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## **Frequently Asked Questions about Yogi Bhajan and Kundalini Yoga**

*For Teachers, Trainers and practitioners of KY (Kundalini Yoga) as taught by YB.*

*Last updated October 21<sup>st</sup> 2020*

The allegations about Yogi Bhajan's (YB) misuse of position have led to a wide-reaching public discussion in social media. Students, trainees, teachers and trainers find themselves facing some challenging questions and associated dilemmas. Here we address many of the questions and doubts being raised in the best possible consciousness and clarity that we can.

If there are other questions arising that you would appreciate some support with, then please let us know and we will include in an update of this document.

### **Some basic points to remember:**

Stay clear from, and about, gossip, rumour, stories. Focus on facts.

Use references where possible and ask for references when people make claims about YB who said or did this or that.

YB made it clear over and over that he was not a Guru. Instead he bowed low and pointed to the Guru (Siri Guru Granth Sahib of the Sikh tradition), saying he was a mere signpost or post man. He reminded students not to love and follow him but to love and follow the teachings, that he did not want to create a personality cult. The KKS does not support the idealisation of his persona. He wanted to give us the tools to have self-experience. 'Deliver the student to their own infinity'. To move up from our animal impulse and down from the rational intellect to our heart and true self.

YB also acknowledged from very early on that he would be slandered, accused, condemned and crucified. In some way he already crucified himself from the beginning, by opening KY to the public and sharing Sikh Dharma in a non-dogmatic manner.

He predicted that we would one day know him as a most 'wretched' being that was none the less privileged to pass on the technology of KY, the Bhakti mysticism of the Shabd Guru and the healing power of the White Tantric Yoga field.

Light attracts moths. Toxic egos, jealous personalities, control games, competitiveness, and much more. All this can and does happen to, and around, any teacher who volunteers to sit on the hot-plate of being a teacher of KY. The definition of a Yogi, unaffected by the polarities as described in the L1 TT manual is not merely the words of YB. It is a summary of several shabds by the 9<sup>th</sup> Sikh Guru Tegh Bahadur. And a call to every yogi/ni to develop their inner core, nucleus, stress free zone, of diamond like stability represented as Sat Naam.

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We recognise that some of the questions below are repeated in different frameworks, and feel that is useful, as the same query can be approached from different angles.

### **Q1. Kundalini Yoga as taught by Yogi Bhajan:**

**Are we still going to call it KY as taught by YB? How can we be comfortable to do that given the allegations and report? Can we teach KY without mentioning or quoting YB?**

A1. Why did it become KY as taught by YB? If we would understand the context behind that phrase or label, then it would become easier to decide the way forward. Note that it is not 'Yogi Bhajan Yoga'. As there were, and still are, different schools of teachings passing on the knowledge and technology of yoga, and as there are different schools or teachings claiming to teach kundalini, or to raise your kundalini for you, then it was a useful and even necessary distinction to identify the technology of self-initiation that YB was sharing. Hence the terminology 'KY as taught by YB'. We could say that YB simply took responsibility for his approach and synthesis. There is no indication that he necessarily wanted credit.

A2. If you are going to teach some other KY, then what will that be? What will be your source? Will you put your own name to it? And take the consequences? If not, why not? Then what name will you put to it? What reference will you lean on? Will you acknowledge the reality of the Golden Chain? Or do you see it as a mere fantasy? YB remains the soul that took the updated synthesis of KY as we know it and shared it with the Western world at the risk of his own life. Credit should surely be given for that, whilst being clear that we do not, in any way, support or endorse the behaviour he has been accused of. The postman may be dirty and smelly. But will you reject the letter saying you have won the lottery? The professor may be eccentric, but his genius is not in question. Imagine that you learnt some really great tools and tips for self-management, for success in business, for keeping focus on a task, etc. but you learnt them from a cheat. Will you now abandon these tools? Or rather challenge yourself as to the integrity with which you use them? YB did not invent KY. Knowledge of the Kundalini is evident in many ancient cultures all over the world. YB simply put together a package and took responsibility for it, by putting his name to it. Some of the teaching may have been channelled (downloaded), some learnt from several masters, some through his own practice and experience as a yogic master. The result is KY as taught by YB. Saying 'YB' is not to put him on a pedestal, but to acknowledge the messenger along with his efforts and sacrifice.

A 3. It is also the case that much of what YB taught can be found in other references. If you know these references then you might say that 'Patanjali says...' or 'the Kundalini Upanishads say ...' or 'Guru Naanak said...' etc.

## **Q2. How to prepare for the questions students have about the authenticity of our yogic technology, as taught by Yogi Bhajan? People are concerned with the revelations in the recently published book, Premka: White Bird in a Golden Cage.**

A. The various responses to questions in this document will be helpful.

There is no need to be anything other than honest. The report from *An Olive Branch* states that it is 'more likely than not' that YB engaged in sexual misconduct and abuse of position.

We each aspire to be good examples of the teachings and we naturally expect that of our teachers.

Sadly, however, the reality is otherwise in many cases. We are challenged to determine how much we might separate the messenger from the message.

The authenticity of the teachings is answered in several ways.

First is the personal experience of the practitioner and the benefits they enjoy from the practice. One's own experience and intuition goes a long way to clarify the authenticity of the Technology.

Second is that a little bit of research will reveal that much of the teachings are not exclusive to YB.

Yoga is an ancient science. Much of what YB taught can be found in other texts and references. In Sanskrit or old Punjabi texts, for example. All the teachings about kundalini, nadis, bandhas, gunas, tattwas, chakras, and more, can be found in various texts dating back over thousands of years.

YB did a remarkable job of synthesising and bring these teachings together under 1 roof and presenting them in a way that speaks to the times of change that we are passing through.

It is not merely a matter of 'YB says...'. Rather it is that 'Yogic teachings say; Patanjali said, Guru Naanak said, and so many other teachers through the ages, each in their own way.

Whilst many of us may have our personal issues, life struggles, attachments, fears, and so on, yet, when we sit down to teach and tune in, we can feel the connection to the golden chain. We put our personal issues to rest, and we deliver the teachings, sometimes even surprising ourselves with the

integrity, purity and inspiration that come through. Likewise, whatever problems Harbhajan Singh, the man, may have had, we can easily feel through the depth and clarity of his lectures that when he was Yogi Bhajan 'The Teacher' reigned. To this day many continue to benefit from that ability of his. Note: YB's behaviour is correctly called into question and may be done so independent of the teachings themselves. While further research can also be done into the diverse strands of teachings that YB delivered.

**Q "Whilst I recognise that the practices of Kundalini Yoga are powerful and have benefit to one's physical, psychological and spiritual growth, I don't want to be supporting a "Master" who may have abused students and as a result his role as a teacher through his charisma and intelligence."**

A 1. By teaching KY, even if we say 'as taught by YB', you are not supporting a master in any way. You are not bringing any student to worship or idolize YB. You are not bringing any student to the master's door where he might take advantage of their naivete, etc. There is nothing for YB to gain from you teaching KY to others. Rather we are supporting the students who can benefit from this practice.

A 2. When you tune in to the Golden Chain you are not tuning in to YB. You are tuning in to the ancient lineage of all teachers. you are also tuning in to your own higher self.

**Q. what do we say in classes and the Level 1 teacher Training in the light of the pandoras box being opened?**

A. 1. We have no reason to hide or lie about the existence of the allegations. i.e. we are not supporting any cover up. You can openly indicate that there are allegations and the result of the report. We agree to the need for transparency and should feel comfortable about referring people to all the necessary links.

2. We acknowledge that YB formulated his own synthesis of KY drawing from several main sources/teacher, and possibly through channelled/downloaded, information. This does not make KY a fallacy. We can refer to the research about his teacher Sant Hazara Singh. and we can refer to Patanjali and other texts about yoga.

3. We confirm our commitment to the highest ethical standards on all levels.

4. We do not see any reason to withdraw support or allegiance to KRI, ATA, IKYTA and EPS. As they continue to look into their structures and systems as well as uphold and upgrade the highest standards of delivery of Teacher Training.

**Q. What about the Golden Chain. If the allegations have any truth in them, does that weaken, call into question, or even destroy, the significance of the Golden Chain? Is it still Guru Ramdas -> YB -> me the teacher?**

A1. Though YB gave his picture for people to meditate on, if they choose to, and he was clearly the direct Spiritual Teacher for many. None the less, YB also gave us the mantras which provide every student and teacher of KY to have their own direct connection with the lineage of Guru Ramdas who sits on the throne of Raj Yoga. YB was a channel for 'The Teacher'. Any teacher that tunes in becomes a channel for 'The Teacher'. The Golden chain is a net spread wide through all teachers that tune in with Adi Mantra. Note: Guru Ramdas is also Gurdev. In the mantra 'aad guray nameh, jugaad guray nameh sat guray nameh sri gurdevay nameh' gurdev is the 4<sup>th</sup> guru who was Guru Ramdas. Therefore, when we chant 'ong namo **gurdev** namo' we are attuning directly to the consciousness of Guru Ramdas and the lineage that went before him.

In other words, chanting this mantra is not tuning in to YB, unless you consciously choose that intention.

A2. The mantras 'Ong Namom' and Gurdev' are both found in the SGGS. Gurdev is also well known from India in general as a respected term for one's teacher. Gurdev can be used to refer to any representation of the voice of your higher consciousness. Namom is the salutation, Ong is the Infinite and eternal sound stream from the beginning of time.

**Q. How can I teach these teachings when the integrity of the teacher is in question?**

A. The integrity of the human being, the man, is in question. This does not automatically equate to the integrity of the teachings being in question. (other answers in this document address that point).

Though it is reasonable to reflect on this matter.

Many teachers of KY experience some degree of doubt about their own integrity, ability and worthiness to be a teacher. Questioning if they are good enough, adequate enough, know enough, live the teachings perfectly enough, have attained an sufficient level of mastery, etc. In the times we live, this mastery and development as a teacher does not come from staying at home to study and meditate, nor from sitting for decades at the feet of a supposed master. If we each would wait until we are perfect enough, then we will wait forever. We learn to swim by getting in the water. We tune in at the start of the class to optimise the chance that our personality does not corrupt the passing on of the message. We remember the teacher's oath. We take 'no claim and no blame'.

If your experience has confirmed the benefits of the practice. Then why hesitate to pass it on?

#### **Q. How do I relate to YB now?**

A. of course this is your choice and there are several choices.

Some suggestions are partly implied by the other answers in this document. i.e. see the references to the postman/messenger. See also the references to distinguishing the message from the messenger. But let's think of other perspectives. Such as how a candle lights another candle. The wax it is burning may be pure or impure. This does not However, in anyway effect the flame. The flame maintains its own inherent property no matter whether it was received from burning rubber or any other source. When a person life prana runs out (burns out) the question is - did you receive the flame, the inspiration, the light of awareness? You can choose how you want to relate to the dirty wax that was burning so that you could receive the light.

If you are drowning in muddy waters and someone comes and gives you the kiss of life. You survive and have a whole new sense of the value of life and self. No matter the nature of the person who pulled you out and got you breathing again. The mantra sat naam is like that. A kiss of life for your soul.

You may choose to ignore, forget and abandon the one who passed on the flame, or pulled you out of the mud. Or you may choose respect and gratitude.

The candle is burnt out now. Your task is to burn bright. Keep your wax clean. And pass on the flame. No matter the issues you may still be personally dealing with, still you might help someone get out of the muddy waters of Maya. Only your heart knows the truth of this.

#### **Q. Do I have to quote YB? Can I teach KY without reference to YB?**

A. Quoting YB was never a requirement. You may teach a whole class and never mention YB. But would you be comfortable hiding, or lying about, the source of the kriyas if asked.

Surely if you are asked certain questions you will answer honestly. Remember teaching is not a popularity contest. Sharing the wider dimension of the teachings, beyond the kriya and meditations, brings a lot of depth and inspiration. There is no value or benefit in hiding what is the case. If you are asked, then your own integrity imposes to you that you will not lie. About the source of the teachings as well as the controversies surrounding them. Sat Siri Akaal means the truth is great and does not die. Truth does have the victory in the end. So best to align with truth sooner rather than later.

#### **Q. what does obey, serve, love, excel mean now? What are we obeying? What are we serving?**

A. what it always meant. It is a formula that works when applied consciously in the right direction. Obey the laws of nature. Obey the call of your own soul – your hukam, your heart, your destiny. Obey the wisdom that you know but often conveniently forget. Obey your own commitment. 'Be a disciple of your (highest) consciousness'. It is something very personal. It is not imposed from the outside. Serve the truth within yourself and in every heart. Serve the upliftment of humanity. Serve the highest principles. What do you want to serve?

Love the love. Love the flow of life, love the light of consciousness, love the chance to give, love the opportunities life gives you, love the sangat, love even your enemy. Just love.

Following this sequence and process will bring out the best of your potential. You will embody and become the excellence.

**Q. Why sign the code of ethics and professional standards if the master did not live up to it?**

A. you may not remember that you signed up for the human experience before you incarnated. Yet who doesn't struggle to fully live up the highest human ethical potential and possibilities. Let the code of ethics and professional standards speak for themselves. Do you not agree to it? Do you not want to be ethical in your conduct with students? No matter how others before you may have been, it is there to warn you, to protect you, to guide you. Can you write a better code of a higher ethical standard? YB asked us to be 10 x greater than himself. And the code of conduct points us in that direction. You may not yet fully live it yourself. But it is a standard that you surely want to pass on to the next generations. Or would you prefer to be responsible to lower the standard generation by generation? Our grandparents may have told us many proverbs, some even contradicting each other. And they never necessarily lived up to them. This does not make their wisdom any less rich and meaningful.

**Q. Why say the teacher's oath?**

A. can you understand the point and purpose of the teacher's oath independent of any allegations? Do you want to teach through personality? Do you want to claim credit for the teachings? And will you take responsibility for all consequences without any protective cover of the Golden Chain? Do you want to relate to the students as a man or woman rather than as a teacher? When you teach, you are a teacher. So why not confirm that?

**Q. Re tratakam. Why should we do it? Should we be telling others to do it?**

A. Tratakam is an ancient meditation technique that continues to work. One can do tratakam on the sunrise, sunset, a candle, a mandala, your partner, a deity, etc. In terms of doing tratakam with the given photo of YB. This is optional. It was never a requirement. You may try and see. Or choose another object of contemplation. Or another method of focus and meditation.

**Q. What about YB's Subtle Body. Is it still operative?**

A. The Subtle Body does not take birth. In the Mul Mantra it is the stage of 'Ajooni' unborn, or beyond the womb. No matter where the individual soul may be. Reincarnated (as cockroach or otherwise) or not. The Subtle Body is a domain, associated to the Akashic records and what we might call the Matrix, or Indra's Net. Therefore, it is a domain that any student or teacher can access and call on wisdom, insight, and other downloadable information. This may be done by tuning in to the Golden Chain or specifically to any of the great masters and gurus that have served humanity through the ages. As you develop your own self-mastery then you will have a more conscious connection to the domain of the collective Subtle body.

Note: tuning in with the Adi Mantra (Ong namo Gurdev Namu) does give you a link to the subtle domain and the masters that remain active and present there. Not necessarily to YB unless you choose to include him in your projection.

**Q. Where to go to get updated information?**

A. Your local community leaders will have the statement issued by the various 3HO non-profit organisations. Whatever has been shared from these institutions is open to share with all. A new site has been set up <https://www.ssscresponseteam.org/> It will have updates as and when they are available.

Note: all trainers should be signed up for KRI bulletins. And any teacher can sign up for IKYTA newsletter. See also 3ho website.

**Q. Re White Tantric Yoga. Can we still trust it? Is it pure? Does the Subtle Body of YB still operate there? Is it still a requirement to do WTY for the Level 1 Teacher Training?**

A. see above regarding Subtle Body. The tantric field is a sacred arrangement in itself. If we approach it with a pure heart and mind then it will continue to offer the same benefits of healing, linking to the infinite and positively influencing the Magnetic Field of the Earth.

WTY is no longer an essential requirement for Level 1 KY Teacher Training.  
Any further developments regarding WTY will be found on the WTY website.

**Q. When we say ‘the teachings’. What do we mean?**

A. This answer may have several levels starting with what you choose to relate to as ‘teachings’.

- 1] Sikh teachings; reference to breath, kundalini, chakras, nadis, etc.
- 2] Teachings about yoga. Patanjali, upinshads, other.
- 3] The teachings as taught by YB.  
Combining shakti (Raaj yoga, KY). Bhakti (Sikh Dharma), auyurveda, etc.

YB did not hide any of it. He brought it together in his creative way. collated. Updated.  
He made reference to various sources. i.e. not one source off teachers or teachings.

**Q. What about Lineage and Legacy?**

A. This is a very relevant topic in the light of the allegations and the change of the times.  
We do differentiate between lineage and legacy. YB was not only one making this distinction. For example, Guru Naanak made this distinction when he chose to appoint the most loyal disciple as his successor rather than one of his own sons.

Lineage tends to associate more to the person or people involved in the history of the teachings.

Legacy refers to the teachings themselves.

A claim to lineage does not carry the same merit or guarantee of integrity as it may have in the past.

The legacy can be picked by anyone and passed on to anyone, independent of lineage.

Hence KY can be practiced by anyone from different spiritual/religious paths.

**Q. Why teach?**

A. 1. it works.

2. This is also like asking why practice. It works.

3. You do not have to. It is your choice, your gain, your loss, your decision, your consequences.

**Q. What about all the teachings of YB re woman?**

A. We live in a time when women awakening, women rising, women claiming their power, is a global phenomenon. The same teachings are being shared in different ways and terms, but it is essentially the same teachings.

Many women have benefited, and continue to benefit, from these teachings. They remain self-empowering. Some of these teachings are not necessarily teaching of YB. Rather they are more ancient and can be found in other sources of yogic teachings. YB was just passing them on.

Before just throwing it all away. Take time to go through the teachings and clearly identify any aspect of them that you have issue with, and why. As always try it and see. Test it, taste, it. If it works, then enjoy it. If not let it go.

On a more subtle note. This whole passage from Piscean to Aquarian consciousness is being played in through the paradoxical theatre of a male teacher, with shadow material, serving women to become empowered to bring down the male hierarchy and take back her power.

One could even wonder (contemplate) whether, knowing his own (and men’s) shadow, was part of the driving force to be sure to give women the tools and insight that would serve the transition.

**Q. Is true that YB was appointed Sri Singh Sahib of Western Sikh Dharma?**

A. Yes, it is true. there exists a letter, proclamation, from Akaal Takhat (highest Sikh authority), naming YB as Sri Singh Sahib.

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These topics are currently under research by KRI and other interested parties:

- references to KY in the Upinshads from approx 2000 BC. And other texts.
- more details surrounding Sant Hazara Singh and YB’s other teachers.
- the connection of yoga with the Sikh teachings of the Siri Guru Granth Sahib.

