

An Olive Branch Report on the Shambhala Listening Post

This document contains a cover letter followed by
An Olive Branch's Report on the Shambhala Listening Post.

*To access other files and information related to An Olive Branch's work,
please visit: <http://communitycare.shambhala.org>*



March 19, 2019

Dear Shambhala Community:

In July of 2018, the Kalapa Council engaged the services of An Olive Branch, an independent third-party organization, to perform a variety of services in the wake of complaints raised about ethical misconduct on the part of Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche and other leaders and community members. Their assignment has now concluded.

Through our work with An Olive Branch, Shambhala intended to provide direct support to individuals who had been harmed within Shambhala and to begin the process of understanding and changing the structural and institutional processes that allowed misconduct and abuse to occur. The Interim Board wishes to acknowledge what has occurred, the impact it has had on individual lives, and express our deepest apology to those who have experienced harm in any Shambhala program or environment.

We are releasing all of the materials that An Olive Branch has delivered to the Interim Board. These include:

- The Listening Post Report, derived from the listening post service open from September 2018-December 2018 that was available to current or past members of the Shambhala community to receive support around various types of harm they experienced in the sangha. The report is a compilation of data, themes and quotations from these phone, video or written contacts with An Olive Branch. We received the final version on March 12, 2019.
- The Final Report which was written for the Interim Board, however, we would like to share it with the entire community as it contains An Olive Branch's recommendations for Shambhala. We received the final report on March 14, 2019.
- The Code of Ethics, a new set of suggested policies and grievance procedures for community care and conduct. We sent this to the Process Team Steering Committee when they were seated, and have asked the Steering Committee to work with us on soliciting feedback from the community on the view, scope and feasibility of this proposed policy.

Scope and Purpose of The Listening Post

An Olive Branch was contracted to provide support, not to investigate claims. In this way, their scope and purpose is very different from a legal investigation. Reporters were not “investigated;” witnesses were not contacted; stories were not interrogated for veracity; reporters were not deemed “credible” or not (as is done in a legal investigation), and names were not disclosed to the accused for the purpose of getting both sides of the story. In fact, we recognize that to do so would be to put those who have experienced harm through yet another difficult process. Many who called into the Listening Post had already told their story to someone in Shambhala and were not believed or taken seriously. Therefore, it was critical to this process that individuals be taken at their word and not assessed for credibility.

Decision Process to Share the Listening Post

We would like to share openly with the community our process around deciding to share the Listening Post report in full. We received letters from sangha members, imploring us that flooding the community with graphic narratives of sexual violence that has occurred over the last 40 years would only continue to traumatize the community. Some people pointed out that we could not confirm the veracity of reports, thereby requesting that we not publish what they saw as unverified reports. Others wrote us insisting that withholding the Listening Post report would be seen as a cover-up, or concealment by the Interim Board. The Interim Board was not unanimous in its decision to distribute the Listening Post report with verbatim interview transcripts included. The majority decided, however, that withholding or summarizing portions of the Report would be seen as concealing data that the community had a right to read—or not read—without editing.

Issues of Confidentiality

We have also struggled with the issue of confidentiality of the reporters of harm. Even though An Olive Branch did not include names or locations in their report, many stories may be easily identifiable. There are also second- and third-hand reports, giving us no way of knowing if those involved consented to their stories being told by others who were there.

After receiving the report, we requested that An Olive Branch contact each person whose story is told in the form of a direct quote to solicit their explicit consent for their stories to be included in a report that would be sent to the Shambhala community. An Olive Branch informed us that many reporters wanted their stories to be public; however, we worried that not everyone who called The Listening Post understood or consented to a public release of their stories in the form of direct quotes. While this process delayed the release of the report because it took time for An Olive Branch staff to get back in communication with everyone whose story was included in their report, we felt it would be irresponsible, if not unethical, to publicize direct quotes of those who did not explicitly consent to it.

A significant number of reporters, upon being contacted, did not consent to having their story made public. Some reporters asked to revise their quotes. And some consented to their quotes being shared as-is. On March 12, we received a revised Listening Post report from An Olive

Branch, this time only including direct quotes for people who consented to a public release of their stories.

As with the Wickwire Holm process, the Interim Board has not been given names of the reporters or the accused. When the accused was a current teacher or office holder, An Olive Branch encouraged reporters to contact the Care and Conduct Panel so that cases could be investigated. In some instances, reports were made to Care and Conduct, and they are under investigation. Some reporters expressed distrust that the current leadership would handle cases appropriately. A significant number of people indicated that they had already tried to report, formally or informally, within Shambhala and that they were ignored or did not receive a fair process. Because we do not have names, we again urge anyone who has experienced harm to contact both the proper authorities and careandconduct@shambhala.org so that these cases can be addressed.

We are hopeful that the Process Team will facilitate community dialogue around existing structures of reporting and care so that we may improve them.

Reflections on Viewing the Listening Post Report

We encourage each person to reflect on whether they would like to view the enclosed Listening Post report. Rather than taking a paternalistic stance, which might lead the community to believe we are covering up misconduct, we felt that each person could make their own decision as to whether viewing the reports at this time was in their best interest.

****Please know in advance that there are graphic narratives of sexual violence contained in the Listening Post report****

There are instances of child abuse included in the Listening Post report. An Olive Branch staff are considered mandated reporters and they have notified the appropriate authorities according to state legislation where the abuse occurred (see Appendix 5 within Listening Post report for more detail on mandated reporting). The Interim Board requests that all instances of child abuse, sexual assault, or any other illegal activity be reported appropriately to the police; Shambhala should not attempt to adjudicate crimes internally. However, it is also important for Care and Conduct to be included in such reporting so that appropriate steps may be taken internally.

An Olive Branch Recommendations

As consultants to Shambhala, An Olive Branch submitted a final report detailing their work and making a set of recommendations to the Interim Board. Although this report was intended for the board, we wish to share it with the community. In this report, there are a wide range of recommendations about changes Shambhala could make at the organizational level to create a safer community. We would like the community to review these recommendations as we believe they can help frame needful discussions. It will take time for the Interim Board to dialogue with the the sangha and Shambhala Process Teams to determine how to best relate to them.

Next Steps

At this time, there is a working group tasked with improving processes for vetting teachers and office holders in Shambhala. This group is comprised of Interim Board members, the Care and Conduct Panel, and representatives from Practice and Education. Alongside this vetting process, we are considering a variety of child protection policies and looking at additional safeguards for any person in Shambhala who will be around children. We recommend that the community continue to look at training for teachers, MIs, and leaders around power and harm.

The Shambhala community can no longer deny or ignore sexual violence, harassment, and other forms of structural violence. At this critical time, we ask the entire sangha to reflect on what needs to change, and what we wish to preserve. In this regard, we are eager for the Process Team to begin their work, and we intend to do whatever we can to support their efforts.

These reports are shining light on longstanding systems of harm and abuse within Shambhala. We have an opportunity to demonstrate how a community can see itself clearly, learn from its mistakes and act decisively to better itself. The Interim Board is committed to doing this work and we invite all members to join us on this journey.

Wishing gentleness and kindness to all,

The Interim Board

Veronika Bauer
Mark Blumenfeld
Martina Bouey
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An Olive Branch

A project of the
Zen Center of Pittsburgh



Report on the Shambhala Listening Post

March 12, 2019

Prepared by An Olive Branch

An Olive Branch strengthens organizations by helping leaders understand the role of conflict in organizational health.

We help spiritual communities proactively reduce the impact of destructive discord by providing training on ethics, policies, governance practices, and conflict resolution.

We also stand ready to help spiritual communities as they respond to the suffering, chaos, and breakdown that results from ethical misconduct. We provide processes for healing and restoring harmony.

An Olive Branch brings the calming influence of a neutral third party, inspired by the tradition of Buddhist teaching that stretches over 2500 years.

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Executive Summary

Background

Shambhala International is a large Tibetan Buddhism organization with 200 centers and groups in 50 countries. It is led by Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche (Ösel Mukpo) who is called the “Sakyong” or “king.” In February of 2018, a former member published what is known as the *Project Sunshine Phase One: Final Report* in which allegations were made of sexual misconduct by Shambhala’s leaders, including the Sakyong. Two additional Project Sunshine reports were published in the following seven months. The allegations led to Shambhala authorizing an independent investigation by a law firm in Nova Scotia and to engaging An Olive Branch, a neutral third-party organization, to provide services to help Shambhala address the controversy and restore the organization to health. These services included a “Listening Post.”

The Listening Post served current and former Shambhala International members who wanted to report sexual, physical, and/or emotional harm resulting from the actions of Shambhala teachers and office holders. The elements of the Listening Post included 1) listening to reports of harm in an affirming and non-judgmental way; 2) offering support and encouragement to reporters of harm; 3) helping reporters of harm decide what, if any, actions they would like to take and any requests they would like to make of Shambhala; 4) identifying options available to reporters of harm (such as filing a grievance or speaking to the independent investigator); and 5) serving, on request, as an advocate for reporters if they chose to take their complaint forward through an organizational grievance process.

Purpose of the Listening Post and the Listening Post Report

In authorizing the Listening Post, the Kalapa Council recognized that an essential component of restoring organizational health to Shambhala would be the organization’s stance regarding past allegations of sexual and other kinds of misconduct by its leaders and teachers. They understood that trust of Shambhala’s leadership had eroded within the sangha and many sangha members were concerned about whether they could bring complaints forward and receive a fair hearing in the midst of the current allegations. The Listening Post was intended to provide a safe avenue for people to be heard and supported while, at the same time, collecting their experiences to be reported anonymously to Shambhala’s governing board.

Methods for Gathering and Analyzing Reports of Harm

On July 19, 2018 a letter was sent to the Shambhala International community introducing An Olive Branch and explaining the forthcoming availability of a Listening Post. On September 4, 2018 a second letter announced the opening of the Listening Post and explained the purpose of and plans for how the Listening Post would be conducted. Any Shambhala member or former member who had experienced harm was invited to contact the Listening Post at listeningpost@an.olive.branch.org.

Individuals who contacted the Listening Post were offered their choice of: 1) submitting a written statement detailing the incident(s) of harm they had experienced; 2) participating in an on-line

interview; or 3) using both of these options. They were told that interviews would not be recorded and that everything they reported would be confidential (unless it met the standards for mandatory reporting in the jurisdiction where the harm occurred).

All instances of harm reported in the Listening Post Report were initiated voluntarily by persons previously or currently affiliated with Shambhala or surrogates speaking on behalf of Shambhala members or former members. Additionally, every effort was made to address reporters' potential hypersensitivity to re-traumatization during the interviews. The information collected was not the result of a broad, systematic, or stratified sampling approach to survey Shambhala members.

The procedures used for analyzing the incidents of harm were consistent with rigorous techniques for inductive analysis of interview data in qualitative research. Interview notes and submitted reports were coded to identify and catalogue the incidents of abuse and reporters' perceptions related to these experiences. Through a gradual process of comparison across the reports, the codes were refined and aggregated into generic themes. A theme becomes robust when it reflects the experiences of several reporters across multiple incidents of harm. Quotes were extracted from each report of harm and grouped under the relevant categories of harm and themes that emerged from the analysis.

The Listening Post did not attempt to verify reporters' stories by identifying corroborating witnesses nor were direct questions asked for the purpose of establishing the authenticity of the reports. Since the purpose of the Listening Post was both to provide support for those who had been harmed and to record their stories while avoiding retraumatization, all reports of harm were taken at face value. Although the work was not designed to certify the veracity of the reports of harm that were received, reasonable civil standards for truthfulness apply.

Overview of Findings

In total, 62 people contacted the Listening Post. Of these contacts, 55 produced information that is contained in this Listening Post Report. Twenty-eight submitted written reports of harm, 16 participated in an interview only, and 11 did both. The majority of the reporters of harm were long-time Shambhala members. About 40% had left the organization, but 60% remained in practice activities within Shambhala worldwide.

The body of the Listening Post Report is organized by two broad sets of themes. The first set presents seven types of harm that reporters described. Four of these were *a priori* categories and three emerged inductively from the analysis. These types of harm are listed below along with the number of reported incidents of each type (Note: Some people reported more than one incident, some incidents fell into more than one category of harm, and some incidents were reported by more than one person):

- *35 incidents of sexual misconduct by Shambhala teachers and staff with adults*
- *7 incidents of child abuse*
- *10 incidents of physical violence*

- *12 incidents of emotional abuse*
- *6 incidents of racial harm*
- *8 incidents of bullying or abuse of power*
- *6 incidents of rumors, ostracization or slander.*

The second set of themes is comprised of those that emerged inductively from the coding process. These themes identify a number of different issues that reporters of harm believed were important to raise in their accounts of the incidents of harm on which they reported:

- *Emotional Impacts of Harm on Reporters of Harm*
- *Culture of Freedom with Respect to Alcohol Abuse and Sexual Behavior*
- *Centers' Handling of Current Crisis*
- *Concerns about Speaking Up*
- *Need to Protect Teachers and Shambhala from Accusation*
- *Reasons for leaving Shambhala*
- *Leadership's Response to Reports of Harm*
- *Reporters' Recommendations for Shambhala Leadership*
 - *Need for training re: misogynistic behavior, sexual misconduct & power abuse*
 - *Change of leadership.*

In the body of the report, each theme is introduced by a short summary followed by extensive quotations from reporters of harm. Because the intent of the report is to enable Shambhala's leadership to understand both the extent and the character of the harm its members experienced, using the reporters' own words to recount their experiences provides a deep and nuanced understanding of the damage done to individuals by trusted leaders. Additionally, many reporters expressed serious concerns about the responses they received from Shambhala when bringing incidents of harm to the attention of the organization's leaders. They also offered many suggestions, especially the need for training of leaders and members about what constitutes sexual misconduct, how to develop effective systems for responding to it, and hopefully preventing it in the future. The reporters' comments should prove useful to the Interim Board in charting a course to improved organizational health going forward.

Introduction

On July 5, 2018, the Kalapa Council of Shambhala International signed a contract with An Olive Branch to assist the organization in dealing with the aftermath of allegations of sexual misconduct by organizational representatives, including the Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche. Such allegations had originally come to light by the publication of *Project Sunshine Phase One: Final Report* in February 2018.¹

An Olive Branch is a neutral third-party organization, independent from client organizations, which assists reporters of harm by: 1) listening to reports of harm in an affirming and non-judgmental way; 2) offering support and encouragement to reporters of harm; 3) helping reporters of harm decide what, if any, actions they would like to take and any requests they would like to make of their organizations; 4) identifying options available to reporters of harm (such as filing a grievance or speaking to the independent investigator)²; and 5) serving, on request, as an advocate for reporters if they chose to take their complaint forward through an organizational grievance process.

The scope of work outlined in An Olive Branch's contract with Shambhala included conducting a Listening Post for current and former Shambhala International members who wanted to report sexual, physical and/or emotional harm resulting from the actions of Shambhala teachers and office holders. The Listening Post offered an avenue for individuals who had been harmed to recount their experience to a neutral third party; to be heard in a safe, confidential manner; and to have confidence that their experiences would be conveyed appropriately (and anonymously) to the Kalapa Council.³

On July 19, 2018 a letter was sent to the Shambhala International community introducing An Olive Branch and explaining the forthcoming availability of a Listening Post. (See Appendix 1). On September 4, 2018 a second letter announcing the opening of the Listening Post was sent to the Shambhala community that explained the purpose of and plans for how the Listening Post would be conducted. (See Appendix 2). The Listening Post was staffed by Dr. Barbara Gray, an organizational sociologist, mediator, Lay Zen Teacher and one of An Olive Branch's co-founders. Any Shambhala member who had experienced harm was invited to contact the Listening Post at ListeningPost@an-olive-branch.org. Shortly thereafter, reporters began contacting the Listening Post.⁴

¹ Winn, A.M. *Project Sunshine Phase One: Final Report*, February 15, 2018.

² Shambhala International hired Wickwire Holm Law Firm in Halifax, Nova Scotia to conduct an independent investigation of charges of sexual misconduct by the Sakyong and other Shambhala leaders.

³ Midway through An Olive Branch's contract with Shambhala, the Kalapa Council was replaced by a new governing body, the Interim Board.

⁴ Note: Before this letter was circulated, a few reporters of harm had contacted An Olive Branch through the support link (support@an-olive-branch.org). In order to not discourage these early reporters, eight of them were interviewed before the Listening Post officially opened on September 3, 2018, and their reports of harm are included in the corpus of data summarized in this report. An Olive Branch also monitored this web address for additional reports of harm throughout the duration of the Listening Post.

The Listening Post Process

Receiving Reports of Harm

All instances of harm reported in this document were initiated voluntarily by persons previously or currently affiliated with Shambhala or surrogates speaking on behalf of Shambhala members or former members. Those who contacted the Listening Post did so either in response to the communications from An Olive Branch, described above, or because they heard about the Listening Post from others (e.g., former members) who had seen communications from Shambhala or from An Olive Branch.

When a reporter contacted the Shambhala Listening Post or someone made an inquiry about the process or how to report, they were given the name and some background information about the primary listener (Dr. Gray), along with a brief explanation about how the Listening Post would operate. Reporters were offered their choice of: 1) submitting a written statement detailing the incident(s) of harm they had experienced; 2) participating in an interview (conducted using Zoom technology, with or without video); or 3) using both of these options. They were told that interviews would not be recorded and that everything they did report would be confidential (unless it met the standards for mandatory reporting in the jurisdiction where the harm occurred).⁵

Knowing that experiencing and reporting sexual, physical, or emotional harm is typically traumatic for those harmed and given that the process of healing and its duration differ considerably among reporters of harm, An Olive Branch expected that reporters might have differing levels of comfort in recounting their experiences. Consequently, every effort was taken to address potential hypersensitivity to re-traumatization (Doob, 1992; Bicknell-Henges & Lynch, 2009; Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, 2014) and ensure that reporters always felt in control of the process. In several cases this involved rescheduling interviews, conducting multiple interviews, and following up in writing after interviews were conducted or written reports were submitted to ensure that specific details regarding the incidents of harm had been captured to the reporter's satisfaction.

Interviews were scheduled for one and one-half hours using Zoom technology with Dr. Gray always visible, and, in many cases, interviews ran longer than the scheduled time. The interviews were not recorded, but Dr. Gray took detailed notes as people spoke – capturing their exact phrases whenever possible. Reporters were told that their concerns would be summarized anonymously in a written report that would be given to Shambhala's governing board. (See footnote 3). Even if a reporter indicated confidentiality was not an issue for them, care has been taken to ensure that features of reporters' comments that might make them identifiable to others within or outside Shambhala were expunged from the quotes included in this report.

⁵ As mediators, An Olive Branch conforms to jurisdictional guidelines for mandatory reporting of child abuse. These guidelines vary among countries and among governmental units within countries (i.e., states, provinces). See Appendix 3 for additional information about mandatory reporting requirements applicable in three locations in which Shambhala has land centers, Nova Scotia, Colorado and Vermont.

The interviews were semi-structured but left considerable room for reporters to explain their experience in the manner they judged to be best. Interviewees were typically asked how long they had been involved in Shambhala and in what capacities, and then were asked to describe in their own words the harm they wished to report. Dr. Gray periodically offered statements summarizing what she had heard, asked questions to clarify or elaborate on the information provided, and generally tried to create an atmosphere in which the reporter felt comfortable describing the details of their experience. Dr. Gray exercised vigilance in checking with the reporters whether any parts of their accounts would make them vulnerable to identification within or outside of Shambhala. If this was deemed a concern, special efforts to remove identifying features of their story were undertaken as described further in the next section, “Procedures for Analyzing and Reporting Incidents of Harm”.

It is important to point out that the information collected was not the result of a broad, systematic or stratified sampling approach to survey Shambhala members. Only those people who voluntarily contacted the Listening Post were included in the data reported here. Consequently, it is not appropriate to draw inferences about the behavior of Shambhala as a whole from the incidents of harm described herein. Nonetheless, some patterns were found in the data that are detailed later in the “Findings/Themes Identified” section. How these patterns were identified during analysis of the incidents of harm is described next.

Procedures for Analyzing and Reporting Incidents of Harm

The procedures used for analyzing the incidents of harm were consistent with rigorous techniques for inductive analysis of interview data in qualitative research (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; Charmaz, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). In this process, the interview notes and self-authored texts submitted to the Listening Post were read and re-read for the purpose of identifying the key ideas (referred to as codes or themes) contained in each. Charmaz (2006: 43, 46) provides a useful and straightforward explanation of coding,

Coding means categorizing segments of data with a short name that simultaneously summarizes and accounts for each piece of data. Your codes show how you select, separate, and sort data to begin an analytic accounting of them...Through coding you define what is happening in the data and begin to grapple with what it means.

Consistent with establishing credibility in the analysis of qualitative data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), “*in vivo* codes” were used whenever possible. *In vivo* codes are expressions drawn from the reporters’ own words, that succinctly capture the essence of their experience and “crystallize and condense” their interpretation of it (Charmaz, 2006: 54, 55). The use of *in vivo* codes enhances the credibility of the analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) because it ensures that what is significant from the reporters’ perspective is captured in the analysis (Charmaz, 2006). As *in vivo* codes for one incident of harm are identified, they often serve to encapsulate other reporters’ experiences as well. This frequently occurs

within organizational or community settings because members develop a kind of short hand for sensemaking and communicating within their organization or community. In Shambhala's case, "the center of the mandala" could be considered an *in vivo* code.

The coding process was continued for all reports of harm. Through a gradual process of comparison across the reports (Charmaz, 2006), the codes were refined and aggregated into generic themes. This process, called triangulation, occurs when reporters offer similar descriptions or interpretations in their accounts of what they experienced. A theme becomes robust when it reflects the experiences of several reporters across multiple incidents of harm. The credibility of an analysis is enhanced when the emergent themes reflect triangulation among reporters' interpretations of their experience and when the incidents of harm are presented in the reporters' own words (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Interviews and statements were read more than once to ensure that all key points shared by a reporter were captured under the themes.

Quotes were then extracted from each report of harm and grouped under the relevant categories of harm and cross-cutting themes. Material that fit under each theme was organized and condensed, but every effort was made to preserve the reporters' words and intent in the quotes. As noted earlier, if the reporter was potentially identifiable because of details provided in their report, these details were omitted or other steps to disguise the incident were taken so that the reporter's identity would not be divulged. Although many quotes could be categorized under more than one theme, in the interest of brevity this was not done. Instead, a quote was included under the theme that best captured the overall spirit of the comment.

Additionally, to ensure that details of the incidents of harm that are presented in this report preserve the anonymity of the reporters, in cases where this was an expressed concern, excerpts of the reporters' accounts were sent back to them for verification and editing. This was also done for incidents in which the written material submitted by a reporter was incomplete or the listener's notes were unclear. Reporters were asked to confirm or amend the extracted quotes to ensure that they were authentic and anonymously captured the reporter's experience. This process, another tool for establishing the validity of qualitative analysis, is known as member checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). It enhances the likelihood that the interpretations presented in this report are credible and reliably capture the perspectives of reporters themselves. In addition, before the report was sent to the Shambhala community, each reporter was given an opportunity to affirm whether or not they wanted their specific quotes to be removed from this report. In those cases, the quotes were removed but the incident(s) of harm were still included in the summary tables. Eight reporters requested having their quotes removed while the emails of two were no longer operable so their quotes were also not included in this report.

Veracity of Reports and Burden of Proof

The Listening Post did not attempt to verify reporters' stories by identifying corroborating witnesses nor were direct questions asked for the purpose of establishing the authenticity of the reports. All analyses of qualitative data involve interpretation. While trying to be as faithful as possible in capturing the

reporters' interpretations of their experience, the scope of the Listening Post's work did not include certifying the veracity of the reports of harm that were received. However, since the purpose of the Listening Post was both to provide support for those who had been harmed and to record their stories, all reports of harm were taken at face value. To do otherwise would run the serious risk of retraumatizing anyone who had experienced abuse. Retraumatization can easily happen whenever listeners question the reporter's veracity.

Additionally, the analysis of the reports of harm was not undertaken to establish the culpability of those accused as in a court of law. Hence, the standard of proof referred to in judicial proceedings as "beyond a reasonable doubt" is not appropriate here. Nor is the language "the preponderance of evidence" since evidence from other sources than the accounts provided by the reporters was not collected. Consequently, the report relies on a lesser civil standard of authenticity that places the validity of the claims at greater than fifty percent. Note, however, that it is not easy for anyone to come forward in this situation and voluntarily submit themselves to questioning about their own sexual or emotional experience. Recounting one's personal sexual history can be embarrassing, at a minimum, and retraumatizing at the other extreme. Consequently, while untruthful reports are possible, they seem unlikely. More often than not, the number of accounts of sexual abuse is vastly underreported in organizations and in society. For example, RAINN, an organization that operates the national sexual assault hotline, estimates that only 1 out of 4 sexual assaults are ever reported to police.⁶ For this reason alone, it is likely that this report underrepresents the incidents of abuse that occurred within Shambhala since the 1980s. Overall, the reports documented herein are judged to be credible interpretations from the perspective of the reporter. In three incidents, however, those accused also contacted the Listening Post and provided different versions of what had occurred.

Advocate Role for Care and Conduct Grievances

After reporters finished presenting the details of their reports, Dr. Gray asked if they had gone or considering going through Shambhala's Care and Conduct procedure (if the incident occurred after 2002). Many reporters were not familiar with the procedure and were skeptical about the utility of using this process. Anyone who was interested was given instructions about whom to contact within Shambhala to begin filing a grievance with the International Care and Conduct Panel. In addition, per agreement with the Kalapa Council, An Olive Branch offered to make an advocate available if the reporter wanted support in going through the Care and Conduct process. In two cases, reporters requested this assistance, and An Olive Branch member, Ms. Katie Egart, began to work with them. Both of these cases were postponed by the reporters themselves when each (coincidentally) was relocating to another community in October. Neither reinitiated contact with Ms. Egart before An Olive Branch's contract with Shambhala concluded.

⁶ Rape Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN). The Criminal Justice System: Statistics. <https://www.rainn.org/statistics/criminal-justice-system> (Accessed 1-25-2019)

Summary of Incidents of Harm Reported to the Listening Post

Classifying Incidents of Harm

One way to classify the incidents of harm reported to the Listening Post is by the type of harm reported. Incidents were initially stratified according to three broad types of harm: sexual, physical, and emotional. Definitions of what is considered *sexual abuse*, *sexual assault*, or *sexual violence* differ by national, state or provincial governmental jurisdictions. (See Appendix 3 for details.) To illustrate, Vermont has eleven categories of crime that comprise its *sexual assault* statutes. In Colorado, *sexual assault* is broadly defined as “knowingly inflicting sexual intrusion or sexual penetration on a victim”⁷ and includes six categories of action. In comparison, Nova Scotia uses the term, *sexual violence*, which is defined as “an act or encouragement of an act that includes any violence, physical or psychological, carried out through sexual means or by targeting sexuality” and includes but is not limited to sexual assault, childhood sexual abuse, sexual harassment, degrading sexual imagery, cyber-harassment, and sexual exploitation.⁸

Defining Sexual Harm. In this report, *sexual harm* refers broadly to sexual acts and sexual contact as characterized in the U.S. Code § 920. Art. 120.⁹ This broad definition also includes behaviors of physical contact that often fall under the term *sexual harassment* (such as unwanted touching and kissing) as well as more specific actions typically understood as *sexual assault*¹⁰ because, in the eyes of the reporters, these actions were inappropriate and generally left them feeling violated in some way, and generated feelings of anger, fear, disgust, and many other emotions.

Also, it is important to point out that, in the type of analysis done for this report, codes that emerge are not necessarily mutually exclusive. For example, sexual and physical harm can occur in the same incident and either or both types of harm can result in considerable emotional harm as well. Consequently, incidents of harm were grouped according to the primary category identified by the reporter using their own language. In a few cases, emotional harm was also indicated in the table along with sexual or physical harm when the reporter expressly indicated emotional abuse. Failure to list emotional abuse along with other types of abuse in the tables that follow should not be construed to mean that these incidents did not also trigger emotional responses in those who experienced other types of harm.

Child Abuse and Additional Types of Harm. Incidents of harm that conformed to statutory definitions of child abuse were placed in a separate category from cases involving adults. This report does not offer one specific definition of child abuse because governmental jurisdictions differ in what constitutes this

⁷ <https://apps.rainn.org/policy/policy-crime-definitions.cfm?state=Colorado&group=3> (Accessed 1-25-2019)

⁸ <https://novascotia.ca/coms/svs/docs/primer.pdf> (Accessed 1-24-2019)

⁹ [http://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=\(title:10%20section:920%20edition:prelim\)](http://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=(title:10%20section:920%20edition:prelim)) (Accessed 1-25-2019)

¹⁰ This report does not claim to have made legal determinations about each case here. Dr. Gray is not a lawyer and did not probe for the level of detail needed to make such determinations. Obviously, if a reporter wants to pursue legal action, they would need to consult a lawyer to get a legal determination about which statutes were violated in the location where the incident occurred.

offense. Before classifying an incident as *child abuse*, it was necessary to compare the details of the incident with statutory descriptions of types of harm provided for the governmental jurisdiction in which the incident occurred. For example, differences with respect to the age of consent and whether the proximity in age of the parties is taken into account exist among Canadian provinces and among states within the U.S. (See Appendix 4). The incidents determined to be child abuse were also analyzed in more detail to ensure that An Olive Branch met mandatory reporting requirements for child abuse cases in that jurisdiction were met. (See Appendix 5).

Additionally, the coding process revealed that the four broad categories of harm (sexual, physical, emotional and child abuse) did not adequately differentiate among all the reported incidents. Three other categories of harm were generated inductively through the coding process to capture the remaining unclassified incidents: racial harm, bullying and abuse of power, and slanderous rumors.

Overview of the Number of Reports and Incidents of Harm

In total, 62 people contacted the Listening Post. Of these contacts, 55 produced information that is contained in this report.¹¹ These 55 comprise the “reporters of harm” whose experiences are summarized in this report. Twenty-eight of these submitted written reports of harm, 16 participated in an interview only, and 11 did both. Of the 55 total reports, 39 were self-reports and 16 were reported by bystanders. Bystanders include people who witnessed the incident or its aftermath or were directly told about it by the person who was harmed. It is also important to note that 15 of these reporters provided information about more than one *incident* of harm. An *incident* of harm refers to a discrete event or a relationship that continued on an ongoing basis for a finite duration of time. Information about a total of 67 incidents of harm is presented in the report. In four of these incidents, reports of harm were provided by two different people. Additionally, as noted above, in three incidents, the accused (who also contacted the Listening Post) provided different interpretations of the events than the reporter with respect to each party’s motivations and intentions.

The majority of the reporters of harm were long-time Shambhala members. About 40% have left the organization, while about 60% were still engaged in practice activities within Shambhala worldwide at the time they made their report of harm. They included Shambhala members from three continents.

Tables 1 and 2 provide information about each incident of harm. Table 1 captures self-reports of harm (i.e., provided by reporters who themselves were harmed). Table 2 captures bystander reports of harm (i.e., provided by others who witnessed or were told about harm to someone else). In order to ensure confidentiality of the reporters, each incident was given a separate four-digit incident number (e.g., 0012). Some reporters reported more than one incident, some incidents fell into more than one

¹¹ The remaining contacts can be accounted for as follows: Two fell outside the scope of the Listening Post, one was making an inquiry about the process for someone else, and two involved the same person contacting us via two different means (phone and email). In addition, seven potential reporters did not follow through after they received a response to their initial inquiry from the Listening Post.

category of harm, and some incidents were reported by more than one person. In Tables 1 and 2 the incidents were classified using the following categories:

- type of harm (sexual, child abuse, physical, emotional, racial, bullying and abuse of power, or slander)
- decade in which the harm occurred
- position of the accused within Shambhala
- whether the incident was reported to Shambhala.

If a reporter offered more than one incident, each incident was given a separate incident number in Tables 1 and 2. However, when the same incident was reported by two people, it carried the same incident number for both reporters. A total of 42 incidents involved sexual harm of some kind which ranged from consensual sex between teachers and students¹², to sexual harassment (unwelcomed sexual contact, e.g., kissing, stroking, etc.), to child abuse and rape. Of these incidents, 33 were reported by the victims themselves and nine were reported by bystanders. Ten incidents involved physical violence. Another twelve incidents were classified as emotional abuse¹³. An additional six involved racial discrimination, eight involved bullying, and six involved rumors, ostracization or slander (as defined by the reporters). Additionally, three reporters contacted the Listening Post to report their involvement or complicity in sexual abuse while five reported “harm” from being wrongly accused and had contacted the Listening Post to deny allegations of either sexual abuse or slander made in social media or were standing up in support of others who had been accused. Two contacted the Listening Post to explore their own responses to reporters of harm with whom they had had contact. Three others did not make reports of harm but sent written suggestions for improvements Shambhala should make to prevent harm in the future.

The reported incidents of harm spanned four decades and many pre-dated the enactment of Shambhala’s Care and Conduct Policy. Consequently, getting and reporting useful data about which incidents of harm were presented to Care and Conduct and the dispositions of those cases that were, proved difficult. Only a handful of reporters indicated with certainty that their case went to Care and Conduct and most were unclear about either the process, the outcome, or both.

¹² Starting on July 2, 2002, Shambhala’s Code of Conduct expressly prohibited teachers from engaging in sexual relationships with students. See *Shambhala Care and Conduct: Conducting ourselves and caring for each other*, which states on p. 7: “The instructor must refrain from any sexualizing gestures, inappropriate touching, verbal innuendo, invasive personal questioning, scheduling of dates, and intimate self-disclosures.”

¹³ Note that three of these were also classified as other kinds of abuse.

Table 1
Self-Reports of Harm

Incident #	Decade	Accused's Role	Sexual	Child Abuse	Physical	Emotional	Racial	Bullying/ Abuse of Power	Rumor/ Slander	Reported to Shambhala
0001	2000-9	Center Director	√		√					√
0006	2000-9	Center Director	√			√				√
0007	2010-9	Kasung	√			√				√
0029	2010-8	Youth Educ. Director	√			√				
0033	2000-9	Teacher/MI	√					√		√
0041	2000-9	Kasung	√					√		
0046	2010-8	Men in bathhouse	√						√	
0004	2000-9	Teacher	√						√	
0003	2000-9	Kasung	√							√
0013	2000-9	MI/Now Shastri	√							√
0014	2000-9	Older Practitioner	√							√
0015	1980-9	Participant/Now Acharya	√							
0018	2010-9	Center Director	√							√
0020	1980-9	Seminary faculty	√							years later
0021	1990-9/ 2000-9	Sakyong	√							
0022	1970-9	Chögyam Trungpa	√							
0024	1980-9	Employee @Land Center	√							
0025	2010-8	Shastri	√							√
0026	2010-8	Shastri/MI	√							√
0027	2010-8	Attendant of Sakyong	√							
0028	2000-9	Office Holder/Teacher	√							√
0030	2010-8	Attendant of Sakyong	√							
0031	1980	Senior Teacher	√							
0032	1990-9	Same Senior Teacher	√							√
0034	2000-9	High level officer	√							√
0035	2010-8	Prominent Teacher	√							

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Incident #	Decade	Accused's Role	Sexual	Child Abuse	Physical	Emotional	Racial	Bullying/ Abuse of Power	Rumor/ Slander	Reported to Shambhala
0036	2010-8	Participant	✓							
0039	2010-8	Self	✓							
0049	2000-9	Teacher	✓							✓
0009	1980-9	Program participant at Land Center		✓						✓ in 2000
0010	1980-9	Unknown		✓						
0011	1980-9	Unknown		✓						
0019	1980-9	Staff		✓						years later
0012	2010-8	Ctr. Director			✓	✓				✓
0002	2010-9	Honoree			✓				✓	✓
0040+	2000-9	Senior member of Kasung			✓				✓	✓
0005	2000-9	Kasung			✓					✓
0053	2010-8	Teacher			✓					✓
0054	2010-8	Teacher			✓					✓
0017	1990-9	Center Director				✓		✓		✓
0052	2010-8	Sangha, cohorts, MI				✓		✓		
0016	1990-9	Res. Director				✓				✓
0038	2010-8	Events of this year				✓				
0044	2000-9	MI				✓				
0047	2010-8	Teacher				✓				
0050	2000-9	Teacher				✓				
0023	2010-8	Diversity Warrior					✓			
0037	2010-8	Office Holder					✓			
0042	2010-8	Member					✓			✓
0043	2000-9	Center Directors					✓			
0045	2010-8	Participant					✓			✓
0048	2000-9	Office Holder						✓		
0051	2010-8	Sangha						✓		
0008	2000-9	Center Director							✓	✓

+ Two reporters described this incident

Table 2
Bystander Reports of Harm¹⁴

Incident #	Decade	Accused's Role	Sexual Harm	Child Abuse	Physical Violence	Emotional Harm	Racial Harm	Bullying / Abuse of Power	Reported to Shambhala
0061B	2010-18	Teacher	√					√	√
0055B	1990-99	Unknown	√						√
0067B ⁺	2000-09	Sakyong	√						√
0057B	1990-99	Sakyong	√						
0059B	2000-09	Sakyong	√						
0063B	2010-18	Staff	√						√
0056B	1990-99/ 2000-09	Shambhala Facility Office holder		√					
0058B	2000-09	Resident of Shambhala Facility		√					√
0065B	2000-09	Staff		√					√
0053B ⁺	2010-18	Teacher			√				√
0060B	2010-18	Teacher			√				√
0054B	?	Teacher			√				√
0062B	?	Unknown				√			
0066B	?	Teacher					√		√
0063B	?	Unknown						√	

⁺Two reporters provided information on the same incident

Table 3 shows the incidents of harm that were classified as child abuse along with some additional details about how they were handled. For example, the table records the incidents, where the incident occurred, and if it was reported to Shambhala, to police (including by An Olive Branch as a mandatory reporter), and to the International Care and Conduct Panel. If An Olive Branch did not report the incident, an explanation for why no report was made is also provided.

¹⁴ Note: There were no instances of racial harm or slander in the reports of harm from bystanders; hence, those columns are not included in Table 2.

Table 3
Incidents of Child Abuse

Incident #	Reported by self or bystander	Role of accused	Decade & location	Reported to Shambhala at the time of the incident	If reported later, recipient(s) of the report & when received	Mandatory report made to police by AOB & why or why not
0009	Self	Program participant	1980-89 Colorado	No	Sakyong in 2000	No*
0010	Self	Land center staff	1980-89 Colorado	No	n/a	No*
0011	Self	Land center staff	1980-89 Colorado	No	n/a	No*
0056B	Bystander	Office holder	1990-99 & 2000-09 Colorado	No	n/a	No* Bystander (who knows the victim) did report it to police
0019	Self	Victim was uncertain	1990-99 Colorado	No	Kalapa Council in 2018	No*
0058B	Bystander	Land center staff	2000-09 Colorado	Yes	Multiple Kasung at the time and later	Yes, but unnecessary*
0065B	Bystander	Land center staff	2000-09 Colorado	Yes	n/a	No*

* Per Colorado statute, mandatory reporting of child abuse is not required after the victim turns 18. Additionally, in Colorado, prior to 2006, the statute of limitations for prosecuting sex offenders was 10 years. A new law was passed in 2006 removing any statute of limitations. The new law took effect on July 1, 2006 and only applies to offenses that were committed on or after July 1, 1996. <https://www.colorado-sex-crimes-lawyer.com/colorado-statute-of-limitations-for-sex-offenses> (accessed September 15, 2018).

Themes Identified. In addition to classifying incidents of harm into categories by type of harm, the coding process revealed a number of other cross-cutting themes that were reflected in multiple reporters' experiences of the reported incidents. These cross-cutting themes were not identified prior to coding the data, but they emerged inductively during the analysis. The inductive analysis described above generated a total of eight themes. In keeping with the canons of qualitative research, whenever possible, the themes are captured in *in vivo* codes -- terms that were used by the reporters themselves (Charmaz, 2006: 55; Corbin & Strauss, 2008: 85).

The themes are organized into two broad sets. The first set provides qualitative accounts of each of the seven types of harm described above and reflected in the Tables 1 and 2. In this part of the report, the quotes provided include both self- and bystander reports of harm. Bystander reports of harm are marked with a "B" at the end of the incident number (e.g., 0101B). The quotes were drawn from the reporters' accounts of the incident but are frequently shortened in order to capture the essence of a

long description of events or impressions. As noted earlier, seven types of harm were identified and descriptions of incidents reflecting each type are provided.

Types of Harm Reported

- *Sexual Misconduct by Shambhala Teachers and Staff*
- *Child Abuse*
- *Physical Violence*
- *Emotional Abuse*
- *Racial Harm*
- *Abuse of Power*
- *Rumors/Slander.*

The second set of themes are the eight that emerged inductively from the coding process (emergent themes). These themes identify a number of different issues that reporters of harm believed were important to raise in their accounts of the incidents of harm on which they reported. Also, some reporters only provided comments and did not report a specific incident of harm. All quotes that support these eight themes are numbered separately from the incident numbers. Some themes address the reporters' responses to the incident; others capture the reporters' perceptions of Shambhala's responses to the incident. Still other themes address aspects of Shambhala's culture and practices and recommendations that reporters offered to Shambhala's leadership for preventing harm in the future. The emergent themes include:

Emergent Themes Raised by Reporters

- *Emotional Impacts of Harm on Reporters of Harm*
- *Culture of Freedom with Respect to Alcohol Abuse and Sexual Behavior*
- *Centers' Handling of Current Crisis*
- *Concerns about Speaking Up*
- *Efforts to Protect Teachers and Shambhala from Accusation*
- *Leadership's Response to Reports of Harm*
- *Reasons for Leaving Shambhala*
- *Reporters' Recommendations for Shambhala Leadership*
 - *Need for training re: misogynistic behavior, sexual misconduct, and power abuse*
 - *Change of leadership.*

Categories of Harm and Themes with Supporting Quotes

Reporters' Descriptions of the Harm Incurred

This part of the report provides descriptions of the harm reporters experienced either in their own words or in the words of the bystander who provided the report of harm. Exemplary quotes for each category of harm are presented. When possible, similar incidents of harm are grouped together for ease of comparison by the reader. Summative comments are provided throughout to guide the reader through the quotes. Please note that a few descriptions are graphic and may be disturbing, but they are presented in the way that the reporter told them to Dr. Gray.

Sexual Harm

Incidents of Sexual Misconduct by Shambhala Teachers and Staff. Several reporters described incidents of being unexpectedly kissed by senior male teachers. This behavior was reported by Shambhala members of both genders. Not only were the experiences unexpected, they were also unsolicited and unwelcomed.

0025: *I participated in a retreat led by (Shastri). At the very end of the retreat we had a festive dinner. I was assigned to serve the (Shastri). This meant that, when he kept asking for alcohol, I had to refill his glass, even though it became clear that he not was drinking in moderation. In addition to the teacher/student dynamics, he was a 70-something old man, and I was a 27 year-old woman. At the end of the dinner, we were socializing and saying good bye. The (Shastri) was making his rounds and when he approached me, and I prepared to thank him, he kissed me on the lips. This is not how he said goodbye to others. It was shocking and in the midst of everyone else, I felt I couldn't react or make a scene...I felt thoroughly disrespected and angry that his drunken stupidity could tarnish what was otherwise a very powerful week for me.*

0033: *I was in the shrine room. All my defenses were in check, but it was when I needed to protect myself. The (accused) had been upfront teaching. I was closer to where he was while others were farther away. He kissed me on the neck. I was stunned. The tornado inside me is still there.*

0034: *(Name of an office holder) and I had a private meeting about dharma at a non-residential dharma retreat. I felt honored. He was a well-known important guy. We sat across a desk and discussed specific dharma issues. We've never had a private connection. When the meeting was finished, he followed me to the door and kissed me on the lips (completely unexpectedly). I was shocked and went into a bit of a freeze.*

0035: *At a party with almost all Shambhala people, I had my first experience within Shambhala of telling the previous story within a small group of friends. I felt heard and sensed the welcome possibility of healing around it. Later, a prominent teacher in that small group leaned down and kissed me on the lips when he said goodbye. His wife was there. Again, I felt shocked. Even more so in the context of having told the other story of being inappropriately kissed.*

0036: *Following a program there was a graduation and a party at a Shambhala Center. A man with a superior attitude was talking to my husband, who was on my right. The man stood on my left. Suddenly I felt his hand moving up and down my back, feeling my back and bra strap through my thin cotton blouse...I was shocked, and in a quandary. I stepped away into the corner against the wall. I didn't say anything there as I didn't want to disrupt the special graduation celebratory atmosphere for others. I left the party quickly and noticed various trauma reactions: a bit of freeze, then shaking, and later anger.*

0041: *When I arrived, a few adults took aside everyone under the age of 21 and informed us that we were not allowed to drink at this program. Drinking was quite common at this program at the time. My understanding is that no adults were ever told not to provide us with alcohol. At the age of 17, I was very excited about being able to attend an adult program, and I wanted the full experience. I was frequently offered alcoholic beverages by adults who should have known better and was more than happy to drink them. In particular, one man who I believed must have been in his 50s would frequently provide me with very strong drinks to the point that I was quite tipsy or drunk. He also would kiss me on the cheek and call me "That pretty young kasung." It never went beyond that, though I was a bit uncomfortable, I thought nothing of it for many years. I realize now it was fairly predatory behavior, and no one ever told him so...I feel terrified even bringing it up ten years late.*

Other reports of harm also addressed sexual misconduct by Shambhala teachers or office holders including members of the Kasung. Although they technically occurred among "consenting adults" (e.g., neither participant was under 18), they do fall into the category of misconduct according to Shambhala's Care and Conduct policy of 2002 because they involve an officer holder, teacher, or Meditation Instructor. However, several reports occurred before the Care and Conduct policy was in place, and several reporters are reappraising their experience in light of the Care and Conduct policy and more contemporary notions of what constitutes an inappropriate relationship between teachers and students.

0003: *(After a particularly intense interaction with the Sakyong), a member of the Kasung said, "Let's go for a walk. He had given me the Kasung oath. He was a Vajrajana practitioner. I trusted him. On our walk, he taught me a Kasung song and Milarepa songs. At one point he suggested we lie on the ground, and he held my hand. At the end of our walk he asked, "Will you come to my room to get wrong?" I asked, "Aren't you married? He said, "Yes, but we have an open relationship." It was such a magical experience, and we ended up being together that night. He was 47, and I was 27. This led to enormous confusion later because they turned out to not be in an open relationship.*

0006: *I fell in love with a man older and more senior in Shambhala than me at (Center). He was a former (Center Director) and senior (Teacher). I would not have had a relationship with him looking back if it wasn't for his position in Shambhala. He pursued me over the top. He told me I was the woman of his life. I would go on weekends to see him. Then I moved in with him.*

0019: *The individual is (Name), who was part of the faculty at the (year) seminary. I was seventeen and turned eighteen that summer, and he was in his forties or fifties at the time. I guess legally it was OK for him to have a sexual relationship with me, because I was officially of the age of consent; however, I feel that the large age difference, as well as his position of power as a teacher makes this an inappropriate and abusive relationship. Again, everybody knew he was having a sexual*

relationship with me, but nobody did anything to stop it. He even bragged about it to his friends back home who reportedly wrote back to him that they were "jealous" because he was with a seventeen-year-old.

0060B: *The sexual problem that I knew of was (Name) who was hitting on one of his meditation students. (Name) has passed away so this is obviously no longer an issue. I was asked to uninvite (Name) from all trainings where he had contact with students. It was personally very difficult for me to do because (Name) was an important teacher, but I did it.*

0024: *I was recently arrived in Colorado, with the thought of becoming a Buddhist follower of Chögyam Trungpa...the year this incident happened to me. I was sitting a dathun at the (Center)... While I was sitting in the shrine room there, an awful memory (of a past relationship for which I felt guilty) came up, and I ran from the shrine room crying with fierce emotion, until I had run someway off from the center, close to some retreat cabins...After some time alone, I returned to the center, entering into conversation with a man who was in some capacity an employee of the center...He questioned me as to my capacity for becoming an engaged member of the community, insisting I was "rock 'n' roll", not meditation material. He then insisted that if I were a Buddhist, I would come to bed with him, that being the defining action which would decide my fate! I, being young and foolish, also slightly fast, and determined to study religions, jumped into bed with him. He suggested by doing this you are making a total commitment to Buddhism; you are one of us now...I woke up feeling quite scared and angry, that I had been forced into such a trial, fearing the outcome would be my getting chased away from the center. I want it known that the guilt I bore from that incident led me away from the teachings and the practice of Buddhism. And in the long run, (it) sent me on a long downward spiral which ultimately ended in tragedy...It was like a freight train on its own track going to derail. More recently...when I started reading the email from the (another Center), my mind flashed back to that shame I felt when I was at my most vulnerable, and I thought that I would mention this as a way of gaining closure. I can't tell you how scared I felt by that single incident, for it was never resolved. Perhaps now, I may be able to get over the past, and not believe sexual abuses are the hidden price to be paid for becoming a part of the religious experience, whether it be of the Christian or Buddhist faith...I would like to be able to forget it all. I don't want to return to Shambhala.*

Unwanted Advances. Others reported instances of unwanted sexual predatory behavior by Shambhala teachers and staff.

0013: *(Name) and I would talk about the dharma and during some of those talks he would get an erection. The other staff present would laugh and call them (Name's) "dharma boners".*

0014: *I moved to (retreat center) in the fall of 2004 when (Name 1) was director...I was hired as a Practice and Study assistant. An "old-dog" practitioner (Name 2) there for a long in-house retreat...began to sexually harass me. One time I was minding the commissary and he stopped in to ask me "how much for a fuck"; another time he came up behind me at a celebratory dinner and stuck his hand down the back of my pants to touch my ass (under the clothes). It was really shocking, and I left immediately because I didn't know what to do...After that happened, I alerted (Name 1) about this behavior. I have no idea if he did anything, but I definitely remember thinking he didn't "get" it. After this an older sangha woman approached me in the dining room and said she had heard that I had accused (Name 2) of sexual harassment and then retracted it and she was angry with me, saying*

"that's really bad, that could ruin someone's life!" But, I never had retracted it! She had (only) heard that I had. A few months later - in the spring of 2005 - I heard that (Name 2) was going to be promoted...and I reminded the director that (Name 2) had harassed me and was a creeper. I protested his hiring vocally. Maybe two weeks later I was called into a meeting with the director and two other people, and I was told I was "not a good fit for the center" and given a few days to leave. (I was fired). I was completely shocked and asked, "What was the cause?" and was told "there had been complaints against me" and (was) not even given two weeks to find a place to be.

0026: *I moved to from (Place1) to (Place2). The move was stressful and traumatizing, and I was depressed. The local Shastri reached out because they had been through similar relocation issues. We started talking often. They became my MI by mutual consent...I went away to a retreat they were heading and stayed at their home. (Shastri) was very affectionate and also confided in me about a wide range of intimate personal issues and some conflicts with another teacher...we got into a very emotional and sexualized relationship. My alarm bells were going off, but I was very depressed and dependent. The local sangha was also in crisis ... there was a lot of drama. (Shastri) grabbed on to me as someone who knew the teachings, but all they needed was support from me... There was constant texting and flirting, also sometimes couch cuddles and massage; we were doing this alone in (their home). They should have set boundaries or stopped being my MI but instead would tease and say things like, "You don't want to be the one who burned the Shastri's breakfast" when I was cooking for them. It went on for 6-9 months. Somewhere in there they were suspended from teaching for other reasons and no longer a shastri. Then suddenly I lost (very close relative). My work was hell. I was also very ill. At that point, I was clear that if they asked me for sex, I would not be able to resist, but I really wanted them to stop messing with me. We had a big conversation that they started by saying "there's nothing that can arise between us that isn't workable." I said "I need you to stop flirting with me; it's making me miserable." I wanted to stay close but stop being sexual. But I believe they heard something like "You're a terrible person for not sleeping with me." I really don't know. It seemed totally OK for a few days. Then they totally and suddenly cut off communication—nothing. It was several months, and then we started talking again but it was awkward and I had very mixed feelings... then they moved to (new location). I think they have since left Shambhala altogether.*

0039: *The second thing I want to mention is a sexual assault that I was involved in. I have decided to go into specific and graphic detail because I feel it is important that this story is told clearly. In the months before (event), we would typically have staff-only work weekends in order to get things done and get the facilities into the condition they needed to be in before event. We often got a lot of work done and would typically have a few drinks around the camp fire in order to celebrate our accomplishments. We had one of these work weekends in (date) and...accomplished quite a lot and began our typical celebration the night before leaving. I was technically in command at this work weekend, so I take full responsibility for what happened. For some reason we all got substantially drunker than was typical...the level of drunkenness was unusual to say the least. My memories are hazy at best, but I do know the basic outline of what happened...When I woke up the next morning, I realized immediately that I had fucked up. The woman in question was 19 years old (I realized she was under the legal drinking age that morning), and was extremely drunk, too drunk to consent. I asked her whether she felt like what had happened was "abusive" and she said "sort of" which made me feel terrible. I apologized to her, but I think she felt like it was hollow, which it may have been at that point. When I got home, I received an email from someone who had been there encouraging me to get in touch with some of the other leadership about what had happened, so I did. Within a few days, I had resigned from any leadership role having anything to do with (event) or Kasung. I had*

little communication with either of those organizations after this, other than some mention that a "high level committee" had been appointed to investigate and handle this situation, and that they weren't sure whether a legal process would happen. I was told to get in touch with (Name), which I did, and he sort of acted as liaison between myself and this committee. In the years since, no police have ever gotten in touch with me, though I expected them to, and at that point would have welcomed it, just for some sense of closure. I guess the young woman didn't want to go through the legal process. My understanding is that she felt like Shambhala was handling it well enough. That however, is not how I feel. I don't really feel like any restorative process arose from this at all. I am filled with regret that nothing really ever happened to process this situation or to create some sort of restorative justice. If that young woman ever asked what has happened since, I wouldn't have a good answer, except that I fully understand that I sexually assaulted her, and I am so so sorry, and willing to do anything she feels would make this right. In the meantime, since she has made no attempt to contact me, I assume she would prefer to not hear from me, but I really have no way of knowing. If she needs me to stay away from her and from (event) forever, then that's what I'll do. I feel like I am operating in ignorance at this point, though. I have not mentioned the young woman or man's name since I feel it is up to her and/or him to come forward if they feel that is appropriate. I hope they do so, but it is not my place to say.

0046: *I am writing to complain of a subculture of sexual harassment that exists within the sangha that, while somewhat diminished in the last few years, has been pervasive and has contributed significantly to a culture of abuse as well as to exaggerations, confusion and cover ups of such abuse. I am referring to widespread rumor mongering, innuendo and insinuation, double entendre, gestures and pantomimes all of a sexual nature, some of it quite subtle and some of it quite obvious and nearly but not quite overt. The veiled language of innuendo and insinuation is of an accusatory nature or of a solicitous nature, refers to real or imagined past histories of individuals, and some of it is proffered as "testing" to see if someone is prone to or looking for frank sexual engagement of one sort or another, but all of it contributes to a bizarrely sexualized atmosphere and culture...The perpetrators generally pretend to some sort of wisdom and insight into the proclivities of others that supersedes any need for factual information. There is also a pretense that there is an unspoken or secret (as in tantric secret) that both sanctions and encourages these behaviors...Much of it involves closeted male homosexuality and results in tawdry behaviors and solicitousness in the bath houses...The gestures are most often a curled hand near the mouth to indicate an act of felatio as either an accusation or a solicitation. One unfortunately quite common behavior is the prominent display of the backside to "shame" an individual or to pretend that the victim somehow needs, wants or deserves such peculiar attention. However, the behavior is primarily meant to humiliate and disrespect the victim and to demonstrate dominance by the perpetrator...The pantomimes are primarily of one sort, a sexualized gesticulation of the hips toward the backside or mouth (sometimes even the ear) of the victim to indicate a homosexual act...The perpetrators generally recruit others to act in a similar manner toward the victims...I have been a victim of all of the above for most of my years in the sangha, have never successfully managed to figure out what motivates them or how to stop them; hence my complaint.*

Reports of Sexual Assaults by the Head of the Lineage. Although the 2002 Code of Conduct does not specifically mention the lineage head in its prohibitions about sexual relationships among teachers and students, and because the broad inquiry going on within Shambhala (as well as the Wickwire Holm Investigative Report) does address the Sakyong's behavior, Tables 1 and 2 list four reports about the

Sakyong's sexual behavior. However, two reporters asked us to withhold their descriptions of these events. One report about the behavior of the Sakyong's father, Chögyam Trungpa, is also included here.

0021: *After Trungpa Rinpoche died, I was a kusung for the Sakyong. Driving to my 7 a.m. shift I saw discarded clothing on the highway, including new khaki pants. No one was at his residence and I had to drive to find him off "the land". The Sakyong was very hung over and was to perform an abisheka for at least 100 people that day. He was very hung over. I tried tea, massage and sauna. He got up to go to the bathroom. He told me to stay. When he came out, he said, "Take your clothes off." Once in bed, I turned on my side and immediately fell asleep. He shook me to wake me up. We had sex. I gave him tea. It was more or less consensual, but I wasn't into it. It probably harmed me and my marriage. I did think of myself as special. Later, the shifts I had were at night, and some type of sex was expected. This was over about a year period. I was very conflicted with this scenario and told my then husband about one instance at a community party at the Sakyong residence.*

0057B: *A 20-year veteran of the Dorje Kasung reported that, after reading the reports of harm, he felt sickened and embarrassed about escorting a woman to meet the Sakyong at a Kusung's request. He reported feeling like the Dorje Kasung failed in its duty to protect the sangha and the teacher and have been complicit in the Sakyong's abuse of women and alcohol.*

0022: *I am a 65-year old woman who was sexually assaulted many times by Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche when he first settled in Boulder in the early 70s. I was the same age as, and friends with, his wife, Diana Mukpo. Having her husband sexually assault me over the course of two years when I was in my late teens, eroded my sense of self, trust in friendships and the very understanding of the core of Buddhism— to do no harm.*

Rape and Sexual Assault. Three reports of harm make allegations about rape or sexual assault by Shambhala teachers, staff or members. Some of these reporters requested that descriptive details of their experiences be omitted from this report, but the incidents are recorded in the summary statistics in Table 1.

0007: *I became friends with a Shambhalian. I wanted to remain friends...One night he had locked himself out of his home...about a 3-hours journey away. I lived in a large house with many rooms assigned to different roommates which had a shared kitchen and bathroom, but there was no living or common room, no way to sleep on the couch...The only option for where (Name) could sleep was my bed as it was late at night and time for bed. I made the stipulation he could only share my bed if he kept his hands to himself. I made it very clear I was not interested in sex or any type of romantic involvement with him...I also trusted him because of his role. He tried several times to put his arms around me...I kept pushing him away and saying "No". I'd fall asleep and suddenly get jolted out of sleep when he was attempting to fondle me. This happened repeatedly...It must have been about 2 or 3 AM when I woke up with him having sex with me. We had sex in the middle of the night. He raped me, but I couldn't admit that's what happened at that time. Only looking back a few years later do I see this was the definition of rape.*

0049: *I was one of at least six second-generation women who had done nude modeling for the (accused) who was a sangha member and MI and psychiatrist in (City)...Three of us realized that the (accused) had acted inappropriately with all of us...I was the last of these three, and with me he removed his clothes and masturbated in front of me (without my permission), after asking me to*

masturbate while he photographed me. The three of us filed a complaint and initiated a Care and Conduct process. A meeting was held that ended with the decision that a letter from (office holder) would be sent to the (accused) asking him to refrain from taking photos of young women and to remove the photos he had taken from his website. He may also have been requested to become inactive as an MI (though it was only a request, not a revoking). Because I worked for (office holder), it became my responsibility to type up this letter, which felt completely bizarre. I hope that we understand trauma enough today to not have to explain why that is a bad idea. Ten years later, allegations of making child pornography were brought by a professional organization against the (accused) in a case involving a young second-generation teenager. I filed my complaint with them to support her case...but I learned that Shambhala had no written record or duplicate copy of the letter sent by (office holder) to the (accused). At this time, I also learned that both this teenager and another second-generation young woman were photographed soon after he received the letter from (office holder) asking that he stop--to which I'd heard he'd agreed.

Pornography. Finally, two incidents involved Shambhala teachers reportedly using and sharing pornography with students.

0018: *In 2013, I re-located from one Centre to another. I was contributing a lot to shore things up there. People loved him (the local teacher), and he became my MI. One time I drove him home after a Centre event. He asked me how things were going in my spousal relationship. I thought it was an odd question for an MI. At events, he'd make sexually explicit jokes. The jokes made me feel uncomfortable. One day I got a private message from him that said, "Of everyone in the Centre, I feel like you won't be offended by this." The message contained a pornographic poem. When I read it, I thought, "I have finally found a spiritual home, and now I have to leave." I told two friends: one justified it, the other saw it for what it was. I tried to intellectualize it because I didn't want to lose my community. He denied any wrongdoing. After I rejected his "poem," he began to ignore and undermine me. I slowly dropped out of the Centre. I wonder if he can learn. I want him to take responsibility, admit his wrongs, and stop teaching/leading.*

0063B: *First of all, I have to say, I have not directly experienced harm. However, I have heard from a few friends of mine that around five years back, they tried to report one of the staff members as having child porn on his USB stick.*

Child Abuse

Of the seven incidents of child abuse shared with the Listening Post, four were reported by those harmed and three by bystanders who were close to the abused individuals such as friends or family members. In one case, there appears to have been an effort to groom the child from a young age and the abuse continued for several years.

009, 0010, 0011: *In 1980 I went to live with my mom. We went to (Center). We lived in a little cabin. I was 12-13. I woke up in the night with a guy sucking me off. He pursued me, and I let him do it again. He was attending a program there. We moved to (City). He moved to (same city) and gave me gifts and it continued for three months. In the summer of 1982, when I was 14, I was also abused by a staff member. (Name) knew about it, but I didn't mention it until I was 19...I spent years in therapy. I spent years not being able to go to sleep until a Shaman got rid of it in an Ayahuaska ceremony. I've*

spent my life trying to figure out how to love myself. It's a journey to see what that is about. There are still parts of me that are locked in.

0056B: [Note: The reporter's account was relayed by a friend because the reporter (Name 1) was too traumatized to come forward.] *The perpetrator (Name 2) was a family friend. The abuse started at 13 and occurred again at 16. Most of the abuse happened at the perpetrator's home. The perpetrator (Name 2) acted as the (Name 1's) MI. He was a mentor and father figure...he was also arrogant and cocky and powerful and knew nothing could touch him.*

0019: *I want to draw attention in particular to two individuals whose actions I find particularly egregious. I will name them because I want others to be protected from them. The first one is (Name), who groomed me and molested me when I was fifteen years old. This occurred at (Center) during the (assembly program). He convinced me to spend the night with him in his tent and molested me while his eleven-year-old son was in the same bed next to us. He tried to have intercourse with me but stopped because I started screaming. Everybody knew what was going on, but no one did anything, he wasn't even asked to leave the (Center)...(Later) I had therapy with a therapist who was a Shambhalian. It was a dual relationship. I realize that now. She knew about (Name). So many people knew. She had witnessed it. It shows how warped the culture was then. It was normalized in the culture...I know of other women who were taken advantage of as teenagers.*

Physical Harm

Although fewer incidents of physical harm were reported than incidents of sexual harm, they are no less egregious and concerning. For two incidents in this category, there were duplicate reports of harm that overlap considerably.

0002: *Seven years ago, (Name) got me in a headlock and threw me down some icy stairs after cursing at me with an angry, shaking whisper in my ear. I had fallen asleep at his house, and he began to feel claustrophobic and wanted me out. He woke me up twice, telling me to leave, and I said that it made no sense, that it was 1am and there was an ice storm outside. I was his girlfriend at the time. The second time, I got up and said something like, "You're such an asshole," and left his house, slamming the door. He ran outside and proceeded to do what I described.*

0012: [Note: this report is paraphrased.] *A Shambhala leader for whom (name) worked showed a lack of respect for (name) and (name's) work. There were physical threats with one encounter. (Name) left before the work contract ended.*

0053B: *Name 1) physically pushed (Name 2) in his home and threw his personal belongings down the stairs.*

0053B: *I am writing to describe incidents at my home and at the (City) center involving (Name of accused). The (accused) was an inactive teacher that had been staying at the apartment where I live on a temporary basis. On (date) he damaged my property and threatened to harm me violently as he screamed and put his body in contact with mine. I had spoken with him the night before saying I had to get something from the room he was staying in, and I was going to do it in the morning. He said he would be back by 9 a.m. A few minutes after 9 a.m. I knocked on the door and asked if I could retrieve the boxes. He said he was sleeping, but since I had seen him awake a few minutes before, I*

thought he was joking. I opened the door and told him I would just be a few minutes. He was clearly awake, and said, "No, don't take the boxes." I moved towards the boxes and (Name) said, "I paid for the room." I was taken aback and unsure what was going on. I said to him, "I just need to get these boxes." He jumped up screaming and saying, "You always do whatever you want, that's why no one wants to be around you." He picked up a box and threw it, damaging the contents inside, and proceeded to pick up another. I said, "Please calm down." He then put his body directly in contact with mine and said, "I will throw you down the stairs next." I left the room...Two days later, before a talk at (City) center, I was standing in line for the men's room. The (accused) walked up to me, came very close, and aggressively said, "Hey. How are you?" in a fake sing song voice. He was definitely taunting me at this point. Leadership told me directly that the (accused) had been violent to others, and they allowed him to continue teaching. In conclusion nothing was done to protect him from himself or the community at large by clarifying his teaching status.

0060B: There was an incident at (center) where (Name 1) cornered (Name 2) in a room for a long time and apparently had a knife. (Administrator?) threw him out, but there was, again, a chronic lack of willingness to report this to International. Apparently, it was a "choose your battles" decision on the part of (center) leadership. (Name 1) is really a problem! He has a very serious, untreated mental health issue!

0040: This happened in (date), I believe, at (Center). It was skit night and the oldest kids traditionally did their skit last, which involved making fun of the staff. Some of the staff found the content objectionable and sounded an airhorn that indicated the skit was over. The camp was in a rebellious mood because the weather had made us all a bit miserable, so we all screamed at the staff and said, "Let them keep going." The next thing I knew, one of the staff members (Name) was up on the stage holding a bench. He threw it down and yelled something like, "Get off the stage now." All the kids in the camp were horrified, and I remember a few of the younger ones (as young as 10) even crying. The staff went on to do their own skit which involved putting spaghetti on someone's head, I believe.

0040: [Note: This is second account of incident 0040 by a different reporter.] I attended (event) which always has a skit night in which the participants traditionally make fun of the staff. It went really long. The staff told us to get off the stage. We didn't...We were being belligerent 16 year-olds—pushing the boundaries. A senior staff member ran in front of the stage—looking crazy. One person was sitting on the edge of the stage. The staff member hurled a bench at those of us on the stage that just missed the girl on the edge of the stage. He said, "Get the fuck off." We were all stunned...All the staff were in the back but didn't intervene. The (event) completely changed then. I was heart-broken and sad...The next day all the 16 year-olds were processing, and we were blaming ourselves. Some staff sat with us and carried our grievances. They said, "You shouldn't even treat an adult that way." The senior staff told us, "I was trying to wake you up, and you needed a clear message." My parents wrote letters; other parents were enraged. Senior staff of (the event) tried somewhat to help reconcile what had occurred, but they continued to defend (the accused) who did step down for a little while...I wouldn't want the (event) shut down but would want the (accused) to step down. Something was taken from me...I think he should be stripped of his title.

Emotional Harm

These reports capture incidents in which the reporter emphasized the emotional aspects of their interactions with the accused party. There may also have been other types of harm associated with

these interactions such as slanderous rumors or consensual sex between a teacher and student. They are reported here under emotional harm because that is what the reporters' emphasized.

0006: *In 2008 to 2009, I moved to (center). There I started a relationship with a man older and more senior in Shambhala than me. He was a former (Center Director and Teacher)...I would not have had a relationship with him looking back if it wasn't for his position in Shambhala. In the end it was the most emotionally abusive relationship of my life. At the end of our relationship he would make sex feel like rape, so I did feel physically and sexually assaulted by him in the end. And I actually haven't had any long-lasting relationship since then. When I think about why, it's because I trusted him so completely, and at the end he completely broke my trust. I suppose I have a hard time now trusting any man.*

0050: *I met the (accused) at the (City) center where I went for Level 1 training. He encouraged me to continue with Shambhala training, which I was not really interested in. I only went to Level 2 because he said he'd like me to go, and he would come to (City) to do it with me. We hung out during the weekend. I was thinking of going back to school to gain the credentials to work as a therapist or social worker. It was in this context that the (accused) told me about Naropa University...and described it in glowing colors. He soon offered to pay for my studies and revealed that he had done the same for two other young women before me...My immediate reaction was that I felt it was inappropriate for someone to offer this much money to someone they barely knew. I also had a sense that his interest was not just friendly but had a somewhat hidden erotic component...I told him clearly, I didn't think it was a good idea for me to accept his offer...He pretty much ignored my "No" and kept talking about this issue. Finally, I agreed to go and visit Naropa University with him...He paid the flight ticket and the hotel, and I paid for the rental car. As planned, I visited the campus...and explored my options. I liked what I saw...I agreed to accept his offer and then...he pulled it away. He called me names and abandoned me in Boulder Colorado...This turn of events was completely unexpected. It was crazy-making and extremely painful.*

Racial Harm

Even though the Listening Post was not advertised as a forum for dealing with racial issues, a few reporters did raise these concerns in their interviews or written statements. It seemed worthwhile to include them here as they offer insight into how members of different races may experience programs and interactions that occur within Shambhala's centers.

0042: *I made a comment in a committee meeting that was probably inappropriate and was interpreted as reverse racism.*

0037: *It has been brought to my attention that I used harmful speech. I've had three meetings with my local (Office Holder) but I don't understand what is the problem...I was told there were complaints about my harmful speech and actions and asked if I was sorry for them. I am of South Asian descent, and the (Office Holder) was not aware of his/her own racist implications by doctoring a photo s/he took of me at a program by adding a racially insensitive caption which affected my interactions with (Office Holder). Eventually, other leaders and my MI tried to get to the bottom of it. Finally, I was given one example. I am not OK with this process. I don't feel safe and haven't gone to any center since.*

0043: *An indigenous Canadian, First Nation's person, was taking Level 1 training. She offered a traditional teaching story which was in synch with the conversation we were having. She took 10-15 minutes after the facilitator had said it was OK. I heard some directors commiserate that she had thrown the session off base and was full of ego. This was Buddhist one-upmanship.*

0023: *I feel I have been harmed by the anti-white rhetoric promoted by the Sakyong and his "Diversity Warriors." The Sakyong has created a Diversity Warrior element in Shambhala in his apparent interest in making Shambhala more diverse. I definitely agree Shambhala would benefit by being more diverse. However, the Sakyong has introduced amateur Shambhala Diversity Warriors into programs in a way that promotes racism in forcing white people to listen to discussions about "white privilege" whether they agree with it or not. I attended Warrior Assembly this past June at the Shambhala Mountain Center. It was not about diversity and had no diversity component. However, one part of the program had two "Diversity Warriors" with no actual professional experience in diversity programming, address us. One...began her talk to us with the following words, "We white people are ignorant"...What I feel does harm is to address me not as myself but by my racial identity without my agreeing that you have my permission to do so and forcing whites to undergo "teachings" about their ignorance, privilege, etc. I believe it is potentially illegal to make statements about being ignorant based solely upon one's ethnic background. This unskilled amateur conversation being foisted upon people like myself who simply want to attend a Buddhism program has gone on long enough...While the white speaker apologized at the next interval, most likely because the teachers of the program told her that she needed to apologize, my complaint is that this never should have occurred in the first place. Anti-white rhetoric should have no place in programs that are completely unrelated to discussions about race.*

0045: *I attended a week of meditation at (center). There were offerings where people sing and dance. A murder ballad was sung called, "Kill the Brown Girl" that was about a male suitor killing a brown girl he was supposed to marry through an arranged marriage. The staff tried to deal with it, but it was very light treatment. As a person of color, I felt I had to intervene but also feared that I was going to get a reputation as rabble rousing. If you are a person of color in Shambhala, there is an expectation that YOU will and should fix the racial problem.*

Bullying and Abuse of Power

Many people contacted either the Listening Post or An Olive Branch's support line to ask if the Listening Post would hear complaints about abuse of power. These potential reporters were told that the topic of abuse of power was beyond the scope of An Olive Branch's current work with Shambhala and were encouraged to use the vehicles that the Interim Board and/or Process Committee would create for additional feedback from the community going forward. Despite these attempts to redirect concerns about abuse of power, a few reporters did include comments related to this topic. In some cases, the reporters described their experience as being "bullied" so this *in vivo* code also captures a few incidents in this section.

0113: *Ultimately, the core issue is one of a general culture of abuse of power...There is a huge issue of mistrust and the fact that the Kalapa Council is still seated and there is not a new Care and Conduct policy, as promised, is discouraging...Unless there is real change as stated in July, I will not*

provide Shambhala or its representative (i.e., the Listening Post) with more detailed information about sexual misconduct.

0068: *I had done a dathun and served as a guide at (center). The (accused) was my MI back at my center. Our whole group was asked to give presentation on a book. Teachers started making the presentations. I volunteered because I thought it would be a safe environment. It made me feel good that they were asking people. I didn't think I would do good, though. Afterwards, I was shamed by my teacher. He yelled at me through the phone. I didn't feel I had done anything wrong. I felt I wasn't heard. I stopped our MI relationship. Others above me "poo-pooed" the incident when it was brought up, saying, "Oh it was just (Name of accused)." I didn't feel I could approach the new center director about it after the (accused) kissed me on the neck. I felt bullied when the (accused) dumped on me, and the previous (Center Director) did also.*

0064B: *It was a situation that was related to me rather than witnessed by me or directed toward me...It wasn't direct physical abuse; it was an instance of verbal and organizational bullying to which she attributed the miscarriage of her baby, which took place a few days later...I was struck, however, that when the story was related to me...She related it in a very matter-of-fact way without apparent anger. Linking the two was absolutely not something done on the spur of the moment or in reactive emotion or rancor...Although the traumatic effects are not usually as obvious or dramatic as with sexual or direct physical harm, abuse of power and bullying seriously weakens the sangha. In my local sangha, it's resulted in loss of members, financial instability, teachers being blacklisted, experienced administrators and translators being sidelined, and unhealthy concentration of money and power in the same, very small number of individuals—who of course have to be obeyed in order for you to be invited to carry out any role in the group...There's also a clear symbiotic effect between verbal and physical bullying: the kind of high-level sexualized abuse which I presume you're mainly dealing with in Shambhala both encourages and is encouraged by the kind of "lower-level" behavior which I've witnessed locally over many years.*

0048: *The nature of the harm is not sexual. I would consider it bullying. It occurred at (center). I was then (office holder), but I was relatively new to Shambhala and not a Tantrika. In my experience, Tantrikas had all the status and power (they still do). Together with a senior council member we took the decision to hold a Shambhala Training Level despite the fact that it contained only four participants. After the level was successfully completed, the (accused), although no longer in a leadership position, proceeded to harshly reprimand me for taking this decision. The other council member (also) did not support me. I felt I was thrown to the wolves. The (accused) asked for another meeting and continued to bully me to the point where I was in tears; then the (accused) walked out. I felt I had no one to speak to about this incident.*

0052: *I am aware that my experience and path uniquely underwent a major shift concurrently with the start of a strategic, political, and largescale organizational change being required and taken up by the larger mandala, with some input from members of my local sangha. I had considered myself an early instigator and encourager in some ways of this inevitable, evolutionary, and transformational movement. Yet my subsequent ability to make wise, appropriate and healthy choices for myself or others has seemed greatly compromised by both limited and /or manipulated access to people, information, and resources since that time. My health and livelihood were very much damaged. I have sometimes pondered whether or not the term "lungta bullying" may be applicable and, if so, then, who is the properly identified bully enacting this harm...More recently, the full sum of all these challenges has had the effect of a feeling that my choice and ability to continue to pursue ANY*

chosen practice path within Shambhala is itself being held in great tension, uncertainty, and possible improbability.

Rumors, Ostracization, and Slander

A third type of harm that emerged from the coding process was that of “rumors, ostracization, and slander.” These terms were all separate *in vivo* codes but seemed to be pointing to the same behavior so they are grouped together here. In all but one of these incidents, the rumors, ostracization or slander occurred in conjunction with one of the other types of harm. In the reporters’ perceptions, once a rumor or scandalous statement about them began to circulate, it took on a life of its own that they found was difficult to address, let alone stop or reverse. Several of these reporters have sought other avenues and forms for their practice as a consequence of these experiences.

0004: *I supported someone who had been abused. One (leader) has ostracized me and said I was “killing them.” I didn’t know how deeply I had been cultified.*

0008: *The worst was that there was a lot of rumors being spread about me, how I was a difficult and crazy person in relationship to the three men (whom the reporter had accused). Because people in the sangha knew I’d had conflicts with these three men, it was assumed there was something wrong and “crazy” about me...No one knew my version of events. Instead, I just got banned from Shambhala...Getting banned from Shambhala is actually one of the most painful things when you are a Scorpion Seal Practitioner.*

0119: *I went on retreat for 1-2 years and lived at (center). There was lots of gossip among people I’d never met having reactions to me because of my doing drugs or drinking too much. I guess it’s better to be talked about than not.*

0002: *[See description of incident #0002 under physical abuse above.] Afterward, he was so afraid that I would tell someone, and that it would harm his reputation, that he began slandering me viciously. I was new to (City) and he spread rumors about me. He even used social media to write a horrible article about me and my family...Anytime a mutual friend became my friend on Facebook, he would contact that person and threaten them unless they deleted me as a friend and discontinued contact with me. It was one of the darkest moments of my life, and the trauma has stayed with me. There are countless other incidents that occurred with (Name) after this, where my life felt threatened. At the time, I confided in (Regional Commander) about what happened. He stepped in and “helped me.” Without my permission, he told others who confronted the (accused), who then doubled down on his slander and defamation of my character so no one would believe me.*

0040: *I never had full reconciliation with (the accused). I didn't want to go to the police but I was disheartened how it had been handled. I felt dismissed. I have never really gone back to (the event) since that happened. It was difficult to hear years later that people spoke about that night as if it were a rumor, which discredited all of us who had experienced it.*

0046: *[Note: This incident was also reported in more detail above (#0046) under “Sexual Abuse.”] I am writing to complain of a subculture of sexual harassment that exists within the sangha that...has been pervasive and has contributed significantly to a culture of abuse as well as to exaggerations,*

confusion, and cover ups of such abuse. I'm referring specifically to widespread rumor mongering, innuendo and insinuation, double entendre, gestures, and pantomimes all of a sexual nature.

Emergent Themes Raised by Reporters

As noted earlier in the description of how the reports of harm were analyzed, several themes emerged from the analysis that provide a broader understanding of how the reporters made sense of their experience, how this experience impacted them personally, and how it influenced their feelings about Shambhala, its leaders, and its governance processes. These additional insights into how the reporters made sense of their experiences of harm are summarized in this section under eight themes.

Emotional Impacts of Harm on the Reporters Themselves

In addition to their stories, recounted above, of the explicit abuse that they encountered, the reporters also offered many insights into the emotional experiences that accompanied the abuse—which, for many, have never left them and from which they have not ever fully recovered. These kinds of reactions are consistent with what is known about the aftermath of abuse for survivors, but hearing them tell it in their own words is particularly revealing.

0123: *I ended up working with an energy healer. When my body was frozen and I thought I was going to hell, she helped me release these belief systems. I was lucky I was exposed to this world before all this (abusive situation) happened. But I was handcuffed by guilt I even felt like I couldn't leave Shambhala...I'm so glad I didn't listen to all the Shambhala guilt...I'm finding my own wisdom.*

0153B: [When a reporter of harm (Name 1) was disclosing to her friend (Name 2), who later contacted the Listening Post on her behalf, (Name 2) recounted], *“(Name 1) kept covering her face, rocking back and forth, shaking, crying, and unable to look me in the eye. She became visibly distressed raising her voice and said that his wife had to have known what was going on.” She explained that she still in some ways relates to him as a father figure...and at the same time she feels weak, broken, and like she will never be okay. She said she feels ashamed and guilty that it happened. She said she continues to feel betrayed and extremely confused because she thought that it was the way it was. She felt like she had no power, and never told anyone for years...It's extremely painful and triggering to talk about and no one knew the full story...She associates dharma with abuse and...has slowly phased herself away from this community.*

0116: *For many years I have felt a lot of shame about this time in my life. I used to blame myself and thought of myself as promiscuous, or “slutty.” Now that I am older, I realize that the responsibility for what happened to me lies with the adults who were involved. I also wish that there hadn't been a culture that was so permissive of these things occurring and that I had been better protected.*

0149: *I didn't give money to Shambhala this year. I'm torn because I'm holding back something I gave every year...A storm came through and uprooted some of my roots...When I get on my cushion, you can't not tell. I feel like I'm in the charnel ground when I go...I do want to move forward. He can't take the feelings the teachings have given me. I know what is true.*

Culture of Freedom Re: Alcohol Abuse and Sexual Behavior

One theme that was present in many of the reports of harm was the abundant use of alcohol at Shambhala events. Some reporters linked this use of alcohol with the organization's permissive norms about sexual behavior among Shambhala participants which date back to the early period when Chögyam Trungpa was leading Shambhala. Nonetheless, both practices were reported to have continued with the founders' successors.

0126: *As a monastic in training, I did the Sakyong's laundry and spend time at his house...Later, when I gave back my robes, I attended a party with alcohol, but I had kept my vow not to drink. I was the only non-drinker at the party; it felt kind of weird. I was surprised at the level of slinky attire and left because I was uncomfortable.*

0119: *I was a second-generation Shambhalian. I was going to (Retreat Center). I started doing drugs. The kids were all strung out. I got kicked out for being too wild. I tried to overdose on aspirin and had to have my stomach pumped...It is very familiar to feel "used" at a dharma center. There is some kind of freedom and definitely affairs at dathuns. In some ways it is magical and totally a two-edged sword. It is a deep aspect of the confusion...It gets imprinted with the experience.*

0125: *He (Name of accused) feels he didn't really do much wrong as there was a "culture of nudity at the time" in Shambhala. I disagree and am seeking how much I can educate him as to the consequences I have suffered over the past ten years...Not being driven out of the sangha due to repeated instances of predatory sexual behavior has enabled (Name) to rise in the ranks and progress along his path undisturbed. He simply doesn't understand that he has benefited from the structure of Shambhala in a fabulous manner and what he considers to be an act of the culture of nudity, I call an illegal act.*

0118: *In the early 1990's...our community was going through great turmoil and the atmosphere and boundaries of acceptable behavior were much different. At that time, it was considered acceptable for teachers to have sexual relationships with students, and apparently it was also acceptable for grown men to have sexual relationships with teenagers. (After all, our guru had married a sixteen-year-old and had sexual relationships with many of his students as well). At (Center) there was an atmosphere of promiscuity. People were hooking up all over...When Chögyam Trungpa came to the US, he was promiscuous. The Sakyong's behavior was modeled by his dad—who was visibly drunk—and this was not hidden...I am pleased that some of these things have changed and improved and that there are at least official policies in place with the goal of preventing the occurrence of abuse.*

0120: *Shambhala had always been a safe haven and home for me, and I have been intensely devoted to the teachings of Buddhism and Shambhala from a very early age. I was in awe of "advanced practitioners" and the attention of older men, particularly of these senior students, made me feel grown up and made me feel like I must be a worthwhile person. Unfortunately, some individuals took advantage of my vulnerability.*

0135: *Fortunately, I saw Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche's womanizing and alcoholism first hand, so I had the good sense to leave the community until after he died.*

0115B: *The boundaries between verbal and physical bullying and their effects are not as clear-cut as we sometimes think they are. There's also a clear symbiotic effect between the two, to my perception: the kind of high-level sexualized abuse which I presume you're mainly dealing with in Shambhala both encourages and is encouraged by this kind of "lower-level" behavior which I've witnessed locally over many years.*

Centers' Handling of Current Crisis

Some reporters talked about how their local centers have been responding to the abuse allegations hanging over Shambhala International.

0121: *In the (City Center) we removed the pictures of the Sakyong.*

0112: *I am deeply concerned about the recent actions of some of the Center's senior teachers and leaders in response to the current crisis. I believe these actions are resulting in emotional and spiritual harm to practitioners, contributing to a widening rift in the sangha, and preventing the community from moving forward in a healthy and productive way.*

0144: *The (Place1) Sangha is trying to be very active (in response to the crisis). They took the pictures of the Sakyong and CTR down. [Someone in leadership] was one of the first to say publicly that the entire board (Kalapa Council) should resign and the Sakyong should step down. It all exploded, but finally we can talk about all this.*

0107: *I would like to report that I have not always been treated well by members and leadership at my local Shambhala Center in (City), by members of my practice cohort from recent advanced assemblies, nor by my meditation instructor of the last four years, who holds a high-ranking teaching position in the mandala. By the same measure, I also must report that I, too, have not always treated these same persons as well as I aspire to....But I am still saddened by the fact that in my own experience there were numerous times when a needed conversation that could have shed light on the totality of reality simply did not take place...I have experienced significant pain and hardship as a result of some interactions...These experiences have deepened my understanding of what suffering can mean for the most vulnerable and marginalized among us. Perhaps most of all, I have been very humbled to live what it is to be marginalized and without equal access to the very means of lifting oneself up.*

Concerns about Speaking Up

Several reporters raised the issue of having the courage to speak up both when situations of harm occur and more generally in sangha affairs. For some, their sense of security within the sangha was eroded after a specific incident of harm or a sense of discouragement lingered if they did not believe the incident had been resolved satisfactorily. Some skepticism remains regarding the ability of the Care and Conduct process to address reports of harm, especially those from years past -- before a policy existed.

0127: *During a discussion circle about the current events, I heard of other instances when the procedures were not upheld. "What's the point when nothing changes." It seems like a matter of*

inconvenience, but ethics are never tidy and convenient...I didn't re-open anything with Shambhala. It's so tied up.

0131: *It's a labyrinthine process to get anyone to say, "This behavior by a teacher is wrong." I want this culture of sexual predation and enabling by very nice, kind thoughtful teachers to end. I want to never have to answer another email from someone asking me if so-n-so is safe to do retreat with and how they are going to leave the sangha rather than go through Care and Conduct...I don't know if Shambhala International understands it is necessary to take sexual harm seriously...My concern is the policy is a complete passing of the buck...And is the old policy going to carry the water for older victims? Will the women be willing to come forward?*

0113: *Until there is a firm shift to implement a new policy that includes, at a minimum, protections from retaliation per EEOC guidelines and a new board, I don't see myself or others speaking up...I will not provide Shambhala or its representative with more detailed information about sexual misconduct, and my decision to come forward without stating a misconduct claim is increasingly an option (and others) may consider or present to an attorney.*

0141: *I reported his behavior (accused) to my MI and the (center) director. I knew ultimately that I would be OK, but I didn't want him (accused) to ruin the path and the teaching for someone else. I told them I didn't want to file a Care and Conduct complaint because I felt it was not my job to rectify this situation, and I did not want to expend my energy on it.*

0150: *In therapy, I worked on how to get angry. The fact that others are speaking up, has helped me.*

0101B: *It is also necessary for me to practice speaking up and sharing the truth as I have known and lived it. This is a central part of my path and of any journey that requires accepting the joyful dance of both/and/ form/formless/beyond.*

Efforts to Protect Teachers and Shambhala from Accusation

Going hand in hand with perceptions that it is difficult to speak up within Shambhala or to be heard when you do speak up about abuse, some reporters went even further to suggest that some members of Shambhala took deliberate steps to protect the reputation of senior teachers and the organization as a whole from accusations of wrong-doing. This self-protective stance often came at the expense of those who felt harmed.

0111B: *Everyone, including me, was so grateful that they didn't want to make a fuss—call the police, sue (Land Center) etc.—because we were afraid we could lose our precious Stupa (Land Center), a place that was so important to us, a place that we felt would propagate the dharma. It's so telling to me now, sadly it took me so long to realize this, that very few people cared about what the girl had been through, it was all about saving our sangha, our image. I was on the sidelines of this, but I feel so ashamed of myself for not stepping up...I mainly just wanted to share a view of our culture of valuing Shambhala over people.*

0154: *We do understand the importance of listening to those who feel that they were harmed by sexual misconduct. We do want Shambhala to address any legitimate sexual complaints and to set up good human resource policies to address any and all concerns BUT we do not want the image of*

Shambhala tarnished beyond repair in the process. Shambhala has helped many people to live better lives. Some of us are concerned that "the baby may get thrown out with the bath water." And see the challenge is to address the concerns but to also NOT do irreparable damage to Shambhala in the process. Again, I appreciate the work that you have taken on. And hope that you understand the frustration that many of us in Shambhala feel at this time.

0155B: *The response from the community was to be very protective of the staff member reported to have a USB stick with porn on it (saying things like "We are all about forgiveness"). He had done something illegal and contributed to maybe one of the worst crimes to humanity. And the staff member who wanted to take action by going to the police was personally intimidated by some of the staff not to. The police did get involved though, but I do not know how it ended.*

0156: *It seems there is a cloak of protection the long-time practitioners manage to smother the truth with.*

0106: *In brief, the situation reflects the situation of the entire organization: fear to criticize the Sakyong as the supreme spiritual head of Shambhala, and a resulting silencing and dismissal of anyone who dares to come out and challenge in any way the Sakyong's supremacy. Given that the Sakyong is regarded as God and to challenge/criticize him is seen as a breakage of the sacred bond which results in ending up in a hell realm, it is no mystery how it is that silence and silencing is the way to protect his exalted status.*

Leaders' Responses to Reports of Harm

Once reporters of harm shared the incidents they intended to report, they also often expressed frustration about how incidents that were reported to Shambhala were handled. For many of the reporters, their perceptions about how Shambhala responded when they reported the harm they had encountered left as lasting an impression as the harm itself. Many reporters recounted that they never knew what was decided by Shambhala's internal deliberations about their incident of harm or the specific outcome of Care and Conduct proceedings that might have been initiated to address their incident of harm. Several expressed disappointment with the outcomes (or lack thereof as they perceived it). A few suggested that a Shambhala representative's response served to have a retraumatizing effect on them. This has led to skepticism on many of their parts about Shambhala's intentions and skill in handling complaints effectively. While it is certainly possible that actions were taken about which reporters were unaware, and if so, this suggests a gap between reporters' experiences and Shambhala's intentions which merits attention in order to restore trust in the community. Consequently, this theme potentially holds much insight for those taking the new Code of Ethics forward and/or designing other means of responding to reports of harm when they occur.

0124: *[After an incident of physical abuse described earlier] I confided in (Regional Commander) about what happened. He stepped in and helped me. Without my permission, he told others who confronted (Name of accused), who then doubled down on his slander and defamation of my character so no one would believe me. I want to make sure no one else is victimized in our community while everyone tiptoes around it, does nothing, and rewards the abuser.*

0005: *The (accused), who was fixated on me, sent my personal emails to (Center Director). (Center Director) then demanded to talk to the me and accused me of attacking the (accused).*

[Note: A few years later, after another incident, the (Center Director) wrote a letter urging care for the reporter if she applied to other Shambhala Centers, but the reporter saw the letter as banning her from Shambhala.]

0130: *I told (Acharya) and (Name) about his (accused's) behavior but got no support from them.*

0132: *When (Name) posted on her Facebook page that she was assaulted by the Sakyong, there was only a token response—trying to get resolution for the issue. The Care and Conduct Policy didn't apply to the Sakyong then. She (Name) got a lot of pressure to "Watch your samaya."*

0133: *To me this isn't an issue of the original harassment...it's an issue of misuse of power and irresponsibility with regards to taking harassment claims seriously (and thus not protecting the young female staff). Being on retreat with a few of these players this summer reminded me forcefully of the power of being in power and how completely unheard I was.....to (Name of person she reported the incident to) I should have just shaken it off, let it go and let (Name of harasser) do his work, and when I didn't, he simply got rid of me. I was pretty disposable at 24-25 years old...At the time I was too shocked to put the pieces together, but after a few months I realized I had been fired so they could hire (Name of harasser) to work on a water problem they had. The harassment was uncomfortable and gross, but the response of the higher ups was much worse. It literally took me years to go back to (retreat center), just for short periods of time until I was sure the atmosphere and treatment of staff had truly changed. Even now I really dislike seeing the players - or their spouses - in that horrible episode.*

0117: *At the summer seminary, all the lower level teachers were dating students. (Name) slept with other women when in a relationship with me...Because I was a teenager, they should have known. Everyone knew...At the time I did not perceive this as an inappropriate relationship so I did not complain or report anything to anyone. The inappropriateness of the relationship did not dawn on me until I was older...He was also not asked to leave (Center), and at the time, I was not aware of anyone trying to stop his behavior. Why didn't anybody call him out? The (Center Director) should have said something. The Sakyong should have said something. Everybody knew and didn't do anything... They were using their status to prey on teenagers...In a recent conversation, I learned that he was indeed told to stop his relationship with me. Unfortunately, this was not effective because he did not stop his behavior. Also, the people who told him to stop were not willing to follow through with any consequences, such as asking him to leave (Center).*

0142: *I told (Center Director) I didn't want to file a Care & Conduct complaint because I felt it was not my job to rectify this situation, and I did not want to expend my energy on it. The (Center Director) did her best to relate it to two Acharyas, one of whom gave the (Shastri) a stern talking to. In the process, we learned that this was not the first time a complaint had come against him—a similar incident had happened elsewhere. Although he didn't remember the event, he wanted to apologize to me...I had no interest in talking to him...In my eyes, there were little repercussions for him...He eventually did step down as a Shastri, but I don't know why. He was still teaching...It would make me nauseous to see his name listed as teaching a program, unsure if he had actually learned anything or if his behavior would change...It is my understanding that this information often isn't passed down to the people who make those decisions, or people don't feel "empowered" to not invite someone. I was*

glad I hadn't gone through the Care and Conduct process, but this informal process also didn't feel as thorough as it needed to be.

0145: *[This comment pertains to incident #0026 under Sexual Abuse.] An Acharya offered sangha members mediation interviews over Skype. I told her everything. She was appropriately horrified and affirming. She said the sangha owed me an apology and made a big show of apologizing "on behalf of the Sakyong." But she also indicated that since (accused) no longer held the role of shastri, Care and Conduct had "really nothing to do." She said she would take the matter anonymously to two other acharyas for further action, but she never got back to me and as far as I could tell she never followed through. When I later expressed concern that (accused) was teaching in (new location), the acharya kind of shrugged and said "(accused) is being closely supervised by the local shastri" like that eliminated the problem. I feel like, "I handed it to an Acharya. I wanted some fucking level of accountability. I wanted someone to tell (accused) that it wasn't OK—and (accused) is still teaching" ... I had some very healing conversations with (a shastri from Place 1), but that person said, "I have no authority to do anything."*

0151: *There was no one to go to there about the misconduct. I didn't tell (teacher) anything. Later I did talk with someone more senior there who was a friend and MI. It didn't go anywhere, as this person didn't know where to report it and I think didn't take it seriously enough. I wondered whether this was the kind of conduct that was OK for teachers in Shambhala. I didn't know where to go for help, so I dropped it... My friend had let me down. (Teacher) let all of us down about those questions. They had a lack of clarity, so I dropped it. In my gut I felt conflicted: I both loved and mistrusted Shambhala.*

0157B: *[Re: the incident about pornography on a teacher's USB stick reported earlier.] The staff member who wanted to take action by going to the police was personally intimidated by some of the staff not to. The police did get involved though, but I do not know how it ended. How this guy didn't get fired is a big mystery to me. (Retreat center)—together with the sexual misconduct by teachers—seem to be above the law.*

0105: *[Referencing sexual assault described earlier.] In my case Shambhala simply did not do enough to protect the community. They asked (the accused) to remove the photos from his website, as if that was the real problem. They only requested him to stop being a meditation instructor and failed to formally and immediately suspend him...Another problem in Shambhala's process was that there was no public statement of the (accused's) behavior to the sangha at large to warn other people, young women, in particular, of the (accused's) behavior, or to invite others to come forward. The (accused) subsequently lost his professional license but claimed he had never received a letter from Shambhala, only that a senior leader had talked to him...Before the (accused's) license was revoked (which it ultimately was), when I again brought this to (office holder's) attention, the (accused) was asked not to come to our local Shambhala center and to inform certain leaders if he were going to a land center...He was not asked to relinquish his MI status, (only to remain inactive) and no public statements were made about him by Shambhala. Once he was found to be at fault, part of the Shambhala process should have involved a public statement saying he was removed from his post for sexual assault. This is one of our weakest areas. We should make these statements public to protect the local and international Shambhala community rather than trying to protect Shambhala as an organization or protect the perpetrator...Recently, the (accused) signed up for a program I was planning to attend. There was nobody clearly holding the case. Suddenly, here I was yet again having to demand attention be brought to the situation and to address (accused)... I also recently saw him*

at our local center, despite his promise he would not attend. However, I am more interested in how we as a community learn and grow from this situation...This is not just about him and me...It's about a culture of fear and misguided protection.

0109: *I did not feel safe to return to the center and did not feel this was fair to the Sangha or to (accused). Two teachers expressed to me that...he had done similar things in the past. I did not feel it right for him to be in the teacher's seat in regards to safety of the students he might teach, and the safety of Sangha in general. I also did not feel it appropriate that he was representing Shambhala or was capable of embodying its teachings. And I did not think it was at all fair to the (accused) to put the stress of teaching on him. I did not ever return to the (City) center after this incident which was my home center since 1999, because basically I felt it dangerous and negligent to allow this to go unchecked. Especially after the persons in authority had told me in their own words the (accused) was ill. In my view there was basically nothing done.*

Reasons for Leaving Shambhala

As mentioned earlier in this report, many reporters of harm indicated that they had left Shambhala either because of the incident(s) of harm they experienced or because of how Shambhala handled the situation. A larger percentage expressed hope that Shambhala would be able to learn from its experience and make constructive changes consistent with its philosophy of promoting an enlightened society. Below are several accounts of why those who have left did so.

0128: *After my incident and no one listening to me, I'm not connected to a local sangha. I just practice at home. I hope to come away softened and not hardened.*

0134: *So many people have left the community because the Care and Conduct process didn't work. The perpetrators were enjoying a lot of protection.*

0136: *The socially and culturally-accepted Vajradathu/Shambhala mindset on sexual abuse is everything Buddhism is not. 'Creating Enlightened society' is simply a false premise. I hold the absolute teachings in the highest regard and remain a Buddhist practitioner. I was left with no other choice than to seek out more trusting Buddhist lamas outside of Shambhala. The betrayal of many of your senior male teachers and leaders makes a sham of the 'relative' teachings they falsely impart. From top, down, they have eroded the ideals of what American/European Buddhism could have been in this international community if they had simply followed the precepts, the paramitas, and truly respected and honored their students.*

0140: *It was my first sexual encounter [described previously]...I became angry about how casually I was treated. I brushed it aside and never worked through it. I had a lot of pain and self-loathing. I tried to run away. Sitting with all that was difficult. I never dealt with it...I would like to be able to forget it all. I don't want to return to Shambhala.*

0159: *In my own center in (City) I have had to part ways due to the lack of support a colleague received from the Kasung after questionable behavior from a student. It was at that time that I became aware of the assistance at the larger land centers that the Kasung offered to the high level teachers and their desires, most notably the Sakyong.*

0158B: *This incident [in which pornography was found on a teacher's USB stick] breached my trust in (retreat center) and deeply hurt me. It was a place I found peace and quiet. I loved coming there but of course stopped going and felt very sad about that.*

0160: *I feel distant from the sangha. I have found other teachers. I resonated with Chögyam Trungpa, and not with the Sakyong. I'm still looking for another teacher.*

0110: *I did not ever return to the (City) center after this incident which was my home center since 1999 because basically I felt it dangerous and negligent to allow this to go unchecked. Especially after the person in authority hold told me in their own words the (accused) was ill. In my view there was nothing done.*

Reporters' Recommendations for Shambhala Leadership

Need for Training about Misogynistic Behavior, Sexual Misconduct, and Inappropriate Sexual Contact.

Several reporters mentioned the need for Shambhala to offer training programs for its leaders and community members regarding what is considered sexual misconduct and inappropriate sexual contact within the community. Others also suggested that the training address patriarchal and misogynistic behavior engage leaders to become familiar with the sacred feminine.

0129: *[Re: Center Directors who failed to take action on her complaint.] I don't know if they had any training. There was not an official ending; no concise point.*

0122: *I am happy to see the culture in our community changing. I am happy that the voices of those who experienced sexual misconduct are finally heard and taken seriously. We need to do more to keep our community safe. In particular, I would like to see a culture of zero tolerance for sexual relationships between adults (particularly adults in positions of power, like teachers and "senior practitioners") and underage children. People should know that if this boundary is violated, they will be prosecuted and go to jail. Unfortunately, I cannot press charges against (Name) anymore because the statute of limitations has passed. I would if I could...It is important to get an accurate picture of what happened. Andrea Winn (Sunshine Reports) is making it harder...Can we take a more nuanced and more compassionate approach? The Sakyong is traumatized. He grew up in a refugee camp. He and his mom escaped genocide. Then the Scottish couple kidnapped him and didn't want to give him up. Then he came into (a) crazy hippy community. His father was drunk. He has learned unhealthy coping strategies, but he has blossomed into a wonderful teacher. It's not a problem of individuals; it's a systemic problem...I really hope we won't fall apart. We have an opportunity to honestly look at these things if the Sakyong can be part of the conversation.*

0137: *I believe that what the community needs is a major shift to seriously embrace and teach the sacred feminine. Prajnaparamita, Yeshe Tsogyal, Machig Labdrön and Tara practices should be a requirement for all senior male teachers going forward. Enough is enough!*

0143: *I don't necessarily think that (Shastri) needs to stop teaching, but he does need to work on this relationship to alcohol and have some kind of intervention around patriarchy before I would really trust him in the teacher's seat again. I feel lucky that I haven't been put in the position of having to*

be on retreat with him again (or missing retreat because of him) – I know that hasn't been the case for everyone.

0147: *I am writing these recollections down because I suspect that (accused) and many other, mostly male, teachers do not realize the effect of their actions on students who trust and respect them. In particular, the lying to get away looks cheap and demeaning afterward. I like to say I got over these events, but I am not entirely sure I have. We can do better.*

0152: *Is it possible that there could be training for the culture. Real training is needed in many areas, including around the freeze response which is mistaken for equanimity...Education is needed.*

0102: *My career...allowed me a view of sexual harassment policies some of which included clauses specifically stating that reference to sexual orientation or past history were not allowed either overtly or via innuendo and insinuation. I strongly recommend that the Shambhala policy include such as clause as it is sorely needed and presently there is no means by which to address or redress this prevalent and disruptive form of sexual harassment.*

Need for Better Handling of Racial Issues. Although the Listening Post's charge did not expressly include racial harm, this theme was raised by a few reporters who also offered suggestions for how it might be better addressed within the community.

0139: *Anti-white rhetoric has found a welcoming place at Shambhala. As a white person I wanted to report what I experienced as racial harm...I definitely agree that Shambhala would benefit by being more diverse. But I question whether I should be addressed by my race at all during a Buddhist teaching program.*

0114: *When there are known issues, there is a great hesitancy to courageously fix them. My feeling is that the higher echelons of Shambhala haven't taken seriously People of Color teachers and leaders. They haven't made promotion of people of color a priority. Many of the hurts and harm happen at local centers. There is a disparity between what many in Shambhala want, teachers and leaders of color, and the local centers which do not, in many cases, prioritize the promotion of people of color either. All hurts are local.*

0103: *I've done meditation teacher training. It is important to discuss how meet your own needs without harming others.*

0108: *I would like to close my comments here with a simple request that The Listening Post consider exploring and including some detail on the serious health-damaging effects of social isolation and social rejection in its final reporting to the Shambhala Interim Board and wider community.*

Change of Leadership. Some reporters also made specific suggestions for changes in Shambhala's leadership, as well as steps they believed the Sakyong should take to improve the welfare of the community.

0138: *I believe the Sakyong and his entire family should permanently step down from the comfortable, false-royal court they have created for themselves and let the best and most trusted female acharyas like Christie Cashman, Arawana Hayashi, and Pema Chödrön, lead the way.*

0146: *Just having women in leadership positions is not enough. Shambhala has its “Aunt Lydias” (ala The Handmaid’s Tale) and other enablers. I’m pretty pleased with the Interim Board.*

0148: *The statement I sent is pretty complete (it was my third version), and I felt a lot better after sending it. My main concern is to warn against sexualizing relationships between teachers and new students and also adding insult to injury by then lying to those students.*

0161: [Note: This quote is taken verbatim from the reporter’s communication to the Listening Post. Only the spelling of Chögyam Trungpa’s last name was corrected.] *I believe if The Sakyong engages in the following actions, some for the remainder of this lifetime, we may feel more & more inclined to stay together as one collective spiritual, compassionate conscious force of The Dharma & Trungpa Rinpoche’s lineage in our mutually shared lifetime(s).*

- 1. He must be in on-going therapy with a highly seasoned, well trained psychotherapist that is a specialist in sexual abuse therapy; this training is a must as any therapy for The Sakyong without a therapist well-schooled & trained in sexual abuse therapy would have little influence on his insight & strategies for change and long-term changes.*
- 2. He must personally acknowledge in front of many new & less recent Acharya’s & other students his remorse and state his intention to offer appropriate restitution to as many of his victims as possible, hopefully every one of them, if it takes his entire lifetime or lifetimes.*
- 3. He must promise and make a solemn oath he will never commit the abuses he is known to have committed & promise if he has an such inclinations to ask immediately for support & help from several available women & men he trusts and respects.*
- 4. These meetings mentioned above can be arranged so that there is no individual carrying a wire to tape record his words to protect him from any present or future law suits.*
- 5. If possible, with his lawyers approval, let him speak thru Skype at a pre-determined time to The Shambhala Community and express in whatever ways he can that he is now on The Path of Consciousness The Great Rinpoche’s past & present are & have taught or words that will inspire a confidence in him by so many that have lost faith in him & The Shambhala Path; many who have already fallen away.*
- 6. The Sakyong needs to become humble; more & more & more humble; humbling himself in the following ways, if he is sincere & serious about repenting for his horrific patriarchal centuries old sexual abuse karma & financial misuse of millions & millions of dollars.*
 - a. Sell the 3 homes he lives in, giving a considerable portion of that money to Tibetan families & causes to reduce the undo pain & suffering of those living in poverty.*
 - b. He can then, for his family, either purchase or rent one humble apartment, condo, or home; when he travels, he can live in the home or apartment of his students.*
 - c. He needs to dress MODESTLY & carry himself modestly, gently, & with great sensitivity to the needs of one & all.*
 - d. He needs to do acts of random kindness on a regular basis and participate in life like one of us.*
 - e. This means, to renounce Shambhala as a kingdom & himself as the present King of Shambhala bearing in mind his beloved father set Shambhala up as a kingdom.*
 - f. The power of The Lineage Holder who holds The Teachings can continue to be passed on thru The Sakyong’s blood line as long as there is someone of his immediate family to carry on The Lineage. Otherwise, the most conscious individual who has kept & continues to keep her or his actions beyond reproach will become the lineage holder. When that person leaves the physical body, the next Lineage Holder will be chosen as the most conscious, deserving and committed to keep their actions beyond reproach.*

- g. He must dress MODESTLY & renounce his golden garb seen in a photo in the majority of Shambhala Shrines. His clothing can be varied and even in vogue, but not ostentatious & not costly.*
- h. He must ask for the door at Karma Choling that says words more or less to the effect "This door is reserved for The Sakyong". A king or queen who is conscious, an advanced being of The Way, & does not want to draw any attention to herself or himself, usually needs to dress down, not be obvious and have a truly humble inner life reflected in his cloths, his living arrangements, and use money frugally as much as possible all the time.*
- l. The Sakyong must humble himself and ask for forgiveness from each one he has assaulted, both sexually, psychologically, financially and in other ways yet to be determined; returning thousands & thousands of dollars to women & men he has manipulated to pay for plane tickets for individuals, he The Sakyong could have personally paid for or had Shambhala pay for rather than coerce women & men to almost become destitute.*
- j. It would be an unexpected & profound series of events if he would visit various parts of the USA and the world where Shambhala communities are located and have several different communities come together in 1 place for a day with The Sakyong & let him talk with us. This could be arranged with some difficulty with all of us participating to for example rent a small college stadium like The U Mass-Amherst football stadium and talk with us. Probably 30 different trips would be able to give folks the chance to connect with The Sakyong if only to see & hear him and his essence speak to us.*
- k. The Sakyong must re-united all The Shambhala Centers & students, using every creative approach and resource possible; this may very likely include using a considerable amount of his personal savings.*
- l. The Sakyong would hopefully be transparent and provide all monies & homes all over the world and his tax returns to make evident he is keeping his financial intentions & actions beyond reproach.*
- m. The Sakyong must address those in his inner circle that gave him shelter to sexually assault all the women he took advantage of & all the women those in his inner circle also took advantage of and The Sakyong hopefully will impart & encourage on an on-going basis the above list of recommendations to those in his inner circle that in their lust, greed, and aversion for The Love and Dedication to The Buddha, The Rinpoche's, The Dharma, & The Sangha have caused pain & suffering to the women they abused & the emotional hurt in the minds & hearts of the men & women that although were not directly assaulted still felt betrayed, ignored, and dismissed by negative actions done and other important actions not done or not yet done.*

0162: *I don't believe we can make a fresh start and create an atmosphere of healing until the activities of the organization and privacy of the "Kasung" and their complicity in assisting the assaults, is addressed. I believe this secret society needs to be dissolved, it no longer serves a purpose if transparency is our hope of healing. If the whole council had to resign, surely these "guards", some even being eye witnesses, need to be removed. I believe if the history and reputation of the Kasung is reviewed it will become clear that this covert protection and assistance is no longer needed. The people on the path of Shambhala Buddhism are not being served and protected as long as the Kasung has free reign.*

0104: *I feel that Shastris should not simply be appointed without some type of pre-appointment feedback or input from the larger community.*

Concluding Remarks

Shambhala faces a challenging time ahead in responding to the accusations against its leaders of sexual and other types of misconduct that have been raised in this report and elsewhere. In addition to the traumatic personal consequences of misconduct, the types of harm described here can erode members' trust of the organization and its leadership and weaken their resolve to practice. The reporters of harm who had the courage to raise their voices and share their experiences have offered the Interim Board and the Shambhala community a window into aspects of their culture that merit careful scrutiny. These reporters should be commended for coming forward and helping to create an opportunity for Shambhala to address the harms reported here and to revitalize its efforts to prevent future harm from occurring. Members of the Interim Board have stepped up to face these challenges and to determine the best courses of action to pursue in addressing them. While An Olive Branch sincerely regrets the circumstances that necessitated the creation of a Listening Post in the first place, there is much to learn from the reports it produced. Toward that end, An Olive Branch hopes that this report will be of value.

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Appendix 1: July 19, 2018 An Olive Branch Letter to Shambhala Community

An Olive Branch

A project of the
Zen Center of Pittsburgh



July 19, 2018

Dear Members of the Shambhala Community,

We are writing this letter to introduce ourselves and announce that Shambhala's Kalapa Council has engaged the services of An Olive Branch to support the sangha's healing and reconciliation in the wake of complaints raised about ethical misconduct on the part of Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche and others within the community. We also want you to know about the ways you can be involved in our work if you so choose.

About An Olive Branch

An Olive Branch was formed in 2011 as a project of the Zen Center of Pittsburgh. Growing out of the need for greater understanding and reduction of ethical misconduct on the part of religious leaders, we provide services to organizations in conflict after a beloved teacher has been accused of misconduct. We promote understanding and healing and work to strengthen organizations' boards and policies to reduce the likelihood of future misconduct. We have expertise, knowledge of best practices, and standards of excellence for our services. Our consultants have complementary skills related to training, facilitation, governance, and intervention.

Please see our website, www.an-olive-branch.org, for our white paper on Clergy Sexual Misconduct and the Misuse of Power, a webinar series on Ethics in American Buddhist Groups, and other resources.

Questions about this project or about An Olive Branch may be directed to me, Katheryn Wiedman, Co-Director of An Olive Branch and Project Director for the Shambhala project: katheryn@an-olive-branch.org

Timeline

Earlier this year, a member of the Kalapa Council contacted An Olive Branch to inquire about our services and ask how we could help with publicly emerging claims of sexual misconduct within the community.

In Boulder, CO on June 23, 2018 a Kalapa Council task group met with co-directors of An Olive Branch, Dr. Katheryn Wiedman and Leslie Hospodar. The purpose of the meeting was two-fold:

1. For the Council members to describe the organization's needs and to ask questions about our services and
2. For An Olive Branch to learn more about the situation within Shambhala and to determine the appropriate services to include in a proposal.

During the following week, An Olive Branch developed an agreement that was accepted by the outgoing Shambhala Kalapa Council on July 5, 2018. They believe, as we do, that our work with Shambhala will be important to the community's healing. Although the Council members are stepping down, we are beginning our work now while the leadership transition is underway. The agreement includes the following elements:

1. Drafting a new ethics policy and grievance procedure
2. Providing a "Listening Post" and "Advocacy Service"
3. Providing training on the abuse of power for the Shambhala Interim Board
4. Facilitating a planning session for the Shambhala Interim Board
5. Facilitating regional communication meetings
6. Working to promote reconciliation within the community.

As an individual member, two of the elements listed above are of importance to you at this time because they involve your participation. They are the subject of the remainder of this letter:

- New Ethics Policy and Grievance Procedure
- Listening Post and Advocate for Reporters of Harm.

New Ethics Policy and Grievance Procedure

Over the past months, the Kalapa Council has received a range of comments from people in the community including that the existing "Shambhala Care and Conduct" policy and its procedures for filing a complaint are not conducive to filing reports of ethical misconduct. In response, the Kalapa Council empaneled a task force to develop a more specific sexual misconduct policy and established a timeline for drafting, seeking input, and adopting this policy.

In light of the urgency raised by recent allegations, An Olive Branch offered to draft a new Shambhala ethics policy and grievance procedure for review by the task force. Our advice is based on best practices for organizational ethics policies that define acceptable/unacceptable behavior for teachers and members and specifies fair grievance procedures. We will be working with Shambhala representatives to review/revise the draft to ensure that it reflects both Shambhala's aspirations for a new culture of responsibility and today's ethical standards. When the new ethics policy and grievance procedure are adopted, all Office Holders will be required to comply with it and signify their understanding by signing an Oath of Understanding and Adherence.

Developing a new ethics policy and grievance procedure is the first order of business in our work with Shambhala because these documents will establish clear ethical expectations for everyone

in the community and provide simple and well-defined steps to follow for people who have grievances. Work on these documents is now underway.

Listening Post and Advocacy Service

Once the new ethics policy and grievance procedure are in place, An Olive Branch will offer a Listening Post for individuals who want to report sexual or physical misconduct. The Listening Post will provide a way for them to tell their story to a neutral third party and to be heard in a safe, compassionate, and confidential manner. The Listening Post will also be available to any current or past Shambhala members who have regrets about contributing to such misconduct directly or indirectly (e.g., severe stress or guilt from witnessing abuse but not stopping it or reporting it). Priority for the Listening Post will be given to Shambhala members who have experienced either of these types of harm.

The Listening Post has three objectives:

1. First and foremost, provide some measure of relief to people who are suffering because of sexual or physical misconduct by a Shambhala leader;
2. Help these reporters of harm formulate any requests they would like to make to the organization's leaders;
3. Expose the full extent of damage to the fabric of the sangha from sexual and physical misconduct.

To accomplish the third objective, a summary of the information collected via the Listening Post will be reported to the Shambhala Interim Board and later to the community. Reporters of harm have the right to remain anonymous; both An Olive Branch and the Shambhala Interim Board respect this right. Names and identifying details of the reporters of harm will be carefully omitted from all reporting unless an individual reporter requests to be identified.

Any reporters of harm who wish to also report their experience to the independent investigators hired by Shambhala and/or to use the revised grievance procedure to resolve their claims will be directed to these processes respectively.

In addition, An Olive Branch will offer an Advocacy Service for reporters of harm who want help in following the new grievance procedure or participating in the investigation. The Advocate will support these individuals in using the grievance procedure but cannot provide legal representation.

What's Next

An Olive Branch will communicate additional information and instructions on how to contact the Listening Post as soon as the new ethics policy and grievance procedure are in place. We expect that the Listening Post will begin in early September, once the new ethics policy and grievance procedure are approved.

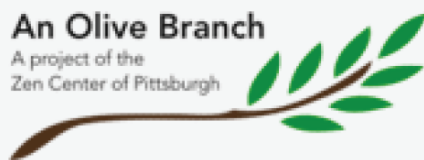
Work on the other elements of the agreement will commence once the new Shambhala Interim Board is seated. Throughout the project, we will be in close communication with you as work on each element proceeds.

Underlying our work with the Shambhala community is the intent to create a new culture of physical safety and psychological health. We believe that through working together with open hearts and minds everyone can learn from this situation, strengthen Shambhala's collective spirit, and promote equanimity.

Katheryn D. Wiedman

Katheryn D. Wiedman, Ph.D.
Project Director
Co-director of An Olive Branch
katheryn@an-olive-branch.org

Appendix 2: Sept. 3, 2018 An Olive Branch Letter to Shambhala Community



September 3, 2018

Dear Shambhala Community:

Starting on September 4, 2018, An Olive Branch will offer a Listening Post for current or past Shambhala members to report harm suffered because of sexual misconduct by Shambhala teachers and office holders. The purpose of the Listening Post is to enable any current or past Shambhala member who would like to confidentially report sexual abuse to do so in a safe and supportive context. Because experiencing and reporting harm is typically traumatic, we understand that reporters may be at different points in processing their experience. If you choose to report, we will respond to your individual needs and try to ensure that you always feel in control of the process.

After the Listening Post closes, An Olive Branch will prepare an anonymous summary of the reports of harm we received. This report will be given to the Interim Board of Directors and shared with the Shambhala community.

An Olive Branch is a neutral third party organization, independent from Shambhala, that assists reporters of harm by: 1) listening to reports of harm in an affirming and non-judgmental way; 2) offering support and encouragement to reporters; 3) helping reporters decide what, if any, actions they would like to take or any requests they would like to make of Shambhala; 4) identifying options available to reporters (such as filing a grievance or speaking to the independent investigator); and 5) serving, on request, as an advocate for reporters if they choose to take their complaint forward.

Reporters of harm have several options for action. These options are detailed in Figure 1 below and vary depending on the time period in which the harm occurred. For example, if you experienced harm between January 1, 2002 and September 1, 2018, you have three options:

- First, you may speak to the Listening Post for support or you may submit a written report of harm if you prefer. We expect the Listening Post to continue until December 31, 2018.
- Second, regardless of whether you speak to the Listening Post, you may speak to the independent law firm (Wickwire Holm) investigating misconduct within Shambhala. The investigation will be open until October 31, 2018.
- Third, you may also file a grievance under the Care and Conduct Policy adopted by Shambhala in 2002. If you would like an advocate from An Olive Branch to work with you during this process, one will be provided.

If you experienced harm prior to 2002, you may contact the Listening Post and/or Wickwire Holm. A separate process to address these complaints of harm is currently being developed because they predate the 2002 Care and Conduct Policy. Reports of harm that occur after September 1, 2018 will fall under the **new Code of Conduct** soon to be approved by the outgoing Kalapa Council. Shambhala will send a separate communication about this new Code of Conduct as soon as it is approved.

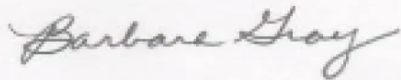
For reporters who wish to converse in a language other than English, special arrangements for you to do so will be made. Please indicate your language preference in parentheses, e.g. (German) when you first contact us.

If you would like to report harm, please contact us at: ListeningPost@an-olive-branch.org. Please provide your name, email address and/or telephone number, and country or time zone. All information shared with the Listening Post will be kept strictly confidential unless you, as the reporter, direct us to share it with others.

We are aware that some people who have been harmed have already left Shambhala. If you know of someone like this, will you please forward our letter to them?

While we deeply regret that it is necessary to create a Listening Post at all, we are committed to offering a safe space for anyone who has experienced harm to be heard, pursue redress, if desired, and take another step in their healing journey.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara Gray". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Dr. Barbara Gray

An Olive Branch

Appendix 3: Differences in Definitions of Sexual Abuse in Nova Scotia, Colorado, and Vermont

Nova Scotia

Sexual violence refers to an act or encouragement of an act that includes any violence, physical or psychological, carried out through sexual means or by targeting sexuality. This violence takes different forms which include but are not limited to sexual assault, childhood sexual abuse, sexual harassment, degrading sexual imagery, cyber-harassment and sexual exploitation. Sexual violence is a significant public health issue.

<https://novascotia.ca/coms/svs/docs/primer.pdf> (Accessed 1-24-19)

Colorado

Colorado has six categories of sexual abuse charges: 1) Internet sexual exploitation of a child; 2) Procurement of a child for sexual exploitation; 3) Sexual assault; 4) Sexual assault on a child; 5) Sexual assault on a child in position of trust; 6) Sexual exploitation of a child.

Sexual Assault – Knowingly sexually penetrating or sexually intruding upon a victim by any of the following means: The defendant:

- Causes the victim to submit against his or her will
- Knows the victim submits as erroneously believes the defendant to be his or her spouse
- Engages in the sexual activity while claiming to offer a medical treatment, but it's inconsistent with reasonable medical practices

The victim is:

- Incapable of understanding the sexual conduct
- Unconscious, asleep, or otherwise can't consent and the defendant knows this
- Under 14 years old and the defendant is at least 4 years old and not his or her spouse
- 15 or 16 years old and the defendant is at least 10 years older and not his or her spouse
- Detained in a jail, prison, or hospital where the defendant has authority over the victim and uses this authority to coerce the victim into the act

Unlawful Sexual Contact – Knowingly touching the victim's intimate parts or making the victim touch the defendant's intimate parts, or touching the clothing covering the intimate parts if this contact was for sexual arousal, gratification, or abuse, prohibited in any of the following cases:

- The victim:
 - Doesn't consent
 - Can't understand the sexual conduct
 - Is unconscious or asleep and can't consent
 - Is an inmate at a prison, jail, or hospital where the defendant has authority over him or her and uses that authority to coerce submission
- The defendant uses date rape drugs to impair the victim
- The defendant engages in the sexual contact while claiming to offer a medical treatment/exam, but the "exam" is inconsistent with reasonable medical practices
- Knowingly inducing or coercing a child under 18 years old to expose their intimate parts or to engage in any sexual contact, intrusions, or penetration with another person for the defendant's sexual gratification, by using any of the same means listed above for Sexual Assault

<https://statelaws.findlaw.com/colorado-law/colorado-rape-and-sexual-assault-laws.html> (Accessed 1-24-19)

Vermont

Vermont has defined eleven crimes that are used to prosecute sexual assault and related crimes within the state. **Statutory laws** can be used to prosecute offences that are related to the victim being below the Vermont Age of Consent, while non-statutory rape laws are often used to prosecute offences in which force or coercion was used by the assailant. The eleven categories are:

[Aggravated human trafficking](#) Vermont state law § 2653

[Aggravated human trafficking](#) Vermont state law § 2653

[Aggravated sexual assault of a child](#) Vermont state law § 3253a

[Fornication by persons prohibited to marry](#) Vermont state law § 205

[Human Trafficking](#) Vermont state law § 2652

[Lewd and lascivious conduct](#) Vermont state law § 2601

[Sexual abuse of a vulnerable adult](#) Vermont state law § 1379

[Sexual assault](#) Vermont state law § 3252

[Lewd or lascivious conduct with child under 16](#) Vermont state law § 2602

[Sexual exploitation of a minor](#) Vermont state law § 3258

[Sexual exploitation of an inmate](#) Vermont state law § 3257

Appendix 4: Variations in Definitions of Child Abuse In Nova Scotia, Colorado, and Vermont

Since definitions of child abuse vary by jurisdictions, below are key points about how child abuse is defined in each of three jurisdictions where Shambhala has practice centers: Nova Scotia, Colorado, and Vermont. However, the cases of child abuse reported to the Listening Post occurred only in Colorado.

Nova Scotia:

Child abuse includes:

- 1) physical abuse (the intentional use of force on any part of a child's body that results in injury);
- 2) emotional abuse (anything that causes serious mental or emotional harm to a child, which the parent does not attempt to prevent or address);
- 3) the improper exposure of a child to sexual contact, activity or behavior; and
- 4) neglect (any lack of care that may cause significant harm to a child's development or endangers the child in any way).

https://novascotia.ca/just/Prevention/tips_child_abuse.asp, accessed September 15, 2018.

Vermont:

Sexual Abuse: Consists of any act or acts by any person involving sexual molestation or exploitation of a child, including but not limited to ((33 VSA § 4912(17)): (A) Incest; (B) Prostitution – (Sex Trafficking of Minors); (C) Rape – (Sexual Assault); (D) Sodomy – (Sexual Assault); (E) Lewd and Lascivious Conduct (For children over the age of 16 who have been subjected to this conduct, this is limited to conduct which is forced, threatened or coerced, or the victim lacked the opportunity or ability to consent.); (F) Child Pornography; (G) Viewing, possessing, or transmitting child pornography; (H) Human Trafficking (Sex Trafficking of Minors; (I) Sexual Assault.

The definition of a Sexual Act is: Conduct between persons consisting of contact between the penis and the vulva, the penis and the anus, the mouth and the penis, the mouth and the vulva, penis and penis, vulva and vulva, or any intrusion, however slight, by any part of a person's body or any object into the genital or anal opening of another. (Excerpted from:

<https://dcf.vermont.gov/sites/dcf/files/FSD/Policies/50.pdf>, accessed January 14, 2019).

Vermont Age of Consent Law: §3252 (c) provides that no person shall engage in a sexual act with a child who is under the age of 16, except:

Where the persons are married to each other and the sexual act is consensual; or where the person is less than 19 years old, the child is at least 15 year, and the sexual act is consensual. However, it rises to 18 if the person is related to the minor or in a position of authority over him.

(d) No person shall engage in a sexual act with a child who is under the age of 18 and is entrusted to the actor's care by authority of law or is the actor's child, grandchild, foster child, adopted child or stepchild.

<https://dcf.vermont.gov/sites/dcf/files/FSD/Policies/50.pdf> (Accessed 1/24/2019)

Vermont statutory rape law is violated when a person has consensual sexual intercourse with an individual under age 16. <https://www.ageofconsent.net/states/vermont> (Accessed 1/24/2019)

Colorado:

The definition of child abuse is based on the US federal law known as the 1974 Mondale Act (also known as Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act - CAPTA) which offers these minimum definitions of child abuse and sexual abuse:

Child abuse or neglect is any recent act or failure to act resulting in imminent risk of serious harm, death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse, or exploitation of a child (usually a person under the age of 18, but a younger age may be specified in cases not involving sexual abuse) by a parent or caretaker who is responsible for the child's welfare.

Sexual abuse is defined as employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of any child to engage in, or assist any other person to engage in, any sexually explicit conduct or any simulation of such conduct for the purpose of producing any visual depiction of such conduct; or rape, and in cases of caretaker or inter-familial relationships, statutory rape, molestation, prostitution, or other form of sexual exploitation of children, or incest with children.

Colorado statutory rape law is violated when an individual has sexual intercourse with an individual under age 17. Close in age exemptions exist allowing 16- and 17-year-old to engage in sexual intercourse with partners who are less than 10 years older, and minors younger than 15 to engage in sexual congress with those less than 4 years older. Defenses exist if the victim and perpetrator are married (common law marriages are not applicable). Although the age of consent is 17, child prostitution laws extend to those 18 and under.

<https://statelaws.findlaw.com/colorado-law/colorado-rape-and-sexual-assault-laws.html> (Accessed 1-24-19)

Appendix 5: Statutes Governing Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse In Nova Scotia, Colorado, and Vermont

Nova Scotia

Mandatory reporting of child abuse to a child welfare agency is required of all Canadians when even a suspicion that a child under 16 may be in need of protective services. (See https://novascotia.ca/just/Prevention/tips_child_abuse.asp, accessed 9-15-2018).

Colorado

Mandatory reporting of child abuse in Colorado is addressed in Colorado Law: CRS § 19-3-304(a) which details which type of persons and when they are required to report child abuse or neglect. The statute states:

“(1), any person specified in subsection (2) of this section who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect or who has observed the child being subjected to circumstances or conditions that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect shall immediately upon receiving such information report or cause a report to be made of such fact to the county department or local law enforcement agency.”

“(b) The reporting requirement described in paragraph (a) of this subsection (1) shall not apply if the person who is otherwise required to report does not: (I) Learn of the suspected abuse or neglect until after the alleged victim of the suspected abuse or neglect is eighteen years of age or older; and (II) Have reasonable cause to know or suspect that the perpetrator of the suspected abuse or neglect: (A) Has subjected any other child currently under eighteen years of age to abuse or neglect or to circumstances or conditions that would likely result in abuse or neglect; or (B) Is currently in a position of trust, as defined in section 18-3-401 (3.5), C.R.S., with regard to any child currently under eighteen years of age.”

Additionally, in Colorado, prior to 2006, the statute of limitations for prosecuting sex offenders was 10 years. A new law was passed in 2006 removing any statute of limitations. The new law took effect on July 1, 2006, and applies to offenses that were committed on or after July 1, 1996.

<https://www.colorado-sex-crimes-lawyer.com/colorado-statute-of-limitations-for-sex-offenses>, accessed 9-15-2018.

Vermont

All Vermonters are encouraged to report their concerns about children’s safety. Mandated reports are legally required to report any suspected child abuse and neglect to us (Department for Children and Families) within 24 hrs. Additionally, see age of consent description for sex offenses in Vermont in Appendix 3. <https://dcf.vermont.gov/sites/dcf/files/FSD/Policies/50.pdf>, accessed 1-24-19.