



SAN FRANCISCO  
SHAMBHALA MEDITATION CENTER

## **Relocation: Top Ten Frequently Asked Questions**

### 1. Why do we need to move?

**Size:** Our current center provides room for only one event at a time. Hosting a Shambhala Training Level and Open House or nynthün, at the same time is not possible. It is also less than ideally arranged for Shambhala Training, where three or more separate private meditation instruction spaces are often required.

Our single shrine room has a capacity of about 60 people; many visiting teachers can draw 100 or more participants to a dharma talk or weekend retreat. A larger shrine room will enable us to host these teachers.

**Location:** Our center is located away from the major activity hubs of the city. Travelling to the center on public transportation is time-consuming, typically taking 1-1.5 hrs from many other neighborhoods. Moving the center to a more centrally located neighborhood, will allow members to more easily get to the center and increase the center's visibility in the city.

**Access:** Our current center is not handicapped accessible.

### 2. Can our membership support a larger space?

The relocation committee (board) has created detailed business plans for building sizes ranging from 5000 to 10,000 square feet. Each plan includes space dedicated for retail business including a yoga studio, bookstore, and a cafe as a way to open to the larger community and provide additional, stable income for the center. The center would not manage these businesses; instead it would lease them to groups that reflect the vision of Shambhala.

In addition, a risk assessment has been created for the relocation that identifies risks and the means to mitigate them. The total amount being raised includes an amount of reserve funds to help the center meet its obligations for the first five years in the new space as membership grows to match the size of the new center.

The business plan accommodates both possibilities of leasing space for retail businesses, and partnering with them and/or managing them. The goal is to provide a vital community center that is active over many hours of the week. We want those businesses to reflect core values of Shambhala in their operations.

### 3. Why are we trying to buy a building?

As long as we rent, our expenses are destined to rise at a rate equal to, or higher than, the cost of living index and/or prevailing rents. This means there is always the risk of being priced out of the market when lease renewal comes up. For example, the New York Shambhala Center currently faces this crisis. It will most likely be forced out of its space when its lease comes up for renewal next year.

Ownership of our center's building will increase the center's stability over the long term. Additionally, in recent years mortgage interest rates have declined significantly making ownership in a city as expensive as San Francisco more attractive now than in many years.

### 4. Are we doing any fundraising?

Yes! Fundraising began in the Spring of 2005. In addition to a bake sale held last December, a fundraising event was held with the Sakyong in January of 2006. More fundraising events are being planned including a meditation marathon. As of September 2006 we have raised \$190,000 (90,000 in donations and 100,000 in pledges) of our \$750,000 goal.

### 5. Can our current membership raise \$750,000?

In addition to individual donations the center is applying for grants from organizations. Non-profit fundraising professionals have advised that up to 80% of the goal is raised once a location is selected. For us that amount is \$560,000. The more we raise in advance of finding the building, the better chance we will have of getting the full amount in time.

We have also been exploring potential support from the City of San Francisco Redevelopment Authority. If we select a location within certain geographic zones in which they are trying to encourage redevelopment, we might be eligible for certain subsidies. There is a potential subsidy for a development that includes a low-or moderate-cost housing component.

6. Who is Newmark?

Newmark is a real estate developer with a real estate broker division. They have a separate division which exists to assist non-profits acquire real estate within the city. They have helped the California College of the Arts, the American Civil Liberties Union, the American Cancer Society and many others find new locations.

7. Isn't the Berkeley Center large enough for Bay Area Shambhala Events?

The Vidyadhara Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche and the Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche both requested that San Francisco be a large center and the seat of Shambhala in Northern California. This does not exclude other Bay Area centers but points to the fact that visitors to the Bay Area travel through San Francisco. It is the natural landing point for visitors from Asia, including teachers visting from Tibet.

8. If I donate money is it tax deductible?

Yes.

9. How can I help?

Contact the Director of Development ([development@sfshambhala.org](mailto:development@sfshambhala.org)) or the center's Executive Director, Seth Bregman ([seth@sfshambhala.org](mailto:seth@sfshambhala.org)). There are many ways you can help from small to large. Some examples include, telling non-sangha members about the relocation effort, writing a story for a local paper, and organizing a fundraiser--yes, bake sales help.

10. When will the relocation happen?

The center's plan targets Fall 2007 as a decision point to determine if the project to purchase a building is progressing satisfactorily enough to continue. If at that time a suitable building and necessary funds have not been found, moving to a new rental space would be an option on the table and some donated monies, under prior arrangement with their donors, may have to be returned.