



THE SHAMBHALA MEDITATION  
CENTER  
OF ST. JOHNSBURY

OCTOBER NEWSLETTER 2004

802-748-4240

17 EASTERN AVENUE  
(BELOW THE STAR THEATER)  
ST. JOHNSBURY, VT 05819  
PO Box 66

WWW.STJSHAMBHALA.ORG

THIS BODY WILL BE A CORPSE

The breeze catches the flat of the leaf, gently separating it from the twig to which it was once joined. The leaf joins other leaves, as the gust propels them into a lazy spin to the earth where they layer the earth with their colorful corpses each autumn.

Once a year, we have the privilege of watching this timeless funeral rite take place. As we rake the leaves and cart them away to a leafy funeral pyre, what are we contemplating? The following may help to answer that question.

*The reputation of Buddha Shakyamuni had spread far and wide. Not only was he renowned as a great, compassionate and fully enlightened human being, but also as a skilled teacher and a miraculous healer who could even bring the dead back to life.*

*One day, a woman approached him after a teaching begging that he do something to restore her dead child to her. The Buddha listened patiently to her plea and saw how great was her despair. He said to her, "Mother, if you bring me just one mustard seed from any household in which no person has died, then I shall revive your child." The woman was greatly encouraged by the Teacher's words. She traveled from door to door throughout her own village, but could not find even a single residence in which no one had died. She went out of town, wandering to this hamlet and that in search of the tiny seed that the Buddha had requested. Days later, muddied and footsore, she returned to the place where the Buddha and his followers were passing the rainy season. She was ushered into the Teacher's presence worn out, but not discouraged. "Master, try as I might, I could not locate the token you requested as an offering. But I have come to understand that death visits every household and eventually, every single one of us. I would like now, to 'enter the stream' and work towards the liberation that the teachings provide."*

[www.khandro.net](http://www.khandro.net)

"You cannot help a dying person until you have acknowledged how their fear of dying disturbs you and brings up your most uncomfortable fears. Working with the dying is like facing a polished and fierce mirror of your own reality. You see in it the stark face of your panic and your own terror of pain.

"Sometimes, I think there could be no more effective way of speeding up our growth as human beings than working with the dying. Caring for the dying is itself a deep contemplation and reflection of your own death."

**Sogyal Rinpoche, *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*, p 173**

*"One's attitude toward death is central to any healing process. Although it is frequently ignored it is always in the background. No one wants to face the possibility of death, or even the idea of death. Even a mild sickness points to the possibility of nothingness: we might lose control of our physical and mental situations; we might become lost in mid-air. Since as healers we are dealing constantly with the fear of loss, we should actually bring that possibility into the picture.*

*"We do not have to try to conceal the unspeakable; on the other hand, we do not have to push it to the extreme. At the least, we should help a person have some understanding of the idea of loss. of the possibility of nonexistence and of dissolving into the unknown. The whole point of any relationship is to share some degree of honesty and to explore how far we can go with it. In that way relationships can become extremely powerful and intense, and beautiful.*

*"And finally, what do we mean when we say that a patient has been healed? To be healed, ironically, means that person is no longer embarrassed by life; she is able to face death without resentment or expectation."*

**Chogyam Trungpa, *The Heart of the Buddha*, ch 9, *Acknowledging Death***

"The most beautiful people we have known are those who have known defeat, known suffering, known struggle, known loss, and have found their way out of the depths. These persons have an appreciation, a sensitivity and an understanding of life that fills them with compassion, gentleness, and a deep loving concern. Beautiful people do not just happen.

"And after your death, when most of you for the first time realize what life here is all about, you will begin to see that your life here is almost nothing but the sum total of every choice you have made during every moment of your life. Your thoughts, which you are responsible for, are as real as your deeds.

You will begin to realize that every word and every deed affects your life and has also touched thousands of lives. We run after values that, at death, become zero. At the end of your life, nobody asks you how many degrees you have, or how many mansions you built, or how many Rolls Royces you could afford. That's what dying patients teach you."

### Elizabeth Kubler-Ross

*"Death casts a different light on life. The more fully you relate to death, the more fully you relate to life. You are clearer about what is and isn't important, what can and can't be done, what is and isn't meaningful. Increasingly, you look beneath the surface of things and seek what really matters. Social prescriptions and promises of success and security ring hollow. Conventional definitions of success and failure, happiness and unhappiness, gain and loss, fame and obscurity, respect and disdain lose their hold. Your relationship with society changes. You stop following convention for convention's sake or tradition for tradition's sake. In the end you may do many of the same things, but you will do them for different more personal reasons. Each action, each meeting, each word you say comes from a personal connection to life, not from what you've been told to believe or do. The more you embrace death, the more you embrace life."*

### Ken McLeod. Wake Up to Your Life, p109

We see the leaves fall, we feel the icy breeze cut our cheeks, we smell the dry air as it burns our lungs, we hear the roar of the arctic wind, and we taste the preciousness of this life. The knowledge and certainty of death allows us to give more fully to the things that are important. Last night, on Prairie Home Companion, a musical group played a song, entitled, "We're All in this Thing Together". The words remind me of those with whom I practice and the places where we do it. The Center allows us to be in this thing together; to practice, to eat, to speak, to smile, to weep, to love, and to die to all those things we once thought we were. Please support your local dharma center by giving in the way that best amplifies your basic goodness.

- David R. Horton

### CENTER ACTIVITIES:

THE ANNUAL YARD SALE will occur at Gerry Haase's residence on October 2nd. Items for the sale can be stored in Madge Rossinoff's garage at any time between now and the yard sale, in Newcomb Greenleaf's garage on the night before the yard sale, or brought to Gerry's house on the morning of the yard sale.

Please contact Sandy Raynor at 592-3178 or newcomb@fcgnetworks.net if you want to volunteer to help. Sandy is requesting the help of several volunteers for shifts beginning at 6:00 (setting up), 9:00 (selling), 12:00 (selling and bringing lunch), and 3:00 (takedown).

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Oscar Garcia, our new Practice Coordinator, likes words. He wants to know what dharma terms--Buddhist and Shambhala terms that are used around the Center-- have intrigued, confused, or tickled your curiosity. We will begin to publish a dharma vocabulary definition section in our Newsletter, with your help. So, please send words whose meaning has interested you to: Oscar Garcia at karma\_shedup@yahoo.com We will share the words and meanings in subsequent Newsletters.

### *Study Programs:*

MEDITATION sessions are held Wednesdays and Thursdays from 6-7 p.m. and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. Nyinths occur the first Sunday of every month, running from 9a.m. until 12p.m. with an hour lunch and then from 1 p.m. until 4 p.m.

STROKE PRACTICE is happening during regular sitting hours in the office at the Center!

THE KHANDRO RINPOCHE Study Group meets each month on alternate Tuesdays at 6:45 PM. The text is "Treasury of Precious Qualities" by Longchen Yeshe Dorje, Kangyur Rinpoche, the selection Khandro Rinpoche recommends from her Gateway Curriculum. New & Old students welcome. No charge. For more info, call Vicki Schafer @ 633-3939 or Joan Kydd @ 748-0330.

THE KEN MCLEOD group has been meeting on Thursday evenings at 7:10 p.m. at the Center, to listen to and discuss audio excerpts from Ken's June "Awakening From Belief" workshop that was held here in St. Johnsbury. The suggested reading for newcomers to the group is the fifth chapter in Wake Up To Your Life; Karma and Dismantling Belief. Ken McLeod will visit St. Johnsbury again, from July 13-17, 2005 and will teach on The Four Immeasurables and associated practices.

TAI CHI, taught by Lillian Concordia, is practiced on Tuesday nights from 5 to 6:30 p.m.

KADO THE WAY OF FLOWERS: Marcia Shibata will teach classes for beginners and intermediate level practitioners on October 2nd, 9th, and 23rd from 1 to 4:30 p.m. Classes are limited to eight students. Contact Marcia at 802-533-9269, mtfowers@sover.net

*Fall Schedule:*

During the last academic year, we presented the classes of the first cycle of the Shambhala School of Buddhist Studies. On the weekend of September 18-19, the second cycle began with The Three Jewels, taught by Newcomb Greenleaf.

THE BODHISATTVA WARRIOR: Six Paramitas, the next class of the second cycle, starts on Thursday, October 28. It will be taught by Susan Shaw and Michael Taney. It will run for 5 Thursdays and end with a one-day intensive TBA.

SHAMBHALA TRAINING Level I: The Art of Being Human will be directed by Roger Guest on the weekend of October 15-17. Its theme is discovering basic goodness in the world and ourselves.

LANCE BRUNNER, Chair of the Shambhala Social Action Advisory Group, will be at the Shambhala Center on the evening of Saturday, October 23, for a potluck dinner and discussion on issues surrounding Shambhala and social action. Lance is Professor of Music at University of Kentucky and will be in this area to teach a week of Shambhala Training at Karme Choling.

A VIDEO weekend of Pema Chodron, Losing Our Appetite for Aggression will be presented on November 11-12.

THE VAJRAYANA teaching of Mingyur Rinpoche, Three Words That Strike Vital Point, will be scheduled in January.

*Facility Plans :*

A DISPLAY CASE will be installed on the street side of the pillar in front of the outside door on Eastern Ave. We will no longer have flyers taped to the exterior door, to which a great eastern sunburst logo will be applied. SPOTLIGHTS will be installed over the library and the bulletin board to aid those of us who, being blessed with mid or old age, need a bit more light to read by.

*Finances :*

The latest financial report was prepared by Emily McAdoo and is available at the Center. The scholarship fund helps sangha members to attend programs, primarily at the Center and at Karmê Chöling. Requests should be submitted in writing to Newcomb or Tune. Requests for scholarships for programs outside these two spheres will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Karmê Chöling has been matching our scholarships when that is requested in writing.

*New Positions:*

Many thanks to Greg McNally for his years of service as Shambhala Training director. Tune Faulkner will coordinate the upcoming Shambhala Level I on the weekend of October 17-19. We are looking for a new director to work with Sophie Cohen who will co-coordinate with the new director. Sandy Raynor will be moving into the Publicity position, Oscar Garcia will coordinate Practice. Michael Beauregard will take over the administration of the Library from Susan Shaw, whom we thank for bringing the library into real being.

PINS, Partners In Service, is a program that is a coordinated effort between Northeast Kingdom Youth Services and various local churches to assist local youth with various needs of theirs that go unmet. The services provided can range from helping them purchase a toaster to driving them to work or a driver's license test. The program is based in North Congregational Church, and Tune will coordinate on our end.

*Executive Committee:*

The Executive Committee will meet on Monday (not Tuesday), October 11th at 5:30 p.m. All community members are invited to attend. Decisions are made by consensus of the members of the committee.

- Coordinators: Tune Faulkner & Newcomb Greenleaf
- Practice: Oscar Garcia
- Library: Michael Beauregard
- Finance: Emily McAdoo
- Facilities: Michael Leszczynski
- Publicity: Sandy Raynor
- Study: Anne Stevens
- Secretary/Editor: David Horton
- Rusung: Michael Taney
- Membership: Barry Rossinoff
- Shambhala Training: Sophie Cohen and open position

ARTICLES AND NEWS submissions to the Newsletter are welcome. Please send any news and dharma relevant articles to David Horton at [dryder47@verizon.net](mailto:dryder47@verizon.net).

Thanks to Greg Guest and Troll Press for printing this Newsletter.





# Shambhala Meditation Center

## of St. Johnsbury

October 2004

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
				<b>1</b> _9:00am yoga	<b>2</b> _9:00am-3:00pm Garage Sale _1:00-4:30pm Kado	<b>3</b> _9:00am-noon, _1:00-4:00pm nyinthun
<b>4</b> _6:00pm yoga	<b>5</b> _5:00-6:30pm Tai Chi	<b>6</b> _6:00-7:00pm silent sitting	<b>7</b> _9:00am yoga _6:00-7:00pm sitting and chants	<b>8</b> _9:00am yoga	<b>9</b> _1:00-4:30pm Kado	<b>10</b> _11:00-12:00am sitting and chants
<b>11</b> _5:30pm Executive Committee mtg.  _6:00pm yoga	<b>12</b> _5:00-6:30pm Tai Chi _6:45pm Khandro Rinpoche study group	<b>13</b> _6:00-7:00pm silent sitting	<b>14</b> _9:00am yoga _6:00-7:00pm sitting, chants and Mahamudra sadhana	<b>15</b> _9:00am yoga Level I Shambhala Training	<b>16</b> Level I Shambhala Training	<b>17</b> Level I Shambhala Training _11:00-12:00am sitting and chants
<b>18</b> _6:00pm yoga	<b>19</b> _5:00-6:30pm Tai Chi	<b>20</b> _6:00-7:00pm silent sitting	<b>21</b> _9:00am yoga _6:00-7:00pm sitting and chants _7:10pm Ken McLeod study group	<b>22</b> _9:00am yoga	<b>23</b> _1:00-4:30pm Kado _6:30pm potluck and social action discussion with Lance Brunner	<b>24</b> _11:00-12:00am sitting and chants
<b>25</b> _6:00pm yoga	<b>26</b> _5:00-6:30pm Tai Chi _6:45pm Khandro Rinpoche study group	<b>27</b> _6:00-7:00pm silent sitting	<b>28</b> _9:00am yoga _6:00-7:00pm sitting, chants and Mahamudra sadhana _7:10pm Bodhisattva Warrior Class	<b>29</b> _9:00am yoga	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> _11:00-12:00am sitting and chants