

Rhona Reid posting a CSA letter for a friend

I am posting this on behalf of and at the request of my friend, Beverly. This is a CSA account that took place in my home country of South Africa:~

This message should come as no surprise to some of you.

As you all should be aware, there has been a global awakening and outcry to the incidences of sexual assault on children and older friends affected as children, in this Fellowship, perpetrated by workers and elders.

Everyone needs to be very clear that under no circumstances should anyone ever derive sexual gratification from touching, stroking, holding, or watching a child, let alone having sexual intercourse or sexual activity of any nature, with a child.

Anyone who does is a very sick person. Those warped, sick, and evil people who do, are called pedophiles.

For the perpetrators to be people in a position of trust and authority in our fellowship makes the crime even more heinous.

Child sexual abuse IN ANY FORM is UNACCEPTABLE. It is also a serious crime in South Africa and other countries alike.

On 19 June 2017, the status of limitations to report historic sexual crimes of any nature was lifted in South Africa, It may indeed have serious implications for perpetrators if victims find their voice and the strength to stand up to their abusers.

When it comes to our fellowship, for these crimes to be verified and then covered up, with inappropriate action taken after being reported, with little to no consequences for the perpetrator, makes those in overseeing positions not only heartless but complicit to the said crimes.

In my case, Johan Marais sexually assaulted me when I was 9 years old. He would have been around 26 years old and in the work.

Johan had groomed me over time, calling me his little lamb, his helper, twirling my long blond plait in his hands.

On a warm November day in 1983, at Durban convention preps, Johan Marais took me to the

bottom of the grounds, next to a stream and under a tree where he sexually assaulted me. Whilst he was getting up, I managed to escape and ran away, only to be caught by him a short way up the hill. As he held me he threatened me and told me that God would punish my family and I, if I ever told anyone.

After the day of the sexual assault, whenever he saw me, he would give me those little pink musk sweets, calling them "be quiet" sweets.

When I was 16 I told someone about my secret.

Within months, I fell gravely ill and to this day I live with multiple autoimmune diseases.

My specialists overseeing my health have said they believe these diseases were triggered as a result of immense emotional trauma.

On the 20th September 2010, I found the courage to confront Johan Marais via email. He admitted to sexually assaulting me.

In a telephone conversation with Johan after his initial admission of guilt, I asked him how many other children he had done something similar with, and his chilling response to me was, "What do you consider a child as they differ so much in maturity".

This information was all shared with Johan Kotze and Andy Robijn and after consultation with Dale Schultz from the USA, and other senior workers, it was decided that Johan Marais would be removed from the work.

I have emails with his admission of guilt and a voice recording of the 3rd of January 2011 of a meeting with my husband, Johan Kotze, my psychologist, and Johan Marais, where Johan Marais admitted to sexually assaulting me.

At the time I trusted the workers to deal with this appropriately.

However, I endured tremendous pressure from overseers in South America to allow Johan back into the work there, even blaming me for any souls who would not be saved, if Johan Marais were not allowed back into the work.

I stood down from prosecuting Johan Marais criminally. And I stood down from taking civil legal action against him and possibly against the workers, who are the liable overseeing body of the collective workers, for exerting undue pressure on me during the process. I simply did not have the physical and emotional strength to go ahead with it.

I was recently asked, again, about whether I have considered being baptised and why I don't stay on the grounds between meetings during Convention and Special meetings. Nor do I help during

Convention Preps.

Can you imagine me allowing a male worker, to touch me in order for me to be baptised, to relive that physical subjection, giving my trust to another male worker and thus allowing him to submerge me in water? It is traumatic to even think about it.

Every time I go to the convention grounds in Durban, I live through multiple triggers. I put up a brave face, try and be strong, for the sake of my children and my parents. So no, I do not stay between meetings and no I will not help at Convention Preps.

So the question, why am I voicing this again?

It has come to my attention that Johan has a meeting in his home. A known child sexual predator has a meeting in his home!

There are absolutely no circumstances that make it acceptable for a pedophile to have a meeting in his home.

What blatant disregard was given to the very serious nature of the crime perpetrated against me. I can't help but think, how many others are suffering, as I am?

The threat of being shunned, of being considered one who brings division, and being cut off by the friends, has been reinforced so powerfully by Johan Kotze's recent email.

What an abuse of power and authority! Those clear threats indicate no interest in hearing the truth about sexual assault victim's stories and the impact on their lives and shows absolutely no understanding of the devastating lifelong effect that sexual abuse has.

As a victim, what do I propose?

1. Johan Kotze, as overseer of the work in South Africa, must issue a genuine and humble apology and admission of failure, on behalf of all workers, past and present, for failing to deal with perpetrators openly, harshly and consistently and for failing to be respectful and sensitive to the victims' lifelong trauma.

The past needs to be taken care of so that there can be a future for generations to come.

2. Johan Marais' meeting is removed immediately, and he may never have a meeting in his home again. He is removed from any meetings or gatherings, where children are or may be present. This rule must apply to all child sexual abusers.

3. There needs to be Women in our fellowship, who victims can go to with confidentiality guaranteed, who are trained in dealing with abuse victims, as well as understanding the Child Protection Act in South Africa. The names of these women as well as their contact details, needs

to be clearly communicated to all in this Fellowship. Statistics show that 86% of abuse goes unreported, our fellowship is no different. If victims knew there was help available some of the tragic lifelong consequences could be averted.

In reading this email, you now have a glimpse and a better understanding of the severe trauma that victims and their families endure.

Please respect the young people who are the future of our Fellowship. Respect these vulnerable people so that they remain protected and innocent, and that this evil, sick cycle gets broken.

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