remember that we now have a weekly Open House every Thursday between 4:00 and 6:00. It is hosted by Sophie Cohen and is a great time to kick back and browse, chat, have a cup of tea, and enjoy our lovely Center.

Rota

We have completed our 1st month with Michael Taney developing an on-line Shrine Room Rota schedule with considerable success. Center clean-up can be done at your leisure anytime during the week you are assigned. It takes about 2 1/2 hours and can be split up however you like to make it work for you.

There is abundant appreciation for the efforts of Sarah Littlefeather's schedule work.

Community Meeting

From the Community Meeting of April 24:

Kunchok Foundation

The Sakyong recently ran a very strong race in the Big Sur Marathon, running as a fundraiser for the Kunchok Foundation, which raises funds for Surmang Monastery, the Tibet home of the Vidyadhara.

The Center pledged \$108, and we have received and additional \$138, making a total of \$246. If you'd like to add to this before it is sent in, communicate with Newcomb, Tune, or Emily.

Finance

Emily McAdoo will take over the checkbook from Vichie Schafer and will work with Barry and Michael T. on dues payments and membership issues.

Schedule

Our Summer Schedule will continue with all-day Nynthunes the 1st Sunday of the month. Other activities are likely to be curtailed Watch for Center Calendars and notices.

Handicap Access

We discussed handicap access to the Center and particularly the ability for Sarah to attend Community Meetings. Though Sarah would be pleased to have a 2-way audio hook-up, an alternative handicap venue is being considered.

Deleks

We remain undecided about incorporating delek system though there was agreement regarding the need for a system or individual(s) committed to Community Well-Being.

PRESIDENT'S CALL:

President Reoch's Community Call 4/25/04

Condensed from notes by Sarah Littlefeather. The longer version is available for the asking. 10 + centers participated.

The Big Sur Marathon was discussed while we waited. Pictures are available on the website.

Introductions: Richard Reoch, President of Shambhala, talked about conference groups from the Congress. Connie talked about where things are with the 8 working groups:

- Leadership
- Community care
- Outreach
- Mandala Structure
- New Economic Model
- Diversity and Accessibility
- Membership
- Communication

Chairs names will be posted to the website for "Shambhala Congress". The groups are thoughtfully and carefully working through topics...in process of finishing their objectives.

Review groups, made up of volunteers across the mandala average 50-80 each. Contact a working group chair if you have not received notice by email by May 10th. Are the review groups closed?...No, they will remain open throughout the process. So anyone can jump in at any time and all are encouraged to do so.

Richard asked if everyone was aware of the social action groups forming or already active around the mandala. Most responded yes, some had not heard about it and wanted more information. Working groups have evolved and it looks like we will have 400 people involved by next year. The next congress will be in Halifax February 15-20 2005. There is conference July 28th with all center directors.

Richard: The concept of regionalization is high on agenda. Before reconstructing the central services of the mandala it is important to see how and in what form regional issues develop. Addressing such issues as an acharya visiting an area where they are known and that topics reflect the recent teaching. This would really change things in a positive way for both program participants as well as centers generally. This shapes what is needed from the Center of the Mandala. Hope to see some development in the next year on these issues.

Brian - Gampo Abby: there is an opening for 3-year retreat. And they are doing a monastic youth dathun there this summer and there is still room for 17-25 year olds.

FACILITIES NEWS:

All shrineroom lights are now Energy Savers.

We are now required to send in a copy of any recorded talks by the Sakyong, lineage holders, Richard Reoch and the acharyas. Guidelines for this will be available on the bulletin board and on the recorder.

Our Center Bulletin Board always has relevant information for our practice and related interests. We encourage you to pay it some occasional attention.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Many thanks to Brian Blundell who donated two shrine brushes, a beautiful framed chakrasamvara painting and two banners as well as \$500 towards future carpeting needs. Also thanks to Nancy Wallace who donated the exquisite rug in the front area, which looks fantastic. Ann McKinley gave us the beautiful table runner she made for the central table.



