



Taking Accountability

Spring
2026

This issue of the newsletter contains some difficult topics. We'll be discussing taking accountability for sexual harm. Some of you reading this might be survivors of sexual abuse and assault. Some might be perpetrators. Some might be both. Everyone has a loved one who is a survivor. This touches all of us and is deeply personal for us as an organization. If this topic is too much for you right now, please stop reading and catch up with us in the next issue. Before you go, know that you are loved, beautiful, and full of all good things.

"Truth isn't the enemy of love—it's what makes real love possible." –LW, 2025

Last summer, we received an email with the subject title: A Request for Accountability Concerning Bo Lozoff's Legacy. The email was honest and thoughtful. The author asked us to be upfront about all the ways our co-founder Bo Lozoff hurt people that left lasting damage. She wanted us to take public accountability as an organization for his abusive behavior. That's what we're doing today.

We've struggled for years as an organization to know how to talk about Bo Lozoff as a man, a writer, and a spiritual leader. His writing, teaching, and vision have helped many people. These works have inspired people to get sober, to get out of prison and stay out, and to help others. His ideas have motivated people to start their own organizations to help people in prisons and jails as well as those in reentry and recovery. His legacy has truly been a helpful one for many people over decades.

But that is not the whole story. In his leadership role with Human Kindness Foundation, Bo Lozoff abused his power and hurt vulnerable people. This abuse was particularly bad when Human Kindness Foundation had a residential community called Kindness House where staff, volunteers, and formerly incarcerated people lived and worked together between 1994-2006. There, Bo Lozoff set himself up as leader and spiritual teacher. As a teacher, he could be wise and kind. He could also be hurtful and cruel. He wrongfully claimed that shame, verbal abuse, and sexual encounters were all teaching and healing tools. The authority structure he created allowed him to control, manipulate, and abuse people in his community.



In 2008, Bo Lozoff's abusive behavior at Kindness House was exposed in an article in a local newspaper, *The Indy*. In the wake of the scandal from this article, he left

Human Kindness Foundation. He moved to Hawaii, where he died in a motorcycle accident several years later. His family and friends at Human Kindness Foundation grappled with how to acknowledge his abuse while continuing to promote his spiritual teachings.



The email we received this summer caused us to look deeper into our past to learn more about Bo Lozoff's behavior. What we found was a disturbing pattern of manipulation and abuse. We learned how he groomed vulnerable women, many of whom had previously experienced sexual abuse or assault. Even when he lost everything—his job, his family, his reputation—he doubled down and continued to abuse women. He never admitted he did wrong. The only thing that ended his abusive behavior was his death.

Simple stories are not neutral. Our organization has actively hurt people by sharing a partial story about Bo Lozoff. The author of the email who inspired us to dig deeper into our past made just that point. "Those harmed by Bo have carried the confusion, silence, and spiritual invalidation your version enables," she wrote. For survivors to hear little in public about their abuser beyond what a visionary he was is painful, confusing, and traumatizing. It leaves survivors second-guessing their experiences and reality itself. The fact that he perpetrated his abuse largely under the guise of spiritual teaching and healing makes this harm even more painful and enduring because it can tarnish survivors' spiritual beliefs and sense of community.

For close to fifty years, Bo and Sita Lozoff and their friends ran Human Kindness Foundation. In the face of Bo Lozoff's abuse, his family and friends struggled to understand and craft stories around a loved one's actions. Now our leadership has changed. No one on our board or our Executive Director was involved in running Human Kindness Foundation when Bo Lozoff was alive—most never met him. Perhaps that makes it easier for us to tell this story now. But we're still struggling with what to do with this legacy, how to repair the harm that occurred, and what lessons we can learn.



In the past, Human Kindness Foundation used all the ways we helped people as a shield to avoid looking deeper into the legacy of harm Bo Lozoff left through his abuse. Our organization is part of this legacy of harm in our failure to publicly apologize to the survivors of his abuse. Our organization is part of this legacy of harm in all the ways we held Bo Lozoff up as a leader and promoted his spiritual teachings without telling the full story about him that included his brokenness.

We apologize to the survivors of Bo Lozoff's abuse for all the ways our organization invalidated your pain through our failure to fully acknowledge his harmful actions. We apologize for never telling this story clearly and without

excuses. We apologize that our organization presented Bo Lozoff as simply a benevolent and wise spiritual teacher and for all the pain and confusion that must have caused. We apologize for not trusting people to be able to hear complicated and messy stories and make their own decisions from there around whose spiritual wisdom they seek.

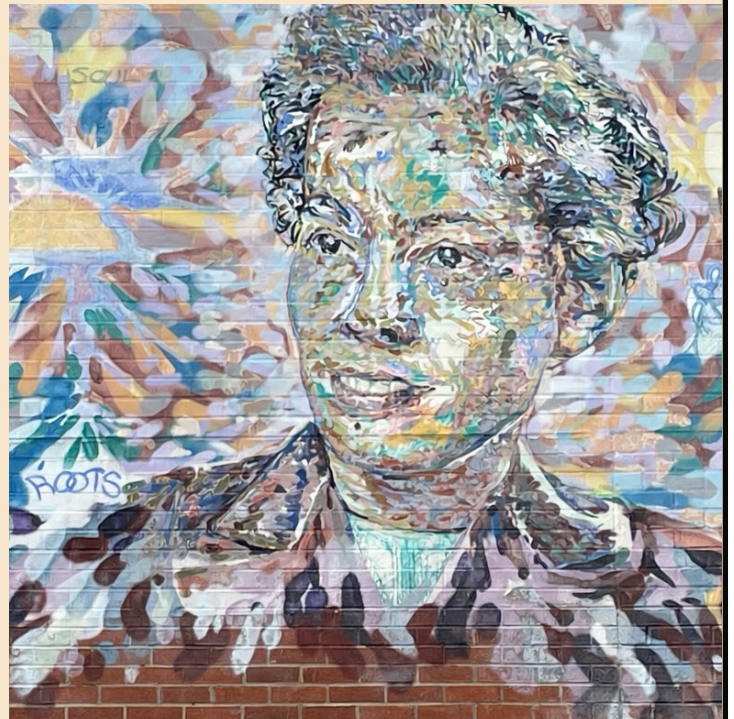
So why tell this story now, 13 years after Bo Lozoff's death? First, someone called us out and we needed to answer that call. We are grateful for her witness. Second, this is an important story to tell at this time. Now, more than ever, we need to build cultures that do not allow people to bully and abuse others with impunity. Instead, we need to create cultures of loving accountability around us in any way we can. We need models of people and communities who take accountability for their actions, who admit they have done wrong, and work to make amends. We must start right in front of our faces, look at ourselves, and see how we need to change.

The email we received was an example of community accountability in practice. The author told us our organization had hurt people and that we could do better. That's what real love looks like—a call for accountability combined with a belief in our capacity for growth and depth. Sometimes it can be hard to look at ourselves in the mirror and see ourselves clearly, for better or for worse. That's why we need community. We need people in our corners who can be honest with us when we're messing up and call us to do better.

No statement, apology, or process can undo the harm Bo Lozoff caused. No amount of amends washes this pain away. Instead, this honest reckoning with our past is about the kind of future we want to create. It's about breaking cycles of harm. It is our hope that we can grow as an organization and deepen our mission by looking at our past and identifying how we can do and be better.

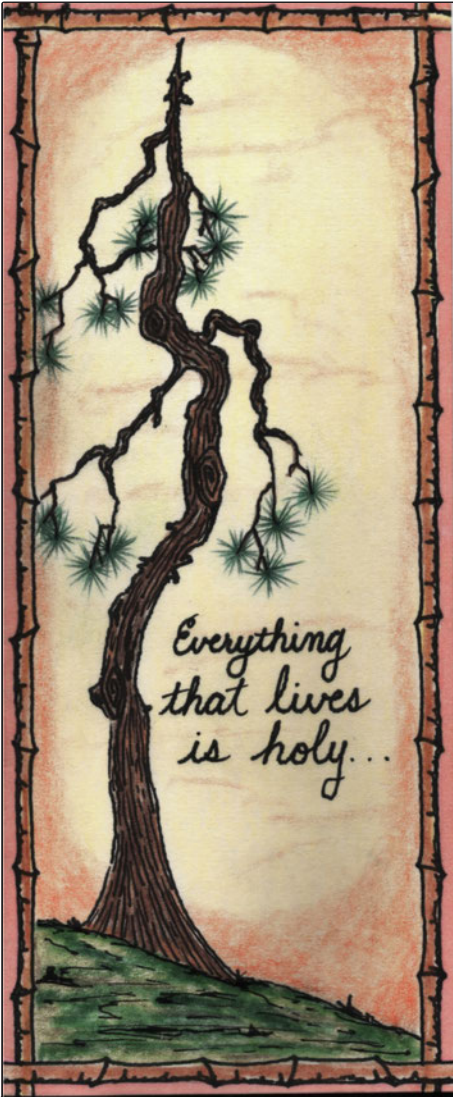
What are we doing moving forward? We're continuing to examine who we want to be and the kind of culture we want to promote as an organization. We are no longer an organization built on the writing and teaching of one man. Instead, we are building an organization in which we share the creativity and wisdom of many people, especially those who have experienced incarceration. Over the past four years, we have started to distribute more books from a wide variety of authors who provide different voices and perspectives on spirituality, creativity, wellness, growth, and healing. We will continue to share new work with you, particularly focusing on those created by people who have experienced incarceration. We are also building a board with individuals not previously connected to Human Kindness Foundation who are bringing fresh insight and perspectives on understanding the past and charting a course for the future.

In recognition of the harm Bo Lozoff caused and the lack of accountability he took for his actions, we will stop distributing most of his books. *We're All Doing Time* is the exception. We know how meaningful this book has been to so many people over the past 40 years. We recognize the powerful legacy of healing it represents. *We're All Doing Time* is bigger



"It had taken me almost a lifetime to discover that true emancipation lies in the acceptance of the whole past, in deriving strength from all my roots, in facing up to the degradation as well as the dignity of my ancestors."

— Pauli Murray from *Proud Shoes*



than Bo Lozoff. It's about us. And so we invite you into its revision process as we move to make the book a work of collective authorship. It will be written by the community of Human Kindness Foundation.

This revision process will take time. The collective version of *We're All Doing Time* will be an ongoing process. We'll be printing small batches of the book so that we're able to add new content and revisions in future printings. The first version won't be perfect. The next one won't be either. But it will grow and evolve, as we all do.

Growth requires breaking. It's easy to stay in our shells, hiding our painful truths from ourselves and others. These shells of protection, however, keep us small. They become prisons of our own making. We need each other's help to break out and break through. If we're all doing time, then the only way we get free is together.

"Sometimes you have to break things if you want to grasp God in them," the German priest Meister Eckhart wrote over 700 years ago. "In the breaking, we allow what's holy to take form in us." Thank you to everyone who has invited us to break, bend, look inward, and examine how we need to grow and change.

We bow in gratitude before our community who has taught us so much, in humility for all we still have to learn, and in joyful curiosity for all yet to be formed from the holy brokenness in us all.

In peace, love, and wonder, Erin

A Note from Sita

My dear friends,

"Until you really and truly take full responsibility for your actions, you can't begin to heal," our dear friend Gabe Shute wrote in our newsletter in 2017. He served 19 years in a Tennessee prison and was released more than 10 years ago. I'm sorry to say that he has passed on. I still learn from his example—as I learn from you, dear ones.

I'm working on doing what Gabe called for so often in the beautiful letters he wrote in our newsletters—to be accountable for my actions. I'm aware that my silence regarding Bo's actions has been responsible for suffering, and I truly apologize for any harm that silence has caused. I'm here every day at Human Kindness Foundation doing what I love best—answering letters, sending out books, and being present to anyone in need. I'm sending my deepest love to you all. I feel humbled and grateful every day for our continued friendship.

I love you, Sita

Many thanks to our artists: page 1: Shabari Case; page 2: Abraham Hayes (top and bottom); page 3: unknown artist; page 4: unknown artist, designed by Tom Dodson; page 5: Yao Chen; page 6: Philip Wagoner; page 8: Stephen Stoeltje.

News, Notes, and Offerings

We're All Doing Time Revisions

Each newsletter, we'll offer specific guidance for the kind of content we're looking to add to *We're All Doing Time*. If you would like to provide feedback or possible content for the book, please address your envelope to **We're All Doing Time, PO Box 61619, Durham, NC 27715.**

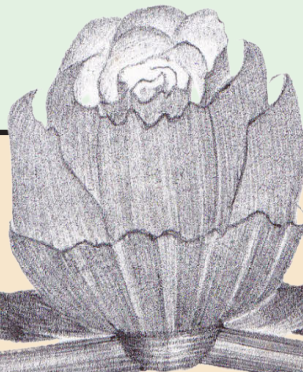
If you have a favorite quote that you think might be a good addition to the book, please share the quote and author with us. If you have a response to the following letter, please share it with us.

*Dear HKF, After a good start for a couple of months, I seem to be falling short of the standards that I honestly thought I would be at. One of those areas is meditation. I am able to do the just sitting still thing for a little while, but I feel it is like trying to grab smoke and hold on to it while in the midst of a gale force wind. After reading the meditation chapter in *We're All Doing Time* over and over again, I can't seem to break through. Any help on this will be greatly appreciated. Love, T*

Thanks for sharing your experiences and wisdom with us!

Together-Apart

My dear friends, please continue to sit with us on Wednesday evenings from 7 to 8pm (or any time on Wednesdays that might be convenient for you) as we send love, prayers, and blessings to the many suffering beings in the world. Use whatever practice is meaningful to you, beloveds. "See" you all on Wednesdays! Love, Sita



Letters

Dear Ms. Erin & HKF friends,
I wanted to say thank you first off for your continued blessing of the "A Little Good News" newsletter that I know is helping so many people around the country who are in prison, who may not have any hope. You are giving them hope by this newsletter, letting them know that they have outside support.

Second, I wanted to comment on "D's" letter to you [in the last newsletter] as well as your response, Erin. I'm so sorry for what happened to the both of you in the past. You are being brave and courageous to tell your story of overcoming trauma that no person—man, woman or child—should go through.

I guess for me it's hard to hear people who have spoken of their sexual abuse or assault because I know myself being the one who committed that type of offense, you don't realize the pain psychologically you have caused, and trauma that can affect that person and how deep it can harm one's development, especially if it's a child.

I'm probably not the right person to speak out on this, but I believe for people like myself who have offended, speaking up and taking responsibility and accountability can help those who have been hurt to speak out about their own abuse/assault to help someone else. I personally have made a vow to help those like myself who struggle with psychological disorders to get help sooner before they harm, to better reduce the sex offenses that happen.

Thanks for the gift of this letter. Looking forward to the next one.

-Terrence

The Velcro of the Soul

I give and receive in vain,
unless I am healed.

I know there is pain,
We all have pain.

But the lack of expression,
leaves us in chains.

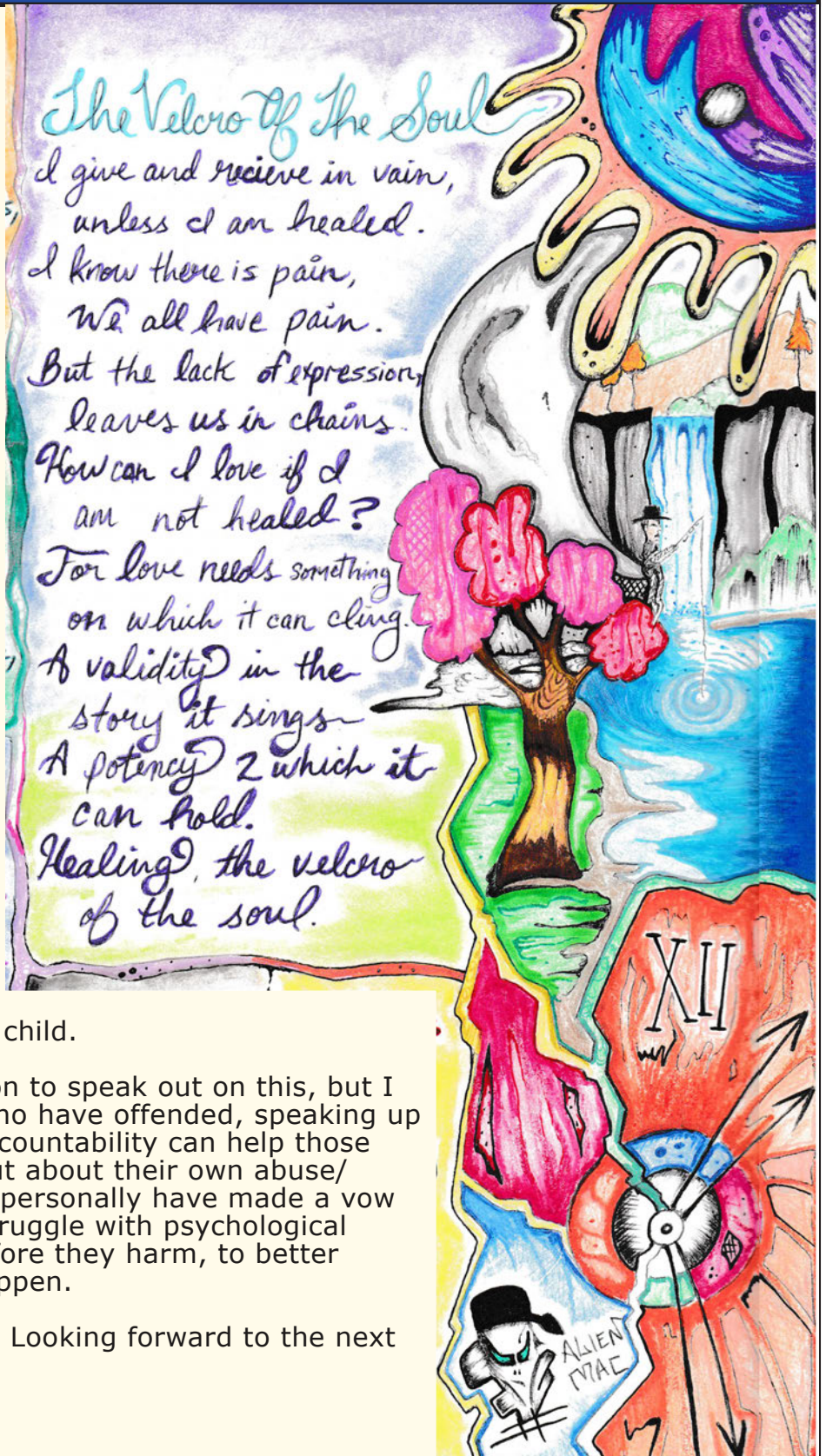
How can I love if I
am not healed?

For love needs something
on which it can cling.

A validity in the
story it sings—

A potency which it
can hold.

Healing, the velcro
of the soul.



Letters

Dear Terrence,

Thank you for your letter. You have no idea how much it meant to me. There is something really healing to me when I hear someone who has committed a sex offense take responsibility for their actions.

The boys who assaulted me told me it was my fault and I believed them. For over twenty years I blamed myself. I don't know if that blame caused me more damage than the assault itself. But it definitely messed with my mind and my relationships with other people. It made me harder and less compassionate than I would like to be. I think I would have been able to process what happened and begin healing much sooner if I believed from the beginning that it wasn't my fault.

It would have really helped me for those boys to apologize, say they understood what they did was wrong, and that they would never do it again. That never happened. For a lot of victims, hearing from the people who hurt them is not helpful. Every person has their own path towards healing. But to hear people like you take accountability for your actions helps me and can help others.

You are absolutely the right person to speak about this. Your voice matters. It matters to other victims and perpetrators. It is never too late to take accountability for our actions. It is never too late to change our ways. That doesn't take away past harm but it can prevent future harm. That's a pretty big deal.

Healing is a journey and it's one best taken in community. We need each other in order to heal. You have a healing journey of your own because when you hurt others, you hurt yourself. I think your letter is part of your healing journey and mine. So now our journeys are connected, even though we've never met! I think that's really beautiful.

Thank you for the gift of your letter as well. We have a choice every day: do we want to lift each other up or tear each other down? You lifted me up today. Thank you. Peace,
Erin

Sita,

I'm so excited for the future as there is a lot I get to do each second right here now. I'm not happy I'm in jail -- it's that I'm happy I'm suddenly alive in jail as I find I am.

Love comes with accountability. If I do my best each moment not only do I get to honor God, but I get to honor everyone I meet which also honors me as we are reflections of one another. It's quite an amazing trip!! It's all a gift. Sometimes I want to just cry over it. I feel like I just woke up... So now I do the most to keep increasing in faith. This purpose seems to keep me balanced.

God keeps giving and giving to me! Some hear that and wonder "What? Look at you--old, sitting in jail..." I just smile and will continue to reflect on my gifts. Everyday I learn new ways to be better and share this love that I've been gifted. Just being aware of my footprints--physically and emotionally. Just mindful of others and helpful (within reason), not forceful or self serving.

I don't ever want to be what I was: a taker, a little dark cloud... I know life is serious. I have so much work all around me. It's just joyful to me to finally see it. Now I want to cultivate it, and I am doing my best... -AP

Please note HKF may anonymously publish letters you write to us in our newsletters or other publications. We may also publish artwork sent to us with attribution whenever possible. Please let us know if you do NOT want your work published. Thanks for filling our publications with your spirit and wisdom!



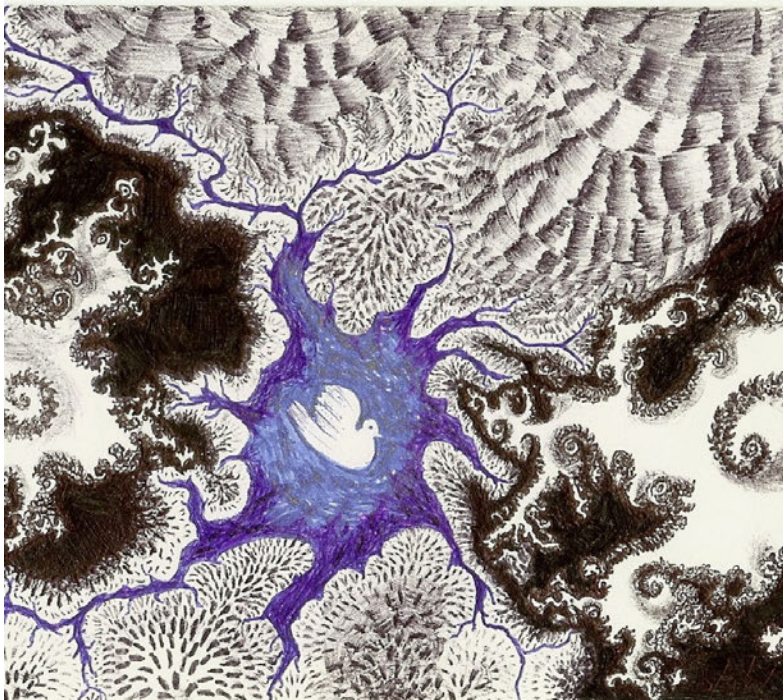
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“Our deep dark past will become our
greatest asset.”

John, 2014

Art by Stephen S.



Reflection

“Someone I loved once gave me a box full of darkness. It took me years to understand that this too, was a gift,” writes poet Mary Oliver. Pain doesn’t simply turn into wisdom. It takes time and effort to burn off the poison of pain. Give your pain the time, care, love and attention it needs. Wounds heal. Scars remain. They trace the lines of our strength.

Questions

What is the story behind a scar or a tattoo that is important to you?

What was a hard time you thought you couldn’t recover from?

How did it shape who you are today?