

An open letter to the Yoga community, <3

It seems that many of you are seeking transparency on the information that was released by The Practice Bali. I have heard how some of you are hurting and I understand from personal experience that you have invested a lot of your heart, money, time, energy and trust in Para Yoga, and it's founder.

As you haven't heard from Rod himself, (and as I have heard he is claiming "untruths and delusions") I feel it is necessary to answer some of the questions floating around truthfully. Please know that I gain nothing from this letter other than closure and the comfort of a small good deed in the hopes of making sure this isn't continuing with other students.

To relay this is extremely embarrassing, I have held a lot of shame for the past 2-3 years. I am a big girl, I make my own choices and I own the part that I played in this.

In 2017 I was directed to 'Yogarupa's' teachings by Octavio. I went home to Australia and read The Four Desires, I signed up for Yoga Glo, started taking his classes daily and I purchased my ticket to the Bali Tantra Shakti training when they were released.

I arrived in Bali to do the training by myself, I expected to be the least experienced teacher there. I was extremely anxious. I had recently flown to Dubai to search for my missing brother who was suffering from psychosis and because of this experience (I found him in a psychiatric unit) I was pretty shaken and doubting the spiritual path as a whole - Tantra Unveiled (the recommended reading) mirrored a lot of what my brother had been babbling about and I almost cancelled my place in the training because I felt that I may too lose myself, like my brother did.

A private consultation with Brad Hay and meeting ██████████ and ██████████ for the first time before day one were really helpful in soothing my nerves.

On the first day of training as I'm sure the students present would remember the level of excitement in the room was pretty electric. Everyone wanted to speak to Rod and get photos with him -- from the very beginning it was as if he was some kind of a celebrity -- looking back on this (now that I have completely removed myself from the yoga world) it really is quite comical.

I approached him at the end of class on day 1 to ask him about something in relation to my little brother as he had mentioned psychosis in the lecture. Rod answered my questions and we didn't speak again one-on-one until after the third day when he asked me if I wanted to have dinner with him that night. I had heard that he was taking groups of students out to dinner so I accepted this invitation.

We went to The Slow and spoke only teacher-student related conversation. I was surprised to see it was just him and I. We parted ways for the night.

The next day as I walked up the stairs of The Practice I heard a familiar voice saying "hey you' from behind me, it was Rod.. He asked me if I was going to be attending the Kirtan after the last day of training to which I answered yes.

After the last day of training I took my bolster at Kirtan, Rod walked in and sat somewhere behind me. After it was over I walked out of The Practice, Rod walked out straight after me

asking if I would like to have dinner with him again.. I accepted.

We ate at In the Raw. This time the conversation was a little more personal. He told me he could see something special in my practice, that I was very powerful and that he was intrigued by me. We spoke about how he found yoga, his first marriage break up and his children. I told him about my abusive relationship with my daughter's father, about how it led me to yoga etc. He told me at the end that he was "surprised that I hadn't taken advantage of the situation." I asked him what he meant by that, to which he answered "You haven't asked me for a Mantra".

I honestly had no idea what he meant - my entire understanding of a mantra at that point was something we had just sung at kirtan. He explained what he meant and invited me back to his apartment so that we could meditate where he would look inside me and tell me what my meditation practice should be going forward "saving me years of searching".

We went back to his apartment, we meditated, he gave me my mantra and as I was leaving he mentioned that he felt something toward me. He said that he couldn't act upon it because his daughter was too young and he was married. He said that he thought we were divinely connected or perhaps together in a past life. He said it was very "second worldly".

I flew home to Australia the next day and soon after received a text message from Rod saying we should "dot the i's and cross the t's". He Facetimed me from the office at The Practice and we spoke as Bali experienced another earthquake.

He told me that he was there for me to contact personally whenever I needed to talk and that he was interested in seeing where this "second worldly" connection was going to go.

Facetime conversations, emails and text messages continued between us for a few months, the conversations were still 'teacher/student' but also getting a lot more personal. Rod then decided to take a 3 months break from communicating to which he broke when Brad Hay was teaching a workshop at my studio. I told Brad some of what was happening that night. I asked him to keep it between us for my privacy. We spoke about me going to Gina directly.

Rod and I spoke on and off again - both of us, at times recommending we take a break from communication but somehow we would start talking again. I was constantly asking myself why I was continuing these conversations when I knew as a single mother living in Australia at 29 years of age that I didn't want a relationship with a 61 year old man in the US or anything more with him, other than him being my teacher. I honestly felt the weakest that I had ever felt before, I found myself saying things that I didn't mean to impress him and although I would usually consider myself to be quite a strong, straight to the point person. It was like I could no longer think for myself. Even when I had to attend parenting duties or teach a class at my studio, he had an expectation that I would almost clear my schedule if he wanted to talk at a certain time.

He asked me for 'photos' which I am absolutely ashamed to say that I sent him.

We spoke about him seeing my hometown a few times and as I was planning a festival I asked him if he would come and be the headline teacher. He agreed and it was announced that he would fly to Australia after the next Bali training.

We spoke about spending time together in Uluwatu before the Kosha training, Rod then told me that he had told Gina, his wife that he had fallen in love with someone in Bali which

scared me a lot and again I questioned why I hadn't just cut it off, I decided to take space and we did not meet in Uluwatu.

We started speaking again before Bali. We met the day before the Kosha training at The W where we had lunch and conversation. He gifted me with a book "Daughters of the goddess" - The woman saints of India and a replica of a grey alpaca (maybe) jacket that he wore. He asked me to never put a photo of me in the jacket on social media because he wears his one often and it would link him to me.

We started the training the next day.

A lot was shaken inside me throughout the first 3 days of that training. I was starting to see Rod in a very different light. He was contradicting himself in the teachings and I was really just seeing him through my own eyes again (this may sound strange but it's the only way I can explain it), he talked about desire and not acting upon things that weren't right. He talked about marriage and monogamy. He spoke about his love for Gina (when he had always made out to me that their marriage was not working as "she had stolen a lot of money from him for her business" which I don't believe to be true anymore) I was seeing that he wasn't who he said he was as a teacher and half way through the 4th day I left the training and sent him a text saying I wouldn't be returning. I said that I was finally releasing myself from the ridiculousness of the situation and that I knew he was a liar, that I didn't trust the teachings because he was teaching them, that he was "a full of shit manipulator and a fraud". He called me right away and very calmly smoothed it over. I mean he was good. He talked me into returning to class that day.

How I went from being SO angry to right back where I had been for the past 12 months, I have no idea.

The next day/ after the last day of the training Rod came to my apartment. We were intimate. He suggested he book me a room so that I could stay for another week in a hotel and he could visit after class, I declined.

He flew to Australia where I picked him and his son up from the airport. On the way home when getting petrol, I returned to the car where a box sat on my seat. It was a gold necklace that he had bought me in Bali.

Gina and family flew to Australia and came to the festival where she made it very obvious that she knew it was me that he had been speaking to. On the final day of the festival Rod told me she was coming back to talk to me. He told me that he would either "have a family or no family by the end of that day" and that it was "completely up to me which way it went" by what I decided to tell Gina.

Gina arrived and we went for a walk. (While Rod knew this was happening just 20 metres away he was initiating students in private and "sacred" consultations). Gina and I had a heated discussion. She was told by Rod that I had pursued him and he was innocent. He had apparently begged her to come to Australia to protect him from me. I took the necklace and put it into her hand and told her she could believe whatever she needed to believe to get through it.

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When it was over and they had left, I literally felt like I had been released from a spell. I know that that sounds ridiculous and I am not saying that I am a victim, as I said I am a big girl. I made my own choices but I do believe there was a pretty large power difference. I do believe the Para Yoga code of ethics was broken and I hope that he has not continued to use the teachings to capture the attention of young women for his own personal gain.

I was not out to get Rod. I never wanted this to get out. I have held way too much shame about it.

Within 2 weeks after the festival I had sold my studio, moved to the other side of the state and stopped talking to all of my yoga friends.

It wasn't until very recently when I caught up with two friends in the community that I opened up about it. It then got out without my permission into the yoga community - I don't blame them for doing so, they were hurting and confused and felt like something needed to be done so they took the information to Octavio.

I have heard that there is a lot of pointing fingers going on right now and I just want to finish with this:

The only people to point fingers at are myself and Rod.

Brad Hay was the only one I felt comfortable enough to let in. He knew a little of what was going on, until it all blew up in front of him at the festival where he found out everything. He pulled Rod up on it. He was always there for me without question and as far as 'yogi's' go — he in my opinion is the most credible.

I am sorry for my part and I hope that Rod can show you all the respect you deserve by dealing with this openly and truthfully.

And to Rod as I know you will see this... I heard that you're claiming "untruths and delusions". If that is the way that the almighty Yogarupa is going to handle this, know that I will not stand for it,

I have the emails, the texts, the phone records and the social media messages that you asked me to delete.

Own your shit.

Sincerely,

A blue brushstroke redaction covering the signature.