

Strategic Discovery Report

Outreach and Culture Task Group

Presented by:

Co-Chairs

Shahla Mousavi

Julia Emery

Members

Chris Lincoln

Patrick Spriggs

Molly Sacamano

Nicki Daley

Brianna Socha

Emily Takahashi

Todd Amodeo

Carla Burns

Noel Smith

Meetings: July 31, August 7, 14, 21, 28

I. Vision and Understanding of Goals

- Definition of Shambhala Outreach and Culture
 - Acknowledgement of existing outreach programs and institutional knowledge.
 - Empowerment of current structure and programs.
- How we present ourselves:
 - Communication
 - a. Embodiment
 - 1) Looking towards communicating and embodying mindfulness and meditation in action within the Boulder Community.
 - 2) Fostering inclusivity in interpersonal communication.
 - 3) Engaging the greater Boulder Shambhala Sangha in fostering connections with the Boulder Community at large.
 - 4) Optimum utilization of community members' professional skills and vocations.
 - 5) Maintaining a supportive, connected, dharma based education and practice.
 - 6) Desire to know and understand our community.
- Questions/Concerns
 - a. Lack of definition within current Culture and Outreach practices in the following areas:
 - 1) System in need for a “structural upgrade”
 - A proposal that our current system of culture and outreach could be much benefited by a thorough redefinition and distribution of the workload within our community (with much gratitude for the work that has been done!). Suggestions of how this might be approached are outlined within the vision and recommendation sections of this report.
 - 2) Lack of efficient communication and transference of knowledge and experience within the Shambhala Community
 - 3) Lack of proficient marketing and adaptation in response to the changing world around us.

A. **Recommendations**

Recommendation #1 (General)

To hold a Community event for the Boulder Shambhala Sangha, in which all Sangha Members are able to display and share their professional skills, businesses, etc.

- This event would hopefully take place possibly before, or at least in tandem, with all other recommendations made in the area of Outreach and Culture (preferably within a year or two), so that we are able to experience, share, and explore the abundance of resources already present within the Boulder Shambhala Community.

- Ideally, this would be one of the first recommendations to be implemented in the 3 year final plan, as it would greatly help to inform our process of expanding out into the community, as well as determine what areas of the community we would be best suited to work with.

II. Goal 1: Magnetizing New Members

A. Recommendation #2

To create a space in which to get to know and learn from other cultures and traditions, and subsequently, to serve and exchange services and resources, in the spirit of Enlightened Society. Furthermore, to increase awareness and engagement in social, cultural, political and global events, especially being conscious of their effect on the residents and diverse range of communities within Boulder County.

- Concern: Especially when considering diversity of culture, religion and ethnicity, we must be careful to avoid appropriation.

B. Action Steps

Youth & Diversity

- a) Begin by deepening our understanding of the ethnic and social diversity both within the Shambhala Community and within the greater Boulder Community as a whole.
- b) Work to maintain the current youth activities within the Center, while simultaneously expanding our awareness and connection to educational and social institutions within Boulder County.
- c) Foster a better connection between the Boulder Shambhala Center and Naropa.
 - Specifically, utilize and invite teachers that are active in both communities to help foster a better sense of connection and communication.
 - Create greater possibilities for exchange and collaboration between Naropa and the Shambhala Center. Ex. Internships, artistic collaborations, etc.
- d) Expand our connections with local public education programs, specifically with CU and BVSD
 - a. Promote Young Sangha night at CU
 - Take Young Sangha Night to CU.
 - Utilize flyers, social media, meditation instruction and teachers.
 - Offer sanctuary and services of mindfulness practices to the youth of the greater Boulder Community (with regards to social, mental/emotional health and difficulties, etc.)

- c) Expand our connections with the Hispanic community
 - Specifically, offering mindfulness practices (Note: Nicki Daley would be excellent to communicate with in this area, as her husband and son have previously engaged in this activity within the Boulder community).

C. Implementation Timeline

As this is one of the more expansive recommendations, and might take longer to implement, we suggest adopting a 7-year plan for this recommendation, taking into consideration financial feasibility, community engagement, and overall enthusiasm and sustainability.

III. Goal 2: Extending Out/Supporting

A. Recommendation # 3

To develop our awareness and participation in current events, both locally and globally

B. Action Steps

- a) Global Warming
 - Support current activities and actions- Specifically, discuss with Emily Takahashi and Chris Lincoln.
- b) Use of Shambhala Center as a potential Gallery space
 - Promotion of Dharma Art.
- c) Homelessness
 - Look into current resources
 - Expand our services
 - Talk directly with homeless individuals, in how we can
 - Provide support and service to them, both physically and Emotionally.

C. Implementation Timeline

As this recommendation is very expansive and could develop in a number of varying ways, we suggest a 7-year plan as well, taking into consideration all elements mentioned for Recommendation #2.

IV. Goal 3: Shambhala in Boulder

A. Recommendation # 4

How does the Center see its role in supporting outreach, with regards to the following areas: marketing and media, Shambhala in the streets, and interfaith connection and inclusivity.

- Define Noel Smith and Brianna Socha's responsibilities.
- What are their roles, specifically with regards to outreach?
- Create a permanent position for Carla's current work.

B. Action Steps

Marketing and Media

- a) Better promotion of teachers
 - Invite teachers from various Shambhala Centers around the Country to come and speak.
 - Ex. Invite teachers involved in the current social outreach program in Chicago to come and share their experiences.
 - Place a Bulletin Board of current Shambhala activity and resources outside of the Boulder Shambhala Center.
 - Create a Teachers Blog on the Boulder Shambhala Center Website.
 - Increase sharing between the blog and social media:
 - 1) KGNU
 - 2) Broadcasts of Dharma Talks
 - 3) Daily Camera
 - 4) YouTube
 - 5) Facebook
 - 6) Podcasts Connecting to the Boulder City Website

C. Action Steps

Shambhala in the Streets

- a) Engagement in Festivals with the Boulder Community.
 - Booths

D. Action Steps

Interfaith Connection and Inclusivity

- a) Expansion of the Boulder Shambhala Center from a predominantly Buddhist Center to a Cultural Center, with greater interfaith connection and inclusivity.

V. Goal 4: Communication

A. Recommendation # 5:

To foster an environment of communication in a humble manner, always contemplating basic goodness, and mindfulness of language.

A. Recommendation # 6:

To create more skilled and empowered professional positions within the Boulder Shambhala Center, designed to support and ease communication among the staff, the Shambhala Sangha and the greater community at large.

B. Action Steps:

- a) Define Noel's staff position, so as to determine what is within his area of activity and to provide adequate support.
- b) Capture institutional wisdom.

c) Define curriculum of current and past practices and programs related to Outreach and Culture.

d) Help to implement the Deleg System

- Acknowledge the necessity of creating groups within the Boulder Sangha, which would spread out the responsibility of creating and maintaining outreach connections within the greater Boulder Shambhala Sangha, instead of keeping it concentrated to Boulder Center staff.

C. Implementation Timeline

Because this recommendation deals directly with the structure, we recommend that this is addressed within the first 3 years of implementation.

A. Recommendation #7:

Leadership and Training: Utilize the great teachers and leaders of Shambhala for training in all aspects of communication with the greater local and global communities. Develop a Path of Service that connects directly with Outreach and Culture.

B. Action Steps:

- a) Unify education around a Path of Service whose entire goal is Outreach and Culture.
 - Recognize the need to be faithful to the Dharma, and clear and tolerant in communication within a variety of communities.

C. Implementation Timeline

As this also relates definitely to the overall structure of cultural engagement, we suggest that this also occurs within the first 3 years of implementation.

VI. Final Goal and Aspiration:

A. Recommendation #8

An outreach oriented vision pertaining specifically to His Majesty, Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche.

B. Action Steps:

- a) Aspiration/longing to share more of the Sakyong and his teachings with the greater Boulder Community.
 - Possible Radio Talks
 - KGNU, etc.
 - Connect Interfaith Outreach aspirations directly with the Sakyong
 - Interfaith Dialogues with the Sakyong

C. Implementation Timeline

This is a general aspiration without a specific timeline!