



Kootenay
Shambhala
Meditation
Centre

NEWSLETTER • May 2009

3rd Floor - 444 Baker Street, PO Box 136, Nelson, BC V1L 5P7 • 250-352-5560 • info@nelsonbuddha.com • www.nelsonbuddha.com

"It's important to be mindful of the environment, but what's more important is to be mindful of our attitude towards it."

—SAKYONG MIPHAM RINPOCHE
Contemplation for April 7th, 2009
www.mipham.com

WELCOME

The Kootenay Shambhala Meditation Centre is part of an international community of meditation centres founded by Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche, a Tibetan Buddhist meditation master, and now led by his son and lineage holder, Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche.

Our Centre offers free meditation instruction, a clearly defined path of practice and study, a range of community activities and more. All our offerings are meant to help people of all kinds awaken their innate wisdom, compassion and sense of irony.

We invite you to join us in celebrating this journey of discovery.

This newsletter is intended largely as an introductory handout for newcomers. For the latest and most complete information about our Centre please visit our website at www.nelsonbuddha.com.

You can also stay in the loop by subscribing to our blog or one or both of our email lists, or by contacting us at info@nelsonbuddha.com.

Get the latest news at:

nelsonbuddha.com



REGULAR PUBLIC EVENTS

Everyone is welcome to attend these events. Participation is free of charge. (We gratefully accept donations.) For the latest schedule information please go to the Clickable Calendar on our website.

Meditation Practice

Sundays, 9 am - 12 pm

Mondays, 7 - 8 pm

Wednesdays, 12 - 1 pm

Thursdays, 5:15 - 6:15 pm

These sessions highlight the Shambhala community's core practice—mindfulness-awareness meditation—in both sitting and walking forms. Most sessions start and end with chants. Sunday sessions include mid-morning refreshments and, occasionally, short teachings and/or maitri bhavana healing practice. Participants may come and go as they wish.

Children in Shambhala

Sundays, 9 am - 12 pm

Intended mainly for children of parents participating in our Sunday morning meditation practice, this weekly program offers a playful introduction to Shambhala, with developmentally appropriate activities to nurture body, mind and heart.

Open House

Mondays, 7 - 9:30 pm

Our Open House program offers a friendly introduction to meditation practice, Shambhala Buddhist teachings and our community. • **7 pm:** Meditation instruction and practice (introductory instruction is available at 7 pm; follow-up instruction, at 7:30 pm) • **8 pm:** Talk and discussion • **9 pm:** Tea

Parents & Infants Meditation Group

Thursdays, 10:30 am - 12 pm

Called "Calm Abiding Together," this weekly gathering provides opportunities for parents with infants up to 18 months of age to receive *shamatha* ("calm abiding") meditation instruction and practice with their infants present. Discussions follow practice.

Sadhana of Mahamudra

On (or near) new and full moon days (this month, May 8 & 24), 7 - 8 pm

The Sadhana of Mahamudra is a text written by Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche. It embodies a way of invoking the energy and wisdom of the Kagyü and Nyingma schools of Tibetan Buddhism and cutting through all forms of dogmatism. The practice involves chanting the text and relaxing into the atmosphere that doing so creates.

TIDBITS

Kootenay Shambhala environmental initiatives

By Russell Rodgers

This article is adapted from an Earth Day email message to Kootenay Shambhala Centre members and friends from Centre member Russell Rodgers.

Since this is Earth Day, it seemed a good idea to talk a bit about our Centre and the environment. Here are some of the initiatives that are underway or planned:

The first step in an environmental audit of our Centre has already happened. Gregory Heming has been working on that with James Rodgers, an environmental auditor who has volunteered his time. We discovered that we need to plug some holes in ceiling joist spaces between the Centre and the stairway hall before a full audit can proceed. The full audit involves de-pressurizing the space so that air leakage from the outside can be measured and sources of leakage detected. We already recycle, compost, and use mostly environmentally friendly cleaning supplies. We usually avoid using paper and plastic eating utensils. Other ideas are most welcome.

This summer's weeklong meditation retreat, entitled "Touching the Earth," will focus on using meditation to connect directly and non-conceptually with the natural surroundings of our open-air pavilion at our retreat land. We'll use the traditional mahayana teachings of empty-fullness to dissolve some of the obstacles that prevent that kind of connection. We'll do lots of bodhichitta practice for the earth, plants and animals and society at large. We'll also bring in the Shambhala teachings on drala and the vajrayana teachings on magical sacred world. I have been talking to many of you about your experience of practices that help in this regard.

Cameron Wenaus and some members of the West Kootenay EcoSociety are planning a potluck get-

acquainted dinner for our two organizations at the Shambhala Centre. Many people have commented that our two organizations compliment each other, and that we could work together in various ways. This would also be a chance for our incipient environmental working group to get together in one place along with others from the community.

We are planning a two-day workshop for people working in the environmental movement. This workshop will include some of the material from the weeklong summer retreat. We'll also talk about using meditation to work with stress and burnout, and other practices that can be brought to bear in situations involving conflict.

Although we haven't met yet as a group, I think it's important to acknowledge that we already have an environmental working group at the Centre. Up until now, we've been talking informally with each other, mostly one-on-one and by email, and sometimes bringing up specific issues at Council meetings. If you would like to be included in the working group, please get back to me so that we can include you in email communications. We will need help in carrying out many of the activities listed above. I am currently the liaison person for the Shambhala Touching the Earth working group and am involved in directing the summer weeklong retreat and the workshop for environmentalists. At this point, I think that it would be good to spread out responsibilities so that we can move forward in an effective and coherent fashion and explore ideas with each other.

Enjoy Earth Day.

Summer meditation retreat details online

The Kootenay Shambhala Centre heartily invites new and experienced meditators alike to participate in this year's annual public one-week meditation retreat at Senge Ling, our retreat land near Nelson, from Saturday, June 27th to Sunday, July 5th. In this retreat, titled "Touching the Earth" and led by senior Kootenay Shambhala Centre member Russell Rodgers, we will explore our experience of the natural world in the context of *shunyata*, or empty-fullness. For a full program description go to the Programs area on our website.

GENEROSITY POLICY

Our Generosity Policy allows anyone to participate fully in the life of our Centre regardless of his or her ability to contribute financially. It states:

The Kootenay Shambhala Meditation Centre thrives due to the generosity of its program participants, friends and members. Recognizing that generosity, trust and openness are interconnected, we offer all of our programs on a suggested-donation basis and welcome participants to donate less or more than the suggested amounts as they choose.

To learn how you can make a donation please go to the Donations page on our website.

MEDITATION INSTRUCTION

Mindfulness-awareness meditation is the basis of all Shambhala activity. Originating from Shakyamuni Buddha over 2,500 years ago, this practice is the art of resting the mind, opening the heart and appreciating what it is to be fully human.

Free instruction in this practice is perhaps our Centre's most valuable offering. We offer introductory instruction to newcomers and follow-up instruction to other practitioners on Monday evenings, as part of our Open House program, and at other times by appointment. We encourage anyone curious about the path of meditation to work regularly with a meditation instructor.

Shambhala meditation instructors are senior Shambhala Buddhist practitioners specially trained and authorized to help people deepen and expand their conceptual and experiential understanding of meditation.

For more information go to the Meditation area on our website or contact Tim Albert, our Meditation Instruction Coordinator, at 250-357-2497 or eldoradocreek@netidea.com.

CORE PATH PROGRAMS

As currently presented at the Kootenay Shambhala Centre, the core Shambhala Buddhist path consists of three interconnected elements, each grounded in mindfulness-awareness meditation.

- **Shambhala Training** is a sequence of weekend workshops that emphasizes embodying bravery, gentleness and wakeful intelligence in every sphere of human activity.
- **Buddhist Study** is offered primarily through the Shambhala School of Buddhist Studies, a curriculum of weeknight courses and weekend programs that presents a thorough introduction to Buddhism in general and Tibetan Buddhism in particular.
- **Contemplative Arts** are a vehicle for integrating mindfulness and awareness into everyday life.

We welcome everyone to explore these offerings to the degree s/he wants. Altogether, this training is a big part of the preparation students require to attend Shambhala seminars and other advanced programs and engage in subtler practice and study. Upcoming core path programs are listed below.

For more information about the Shambhala Buddhist path visit our website or contact Jim Northcote at info@nelsonbuddha.com.

SHAMBHALA TRAINING

Golden Key

With Acharya Jenny Warwick

Friday, May 1 - Sunday, May 3, 8:30 am - 6 pm

Prerequisite: Shambhala Training Outrageous & Inscrutable

Suggested donation: \$150; \$50 for repeat participants • Materials: \$50

Drawing wisdom from *The Letter of the Golden Key*, a Shambhala root text that addresses our relationship to the "material world" and our sense perceptions, this special three-day program teaches the practice of enriching presence—the ability to instantly sense the inner wealth within ourselves, phenomena and the natural world.

For more information go to the Programs area on our website or contact Sally Albert at 250-357-2497 or eldoradocreek@netidea.com.

OTHER PROGRAMS/EVENTS

May Open House Talks

Mondays, 8 - 9 pm

All welcome • Free of charge (donations gratefully accepted)

Our Open House program offers a friendly introduction to meditation practice, Shambhala Buddhist teachings and our community. Typically, senior or intermediate Shambhala Centre members present the teachings in talk-and-discussion format. Upcoming talks are listed below. For the latest schedule information go to the Clickable Calendar on our website.

Monday, May 4

“Working with Strong Emotions,” with Jim Northcote

Monday, May 11

AUDIO: “Small Mind or Big Mind,” with Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche (followed by a discussion led by Lynn Dragone)

Monday, May 18

“Awake in Action,” with Lisa Hill, head of the social action arm of the Vancouver Shambhala Centre

Monday, May 25

“Spiritual Road Sense,” with Brian McEwen

Movie (etc.) Night

Friday, May 22, 7 pm

All welcome

On Friday, May 22nd, we’re having another Movie (etc.) Night, and you’re invited!

This popular, semi-regular event combines sharing good movies and preparing and eating good food and generally having fun together. Whoever coordinates the preparation of a night’s meal gets to pick that night’s movie(s).

Schedule:

- 7:00 pm: COMMUNITY KITCHEN: Help prepare the night’s “meal”—Popcorn Buffet, with Chief Popper Lynn Dragone
- 7:30 pm: MOVIE: *Milarepa: Magician, Murderer, Saint*

Suggested donation: Your favorite popcorn recipe and ingredients

For more information contact Lynn Dragone at nalandalynn@yahoo.com or 250-352-1964.

COMING SOON

Ikebana Workshop

Stay tuned for details

This newsletter outlines only some of what’s happening at our Centre. For the most up-to-date and complete listing of our programs and events please visit the Programs area on our website.

ELSEWHERE IN SHAMBHALA

Sangha Retreat

With Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche & Acharyas

Pema Chödrön & Adam Lobel

Shambhala Mountain Center, Red Feather Lakes, Colorado

July 17 - 24, 2009

This retreat provides an opportunity for the Shambhala community to gather, practice and connect with Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, and Acharyas Pema Chödrön and Adam Lobel. The retreat will focus on the sitting practice of meditation and include talks, guided meditation, contemplation practice, and shamatha yoga. Open to members of Shambhala, this week will count as one week of a dathün. For more information visit Shambhala Mountain Center’s website at www.shambhalamountain.org.

For information about other programs and events taking place in the wider Shambhala world—or about any other aspect of the community—please visit Shambhala’s main website at www.shambhala.org.

COMMUNITY

The Kootenay Shambhala Centre is home to a wonderfully diverse and vibrant community of about 35 members. We share a connection to mindfulness-awareness meditation and the aspiration to create a wakeful, joyful society. There are many ways to get involved—attending meditation practice sessions and celebrations, joining in recreational activities, taking courses, working with a meditation instructor and volunteering, to name a few. We invite and appreciate everyone's participation!

To learn how you can join in and to stay in the loop, visit the Programs area on our website, subscribe to the Kootenay Shambhala Blog or one or both of our email lists, or contact Lynn Dragone, Cameron Wenaus or Jim Northcote (or any other Centre member) at info@nelsonbuddha.com.

MEMBERSHIP

Everyone is invited to become a member of the Kootenay Shambhala Centre. Membership is a way to express appreciation for what Shambhala provides and help make it available to others.

Membership involves supporting the community in three main ways:

- Practicing mindfulness-awareness meditation
- Volunteering
- Providing financial support

Membership also brings several privileges. For more information please go to the Membership page on our website or contact Cameron Wenaus, our Membership Coordinator, at info@nelsonbuddha.com.

The Kootenay Shambhala Meditation Centre Newsletter is published monthly. You can contact the editor, Jim Northcote, at info@nelsonbuddha.com.

Shambhala, Shambhala Meditation Center, Shambhala Center, and Shambhala Training are registered service marks of Shambhala International (Vajradhatu).