

Dear

We are writing to you as concerned dharma students who are or have been students of Sogyal Rinpoche. We're very grateful for the teachings we've received from him and will always value this connection. However recent events have raised serious issues concerning Sogyal Rinpoche's behaviour, Rigpa management's response, the treatment of those who speak out about their concerns, and even concerning the transmission of the Vajrayana teachings. Despite the undertaking of various initiatives, the core problems have not been resolved.

In case you are not fully aware of these problems, we have attached [the letter from 8 Rigpa students](#) in which they attest that Sogyal Rinpoche emotionally, physically and sexually abused them and others.

We hear that you may be teaching at a Rigpa center in the future. As you can imagine, Rigpa students are in the throes of an extremely challenging period. They're in need of your guidance and the inspiration and insight that naturally comes when we receive the precious teachings. So thank you for your assistance in helping this sangha that we care deeply about.

It would be very helpful if you could mention the question of emotional, physical and sexual abuse by teachers of Tibetan Buddhism. When teachers remain silent on the issue of unethical conduct by lamas, as they have in the past, it makes it appear to many that the teacher thinks unethical behaviour is an acceptable part of Tibetan Buddhism. This leads to some students losing their trust in the teachers who remain silent. Some, if not many, also lose faith in the tradition and even in the dharma itself.

A faction of students and teachers have ignored, and even supported, the behaviour of Sogyal Rinpoche and instead laid blame for the situation on those who spoke out about abuse. They have called them 'samaya breakers' who will go to Vajra Hell, have minimized the students' concerns, downplayed their suffering, and attempted to personally discredit them. No apology has been given by either Sogyal Rinpoche or Rigpa Management. Instead of helping the victims to heal, this only adds to their trauma. This, along with Sogyal Rinpoche's behaviour, has turned many students away from Rigpa.

Though Sogyal Rinpoche is no longer the spiritual director of Rigpa, the beliefs in Rigpa that allowed the abuse to flourish and be covered up for decades have not been addressed. By directly addressing these issues, you could bring clarity and relief to students who feel confused and in pain. You could re-instil confidence in the teachers they have come to rely upon.

We feel that continued silence on this matter will negatively affect the future of Buddhism in the West, limiting the scope of its reach and the benefit it could otherwise bring.

[His Holiness the Dalai Lama](#) and other teachers such as [Mingyur Rinpoche](#) and [Matthieu Ricard](#) have said clearly that abusive behaviour is not a teaching method, that continued abuses should be made public, and that samaya is not broken so long as the student still respects the good they have gained from their relationship with the teacher. The links on their names above lead to the relevant statements.

Links to other articles related to the issue of abuse in Tibetan Buddhism can be found on the [Reference Material page of the What Now? Blog](#).

Thank you so much for considering our concerns.

With respect,