

Re: Sexual misconduct by Buddhist teachers (was Eido Tai Shi

□ by Shodo on Wed Jun 01, 2011 10:59 pm

This was just posted on genkaku-again... After listening to Genjo's teisho I feel that it belongs here as well.

From Banko Randy Phillips, who resigned from the board after the latest fiasco.

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Dear Genjo Osho,

Thanks you for your email. I find the contents to be disturbing, to say the least.

As you know I resigned from the board because I thought that Eido Roshi should take an immediate leave of absence and stop seeing students under the auspices of ZSS.

As you remember, during all of the many deliberations with the board Shinge Roshi would agree with the plan of action only to backtrack or reverse direction - sometimes only hours later. She does not fundamentally understand the situation and is apparently not capable of acting any other way. I do understand loyalty to a teacher but this is beyond the pale. She does not handle confrontation well and this is a situation that centers around an individual who needs to be confronted. I am not speaking behind her back in that I have written the same to her in the past. She apparently feels that all confrontation stems from anger. None of the board has acted in anger, myself included.

I am of the understanding that you wrote a letter to Eido Roshi (with the board's and Shinge Roshi's approval) requesting that Eido Roshi own up via a statement to what he had done (with some amount of specifics), honestly apologize and seek some sort of rehabilitation. After doing that the board might consider SOME kind of continuing relationship with him.

It appears that Eido Roshi has done nothing other than to try to figure a way to get back in. It appears that two old-time Shanga members (at his request) are soliciting what Sangha that is left to write letters to Eido Roshi explaining their desire to study with him. I speculate that these letters will then will be submitted to the board with the argument that the Sangha wants Eido Roshi and the board does not represent the heart of the Sangha.

If students want to study with Eido Roshi I sincerely wish them well. I feel that it is imperative, however, that ZSS does not offer him a venue. ZSS does not belong to Eido Roshi, though he has long acted like it did.

This is a time for leadership. A leader would explain to students that did not understand the situation what has transpired. What has transpired?

Eido Roshi has lied about almost every detail of his coming to America and New York. He has lied by omission and by outright lie. He has had very questionable financial dealings. He has gone against the wishes of his greatest benefactors repeatedly to the point where they "disowned" him. Soen Roshi did the same - and Eido Roshi repeatedly lied about it. He had numerous sexual scandals that are well documented. He allowed his wife to run Shobo-ji nearly into the ground with her mean vindictive behavior. When senior Sangha members (lead by myself) got him to agree to a schedule where she would slowly step down he reversed his decision within months. When the recent scandal broke he wrote a very tepid apology and then retracted it via a letter to the NY Times. He has been asked repeatedly by the current board to return ZSS documents in his possession and he has not to my knowledge acted in good faith or complied with most requests. Now he is behind the scenes trying to pull strings to get himself back into a teaching situation with ZSS.

Teaching is a privilege and not a right. Eido Roshi has betrayed the trust that was given to him time and time again. This is patently ridiculous. It also remains a legal liability if the board backtracks. If Shinge Roshi can not agree to this (as she has in the past) then she should remove herself. We can chart the waters ahead without an Abbot, especially one who does not understand the basics. This is not the time for consensus, this is not the time to ask your students what they want. This is the time to explain to them why they can not have what they think they want. Eido Roshi does not have the moral authority to be entrusted with the responsibility of being a teacher because he repeatedly abused this power. This is the time to show some leadership and make difficult decisions - and stand by them.

Yes, Eido Roshi has been a great teacher, he was for me and he changed my life and countless others. But the fact that he can teach well and even open Dharma eyes is not a valid argument that he should be allowed to continue to teach. Unless he has a profound change of heart we should have nothing to do with him via ZSS.

Please not to agree to whatever compromise Shinge Roshi comes up with. I am sure that Fujin is in the heart of all of this as well as all of the other enablers. The time for compromise is AFTER Eido Roshi shows some real honesty, change and remorse.

I do not envy you this trip. Please know that I greatly respect your work and the work of the other board members. If there is anything I can do to help please let me know.

**Feel free to share this email with whomever you wish.**

Gassho,

Banko Randy Phillips