



*anonymous*

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I was a student of Roshi for several years starting in my early twenties. After reading all the articles and comments that have appeared recently, I am perplexed and saddened. First of all, I know there is some truth to the allegations. I was aware several years ago when some oshos left the organization because they were starting to talk about this and were I think told to just keep quiet. They said that Roshi's sexual behavior was their reason for leaving. Before that was when I was a student, and I really knew very little about this. The entire time, I have only heard one direct story from a female, and she did not seem particularly upset by it, she had said no to him when asked to show him her breasts. She included in the telling of that story, saying that almost all the nuns and female students at some point were at the receiving end of some sort of sexual inappropriateness. I only heard this after I had studied with him already for a year or so. I was surprised because he had behaved with such formality, restraint, care and respect towards me personally. He teaches that the enlightened state of unity is before distinctions of subject or object, men and women, or life and death. With me, he has always been kind, appropriate, and has stuck to his role as a teacher.

For some reason, apparently, he can be several different people depending who he is with or what the situation is. I know that some of these things people are saying actually happened, however I also really have trouble imagining it based on the way he acted with me. I feel angry because as students of Roshi, we learn that we understand almost nothing compared to him and that we should give up our will and surrender to his guidance. Simultaneously he would teach me to not attach to him or to the practice. No one in the Sangha now feels able to take on his role, to conduct sanzen or give Dharma talk. I sometimes worried about him not being responsible with his power over me. Sometimes I would feel that he was the only person I talked to all day on a sesshin and that he would just say the same two or three word koan each time and I got frustrated and angry. Other times, I felt an incredibly powerful exchange between him and I and I would then sit much more strongly and energetically. I believe that in my case he worked hard and taught me as best he could. Seeing this, its hard to understand why he has acted like an adolescent with so many girls and women.

I have heard some accusations that I know are true, like about groping and asking girls to show him their breasts in Sanzen. I have no idea, on the other hand, if he actually was in jail in japan, if he has "several," illegitimate children or if arranged meetings for tea were resulting in sex with students. I don't know if the oshos who worked closely with him were helping him with this or how much they knew or participated. I did know that he had a child somewhere and that he was not the child of his wife. Does anyone know where to find these children of his? In conclusion, this is depressing and psychologically confusing. Zen masters are said to have broken the bonds of having a permanent and consistent personality. His primary teaching was about, "no thinking," and I saw often that this got confused and mutated into things like irresponsible drinking or mindless obsession with rules. I don't think that even if the whole truth comes out, we will even understand what was going on in his mind. I do hope that the organization he founded can find strength despite this, and that people with more responsibility and an equal level of understanding can take his place as Roshi.

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