

**The Sakyong, Jamgön Mipham Rinpoche**  
**Shambhala Day Address**  
Year of the Earth Mouse  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
7 February 2008

Ki Ki So So. A very happy and cheerful Shambhala Day to everyone. This year I am particularly happy that Khandro Tseyang and a portion of her family are here, a portion of my family is here, and the majority of my Halifax family is here. To all of you listening in Europe, the United States, South America, and other places, I send you deep heartfelt wishes. You are all very dear and close to me today.

It is very appropriate that today is called “Shambhala Day.” Obviously it’s the New Year, a new beginning for us as we enter another lunar cycle. But what is particularly wonderful to me is the notion of Shambhala Day as a fresh start. As many of you do, I count the years on this path, and I think—my memory is getting vague at this point—it has been about eighteen Shambhala Days now that I’ve had to figure out what to say to everyone. It has been an interesting process, but this year it strikes me that as a community, we’re coming to a tipping point, a critical point. We have gathered our communal lungta, and I am also very happy to say that we have also gathered our communal compassion and loving kindness, which is not an easy thing to gather. Everyone has tried in their way very diligently to understand their own mind and heart. The little spiritual atomic bomb of Shambhala that the great mahasiddha, the Venerable Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche, brought on his back from Tibet and planted here in the West, has grown exponentially. We all discover day by day through our practice and our life what the meaning of Shambhala is.

On this day of Shambhala, it is important to be good meditators in the sense of not projecting our mind too much into the future and not dwelling too much on the past. Rather, we can be here on this day and at this moment and first of all just appreciate being alive, being together, and having this situation. Certainly the notion of appreciation is essential in binding us. The journey of Shambhala is rooted in the notion of enlightenment and peace, the notion of the world living in peace—that’s the message. The word Shambhala can be translated in many ways, but some say its literal meaning is “the source of happiness and peace.” That is the springboard.

As we gather to practice and to do what we do in our individual lives and various cultures, the message of Shambhala is coming more and more into light. I think we all have a karmic connection in terms of knowing how sanity, peace, and happiness are integral aspects of life. As the forces of negativity, fear, and uncertainty in the world continue to grow, as we continue to consume the world’s natural resources and also each other’s natural resources of patience, and as we delve full head into desire and aggression, the message of Shambhala is no longer an extracurricular activity. It is no longer a hobby, but is essential to life, essential to what we are all doing.

In terms of our community, I really hope that the tipping point is about how we’ve grown and matured as individuals, and how now we can enter into applying the notion of peace to the world. Now we can apply our mind training, social training, and the wisdom of our traditions—whether it is the six ways of ruling or the six paramitas or the notion of courage and warriorship. Any of these single principles that are dear to our lives we can use to transform our lives and transform those around us. It’s a very powerful teaching.

As I have mentioned before and as I have experienced myself, if anything we sometimes have too many choices, too many practices. But all these practices engender the same basic principles: virtue, strength, determination, courage, focus, one-pointedness, and

compassion—they all engender these habits.

As we enter the New Year, we need to be more determined that our life will be a way of peace and meditation. We need to become more and more convinced of that—not by fostering extremism or narrow-mindedness, but by really living by those principles. I myself don't gain strength by constantly doubting myself—I think [laughter]—but by simplifying my mind, and that's a far step from being an idiot. However, we all have a load of complications that we carry on our minds and in our hearts. We need to learn how to be really big and incredibly simple at the same time. That quality is something that inspired my father. By embodying it, he inspired us. It is something that I try to learn and practice myself.

So here we are at this particular time. How can we be of use to the world? As we say in our bodhisattva chant, "Make use of any part of me; use even a part of me." Our world is not saying that; this message of compassion and strength has to be brought forward. We have no choice but the way of peace and strength of mind. As the economy goes up or more down, as the fear level rises from orange to red, our mind needs to be strong and stable. What will stabilize the economy is our lungta, our own practice. This is something that we can offer to the world. It is no longer just a spiritual dalliance; it's not simply something we're doing on the side.

I encourage everyone to bridge the gap between our practice of deep meditation and our life, and how we can bring those two together. Splitting those two becomes debilitating and depressing. How can we bring the element of inner understanding to the path? As Shambhalians we must understand that every single human being experiences obstacles; every single sentient being experiences a level of depression or hopelessness. Although we may not talk about it, it's not uncommon.

To be courageous is to realize that we have a choice about how we live our life. We can live by these principles that we have inherited, which are our wealth. It is these principles that we can celebrate and cherish today. We are all at various stages of the path and our practice. Now it is essential that at every level—simple meditation, tantric ritual, social action, whatever it may be—we effectively engage the wisdom that we have to change and enhance the world we are living in. In many places, that is already happening; we are all trying to do this in our own ways. I feel personally that the world is calling us to offer an outer message of peace, strength, and vision. How can we be effective? Listening to the speech in honor of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the principles he promotes and embodies—compassion, peace, and understanding—when I heard those words being spoken in the capital of the United States, I felt a sense of a time-warp in that we *in* the world that is calling us. I encourage everyone to contemplate this and use today as a springboard for answering that call.

In terms of what Shambhala is, I want to talk about something that's been on my mind. It seems that the level of maturity within our community has reached the point where it seems important to go further, which is the notion of lineage. In light of my recent marriages [laughter], I think everyone was, or at least appeared to be, very delighted, and we were both very appreciative of that appearance. But I think it was not just our personal happiness that people were happy about, it was also the notion of lineage. Many people have talked about what or who is next—just as I'm getting going [laughter]. But clearly it is on my mind, and I have been talking to Lady Diana about it, and we want it to be a smooth transition.

In thinking about the notion of lineage—who we are—I have created a new format, a structure that I'm calling "Kalapa." Kalapa will be the storehouse and protector of the Shambhala lineage, and in particular, the lineage of Sakyong. Sakyong is the title that has been bestowed on me; as I have said many times, it's not my name. It's a title similar to "Dalai Lama" or "Gyalwa Karmapa." Those are titles held by individuals who embody those principles. "Sakyong" is a title that has been handed on to me. I do not hold it lightly, as it's obviously both a blessing and a burden.

In Tibet, Sakyong or Kongma Sakyong was a revered title of dharma kings that was bestowed only on certain deemed individuals. So the empowerment was given to my father, the Vidyadhara; it was given to myself. Since we descend from the family of Mukpo and Gesar, we actually have a hereditary ownership of it. The notion of Sakyong is that it has to continue. The lineage of Sakyong has to continue. It's the source of spiritual blessing and teaching.

In a traditional Tibetan painting of Shambhala, you see a circular ring of mountains, with Shambhala divided into eight main regions, representing the eight petals of a lotus. In the middle, there is a palace that looks like a monastery; that is known as "Kalapa," our namesake. Kalapa is the centre of Shambhala. Within that palace is the Rigden king, the universal monarch of Shambhala. The Sakyong is the earthly manifestation of the Rigden principle.

In our community we use the word Shambhala. It felt important in terms of all the teachings and the artifacts of the Vidyadhara, as well as those that I am continuing to produce, that all those will be safeguarded in Kalapa. Creating this entity felt like a timely thing to do in that we've gone through a process of testing ourselves and the community has come to a point of maturity. The notion of Kalapa is also to create a sense of inner safeguard. There have been ways in which I myself have not really moved forward all these years because things have been so fragmented into different areas. But with the participation of President Reoch in creating the Shambhala Congress and the Mandala Council - as well as the Sakyong Council, which is the governing body - and having all those work effectively, it's important to now have the lineage and blessing coming from the middle, just as it is in the image of the thangka.

Again, in the future, we'll refer to it as Kalapa. Generally speaking people just refer to it as Shambhala International, but I think that it was important to make it into a real entity as opposed to just a namesake. I think this will create some simplicity in our community. I feel that at this point I am slowly having enough confidence to empower certain individuals who can play key roles in terms of our mandala. One of the initial appointments that I made was the President himself.

The creation of Kalapa is something that I wanted to share; it's not particularly the time and place to go into details. But I felt that it is an evolution and a development that needed to take place. I personally was concerned about the teachings of the Vidyadhara, his various spiritual articles, and how they get carried forward. In terms of where we are, as this year moves forward we will do more with that.

So I consider Kalapa as the "inner"; that will affect all the Shambhala Centers and how they are structured. It will simplify how we plan in terms of priorities of projects and programming. We will have a stronger internal mandala, which will affect the roles of the acharyas and the Dorje Kasung and so forth. This relates to the notion of "outer," which is how we can offer a stronger sense of peace and compassion. On the secret level, there is our own personal path and practice.

I have been here in Halifax for quite a while, working on the curriculum, which we'll unroll this year. I'm starting at the very beginning, at the basic first year curriculum. I've gone through all thirty-six classes; for each class I've written a syllabus that I will probably have to teach. So I've just made more work for myself. But it is important to look at how we enter into Shambhala. I'd like to take the approach of looking at what is needed. What do people need at this particular time? There are certain principles that we need to understand, such as the obstacles are and antidotes. Previously there was a tendency to try to cram all the Shambhala teachings and all the Buddhist teachings into a very short amount of time.

Looking at the first year, I am quite excited about how things could come forward. For example, at every level—even at the end of a one-week class—people will be offered a short

practice to take home and do. It's important that we encourage a sense of a personal path and journey. I know that people here today are at different points; as everyone knows from the summer that I presented the Rigden ngöndro, the path of vajrayana is getting clearer in terms of what we do. But from the beginning, at every stage, I'd like us all to understand clearly what our practice is. Our own inner secret practice makes it easier for us to have more life-force energy, more of a wellspring of understanding, and to keep our practice off the competitive level of "I've done more" or "I've done less." Rather, we will see practice as something very dear to our heart that we all have to take us through life.

As many of you know, one approach is just to take something and pass it along. So there are certain things that have been done in the past that we do by rote. However, we are living at a time where there is so much change. Before something is new, it's already old. People's attention span seems to be getting shorter, the life-force energy is waning, and this is affecting our health both physically and mentally. So I want the teachings to be useful and practical. There is so much in there that *is* useful and meaningful. As everyone knows, even the basic practice of meditation is now coming so much into the mainstream. I also feel that a lot our leadership principles, such as Magyel Pomra Encampment and dathün, could be interwoven with family, work, and business. I know that some of you are already diving in and experimenting with how the teachings can be of more use.

We say that the mind is like a crystal, with infinite perspectives and angles. Our consciousness is so brilliant that great realized ones like the Buddha have said that our mind is wisdom itself. That means that by holding our mind and heart just right and then shifting our attitude ever so slightly, we become like the crystal, and the manifold experiences of wisdom dawn on us instantaneously, as presented in the Kalachakra teachings. We may get stuck in samsara and the setting sun because it's very easy to get stuck in one way of looking at something; we're thinking that the mind is one-dimensional and that that's how things are. We don't realize that what we're seeing is only our own projection or our own self-created limitations.

As we go forward, we need to understand the diversity and potential of ourselves as individuals. Once we understand our diversity and potential, we have incredible energy and enthusiasm. The way to harness that is by making the proper environment. The proper environment is what we call "enlightened society," which relates to how we work with our family and household, how we set up our office, and how we set up our life. It all plays together.

We have to be practical and try to live an enlightened life, an awakened life, which means using every possibility. If we are surrounded by anti-forces, it is very difficult to work as individuals, each struggling to maintain our mind in a big way. So as a culture, we're trying to depend on each other. We're trying to create practice environments and family structures that can help bring out our enlightened potential. It is something that we have to do *now*. Many people in the world are beginning to give up on their family structure and social structure. They are seeing these structures as rules they feel bound by. The notion of Shambhala is that we appreciate each other, not so much in the sense of being bound by rules, but in the sense of drala. When we behave and do certain things in a certain way, energy propels us forward. There is appreciation and natural culture—natural manners or behavior. In mahayana Buddhism, it's called *tsültrim*, discipline. In Shambhala, we call it drala. There are many ways to invoke it; these principles are very much at our fingertips.

Realizing the potential of all beings is what we call basic goodness. Those individuals who can pause for a moment and reflect on their basic goodness are called warriors. Those individuals whose mind and energy are too speedy to be able to do that are called cowards. Clearly there are days when we are warriors and days when we are cowards. That's how the path goes. But we are living in a situation where we can gather and apply our consciousness.

If we do that, then it has a tremendous impact on the world as a whole. I consider that to be our inner journey.

It is very important to have a path. No path, no growth. No growth is stagnation, which creates negativity. Then our mind and our system become poisoned. So it is very important that as a community we support each other on the path and that we understand our own path. This is why we talk about curriculum, which has to be formalized so that there is a general path that we can begin and join in on. Everyone will have slight variations of their personal experience. The path is something that is not somewhere else; it is here, right in front of us. So I'd like to encourage everyone to look at your path, your journey, and use today as a fresh start.

I love you all very much. You don't love me? [Laughter; laughs.] Sometimes it's just good to hear that. [Audience: "We love you!"] Honestly I think that is the only reason why I do this. I always see the world as a challenge, but the practice of love and compassion is very powerful and today is the day where we can celebrate that.

So as we gather internationally, let's take a good posture wherever we are and for just a few minutes make a communal aspiration of how we would like to grow this year, how we can go forward. Let's think about the aspect of practice and path that we'd like to accomplish. You don't have to overdo it; just aspire to do something that you feel that you can manage. It can be something very practical, like doing a dathün or finishing ngöndro, or it can be very basic like generating more compassion. But as we are all hooked up, let's be decisive in our mind, "That's how it shall be!" [Pause. Contemplation.]

A very happy new year to everyone and at this point I'd like to do something dangerous, which is ask my wife to say something. [Laughter.]

**Khandro Tseyang:** *Tashi delek* to everyone. I hope you can all hear me. I'd like to wish a very happy and cheerful Shambhala Day to all of you who are gathered here in Halifax, and to all the Shambhalians who are celebrating today worldwide, and to all the children of Shambhala.

This is my first Shambhala Day with you. It's the first time I have not spent Losar with my family. I'm a little sad not to be with them today. However, I feel happy to be celebrating Shambhala Day here with my husband and my newfound family, which is all of you here.

As children, we used to get very excited, because for us Losar means everything—New Year, birthday, and Christmas all in one. However, at the same time, my father His Eminence Namkha Drimed Rinpoche, my brothers Jigme Rinpoche and Lhunpo Tülku Rinpoche, and the monks at our monastery, all get up at about three o'clock in the morning to start their Gesar practice, which is based upon Mipham Rinpoche's terma as well as my father's own terma. That's when all the people start arriving. They have a blessing line, and all the people in the community come for blessings from my father. That's also when we offer the Tibetan *chang* early in the morning, and that's when people get drunk [laughter]. They *have* to get drunk, they say, on the first day of Losar. Everybody seems to be enjoying and having fun. That is also the time when all the people come in the best of their dressing, especially the youngsters, as it's when they check each other out, I guess. And for our *lhadrang*, or home, this is the busiest time of the year. It almost takes three days for the whole community to come and receive blessings. Then there is obviously lots of eating, games and dances that go on for almost five days, including Gesar's sacred dance, which we do usually on the third day of Losar.

Here in the West, I see how Trungpa Rinpoche and Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche have continued some of these traditions, and I am happy to see that and participate in these celebrations. Of course, being Shambhalians, all of you know that the main qualities of a

Shambhala warrior are loyalty, fearlessness, reliability, steadiness, and genuineness. It is my wish that you embody these qualities. That's very important. It's also important to remember the basics of being a dharma practitioner, which is having unchanging faith and devotion in the teacher and the lineage, and to always remember his kindness to us. I pray for your safety, your good health, and that of your children and family. May the New Year bring lots of love, happiness, prosperity, and peace throughout the kingdom of Shambhala and the world. And may we all have another wonderful year as a community and appreciate each other.

In conclusion, to bring auspiciousness, I'd like everyone to do the warrior cry together with me, three times, really loud. This morning we did a bit of celebration at the Kalapa Court, with my husband presiding, and my brother and half of the Ripa family who is here, as well as the Mukpo family. We did the short practice, so I feel very happy, with good energy and high spirits. So let's all do this together. [All do the warrior cry three times.]

Ki Ki So So Ashe Lha Gyel Lo  
Tag Seng Khyung Druk di yarkyé!

Thank you all.

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