

Andrea Winn's February 9, 2018 post in Facebook Group

Dear Noble Sangha,

I was asked by Leslie [Hayes] to say something, and it feels like the right thing to do. If community members saw sexualized violence, or really any kind of social violence, we would not be in the challenging positions we are in now. If we had movements within our body that resonate with the gong of truth, we would indeed be in a far more healed state.

Leslie and I know we have radically different perspectives on, and approaches to, the violence problem in our own ways to bring healing. I appreciate how she and I have developed a wide space of honour around our respective approaches.

I took a look through the thread of discussion begun by Justin Rezzonico last night, and I witnessed sincerely engaged one another and shared their divergent views. I praise the goodness in this, and in what you, as a community, are doing.

It seems we need to learn how to talk about such an overwhelming challenge in our community. At a Level 5, Eve Rosenthal, suggested that perhaps I will show the community how to have that sensitivity. I am trying.

Mitchell Levy has indeed caused great harm in our community. Many people of my parents' generation in the past that we can just forget about it.

However, many young people's lives were affected by Mitchell's selfish and harmful actions. Harm has not been repaired. This is true. One great tragedy is the suicide of Ciel Turzanski after the abuse she experienced in the sangha. There is no way to repair a situation like this. There are incomprehensible things we have yet to understand.

Many of us have lived for decades in oppressive silence about the crimes of Mitchell and many others. It is not understood by any of us.

I understand Mitchell has gone through two Care and Conduct processes for two of his crimes. This is the nature of his crimes, he should step down from all leadership and teaching until the harm he has caused is repaired.

If there is one thing Trungpa Rinpoche taught, it is that we can clean situations up. When we dirty our community, we wear clean clothes.

The lineage he gave us gives us unique and powerful skilful means for cleaning situations up. It is now time to take his teachings and integrate them fully into a way forward in cleaning up the violence within ourselves and our community.

It would be wrong to vilify Mitchell and other perpetrators of the violence, because there is likely some element of truth in what they say.

need to commit to our practices both on and off the cushion to address the harm doers within and with

I had the opportunity years ago to do some work in a group for male abusers. In this experience I got to see their rigid, hardened defensiveness. I also heard their stories of being abused themselves as little boys repeating for generations in our culture.

So let us deal with the dynamic. And let us find the skilful means for dealing with the perpetrators and harm

If Shambhala is committed to creating a culture of kindness, that flame of kindness now needs to be turned on to relate with ourselves and each other.

We have a very challenging road ahead if we are going to find our way through this and come out the other side able to brilliantly carry forward the Shambhala lineage.

We need strong, competent leadership for this to happen. May it arise in the powerful ways now demanded.

Please read the Project Sunshine report coming out on February 15th.