



15 Sept 2020

Sat Naam dear members of the KRI community,

This letter is to keep you informed about how KRI is dealing with the recent release of the report from An Olive Branch and what our plans are for the future. We recognize how much uncertainty the report has created, on many levels; we want to be very open with you about where we stand and where we see things going.

You can find the report posted in its entirety in several languages [here](#), along with a cover letter from the organization that commissioned the report, the Siri Singh Sahib Corporation. On [this page](#), you can also find two prior letters from KRI (one before and one after the report was released) in multiple languages, several resources to help in processing the emotions the report may bring up, and a link to a very extensive FAQ page, with answers to many questions that have come up recently.

The KRI board of directors accepts the findings of the report, which is “that it is more likely than not that Yogi Bhan engaged in several types of sexual misconduct and abused his power as a spiritual leader.” Part of KRI’s response to this conclusion includes:

- Reaching out via the Compassionate Reconciliation process (explained more below) to try to help the individuals who reported harm.
- Remaining committed to continuing to share the yogic technology Yogi Bhan taught.
- Evolving as an organization to be more inclusive, transparent, and open to critical feedback.
- Embracing change, living our values, and exploring all aspects of our history and culture that may have contradicted our values.

KRI’s board of directors also recognizes the need to expand and become more culturally and geographically diverse; hence, it is looking for new members. The intention is to strengthen and balance board representation broadly across the globe and to include voices that represent the views and perspectives of our diverse community. This is especially important to do NOW, so that this increased diversity can help KRI navigate the work ahead. To that end, you can self-nominate and/or recommend qualified candidates who are interested in re-inventing KRI to meet the needs, the consciousness, and the heart of this New Age. If you are

interested in self-nominating or know of a person who would love to serve the teachings and technologies of Kundalini Yoga, please send a request for more information and an application to [Gurusahay Singh Khalsa](#).

What About the Doubts Raised About the Validity of the Investigation?

KRI accepts the report from An Olive Branch and does not find the concerns about their licensing within the State of Pennsylvania or their qualifications to impact the report's findings. You can read more detailed responses from the group that hired An Olive Branch [here](#). We also believe that An Olive Branch's investigation — which received information from more people who spoke in support of Yogi Bhajan than against and which actively reached out to Yogi Bhajan's family and close associates to provide any relevant information — was neutral.

As the report says very clearly, their criteria was different than in a criminal trial, where something must be proven "beyond a reasonable doubt." The standard used by An Olive Branch was whether it was more likely than not that the alleged conduct occurred. Applying this standard, An Olive Branch found that it was more likely than not that Yogi Bhajan engaged in different forms of sexual and ethical misconduct.

What is Being Done to Reach Out to the Reporters Of Harm? How Can Existing Students Feel Safe to Practice Kundalini Yoga?

KRI is participating with our partner organizations in a process we are calling Compassionate Reconciliation, which will be based on the principles of restorative justice. We are currently looking for an outside consultant to help structure and guide this process. In designing the Compassionate Reconciliation program, the organizations will work with reporters of harm to explore how they can be helped and to support community healing on all levels.

Many of the questions and concerns that arose during the investigation but that were beyond the scope of AOB's report will be addressed through this Compassionate Reconciliation process. Going forward, the organizations will evaluate whether additional steps will need to be taken to resolve those concerns.

Our nonprofit organizations include the Office of Ethics, Professional Standards and Conscious Conflict Resolution (EPS). KRI works closely with this office to deal with any reports of abuses of power — or any other unethical behavior — of any KRI-certified Kundalini Yoga Teacher. If you have experienced misconduct by a teacher of Kundalini Yoga or are facing other ethical challenges, you can contact the 24/7 helpline at 1-888-805-4888 or visit [the EPS website](#) to know your rights and receive assistance.

We also have made public [The 10 Rights of a Kundalini Yoga Student](#), which we encourage all teachers and studios to share with students. Making a public declaration of what our standards are and what our teachers are accountable to is a very important step.

EPS is working with an outside expert to review all of their policies and procedures to make sure that we are adhering to best practices in our efforts to quickly, fairly, and effectively deal with any reports of abuses of power or other ethical infringements.

We acknowledge that the unquestioning devotion to a spiritual teacher is a valid spiritual path, and we honor anyone with such a relationship to Yogi Bhajan. But we do NOT support teachers of Kundalini Yoga cultivating such a relationship with their students. The role of a spiritual teacher is a powerful one, and particular care must be taken to avoid abuses of that power. Particularly, students must always feel empowered (as self-empowerment is the ultimate goal of yoga) to say no, to draw boundaries, and to ultimately make their own decisions about their lives. We do not support relationships where students are told not to question the teachings or the teacher. KRI will continue to reflect, discuss, and learn from our past to improve our trainings and strengthen our community by anchoring our actions ever more firmly in our shared values.

What Will Happen with the Practices of Kundalini Yoga?

KRI remains committed to sharing and teaching the practices Yogi Bhajan brought to the West. They have been effective tools for healing, emotional maturation, and spiritual connection, and we want to continue to help as many people as possible with them. The world certainly needs them more than ever now! This does not mean that we will bypass potentially difficult questions or avoid making changes in our approach.

KRI stands behind our prior and current training programs and publications, and we remain proud of the tens of thousands of Kundalini Yoga teachers who have been trained in a KRI certified program.

We will still teach by tuning in with Ong Namō, Guru Dev Namō, closing class with the Long Time Sunshine song, and teaching the kriyas and meditations as they have been taught. Understandably, losing trust in Yogi Bhajan raises doubts about the validity of his yogic teachings. Regardless of the origins of our practices, the legacy of our collective experiences with them shows their efficacy. We know that Yogi Bhajan learned from many teachers, and we are still comfortable teaching and sharing elements of his teachings that may be his unique combinations or amalgamations because they have been effective in our experience.

We are releasing a new version of “The Aquarian Teacher,” the textbook for our Level One teacher training programs. This new version will acknowledge the report and its conclusions,

and it will focus much more on the teachings than on the person of Yogi Bhajan. We will offer this manual in two versions — one with Yogi Bhajan’s name and picture on the cover and one without. We will also offer our teacher training certificates in versions with and without Yogi Bhajan’s name. This is not to deny the reality of him being the one who shared this particular set of teachings, but to acknowledge how triggering his name and image are to some people right now. The benefits of practicing Kundalini Yoga are our focus, more than where they came from.

How Else is KRI Changing?

KRI’s mission has been to preserve the purity and accuracy of Yogi Bhajan’s teachings. We still recognize the importance of that — not from the perspective that everything Yogi Bhajan said was “gospel truth,” but from the enormous benefits we have experienced and seen others experience when they practice them. We will increase our focus on research and remain more open than in the past to staying in relationship with the broader yoga community and society in general.

We also view the practice of Kundalini Yoga as a means, not an end in and of itself. We practice these teachings to get healthier, happier and holier (more spiritually connected). All of these benefits give us tools to thrive in today’s world, which must also include a personal commitment to improving the lives of others. Seva, or selfless service, has always been an important yogic lifestyle practice, and we want to encourage and support all practitioners to take their practice off their mats and into the world, to work for social and planetary justice in their own unique ways.

In Conclusion - A Personal Note from Amrit Singh

I would like to close by sharing very frankly and directly from my heart — as so many of you have also done. As someone entrusted to keep Yogi Bhajan’s teachings accurate and available for future generations to benefit, it is important that you know my personal story and stance.

I have gone through a lot of emotional pain and processing over the last several months. I began my Kundalini Yoga practice in 1989 and first met Yogi Bhajan in 1995. I worked very closely with him from 1999 until his passing in 2004. I also worked every single day with people who have now come forward as reporters of harm.

Accepting the report’s conclusions is heartbreaking to me. I am so, so sad for the individuals who were harmed. Where I’m at now, which I am sure will continue to evolve, is that I am still

very, very grateful to Yogi Bhajan for all he gave me — both personally in my interactions with him and impersonally through all the yogic teachings that have enriched my life so deeply. And I'm furiously angry at Yogi Bhajan.

These personal experiences of mine contribute to my strong commitments on behalf of KRI to:

- Reach out via the Compassionate Reconciliation process to try to help the individuals who were harmed.
- Ensure that we move our culture so that all people — people of every race, religion, gender or sexual identity — feel welcome and safe.
- Continue sharing the uplifting and transformative practices that Yogi Bhajan taught.

I know that this has been a long email! But there is a lot to share these days. We are just at the beginning steps of facing new facts about our past, and it will take many more months for our community to process through various stages of reaction before some new shared ways of relating to Yogi Bhajan and our history emerge. We are holding everyone in our prayers and welcoming the diversity of reactions. This is a normal and healthy stage, and as uncomfortable as it might be, KRI does not want to rush too quickly into a new narrative. We are processing, changing, learning, and adapting just as many of you are.

We remain a community of committed practitioners, teachers, and trainers who believe in the power of our practices to uplift and heal. KRI is here to help as many people benefit from these practices as possible. We will remain grounded in this vision to help navigate the coming months, as we examine what from the past to keep and what to change. We strongly believe in the strength and power of our community.

If you have additional questions, please look at a detailed set of [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\) here](#). If your particular issue is not addressed, please [email us](#).

Like all challenges in life, these difficult times are an opportunity to live up to our values. KRI is striving to remain deeply heart-centered and to move forward with love and compassion for everyone, even as we acknowledge and deal with the shadows of our founder and our past. We want to continue to be of service by sharing these powerful teachings and by doing so with integrity, openness, and transparency.

With many blessings



Amrit Singh Khalsa, CEO