



S H A M B H A L A  
O F F I C E O F T H E P R E S I D E N T

## Shambhala Mountain Center: Cultural Change; Financial Change

Following the planning meeting held in mid-September and the first two days of the meeting of the Board of Shambhala Mountain Center, we are now embarked on a process to change the cultural and financial model of Shambhala Mountain Center.

We have adopted a clearer statement of vision:

“The purpose of Shambhala Mountain Center is to fulfil the vision of the Sakyong lineage of Shambhala by manifesting and offering the Shambhala Buddhist wisdom tradition and by hosting other traditions in this transformative venue. In this way, Shambhala Mountain Center provides a sacred space in which people can awaken to their inherent wisdom and compassion and come together to create a world of living peace.”

To fulfil this vision, we have adopted the following primary goal that we wish to achieve:

“The staff and visitors to Shambhala Mountain Center know they have come to a community endeavouring to put Shambhala vision into effect. This is embodied in a spirit of continuous practice, including formal community meditation, and everyone’s commitment to this path.”

It is also abundantly clear that world conditions have changed around us and the previous assumptions on which our financial model were based have changed. To ensure that Shambhala Mountain Center becomes sustainable in this context and is able to provide the ground for the Sakyong’s forward-looking vision of a global centre for deep training in Living Peace, we need to make radical changes.

To ensure an appropriate mix of consultation, embracing the community currently living and working at Shambhala Mountain Center, and the rapid and decisive decision-making that the board must undertake as its responsibility, I have proposed the following five-step process:

## **Five Steps:**

### **1. Setting the parameters.**

This is a board responsibility. We need to be clear about our financial and organizational constraints and the limits within which all consultation and decision-making will take place. This will be based on the financial and other data provided to the board by the Executive Director and staff, (To be accomplished by noon, Saturday 10 October).

### **2. Consultation with the senior and department leaders**

Several board members and the Executive Director will meet members of the Senior Management and the department heads to brief them on the overall situation and the factors that the board is considering. These members of the leadership will be consulted about a process for consulting with the staff. The aim is to invite the maximum creative thinking about the elements that need to be included in the cultural change at Shambhala Mountain Center and all possible ways of sustaining Shambhala Mountain Center over the coming months of severely limited resources. Following this consultation the board will decide on a format for the consultative process for staff.

### **3. Consultation with the staff as a whole**

There will be two phases:

- a) The first round of consultation with the staff will be on the afternoon of Saturday 10 October. This will involve as many board members as possible and include a briefing for everyone on the current situation, the parameters established by the board and the consultative process. The consultation will focus on the two aspects of change: cultural and financial.
  
- b) The second round of consultation with the staff will likely take place over the course of one day in the following week (12-17 October), and will continue to involve members of the board who will return to Shambhala Mountain Center specifically for this. The aim will be to continue to evoke the most creativity and wisdom that can help us all make the cultural and financial changes that are needed.

### **4. Decision making**

The board will have an extended conference call by the end of the week to reach firm decisions on the way forward, with a particular emphasis on immediate financial steps that need to be taken in view of the seriousness of the financial challenge we face.

### **5. Reconstruction**

Following that decision, there will need to be a process for assisting staff members in many ways, implementing practical cost-saving measures, as well as embarking on the cultural change and the rolling out of a new economic model.

*Note: Development and fund-raising efforts will run concurrently with this and be an integral part of the reconstruction phase.*