

Executive Summary

Core Topic Working Group Report Shambhala Path of Social Action

"The magical element that binds the words "society" and "enlightenment" into "enlightened society" is the wholehearted motivation by individuals to engage personally in a social transformation that will lead to the betterment of the society."

Sakyong Mipham, Rinpoche

The Shambhala teachings are about the creation of an entire enlightened society that spans the earth. They are our templates on how to proceed in transforming the culture of the West into expressing awakened mind. Shambhala Buddhism gives us the training in study and meditation practice to transform our own worldview and thus our actions. We can then extend that out to uplift the worldview and actions of others. Working skillfully with social action is an extremely powerful way to change society's worldview to one of sanity, hope and generosity. Social activism gives us the opportunity to skillfully extend our influence far beyond those we can directly benefit by teaching meditation. This way we can implant into social institutions a sane and uplifted worldview coupled with compassionate behaviors. Social activism functions on the communicative interface between social structures and worldview. One can work within, and with new, social structures redefining their understanding of themselves and others. Often these structures are deeply struggling with the demons of aggression, passion and ignorance. Can we not develop ways to provide non-aggressive space? Cannot our teachings and practice help us provide open mind and equanimity?

Engaging in social action has many benefits beyond the direct help to other sentient beings. It broadens our connections and contacts; frequently into social, economic and ethnic groups little reached otherwise by us to date. Is it not the case that these groups generally find our teachings uninteresting because they don't see us relating to the problems they see as important to them? By social engagement with them we will demonstrate and develop that relationship. Finally, by engaging with groups seeking to change the world for the better, we will influence the overall conceptual patterns and ways of acting first of those groups and of the people in them, then of the people they serve and ultimately of the entire society. [For more, see attached article: [Riding the Garuda: Engaged Social Transformation in Creating Shambhala Society.](#)]

The precise shape this will take will evolve over time and adapt to fit circumstances on the spot. We envision the Shambhala Path of Social Action to be a major opening outward of Shambhala Training itself. The SPSA has the potential of extending more broadly than Shambhala Training while drawing upon Shambhala Training's depth of insight. The two will grow together and nourish each other.

While also enriching the meditation in action quality of daily lives and the warrior in the world quality of engagement with specific causes, where the SPSA will have the greatest potential for helping uplift greater vision and activity worldwide is through facilitating social action groups and social institutions to learn Shambhala based practices and perspectives. They will find this will help them be more successful while feeling better. We will find them becoming closer allies in creating enlightened society through greater vision and skillful means. Dharma will be propagated.

We do not envision the Shambhala Path of Social Action to focus on engagement in specific social or environmental problems and how to fix them. Individuals and groups will be better able to discern where their hearts lead in that. The Shambhala Path of Social Action would be in awareness-raising, in skill-building, in increasing connectedness with the earth and each other and in engendering a Shambhala Vision worldview. This is basically a way to spread the Shambhala teachings. It might even follow a format inspired by Shambhala Training or Dharma Arts. We foresee the development of and training in a set of skills, techniques and tools we can use and share. Workshop leaders and facilitators will be cultivated to teach these to sangha and to groups and individuals involved in social action broadly defined.

At the Shambhala Congress Sakyong Mipham agreed to compose a Sadhana for the Earth at the supplication of our

working group. In addition, our working group has been inspired by the basic format of sadhanas and by the healing meditations of Tulku Thondup to consider engaging in the development of a basic progressive meditation for use in social action situations that invokes open mind, compassionate heart, basic goodness, connection to the empowering living quality of the world (Drala), rousing fearless natural energy (Windhorse and Warriorship), spontaneous insight, stabilizing continuity of unshakable confidence, and cultivating joyful mind and greater vision.

As decided at the Shambhala Congress in our group, in the Follow Up to the Congress group (#14), and in numerous other groups, we have resolved to continue to actively engage in further development of this issue on an ongoing basis. We ask and expect the Shambhala International Board of Directors to commission a specific Board member to liaise directly, actively and cooperatively with us. We ask for a cooperative consensus building process of decision making with the SI BOD and our Working Group in developing the report given to the greater sangha on Shambhala Day. The same cooperative, consensus building process is what we call for thereafter to include the greater sangha.

Our SPSA Working Group anticipates taking an active role in designing and hosting the SPSA programs planned for DCL and DDL next year. Our group has resolved to design a draft framework and as much detail as we can as a foundation upon which to begin deliberations at those two programs. In addition to email correspondence and telephone conferencing, we plan a meeting in person, perhaps around spring break. At the DCL and DDL programs, it is anticipated that new creative energy will be magnetized to expand on the work of this group. The members of this group intend to continue to play an active role in that ongoing process.

We HAVE embarked upon the Shambhala Path of Social Action. Join us. Support us.

WHY A PATH OF SOCIAL ACTION?

Command of Trungpa Rinpoche and Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche

World Calls for Help

Helps us grow strong as community

Social Action is part of our practice (not something separate) as meditation in action

We have a special teaching for creating Enlightened Society

Boddhisattva Vow

Excellent form of outreach to many social, ethnic, racial, cultural, environmental, religious or other groups that do not now see our teachings as relevant to themselves – but could/would see Shambhala teachings as relevant if we became meaningfully involved in the issues and struggles that they see as immediately relevant and if our teachings were presented in a form that they can see is relevant to their issues.

Particularly groups already involved in genuine social/environmental improvement could readily find our teachings highly useful – if formulated into a Shambhala Path of Social Action that is pragmatic and useful, condensed and focused, and that invokes open mind, compassionate heart, basic goodness, connection to the empowering living quality of the world (Drala), rousing fearless natural energy (Windhorse & Warriorship), spontaneous insight, stabilizing continuity of unshakable confidence, and cultivating joyful mind and greater vision.

SOCIAL ACTION WHAT? Action

Four Levels of Social

Personal Social Action: at home, at work, at play, etc. Meditation in action. Everything we do is social action in some form. Specific tools and path to help us do it better will help.

Specific Projects (e.g. Prison dharma, Hospice, Environmental) through involvement as individuals, as groups of sangha or as officially sanctioned activities.

Working with other groups (NGOs, etc.) who are engaged in social action to help them to incorporate "Shambhala vision" into their work through teaching an organized Shambhala Path of Social Action.

Change consciousness culturally wide. Cultural view, rules, and behavior. Worldview Attitude/Concept. Aligning-view-action. Skillful means and greater vision in the first three levels would be to see this 4th level as the major goal that unites the first three levels.

SOCIAL ACTION/ ENGAGEMENT: NEXT STEPS

Propose formation of a group empowered to accomplish this. – This working group intends to work on that and to encourage others to join.

Group will develop Vision Statement and a set of Guiding Principles (using preliminary work of Social Action working group- work can be continued and expanded upon

Four Aspects of this work

On-line discussion group

Surveys before Congress (available at Congress web site)

Training Programs (early May DCL, Post-Midsummer's Day June DDL)

Training Programs- Ongoing (cultivate a community of teachers to initiate programs on the Path of the Warrior)

Compose a Sourcebook, including a practice book and a book of meditations. Prison meditation booklet is one good template.

ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED AND DECIDED

How do we formalize this? How do we magnetize more to this Shambhala Path of Social Action?

Endorsement of certain projects or at least encouragement and sharing from the center of activities on the fringes of the mandala.

Support could be in the form of training. Training is very important for doing this skillfully. Training is what we do best and are richest in and is what is at the heart of what we have vowed to propagate

CHALLENGES:

Globalization- individualism

Aggression

Need to learn how to work with these internally and externally

How do we know what is ultimately "good" or "bad" for another if we have limited *prajna* (Don't tell others what to do, rather design SPSA to empower others to succeed – invoke Shambhala magic, spontaneous insight, building consensus)

How do we take Shambhala vision, use Shambhala language and culture to affect/influence others' life/experience.

Need to start small- with ourselves, on our own centers. Even this on a small level would be a good start.

Linking up with other Social Action groups already engaged is a really good idea, or groups we already have an affinity to.

Taking on single issues may not be as skillful as bringing what we already have to offer as Shambhalian to existing groups and causes. And using that to transform deeply embedded cultural ideas to Shambhalian ones to influence worldview to be awake, sane, uplifted, just, equitable & sustainable.

Building consensus to proceed

IDEAS

Come up with a list of activities that can be done without money.

Training for working skillfully with others.

Develop a list of guiding principles and a vision statement for a Shambhala path of social action.

Education- Focus in diverse sectors/networks- create networks

Discussions in local centers post- Congress

Future meetings to carry on topics raised here

SADHANA AS MODEL OF HOW TO WORK IN THE WORLD

Sakyong Mipham has agreed to compose a Sadhana For The Earth in response to the supplication of this group at the Congress.

He has already privately agreed to do so when we made our public supplication. We do not know what form this sadhana will take, who will be authorized to practice it (such as will it have a public use or only be for vajrayana students), or when it will appear. While we await this and in addition to this the form of sadhana practice itself has great power to evoke sanity as a model of how to work in the world Without writing an actual sadhana and without giving away any actual vajrayana secrets, never the less emulating some of the general forms of a sadhana could prove supremely powerful.

This could be a core practice of what could be taught to other social action groups and would work to not only benefit their own effectiveness and happiness, but also to enlist them as our allies in creating enlightened Shambhala society.

In list form, the Basic Steps of this Shambhala Path of Social Action meditation inspired by sadhana form are:

Clear, open mind (Hinayana)

Focus aspiration benefit to all being; compassionate generosity (Mahayana)

Remember basic goodness of everyone and everything

Rousing natural connection with the energies of the world around us that descend and empower human activity (Drala)

Ride energy (Windhorse)

Invoke genuine, spontaneous insight and greater vision

Stabilize unshakable continuity of absolute, fearless confidence (Warriorship),

Manifest as warmth of joyful mind of service to others (Mahayana),

Ground back into open mind (Hinayana) and finally

Arise with this evocation as connection with one's true and realized self.

There would be a basic form to each stage, but there could also be some degree of flexibility to accommodate the various forms different people would relate to for each of these stages. Sometimes it could be in Christian appearance or Gaian or others. Our group could more fully develop each stage and then see how this practice works with us first.

SOCIAL ACTION INTEGRATED INTO OTHER PROGRAMS (e.g. Shambhala Training)

SPSA should be seen as the "opening the flower outward" form of Shambhala Training. Teachers/workshop leaders of SPSA might be required to take Shambhala Training and others would be told of the opportunity Shambhala Training represents. Shambhala Training would inform its students of our programs and suggest or even arrange for their students to undertake a SPSA action as Shambhala Training in action.

Other activities within Sangha· SMC Program involving Drala and Nature in conjunction with Windhorse Farm of Jim Drescher.

Awareness raising activities (ecology etc...) Fit into Social Action in sense that they establish one's connection to earth, which activates the protector principle, which motivates us to affect policy and lifestyle changes.

INTERDEPENDENCE

Connecting/ implementing practice into life (everyday).

Feed ideas into the world.

Skillful Means ...

Concluding Statement

"The world needs your help very badly . . . We have to do something about it, personally, physically... please pay attention, and don't abandon this world. This world does need your help so badly, very badly. And so, on behalf of this world, I would like to request you to come and do something about it..."

Chogyam Trungpa, Rinpoche

Attachments

Riding the Garuda: Engaged Social Transformation in Creating Shambhala Society

Supplication to Sakyong Mipham for a Sadhana for the Earth

Declaration of Environmental Aspirations

Books/Resources List

Summary from Working Group Presented at the Congress

Core Topic Working Group Report **Shambhala Path of Social Action**

Introduction:

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teaching meditation. This way we can implant into social institutions a sane and uplifted worldview coupled with compassionate behaviors. Social activism functions on the communicative interface between social structures and worldview. One can work within, and with new, social structures redefining their understanding of themselves and others. Often these structures are deeply struggling with the demons of aggression, passion and ignorance. Can we not develop ways to provide nonaggressive space? Cannot our teachings and practice help us provide open mind and equanimity?

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The precise shape this will take will evolve over time and adapt to fit circumstances on the spot. We envision the Shambhala Path of Social Action to be a major opening outward of Shambhala Training itself and so have the intrinsic capability of being as big as or bigger than the current Shambhala Training program now in place. The two will grow together and nourish each other.

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Flip Chart Notes:

"The world needs your help very badly . . . We have to do something about it, personally, physically... please pay attention, and don't abandon this world. This world does need your help so badly, very badly. And so, on behalf of this world, I would like to request you to come and do something about it..."

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Flip Chart Notes from Shambhala Congress Working Group: Shambhala Path of Social Action/Engagement
6-8 November 2003

QUESTIONS/ ISSUES

Inclusion- People who hold different opinions without alienating anyone.
Need to maintain integrity of our teachings/tradition- not watering down
How to engage socially without threatening limited resources- Corollary: While not discouraging anyone's inspiration/ motivation.
St. Johnsbury, VT, Prison Project
non-controversial and rewarding
Training with department of corrections required.
Connection: "Prison Dharma Network"- Fleet Maul
Halifax
No officially sanctioned activities
Hospice Society organizers
Shambhala Friendship Society – Karin Lavin Memorial Award
Sangha members played key role various environmental issues, particularly in Halifax & NS having world's leading recycling/composting system
Genuine Progress Index Atlantic (GPI Atlantic)
Shambhala Institute
Youth group trying to identify opportunities (e.g. soup kitchen)
Chile
Reflection on Social Action especially referring to historical problems in society
Looking "within" first before working "outside."
Somewhat aggressive to think that we need to change people when we all have "Basic Goodness."
Amherst/ Boston
Lots of volunteer work in Boston
Hospice + Ann Cason's "Circles we Care" for elderly
Work with local hospitals (medical/spiritual care)

ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED AND DECIDED

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Support could be in the form of training. Training is very important for doing this skillfully. Training is what we do best and are richest in and is what is at the heart of what we have vowed to propagate

CHALLENGES:

Globalization- individualism
Aggression
Need to learn how to work with these internally and externally
How do we know what is ultimately "good" or "bad" for another if we have limited *prajna* (Don't tell others what to do, rather design SPSA to empower others to succeed – invoke Shambhala magic, spontaneous insight, building consensus)
How do we take Shambhala vision, use Shambhala language and culture to affect/influence others' life/experience.
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Preliminary:

3 ASPECTS TO HELPING OTHERS:

Awareness of impact within us on what we're focusing on.
Stop judging that which we're focusing on.
Try to understand what the group we're trying to help really needs.
Facilitate the group's discovery and articulation of what they really need and want
Facilitate the group accomplishing what they really need

BE THINKING TOWARDS . . .

Developing a mission statement or a mandate to create a mission statement, goals, and principles.
What is actually needed to help
What questions should we ask?

SOCIAL ACTION/ ENGAGEMENT: NEXT STEPS

Preamble

Call Upon Congress to Endorse the creation and development of a Shambhala path of Social Action/ Engagement
Propose formation of a group empowered to accomplish this. – This working group intends to work on that and to encourage others to join.
Group will develop Vision Statement and a set of Guiding Principles (using preliminary work of Social Action working group- work can be continued and expanded upon
Four Aspects of this work
On-line discussion group
Surveys before Congress (available here)
Training Programs (early May DCL, Post-Midsummer's Day June DDL)
Training Programs- Ongoing (cultivate a community of teachers to initiate programs on the Path of the Warrior)
Compose a Sourcebook, including a practice book and a book of meditations. Prison meditation booklet is one good template.
Supplicate Sakyong to compose Sadhana for Saving the Earth - Done
Request Richard Reoch's involvement in SPSA Working Group

WHY?

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World Calls for Help
Helps us grow strong as community
Social Action is part of our practice (not something separate) as meditation in action
We have a special teaching for creating Enlightened Society
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Excellent form of outreach to many social, ethnic, racial, cultural, environmental, religious or other groups that do not now see our teachings as relevant to themselves – but could/would see Shambhala teachings as relevant if we became meaningfully involved in the issues and struggles that they see as immediately relevant and if our teachings were presented in a form that they can see is relevant to their issues. Particularly groups already involved in genuine social/environmental improvement could readily find our teachings highly useful – if formulated into a Shambhala Path of Social Action that is pragmatic and useful, condensed and focused, and that invokes open mind, compassionate heart, basic goodness, connection to the empowering living quality of the world (drala), rousing fearless natural energy (windhorse & warriorship), spontaneous insight, stabilizing continuity of unshakable confidence, and cultivating joyful mind and greater vision.

SOCIAL ACTION WHAT?

Four Levels of Social Action

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The standard sadhana format in brief progress in a sequence by beginning with shamatha-vipassana practice to relax, open, and clear the mind (hinayana). Then time is spent with generosity practice to benefit others such as tonglin (mahayana). The next stages are vajrayana. One creates the main, front visualization with details and then recites a liturgy describing attributes. A self-visualization is added – oneself as already enlightened, interacting with front visualization. Mantra is recited while holding the visualization. Then the visualization is dissolved into nothing resulting in a space where there is no you for a while. Then one re-arises as the enlightened form

visualized with a vague sense of oneself as that form without detail, which can come with one as one goes forth. Then one exits through more generosity practice (Mahayana). Finally one sits again (hinayana). It is incredibly effective and evocative as we all well know.

People's basic goodness leads everyone to want to be helpful, but we are all hindered by problems to varying degrees. We can all benefit from a practice to help people connect with who we really are and to help us overcome the situational problems. People already involved in social action are particularly trying to do right. But this tends to put them into problematical situations full of aggression and other hindrances. With this wealth of motivation and richness of samsara, a meditation process target for on the spot use would be of great benefit.

From this basic idea arises the inspiration to use a very simplified and shortened form based on the sadhana form, but not being an actual sadhana, to allow any person involved in social action to have a targeted meditation process. The actual forms would be very much Shambhala form of Vajrayana. I see them in a language completely free of "jargon" as an absolute necessity. It would be spiritual but ecumenical.

One could start by focusing back in contact with their awakened mind of basic goodness and clarity, then touch in with their desire to help others to renew why they are here in the first place, then rouse drala connection to the living, magical earth encompassing us, then harness windhorse energy to activate this. Next invoke spontaneous insight for problem solving beyond fixed mind, then firmly connect with absolute, fearless confidence (warriorship), allow that to manifest as warmth of joyful mind of service to others (mahayana), ground back into open mind (hinayana), and finally arise with this evocation as connection with ones true and realized self. These stages can be either atmospheric or visualized as appropriate to circumstances.

This clearly needs polishing, testing and development, but years of warriorship on the front lines of the social action battlefield indicates that this format could be very workable and beneficial. It arose as genuine insight. Once practiced a few times, this form could be practiced very quickly. That would make this form able to be used at the beginning and end of meetings and events. It could be used when the situation fills with aggression or other obstacles. It could be used alone and in groups. It could be used as a daily practice, when one is inspired to connect with the world and nature and in many other forms. One could also practice it for longer periods as well. The more one has studied and practiced Shambhala teachings the more powerful it could be. But it would also be very powerful and useful to anyone genuinely practicing it whatever their training.

This could be a core practice of what could be taught to other social action groups and would work to not only benefit their own effectiveness and happiness, but also to enlist them as our allies in creating enlightened Shambhala society.

In list form, the Basic Steps of this Shambhala Path of Social Action meditation inspired by sadhana form are:

Clear, open mind (Hinayana),
Focus aspiration benefit to all being; compassionate generosity (Mahayana),
Remember basic goodness of everyone and everything,
Rousing natural connection with the energies of the world around us that descend and empower human activity (Drala),
Ride energy (Windhorse),
Invoke genuine, spontaneous insight and greater vision,
Stabilize unshakable continuity of absolute, fearless confidence (Warriorship),
Manifest as warmth of joyful mind of service to others (Mahayana),
Ground back into open mind (Hinayana), and finally
Arise with this evocation as connection with one's true and realized self.

There would be a basic form to each stage, but there could also be some degree of flexibility to accommodate the various forms different people would relate to for each of these stages. Sometimes it could be in Christian appearance or Gaian or others. Our group could more fully develop each stage and then see how this practice works with us first.

Other creative modern variations of this general form are the Healing Meditations of Tulku Thondup. They show additional ways this format can be varied to provide for modern needs. In fact, some of the healing meditations could readily be used as practice for healing the earth. Tulku Thondup has used one for healing connected to 9-11. It would not be surprising if he would be delighted to compose a healing meditation for our use, with long, medium, short and instantaneous forms. Or we could use his teachings to compose one ourselves. David W. has studied these teachings and taught classes on them.

SOCIAL ACTION INTEGRATED INTO OTHER PROGRAMS (e.g. Shambhala Training)

SPSA should be seen as the "opening the flower outward" form of Shambhala Training. Teachers/workshop leaders of SPSA might be required to take Shambhala Training and others would be told of the opportunity Shambhala Training represents. Shambhala Training would inform its students of our programs and suggest or even arrange for their students to undertake a SPSA action as Shambhala Training in action.

Other activities within Sangha· SMC Program involving Drala and Nature in conjunction with Windhorse Farm of Jim Drescher.

Awareness raising activities (ecology etc...) Fit into Social Action in sense that establishes one's connection to earth, which activates the protector principle, which motivates us to affect policy and lifestyle changes.

INTERDEPENDENCE

Connecting/ implementing practice into life (everyday). Feed ideas into the world.

Skillful Means...

WHAT? Clear Articulation of view
HOW? Development of Skillful Means
Practical Paths

HOW? (Guiding Principles)

Listening as Shamatha of Social Action

Obstacles: Attachment to Results, "solidifying", Burnout

Need to renew Bodhisattva commitment

Listening is the Shamatha of Social Action

Danger of solidifying

LEVELS OF WORK:

We are trained to recognize basic goodness

Generate Compassion

Build Confidence

Dignities as ecological cycle (mind/body engaging)

4 KARMAS

Pacifying

Magnetizing

Enriching

Destroying

As skillful means/ way of action

HOW DO THESE PRINCIPLES/TEACHINGS WORK IN SOCIAL ACTION?

“Warriorship” in some form to show selfless action as the right thing to do... (change worldview) (Here we will encounter the constantly recurring problem with the word warrior – and will need to find another way to say this when teaching other groups whose binding principle is some other social action path and will simply find the word warrior too much of an impediment.)

Training so people/groups can arrive at basic insight of how to best build just, equitable, and sustainable society (i.e. Enlightened Society)

Facilitate process of bringing out the native/inherent wisdom of the situation using the “magic” of Shambhala.

Helps us recognize our own Buddha nature, uncovering Buddha nature.

Dignities listed as an “ecology of action or engagement” (Meek, Perky, Outrageous, Inscrutable).

We need to invoke the sacred dimension back into peoples’ lives and actions. SPSA can bring the sacred dimension into the social dimension.

Bring onto the SPSA a way of transferring Shambhala Vision and practice into the daily life of members of other groups taught through SPSA.

Include methods of uplifting practice space when that space is sometimes the office space, but can also be the public meeting, political meeting, protest march, refugee camp or even battlefield.

Need to incorporate a focus on communicating value of uplifting lifestyles in Shambhala manner - dignified harmony. Voluntary simplicity with elegance rather than clutter of accumulation, etc..

Need focus on uplifting places of work, living, school, and volunteer spaces. Not just Fung Shui. Bright cheerful, uncluttered.

Re-enforce peoples’ good, core qualities & strengthen their ability to stay connected with that good core and aspiration to help.

Help people to release the hold that problems have on them and others

And to maintain spiritual connection with their surroundings – a magical earth connection

To build vision of enlightened society – just, equitable, and sustainable.

An answer to two earlier points:

Re: Looking “within” first before working “outside.” – (SPSA will teach others forms to do that with Shambhalian worldview.)

Re: Somewhat aggressive to think that we need to change people when we all have “Basic Goodness.” – (SPSA approach is not for us to decide how to change others but to help strengthen /awaken good, generous and wise qualities in them.)

“FOLLOW UP TO CONGRESS” WORKING GROUP

David Wimberly was this group’s delegate to the “Follow Up to the Congress” Group. He reports:

From the “Follow Up to the Congress” Group that met one short time, a few items not on the recommendations list published (under the misnomer “Implementation Group”):

Need Town Hall meetings quarterly at least

Need to build consensus and buy-in

Designate researcher

Designate person to bring back into information to focus groups,

Designate person to ensure no duplication

Designate reported

The group did not take names of the representatives to the “Follow Up to the Congress” Group from each group. Thus there is some question about format for the “Follow Up to the Congress” Group to continue as such. There needs to be at least e-mail connections among the representatives of each group so that communication can continue about the effectiveness of on-going follow up and ways of furthering implementation as well as an Implementation Group reporting of the overall level of implementation, which is the next step after a plan is agreed on.

David Wimberly can continue at the pleasure of the SPSA Working Group to serve in the capacity as ongoing implementation / follow-up person.

Concluding Statement:

(From the group’s oral presentation to the Congress on the final afternoon.)

"The world needs your help very badly ...

(El mundo necesita su ayuda muy gravemente ...)

We have to do something about it, personally, physically ...

please pay attention, and don't abandon this world.
This world does need your help so badly, very badly.
And so, on behalf of this world,
I would like to request you to come and do something about it..."
Chogyam Trungpa, Rinpoche

"Don't just sit there, do something. Don't just do something, sit there.' This is the central dilemma of a practitioner: when does meditation practice become post-meditation practice? And what is the nature of the Post-Meditation practice? When and how do we engage? We explored the many aspects of this dilemma. What SHOULD you do and What should we do? What should I do?

There are no answers to these questions that will last; that can allow us not to pay attention.
We need to hold the question, to hold the gaze and look samsara in the eyes with our Fearlessness, Gentleness, and Intelligence.

Trusting our heart/mind, we will know when and what has to be done and when to sit back down and trust the space. This is our practice. This is our path. This is the path of social action."
Lance Brunner

" The earth cries for help...Are we listening?
She summons us---Earth Protectors, Wake Up!
I need you, NOW.
What do you think? Should we engage in social action?
It's not optional. We ARE engaged.
We have received special teachings on how to help the world.
We've taken bodhisattva vows to protect one another from fear,
to protect the earth from destruction.
Together, let us invoke Sakyong Wangmo.
Let us harvest peace on this sacred earth, NOW."
Madge Rossinoff

"We bodhisattva warriors embarking upon the Shambhala Path of Social Action salute you! Invite you! And declare: Victory Over War! Victory Over War On the Environment!"
David Wimberly

"Our society tells us that we are good and they are bad, and that the good guys must control the bad. Effective social action starts from the realization that basic goodness, bodhicitta, unites us all. And effective social action spreads that realization into our world."
Newcomb Greenleaf

"The time has come and we are now prepared to commit ourselves to the development of a formal path of social action that promotes the deepening of awareness of society's many needs so that bodhicitta and the protector principle may be ignited within our hearts. With this motivation, we will step forward bravely and skillfully and engage in actions that will bring harmony to ourselves, our society, and the world."
Chris Montone

"The magical element
(El elemento mágico)
that binds the words "society" and "enlightenment" into "enlightened society"
is the wholehearted motivation by individuals
to engage personally
in a social transformation
that will lead to the betterment of the society."

Sakyong Mipham, Rinpoche

Attachments:

Riding the Garuda: Engaged Social Transformation in Creating Shambhala Society

Supplication to Sakyong Mipham for a Sadhana for the Earth

Declaration of Environmental Aspirations

Books/Resources List

Summary from Working Group Presented at the Congress

Attachment 1:

Riding the Garuda: Engaged Social Transformation in Creating Shambhala Society

By David Wimberly

As demons and spirits course the land of Shambhala this Halloween night my thoughts turn to how Padmasambhava brought Buddhism to Tibet by taming the demons and spirits of Tibet and turning them into allies. It is far more than even auspicious coincidence that from the very cave from which Padmasambhava issued forth to bring Buddhism to Tibet, Chogyam Trungpa received the beginning of the Shambhala teachings created to fully bring Buddhism to the West. When we examine the way Padmasambhava was successful when others had failed and compare that with the Shambhala Buddhist teachings we find significant congruence we students need to stay aware of in order to succeed fully in realizing the aspiration and command of our teacher, the Padmasambhava of the West.

What does it mean to say that Padmasambhava tamed the demons and spirits of Tibet and turned them into allies? The ancient nature religion of Pon dominated Tibet, drawing its power from the energies of the earth, the sky, the water, the plants and animals. Padmasambhava adapted the outward manifestation of Buddhism so that it adopted much of the appearance of Pon, using what forms were culturally significant and accepted but giving them a more profound inner meaning that conveyed complete realization.

The spirits and demons of Tibet were tamed by giving them inner meanings to convey the enlightened activity of the Vajrayana. Thus transformed they were now allies that exalted Tibetan culture, permeating it completely with Buddhist wisdom. It became somewhat difficult outwardly to tell the difference between Buddhist and Pon; even within Pon the flavor of Buddhist understanding had great influence. Culturally significant ideas that were fully imbedded into the social fabric now were tamed and made into allies. Ideas, issues and movements of deep importance to Tibetans were now the vehicle of Buddhism. Buddhism had conquered Tibet by morphing outwardly while retaining its inner meaning. Even better, Buddhism had actually gained new strength and vitality with the dynamic energy of this new emergence.

This is the basic pattern that has been successful when Buddhism has successfully traveled to other cultures. In China, Buddhism took outward forms from Taoism on its path to become fully imbedded culturally. In Japan, Shinto was the form used. In Southeast Asia and in the Indonesian area, the outward forms are decidedly native to those areas. Looking even further back, one observes that the format used in India was native there. The native religions that outward forms were borrowed from all place a strong emphasis on innate harmony with the earth and its inhabitants and thus are a natural match with a religion that started under a tree and expressed itself first with touching the earth as its witness.

In each case where Buddhism successfully took root, it did so by adopting the template of local religion and culture, particularly using those aspects already somewhat capable of expressing awake mind. In each case the native culture and native religion was transformed by the infusion throughout society of new, enlightened ideas and understanding

of their own native religion and culture. In each case the forms adapted were from nature, arts and social issues important to peaceful existence.

The Shambhala teachings are about the creation of an entire enlightened society that spans the earth. They are our templates on how to proceed in transforming the culture of the West into expressing awakened mind. In springing forth from the glorious cave of Taktsang like Padmasambhava, Chogyam Trungpa rode the garuda of no less a vision than of how to totally conquer and tame the demons and devils of the entire Western world and tame them into allies. Like Padmasambhava in Tibet, Trungpa's enlightened activity will settle for nothing less than transforming Western Culture into an enlightened form called Shambhala Society.

Skillful means requires examination of the analogous Western demons and devils, the native nature religion, the forms of arts and culture, the opportunities for constructive engagement. Our demons and devils include extreme materialism, ongoing wars and environmental devastation on a scale the world has never seen. The closest to a native, nature religion of the western world is environmentalism, which is rapidly growing and transforming the way the Western world understands itself and its relation to other. It is part politics, part religion and part philosophy through an appropriate myriad of forms such as Gaia, deep ecology, bio-regionalism, Natural Step, eco-feminism, Christian earth stewardship and so on. Many consider environmentalism the fastest growing political movement in the world. Dynamic, evolving, essential yet lacking cohesive leadership; it is a natural match for transformation through Shambhala and for thus providing an excellent vehicle through which Shambhala can transform the world.

This is greater than just conventional environmentalism. Environment also includes the human built environment and social institutions as well. Opportunity arises from the deeply embedded teachings in Judeo-Christian cultures to actively do good works which have become integral to Western influenced society around the world. This manifests in willingness to become involved in social action. Great numbers of people seek to do good through transformation of the morality and social institutions of the world. A dramatic example is the surge of dynamic protests over the G-8, the World Bank, the IMF, and the like happening worldwide. People naturally yearn for a better world. We bodhisattva warriors of Shambhala have tools, teachings, vision that can provide help, guidance, and direction so the result is Shambhala Society.

We can also look to the long tradition of arts expressing and contributing to social/political evolution. Film, TV and other media strongly contribute to setting context and morality in modern culture, albeit usually Setting Sun. Dharma Arts uplifts culture and are powerful social action. Chogyam Trungpa's vision was truly vast.

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As a friend to the young Vidyadhara, former Canadian Ambassador to Nepal and High Commissioner India James George played a pivotal role in convincing him that the time was right for the Shambhala teaching to be given to the West. In his book **Asking for the Earth: Waking Up to the Spiritual/Ecological Crisis** George points out that the social/environmental crisis is not due to lack of knowledge about the existence, extent or solutions to the crisis. Rather, the core problem is a lack of moral strength in Western culture to act responsibly. George documents agreement on this from religious leaders of many traditions.

Another piece of the puzzle is elucidated in **Sacred Ecology**, Fikret Berkes= examination of native cultures to understand what causes a society to behave responsibly or not. Based on the work of Gregory Bateson (Steps Toward an Ecology of Mind, Mind and Nature) in showing the effects of understanding levels of organization of knowledge and expanding on the work of others, Berkes proposes four levels of analysis in traditional knowledge and management systems. Most basic is specific **Alocal knowledge@** of conditions, such as of land, animals, etc. Encompassing that are **Amanagement systems@**; of land, resources, etc. The third level is **Asocial institutions@** including sets of rules of use and codes of social relationships. The fourth and outermost level is **Aworldview@**. Many analysts limit themselves to the social institutions level and frequently jumble *worldview* into this level. But it is by knowing *worldview* as a meta-level understanding that one begins to realize more precisely what ultimately drives society. The mostly **Aobservational order@** of the first three levels is interpreted by the **Aconceptual order@** of worldview. When *worldview* is sane and strong, societies behave; they resist materialism, war, environmental destruction, and so on. When *worldview* is weak or perverted then so are the actions of society and its members.

So what is new in this, one might ask? Working skillfully with social action is an extremely powerful way to change society's worldview to one of sanity, hope and generosity. Shambhala Buddhism gives us the training in study and meditation practice to transform our own worldview and thus our actions. We can then extend that out to uplift the worldview and actions of others. Social activism gives us the opportunity to skillfully extend our influence far beyond those we can directly benefit by teaching meditation. This way we can implant into social institutions a sane and uplifted worldview coupled with compassionate behaviors.

Social activism functions on the communicative interface between social structures and worldview. One can work within, and with new, social structures redefining their understanding of themselves and others. Often these structures are deeply struggling with the demons of aggression, passion and ignorance. Can we not develop ways to provide nonaggressive space? Cannot our teachings and practice help us provide open mind and equanimity?

I remember watching how the Vidyadhara looked up a word in the large Oxford English Dictionary. He would study it carefully, in depth, understand it fully in derivation, history and multiple uses. Then he would often turn its meaning around to find a new way of using the idea represented by that word so that it now illuminated the dharma. The Vidyadhara was working with changing and evolving worldview so we could see the world fresh. And he was teaching us how it is done. The Vidyadhara set up series of organizations, teaching us how to work with social structures so social order would reflect and support awake, compassionate mind as basic worldview. It has now been thirty odd years for many of us to work with this.

Now our new Sakyong commands us to AOpen the Flower Outward.@ One of the best ways we can do this is by understanding the ability of the Shambhala Buddhist teachings to infuse social institutions with a more enlightened worldview through working with social action. The churches that are growing today are the ones that are engaged in social issues.

A recent survey of the 100 most influential religious leaders of the Twentieth Century lists Chogyam Trungpa as number two. The only leader more influential was the creator of the Alcoholics Anonymous 12 Step Program. Like Shambhala, the AA program is ecumenical, welcomes people and their problems with unconditional love (compassion) and teaches people how to respect and uplift themselves through self-knowledge and inner development. But the AA program addresses a very specific social problem with action that has proven beneficial. And the AA program has become a template for similar directed social action agendas. We can learn from that and have much to offer to go further.

Engaging in social action has many benefits beyond the direct help to other sentient beings. It broadens our connections and contacts; frequently into social, economic and ethnic groups little reached otherwise by us to date. Is it not the case that these groups generally find our teachings uninteresting because they don't see us relating to the problems they see as important to them? By social engagement with them we will demonstrate and develop that relationship. Finally, by engaging with groups seeking to change the world for the better, we will influence the overall conceptual patterns and ways of acting first of those groups and of the people in them, then of the people they serve and ultimately of the entire society. AA is doing this big time. What's our plan?

Exactly how to do this will require careful thoughtfulness, planning, training, work and a great deal of inspiration. President Reoch has already started the discussion of just what would be a Shambhala Path of Social Action. We will need all the skillful means, wisdom and compassionate activity the sangha has to offer. And we will need to work with and learn from all of our many allies in this work throughout the world. But the world is worth it and this is necessary.

The Vidyadhara's view is most vast in planning how to create an entire enlightened society. One could say that there has been a sort of gestation period for the development of the embryo of that society. The Shambhala Congress could well be the time for the birth as Shambhala prepares to AOpen the Flower Outward.@ But we can do it. We can just do it. Now.

Attachment 2:

Supplication to Sakyong Mipham for a Sadhana for the Earth

This is the text of the public supplication to Sakyong Mipham to compose a Sadhana for the Earth. This was made by the Shambhala Path of Social Action Working Group of the Shambhala Congress at the Sadhana of Mahamudra Feast on November 8, 2003, the final event of the Shambhala Congress. This event was made further powerful and auspicious as it occurred at the beginning of a total lunar eclipse during an astrologically significant and rare Grand Sextile arrangement of the planets [two intersecting Grand Trines, which form a six-pointed star pattern]. Sakyong Mipham has agreed to compose this sadhana, further joining heaven, earth and man.

David Wimberly:

“Your Majesty, we represent Bodhisattva warriors beginning on a Shambhala Path of Social Action. We begin with poetry.”

Madge Rossinoff:

“As the magical web of creation
compassionately supports
every form of life,
there is no hierarchy among species.
Not one insect is deemed insignificant.
Each sparkling point of consciousness,
while reflecting all others,
is simultaneously the cause and the effect.
This brilliant display of elegant symmetry
is both the source and the manifestation of Drala.
As the elements of earth, water and sky
are not separate from our own minds,
We can practice tonglen for the earth,
for the trees, the greenery and so on.
We can aspire to lighten our footprint
thereby living in harmony
With all beings on earth.”

All read together (David Wimberly, Madge Rossinoff, Lance Brunner, Yolanda Corona, Newcomb Greenleaf, Chris Montone):

“As beginning warriors of the Shambhala Path of Social Action, we hereby supplicate your Majesty Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche to compose a sadhana for the earth, to empower us as her protectors.”

Yolanda Corona:

“Como guerreros que se inician en El camino de acción social de Shambhala estamos aqui para suplicar a usted,

Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, crear una Sadhana para la Tierra que nos permita actuar como sus protectores.”

Then David Wimberly presented the calligraphied document of the supplication in English and in Spanish to Sakyong Mipham.

At the same time he presented to the Sakyong the calligraphied “**Declaration of Environmental Aspirations**” on behalf of the Environmental Workshop, which was not read to the sangha present but has been put on the Congress web page for all to see and submitted to the Congress.

Attachment 3: ***Declaration of Environmental Aspirations***

The Wednesday evening workshop on Environment was very large and full with the richness of sangha caring for our shared environment, yet longing for ways to do more, which was seen as necessary.

It was proposed that we make the heartfelt statement to the Shambhala Congress and to the greater sangha that -

Coming from a multitude of countries spread far across the earth we express concern that we need to care more and care more properly for the environment:

personally,
in our centers, and
in our communities.

Through manifesting generosity towards all sentient beings we can arouse and experience drala.

Psychological problems are often the greatest pollution and also the greatest cause of pollution.

We need to have a path to make it work.

We must invoke a sacred dimension. That is what makes our path unique. It is critical that we need to share this.

The greatest lack we experience today is the lack of connection with drala - the energies of the world that descend and empower human activity.

Specific practices invoke our connection to other life and deepen our connection to drala.

We need to have a path to make it work.

[Prepared by agreement of a group volunteered from the Environment workshop. It is intended to be read to the Congress, entered into the record and posted at the website.]

Attachment 4:

BOOKS / RESOURCES LIST

Glimpses of Shambhala, six Shambhalians' stories, collected by Barbara Blouin, on Congress website
Prebish, Charles S. and Tanaka, Kenneth K., **The Faces of Buddhism in North America**, 1998, University of California Press
Jones, Ken, **The New Social Face of Buddhism: A Call to Action**, 2003, Wisdom Publications, Somerville, MA
Shambhala Survey: the social dimension (on Congress website)
Set In Motion (Richard Reoch)
'04 Social Action Programs Planned: early May- Dechen Choling, Europe; Post Midsummer's Day June Dorje Denma Ling, Nova Scotia
George, James, **Asking for the Earth: Waking Up to the Spiritual/Ecological Crisis**, 1995, Barrytown/Station Hill Press, NY
Berkes, Fikret, **Sacred Ecology: Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Resource Management**, 1999, Taylor & Francis, Philadelphia
Badiner, Allan Hunt (ed.), **Dharma Gaia: A Harvest of Essays in Buddhism and Ecology**, 1990, Parallax Press, Berkeley
Kotler, Arnold (ed.), **Engaged Buddhist Reader**, 1996, Parallax Press, Berkeley, CA
Goldsmith, Edward, **The Way: An Ecological World-View**, 1993, Shambhala, Boston
Fox, Warwick, **Toward a Transpersonal Ecology: Developing New Foundations for Environmentalism**, 1990, Shambhala, Boston
Tulku Thondup, **Boundless Healing** [HYPERLINK "http://www.tulkuthondup.com/bk_boundless_healing.htm"](http://www.tulkuthondup.com/bk_boundless_healing.htm) : **Meditation Exercises to Enlighten the Mind and Heal the Body**, 2000, Shambhala Publications, Boston
Tulku Thondup, **The Healing Power of Mind: Simple Meditation Exercises for Health, Well-Being, and Enlightenment**, 1996/98, Shambhala Publications, Boston.

Attachment 5

Summary from Shambhala Path of Social Action Working Group Presented at the Congress

The Shambhala Path of Social Action

Key Issues:

Why social engagement?

Social engagement is part of our practice (called "post meditation" practice).

We have been given special, precious teachings on creating enlightened society and the exhortation of our teachers VCTR and SMR to help others and protect this sacred world.

The world is calling for help—are we listening?

What is social engagement?

We are all already socially engaged, whether aware of it or not.

Social engagement as path invites us to acknowledge that our working with others *is* our path.

There are many ways to work in this realm from individual efforts within family, sangha, and workplace to tackling social ecological issues (e.g. prison dharma, environmental work, Habitat for Humanity, Amnesty Int., etc), to transforming worldview.

How do we engage?

Apply "practice" to our lives and relationships.

Access resources currently available.

Build on current work, within and outside the sangha.

Design training programs for social engagement.

Include social engagement components in existing programs within the sangha (such as Shambhala Training, Nalanda Programs etc.).

Next Steps/Recommendations:

Recognition that the Shambhala Congress has endorsed social action as a major issue.

The creation and development of a Shambhala Path of Social Action.

Announce the formation of a group empowered to accomplish this (we will start).

The group will further develop a vision statement and a set of guiding principles (using the preliminary work of the Social Action working group) and implementation plan.

Invite participation in the working group and online discussion group: HYPERLINK "<http://www.LearningAlliances.net/SPSA>"

Survey results available at the Congress, free ("Glimpses of Shambhala," "Shambhala Survey: the social dimension.")

Training programs to be offered with Richard Reoch

Dechen Choling (May 2004)

Dorje Denma Ling (post Mid-Summers' Day 2004)

Develop ongoing training for future programs to integrate components into existing programs.