



Dear IYNAUS members,

Last Friday, we announced the results of the independent investigation of Manouso Manos and the actions that RIMYI and IYNAUS have taken in response to Ms. Sargeant's findings that Manouso committed acts of sexual abuse in his classes between 2005 and the present.

We said that these events were "unspeakably sad and tragic." These words did not do justice to the victims.

Sexual abuse of students in yoga classes is horrific. A yoga class is a place of refuge. A place for self-exploration. A place for quieting the mind. It is unacceptable for any teacher to violate that sacred space with acts of sexual violence. It is abhorrent to create not healing and calm, but trauma and pain.

We extol the courage of the victims. The courage to relive and describe painful traumas. The courage to risk reprisals and to expose themselves to scorn and derision. The courage to speak the truth to power.

We apologize to the victims. They should have been safe in a class taught by one of the world's most highly certified Iyengar Yoga teachers.

They should have felt safe filing ethics complaints with IYNAUS.

It is now apparent that we failed to establish an ethics complaint procedure that our students trusted. We now know that many acts of sexual abuse were committed in the past 15 years, but that these did not lead to a single complaint between IYNAUS's founding in 1992 and Ann West's complaint in March 2018. It is now apparent that other victims were not willing to come forward until we hired an independent investigator.

We are determined to effect wholesale changes in our community and in IYNAUS.

A committee led by Lisa Jo Landsberg and Marla Apt has been developing standards for adjustments and new instructional materials for all Certified Iyengar Yoga Teachers (CIYTs). They will discuss their committee's work at both the all members' meeting and the teachers' meeting that will be held at our convention in Dallas on Sunday.

In October, we adopted measures to eliminate or to lessen the fears that prevented the filing of complaints in the past. We discussed other such measures at our meeting yesterday. In October, we also adopted strict measures to guarantee the impartiality of the panels who investigate and decide sexual abuse and other complaints. We decided at our meeting yesterday to restructure our ethics committee to assure that sexual abuse complaints are rigorously investigated and decided in accord with the best practices in the U.S. Our goal is a system of unquestionable fairness that can be trusted to identify and remedy sexual abuse whenever it occurs.

We will discuss these efforts further at the all members' meeting at the Convention on Sunday. These events have stressed our community and the common philosophy that has bound us together. We can begin to re-unify by recognizing and appreciating the strength and resolve of those who took action and by responding accordingly for the collective good.

Yours in yoga,

IYNAUS Executive Council

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