

Questions and Answers about the Report from An Olive Branch and KRI's Response

Section 1: Questions About the Report Itself

1. What are the qualifications of An Olive Branch (AOB)? Why was An Olive Branch chosen if they do not have a license to conduct investigations?

AOB's training and experience qualified them for this investigation. During the course of the SSSC's due diligence in selecting an investigator for this inquiry, AOB was found to meet the critical requirements to be entrusted with completing the task including:

- *Experience understanding the issues unique to spiritual or religious-based organizations.*
- *Experience investigating claims of sexual misconduct.*
- *Demonstrated relatability to reporters of harm as well as witnesses.*
- *Ability to instill confidence that all individuals in the matter will be treated with sensitivity and care.*
- *Service as an impartial third party, unconnected with the SSSC organizations, legal counsel or law enforcement.*

All of AOB's consultants have careers in fields that make them well qualified for the work required for this independent investigation. As professional mediators and facilitators, AOB's consultants know how to listen deeply and ask probing questions to tease out important details and distinctions in what people say. They have graduate-level training and experience in gathering and analyzing qualitative data — data gained through interviews, observations and other sources — making them competent to conduct the investigation and synthesize their findings into a report. Their research backgrounds enable them to ask questions that are guided by social science knowledge, insight and practice, while their project management skills and experience support large-scale inquiries such as this one involving nearly 300 participants. Moreover, these consultants have performed similar investigations for two other organizations in the past, demonstrating their ability to do the work necessary in this matter.

An Olive Branch originated as a nonprofit program of the Zen Center of Pittsburgh. The Pennsylvania Private Detective Act of 1953 requires private detectives in Pennsylvania to have a license to perform many tasks, including activities that fall under a very broad definition of a "private detective business." That definition includes an investigation for the purpose of "obtaining information with reference to ... the credibility of witnesses or other persons." To obtain a license under the statute, an individual must generally have three years of prior law enforcement experience and meet other requirements.

The District Attorney's office in each of Pennsylvania's counties is responsible for enforcing the licensing statute in its county. In the summer of 2020, the Allegheny County District Attorney's office received a complaint about AOB's activities and opened a file on the matter. The District Attorney's office independently investigated AOB's activities and also met with SSSC's local counsel. After considering, among other things, that it did not appear that anyone in Pennsylvania was being investigated and that none of the activities under investigation occurred in Pennsylvania, the District Attorney's

office concluded it had no legal interest in AOB's investigation and advised local counsel that it had closed its file.

While it is true that AOB does not have a license issued under Pennsylvania's Private Detective Act of 1953, law enforcement in Pennsylvania is aware of and has familiarized itself with the nature and scope of AOB's investigation and does not intend to take any action concerning AOB's licensing status.

2. Are there any further investigations being planned as a result of this report? What will happen with questions and concerns that did not fall within the scope of the AOB report and were passed on to the Siri Singh Sahib Corporation? Will there be any additional investigations around those other topics?

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 the Compassionate Reconciliation process. Going forward, the organizations will evaluate whether additional steps will need to be taken to resolve those concerns. In addition, during the AOB investigation, AOB referred concerns that fell outside the scope of the investigation to the Office of Ethics and Professional Standards (EPS) or the Office of Dharmic Counsel (ODC), which is the in-house legal office that serves the Siri Singh Sahib Corporation and its related nonprofits. EPS and ODC will handle those concerns to the extent necessary to resolve them.

3. Were there any men among the reporters of harm?

The identities of everyone who participated in the investigation were kept confidential. Outside of AOB, it is not known whether there were men among the reporters or, if so, how many.

4. Were the witnesses' statements and identities verified for authenticity?

AOB did not receive any anonymous complaints; each participant was required to identify themselves to AOB. AOB's consultants followed best practices for conducting this type of investigation. They listened carefully to the reporters of harm, witnesses and all others who participated in the investigation. They tested the credibility and motives of everyone they interviewed, sought corroborating or refuting evidence and witnesses, and prepared a complete account of what they learned during the course of the investigation.

5. Were Yogi Bhajan's staff and secretaries asked about the allegations?

AOB reached out to staff members and secretaries, and others contacted AOB directly.

6. Does KRI accept the report's findings as truth?

It is important to keep in mind the scope of the AOB report's findings. It does not claim to present "the truth." KRI does accept the report's conclusion, "that it is more likely that not that Yogi Bhajan engaged in several types of sexual misconduct and abused his power as a spiritual leader." We also recognize that accepting the report's conclusions will be difficult for some. We acknowledge this diversity of opinion.

7. How was Yogi Bhajan defended?

Of the interviews and statements taken by AOB that related to the scope of their investigation, 140 were "supporters of Yogi Bhajan and refuters of the allegations," compared to 96 "reporters of harm and others providing input about Reporters' credibility." The report quotes the supporters of Yogi Bhajan and even concludes that,

“Conclusions about the likelihood of his misconduct need not deny or erase the good that he extended to many who overcame destructive habits in their lives and/or found a pathway to a deeper relationship with God. The fact that he offered these gifts to some followers cannot and need not be denied.”

KRI likewise does not deny all the good that Yogi Bhajan did. There are the many, many people he served and helped and uplifted. Resolving the dichotomy between the good he did and harm he caused creates an opportunity for us to grow as a community.

KRI is grateful for the teachings he brought, and we do not deny that many, many people had only extremely positive experiences with Yogi Bhajan. We are also simultaneously deeply saddened that this was not the case for everyone. We are striving to embrace the reality of both the shadow and light sides of Yogi Bhajan, and hope that time and a lot of community dialogue will help us find the best ways to relating to our past, to Yogi Bhajan and to the teachings, so that we can continue to provide people with the technology of the teachings to live healthier, happier lives.

8. Were people offered money to participate in the AOB investigation?

No, our organizations did not offer anyone money for speaking to AOB. Following best practices, the Siri Singh Sahib Corporation made available to anyone claiming to have been harmed, whether they spoke to AOB or not, an anonymous counselling service for up to \$1,200 worth of counselling with Concern.

9. How will we ensure consistency of response among independent yoga studios and teachers?

Some teachers will believe the conclusions of the AOB report, and others will not believe those things. As long as teachers adhere to the teachings, people are welcome to draw their own conclusions. Our practice has always been about openness and acceptance, not any dogmatic system of beliefs that must be accepted.

Section 2: What is being done for the reporters of Harm?

1. What is being done for the reporters of harm?

Free and anonymous counseling is available for all reporters of harm. The outside firm offering this assistance, Concern, can be reached at www.concernhealth.com or at 800-344-4222.

The Siri Singh Sahib Corporation (SSSC) is creating a program of Compassionate Reconciliation that will apply the principles of restorative justice to heal the fractures in the community as we move forward, including reaching out to those who have been harmed and work collaboratively with them to find a mutual way forward. A professional consultant is currently being selected to work with our global community, including reporters of harm, to design and implement such a program.

2. What processes and resources exist to address teacher/student ethical issues within the Kundalini Yoga community?

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 teacher abuses of power – or any other unethical behavior. 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.

In 2019, EPS published [The 10 Rights of a Kundalini Yoga Student](#), which we encourage all teachers and studios to share with students. Doing so is a very important step and publicly declares how our teachers are held accountable.

EPS is working with an outside expert to review its policies and procedures and implement any recommended improvements to continue to ensure that all members of the community have a clear and safe path to report harm and have ethical misconduct addressed promptly, fairly and effectively.

3. Will public apologies be given by the institutions, or the broader community, to those reporting harm by Yogi Bhajan?
The Compassionate Reconciliation process will explore the possible ways to create opportunities for healing and to address the needs of those who were harmed.
4. Are there any reporters of harm who are still involved with KRI and/or teaching or training?
As the identities of everyone who contacted AOB are kept confidential, we do not know who the reporters of harm are.
5. What is KRI's position with individuals who deny these reports of harm?
The AOB report was published to allow everyone to develop an understanding of the past, and we recognize that each person who reviews the report will have their own response. We honor diversity of opinions and ask that all engage in compassionate, respectful dialogue as we move forward.
6. Some people view and/or experienced the way Yogi Bhajan sometimes taught as abusive bullying, and others see and/or experienced that same interaction as a positive, ego-chiseling event. How does KRI view this?
Each person's experience is their own. We acknowledge that many people had nothing but very positive experiences with Yogi Bhajan, and even what Yogi Bhajan called his "Saturn teacher" style worked well as a spiritual tool to help some people. KRI does not believe that anyone should change how they view or share their own experiences.

KRI is very clear that we do NOT condone or support a verbally or physically abusive style of teaching. We would consider "abusive bullying" by any of our certified teachers or teacher trainers to be something to be reported to the Office of Ethics and Professional Standards (EPS).

Section 3: Questions about Kundalini Yoga, Teacher Training, Etc.

1. Will there be further research into the origins and lineage of Kundalini Yoga? Will there be further scientific or academic research into the benefits of Kundalini Yoga? What other sources for Kundalini Yoga exist beyond Yogi Bhajan?

Yes, KRI does plan to continue to research the origins and lineage of Kundalini Yoga. However, a more pressing concern is conducting additional research into the benefits of Kundalini Yoga, which can help gain more widespread acceptance of these practices. You can access the research that has been done on the benefits of Kundalini Yoga, and stay up to date as new studies are published, on the [Research page of the KRI website](#).

2. Which aspects of the teachings are Yogi Bhajan's design and which are from a traditional Kundalini Yoga lineage or traditional Sikhism?

We know the exact origins of only a few of the kriya, exercises and meditations, but we know that yoga has always been a syncretic process. Whether any particular practice was amalgamated by Yogi Bhajan or came through Yogi Bhajan or was taught to Yogi Bhajan exactly as he taught it, we remain focused on the legacy of this practice — the shared experience that shows us that these practices are effective. Given the verbal nature of much yogic teaching, we may never know the origins of many practices.

3. How will Kundalini Yoga relate to Yogi Bhajan in the future? How will we maintain the essence of Kundalini Yoga in the future?

The Teachings themselves will continue to be preserved and verified by KRI. No changes are planned to KRI's work in that context, nor with the kriyas. How Kundalini Yoga will relate to Yogi Bhajan in the future is primarily a personal question for each teacher and trainer to answer authentically. Before the allegations and report, there was a wide range of ways that teachers related to, and spoke about, Yogi Bhajan. Going forward, there will probably also be many different ways people relate to Yogi Bhajan.

4. What is the stance of 3HO and KRI towards Yogi Bhajan?

Our organizations acknowledge that people experienced harm via Yogi Bhajan, and we simultaneously acknowledge and are grateful for the Teachings he brought and shared. It will take many more months before a new way of talking about Yogi Bhajan and about our past emerges from our collective community. KRI will remain in conversation with teachers and trainers as our understandings deepen and evolve.

5. How do I connect to the Golden Chain if I no longer connect with Yogi Bhajan? Is the Adi Mantra to join with Yogi Bhajan? Are there any considerations about changing it?

The Golden Chain has two aspects. It is personal and non-personal. It is linear as well as nonlinear. It is somewhat like our concepts of lineage and legacy. The linear quality relates to your relationship with your teacher. The laws are twofold: how you relate to your teacher is how your students will relate to you and that you must be greater than your teacher.

The nonlinear aspect is that there is a confluence of thousands of years of wisdom from spiritual teachers that is a link, an access point that is available to you for your relationship with your own infinity.

KRI will continue to teach by tuning in with the Adi Mantra. Tuning in with the Adi Mantra (Ong Namō, Guru Dev Namō) is not specifically tuning in to Yogi Bhajan personally. The

Adi Mantra connects us to the infinite, creative, all-pervading consciousness and to the subtle inner wisdom of our own Inner Teacher. It connects us impersonally to the wisdom of all the teachers that have gone before us, and it helps us show up impersonally for our own practice or as a teacher to be there for our students without our ego.

6. How do I talk to my students when I am unsure of the authenticity of Kundalini Yoga myself? *Many people are experiencing a lot of pain, confusion, doubt, and/or uncertainty right now, and there is no “right” way to move through these feelings. Some people may need to take a pause from their teaching. Others are able to share their personal journey with their students in a way that is still uplifting and supportive — demonstrating strength and resilience in the face of personal challenge. KRI and 3HO are offering various avenues of support ([Zoom calls](#), [online webinars](#), a write-up on [“A Yogic Model for Grief Recovery.”](#) FAQs, etc.) to help you find your own relationship with the information about Yogi Bhajan contained in the report from AOB.*

7. How will Teacher Trainings address this history in the future? *The findings of the investigation by AOB will be acknowledged in the new version of “The Aquarian Teacher,” the textbook for the Level One Teacher Training programs. Discussions are occurring among KRI and teacher trainers about what lessons we have to learn from this, and how to use those lessons to make better teachers for the future. We strive to help create teachers who do nothing but serve the highest consciousness of their students and who have done enough inner shadow work to ensure they are fully present for the sole purpose of lifting up their students.*

8. What will be happening with the Kundalini Yoga manuals and Teaching Training? Will the image of Yogi Bhajan on the cover of the level 1 manual still be used? How will the teaching of humanology be approached?

KRI will continue to teach what was brought forth by Yogi Bhajan, and the same kriyas and practices that have helped thousands of people in the past will continue helping them in the future. The books will continue to be sold, and teacher training courses will continue to be taught. KRI continues to examine how to improve our presentation of the teachings to best reach and uplift today’s students.

KRI is editing the Level One teacher training manual, “The Aquarian Teacher,” to make many updates and improvements, including having more of the focus be on the teachings. KRI is also working with all Teacher Trainers to continually improve the trainings to make them even more impactful than they have been. The humanology chapter, as well as other chapters, of “The Aquarian Teacher” is being re-written. This new version of the manual will be available in two versions — one with Yogi Bhajan’s picture and name on the cover and one without. Each teacher trainer can choose which of the revised manuals they want to use or can choose to use the old manual.

9. Are the Teachings being reviewed? Would that include kriyas and meditations? Aspects of humanology?

KRI is not reviewing the kriyas and meditations. We will examine their sources, where we are able to, but we do not feel that proving their provenance is necessary for

continuing to practice and access the benefits. The more “philosophical” aspects of the Teachings have always been open to interpretation and have never been forced on anyone as a belief they must adhere to. We do plan to be more open than we were to questioning and making sure that practitioners and trainers all know that adherence to a specific philosophy is not necessary in order to be a Kundalini Yogi.

10. What will happen to the trademark "Kundalini Yoga as taught by Yogi Bhajan"? Will teachers and trainers who still want to continue to teach "Kundalini Yoga as taught by Yogi Bhajan" be permitted to do so?

Using this trademark will be optional for now. Teachers and trainers who wish to use it may do so, and those who prefer not to use it are not required to do so.

11. What will happen with existing KRI certificates? Will future certificates refer to Kundalini Yoga as taught by Yogi Bhajan®?

Existing KRI certifications remain valid and recognized. KRI will make a version available without Yogi Bhajan’s name printed on it for those who have that preference.

12. Are the requirements for receiving a KRI certification going to change?

Some changes to the certification requirements are being considered. For example, the day of White Tantric Yoga and showing at least two Yogi Bhajan videos in class may become optional rather than required.

13. What is the future of White Tantric Yoga? Will it continue to be part of our practice? Will it continue to be required for certification in Level One?

White Tantric Yoga is a separate organization from 3HO and KRI, and they are examining how they will move forward in the future. Our understanding is that it will continue as a practice for anyone who chooses to participate. KRI is considering making it optional rather than required for a Level One teaching certificate.

14. Is there a discussion about taking a pause from trainings until we sort out how to rebuild and move forward?

KRI honors and supports those teacher trainers who are taking a pause, because we acknowledge that the near future will be a time of more adjustments and shifts in how we talk about our past and our practice and ourselves. We also remain here to encourage and support those trainers that are continuing. We stand behind all of the teacher trainings that have been given in the past, and we are comfortable continuing trainings.

15. How will the organizations handle individuals altering the teachings from how Yogi Bhajan gave them?

As a policy, KRI does NOT support altering the teachings from how Yogi Bhajan taught them.

16. Will previously certified teachers have access to the updated teacher training manual?

The updated manual will be available for sale to prior teacher training students, but not to the general public.

17. Are the teachings going to become less rigid? For example, having to get up at 4 a.m.?
The teachings are timeless and will continue. They are tools that each of us can choose to take advantage of or not. Getting up before the sun has a benefit to our meditation and for our day, but there should not be a sense of rigidity around that teaching. By following the teachings, you can experience the full benefits for yourself; you may always choose not to participate in a particular piece of the teachings.
18. Are kriyas going to be reviewed, especially where Yogi Bhajan is heavily quoted?
The practices themselves won't be changed, as the exercises and kriyas are central to the Teachings. KRI is open to examining and possibly changing how the kriyas are described and written about.
19. Are we going to see new kriyas?
KRI and 3HO are not expecting to create new kriyas but will continue to write up previously unpublished kriyas from the Library of Teachings.
20. Is there a move to be more sensitive to trauma in the teachings?
KRI has offered some free webinars to support teachings in increasing their sensitivity to this important topic. For example, consider reviewing "[How Yoga Works in Trauma Recovery - the Scientific Foundations](#)".
21. Will Sikhism continue to be a part of the teachings?
KRI's role is to promote the teaching and practice of Kundalini Yoga. We acknowledge that there are definitely connections and overlaps between Kundalini Yoga and Sikh Dharma, and we will continue to have a section about that overlap as part of our Teacher Training programs. It has always been very clear that you do not have to be a Sikh to practice or teach Kundalini Yoga.
22. Will the Code of Ethics be addressed and/or rewritten?
Yes. Prior to the allegations, we already had a plan in place to revise and improve our Code of Ethics. It is very important that we have a shared code of ethics that holds all teachers accountable. KRI is happy to be working with the dedicated Office of Ethics and Professional Standards (EPS) on this updated version of the Code of Ethics and on continually improving our process for handling all complaints.
23. Will the image of Yogi Bhajan still be used for the tratakam meditation? Will the tratakam meditation on the photo of Yogi Bhajan remain in the Teacher Training Yoga Manual?
There are several different ways to do tratakam meditations, for example meditating on a candle flame or gazing at an image. The technology will stay available for those that want to continue using the photo of Yogi Bhajan for this gazing meditation. The Teacher Training yoga manual has been updated to focus on the other gazing forms of tratakam meditation.
24. What is the future of Summer Solstice, Winter Solstice and the European Yoga Festival?
3HO will continue to hold Summer and Winter Solstice. There will be no in-person Winter Solstice in 2020 due to COVID-19, although there will be an online summit. We do not yet know when we will again be able to gather in person or how the nature of the events will shift when we do, but we look forward to continuing to receive community feedback and dialogue as we envision the future of these events.

For 3HO Europe and the European Yoga Festival (EYF) the pause we had to take this year, due to COVID-19, has given us space to re-evaluate the frame of the festival. The EYF management team wants its community, in its diversity, to be more at the center of the festival. The EYF also feels the need to go back to the roots of a family-like event — a community gathering where we can all share our vision of who we want to be, as a community involved in its organization.

25. How will organizational leadership become more diverse so that it is reflective and representative of the global community?

The KRI Board of Directors 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 many views and perspectives of our diverse community. 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. Applicants do NOT need to be teacher trainers. 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](#).