

[REDACTED]

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Eido T. Shimano Roshi
New York Zendo * Shobo-ji
223 East 67th Street
New York, New York 10021

Beloved Roshi,

I first want to express my continuing gratitude for all that you have given me. You have helped me to see more deeply into myself. I have learned and experienced much by working with you. Thank you, Roshi.

During my stay at DBZ I suffered greatly over my relationship with [REDACTED]. Something had shifted in the way we were able to be with each other. Historically, we had a deep, open, intimate and honest relationship. A relationship rooted in love, trust and caring. A relationship that was actualizing Buddhist principles and precepts, especially around honesty.

As the days went by at DBZ, I could not understand what was happening between [REDACTED] and me. She seemed so distant. So many things were not being shared and discussed. We were not making love or sleeping together. I began to feel that she was having an affair with someone. Whenever I asked her about this, she led me to believe nothing of that nature was happening. In the face of this and other feedback, I began to look into myself to discover why I was feeling insecure when she was telling me not to be concerned. I began to think that something must be "off" in me that I was feeling these things. I was suffering.

It never entered my mind that there was even a possibility that I was being deceived. Such a thing was "impossible" based upon our agreements and mutually shared principles. Such a thing was impossible at DBZ where we were all, including you, chanting precepts that included honesty and freedom from deception.

Upon our return to [REDACTED], [REDACTED] told me the truth about her relationship with you. My initial feeling upon hearing this was deep relief that I was not totally insane. My feelings had been valid and validated. Since then, I have had many feelings, thoughts, concerns and questions. I will share some of them with you now.

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The most important piece in this for me is the deception. I understand and have lived the beauty of secrets and secrecy. This situation did not have the purity of a secret for very long. It turned into outright deception, lying and manipulation. Deception and lying that caused pain, suffering and loss of trust. We are all trying to alleviate pain and suffering, not increase it. It is incomprehensible and irreconcilable to me how you can expect your students to adhere to Buddhist principles, precepts and vows that you secretly do not keep.

I am concerned that the trust so necessary in the Master-Disciple relationship has been used, either consciously or unconsciously, to fulfill your personal needs. I do not deny you, or anyone else, their personal needs for love, sex, affection or intimacy. However, to use the Dokusan Room and the influence you had over [REDACTED] that is inherent in the Master-Disciple relationship to fill your personal needs is, to me, a breach of that trust.

You risked much in return for eight or ten nights of female companionship with [REDACTED]. First, you risked her well being. I am concerned for [REDACTED] and her pain in all of this. She went to DBZ to be a Kessei student, not the Roshi's concubine. In a way she has perhaps been cheated of an opportunity to deepen her meditation. Perhaps not. My sense is that her Zazen and Dokusan were weakened by the distraction, strain and influence of this situation. Even though she has her responsibility and part in this, I feel and think that the Master is obligated to set sexual boundaries and not "give way to lust".

You risked discovery and the ensuing "fallout" within the Sangha and the [REDACTED] community. As you have experienced before, word of this sort of thing spreads quickly. A number of people here and at DBZ know about it already. The degree of damage to the Sangha is yet to be seen and will be determined by events that are yet to unfold and how you respond to the disclosure of this situation.

You risked my relationship with you and the Sangha. At this time, I am unsure whether or not I will continue with you as student. I am unsure whether or not I will return to DBZ as resident. In angry and hurt moments, I have thought to use my extensive knowledge of your personal finances and those of Zen Studies Society as a weapon. These things will depend upon how you respond to this letter. I would like a response, preferably by telephone, prior to your departure to Japan.

You risked the weakening of your life's work. What a callous price to pay. The endless cycle of cause and effect. I ask myself, "What need in Roshi is so great that he would risk so very much for a few hours of sex?" I hope you will ask yourself this same question.

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I am concerned for you and care about you deeply, Roshi. My heart goes out to you. I am sad that you may not be getting your personal needs met. You, who gives so much, deserve to have all you need and want, BUT, without deception. If you cannot get what you need openly and honestly, please do not rely on deceit and lying anymore. Please find some other solution that is more open and will include those of us who love you so dearly.

This situation, although challenging, gives all of us an opportunity to look within. There is a great gift being offered here. It remains to be seen how each of us will face this challenge and use it.

With much love, care and concern,

