

From: Swami Haribodhananda  
 To: Ahimsadhara Saraswati  
 CC: Bert Franzen; REDACTED; Prime; Sarah Tetlow; Suryantra  
 Subject: Re: Response  
 Date: Friday, 28 March 2014 8:03:48 PM

We are still saying "complete fabrication" which is not true. Some of what she says was I believe true and so we shouldn't make categoric statements. We leave ourselves too open.

We could say "completely disregarded what is fact and what is fiction"

Hb

Sent from my iPhone

On 28 Mar 2014, at 7:51 pm, Ahimsadhara Saraswati <ahimsadhara@REDACTED> wrote:

Hari Om,

Following Bert's and Hb advice:

**Proposed response**

Hari Om Aurora,

Many thanks for writing back - we do want a dialogue on these matters, as that enables us to both communicate with and support people who are concerned. It's also good to know that you have already found strength from others within our yoga community and from the teachings themselves, which as you observe, stand alone, having endured for millennia.

The email from Mary Smith is a complete fabrication which was designed to be damaging to the extreme. Inevitably, however it raises questions in peoples minds. Please remember we do not know who Mary Smith is, and the allegations made and were obviously designed to be damaging to Satyananda organisation.

We live in information-rich times and have to be very careful about how information is used. The Working Together Task Force is taking a proactive approach towards reconciliation with those who were abused by Swami Akhandananda. In relation to Mary Smith's email, it needs to be remembered that it was a reaction to the facebook posts by the (then) children who were abused, defending SHISHY against the deeply negative feelings they unreservedly expressed towards her. None of the people who were abused defended Mary Smith's allegations. What she says does not line up with what we know of the experiences of those who were abused.

The Apology Ceremony will be held at Mangrove on Easter Sunday at 4 pm and all are warmly invited to attend.

Once again, many thanks for writing to us.

Kind regards,

Swami Ahimsadhara

On Fri, Mar 28, 2014 at 6:00 PM, Swami Haribodhananda <REDACTED> wrote:

We should maintain an independent position and I don't think we should make statements that something is completely untrue. Let's be more arm's length than this.

Hb

Sent from my iPhone

On 28 Mar 2014, at 5:24 pm, Bert Franzen <bertfranzen@electassociates.com.au> wrote:

Hello everyone

I'm away in Queensland so coming in to the communications infrequently.

My view with regards to any comments about Mary Smith's email is that we should give it as little air as possible. Any comments should communicate the following messages:

1. The email was a complete fabrication
2. Yes there were issues 30 years ago but the responsible party was bought to justice
3. Comments made about Satyananda and Nirranjan are completely untrue, without a shred of foundation, viscous to the extreme and deliberately designed to damage the Satyananda organisation.

Accordingly I suggest the following amendments in *italics* below.

Kind regards

Bert

-----  
 Bert Franzen

electAssociates | HR Consulting Specialists | Building 8 Level 2 | 49 Frenchs Forest Road | Frenchs Forest NSW 2086

T: 9454 7736 | M: REDACTED | F: 02 8088 6725 |

The information transmitted is intended only for the person or entity to which it is addressed and may contain confidential information. If you are not the intended recipient you are hereby notified that any use, review, retransmission, dissemination, distribution, reproduction, or any action taken in reliance of this message is prohibited. If you receive this message in error, please contact the sender and delete the material from your computer.

On 28 Mar 2014, at 2:34 pm, "Phil Connor" <pmc@REDACTED> wrote:

Hari Om

This is all fine with me.

If the quantity starts to become large we may have to shift to direct response from you.

Om

pm

**From:** Ahimsadhara Saraswati [mailto:ahimsadhara@REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, 28 March 2014 9:29 AM  
**To:** Atma; Bert Franzen; haribodhanand@REDACTED; Anamurti; Sarah Tetlow; Suryamitra  
**Subject:** Response communication Aurora

Hari Om.

so, I want to try out this method of consulting over a response. The subject of the email will be like this one - **Response communication** followed by the **name of the person** we are responding to. Then I'll paste in what we received followed by my draft response. You can then send comments. I'm pasting them into word docs which will get updated with the final version.

**From Aurora Legge (a person Atma knows)**

This one came to the WTTTF gmail. It's main 'thing' is that we need a statement from India. You'll see how I have handled this without referring to it directly - or maybe I've been too subtle? I've also brought in the point that Smith's allegations are not supported by those who were posting on FB. This is an important point which many people may not get, because they didn't see the FB. I think it's really key for us because the FB people had mentioned that Sw. Satyananda was at MM when the abuse was happening but said it would happen when he had left the building, as though A and Sh were waiting for him to be out of the way. That's how I read it anyway. They in no way implicated him or Swamiji as far as I recall and they do not accept Smith's defence of Sh.

I realise we have to be careful about getting into detailed/defensive style communication so am interested in what you think about raising these points. However, I am also aware that people want some help with their thinking, need a perspective which they can't have if they don't know what was on FB and will appreciate us answering them 'properly' not just in a formatted way. Finally, should the sign off be from me on behalf of group, or just from the group, no individual?

Here's the communication:

**from Aurora Legge**

9:53 PM 27.3.14

To WTTTF Gmail

Hari Om.

Thank you for this follow up email. It was definitely needed and good to hear about more work that is being done on this matter. Such a shame that formality and control are inevitable within the yogic realm but change brings positives too.

The second unsolicited email from Mary Smith was the one that disturbed me most as I had previously been unaware of any details in relation to the abuse that was perpetrated at the time in question. I did realize that these were allegations and added to that, not coming from a first hand source. I did notice my reactions and feelings for many days and eventually felt I would like to speak with a colleague about it. Having not picked up the phone to call someone the universe kindly answered my need when a Satyananda Yoga colleague with whom I did my YS4 training appeared at our local monthly chanting! This is the first S.Y. colleague I have seen in my home town! We had a short discussion about it during which she repeated Sw. Atmankutananda's recent words of 'return to the teachings'. I took this not as go back and do the practices, but to see that all the yogic wisdom passed on through S.Y. existed before even Satyananda himself and are impermeable to the failings of man. A tried and tested system as it were. This meant for me, that no matter what is found in any investigation the teachings remain true - many thanks to Sw Atmankutananda for that guidance/reminder.

As I never met, or really knew Sw. Satyananda and he is unable to defend himself, I continue to try to put my feelings about the allegations from the email aside. It seems such a shame that a man who gave his entire life to the practice of yoga and the imparting of it, be tarnished in this way, with an inability for true recourse.

As Sw. Niranjan was an impressive young man at the time of the abuses and accusations, I remain concerned about any involvement, witnessing of or knowledge of abuses and the impact of these on him. This concern is two fold, firstly in relation to continuing my personal connection with him and secondly, in relation to the integrity/trust of this yogic style by non-ashram people/yoga students. I do not know if any allegations have been made against other leaders within the ashram, but I feel that people may rightly ask how the current leader of the organization was involved in these events or subsequent actions. I feel that it is vitally important for Sw. Niranjan himself to clarify this, at least to the people within the organization. In this way if a non-S.Y. person raises the discussion with us as teachers, some confidence can be built regarding current leadership. Although it may not be a priority at this stage please pass on this comment.

Thankfully shortly after the emails in question, the online World Home Yoga Summit organized by the lovely S.Y. teacher Christina Jaguskiak was a joyful reminder of the essence of yoga and bringing it back home to the self. I hope all of you on the Working Together group were aware of it, or were able to access this amazing piece of creativity, inspiration and dedication to yoga by Christina.

This correspondence is mainly cathartic in nature, wishing to put my thoughts forward.

Thank you for the past correspondence in relation to these matters as I have not been involved with or privy to any of the information relating to the abuses, so it is all a bit new to me.

Hari om tat sat.

Kind regards,

**Aurora**

Aurora Legge

The Well Point

Yoga & Shiatsu Therapy ~ Connect & strengthen within

mb REDACTED email REDACTED fb Aurora Legge website [www.thewellpoint.com](http://www.thewellpoint.com)

28.3.14

**Proposed response**

Hari Om Aurora.

Many thanks for writing back - we do want a dialogue on these matters, as that enables us to both communicate with and support people who are concerned. It's also good to know that you have already found strength from others within our yoga community and from the teachings themselves, which as you observe, stand alone, having endured for millennia.

The email from Mary Smith is a complete fabrication which was designed to be damaging to the extreme. Inevitably, however, it raises questions in peoples minds. Please remember we do not know who Mary Smith is, there is no truth of any kind to the allegations made and were obviously designed to be damaging to Satyananda organisation.

We live in information-rich times and have to be very careful about how information is used. The Working Together Task Force is taking a proactive approach towards reconciliation with those who were abused by Swami Akhandananda. In relation to Mary Smith's email, it needs to be remembered that it was a reaction to the facebook posts by the (then) children who were abused, defending SHISHY against their negative feelings towards her. None of them have supported Mary Smith's allegations. What she says does not line up with what we know of the experient who were abused.

We are working out the details of the Apology Day to be held on Easter Sunday at Mangrove Mt and will be sending out this info as soon as possible.

Once again, many thanks for writing to us.

Kind regards,

Swami Ahimsadhara

for Working Together Task Force