

Declaration 1st of March 2018 (UN day of Zero Discrimination)

Conversion therapy has no place in the modern medical and spiritual world

Part A: 'Statement against conversion therapy'

1. We wish to state that the practice of conversion therapy has no place in the modern world. It is unethical and harmful and not supported by evidence.
2. Conversion therapy is the term for therapy that assumes certain sexual orientations or gender identities are inferior to others, and seeks to change or suppress them on that basis.
3. Sexual orientations and gender identities are not mental health disorders, although exclusion, stigma and prejudice may precipitate mental health issues for any person subjected to these abuses.
4. Anyone accessing therapeutic help should be able to do so without fear of judgement or the threat of being pressured to change a fundamental aspect of who they are.

Part B: 'Conversion therapy has no place in the modern spiritual world'

5. If someone seeking spiritual help is in need of therapy, they should be referred free from pressure, well informed and only to confidential, safe and appropriately trained therapists.
6. The pathologising by conversion therapy of certain sexual orientations or gender identities has no medical justification and is therefore sometimes referred to as 'a cure for an illness that does not exist'. Medical diagnosing should never be misused to justify personal and/or religious moral judgment.
7. Conversion therapy often takes place in a context of violence, such as humiliating and dehumanising language, hate speech or exposure to physical violence. Such forms of violence can never be justified, whether it is in a medical or a spiritual context or both.
8. Engaging with conversion therapy, directly or indirectly, is a failure to fulfil one of the core responsibilities medical and spiritual professionals have in common: to protect those who are vulnerable and seek our help. They need to be supported in safe and confidential ways that respect their identity and human dignity.

Endorsing organisations (European Buddhist Union, 2018)

- Italian Buddhist Union (National Buddhist Union, Italy)
- Buddhist Union of the Netherlands (National Buddhist Union, the Netherlands)
- The Buddhist Cooperation Council of Sweden (National Buddhist Union, Sweden)
- Asociación Hispana de Buddhismo (Spanish Buddhist Association, Spain)
- The Rainbow Sangha (Buddhist LGBT+ network, European Buddhist Union)
- Sakyadhita France (Association of Buddhist Women, France)
- Centro Zen L'Arco (Zen Buddhist Monastery, Italy)
- Amida Shu (Pureland Buddhist organisation, UK)
- Association Reiyukai France (Reiyukai Buddhist Association, France)
- London Shambhala meditation centre (Shambhala, Vajrayana, UK)
- Haus Tao, Zen meditation centre (Sati-Zen, Switzerland)
- Mandala Samten Ling, Tibetan study centre (Drikung Kagyu tradition, Vajrayana, Italy)
- Buddhist Union of Belgium (National Buddhist Union, Belgium)
- The Committee of the Network of Buddhist Organisations (National Buddhist Union, UK)

Some of the initial personal signatories (European Buddhist Union, 2018)

<i>Stephen Batchelor</i>	<i>Buddhist teacher and author, France / UK</i>
<i>Ron Eichhorn</i>	<i>President of the European Buddhist Union Head Disciple of the Yun Hwa Denomination Abbot of the Yun Hwa centre in Berlin, Germany</i>
<i>Jamie Cresswell</i>	<i>Vice President of the European Buddhist Union Member of SGI-UK, UK</i>
<i>Stefano Bettera</i>	<i>Vice President of the European Buddhist Union Vice-President Italian Buddhist Union, Italy</i>
<i>Dr Michael Vermeulen</i>	<i>Philosopher and Medical Doctor, London, UK Founding member of the Rainbow Sangha</i>
<i>Dario Doshin Girolami</i>	<i>Abbot Centro Zen L'Arco, Rome, Italy Founding member of the Rainbow Sangha</i>
<i>Munisha</i>	<i>Member of the Triratna Buddhist Order, Stockholm, Sweden Founding member of the Rainbow Sangha</i>
<i>Gabriela Frey</i>	<i>Representative of the European Buddhist Union to the European Institutions President Sakyadhita France, France</i>
<i>Michael Ritman</i>	<i>Member of the Council of the European Buddhist Union President Buddhist Union of the Netherlands, The Netherlands</i>
<i>Isabelle Huet</i>	<i>Member of the Council of the European Buddhist Union Member Reiyukai France, France</i>
<i>Ricardo Guerrero</i>	<i>President of the Asociación Hispano de Buddhismo, Spain</i>
<i>Trudy Fredriksson</i>	<i>Chair of the Buddhist Cooperation Council of Sweden, Sweden</i>
<i>Kurt Krammer</i>	<i>Founder Zendo Salzburg, Austria Board chair of the Austrian Network of Engaged Buddhists</i>
<i>Jake Lyne</i>	<i>Teacher at the Western Chan Fellowship, UK</i>
<i>Martin Schaurhofer</i>	<i>Representative of the Österreichische Buddhistische Religionsgesellschaft, Austria</i>
<i>Alain Colliard</i>	<i>President of the Association Reiyukai, France</i>

Endorsing organisations Part A (United Kingdom, 16 January 2017)

- The Royal College of General Practitioners
- The College of Sexual and Relationship Therapists
- The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy
- The British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies
- The British Psychoanalytic Council
- The British Psychological Society
- The National Counselling Society
- The UK Council for Psychotherapy
- National Health Service Scotland
- The Scottish Government
- GLADD – The Association of LGBT Doctors and Dentists
- Pink Therapy
- Stonewall