

A COPY OF THE FACEBOOK REVIEW POSTING THAT I PUT ON THE SATYANANDA YOGA MANGROVE FACEBOOK PAGE, AND WHICH THEY ALLOWED TO REMAIN FOR SOME WEEKS.

(There were already many more postings with much more explicit detail and an "Apology" from the ashram posted there. I did copy those postings and save in a word document also)

An apology for sexual abuse of children is a step forward. But it is essential to be realistic about its place in redressing the wrongs.

We must get the facts right too.

The dates covered by this apology only cover the period of the late 70's and early 80's. The primary abuser took control of the Ashram in about January 1975. The period the apology covers should thus cover the Mid 70's as well.

Additionally, the victims of the abuse were not only affected by the actual abuse during that time, but also by the actions of the ongoing management who refused to acknowledge the impacts and extent of the abuse until now – some 30 years later. It would be appropriate, then, to also apologise for the prolonged suffering caused by the failure of those in charge since the mid to late 1980's until now to acknowledge the abuse, and to treat the abused with the respect and care they deserve.

Additionally, the statement "The findings of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse are being used for guidance" must be seen as erroneous and misleading. The Royal Commission is still sitting, and has not issued any "findings" or given produced any "guidance" documents.

The offer of Ashram-provided support is also worrying, as unless the Ashram has employed experienced independent counsellors to answer any calls for support, those who access the support offered may suffer further harm. It is not advisable for a person who has any level of allegiance to an organisation to take on a role as a support to a victim of that organisation. They cannot help but have a "conflict of interest".

It is also important to acknowledge that the issuing of this apology itself will be the catalyst for the stirring up of some very unpleasant emotions and trauma reactions in many of those who have lived with the effects of the abuse, and the effects of the lack of acknowledgement for all these years. The decision to issue an apology at this point in time, has been one made by the ashram, not the victims. For those who have attempted to move on and create a new life, having given up all hope of acknowledgement or redress, an apology issued "out of the blue" like this, can be as disturbing to their present lives, as the abuse was at the time.

We need to understand that this apology is only a baby step in the righting of the wrongs. The journey, both for the survivors of the abuse, and for the ashram itself, is just beginning. To suggest that the apology or any healing ceremony will be sufficient to put all this in the past would be ignorant and childish. The path forward will require understanding, patience, compassion, and a willingness to take all the steps needed to help those affected to heal.