

## **Offizielle Stellungnahme des Delegierten von Shambhala Europa gegenüber dem Rat der Deutschen Buddhistischen Union (DBU)**

In den vergangenen Monaten wurden im Rahmen von Andrea Winns Sunshine Report Project<sup>1</sup> anonyme Vorwürfe wegen sexuellen Fehlverhaltens und Machtmissbrauchs gegen Mitglieder des Führungsgremiums von Shambhala International erhoben. Unter den Beschuldigten ist auch unser Lehrer und Linienhalter, Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche. Alle in dem Report genannten Vorwürfe beziehen sich auf Vorkommnisse in Nordamerika und Chile.

Uns erschüttern diese Vorwürfe tief, und unser Mitgefühl gilt allen Menschen, denen Leid zugefügt wurde. Wir möchten klarstellen, dass wir den Missbrauch von Macht gegenüber Frauen und Missbrauch in jeder anderen Form entschieden ablehnen!

Noch fehlen viele Details, um uns ein vollständiges Bild zu machen. Shambhala Europa als Teil des internationalen Shambhala Sangha erlebt sich als eine Gemeinschaft, die von Menschlichkeit und gegenseitigem Respekt getragen wird.<sup>2</sup> Wir begrüßen daher, dass Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche sein Führungs- und Lehramt am 7. Juli 2018 niedergelegt hat und das höchste Leitungsgremium bereits zuvor geschlossen zurückgetreten ist. Unabhängige rechtliche Ermittlungen, die von einer Anwaltskanzlei in Kanada durchgeführt werden, haben bereits begonnen, und An Olive Branch<sup>3</sup> hat sich nun auch in Europa dem gesamten Shambhala Sangha als externer, professioneller Ansprechpartner für anonyme Opfer vorgestellt. Eine weitere Aufgabe von An Olive Branch ist es, eine fundamentale Strukturreform in unserem Sangha zu begleiten.

Wir sind erst am Anfang der grundlegenden Aufarbeitung der Vorwürfe und eines tiefgehenden Trauer- und Reflexionsprozesses. Wir erklären an dieser Stelle ausdrücklich, dass wir diesen Prozess sowie die fundamentale Strukturreform aus tiefstem Herzen wertschätzen und unterstützen.



Berlin, 20. Juli 2018,

Dr. Martin Ramstedt  
Mitglied im Rat der Deutschen Buddhistischen Union

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<sup>1</sup> <http://andreamwinn.com/buddhist-project-sunshine-phase-2-wrap-up-report-to-be-released-thursday-june-28th/>; [http://andreamwinn.com/offerings/project\\_sunshine/](http://andreamwinn.com/offerings/project_sunshine/)

<sup>2</sup> Siehe Anhang, communications from the internal Shambhala International membership website

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.anolivebranch.com/>

## ***Anhang: Zwei Updates von Shambhala International on Community Care***

**Shambhala Initiatives to Address Misconduct and Harm; Latest Updates as of May 10, 2018**

This page, as well as the public resource page, will continue to be updated as we move through this process.

**Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedure:** The Kalapa Council is forming a group to work on creating a sexual harm policy and other initiatives to address and prevent sexual harm. This will build upon previous work done by prior groups. The task force will focus mostly on creating a Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedure as an addendum to the current Care and Conduct Policy and Procedure. The existing Care and Conduct Policy and Procedure has covered all Shambhala office holders. This new policy will cover all community members. The group will oversee the development and implementation of initiatives in this area. Letters of invitation were sent to potential group members as of April 24, 2018.

- **Provide your feedback:** While the task force group is being assembled, we will begin collecting feedback from the community about what you would like to see included in the Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedure. This survey will be released on May 19, 2018. A link will be posted here.
- **Timeline:** The group's formation and activity will follow this general timeline:
  - **April-mid May:** Forming the task force
  - **May-July:** Listening activities
  - **August:** Creating the draft policy based on all input received as well as additional nonprofit best practices.
  - **September:** Soliciting public comment by posting the draft of the new Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedure, and making revisions.
  - **October:** Presenting the document to the Kalapa Council.

**Third-Party Support:** The Kalapa Council will meet in-person with leadership of [An Olive Branch](#) in mid-June in Colorado to discuss the organization potentially providing support in areas such as policy evaluation and revision. The Kalapa Council is also in discussion with other organizations who may provide supportive services.

**People of Color Council and White Awareness Council:** The Shambhala Office of Social Engagement (SOSE) is in the process of forming two new councils. Both councils are working to bring awareness to all pillars regarding these respective identities and practice. If you are interested in the work of SOSE or would like more information on these councils, please e-mail [info@sose.shambhala.org](mailto:info@sose.shambhala.org).

**Previous E-mails:** Please [click here](#) to access a folder of all previous Kalapa Council communications, including translations in seven languages.

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## Introduction and Aspiration

In our sangha of Shambhala, we are part of the larger culture that occurs around us, so we have been affected by the waves of change that have impacted society from the 1970s to today. In addition to this broader historical context, there are unique dynamics from a Tibetan-influenced and tantric religious perspective. At play is a whole history of ancient patriarchal dynamics, Tibetan refugee and colonial experience, and more. We carry from this history a co-emergence of confusion and wisdom.

We share a vision for creating a compassionate community and ultimately, enlightened society. Our basic teaching is that the best of humankind arises from trust in basic goodness, and that we see tremendous aggression arise from fear. There is a lot of fear in our world right now. As much as possible, we want to encourage our community to rely on our teachings and practices, to reconnect with kindness and the primordial sensitivity and bravery of our hearts. This can open us to feeling the full range of emotions necessary for transformative healing.

As we've consulted with experts within and outside of Shambhala, it has become clear that our care will need to include four main areas:

**I. Listening and Healing:** Reaching out to those who have voiced claims of experienced harm, creating emotionally-safe spaces and community rituals to acknowledge, listen, and heal. If helpful, enlist the services of neutral mediator experienced in sexual misconduct matters to help rebuild trust and communication.

**II. Policies and Procedures:** Working with third-party organizations on evaluating and improving our policies and educating Shambhala leadership. We are in active conversation with an established third-party organization, An Olive Branch, about taking on such a role. In addition to this, the European Council will be in conversation with a number of experts and professional organisations to support our European community.

**III. Cultural Shift:** Building capacity for social process and hosting skills to support brave conversations, becoming a trauma-informed community, and robust training for our leaders in issues of power, cultural humility, and social bias, especially around race and gender.

**IV. Restorative and Transformative Justice:** We will offer restorative and transformative justice modes for those who wish to engage with them. These methods emphasize healing for victims and healing for perpetrators, and allow support focused on the possibility of learning and reconciliation. It is an approach based in wisdom traditions. We are in conversation with one of the founders of the restorative justice movement, Kay Pranis, about training our community in these methods. We will also listen to victims to hear what other processes they might prefer for their cases.

The following sections outline specific initiatives within these four areas.

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## I. Policies and Procedures

We are reviewing our existing Care and Conduct Policy to identify areas of further improvement. We will be working with third-party experts to address weaknesses in the following areas in order to have a more complete approach:

- **The reporting process:** Making the reporting process feel safer and easier for victims and addressing ways to report harm perpetrated between members.
- **The process itself:** Offering care and support to victims before focusing on the process of resolution.
- **Awareness and commitment:** Increasing awareness and familiarity with the current Care and Conduct policy by: public posting of the policy, incorporating the policy into registration for programs and program orientations, and requiring all individuals in leadership and teaching positions to sign a commitment to the Care and Conduct Policy.
- **Mandatory Training:** Requiring stronger mandatory training for all Guides, Meditation Instructors, Teachers, Center Directors and office holders.

In addition to reviewing and improving our existing policies as outlined above, the Kalapa Council is launching two new initiatives:

- **Sexual Misconduct Policy & Task Force:** The Kalapa Council will appoint a Committee to create a Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedure to be added as an addendum to the current Care and Conduct policy. Our intention is to create a policy and process where complainants feel safe coming forward. This policy will be informed by feedback and suggestions from those who have reported sexual misconduct and chose not to engage the care and conduct process or had concerns with its view or methods. This process will also include reaching out to individuals who have shared serious allegations of past abuses and, if possible, working together to determine a path forward with investigating these claims. Such an investigation could include oversight or direct services from a third-party expert. [Please click here to access a document detailing the guidelines around creating that new policy.](#)
- **Kalapa Council Training:** Within the next three months, the Kalapa Council will undergo training in issues of sexualized harm, to become trauma-informed, as well as training around seeing social bias, race, power dynamics and privilege.

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## II. Listening and Healing

We are committed to creating safe spaces for our community to be in conversation around difficult issues, and to creating open channels for communication.

- **Local Event Support:** Many local communities have already begun to hold facilitated gatherings where people can share their concerns, questions and ideas. We are working with trained facilitators to create helpful guidelines and forms for holding such community gatherings which we will share. When these guidelines are ready, we will update this website and announce on Shambhala Network.

– **Discussing our History:** The Office of Culture & Decorum has committed to holding facilitated events in Boulder and Halifax, possibly shared online, where we can discuss our history in an open way. Students who experienced other eras will be able to share, and those who have questions or want to demystify past eras can inquire freely. These events will occur by the end of 2018.

– **Email the Council:** The Kalapa Council has read all emails received in the past two months and has begun a process of personally replying to all messages. For those who want to share stories, insights and suggestions with the Kalapa Council, please continue to contact us at [kalapacouncil@shambhala.org](mailto:kalapacouncil@shambhala.org).

– **Practices, and Rituals for Healing and Reconnection:** The Sakyong has asked us to focus on Shambhala Meditation and the new Sadhana of Kindness to help support the inner experience of our community. Acharyas are working on developing rituals from our tradition that will allow for recognition, healing, and purification, as well as writings and teachings that address these issues.

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### III. Cultural Shift

We will be using social process tools and methods to hold difficult conversations.

– **Regional Brave Leadership Trainings:** In order to build capacity for hosting such events, the Kalapa Council in partnership with the Shambhala Office of Social Engagement will offer as many regional Brave Leadership trainings as possible in the coming period. Dates will be announced on this website soon. This 3-day training is inspired by the Shambhala Principle and draws on the global Art of Hosting movement alongside related authentic leadership practices. Participants learn simple yet powerful methods and frameworks for facilitating meaningful conversations, harnessing collaborative power, and organizing teams and groups around complex issues, including Circle Practice, World Café, Dilemma Work, Open Space Technology, and Chaordic Design.

– **Trauma-Informed Support:** The Shambhala Office of Social Engagement is assembling trauma-informed professionals who want to offer their time to support people who have experienced harm or impropriety within Shambhala. Once this group is assembled, they will determine how to reach out and support people. If you have expertise in trauma work, please email [helpdesk.shambhala@gmail.com](mailto:helpdesk.shambhala@gmail.com) to offer help.

– **Support for Local Leadership:** There have already been video conferences offering support for Centre Directors, Acharyas, and Shastris around these topics, and calls will occur soon for those working in Societal Health and Well Being, and for Culture & Decorum Delegates. Call schedules will be sent out to leaders via e-mail. If you are a centre leader, please ensure that your centre's leadership is correctly marked and updated as such in the Shambhala Database so that they receive this information. If you need help, contact [info@shambhala.org](mailto:info@shambhala.org) for database support.

– **Cultivating Dignity Training:** Shambhala's Diversity Working Group has created a course on Shambhala Online called "Cultivating Dignity the Bedrock of All Diversity." If you would like to be part of a brave and caring space to explore often emotionally charged topics that arise when looking closer at how we've all been conditioned to uphold socially constructed hierarchies based on gender, gender identity, sexual orienta-

tion, race, class, and physical, mental, and perceptual characteristics, become more informed about bias and cultural humility, please consider taking taking this real time Shambhala Online Course. training. [Click here if you'd like to be on the email list for future offerings](#). These courses will be mandatory for all teachers and leaders.

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#### **IV. Restorative and Transformative Justice**

Members of the Kalapa Council and the Office of Social Engagement are in conversations with leaders in restorative justice, especially one of the founders of the restorative justice movement, Kay Pranis, to bring this approach into our community starting as soon as possible. This will be one of the modalities offered for people who would like to use this process. Restorative and transformative justice are well-respected responses to conflict that have been used in criminal justice systems in many states and nations. They are approaches that go beyond the usual victim-and-offender dynamic. Transformative justice in particular explores the broader cultures and systems that lead to abuse, racism, and classism. They emphasize community involvement, accountability, and opportunities for learning as alternatives to punishment and retribution.

*Kay Pranis is a national leader in restorative justice, specializing in peacemaking Circles. She served as the Restorative Justice Planner for the Minnesota Department of Corrections from 1994 to 2003. Before that, she worked six years as the director of research services at the Citizen's Council on Crime and Justice. She has written and presented papers on peacemaking Circles and restorative justice in the United States, Canada, Australia, and Japan. Since 1998, Kay has conducted Circle trainings in a diverse range of communities—from schools to prisons to workplaces to churches, from rural farm towns in Minnesota to Chicago's South Side. (Excerpted from Kay Pranis's website)*

## Community Care Update June 2018

On March 19, the Kalapa Council — the governing body of the Shambhala international community — announced a new effort to address issues of past harm in our community, and to refine and bolster existing policies and procedures to create safer environments for our members and program participants.

The intention of this effort is to:

- Create safe spaces to listen to those who have experienced harm and who have not felt heard by Shambhala leadership in the past.
- Create new strategies, policies, and procedures for working with sexual misconduct based these conversations, with input from the community and guidance from third-party organizations.
- Reach out to individuals who have shared serious allegations of past abuses and, if possible, work together to determine a path forward with investigating these claims. Such an investigation could include oversight or direct services from a third-party expert.
- Create mandatory training for all leaders including the Kalapa Council, European Council, Guides, Meditation Instructors, Teachers, Center Directors and other office holders.
- Create support and training programs for regional and local leaders throughout our global community.
- Create spaces for our community to heal by sharing personal experiences and asking questions to leadership.
- Explore restorative and transformative justice methods.

The Kalapa Council will continue to communicate next steps in this process with Shambhala members via e-mail and on this webpage.

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### Quick Links:

The Kalapa Council is working with mandala leaders to create and distribute resources as quickly as possible.

- **For Members & Community Leaders:** Access a webpage with additional information, including: resources for facilitating conversations locally; and a link to a forum where questions may be asked to Kalapa Council members. If you need help accessing the member portal, please e-mail [info@shambhala.org](mailto:info@shambhala.org).
- **International Care and Conduct Panel:** To contact the International Care and Conduct Panel, please [click here](#).
- **Office of Social Engagement:** The Shambhala Office of Social Engagement (SOSE) will provide a container and a support structure to individuals or groups who are inspired by the vision of Shambhala and wish to further the mission of Shambhala in the larger society. For more information about SOSE, please [click here](#).

- **Find an Event:** There are local and regional events being held in Shambhala centers around the world to: educate our community around bias, create safe spaces for difficult conversations; and work together to cultivate compassion in the midst of all that Shambhala and the world is facing. Scroll to the bottom of this page to browse a list of events.
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### **Updates as of July 13, 2018:**

**Investigation into Allegations of Misconduct:** In response to anonymous allegations of sexual misconduct by Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, Shambhala has hired an independent, third-party investigator to look into credible claims of sexual assault raised against the Sakyong and any other leaders in the Shambhala community. The investigation has now begun. **Next Steps:** Shambhala will not comment further on any specific allegations of sexual assault until the investigation is complete. Details of the investigation process, including how to submit a claim, will be released next week.

**Kalapa Council Leadership Transition:** This week, the Kalapa Council began finalizing their transition plan, including forming the transition team that will appoint an interim leadership body. **Next Steps:** The current Kalapa Council plans to announce their transition plan to the community next week.

**An Olive Branch:** An Olive Branch has been formally contracted by Shambhala to provide support in the areas of: drafting new policies and procedures; victim advocacy; planning for and training incoming leadership; facilitating regional meetings; and working to promote reconciliation within the community. For more information on the organization, [please visit their website](#). **Next Steps:** An Olive Branch will write their own personal message introducing themselves to the Shambhala community. This message will be sent out within the next week, including further details about the areas of work described above.

**Update from the Office of Finance:** Leadership has heard your requests for more detailed information about Shambhala's finances. It is our desire to provide transparency around the organization's financial situation and the ongoing financial challenges Shambhala leaders were working on prior to the impact of recent events. **Next Steps:** Ryan Watson, Director of Finance, will send a community-wide message on Wednesday, July 18 with further information.

**Sexual Harm and Misconduct Task Force:** The Sexual Harm and Misconduct Task force has now been formed. This group will work to create a sexual harm policy and other initiatives to address and prevent sexual harm. This will build upon previous work done by prior groups. The task force will focus mostly on creating a Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedure as an addendum to the current Care and Conduct Policy and Procedure. This new policy will cover all community members, whereas past policies have only covered office holders. The group will oversee the development and implementation of initiatives in this area. Invitations were sent to potential task force members, and the group was established in late May. This task force includes representation from individuals who have experienced harm inside and outside our sangha and who themselves come from diverse experiences and backgrounds. [Click here to read more](#) about the group and its members.

- **Provide your feedback:** The Task Force is offering this opportunity to our community to offer suggestions – particularly if you have experienced some form of misconduct in the Shambhala community. People of all genders and sexual identity or orientation are welcome and encouraged to offer feedback. You are welcome to participate anonymously, or to provide your name. [Click here](#) to access the questionnaire.
- **Timeline:** The group’s formation and activity will follow this general timeline:
  - **April-mid May:** Forming the task force
  - **May-July:** Listening activities
  - **August:** Creating the draft policy based on all input received as well as additional nonprofit best practices.
  - **September:** Soliciting public comment by posting the draft of the new Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedure, and making revisions.
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**People of Color Council and White Awareness Council:** The Shambhala Office of Social Engagement (SOSE) is in the process of forming two new councils. Both councils are working to bring awareness to all pillars regarding these respective identities and practice. If you are interested in the work of SOSE or would like more information on these councils, please e-mail [info@sose.shambhala.org](mailto:info@sose.shambhala.org).

**Volunteers Needed – Trauma-Informed Professionals:** Anyone who has a passion for the issue, resources to share, is working with/studies trauma, or has personal experience with trauma and how that’s affected their Shambhala path, is invited to contact [trauma.informed.shambhala@gmail.com](mailto:trauma.informed.shambhala@gmail.com) for more information about becoming involved.

## Frequently Asked Questions

The Kalapa Council has received several frequently asked questions by community members and leaders. We will continue to update this section as new themes and questions emerge.

- - **What is the scope of known misconduct and harm cases within the Shambhala community?** Between 2012 and 2017, there were 12 cases raised against office holders (those holding official roles within the organization such as teachers and leaders). Some of these complaints were formally addressed by the International Panel, and some were referred to other entities in Shambhala for disposition. These included: the Office of Societal Health and Well-Being, the Office of Practice and Education, the Dorje Kasung and Desung Corps, the Minister of Governance and local Center Directors and the Office of Culture and Decorum. We want to be clear and straightforward with the community about the scope of known misconduct. We also recognize that some have not felt comfortable raising complaints within the existing processes and procedures. These known gaps are being addressed by the newly formed Sexual Harm and Misconduct Task Force. There has not been a formal process for re-

porting misconduct by non-office holders and thus these matters have been often handled in informal ways by local communities. The new sexual misconduct policy will expressly include these matters and offer options for resolving them.

- These 12 complaints included: four (4) advances on or seduction of a subordinate; three (3) verbal sexual innuendo or inappropriateness; two (2) cases of unwanted sexual touching; one (1) case of undefined sexual misconduct; one (1) public charge of pedophilia; and one (1) sexual relationship with a student.
  - Of all cases reported to the Care and Conduct Panel (not only those 12 involving sexual misconduct), the following actions were taken: seven (7) terminations of teacher / MI authorizations; five (5) resignations or removal from positions; five (5) cases of monitoring conduct or support on path forward; four (4) departures from the community altogether; three (3) restrictions on teaching and/or attendance at centers or programs; one (1) entrance into therapy; one (1) leave of absence; and one (1) allegation was discovered to be unfounded.
  - In the past 10 years, there have been at least four (4) senior teachers who have been asked to step down from their posts. Two of these cases came through the Care and Conduct process and two happened outside of the Care and Conduct process.
- **Have new cases been raised since the Kalapa Council's announcements so far this year?** So far in 2018, since the announcement of these initiatives, there has been one (1) new complaint and one (1) possible pending complaint both involving inappropriate verbal behaviors by office holders with flirtatious or sexual content.
  - **What is Shambhala's response to the allegations of sexual misconduct by Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche?** In response to anonymous allegations of sexual misconduct by Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, Shambhala has hired an independent, third-party investigator to look into credible claims of sexual assault raised against the Sakyong and any other leaders in the Shambhala community. The investigation has now begun. Shambhala will not comment further on any specific allegations of sexual assault until the investigation is complete.

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## Get Involved or Volunteer to Help

We want to encourage as many people as possible to become involved in these efforts. There are several immediate ways in which you can now participate:

- **Complete the Questionnaire:** Offer your voice to the members of the Sexual Harm and MisTask Force by completing the questionnaire previously mentioned here. [Click here](#) to access the questionnaire.

- **Volunteers Needed – Trauma-Informed Professionals:** Anyone who has a passion for the issue, resources to share, is working with/studies trauma, or has personal experience with trauma and how that's affected their Shambhala path, is invited to contact [trauma.informed.shambhala@gmail.com](mailto:trauma.informed.shambhala@gmail.com) for more information about becoming involved.
  - **Volunteers Needed – Shambhala Office of Social Engagement:** The Shambhala Office of Social Engagement (SOSE) is seeking volunteers in a variety of areas including fundraising, communications and social media management. Please visit the [public resource page](#) for details about these opportunities.
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### **Local Events**

Shambhala communities around the world are hosting regional and local events to: educate our community around bias, create safe spaces for difficult conversations; and work together to cultivate compassion in the midst of all that Shambhala and the world is facing.