



Creating Enlightened Community Shambhala Meditation Center of Chicago

The Sadhana of Mahamudra with Kunga Dawa

Friday, January 30th 7pm - 9pm

Saturday, January 31st 9am - 5pm

Sunday, February 1st 9am - 3pm Feast starts at 3pm

The Chicago Shambhala Center is pleased to present teachings on the Sadhana of Mahamudra by visiting teacher, Kunga Dawa.

Kunga Dawa (Richard Arthure) was one of Trungpa Rinpoche's earliest students and the first Westerner to be trained by the Vidyadhara to teach the Dharma. He travelled as the Vidyadhara's attendant to India, Sikkim, and Bhutan, and was with him on retreat when he received the Sadhana of Mahamudra terma. Together, they created the English language version of the text, which is practiced today throughout the world. This retreat marked a profound turning point in the Vidyadhara's presentation of Buddhist teachings in the West.

Kunga Dawa also co-founded Karme Choling Retreat Center in Barnet, Vermont, and has taught extensively in the United States, Canada, and Europe. In 2003, he completed a 3-year retreat in New Mexico and currently resides in Boulder, Colorado. He published a book of poetry, *Bone Ornaments and Mirrors*, and authored the forthcoming book, *Confusion into Wisdom*.

The Sadhana of Mahamudra is a tantric meditation text practiced by the Shambhala Community. Its purpose is to invoke the blessings of the Practice Lineage and renew spiritual strength. The seminar will explore how we are to understand the wild and wrathful imagery of its symbolism, which at first may seem strange or even outlandish. We will contemplate how the Sadhana of Mahamudra really does help purify a degenerate stage of meditation practice and enable us to experience the living dharma within. The weekend combines talks, practice, discussion, and a celebratory feast practice.

\$150 Non-members; \$130 Members - scholarships available
Visit www.chicagoshambhala.org to register.



Last Chance to Give to Sakyong's Matching Gift Campaign

"Our community tends to be focused on big events and gatherings... but most of the practice and exertion happens when people are at home. Financial support of our local centers and groups is a direct expression of mandala principle." - Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche

The Chicago Shambhala Center was awarded an extraordinary opportunity that can come to fruition with the help of members and friends. Through The Sakyong Foundation, Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche started a Matching Gift Campaign for participating Shambhala Centers worldwide. If we succeed in generating \$400 in

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Vision to Action Planning



The Chicago Shambhala Council has approved a project called "Vision to Action Planning" to engage our community in action steps to realize the vision for our center. Beginning the weekend of February 7-8, the Vision to Action Planning Team, the Council and community members will work with Shambhala consultant Susan Skjei to design and begin implementation of action steps towards the fruition of our vision statement.

This work will be based on our previous Community Building and Leadership retreat in September 2007, as well as many community meetings prior to that and since then. At community meetings in May and June 2008, the community approved the vision statement developed from the retreat and we began to discuss action planning.



During the summer, the Council proposed several potential consultants to assist our process and Council members contacted and interviewed them. The Council selected Susan Skjei as the best fit for our current needs.

Susan is a management consultant specializing in organizational change, coaching, and leadership development.

Formerly a vice-president and chief learning officer in the high-tech industry, she designs and facilitates participative approaches to strategic planning and organizational transformation. Susan has worked with Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche since 1990 and was on the Board of Shambhala International (formerly Vajradhatu) until it dissolved into the new governance system in 2004.

She worked with Richard Reoch to help design the participative governance structure of Shambhala, and has been a prime mover in the development of the Authentic Leadership Summer Institutes in Halifax. David Stone and Alice Dan recommended her to the Council because she emphasizes building community leadership and participation, as well as structuring a doable implementation for our vision of the Chicago Shambhala Center.

The members of the Vision to Action Planning Team are: Tobias Kaemmerer, Marita McLaughlin, Cynthia Morgan, Blessie Selvig, and Keith Spielfogel. They represent a combination of experienced and newer community members to offer both sage and fresh perspectives. Alice and David will serve as liaisons from the Council.

The Council feels considerable urgency at this time to bring some clear fruition to our planning and visioning. The Chicago Center has grown and changed, and our environment is constantly changing as well.

Overall, the purpose of Vision to Action Planning is to actively engage our Shambhala community to establish a structure for the Chicago Center that will serve the vision of the Sakyong and better meet the needs of our growing urban community. This process will strengthen the governance mandala in our center and magnetize practitioners to participate.

Proposed Vision to Action Planning goals:

- 1) Identify priorities for actions to meet our visionary goals, and steps to take in that direction
- 2) Review and restructure the governance mandala of the Chicago Center, to best accomplish our vision
- 3) Review our current financial outlook and future needs, and plan for continued monitoring and development of our finances
- 4) Examine and propose staffing needs

Susan Skjei summed up the Vision to Action Planning process:

"The purpose of Vision to Action Planning is to engage the community, both strategically and relationally, in manifesting our vision of enlightened society in Chicago over the next 3-5 years.

The role of the Vision to Action Planning Team is to work with the Chicago Shambhala Council to design and shape the engagement process and to guide the process over a five-month period including two community weekends (February and May) and interim bi-weekly conference calls.

There are many ways to relate to the Vision and Action Planning process. After reviewing the Center's Vision Statement at www.chicagoshambhala.org, feel free to contact either of us to discuss how you can offer your input in this planning process. We also hope to see you at the Vision to Action Community meeting Sunday February 8 from noon - 5pm.

In the Vision of the Great Eastern Sun,

Alice Dan and David Stone
Co-Directors, Shambhala Center of Chicago

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new or increased recurring monthly donations to the Center so the Foundation will make a one-time grant of \$4,000 - a 10:1 match. And we are getting so close!

Excitement about the Matching Gift Campaign around the world has led individuals in many centers, including Chicago, to offer similar one-time matching gifts, with the same 10:1 match. We set a goal of \$5,000 of one-time gifts for rousing another \$500 in new or increased monthly donations. We are thrilled to announce we are up to \$4,200 in one-time gifts and are reaching out to members and friends to start or increase their monthly donations to secure these one-time matching gifts.

If you have been thinking about becoming a member or making a one-time contribution, now is an auspicious time to do it! Every dollar helps us secure this matching gift. Shambhala International's aspiration is for centers to meet their monthly operation expenses solely from membership dues and donations. New or increased monthly donations as part of this campaign will help us to erase over half our monthly budget gap, pay down our mortgage, and redirect revenues towards fulfilling our Vision Statement (www.chicago.shambhala.org/vision.php).

Here is how you can help:

Pledge online at www.chicagoshambhala.org. To discuss the campaign further or go over alternative payment options, please contact Gina Caruso at g_m_caruso@yahoo.com or 312-802-9290.

All donations are tax deductible. We have until January 31, 2009 to reach our goal, but welcome new memberships and one-time donations anytime. In the meantime, we invite you to be a part of this campaign and help spread the vision of Shambhala.

City Weekthun: An Urban Meditation Retreat



Participants in the winter City Weekthun practice Oryoki, a Japanese-inspired contemplative eating and serving practice. The City Weekthun has become an annual opportunity for anyone to experience extended meditation practice in an urban retreat format. For more information on retreat and extended meditation practice, visit www.shambhala.org.

Center Financial Update

The Shambhala Center of Chicago finances overall are stable, but there are opportunities to further stabilize and enhance the Center's financial position. The Sakyong Foundation Match Campaign and Match the Match Campaign have significantly helped the Center's financial standing.

Preliminary 2008 figures indicate Center revenues equalled expenses. Complete figures will be available by February 2009.

The 2009 Budget is similar to 2008, but with an emphasis on increasing monthly and one-time donations to support the Center's operational expenses.

Increasing the funds for the General and Shambhala Training Scholarship Funds is a high priority given these challenging financial times and the need to keep our programs accessible regardless of one's financial position.

To ask questions and get a complete report, Center members can contact Ellen Schweri, Center Treasurer, at 773-853-0094 or eschweri@comcast.net.

2008 Revenues Summary:

\$100,000 Practice & Study and Shambhala Training Programs
\$70,000 Unrestricted Contributions
\$20,000 Bookstore Sales, Savings Interest, Space Use Fees
TOTAL: \$190,000

2008 Expenses Summary:

\$90,000 Practice & Study Programs
\$28,000 Property Loan Costs
\$20,000 Administrative Salaries
\$36,000 Shambhala International, Insurance, Other Admin.
\$16,000 Various Activities, Outreach, and Services
TOTAL: \$190,000

The Center's Building Fund balance is currently \$4,400. In 2008, \$6,500 was spent for a complete building appraisal and consultation to determine the feasibility for keeping or selling the building and property.

The General Scholarship Fund is currently depleted. Center members donated \$2,500 in 2008. Combined with \$1,000 from 2007, three students received scholarships and were able to attend seminary and Shambhala Guide Training.

Buddhist Women's Conference

March 14 8am - 5pm at DePaul University Lincoln Park

The 4th Annual Conference theme of "Healing Dharma" offers a multifaceted program of education, celebration, and opportunities for ordinary and ordained women from all Buddhist traditions to deepen their life in the Dharma, and explore the role of the Dharma in physical and spiritual healing in women's lives.

Sponsored by the Buddhist Council of the Midwest. Visit www.dharmawomen.org to register and for more information.

Ruling Your World begins With Making Decisions by Ira Abrams

Our daily lives are filled with decisions big and small. We must decide with whom to spend our time, where to live, which model or brand to buy, what to eat, and how to comb our hair. Traditionally, the dizzying array of choices we face in our society is regarded as a distraction.

According to the Buddha, as long as we think we will gain happiness by making one choice rather than another we are going to remain in the never-ending cycle of dissatisfaction called samsara. As practitioners we often feel that we must choose between pursuing true happiness through practice, on one hand, and engaging in our daily "samsaric" existences.

But worldly decision-making can be a path to waking up, if we approach it properly. The path of the Shambhala teachings begins with decision-making. We regard the details of our daily lives as opportunities to wake up. In *Ruling Your World*, Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche suggests that we can use contemplation in order to make decisions that lead to awakening from the nauseating cycle of false hope and disappointment.

Of course, the first choice we must make, as anyone knows who has taken the first Shambhala Training weekend, is the choice to meditate—to look at the mind that seems to be making all these decisions. We must gain some confidence in the basic fact that we are in control of our lives, and we gain this confidence by noticing how our habits of mind are curiously involved in things that can often seem to be imposed on us from outside.

But if our only practice is sitting meditation, we can become stuck. Often, for instance, we become fixated on the quality of our sitting meditation practice. "I'm still discursive," we might say; or, "I have trouble following the breath." We measure our progress on the spiritual path primarily in terms of our meditation technique. However, the point of our practice is really to develop our innate wis-

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dom and compassion; not simply to become great meditators. We meditate in order to cultivate confidence in our basic goodness. From that point of view sitting meditation might be only part of our daily practice—a container for a daily practice of mixing wisdom and compassion into our lives. The mixing takes place through contemplation, the inner space of the container of our meditation practice.

"Having learned to sit," the Sakyong writes, "now we learn to walk." Meditation allows us to see our minds clearly so that we can make good decisions. Rather than focus on the immediate outcome of a decision we take a bigger view and look at the values that are emphasized in the decisions we make.

Most often, we think that our decisions will bring us some form of happiness. We don't know how to work with our deep, inborn



knowledge that happiness is already present within us. If we make decisions as if we lack happiness, then we are creating the lack of happiness. Yet that is what we do, again and again. The Sakyong likes to use the traditional image of the dog chasing the stick. Happiness is where the stick-thrower is, but we chase the stick every time our mind throws it out there.

Our normal habit is to think that we are choosing between external situations or objects—"Should I get a Rolex or a Timex?" "Should I keep my current job where I hate my boss or take this other one that makes less money?" The fact that things don't usually turn out the way we plan doesn't deter us from returning over and over to this way of thinking. On the simplest level, your Rolex might turn out to be a fake or a dud; and your awful boss might end up being fired, or moving with you to your new job.

Instead of making decisions based on what we can get, we can ask ourselves what we are cultivating or rejecting when we make choices. What values are we bringing forward? What kind of world are we saying that we live in? Ultimately, the decisions I make are not about "me"; this "I" or "me" that the Buddha tells us does not exist is merely a conduit for bringing qualities into a world that is completely interconnected. "I" am like an instrument and if I choose to play the note of anger or envy, then anger and envy pour into my world. If I play the note of peace, then my world is more peaceful.

Sakyong Mipham suggests that we can use contemplation such as this in order to develop a mind that can make good decisions. We contemplate what we really want to cultivate in life—what we want to become, what we want the world to become—and we look at the decisions we have to make in terms of those things.

We can do this quite simply and powerfully by sitting for a few minutes in meditation so that it is possible for our innate wisdom to shine through the clouds of our busy minds. Then we call to mind a decision we have to make, with all its possibilities. Once we have that in mind, we ask ourselves: what am I cultivating and what am I rejecting by making this decision in this way, in that way? We can

"Making Decisions", cont'd. on p5

Programs & Announcements

"Making Decisions", cont'd. from p4

then allow whatever insight arises to become part of how we are in the world, and we can let it go and return to sitting for a few minutes.

When we do this, we allow our innate wisdom to operate in our daily lives. We see that we can actually make good decisions and that making decisions is itself a way of developing confidence in our basic goodness. This is how we begin to rule our world.

Service as Path: Joining Heaven and Earth Staffing & Coordinator Training Saturday, March 7 10am - Noon

Ever thought about staffing or coordinating a Buddhist program or Shambhala Level but weren't sure what was involved or how to do it? This workshop will teach you the fundamentals of coordinating, a program mandala, and service as path and practice. Staffing and coordinating practices are about helping others, being in the present moment, and manifesting enlightened Shambhala society. The training will cover such topics as:

- how to register participants and collect fees
- audio recording and archiving
- teacher service including water service for talks
- location of materials in the Center via a Center tour
- tips on purchasing and ordering food
- relating to staff
- getting help when you need it

For questions or if you are unable to attend, contact Michael Duerr at 773.503.8147 or admin@chicagoshambhala.org.

Learn To Meditate

February 7 9am - 4pm with Nancy Newton and Ellen Schweri; May 16 9am - 4pm with Acharya Adam Lobel
A program for beginning meditators or to deepen one's practice.

Learn To Meditate Teacher Training

May 15-17 with Acharya Adam Lobel
May 17 General Teachers' Conference

Shambhala Culture Series

Mondays 7pm - 9 pm February 2, 9, & 16

The Shambhala Culture series includes three talks: "Shambhala Culture," "Protector Principle," and "The Shambhala Lineage."

Attend any or all. What is Shambhala culture and how does it help create Shambhala Vision? These talks precede the celebration of Tibetan New Year, also known as Shambhala Day, which is a time when we are encouraged to reflect on our practice throughout the year.

The chants recited in Shambhala gatherings remind us of the lineage holders and protectors, whose energy and wisdom are available to us any time we let go of petty concerns and open to the environment as it is.

Upcoming Community Events

Vision to Action Planning with Susan Skjei
February 7 - 8

Don Season: Protector and Mamos Chants
February 14 - 23 (evenings & weekends)

Shambhala Day Celebrations at the Center
February 25

Shambhala Ball & Banquet
February 28 in the evening

Milarepa Day
March 8 all-day reading from Rain of Wisdom

Parinirvana of the Vidyadhara - Sadhana of Mahamudra Practice
April 4

Qigong with Eva Wong, Levels 1 & 2
June 6 - 7 at The Center on Halsted

International Buddhism Festival
with Buddhist Council of the Midwest
June 13 at the Lake Street Church in Evanston

Why Ikebana? By Meredith Dyтч

Ikebana, Japanese flower arrangements, are an essential ingredient of any Shambhala function - but the reason is much more than merely a desire to beautify our environment. The roots of Ikebana are religious - going back, it is said, to 7th century Japan, when the Buddhist priest Senmu started placing arrangements of three flowers on the shrine at his temple. These early arrangements incorporated ideas from Chinese Confucianism, Buddhism and Shinto philosophy about the harmony between humanity and nature; these ideals persist today throughout the many modern schools of Ikebana.

An Ikebana arrangement is an expression of the relationship between mankind, heaven, and earth, but even arrangements that don't depend on the traditional three elements can express Shambhala principles. Flower arrangements can be thought of as "landing places for the Dralas," attracting drala with their harmonious beauty. Creating an Ikebana arrangement is also an chance to meditate - in fact, the Zen term for Ikebana - Kado (the Way of Flowers), acknowledges the contemplative aspect of the practice. The act of placing flowers, branches and leaves in a beautiful container can be a mindfulness practice, and at the same time is a way of directly connecting with nature - not only does the finished arrangement reflect the harmony of nature, but the person doing the arrangement is brought into harmony with nature, as well.

All who would like to explore this wonderful practice are invited to attend our next Ikebana Workshop, which will be taught by Ikebana teacher and author Keiko Kubo on Saturday, January 24 from 9am - 5:30pm, at the Shambhala Center. The \$95 fee includes flowers for three arrangements. Space is limited, so reserve early by registering online at www.chicago.shambhala.org.



Shambhala Training teaches a mindfulness awareness meditation practice that enables us to look precisely at our state of mind without trying to alter it. The first five levels of Shambhala Training are known as the Heart of Warriorship.

Each offers meditation instruction and practice, talks about Shambhala teachings, group discussion and individual interviews. Completing the Heart of Warriorship leads to the Sacred Path of Warriorship programs. After completing Level III, participants are eligible to staff programs. For questions, staffing, or more information, contact Jon Feller (jonfeller@comcast.net 773-230-3886) or Gina Caruso (g_m_caruso@yahoo.com 312-802-9290), Co-Resident Directors of Shambhala Training.

Heart of Warriorship (Weekend format)

Level I: Saturday 8:30am - 6pm; Sunday 8:30am - 2pm

All other Levels:

Friday: 7pm - 9:30pm

Saturday & Sunday: 8:30am-6pm

Optional \$5 lunch fee per day

Level II: February 13th - 15th

Level III: March 20th - 22nd

Level I: April 18th - 19th

Level IV: April 24th - 26th

Level V: May 22nd - 24th

Suggested donation: Level I: \$140 (\$125 members)

Other Levels: \$165 (\$140 members) students \$40

Heart of Warriorship

"Good Morning Shambhala" Wednesdays 9am-Noon

Level III: March 11, 18, 25, April 1

Level IV: April 22, 29, May 6, 13

Level I: Sept 16, 23, 30 Oct 7

Suggested donation: \$150 (\$125 members) students \$40

The Sacred Path of Warriorship

Perky: February 27 - March 1

Outrageous & Inscrutable: April 3 - 5

Golden Key April 30 - May 3

Suggested donation: \$165 (\$140 members) students \$40

2009 Shambhala School of Buddhist Studies

The Way of the Bodhisattva

Sundays, 10am- Noon. January 18, 25, February 8, 15, 22, March 1

A review of the Sakyong's teachings on the Mahayana path of dedicating one's life and practice to rousing awakened heart and engaging the practices of a bodhisattva warrior for the benefit of all beings. Readings will come from Sutrayana Seminary Transcripts. Topics include the Bodhisattva vow, the six paramitas, bodhicitta and lojong. This is an intermediate level class and is required if you wish to attend Sutrayana Seminary.

Enlightened Mind: Great Tibetan Buddhist Teachers

Mondays, 7-9 pm. March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, & April 6
Meditation Intensive Saturday, April 18, 9- 5pm

This course introduces the principle of student/teacher relationship as a central component to the study and practice of Shambhala Buddhism. Although historical teachers are studied in this class, this is not a history class, but a look at the dharmic paths and human qualities of our lineage holders.

Experience, Consciousness, and Death with Acharya Dr. Jeremy Hayward April 10- 12

How does our mind perceive the outside world? How do we know what we experience? Will our mind and personal experience come to an abrupt end at death? Buddhism and the new sciences offer complementary perspectives on these questions. Dr. Hayward will discuss how these perspectives relate to personal experience, consciousness and death.

Breaking the Cycle: Karma and the 12 Links of Interdependence

Mondays, 7-9 pm. May 4, 11, 18, June 1, 8, 15

Who am I? What am I? Where am I? How did I get here, and where am I going? Looking directly at the experience of mind, we begin to understand our apparent confusion about ourselves and the phenomena of our world. Renouncing the painful cycle of confused action (karma), we use the natural inquisitiveness of mind to see how this confusion arises and how it could simply cease, allowing awake wisdom to manifest.

Compassionate Communication

By John S. Appel

On Sunday, October 12th and November 9th, Dr. Patricia Deer led workshops at the Shambhala Center on Non-Violent or Compassionate Communication. A trained student of its creator, Marshall Rosenberg, Patricia explained that Compassionate Communication is a method for resolving conflict by expressing needs without blame or criticism, then listening and responding empathetically. Its emphasis on peacemaking, mindfulness, and nonjudgmental awareness complements Buddhist practice. It has a very dharmic quality: it teaches us the "what" and "why" of Right Speech, including listening to and hearing another person's upsets empathically - in other words, bravely allowing ourselves to be more vulnerable -- so that we can make a heart connection into a more compassionate space rather than staying in our protective psychic cocoons. Thus, it is a practice that can enrich our community.

In the Compassionate Communication model we learn to follow four steps. First, when a conflictual situation arises, we observe and describe the external situation without judgment or evaluation. The description should use non-confrontational language and avoid blaming ourselves or others.

Second, we take responsibility for our emotions by understanding that external events are only a trigger for and not the cause of our inner responses: we identify our precise feelings (e.g., being mad, sad, glad or afraid).

Third, we connect our feelings with the needs or wants that were unfulfilled in the situation. This "requires an awareness of what is going on within ourselves that is contributing to our feelings and not attributing responsibility for our feelings to the actions of others.[from a workshop handout]"

Fourth, we follow up with a specific, do-able request (not a demand) of the other party. We try to avoid reproachful language by asking for what we want, not for what we don't want.

A lively discussion with all the participants followed the role-playing of situations from our own lives. We learned that all criticism comes from unmet needs. Therefore, in responding to criticism, it is crucial to find ways to meet others' needs as well as our own. Compassionate Communication is designed to minimize defensive reactions and maximize cooperation. As Peter Drucker has noted, "The important thing in communication is to hear what isn't being said."

Compassionate Communication is a very powerful yet practical wisdom. We live in language. Our conversations create our relationships. Watch for additional sessions with Dr. Deer who will continue to work with us to bring this enriching practice into our lives.





Shambhala Mirror

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The Shambhala Meditation
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Become a Member

We invite you to become a member of the Chicago Shambhala Center, part of a world-wide community committed to creating enlightened society.

We are a self-supporting organization that exists only because people like you donate money and time. If you find that the meditation practice and teachings that you have come across here have been helpful in your life, please consider becoming a member, so that this place might be of benefit to yet more people.

For more information about Shambhala membership, call us at 773-743-8147, or send an e-mail to Beth Lynch, Membership Chair, at membership@chicagoshambhala.org.

You can also visit:
www.chicagoshambhala.org/membership.php

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Shambhala Meditation Center of Chicago

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