

[Independent Weekly reporter Matt Saldaña met with Bo Lozoff; his wife, Sita Lozoff; and Human Kindness Foundation Co-Director Catherine Miller at the Indy office Aug. 5. The Indy suggested meeting at several semi-private indoor and outdoor locations, which Lozoff and Miller rejected because of privacy concerns and the hot weather. The interview began with Lozoff questioning the Indy's refusal to meet at the Human Kindness Foundation headquarters on Etta Road in Durham, where Bo and Sita Lozoff now live. Before the tape begins, Lozoff said that he had spoken to journalist friends who had disapproved of the Indy's decision. However, it is not unusual for journalists to interview people in "neutral" locations. Given the nature of the allegations against Lozoff, I decided that the reporter should not go to headquarters alone, and recommended a semi-private, neutral location. —Lisa Sorg]

BO LOZOFF: What is the policy?

INDY: We don't have to go into someone's house. It's just a decision we made, with the editors.

BO LOZOFF: That's what I mean. I'm going to try to have really honest communication with you. I respect that you're doing your job. You're not being straight with me, in asking for really reasonable—you're not even quoting me a policy now that has anything to do with ... You're investigating an organization, they say, 'Well come out here and see what we do and we'll show you,' and you say, 'No, no. We have to meet in a neutral location. I've never heard of that kind of policy.'

INDY: It's one I've always followed as a journalist. And I guess your journalist friends don't follow the same one.

BO LOZOFF: Well what is that policy?

INDY: I've never gone into someone's own home. This is sensitive material.

BO LOZOFF: This isn't our home.

INDY: Right. Place of business.

BO LOZOFF: It's a public institution that volunteers come in and out of all day.

INDY: Right. A neutral ground I feel like is meeting someone halfway. And that's not what we came here to talk about. The other thing is, yeah, we are running this story.

BO LOZOFF: When I asked you yesterday, 'Is this about me, or this is about Human Kindness Foundation?' you said, 'Well, actually it's about both.' It boggles the mind that it's about HKF, and you say you have a policy against seeing the institution you're investigating. In terms of fair reporting...

INDY: We have plenty of documents of the institution, and accounts of the institution.

BO LOZOFF: All of the accusatory side.

INDY: Right. I'm giving you the opportunity to respond to all those allegations.

BO LOZOFF: In three days?

INDY: I gave you this work week to respond, and I appreciate you accommodating that.

BO LOZOFF: This isn't going to end with you. I do feel that, as a local organization, we certainly at least want the editor to speak for herself, the publisher speak for himself. In all the interest of fairness, presenting something you've been working on for at least weeks, if not months, and then giving us a deadline...

INDY: That's standard journalistic policy. I investigated everything. I collected accusations. I wanted to come to this meeting with everything in front of me, so that you could respond to each one of those. And if, after this meeting, you have further questions, or if I have other questions....

BO LOZOFF: You told me yesterday, when I said, 'What's the motivation of the Independent in doing this?' and you said, 'The Independent has no motivation. We're doing a story.' But HKF is involved with literally hundreds of thousands of people, and you're only doing a story based on accusations of a few...

INDY: That's actually not true. I've read a lot of your books and looked into your organization. It's not only based on accusations.

BO LOZOFF: But you've not looked at the organization in any way that we've known about. And any way that we could bring lists of people, local people, prestigious people, you could talk to so that you could get more of a balanced view.

INDY: If you want to recommend people I talk to afterwards, that's perfectly fine, and I'll give them a call.

BO LOZOFF: As long as you can do it before Friday at 5.

INDY: That was, we gave you a week to respond.

BO LOZOFF: You didn't give us a week. You called us in the middle of Monday afternoon and said I have a deadline on Friday. We're going to actually slander your organization in a big article, and you have a little bit of ability to respond to specific things. I can't imagine that, I'm sure you see yourself as a really fair journalist, and I can't imagine how that addresses issues of fairness.

INDY: There's a lot of reasons why. These are women who decided to come forward with stories that were very difficult for them to come forward with. If we had notified you immediately of that, that would have impaired our ability to collect those.

BO LOZOFF: There's a difference between immediately, and 'We're going to publish the article in the next month or so, and we want to give you an opportunity now to see what we've gathered against you, all these accusations, because we're very interested in issues of fairness, and we want to see what you have to say about these things, and realizing that it might take you some time to refute a specific thing about this or that, or get in touch with somebody to get in touch with us.' This sounds like more of a hatchet job, and it just seems beneath you.

INDY: You're free to express that to my publisher or editor, or anyone you want.

BO LOZOFF: I'm expressing it to you, because that's what it feels like.

[Interview begins.]

INDY: I have received allegations from five different women, all of whom spoke to me separately, and many of whom did not know the others were coming forward, to describe various degrees of sexual contact by you, while acting as a spiritual guide, in one-on-one sessions at the Kindness House, and in one instance, another location. All women describe an attempt on your part to conceal this behavior, while preaching tenets that include a vow against harmful sexual behavior and lying. I will go through each of these allegations, but do you have anything to say about the charge of sexual abuse in general before we begin?

BO LOZOFF: Go ahead.

INDY: Just some general points for you to verify, before we begin:

The Kindness House existed, in one form or another, for approximately 14 years, from 1993, when the land was purchased, until 2007, when the land was sold. You paroled inmates there from approximately 1997 until 2006. You also housed volunteers and visitors.

BO LOZOFF: We paroled inmates there from the time we opened in 1994. Until 2006. Or 2005.

CATHERINE MILLER: We actually closed the program at Kindness House in 2005. It took us a little time to sell and move. But we closed the Kindness House in 2005.

BO LOZOFF: Because I went on tour. We started planning my tour in August 2005, and it was clear from our board that we were not going to continue our program without me on the premises, so that's when we stopped.

INDY: Everyone who lived there permanently was paid \$50/month and room and board, in exchange for daily labor.

BO LOZOFF Including us.

INDY: Everyone who lived there attended daily morning meditation and group meals, abided by a code of silence from approx. 9 p.m. to 9 a.m...

BO LOZOFF: Different years, that was yes or no.

CATHERINE MILLER: But generally yes.

INDY: You also had tunings at certain years?

BO LOZOFF: I think for the length of Kindness House we had tunings. We may have stopped calling them "tunings." Just meetings.

CATHERINE MILLER: We experimented with them. I don't remember the details. For the most part during Kindness House years we had weekly tunings.

INDY: Also people living there agreed to give up drinking, smoking, drugs, and pornography.

BO LOZOFF: (nods head)

INDY: The Interfaith Order of Communion and Community, while not officially part of HKF, but which ex-convicts paroled at the Kindness House were required to sign...

BO LOZOFF: Nobody was required to be in the Interfaith Order. That was a separate project. And it wasn't just ex-cons.

INDY: What did they have to agree to?

BO LOZOFF: We had a whole intake procedure and application to get into the Kindness House, per the parole plan. It was basically—I wish we had found and brought some of those original documents, and I can e-mail them to you—we were extremely clear that this wasn't a place where we were trying to be to everybody's liking. This wasn't a place that was conventional, in any sense, of what to expect. This was an ego-reduction center, and a place to learn how to serve others. People begged us to get in. It was difficult to get in. Part of the lifestyle was some of the things you mentioned. We had morning practice. Everybody was required to attend that. We went into silence at a certain hour of the night. Everybody was supposed to be cheerfully willing to do whatever task needed to be done. One of the greatest functions of Kindness House was that no one was stuck doing one thing for 40 hours a week. Everybody did a little bit of everything.

INDY: People who lived at the HKF were not allowed to form romantic relationships, or engage in sexual activity, for the first six months of their stay.

BO LOZOFF: That happened after about 1998, or something like that. That was fairly late-on, because of an experience we had with somebody coming and immediately bonding with one of the women at Kindness House, and it just really screwed up his focus, and being able to assimilate out of prison. We asked some big things, and that was one of them. We borrowed that from some other spiritual communities, called the six-month rule. Basically, for the first six months, your primary attention is on community life.

INDY: People who lived at the HKF were not allowed to leave the property, without an escort, for the first three months.

BO LOZOFF: Ex-cons. That was part of their parole.

CATHERINE MILLER: Well not all ex-cons. Somebody who was on parole. And that was a requirement of the Orange County parole board. That wasn't our idea.

INDY: You offered mandatory one-on-one sessions with ex-cons and volunteers in your office.

BO LOZOFF: Again, different times in the community, that was or wasn't true.

INDY: Decisions were arrived at by you, and a group of directors which included Sita Lozoff and Catherine Miler.

BO LOZOFF: There's always a difference between the staff and the board. The staff have always included us. That's the sort of day-to-day stuff. The board of directors have never all lived there, different places, and that's the legal decision-making body that meets several times a year, and makes the big decisions about whether to have a Kindness House.

INDY: I understand that, after a certain point, there was a rule against attending AA meetings.

BO LOZOFF: No. That would be the opposite. The first three or four months somebody's there, we tell them way in advance.... It just. Boy. I don't know why a nice guy like you is trying to put the worst spin you could possibly put on. But you weren't there. And you don't have the foggiest idea of what you're talking about. We ran an institution that nobody else would do. You go scour the country and you find me one other organization that takes the people into the community, living with the directors and their families, 24 hours a day, with Catherine's six-year old son, 24 hours a day, eating all meals together. Find me another place that did that, before you are asking me these things in such a cut-and-dry fashion that makes us sound like a cult. Or a dictator kind of organization. These

are all things from people who hate us, and those are the only people you've apparently talked to.

INDY: It's what I need you to respond to.

BO LOZOFF: Yeah, but you're asking me to respond in an inhuman fashion, within an hour or so, after you've been working on this for months, and you're dead-set to publish after this Friday. That's really inhuman and unfair of you. So I'm responding as best as I can. But I'm going to be honest with you throughout, about how disappointing human interaction this is. Because I could take any of those points you just asked me—if you really wanted to be informed about this story—I could give a half-hour explanation of the context of how we were living, and what we were doing, and what the dynamics felt like, but you're not really interested in taking the time for that, because you would've contacted us a lot sooner before deadline if you were.

INDY: I've read a lot of your writing about the holistic, unique nature of HKF, and these are just some points that you have a right to respond to, and I'm giving you that opportunity.

In the summer of 1997 [REDACTED] arrived at the HKF. She left in the winter of 1997/1998. During her time there, my sources tell me that you expressed to her that you lived a celibate life, but that you were struggling openly with the question of whether people should be allowed to have romantic feelings. You also expressed to her that you were thinking of ceasing your role as a spiritual teacher.

BO LOZOFF: I've expressed the possibility of ceasing my role as a spiritual teacher every year of my life for the past 40 years. I don't have any students. I'm not a spiritual teacher in that sense. Other people call me a spiritual teacher. I have no idea what conversation you're talking about with [REDACTED]. Yeah, we were an intimate family. We were people living together doing some very bold, unconventional and intense stuff. Now it doesn't sound like, 'Oh, I never said that.' It sounds like you're putting it together in a fashion that hurts me.

INDY: During her time there, you French kissed her once.

BO LOZOFF: Yeah, I'm sure that happened.

INDY: During her time there, you also expressed your love to her.

BO LOZOFF: I expressed my love to everybody at Kindness House. If she's implying that I was telling her that I love her in a romantic way, exclusive of everybody else, I never said that.

INDY: After she had left, you invited her to watch a movie, then invited her to your cabin, and you put your hands into her pants, and kissed and fondled her breasts.

BO LOZOFF: I don't think it happened quite that way. But I did kiss her and fondle her breasts.

INDY: When she told you that she was interested in revealing the sexual encounter to the community, there was a violent interaction, well strike "violent interaction," that's editorializing...

BO LOZOFF: Gee you wouldn't want that. We wouldn't want any editorializing.

INDY: ...where you ripped a plank out of a construction site, and told her that she was trying to destroy the community.

BO LOZOFF: I don't remember that detail. But I will tell you, eye to eye, that I have never threatened or come close to any sort of violence, and if you print the word "violence" and you editorialize, I'm absolutely going to take you to task for it in every responsible way that I can. I have screamed at people at people in Kindness House. And if you go to TROSA, right here in Durham, and sit in on one of their evening sessions, in a community of ex-cons and addicts, you'll hear constant screaming. I hope you do your homework. A couple of times a year, I might have erupted and screamed at people in Kindness House, and I just want you to know, if you editorialize that with "violence," if you even imply slightly that I threatened violence against anybody, or that I almost committed violence against anybody, you're way, way out of your league, because that never happened.

INDY: Is that a threat right there? You're saying, "If you."

BO LOZOFF: I said I will take you to task. Why are you so against me? We just met.

INDY: I'm giving you the opportunity to respond to allegations. That's my job as a journalist.

BO LOZOFF: Yes I know. But for you or the Independent to say you have no motivation in this is absurd, because...

INDY: This is my job. It's not a personal vendetta.

BO LOZOFF: It's a hatchet job. It's not an investigative job. You won't even come out to see what we do. You won't look at our books.

INDY: I did read a lot of your books actually.

You expressed to her at one point that if you wanted someone to lick the floor for you, they would.

BO LOZOFF: That's an outright lie. I've never talked like that in my life.

INDY: [REDACTED] arrived at Kindness House in 1999. You began counseling her on her “sexual blockages,” sexual molestation as a child, and [REDACTED] within one month of her arrival, and used both imagery therapy and oral and manual sexual contact during these sessions, which lasted through 2002.

BO LOZOFF: No, I’m sorry. I can’t go along with that. First of all, I don’t practice therapy. I’m not a therapist in any way. And [REDACTED] and every other person who’s come to Kindness House has been told that, and knows I’m not a therapist. I’m a guy who is endeavoring to lead a helpful life to others. And I fell madly in love with [REDACTED]. She knew that. She was told that. The clinical way you just put, that makes me into some ridiculous sounding pompous ass, that I practiced oral and manual, whatever it is you said, as part of my therapy—no, the truth is just not quite that reducible to stupid words. The truth is I had a very intimate and intense relationship with [REDACTED], that did actually help her cure her [health condition], that did help her get over her childhood molestation. And as I told you on the phone yesterday, the word “abuse” was a word that was never mentioned, not only while [REDACTED] or anybody else, [REDACTED], was at Kindness House, but even a year or so afterward.

[REDACTED]’s wedding was at Kindness House. After all of this erupted, after the lies and deception were out in the open, after it was just completely clear that I had gotten in over my head in a dysfunctional relationship with her, she and her husband, who I introduced and put their hands in each other’s hands, got married at Kindness House. Catherine was there. I didn’t attend the wedding, because I didn’t want to disrupt it. I didn’t want it to be about me. I left my own community to let them have their wedding there. But Catherine was recounting the other day how [REDACTED] spoke from the pulpit.

CATHERINE MILLER: She spoke about how much she appreciated your involvement in her life, and how much healing. I don’t remember the exact words, of course. It was years ago. But she made a very moving tribute to you, and was sorry that you couldn’t be there.

BO LOZOFF: This was after the most intense screaming shout-fest with her and [REDACTED], after all the hurt and betrayal, *after* it. They actually asked me to perform the wedding. I encouraged them to get another minister friend of ours, and then I decided not to attend at all, because things were so rocky between us. But at that wedding, which is after what you were talking about, after it all, she said how much I helped her.

Now six years later, looking through a lens and a filter that people have reinforced and gone through and distorted, and then made absolutely real for themselves, six years later it all sounds really different. And I have little doubt at this point that you’re going to make me into this cult figure who’s throwing his influence around telling people to lick the floor—go ahead, Matt. It’s not going to do you or your career any good, because it’s the wrong thing to do. You are slanting. You are really editorializing and allowing yourself to do it, because of what you’ve been convinced of from talking to a few people who were involved with us out of tens of thousands. I’m not sure why. I’m not sure what

your stake is in all of this. But, no I don't go along with the three little lines that you read about my relationship with [REDACTED], and I can't imagine that she would either.

INDY: Well, I'm trying to be as specific as possible, and not slanting in my questions, that's why I said 'oral and manual sexual contact.' Can you verify...

BO LOZOFF: [REDACTED] and I never went to bed with each other. I never had intercourse with her.

INDY: Intercourse meaning?

BO LOZOFF: Intercourse is pretty specific. It's when a man's penis goes into a woman's vagina, and they both enjoy it.

INDY: Was there any vaginal contact?

BO LOZOFF: Yes. [REDACTED] and I had an affair. In the midst of her emotional issues, and [health condition], and my trying to help her through hypnosis to conquer [the health condition], which was very successful, in the midst of all of that, we also lived in the same place, and saw each other every day, and we had an affair. And, you're not going to be able to simplify it by saying oral and manual sexual contact in purposes of therapy or anything like that. It's silly.

INDY: You confronted [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] about this sexual contact, when [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] began dating in 2002. At one point you came over to [REDACTED]'s house and yelled at him, that [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] had "sold you out." You also held a meeting, with Catherine Miller and Sita Lozoff, to discuss this problem.

BO LOZOFF: Sita was there at that meeting at [REDACTED]'s house, with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and Sita and me, and again, you're making a matter—at that time, we had been intense family for years. Of course I went over to [REDACTED]'s house. Sita went over to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]'s to try to talk about this. We had a big fight. [REDACTED] screamed at me too. We had a huge fight.

CATHERINE MILLER: But only a verbal fight.

BO LOZOFF: Yeah. I'm sure you must've met [REDACTED] by now. He's about 6'5". Probably weighs 230-240. I'm 5'7". I weigh 160.

SITA LOZOFF: [REDACTED]'s not implying this was anything but a verbal fight, is he? I was there. Believe me, there was nothing but verbal.

INDY: That's what I have from my sources.

BO LOZOFF: We know that [REDACTED] claimed for years that he was traumatized by that, and terrified and all that. That's [REDACTED]'s problem. There was a family argument. I put [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] together. I encouraged them to be interested in each other. They wound up getting married, because of my influence in both of their lives—I felt they were really right for each other. We were a very close, intimate family at that time. Sita and I were trying to—and the way you said it, “I confronted.” I didn't confront anybody about anything.

When [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] had started dating, at my suggestion, [REDACTED] came right out and asked [REDACTED] whether she had ever had any kind of sexual contact with me. [REDACTED] wasn't ashamed or embarrassed at all to say, ‘Yes, actually. Bo and I have had kinds of sexual contact that has helped me a lot.’ [REDACTED] went absolutely ballistic, and everything from then proceeded from that. So for you to frame it like I went to his house and confronted him, that's completely the reverse of what happened. I was confronted by [REDACTED]. And [REDACTED] was caught in the middle for quite awhile. I was confronted by [REDACTED], and it turned into—that was probably the last... I spoke with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] after that, but that was probably the last time that I was in the same room with them, as a close family and this problem together. When was that? You have all the dates.

INDY: Sometime in 2002.

BO LOZOFF: Well I was in silence until late September 2002. And they got married in [REDACTED].

INDY: You wrote a letter explaining your “love triange” with [REDACTED], as well as sexual contact with [REDACTED] during her relationship with [REDACTED].

BO LOZOFF: I understand that [REDACTED] has declined to be a part of this article, and declined to be interviewed, and I'm absolutely going to respect her wishes. [REDACTED] is one of the dearest people in my life. Her son calls us grandma and grandpa. I married her and her late husband. I got him out of prison. I'm not going to talk about [REDACTED] at all, if she's not going to talk to you herself.

INDY: Was there a letter you wrote concerning your relationship with [REDACTED]?

BO LOZOFF: You said on the phone there were documents and e-mails. I know there was a lot of e-mailing, especially when part of this was going on while I was in silence. I couldn't speak. So, I'm not sure what you're calling a letter as opposed to e-mail, but I wrote a bunch of stuff while I was in silence.

INDY: I have a copy here, ‘This Life Changing Challenge Upon Us.’ Does that look like...

BO LOZOFF: Well that's my handwriting. I wouldn't have any familiarity what this says at this point, without reading it again. Do you have a date for this?

INDY: 2002

BO LOZOFF: I'm sure this was absolutely from my heart, and what it looked like at the time for me. Without reading this again, I have no idea how I would feel differently about things that I said here now. I may feel differently about several things. This was during the worst, most intense, period of my life, where I had just completed a year of silence. My community was exploding around me in controversy and conflict. Some of the dearest people in my life were leaving and feeling very conflicted feelings. This was all written during that time. I have no idea how dramatic or intense it is. I may be able to find it on my computer and read it again. But, yes, I wrote that.

Let me say something general, as you're asking me all these specific, very clinical kind of questions. It has been no secret to anyone that I am unconventional in virtually every aspect of my life, not just sexually. So sexual unconventionality is absolutely part of it. That's why I haven't denied that I kissed [REDACTED], that I touched her breasts. I have denied that I put my hands in her pants, because I think that's an exaggeration. I didn't ever touch [REDACTED] there. I'm not trying to get one over you like, 'Hey, I've never touched anybody but my wife.' My wife knows this. We've been together 42 years. If I weren't unconventional in all the other ways I'm unconventional, then I never would have opened Kindness House and been willing to take people straight out of prison after 23 years, and live with them 24 hours a day with no security, and no counselors, and no therapists. My whole life is a little wild for people wearing suits and ties [gestures at reporter] and people working in air conditioning, and I am not trying to pretend that's not so at all. But, when you do this, you're taking that one element completely out of context as if, 'Hey, I work at Rick Hendrick car lot and these are the things I do with women.' I'm sorry, but that's not very good journalism. And it's not a very good understanding on your part. So, you can go ahead, and I'm happy to address each one of these particular things, but I want to be upfront with you that I'm addressing it within the context of—I have been, all my life, unconventional in virtually every way imaginable.

I built these little cabins to live in without air conditioning, when it's 102 degrees outside. I work for no pay. There's one salary paid in our organization, and that's to Catherine for \$32,000. Everything about HKF has been unconventional, and I have not been able to find a program in the country like it. That's why we created Kindness House—people writing to us saying, 'I'm going to get out of prison soon. Where can I go to do spiritual practice and service work, and some kind of activism?' We created the place because I canvassed the whole country and I couldn't find a damn place willing to deal with people freshly released from prison. Now, after 11 or 12 years of doing it ourselves, I have a lot more appreciation for why I couldn't find any place willing to do it, because people get out of prison with a lot of damage, and a lot of rage. But, all I've heard so far sounds like some b-movie script about [cult leader] Chuck Diederich, who browbeat people, and was a megalomaniac and all that. You're just barking up the wrong tree if you're trying to paint me as someone who's doing this for himself, and gotten a lot out of it.

I have been ripped apart and destroyed by the same scandal that you're investigating. I've never been the same from it. I feel like the old joke: 'How about we refund your money, take back the items, shut down the department, and have your manager shot?' We closed down the program. We sold the place. We moved to a different location. We don't have any students. We don't have any residents. We don't have any parolees. This coming about years later like this is like a 2 x 4 in the back of the head. So, no, I'm not going to try to paint myself as some conventional, goody-goody guy. I've never been that. And none of the good things in our work, or in our lives would be ...

This is today's mail. We just stopped by the post-office on our way here. None of it's opened. Feel free to open any letters at will. Letters from prisoners. Today's mail. I swear to God. [Flips through letters, slams them on table] That's what we do. That's what we've been doing for 35 years.

You told Catherine you wouldn't come out here, because you're not investigating what we do now. You're investigating what we did on Nicks Rd. This is what we did on Nicks Rd. This is the primary core of our work since in 1973. [taps envelopes] We had other people come out on Nicks Rd. to help us do this. This is what we were doing out there, and this is what we still do, and this is what my life has been about. And it's only an unconventional person, who's not a therapist—I don't have any professional ethics to abide by, any licensure or anything like that. And everybody knows that from the get-go. There's this sort of wild guy who's got a good heart, who has a lot of power that seems helpful to a lot of people, so let's try to do this experiment together.

I was a terrible, terrible leader of that community. I was a terrible choice by God, to try to do what we did. But we got people out of prison, who never would've gotten out otherwise, and they're still out, and they're doing good work in this very community. And so I can't say that I'm sorry that I did it. But absolutely, I can say the place folded because I wasn't the right person, with my unconventional matter, the fact that I didn't have any counseling or therapeutic skills—we didn't know that we would need any—the fact that I had been unconventional sexually, I was not the right person to try to do what we did, but we did it. And we did it for 11 years, and we did it honestly and authentically. And while these people were with us, it was not like how you're reading right now.

The hatred and bitterness and resentment and accusations are coming through therapy, through negative bonding with friends afterwards, through darkening the lens that they're looking at the past with. I just wanted to give you that general perspective, because as far as I know, that's what's going on. Yes, it was a very unconventional place.

INDY: You were also influential in [REDACTED]'s engagement to [REDACTED], a volunteer, shortly after she arrived, and he ended up leaving.

BO LOZOFF: [REDACTED]. He and [REDACTED] got together after the six-month rule, and I certainly loved them both, and they very much had my blessing. I didn't put them together like I actually really match-made [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. [REDACTED], I actually said to her, 'The guy you're looking for actually comes out

here all the time.’ When I said [REDACTED], she laughed. She said, ‘God, there’s not chemistry there whatsoever.’ When I told [REDACTED], I said you know you’re always telling me, you’re looking for this girl. And there’s one right here, in plain view, that is a beautiful, beautiful person, who you could love. And he said, ‘Who?’ And I said, ‘[REDACTED].’ He laughed. He said, ‘Oh, God. Please.’ I said, why don’t you just open your hearts, because I get a feeling that if you don’t just laugh about this, maybe you’ll find you have a lot in common. That was the most matchmaking that I’ve ever done. I didn’t put [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] together. That happened after the six-month rule. I said, ‘You’re both wonderful, that’s fine with me.’

INDY: You maintained contact with [REDACTED] after she left the Kindness House in Fall 2002, and married [REDACTED] in [REDACTED], and cornered her and kissed her several times while she was visiting, though without any sexual contact.

BO LOZOFF: I don’t know anything that. You’re asking me for vague memories, in the most intense period of our lives. We were an intimate, and intense, family going through a lot of stuff together.

INDY: Did any of that intimacy continue through her engagement with [REDACTED]?

BO LOZOFF: I didn’t see [REDACTED] much after she got engaged. Until that explosive argument at [REDACTED]’s place. I didn’t see either of them again. I actually left town, the next morning after that explosive argument at [REDACTED]’s. I was so devastated by it, that I left town. I went to South Carolina, where my brother owns a cheap hotel, and I could stay there for free. I was there in pain and devastation for three weeks. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] called me at some point while I was there to talk about performing their wedding. I was in enormous pain, and I don’t remember how many times I saw [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] after that. Because I didn’t perform their wedding, and I didn’t even attend it.

INDY: You made sexual contact with her once, after she had married [REDACTED].

BO LOZOFF: There was one time that I remember that I felt terrible about, and feel terrible about. Again, trying to regain goodwill between us, and we started hugging and kissing again, and I left. That may have been the last time I ever saw her. That was shortly after I had gotten back in town after the wedding.

Like I say, to be framing this as a man in power abusing is extremely different from the reality of people intensely, intimately involved with each other—with an enormous amount of equal influence in each other’s lives, emotionally—dysfunctionally bumbling their way through something until it could just sort of break and they could go their separate ways. That’s actually what happened with me and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. We painfully struggled to the point where we couldn’t see each other, and parted. Whether that happened shortly before their wedding, or shortly after their wedding—to me, since they got married in [REDACTED], it’s the end of 2008, that’s ancient history.

You say you've seen e-mails. Did you see the e-mail I sent [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in March of this year?

INDY: I'm not sure.

Yeah, I wouldn't think so. I brought it for you. Why don't you have it. Because that's how I communicate with them. Just struggling to regain goodwill after a longtime.

This is probably an e-mail you haven't seen with [REDACTED], after a phone conversation in March.

INDY: Actually, now that I think about it, I've seen both of these e-mails.

BO LOZOFF: Well that expresses my feelings to both of them. That expresses how I see it today, and how I wish them well, and I wish we wouldn't have to avoid each other's glances if we see each other in public. I wish we could realize that we're basically on the same side of most of the world's major struggles, and if we could just let the past go, have goodwill for each other, wish each other well—that's my feeling. I'm not trying to bring them down.

INDY: [REDACTED] visited HKF as a volunteer several times between 1999 and 2002. She moved there in 2002 and stayed for approximately two and a half years.

BO LOZOFF: Yes.

INDY: During [REDACTED]'s visits, my sources say you touched her and kissed her during one-on-one sessions.

CATHERINE MILLER: Excuse me. Is this from [REDACTED]. You say, 'your sources say.'

INDY: Right. I'm protecting my sources. Everything's been verified, for the protection of...

CATHERINE MILLER: I don't see how anything could be verified, for something in private, by anyone but [REDACTED].

BO LOZOFF: See, I'm trying to protect people's privacy also. You were baiting me a little while ago to talk about [REDACTED], and if I didn't know that [REDACTED] has refused to talk to you about this article, then you would've been eliciting information from me about my relationship with [REDACTED] that she was not willing to talk with you about.

INDY: Two things: that was referring to the document. And I was actually waiting to speak with you before I talked to [REDACTED].

BO LOZOFF: Well my sources have told me that she refused to talk to you. I don't know—I mean, [REDACTED] lives less than a mile from Catherine. We don't know if it's alright to be discussing [REDACTED] with you. We seem to be at a stalemate here, where you don't feel like you can say, 'Yes, it was [REDACTED] who said this,' and we don't feel it's honorable to talk about [REDACTED] when we don't really know whether she's cooperating with you in this.

INDY: As far as who our sources are, that's confidential on our part.

CATHERINE MILLER: It may just be that you need to talk about this after you've had the opportunity to call [REDACTED].

INDY: I'm giving you the opportunity to respond to some information that we've received.

BO LOZOFF: Well I've already given you a general response that I have been unconventional in my sexuality, as well as every other area of my life, in terms of my willing to be intimate with people, psychologically, emotionally, practically speaking, so something like saying, 'When [REDACTED] visited you kissed her,' yeah that sounds like something that could happen, that sounds like something that did happen. I never went to bed with [REDACTED]. Far from it. There's been—[REDACTED] had some problems with some other people at Kindness House, especially one of the ex-cons. We had to really be a helpful part of extricating her from. I don't feel of liberty to talk about that kind of stuff, without knowing that [REDACTED] would want me to.

INDY: As with all of the women, you asked to keep this sexual contact private. During one of these sessions, you told her that if she wanted a spiritual teacher, she would have to learn to accept sexual contact with that teacher, and keep it private.

BO LOZOFF: No. I never said that. And I don't consider myself a spiritual teacher with students, and I have not talked about that. I may have been in some philosophical conversation with [REDACTED] where she was bring up issues with spiritual teachers and sexuality. I may have said something like, 'The Dalai Lama says that once you take someone as your spiritual teacher, you do whatever they tell you.' But, that's one of the reasons I don't call myself a spiritual teacher. I've called myself a spiritual teacher in the sense of my writings and my lectures, but I don't have one-on-one students. And I didn't. I was the spiritual director of Kindness House. As I said, I look back and I feel like I was a terrible choice for that job. But it was the only way a bunch of people got out of prison, so I trust that whatever happened, needed to happen. It's certainly not something I could have sustained for decades, because I'm not the right candidate. I'm too unconventional, in all of my behavior.

Saying something like the way you just quoted, no. Because what you're implying is a man of power who's deliberately trying to twist a woman's mind into thinking she has to do whatever I ask. I have never been that way. I have never felt an impulse to be that

way. I don't jerk people around, and I don't manipulate people for my own ends. Period. I've said that uncategorically.

INDY: [REDACTED] expressed ambivalence about these meetings, and you e-mailed her after your 40-day retreat and apologized, saying it was a mistake but that you were simply trying to help her, and ceased this contact.

BO LOZOFF: If you have the e-mail, then I might remember it. I've gone through a lot of fasting and retreat, and revelations, and as I said before, I have no boundaries in my own vulnerability and willing to be straight with people on what I'm thinking that day. You want to take it all years later as a pattern of a man in power abusing his influence, it's your business.

INDY: [REDACTED] was unsure about moving in, because [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were leaving, and Catherine Miller assured her that the HKF needed her, and she was persuaded to stay.

CATHERINE MILLER: I don't remember that.

INDY: During the time [REDACTED] was living there, you said that society was breaking down, and there would be some sort of environmental apocalypse within 3 years, and circulated 9/11 conspiracy videos. Many people were afraid, and looked to HKF as the only safe place.

BO LOZOFF: Absolute Waco nonsense. We're not like that, Matt. And I hope you don't try to editorialize us into being like that.

INDY: Everything I'm saying is things other people have told me.

Absolute insane spins of everything we've ever been like. I've made many talks, we'll give you tapes me saying, that I think sometime before 2010 we're going to be in for a major kind of equalizing experience like the Great Depression. And I have said I don't know if it will be environmental, military, economic—it could be any of those things. But we're sort of edging toward, with a lot of different systems, some enormous collapse. And that it's really important for us to be the people who are being calm, and saying, 'Many of us saw this coming, and we'll make it through this.' For us to be the people who can help our neighbors, who are so frightened to live without their air conditioning, and that's who we are. That's how I talk and write. It's not, 'HKF is the only safe place.' Any idiot who's ever met us and spent a day there would not say that in their right mind. That is not who we have ever been. Ever.

INDY: [REDACTED] was an ex-convict who paroled at HKF from April through June 2004. There were three sexual encounters with Bo, all of which involved you touching her vagina, and all of which were part of "chakra" work and not sex, because she was not supposed to come to an orgasm, and your sexual organs were not involved.

BO LOZOFF: Again, a very clinical way of saying something.

INDY: I'm trying not to spin.

BO LOZOFF: A very foolish mistake I made of doing chakra work with her. At the same time, I'm sure you've talked to someone named Kevin Dessert about this, because he's going to be the only source of information for someone like [REDACTED]. And what I found out, way afterward, is that—I never touched [REDACTED] anywhere long enough time to even move toward orgasm. And I also never put my hand beneath her clothes. I did chakra work. I don't know what I touched on the front, if I ever did. I was doing the same kind of chakra work with Kevin, because he asked me to, and felt real blocks there. And I found out afterwards that they were screwing each other like crazy during that whole time. And I felt like an enormous fool. Kevin seemed to put a spin on it of my abusing [REDACTED] and all, and convinced [REDACTED]. Awhile after she left, she sent me some emails saying something like that, and I responded to her. We went back and forth for awhile. I think she had to have some kind of surgery, and I said, you've got to get this off your mind. I haven't had any contact with her since then.

There is such a thing as energy work, whether your magazine or readers like it or not. I was very foolish to do it in the circumstance that Kevin set me up in with [REDACTED], and I remember that well. My hands never went below her clothes, and of course not sexual organs of mine were involved, because that wasn't what it was about. It wasn't about sex and it wasn't about orgasm. It was about energy.

INDY: [REDACTED] was yelled at, in private, by Catherine and Sita, for wishing to meet with her parole officer in private. She was told, upon leaving, that this parole officer, Mr. Cox, required that she leave the state of North Carolina, though this was not true.

CATHERINE MILLER: She couldn't go there by herself. I had to drive her there.

BO LOZOFF: We're not like that. All the parolees met with their parole officers in private. We sat out in the hall and waited for them. That didn't happen.

INDY: Also she was told that she could not stay in North Carolina after she left.

BO LOZOFF: That's not true. We have virtually populated Durham and Chapel Hill with people who left Kindness House and wanted to stay.

CATHERINE MILLER: There were issues, but it was the parole officer. It wasn't us.

BO LOZOFF: He's saying the parole officer said she could stay, and we said she couldn't. That's not true.

CATHERINE MILLER: But I can understand how it could be confusing. I don't remember the specifics of [REDACTED]. Haven't felt prepared for this meeting, having

just heard about it yesterday, and not knowing what we would be talking about. But I worked with the parole program. And there were many times, I don't know if it was every time, that the paroling state, not North Carolina, but the one where they came from, that if you don't complete that parole program, and the minimum was three months, that you would have to go back to your home state. There may have been times with N.C. had that stipulation as well. It would make sense: N.C. doesn't want to take a bunch of parolees that aren't even going to finish a program, just using us as an excuse to get into the state. It's not easy to get through the interstate compact. If someone wanted to move to N.C. while they were on parole, they had to commit to our three month program. And so it's quite plausible, I don't remember it, that I would've said to [REDACTED], if you don't complete this three month program, they will send you back to whatever her home state was. It wasn't a threat. It wasn't me saying that she had to leave the state. It was me saying what I thought would be true for her. Now maybe it didn't turn out to be true in her case, but that's what we told people, before they came, that you've got to commit to these three months, otherwise the parole folks won't let you stay.

INDY: She ditched [an HKF member] in the mall, and bought a brand of tampons that was not recommended with her own money, and got in trouble for this.

CATHERINE MILLER: That's ridiculous.

BO LOZOFF: That's not who we are, Matt. That's not what we've ever been for one day in our lives. Print whatever you feel like printing, but that's not who we are. If you print that, there are going to be thousands of people who read the Independent who say, that's not who these people are.

INDY: Did you ask [REDACTED] to leave after six weeks?

BO LOZOFF: We didn't kick [REDACTED] out did we?

CATHERINE MILLER: I don't remember.

BO LOZOFF: I don't know.

CATHERINE MILLER: I do remember she left early, that she didn't finish the 3 months.

BO LOZOFF: We have had to ask people to leave. It may have been when we found out about the whole sex thing between her and Kevin, and how dysfunctional that all was.

CATHERINE MILLER: I think that was later. I think that was after she left that we found out about all that.

BO LOZOFF: Whatever it was—these are intense people, in an intense adjustment period after prison. We had the right to send people back to prison.

Not once, in those 11 or 12 years, did we ever send someone back to prison—even the couple times that I should have. I didn't have the guts, because I don't like prison.

We never just, for our purposes, said, 'Screw you. Get out of here,' to [REDACTED] or anyone else. There've been a few times when we've had to say, 'Look, this just is not working,' and then we've bent over backwards and contorted ourselves into pretzels trying to get the parole officers to agree to let this person just find a job, with our help, or to send them back, but to another program, not to prison. We have gone to great lengths to make sure that we never, ever said to somebody, 'Look, we don't like you, it's not working here. Just get out. You're on your own.'

If we did ask [REDACTED] to leave, it was because we really felt is the wrong place for her, and we found her another place to be.

INDY: Was there also a period for ex-convicts who were going to be paroled there, of trying out HKF, taking a month off, coming back?

BO LOZOFF: No. You mean ex-cons who weren't on parole? Ex-cons who were on parole had a commitment to the parole board, as well as us. You're supposed to have what's called a job plan, and a home plan. We are their parole plan, and it's a minimum three months that the parole officials agreed to. It's actually 3-12 months officially, that the parole officials agreed would be worth their time to do all the paperwork, to get all these people here from out of state, because it's a pain in the butt to do. I was a minimum three months in our program. That would be an impossibility to say someone could come for a week, and then leave for a month.

Now, somebody, whether it was an ex-con or anybody else...

For a time, we said people who are interested in living with us, not parolees, because that wouldn't work, but people who are interested in living with us, had to come at least once for a week-long visit, not just move in, because we had been burned so many times by people who had been very unrealistic about what it would be like to live there.

It's also death to a community when you hear from someone who says, 'I have no other place to go.' That's never going to work out. So we would say, 'If you're interested in living with us, come to visit for a week—and that had nothing to do with ex-cons, that would be anybody—come visit for a week, go away for at least a month. And if you don't have any place to go for a month, then you're just running to us. It's the wrong purpose. It's not going to work out.'

We didn't do anything wisely, and I don't think we even maintained that for a long period of time, in all cases. That was a very brief plan we had, that I think we learned from Twin Oaks. Twin Oaks says you come for a two-week visit, then you have to leave for at least a month. Just like the six-month rule, we took various things from other communities to see how they would work in our community.

INDY: None of it has ever been this sort of David Koresh this-is-the-way-it-is. It's just silly.

INDY: [REDACTED] is a corrections employee who visited HKF on several occasions during ex-con/corrections employee retreats in the early 2000's. During her first visit, she performed oral sex on you during a one-one-one meeting. You began contact by kissing and touching her, while counseling her about being stuck in her second chakra. You explained that you lived an abstinent life, and that this was an aberration.

BO LOZOFF: Well, I don't know about my conversation with [REDACTED]. I did have a sexual encounter with [REDACTED] during her visit. I notice a name you're not naming here is Kevin Dessert, and I have a hunch. I remember [REDACTED]. Kevin came to me or something and said, 'This and this happened with you and [REDACTED], and how dare you.' And I spoke to [REDACTED], and I said, why, if you're unhappy about anything between us, why wouldn't you tell me? Why would you go to Kevin, and create all this ruckus? And she said these words: She said, 'Kevin pressured me, and pressured me, and pressured me every day I was here, trying to tell me every moment that happened in my meeting with you, everything, every word that we said, everything that happened, and he just had this insatiable force to know. And I just finally buckled and told him all our private business.' And she was extremely sorry for that. She was extremely apologetic. I've been on good terms with [REDACTED] ever since.

The fact that you've mentioned [REDACTED]'s name, and [REDACTED]'s name, and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], and now [REDACTED], and you're not mentioning Kevin just really gives me a sick feeling about how much Kevin has to do with this. Matt, you don't know who you're dealing with. You don't know who you're dealing with, if you're taking Kevin's words as gospel. You don't know who you're dealing with. And you don't know the sick twists that you're getting.

INDY: I told you I wasn't going to reveal my sources, and we have at least 10 different sources.

BO LOZOFF: Well you've named all these names.

INDY: Right. Because we needed to discuss allegations. I have 10 different sources.

BO LOZOFF: Is [REDACTED] one of your sources?

INDY: I can't reveal that.

[REDACTED] e-mailed you to say she was confused, and you wrote back saying that he was simply trying to help, justifying it spiritually.

BO LOZOFF: I've never done e-mails back and forth that are that short, and that slanted—so you're going to make whatever you're going to make out of it, you're going to quote whatever you're going to quote out of it.

INDY: In the past year and a half, during your prison tour, you invited [REDACTED] to your hotel, and had intercourse with her.

BO LOZOFF: Yes. And that was not a secret from my wife that I might have intimate relations with somebody, not a secret from Catherine or Human Kindness Foundation that that's part of my life. Two adults had consensual sex in [REDACTED] in the course of my tour.

INDY: Did she say that she only wanted touching, and chakra work, and didn't want sex?

BO LOZOFF: There was no chakra work. There was no discussion of chakra work.

INDY: But she didn't say that she just wanted to snuggle and kiss, but not intercourse?

BO LOZOFF: I'm not going to. I don't know what our conversation was, but if you're implying that I coerced her sexually, I've never done that.

INDY: Several sources have talked about a specific incident with an ex-con named [REDACTED]. My sources tell me that at a tuning, you yelled at [REDACTED] and threatened to send him back to prison. You had to be restrained from physically attacking him.

BO LOZOFF: That I had to be restrained? Who restrained me?

INDY: Sources there said your son Josh restrained you.

BO LOZOFF: I have never had to be restrained from hurting anybody at Kindness House, or any kind of physical violence. I should have sent [REDACTED] back to prison. I mentioned that about a half hour ago that there were a couple of people that I really should have sent back to prison. [REDACTED] was a psychopathic liar, and he just about brought our community down in his lies, and I was too weak to send him back to prison, and I was furious with myself. I screamed at [REDACTED] a couple of times, and we finally—we continued to put up with him, because we didn't want to send anybody back to prison. [REDACTED] put on his application that he was single, had no children, he was educated at Oxford. And until that time, we never verified anything anybody wrote on their application. That's how naïve we were. We found out that he's got children, that he's actually never been out of the country. He basically just lied to lie.

And then there was a very vulnerable community member named Bruce, that [REDACTED] started bonding with. Bruce was going through a real dark and intense time after 18 years in prison. And [REDACTED] just about destroyed him, and I should've sent [REDACTED] back to prison. And I was just that angry, because I didn't have the guts to send him back to prison, and that's what happened with [REDACTED].

INDY: In another incident, an ex-convict spoke back to Sita, and said, 'Don't tell me what to think.' You responded by saying that HKF had the right to tell people what to think, and you also expressed concern that people there were not regarding you as a great spiritual teacher, and that no one there could appreciate that.

SITA LOZOFF: I don't think Bo ever had to encourage anybody to say he was a great spiritual teacher. That's just ridiculous.

BO LOZOFF: Have you ever visited TROSA, one of their nightly meetings? Do you know what TROSA is?

INDY: Yes. Rehabilitative...

BO LOZOFF: It's a recovery community. You should go see one of their nightly meetings.

INDY: I assume the people there are licensed to work with people. You talk about context, I think that's different.

BO LOZOFF: The context I'm talking about is when you're dealing with addicts, when you're dealing with ex-cons, when you're dealing with really, really violent, and very dysfunctional people, sometimes the very best programs in the country try to scream and beat those egos down.

We did not ask anybody to come to Kindness House ever. We did not even encourage anybody to see me as their leader in life, and do everything that I said. I've already acknowledged to you that I was a terrible choice for creating this community and running it, but it got a lot of people out of prison, and no one else would have done it. You weren't doing it. Nobody here at the Independent was doing it. And there are people in Durham saving people's lives today who you haven't talked to. They're saving lives in Durham today, because we got them out of prison, and brought them to Kindness House.

Was I a rough-around-the-edges leader of that community? Absolutely. There's no contest. Was I a selfish, manipulative, egoic, maniacal leader? No. You're wrong. Anybody who says that is a liar. It's never been the case.

INDY: A number of sources talked about minor infractions, such as eating too much, or buying coffee at Weaver Street.

BO LOZOFF: There was no coffee allowed at Kindness House, and we have the right to make that rule. Again, we didn't ask anyone to live with us, and we told people not to, in the stuff we sent them while they were in prison. We had a rule against coffee. If you want make that seem like a cult, go ahead. But we had a rule against coffee, and I will defend that today. If I had another community, I'd have a rule against coffee. We're dealing with people who are almost all addicts, and coffee is one of the greatest

addictions in the American culture. So we had a rule against being addicted to something at Kindness House—and cigarettes, too.

INDY: Did you ever threaten to send someone back for violating these rules?

BO LOZOFF: Somebody was supposed to actually abide by all our rules, which they saw in advance, while they were sitting in a prison cell: no coffee, no cigarettes, no pornography. They were supposed to abide by every one of them. One of our problems was that because we didn't really see ourselves as a program, we didn't have consequences. If you want to twist that to say, 'Did we ever threaten to send someone back to prison for drinking coffee,' that's a ridiculous spin, which is your bias, and the Independent's bias. Because, anybody, in a 101 journalism class, can take one of the 15 rules out of context of the place, and say, 'They threatened to send someone back to prison for reporting two minutes late to their dorm.' That's what you're doing when you're saying, 'Did you ever threaten to send someone back to prison for drinking coffee?' People were supposed to abide to 100 percent of the rules that they signed and agreed on while they were still in prison, before they ever crossed into North Carolina. People were supposed to abide by those rules, and we didn't forget about those rules when they got there. And coffee is one of those rules. Yes, they couldn't buy coffee on Weaver Street, or Talbert's, or anywhere else.

INDY: One other incident with a rule, where you crushed a VCR because a couple of ex-cons had broken a rule by watching a horror movie.

CATHERINE MILLER: Not a VCR. A videotape.

BO LOZOFF: A VHS tape?

CATHERINE MILLER: Yeah, just a little tape. It's not a huge act.

BO LOZOFF: What movie was it?

INDY: A horror movie.

BO LOZOFF: Oh, a horror movie. Yeah, I'm glad I broke it. I'm proud I broke it. People coming to Kindness House who've spent most of their lives hurting people shouldn't be watching horror movies. I stand by that.

And, you know, I can't believe this is coming from the Independent. I can't believe that you're actually talking about coffee, and my breaking a VHS, building some case that this is worthy of some story in the Independent. This is unbelievable. You're taking 11 years of dealing with violent and damaged people, and you're saying, 'Did you ever in fact tell somebody that they might go back to prison? Did you in fact break...'

And what you just asked me was a VCR. No, I've never broken a VCR in my life. Did you break a videotape? I don't know. Catherine remembers. I wouldn't know.

Were you a forceful, dynamic leader of this community? Yeah. Somebody had to be, and I didn't like the job, and we quit it and sold the community, and we stopped the program, and now we're not doing it anymore. What the hell are you interested in? Is this abuse? Is my breaking a videotape abuse in your book?

INDY: I'm not here to talk about how I feel about it.

BO LOZOFF: Well you're the one writing the story, and you're alleging abuse. Is this the allegation of abuse, that I prevented people from drinking coffee, and that I broke a videotape? Is that abuse? Is that going down in the article as allegations of abuse? I'm asking you an objective question.

INDY: I'm not sure, actually. I think with these small incidents, a lot of the ex-convicts I talked to saw them as small things, but to several of them, they were afraid that something like a cup of coffee, or a VCR, would threaten their being sent back to prison. To the sources I spoke to, they mentioned a lot of small things, and they talked about an angry reaction to those things.

BO LOZOFF: When you're on parole, you know that you can be sent back to prison at any time, because as the parole board likes to remind you, parole's not a right. It's a privilege. And simply by definition, Kindness House was the program that they had to be in for at least three months.

Kevin Dessert was not just in for three months. He was with us for 2-3 years. He could've left at any time. He begged us not to kick him out, after he violated every rule that we'd ever made, and kept violating them. He would come, in his charming way, and convince us of his sincerity and all that, and we kept giving him another chance, and never kicked him out. Never kicked him out. Never kicked him out.

He didn't just stay the three months and then he was done with us, these abusive people.

So, first of all, I hope you don't use a phrase like "a lot of the ex-cons I spoke to," because I don't think you've spoken to a lot, frankly. Three or four doesn't even constitute a lot, and I don't think you've spoken to a lot. And you've certainly not asked us for names of ex-cons that you could speak to.

INDY: I said that at the end, if you want to provide me with names to talk to, I would....

BO LOZOFF: Yeah, well. For a deadline Friday, and as a response. Not as part of the investigation, part of your own edification of who we are and what we do, but as a response to specific allegations. That's a poor substitute for fair journalism.

For you to say "your sources say"—basically the picture you're painting is that they walked around in fear, that these really angry, nasty people could just [snaps fingers] in a blink, send them back to prison. We never sent a single person back to prison, ever, in

our history. There was so much more love than anger at Kindness House, that it's a shame that that word hasn't even been mentioned once, "love." You're just painting a whole wrong picture. You're barking up the wrong tree, dude.

INDY: What kind of interaction with the parole board did you have? Did they come and check out the Kindness House?

BO LOZOFF: The first parole officer we had for everybody was Charles Staley, and he came and spent time at Kindness House. He didn't have to come every time we'd accept somebody, because he knew who we were and the work that we did. He was delighted. We were the only residential program in this part of the state. He was delighted that there was something wholesome and really worthwhile going on in Orange County.

Then, he left. I think he went to Chatham. Just a whole succession of parole officers started rotating in Orange County. We didn't really get to know any one for very long. All our guys were just assigned to one individual. It became a much more cold and bureaucratic thing. Some of them would come out when they got news of a parolee. Most of the time they didn't, because they knew where we were, they knew who we were, they knew what went on. They had all our documents about our rules and stuff like that. As Catherine said before, we would take people to their parole meetings. We would sit out in the hall. Not only did we never insist that we stay in the room—the Parole Board wouldn't have allowed that. The parole officer would've said, 'Who the hell do you think you are? This is my client. You can sit out there and wait.' We took people for their parole meetings. With Staley we had a very affectionate and close relationship. After he was gone, it was just sort of business. They knew we had a good record of what we did with people, so they didn't really do much other than meet with people. It felt really good to us when, after a few weeks or a month, they'd say, 'This guy doesn't have to come in every week anymore. Just come every month.' After a couple months, 'every three months.' They did that with almost all our guys at Kindness House, because they trusted us.

INDY: You mention Neem Karoli Baba often in your teaching, and writings, and refer to him as your own guru. In "It's a Meaningful Life: It Just Takes Practice," you write that Neem Karoli Baba is 'directly responsible for the Prison-Ashram Project.' In Ram Dass' biography of Neem Karoli Baba, 'Miracle of Love,' the author, a co-founder of the Prison Ashram Project, describes the erratic, mystical behavior of Neem Karoli Baba, including verbal abuse of devotees and sexual interaction with women. Did you witness this behavior in your time with Neem Karoli Baba, and did it influence your actions at Kindness House, regarding the accusations that have been levied against you: verbal abuse and sexual contact?

[Note: Bo Lozoff did not spend time with Neem Karoli Baba.]

BO LOZOFF: Neem Karoli Baba was a liberated master, and I have never, in any way, claimed or implied or even hinted that I am like him, that I can do the same things that he did. There's never been a comparison. In fact, I've gone out of my way to make it very

clear to people not to see me like that, and I don't use any of his behavior as justification for my own.

INDY: Regarding the sexual contact, you explained your sexual contact with women in spiritual terms, to them, and in your correspondence with others: You write of [REDACTED] in a letter distributed to HKF members, "It would be blasphemy against God if I were to say I am ashamed in any way for our love triangle, because God's hand was and is clearly evident in all of it." Yet, on the phone yesterday, you dismissed these concerns as "scandal" from people who've had "too much therapy." How do you decide what behavior is excusable by spirituality, and what reactions to that behavior can be dismissed as petty, or less-than-spiritual?

BO LOZOFF: I'm a mystic. That's my frame of reference. People's frame of reference is psychological. People's frame of reference is emotional, intellectual. My frame of reference is mystical. That's not going to look too well in any newspaper or magazine article, because it's going to be lumped in with false prophets and all that sort of thing. But I can't pretend to be some sort of therapist or minister, when my whole orientation is that I follow a calling. It's intuitive. I've put my whole life up for that calling.

I built the most beautiful home for me and Sita to live in forever, and two years after we founded Kindness House, our board of directors said, 'Bo and Sita need to live here.' And we left that home within a matter of months. We left the most beautiful place you could ever imagine, to construct a cabin less than the size of this room, to live in the Kindness House with a bunch of convicts. Because if something feels like a calling, an intuitive mystical calling, I will put my life on the line for it, and not hold anything back. That is because that's my nature. I don't use reason. I don't think, 'What's my ambition?' I don't lead my life. I follow what I feel is mystically based intuition.

My guru is at the center of my life. I never really mention my guru in my talks or my writing, because it's not really very relevant. There's nobody trying to push some particular mystical being, who's no longer even in the body, on anybody else. My guru in India was called the Saint of Karma Yoga, the Saint of Service. What he said was, 'Feed people. Serve people. Love everyone, serve everyone, and remember God.' That's what I try to do. Kindness House was one expression of that. We put our lives on the line for it. We had some of the best and worst experiences of our lives, with some of the very same people you're talking about.

That's my hurt in all of this, in that there was no top-down separation or anything like that. There was no masters abusing the servants. We were all full-tilt, 100 percent involved, together—whether it was functional, dysfunctional at different times. I fell in love with [REDACTED] and got in over my head, and caused a whole bunch of pain. Whether I was out of my league in dealing with a psychopath like [REDACTED] and not sending him back to prison. Whatever it was, it was full-tilt, genuine and authentic, putting all our lives on the line together, with people who really needed a helping hand. And I can't apologize for that. Because there are other people who are out of prison now,

who would not have gotten out of prison if I hadn't fondled [REDACTED]'s breast. To me, the whole thing was one piece.

I didn't do it well enough. By being sexually unconventional, by fondling [REDACTED]'s breast, by kissing [REDACTED], I was not the right leader for that community, and so it had to fail. But we had 11 years of getting some spectacular people out of prison, and doing some work that nobody else did. I can't go back and say this piece was wrong, and this piece was right. Because, to me, being a mystic, we followed the calling. It was an incredible adventure and misadventure. It was like a wild rollercoaster ride, but with all the best intention and devotion, and now it's over, Matt. It's over. I didn't do a great job in every way. So it's over. We sold the place. I'm defrocked. We don't have students. We don't have residents. We don't have parolees. You're beating a bunch of dead horses here, and I can't imagine a lot of value to the Independent humiliating my son and his wife, and all the people who love us in this community, and affecting all the people who read the Independent who are going to see, 'Oh my God. That's not fair at all.' For some disgruntled people who you've spent an enormous amount of time with, and you're giving us 72 hours to bring you non-disgruntled people to counter it. I'm sorry, you have stacked the deck. There's a lot of bias. There is editorializing. Because you're not saying, 'I tell you what. The article doesn't have a deadline right now. You take the next couple of weeks to bring me who or what you want me to see in the interest of fairness.' You're not saying that. You're giving me a very brief time for the bad guy to respond to the allegations. Not much more I can do.

[Note: The Indy gave Lozoff one week to respond.]

INDY: If you're a mystic, and these other people aren't mystics, how is that not a top-down relationship?

BO LOZOFF: I'm not saying it was an egalitarian community, and that's something we pointed out very explicitly. I'm not saying there wasn't an authority structure, what I'm saying is the very authority structure itself was eating at the same table, was sleeping in the exact kind of bed, in the little un-air-conditioned cabins. We were meeting every morning for meditation. We didn't have a break. Sita and I didn't take a vacation for years. We were 24 hours a day. Convicts would come and go, three months and kind us all kinds of trouble and leave. Sita and I and Catherine were there 24 hours a day. That's how it's not the top-down. We're not people driving up the driveway and telling people not to do in the nighttime, and then we go home to our comfortable houses and Lexuses. We didn't own any vehicles either. We abided by all the same lifestyle agreements that all of us had agreed upon, in order to do this experiment together, about how we worked and how we lived and what we did for practice, and how we spoke. There was nothing top-down about the equality of the conditions we all lived under. We all lived under the same rubric. And full-tilt. Sita and I looked 20 years younger, just five years before Kindness House began. In five years, we aged 20 years, because it was an enormous full-time commitment to actually live there and do this and not have any time off. 3 a.m., one of the dysfunctional kids knocked on our window: [REDACTED] threw a TV at me.

That's because we're available 24 hours a day. 24/7. That's what I mean by no top-down. There's nobody in an air-conditioned booth barking dictatorial orders about how to live.

INDY: One of the tenets in the Interfaith Order of Communion and Community, which all ex-convicts, and long-term volunteers, were required to sign was: "no harmful sex," including not just sex with unwilling partners but also sex that degrades or betrays others. Another tenet is a vow to give up "lying, stealing, deception, slander and gossip." Yet all of the women I spoke to described an effort, on your part, to conceal your sexual encounters with them. Do you feel that you have violated your own teachings, and if not, how do you justify this apparent dissonance between teaching and action?

BO LOZOFF: First of all, I founded the Interfaith Order from requests from prisoners, to have something more tangible that they could actually belong to. Prison-Ashram Project and Human Kindness Foundation aren't that. We don't really have members. We don't have things for people to follow. I founded the Interfaith Order and put [REDACTED] at the head of it for the first month that he got out of prison for 23 years, because I didn't see myself as being directly involved in the Interfaith Order ever. And after [REDACTED] left it, we farmed it out to some other project. This was not something I was trying to be the head of. At other people's request, we created something that we thought was a useful vehicle for people in prison who wanted something structured.

In answer to another part of your question: Do I feel that I violated my own teachings? I feel that there is a significant difference between privacy and secrecy. And, I did violate that, I did cross that line—mainly because of personal issues between me and my wife around all of this. I did cross that line in some of my dealings with women at Kindness House. I was also following what I believed to be genuine risk-taking, with very loving and compassionate behavior and encounters. And a lot of that blew up in my face. I apologized to every one of the people who are your unnamed sources for my part in the pain that comes from all of this erupting in a community where there are lies and betrayal.

I think that I probably wrote about that in that very long letter I wrote when I came out of silence. I would have to look at it and review it. I don't approve of lying. I also don't feel that all privacy is lying. We have a lot of privacy. I don't watch you go to the bathroom. We have a lot of private parts of our lives. And, every spiritual counselor has an enormous amount of privacies that he doesn't share with people.

Now, there's a good argument to be made that when it involves you sexually, that crosses the line. And, again, I'm saying, I have never touted myself as a conventional anything. I'm this guy who's putting his life on the line for the things he believes in. Sometimes that's been dysfunctional, to a certain degree, and I'm really sorry for that. I never abused anybody in my life. I never intentionally took advantage of anybody in my life. I never forced myself sexually on [REDACTED] or anybody else. But, do I regret the blowing up in my community of lies and secrecy? Absolutely I regret it. It hurts me to this day. And it has affected me tremendously, in the six years since I came out of silence. It's affected

me enormously. It's put a permanent crimp in my heart. It's humbled me immensely. I don't have teacher-student relationships anymore with anybody.

INDY: Do you consider yourself a public figure, as being the face of HKF?

BO LOZOFF: Well, I don't. Of course, it's my books that Prison-Ashram Project mainly sends out to prisoners. I'm always going to be... these letters, a lot of them are addressed to Bo. That's because people identify me as that. [Flips through letters] But, I left the board of directors at Human Kindness Foundation. I encouraged the board to name Catherine and Sita as co-directors. I'm not a co-director. All that we talk about me now is as founder, and volunteer. I have no official position. We don't do the \$50 a month anymore. Sita and I are the only people who get room and board because we work full-time as volunteers.

INDY: What's your salary now?

BO LOZOFF: Nothing. Nothing at all. We get zero from HKF for working full time, 7 days a week. Zero. That's the kind of organization that you're writing about. And it always has been.

We hadn't paid a salary until Catherine's, and that was because HKF was breaking up. She was leaving, and needed to find a job. And we really needed her, and at that time she was office manager. The board had a meeting, and said, 'We're an all-volunteer organization.' That was a very big step for us. Were we not going to be an all-volunteer organization any more? She's the only salaried employee. Sita gets a small social security check. That's what we have for cash. We don't take a dime from HKF. And, every one of my books, all of my CD's, all of the DVD's and so forth, even when I give a concert here locally, all the money goes to HKF. I don't take a dime.

INDY: Jack Kornfield, who has praised your writing, addresses the inherent difficulties of a spiritual leader abusing his power through sexual abuse, in "A Path with Heart." He writes, "The teacher's role can be misused in hypocritical or clandestine sex that contradicts the vows or tenets of the teachings, in forms of exploitation, adultery, and abuse, or other behavior that endangers the physical and emotional well-being of students." He specifically notes sexual encounters justified "in the name of 'tantra' or other special teachings. Does this accurately describe the contact you had with women? If not, what is the difference?

BO LOZOFF: You'd have to ask Jack what his feelings are about what I did. And Jack is more of a professional, he's much more conventional, he's a Ph.D. I know Jack well. He's a Ph.D. He's a psychologist, and I'm not at all in the psychological mode. I said to you earlier, I'm not trying to pretend to you that I'm conventional, even by Jack Kornfield's standards. I know that I've been right on the edge of taking risks, and being vulnerable to accusations that I'm misusing spiritual influence, or claiming something to be tantra when it's not. All I will say to you is that what I do is sincere and genuine. When it's a mistake, it's a sincere and genuine mistake. I feel like I made a lot of

mistakes at Kindness House, and that's why I wasn't the right guy to be the leader of that community.

Virtually every year—Catherine can attest, she's been on our board 15 years now—every year, I go to the board meetings and say I want to leave the board. I don't want to be in power. I don't want to have power over anybody. And the board, until this year, has convinced me not to leave the board. Please continue being our primary guide and so forth. I've always been reluctant—I'm reluctant to teach, I'm reluctant to lecture. So I'm just this guy, who doesn't fit into one particular box. If I said something to a particular woman about using sexual energy—I don't use the word “tantra” much because I feel like it's misused, but I certainly talk about sexual power and sexual force and sexual energy—and whatever I've said, I sincerely believed at the time. I know there's always risky behavior, to put something into practice like that, or to touch somebody sexually, but it's also risky behavior to take a 240-pound brute out of prison for five different crimes, and live with him with your little kids and your wife. I perform all kinds of risky behavior that I generally believe in.

That's what went on at Kindness House. I blew it a lot, and that's what you're focusing on.

INDY: Human Kindness Foundation purchased land on Nicks road in two sections: In 1993, HKF purchased 13.27 acres in Bingham Township for \$120,000. In 1999, HKF purchased an additional 55.8 acres in Bingham Township (3 parcels) for \$250,000. (\$2/thousand excise tax in effect since 1991). This land was combined into one parcel, of approx. 69 acres, effective with the latter purchase in 1999. How did HKF pay for this land?

BO LOZOFF: One donor gave us \$120,000 to buy the original (13) acres. And then he and one other donor, in 1999, gave us the \$250,000 to buy the 55 acres.

INDY: Would you mind disclosing those donors?

BO LOZOFF: I couldn't without asking how they felt about that. We don't believe in mortgages, and we don't believe in the HKF being in debt at all. A lot of my social criticism is the enslavement to debt, not living within your means. So, when something comes about that seems like a direction from HKF to go in, we just see whether anyone wants to fund it.

There's a guy I went to high school with who funded that original purchase, and \$150,000 of the second purchase, because he respects our work, and he's a rich guy.

INDY: Is that Mickey Singer?

BO LOZOFF: Yeah, Mickey Singer.

INDY: What about Stone Circles mortgaging the property from you now—did you feel that was okay?

BO LOZOFF: We just have a policy that HKF doesn't go into debt. We're not railing against anybody going into debt. I understand that it's almost impossible for most people to have a home without a mortgage.

CATHERINE MILLER: In your books, you recommend against debt, except for land.

BO LOZOFF: Except for mortgage. I rail against people buying cars on time... Real-estate is something most people can't do without a mortgage. We really like the people at Stone Circles. They didn't have a chance in hell of getting a mortgage for such an usual place, or getting qualified. So we just trusted our gut and took an enormous risk, because they aren't qualified. They don't have any assets that would give them the ability to pay this mortgage. We're taking an enormous risk, by the seat of our pants, like we've done everything else, because we're unconventional.

INDY: In 2007, HKF sold the 69 acres on Nicks Rd. to Stone Circles for \$1.388 million—a profit of over \$1 million. Stone Circles made a down payment of \$278,000, and is mortgaging the remaining \$1.11 million directly through HKF. How does HKF justify to its donors, many of whom have given money to support a parole program for ex-convicts, selling off this land at a large profit?

BO LOZOFF: We built the entire place. We have a mile and a half of driveway, a 2-acre pond, a 2-acre pasture, a barn, seven residences, office and meditation hall, and two workshops. We put hundreds of thousands of dollars, and hundreds of thousands of hours, into it—

INDY: But with less traditional expenses, because everyone's only getting paid \$50 a month.

BO LOZOFF: I'm talking about the increase of value of the land. We made it increase in value. That wasn't profit.

INDY: You talked about why you decided to fold Kindness House, but I'm wondering what you said to donors who have given money to support a parole program.

BO LOZOFF: They gave money to Human Kindness Foundation. Human Kindness Foundation was the body we were then, and the body we are now. That's never changed. They didn't give money to a parole program. They gave money because they respect and admire our work.

INDY: One part of that work was the parole program.

BO LOZOFF: But it was one small part. And some of the donors—well, one donor, Mickey Singer, may not even have related to the parole program at all. They came to visit

at one of our gatherings, and they saw that Sita and I lived in a cabin smaller than the size of this room with no air conditioning, and they went home and said we want to give you \$120,000 for the first part of this land, because we're so moved by how the directors live. They didn't give it for a parole program. So please don't imply that we're dishonoring our donors, or violating their confidence. Our donors have no problem with us at all. We are the cleanest financial organization I have other seen or witnessed—probably 90-some percent of our revenue goes directly back out into program expenses.

INDY: Shortly after selling the 'Kindness House' land on Nicks Rd., HKF purchased land on Etta Rd, where the foundation is currently headquartered. Since you no longer parole ex-convicts, or run a Kindness House, or conduct a bio-diesel program, how do you justify the purchase of a combined 7.5 acres in the name of the name of Human Kindness Foundation?

BO LOZOFF: That's not what our donors have ever funded, Matt. This is what our donors fund. [Spreads envelopes on table] This is one day. One day's mail, Matt. This is what we do. This is what we do in 61 countries over the world. Please don't try to lead us into a conversation where we aren't telling our donors what we do, and they're giving into some black hole that they don't understand about what we do on Etta Rd. What we do on Etta Rd. is about a dozen people from all over Durham and Chapel Hill and Hillsborough come and read these heartbreaking prisoner's letters that are thanking us for saving their lives, and asking for our love and prayers and blessings, and copies of my books, and we do that faithfully, like we've been doing since before you were born—since 1973. This is what we do. Just drop that, 'what do you think this place is for' kind of thing, because you're way off track. This is what we do, and we do it faithfully, beautifully, compassionately, and well. The Dalai Lama respects it, and writes forward to my books, Jack Kornfield respects it. This is what we do, and what we're known for.

What you're focused on is some local, intense experiment that we did that worked great for some people, and terrible for some people, and put us through a lot of stuff, and it has never, it has never, been the central part of what Human Kindness Foundation and the Prison-Ashram Project do, or are about. The parole program was only one of three motivations for creating Kindness House. We had three motivations for creating Kindness House. One, was that we could take people straight out of prison who are looking for a place to go serve—highly functional, they had already done their addiction work, had already done their breaking the rules, had already done their rebelliousness. They were coming because they were begging to be allowed to a place that worked full-time for the benefit of humanity. That didn't happen, but that's what we created it for. The second reason was so that we could offer room and board to people who wanted to be full-time volunteers to help do this [Motions to letters]. That was the second reason that we created Kindness House.

We never wanted to get into grantwriting and fundraising. We don't do any fundraising. We don't do any grantwriting. We never wanted to start having a couple hundred thousands dollars a year worth of salaries. So we thought, 'What if we lived on a big piece of land, grew our own food, lived with a bunch of people, built our own structures,

and retired yoga teachers and other people could come and live with us and help do this work, some ex-cons, some not?' That was the second purpose, to have a place for room and board.

The third purpose was to have a visitors center, because people write to us and say, 'I've read about your work, I've read your work, can I come and visit?' And we wanted to have a place to say, 'Sure, come take part in our community life for a week.'

The parole program was never more than one-third of even what the place on Nicks Rd. stood for. You implying that we've vastly shifted directions, and we're letting donors down, or anything like that is way off. Nobody cares. None of our donors care if we do a parole program. We're the Prison-Ashram Project. We're the world's biggest interfaith prison ministry. That's what we do.

CATHERINE MILLER: A lot of them never knew that we had a parole program. We couldn't put it in our newsletters, because if we did...

BO LOZOFF: We'd have 5,000...

CATHERINE MILLER: We have 45,00 prisoners on our mailing list. And if they knew that they could come and live with Bo and Sita for free, we would've gotten 20 times that mail, and we wouldn't have been able to keep up. So we kept the parole program from our national list pretty quiet, pretty under the radar screen.

INDY: Do you currently have visitors at Etta Rd.

BO LOZOFF: No. We have no overnight accommodations anymore. We don't do that.

INDY: In June 2006, you sold the 'Blueberry Hill' land, where you briefly conducted a Bio-Diesel program for ex-convicts, in addition to the bio-diesel reactor itself in August 2006. In a Spring 2004 newsletter, you asked for \$1.5 million to finance the bio-diesel project, in the form of CD purchases.

BO LOZOFF: That was in the Independent. That wasn't Prison-Ashram Project, and it wasn't even really Human Kindness Foundation. We created Carolina Biodiesel to be a job creation program, as well as a biodiesel production facility, on the basis of, 'This seems like the right thing to do.' It feels like we're being called in that direction. Even though it's a very big departure for us, from what we really understand and do, we'll give it a try. If this simple little idea of selling 100,000 CD's could fund this program, then we'll have confidence that it's the right thing to do. If it doesn't, then we tried it, fine. What is our involvement with bio-diesel, and are we able to do a job-training program for ex-cons. As it worked out, we weren't even close to that kind of success in selling CD's to raise money.

INDY: How many did you sell?

BO LOZOFF: 2-3,000

(Talks about Blender's Tax Credit, reasons for failure.)

At that point we just said, you know, Prison-Ashram Project is what we do well. I spent, what, two years? I spent two years knocking my head against walls, learning everything I could about biodiesel, traveling to different parts of the country to talk to people, and look at factories and equipment. And finally said, we're in over our heads, we're not going to accomplish this. And now the government is crippling it. We're primarily a prison ministry, not a biofuels organization. ...

We sold our name and our tanker, and all of our contacts to Bull City Biodiesel. They're doing great with it. They're really sweet people, and they have part of their mission that they want to honor part of our mission with Carolina Biodiesel by hiring ex-cons whenever they can.

What it turns out, several years after, is we ceded that project. We thought we were going to do it, because we had this factory on 86 North, and we thought that would be the purpose of the factory. We sold the factory. We rented it out first to an ex-con, and were very happy about that, but then he died. So, we sold that land because we had no use for the factory, and we gave the Biodiesel truck and name to Bull City, and we're happy about that. It's just not what we thought we should do. We would've been way over our head. We would've been terrible business people.

INDY: In your last tax form, filed in 2006, you reported having over \$990,000 cash on hand—before the the land sale. At the same time, you reported \$143,000 in program expenses, including over half for upkeep of the Kindness House, which no longer exists. That was in 2006

CATHERINE MILLER: That wasn't cash, that was \$990,000 in assets. That counted the land.

BO LOZOFF: That's the mortgage, which is over a 30 year period.

CATHERINE: We've never had anything close to that in cash. But, our balance sheet shows it as assets.

INDY: Since then, you've sold the land. I haven't done the complete math, because you've sold the land, and this was in 2006. Now that you don't have the Kindness House, or parole program, or biodiesel, what are you doing now with donations?

BO LOZOFF: We spend \$100,000 a year, at the post office. We spend about another \$100,000 a year publishing books that we give away 90 percent for free. We've been doing that since before you were born, and we're very proud of that. We're very proud of how we use donor money. [REDACTED] said himself, before he died, 'I have never met anyone who uses money more effectively than Bo and Sita Lozoff.' You dig whatever

you want to dig about us financially. And you're just wasting your time. Go ahead. I invite you. We are the cleanest organization you have ever met—in your entire life. And anybody with a grudge against us who's trying to lead you into a direction like you can catch us on something, come talk to our bookkeeper. Come talk to our accountant. Look over all our forms.

You have to speak more carefully, because you just said, in your own words, well here in '06, you had \$990,000 cash on hand. We don't have cash on hand, and we've never had that. One of the reasons we gave Stone Circles a mortgage is that we didn't want that much cash to figure out. We'd have to hire a financial manager. What a grassroots nonprofit needs is long-term stability. Stone Circles pays us about \$7,800 a month on that mortgage, and that's exactly what an organization needs, that gets 100-some letters a day, and spends about—what do we spend each week on stamps and mailing?

CATHERINE MILLER: It's over a thousand most weeks.

BO LOZOFF: This is besides any big expenses.

SITA LOZOFF: 4-5 thousand a month.

BO LOZOFF: So 4-5 thousand a month we're spending at the post office. So Stone Circles paying us a mortgage is much more reasonable for a nonprofit that only has one checkbook. We don't have a lot of accounts. We don't have investments. We have one checkbook, we keep it very simple, we pay one salary, and all the money goes into programs.

We actually are not holding a lot of money, compared to the money we are spending. It sounds, from the way you put it, like you only had \$145,000 in program expenses, and almost a million dollars in cash—that's almost never been the case. It's not the case now, and we're actually a little low right now on cash. We have a newsletter coming out, and that's usually when cash comes in. You're not going to find any tiny financial scandal, no matter how closely you look into HKF.

I got a \$187,000 advance for "It's a Meaningful Life." You know what I did with it? I signed Bo Lozoff on the back and I gave it to the Human Kindness Foundation. That's how we developed that lower property. That's how I deal with money. We've given away millions over the years—anything that's given to me and Sita personally.

INDY: Since I have the records from 2006, I'm curious about the changeover.

BO LOZOFF: There's no changeover. We didn't take a big bulk sum from that. We gave a small non-profit a great break. And we created a mortgage for them. Our board of directors has been saying for 5 or 10 years, we should have some long-term plan for how our organization's going to be funded as Bo gets too old to be the cash cow. I'm the cash cow, not because I ask people for money, but because when I lecture and I tour, people

give us money. That's just the way that it is with non-profits. We've never had an answer to that, since HKF doesn't really want to get into fundraising or grantwriting.

INDY: Why don't you pursue grants?

BO LOZOFF: I've always felt that it's demeaning to non-profits to compete among each other for funds. It's like queen for a day. I feel like rich people need to take the responsibility of what they want to do with their money. We've had people beg us to write a grant proposal for their own foundation, and sometimes the most we've been willing to do is Catherine will fill out a form of our vital statistics ... what our budget is, how we would use the money if they gave it. What I'm against is an organization saying, in our grants cycle we have \$300,000 to give away, there's 30 organizations competing for that \$300,000, submit your shot. Frankly, and I've said this publicly, I don't know if our organization's more worthy of support more than the soup kitchen or the battered women's shelter, and I'm not going to tell anybody it is. So, we take ourselves out of that.

As far as general fundraising goes, I talk about money in some of my talks and lectures, so that people can get a clear idea of how—we have this thing called “Money Yoga. There's a little half-sheet called “Money Yoga,” that says, this is our view about money. Since we don't say anything about it, people think we don't need it. Of course we need our donors, but here's the reason why we don't ask you for money. Here's what we feel about money. One of the things we say is that a dollar given with affection is sincerely worth more to us than a thousand dollars given with pressure. We will never do that.

To me the donor is as important as the prisoner we're sending free books to. A lot of organizations like Habitat or Amnesty International and World Wildlife Fund, they just dog you and dog you like you're not as important as the pandas. We feel like everybody's equally important, so we don't want to put guilt and pressure on somebody's life to get our funding.

And, the thing is, Sita and I have never felt like the HKF had to last forever. So, we follow our lives, rather than lead them. If we started running out of money, then we would start considering, maybe it's time to go under. We don't have to do this for 40 years. That's our position about grantwriting and fundraising: we just don't do it. And, ironically, we have a very small base of donors. Real donors, not just people who buy a book online, still fewer than 500?

CATHERINE MILLER: Probably. Regular donors, it's absolutely less than 500—a lot less.

BO LOZOFF: This is a worldwide organization, with over 50,000 people on our mailing list, 45,000 of them prisoners, and the great majority, if you do some computer queries on our non-prisoner database, and you do money total, out of 7,000 people that we have as non-prisoners, probably over 5,000 of them have never given us a dime, have never even bought a book. We actually have a few hundred people, many of whom we've never met,

give us \$10, \$20, \$50 a month, just really believe in our work. We've never had a guy get out and dig up his buried loot and send us half a million. We've been expecting that.

But our funding is mystical. Our funding is actually very mysterious. We don't go after it. We don't pressure anybody. And we have just enough to meet all our changes. What do we print now? 35,000 copies of *We're All Doing Time* at one time? So that's a \$50-60,000 bill that happens every year or two. We have enough money to meet it, and we never really have enough money to be fat. And we don't really want it. That's why, to us, the Stone Circles arrangement is great for them—they never would've had that place any other way—and it's actually the best thing for us, because it's long-term stability as I get old, and if I decide I'm never touring again, I'm not going to be the face of HKF... I haven't written a book for adults since *Meaningful Life*, which was 2000. I don't know if I ever will again.

I was on tour for almost two years, and Catherine was telling me that this year in 2008—I got back last October, our donations have dropped significantly, because that's just part of the natural cycle. They hear me, see me, and give money. When they don't, they don't.

[The Indy gave Bo Lozoff, Sita Lozoff and Catherine Miller ten minutes to re-group, and provide a final statement.]

I just want to say that after this conversation, Matt, I understand and respect that you're an honorable person doing your job in the way you feel you're doing it. I have to tell you, I feel you've been bamboozled. I'm so surprised from everything you've just quizzed me on, that the Independent still feels this is newsworthy. That it is so dated. You're not talking about pregnancies and abortions and rape, you're talking about kissing and touching somebody's breasts, and breaking a DVD. That entire community experiment is closed down, and I just got to tell you at the end of this conversation, the same as the beginning, it really boggles my mind. I've been an activist all my life, since the 1960's, and what I've heard from you today, what's being alleged against me—it's a couple of really painful things, like [REDACTED] and me. And surrounding that is kissing somebody, and touching somebody.

INDY: I feel like for those women, it was more than that. You didn't want to use the word "abuse," but that's what they felt it was.

BO LOZOFF: You're talking about very particular women who have—you said, some of them haven't talked to the others, all of them have absolutely been coordinated by [REDACTED] and Kevin.

INDY: I talked to five different women, and some of those had never talked to the other women. And I had 10 different sources, and they all talked about an element of manipulation and secrecy.

BO LOZOFF: Even they are not alleging intercourse. They're not alleging I told them to get an abortion.

INDY: With the exception of one.

BO LOZOFF: And everything you're talking about is years old. Even [REDACTED] is well over a year old, and she's in [REDACTED]. And I'm going to speak with her, because we've been on good terms, and I know how she can get twisted around by Kevin. But I'm just so sorry and hurt that you and the Independent consider that, at the end of 2008, this is actually an article that has some value to the community.

INDY: You're a very public figure in the community, and that's why it's newsworthy. We're not writing an article about some guy in the street.

BO LOZOFF: Yeah, but this is gossip about a public figure. This isn't saving people coming out here on parole program, or volunteers coming out to live here. We shut it all down because it blew up in our faces. We shut it all down because I was unconventional sexually. We shut it all down because there was controversy about whether I was manipulative or sincere. We shut it all down years ago. And I just don't see the good judgment in this. I want you to know this. I respect you as a person. You're not doing something you feel is wrong. I feel what you're doing is way off base.

You keep referring to "our policy," without taking personal responsibility for some of the decisions you're making. You're not giving us a fair amount of time to have people contact you who we tell what's going on, and then they reflect about what they want to say to you, and then we reflect on whether we can give you their names. You're not really giving a fair amount of time for that, by saying, we have this week, and that it.

INDY: In response, I've gone over decision I've made with my editors. You can deconstruct policy, but every decision I made on this particular story was vetted by my editors. We put a lot of effort into it.

BO LOZOFF: I think that what you and your editors are not taking into consideration is your naiveté about your sources. How you can be, like the line in "Ramona," [sings] "I can see that your head has been twisted and fed by the worthless foam from the mouth."

Nobody is alleging anything, years later, that sounds like a serious enough, even potential, abuse issue, to make the big investigative article in the Independent about what a sham this organization is. We're not a sham, and if you paint us as a sham, you're doing something seriously wrong in your own life. Because we're not a sham. We're one of the best non-profits that I've ever seen in my life, and I've been all over the world.

INDY: It's the reason why we're looking into the story.

BO LOZOFF: You have no proof. Just old gossip and contention between a few people, when we've served scores of ex-cons, and hundreds of volunteers there you are not giving us enough time to get in touch with.

Nobody is saying, 'He forced me down in bed.' You're getting to the edge of, 'She felt slightly manipulated, or she felt this, well he felt threatened.' After all these years...
[inaudible]