

## Shambhala Training Form: “Way of Shambhala: Path of Ashe”

Prepared by Ian Powell for SGS Practice and Education

August 2020

**Document Purpose:** The purpose of this document is to present an alternative form for the online delivery of Way of Shambhala curriculum to those interested in its practice and study.

### Document Definitions:

- [Way of Shambhala](#): “An extensive path of training in authentic meditation practices and wisdom teachings for anyone interested in pursuing such training.”
- Course Series: A “component” within the Way of Shambhala. Such series include:
  - The Everyday Life series (MIEL through WIEL)
  - The Shambhala Training series (Levels I – V)
  - The Basic Goodness series (BG1 through BG3)
  - The Sacred Path series (Levels GES through GK)
- Course: a distinct unit of curriculum within a series, for example:
  - Everyday Life series, course 4: “Fearlessness in Everyday Life”
  - Shambhala Training series, course 3: “Level III: Warrior in the World”
  - Basic Goodness series, course 1: “Who Am I? The Basic Goodness of Being Human”
  - Sacred Path series, course 2: “Windhorse”
- “Tiger Path”: the general, historically-offered format for Way of Shambhala course content and transmission: in-person, community-or-land center based, authorized educator-led training.
- “Path of Ashe” form: the overall structure for course content delivery presented in this document.
- “Path of Ashe” program: a real-world implementation or application of the “Path of Ashe” form. One possible target-state of such a program is presented in this document.
  - Pilot and phased-implementation projects are not explored in this document.
- “Path of Ashe” solution: a cloud-based software application where program participants access program services
- SGS: Shambhala Global Services; the central administrative body of the Shambhala global mandala
- SDB: Shambhala Database; the central data repository for Shambhala members and participants, maintained by SGS
- [Shambhala Online](#): “Shambhala Online offers live events, interactive programs, online courses and an extensive media library of recordings from senior teachers in the Shambhala lineage. Our mission is to support Shambhala teaching and learning across the boundaries of time and geography through technology.”

**Form Overview:** The “Way of Shambhala: Path of Ashe” (or “Path of Ashe”) form would offer a self-directed, self-paced, student warrior-centric avenue for accessing Way of Shambhala curriculum via **low-cost, online delivery**.

- *Note: “Rigden: Unconditional Confidence” weekend retreat is not addressed by this form*

**Form Purpose:** The purpose of this form is to offer **self-directed delivery** of Way of Shambhala curriculum to participants who may have **time, money, location, or demographic** (e.g. class, race, gender, age, ability, etc.) **barriers to access** such teachings as they have been historically presented: primarily in a weekend format for a prescribed cost at a location-specific community center by one or more of a particular group of authorized directors.

## Form Application:

- To explore an application of the “Path of Ashe” form, a hypothetical program is presented here. General use cases follow.
- *Note: one possible implementation of the “Path of Ashe” form is as a module of Shambhala Online. If such a thing desirable for the stakeholders of Shambhala Online, blue-highlighted sections below may already be included in the Shambhala Online implementation, and thus could be overlooked while exploring this form application.*

A “Path of Ashe” participant would:

- **Sign up for access to “Way of Shambhala: Path of Ashe” through a third-party hosted, cloud-based solution.**
  - A “Path of Ashe” solution could be created and delivered by a professional development team in consultation with stakeholders, emphasizing Shambhala-values-informed simplicity and ease of use, and market alignment to, for example, an online education delivery platform such as [Khan Academy](#).
  - A “Path of Ashe” solution would have permissions-limited, secure read/write access to the Shambhala database in order to update and retrieve participant data via some kind of API.
- **Securely sign in to created account to access solution information such as individual profile, course offerings, course map, and other options such as requesting scheduled Shambhala Tutor sessions**
  - Solution should ensure location-appropriate data privacy, e.g. compliance to GDPR, etc.
- **Securely enter credit card / debit card / pay card / generosity coupon information to credit their personal account.**
  - ‘Generosity coupons’ could be coded coupons purchased and gifted individually or in bulk from SGS.
- **Pay a small amount for access to a “Path of Ashe” courses available to them**
  - Available offerings are based upon the current authorization path for Way of Shambhala offerings, e.g. a person has access to ST Level II only after completing ST Level I, and so on.
  - Authorization for “Path of Ashe” course access is based upon recorded, completed coursework on the “Path of Ashe”, “Tiger Path”, or other path forms for Way of Shambhala. (See “Lion Path” form document for details)
  - Amount is TBD but should be kept at or below the [World Bank-set International Poverty Line](#). (USD\$1.90 as of 2015)
- **Receive access to course content, including:**
  - **Course outline, content, and contemplations**
  - Video of course meditation instruction offered by any authorized, active “Shambhala Tutor” (see “Shambhala Tutor” form document for details), selectable by participant.
    - **Various language options and demographic representations** (e.g. class, race, gender, etc.) **should be available** for the participant to choose from.
  - Clearly-stated content, contemplation, and meditation time / knowledge requirements for completing course offering
    - Content example: “Over the next two weeks, familiarize yourself with the following ideas in order to proceed...”
    - Contemplation example: “Over the next two weeks, set aside 15 minutes a week to contemplate each of these three things in order to proceed...”
    - Meditation example: “Over the next two weeks, meditate in the way of this course for 15 minutes a day in order to proceed..”
- **Update status of course offering once course requirements are completed**

- Based upon minimum time requirements set forth (e.g. “two weeks”) and honor system with participant
- Upon participant recording fulfillment of course requirements, the participant would receive access to a tastefully-designed, downloadable, page-printable ‘certificate of completion’ bearing their name and a congratulations on their course completion.
- SDB participant record would be updated in SDB upon recording course status as completed.
- **As inspired, request paid, scheduled session with a “Shambhala Tutor” for additional questions, comments, or instruction related to course materials**
  - Access to “Shambhala Tutor” may be scheduled by a tutor’s stated and actual availability met with one of “Path of Ashe” participant’s requested time slots.
  - See “Shambhala Tutors” form document for details on that form.
  - Amount participant is required to pay “Shambhala Tutor” is TBD but should be kept low / tied to the [World Bank-set International Poverty Line](#). (USD\$1.90 as of 2015)
  - Balance between participant payment and Shambhala Tutor asking price would be paid by program underwriter (e.g. regular donors, SGS, etc)
- **As inspired, request paid, scheduled session with a Shambhala Tutor for ‘certificate of accomplishment’ interview at end of course series**
  - A ‘certificate of accomplishment’ (as distinct from a ‘certificate of completion’) would communicate that a Shambhala Tutor has verified a “Path of Ashe” participant’s understanding of series material to be no different than a “Tiger Path”, etc. participant.
  - Interview specifications TBD.
  - Upon Shambhala Tutor recording fulfillment of course evaluation, the participant would have access to a tastefully-designed, downloadable, page-printable ‘certificate of accomplishment’ bearing their name and a congratulations on their accomplishment.
  - *Note: conferring a ‘certificate of accomplishment’ may not necessarily require the “Path of Ashe” participant to have recorded a ‘certificate of completion’, e.g. for participants who may have trained with a subsequently-unresponsive Warrior Guide (see form for details) or participants who are on the “Dragon Path” (see “Lion Path” form document for details). Conferring a ‘certificate of accomplishment’ is up to an authorized Shambhala Tutor’s best judgment.*
  - SGS may set minimum criteria for Shambhala Tutors authorized to confer a ‘certificate of accomplishment’ to participants.
- **Continue taking courses and course series as desired**
  - “Path of Ashe” participants should be welcomed to continue via encouraging communications (e.g. solution notification, infrequent email reminder) of their completion or of their accomplishment.
  - Participants should be encouraged to personalize their learning by submitting a video of themselves talking about what they feel they learned from the coursework they completed or accomplished.

A “Path of Ashe”-available “Shambhala Tutor” (see form document for details) would:

- Post availability dates and times for “Path of Ashe” tutor time in their profile
- Set hourly price for their interview time in their profile, understanding that hourly maximums may be set by program underwriter
- Set pay target (e.g. “Tutor Livelihood” (ie. pay to tutor), “Burlington Shambhala Center”, etc.) for their hourly pay to go towards

- Understand via participant request what kind of interview is being requested--whether participant is requesting interview and clarification or whether the participant is requesting a “certificate of accomplishment” interview
- Re-familiarize themselves with course content previous to interview

A “Path of Ashe” administrator would:

- Work to ensure the operational success of the “Path of Ashe” program by providing quality customer service to the users of the solution.

A “Path of Ashe” program owner would:

- Procure professional services to build and maintain a solution to meet the needs of the “Path of Ashe” program delivery
- Hire or enlist “Path of Ashe” administrators to ensure the operational success of the program
- Work to ensure the strategic success of the “Path of Ashe” program

A “Path of Ashe” underwriter would:

- Commit to subsidizing operational and strategic costs of program
- Commit to subsidizing Shambhala Tutor time in order to keep costs low for participant while providing a reasonable rate of pay for Shambhala Tutor’s time
- Be in periodic contact with the “Path of Ashe” program owner, re: program strategic health, as a stakeholder would

A “Path of Ashe” stakeholder would:

- Be in periodic contact with the “Path of Ashe” program owner, re: program strategic health

### Questions and Comments:

- Does the “Path of Ashe” form need to be implemented in a new solution? Or could Shambhala Online be adapted to support it?
  - Shambhala Online could be adapted to support the “Path of Ashe” form if that is desirable for the stakeholders of Shambhala Online.
  - Basic Goodness and Everyday Life series are [already offered through Shambhala Online](#), at \$108 / course / participant, well above the rate recommended per course in this form.
- How do you see the transmission of texts such as found in the Sacred Path course series taking place in way comparable to the “Tiger Path” ?
  - Texts can be read via an authorized “Shambhala Tutor” session and subsequently mailed to participant at cost--possibly, mostly subsidized by an underwriter donation.
- How will a person on the “Path of Ashe” connect with a community in order to support them on their path?
  - A person on the “Path of Ashe” has a number of ways to connect with community:
    - Online, via communications client such as Zoom
    - Online, via social media site such as Shambhala Network / [Shambhala Online](#)
    - In person, by visiting the nearest Shambhala center
    - In person, by gathering like-minded folks to create a Shambhala study group (ie. an organization-registered group)
    - In person, by gathering like-minded folks to create a Shambhala Community Co-operative (ie. an organization-unregistered group, see SCC formative docs for details)