

SPEAKING OUT FOR INTEGRITY AND DR. MARC GAFNI

Dr. Marc Gafni, My Friend, a Voice of Hope Grounded in Love

The most recent expressions of malice began, presciently enough, on Christmas morning 2015. On that morning a short column appeared on the New York Times website: [*A Spiritual Leader Gains Stature, Trailed by a Troubled Past*](#). The appearance of that article may have surprised some, but not its subject, Dr. Marc Gafni. He had been warned, warned that someone was gunning for him, warned by the questions the article's author had asked him (and for that matter, those he didn't), warned about the coming fury as one man, Steve Dinan, owner of The Shift Network, declared his intention to save "the world" from Marc Gafni. The injustice perpetrated against Marc, an injustice made stunningly obvious in this article, would have destroyed a lesser man. So insidious, so filled with blatant misdirection, distortion and hyperbole—oh hell, let's call it what it is—an attack so filled with lies, that it might have successfully undermined every gorgeous, insightful, and outrageously loving move Marc Gafni has ever made. I'm told that the perpetrators of this smear campaign, this campaign of lies, don't quite get why their attacks haven't gotten the job done. There's a reason for that, and it gets to the heart of who this man is. It gets to why it matters that you understand the breadth and depth of malice being launched at him from the dark and distorted corners of the erstwhile "evolutionary community."

Why do I care? Why should you? Three months into this travesty I sat on a Zoom call with 30 or so people I am proud to call my friends. All were Marc's friends. Some of us had lost jobs because of the smear (no joke, people called some of our employers seeking to get us fired)! All of us had been disappointed to see relationships fraying as people we thought of as friends embraced the hysteria, the rumors. You might expect the conversation would have centered on what we might do to "get them back," what we might do to get back at the perpetrators. But that was not the tenor of this conversation, nor any other I've been privy to during this entire smear campaign. Instead, as each person spoke, it was clear we were seeking Spirit's next move; confronted by hatred we prayed for love to evolve. We concluded that Spirit's call was to shine a light on the methods, the motives and the madness of a smear campaign. One person after the other spoke of seeking Spirit's next move; we were looking to love even this moment

open. Let me be clear: it was Marc Gafni who set that tone. Marc refuses to be defined by this injustice or to have his capacity for love be undermined in the moment.

Marc is one of my closest friends. He has been for years. I want to begin by sharing the Marc I know with you. I want to describe the man I've known through my years of interaction with him. (Some, I know, would suggest that I'm under some kind of occult spell that Marc has cast upon me. You need to stop saying that; you're making me vomit.) I trust my words will help the reader get a glimpse of why Marc has not only survived these injustices, but has spiritually and intellectually thrived in and through them.

During the years of lies leveled against him, he has written and published six new volumes—all of them offering teaching of significant substance. He founded a new theory of Self, Unique Self theory. From that he initiated a working think tank, one that calls forth great minds in a wide variety of fields, to address its implications. As if that weren't enough, he initiated and led two, (for me), life changing, Integral Spiritual Experience events, the Success 3.0 Summit, a wisdom school and mystery school, (the first in the States, the second in Holland), and is even now, as I write, preparing what might become his most important work. Working together with many colleagues from the think tank and beyond he is tirelessly, steadily, persistently producing a new body of work. One thinker, Barbara Marx Hubbard, calls this work the “best new evolutionary memes we have to carry us forward . . .”

But all of that is really beside the point. I have seen Marc close up, in the best of times and in arguably, the worst of times. I have seen a person filled with paradoxes. He is utterly absorbed and dedicated to his life mission, but at the same time he can drop in and listen to someone else at a level that can change them. I got a message from him not too long ago: “You are a great man. You have the capacity to express the love that powers all of creation. You've already done so in MANY, MANY, MANY, MANY, ways. (You know Marc, never use one superlative when four will do :-). God I love him.) Don't forget that, and if you do, call me—day or night—I'll remind you.” He sent that to me when he heard I had gotten some very, very, very, very, disappointing news. (Okay, so I may have picked up a couple of mannerisms, but at least I didn't use all caps!?) He

meant it. I'm not the only one who receives that quality of love from Marc. It's an experience I share with virtually everyone he works with.

I have worked with him during these challenging times. I've seen him encourage and inspire people, leading by example with an overflowing heart and a huge work ethic. I have seen him make mistakes. I've seen him struggle. I've seen the awful toll all of this has taken. His capacity for forgiveness takes my breath away, and when he looks in the mirror, and sees his mistakes, you can count on an apology—not just the words of an apology, but the attitude of one too. Who does that nowadays? I'll be asking that question again in earnest, at the end of this article.

Have you ever heard Marc teach? You should. The man teaches like something that is hard to describe, but that won't keep me from trying. He gave a two hour keynote at the second Integral Spiritual Experience. It was a sermon really. I know something about that; I've preached for 20+ years and I've been teaching it for 13 years. ([If you know of someone who needs a preaching coach—most of we preachers do—please send them my way.](#)) Sermons, in my view, are meant to give people an experience of the truth, an experience of that movement of love in our lives that changes us. To do that you need to connect people to the despair they carry, *and then provide a vision of hope that can lift them from that place*. But those things must be in balance or the hearer is left in despair. Marc used examples that night, that brought us into the desperate darkness of human depravity. If any one of my students had used such examples I would have stopped them in their tracks and said, "You said that for the drama; there is no way you are going to carry us out of the despair you've brought to our door, so do us a favor and sit down." But that night, Marc pulled it off. As the minutes ticked by, inching towards midnight, the hope started to build—it was a weave of stunningly brilliant content and deep spiritual transmission—and then he broke through. He broke through with such joy, such utter confidence in the reality, and the power, of creative love in the world, that I broke down in tears of joy. I was in the balcony. I practically flew down to the stage and threw my arms around him.

You could feel the truth and depth of spirit in your body that night. Then, and on so many other nights since, Marc has reconnected anyone who will listen to a sense of

what he calls Outrageous Love, a connection to a personal God. With that connection comes a desire to live what he calls “Unique Self,” to be part of the “Unique Self symphony.” Other traditions will have other words for this—that’s the point. He’s talking about the fundamental point of engagement between the great spiritual traditions. He is offering that clarion call which has gone forth from the mouths of spiritual masters from China, to India, to Europe, to the Americas—from the dawn of human culture to this very day. Dr. Marc Gafni, D.Phil., (for here is where it becomes so abundantly clear what he did to get that D.Phil. from Oxford University—that’s right, the malicious rumors are WRONG; he did, in fact, earn his doctorate at Oxford), but I digress . . . [Marc] has drawn his profound understanding of the self and its relation to the divine, from a close reading of sacred texts. Said better, he draws it from what the Christian mystics would have called “an ontic merging with the sacred text.” Few could ferret out those insights, fewer still can offer an inspired, coherent, and relevant message in response. (For those in the Judeo-Christian traditions it will suffice to say that Marc attempts, with astonishing success, to make sense of the near sacrifice of Isaac, a truly terrifying story in Genesis 22—nobody does that.) When Marc opens sacred text, it shimmers in his hands. He knows that and wants, almost desperately, to use this gift he knows is generated by Spirit, to provide a way forward, beyond the deconstruction of the world’s great religions. But most of all what he seeks to create through all of this, is a new “dharma”—a new Integral world story that can “carry us forward” refreshed, renewed, . . . alive.

But all this comes with a cost. I’ve watched as time and time again this has produced a kind of primal jealousy among his, (I can’t believe I have to call them this), competitors. Hell, I’ll own it; I’ve felt that jealousy too. I’m a pretty good preacher, at least most folks willing to say, say that I am), but when Marc is in the flow, when he’s weaving erudition, passion, and transmission into one of his transformative tapestries, well, I love him and I hate him, both at the same time. It took me years to work with that, to move beyond projecting my own stuff onto him.

Marc is a “*yuge*,” powerful, and paradoxically, oh so vulnerable figure—wise and yet naïve. I think he is beautiful. I also think that, like every other human being on the planet, he is imperfect. But I’m not going to outline his imperfections here; I won’t satisfy the prurient desire to stand in judgment over another human being; I’m not going to reveal

his humanity to you because I know the maelstrom of malice will feed on it and distort anything I say beyond recognition. Marc is a fascinating man. He is fiercely committed and singly focused, expressing creative love—Eros—as best he can. But what's most essential these days, at least to me, is that the suffering he's endured has somehow cracked him open.

Peter Dunlap, Ph.D., Marc's psychologist, (yes, Marc believes that therapy should be part of a teacher's spiritual practice), described him as, (in the best sense of the word), "a mutant who brings us gifts that we need to protect." I agree. I do not think that I have met a person as naturally unguarded as Marc—that is his naiveté. I write this article to offer some protection to a man, a friend, who has suffered injustice, one who refuses to walk away from his call. He keeps on doing what he has always done; seeks to love the world and love all of us in it, into its next beautiful expression of evolution. Without this preface about my friend, Marc Gafni, the pain and the outrage I feel at the malicious lies that are to be described in the coming pages, will not make much sense.

I write about one small part of this story of injustice, the part I've seen up close and personal. I intend to reflect, or maybe reveal, the motivation driving the smear . . . but also why the smear must fail. I write in the closing weeks of December 2016 and will at the end of this piece, call the reader to stand, for if the last few weeks have taught us anything, it is that *if we do not insist on truth, all will be lost.*

Smear Campaigns, Hidden Agendas and the Manufacturing of Victims

Why should you believe my story, my "version" of Marc Gafni rather than the rumors circulating about him? I'm tempted to say, "Because I am right and they are wrong." It's tempting because, after all, I am and they are, but that assertion shouldn't be enough for the thoughtful reader. My answer is, because I have checked facts. It is curious to me that those who have prosecuted this smear campaign, while having been offered multiple opportunities to check facts and hear another side, have consistently refused to do so. I have not. A great deal of what I have to say is based on e-mail threads, most written by Stephen Dinan who is the primary instigator of this most recent smear campaign.

These e-mails were made available to Marc as early as October 2015. This most recent smear began two months later, on Christmas Day 2015. The thread indicates that Steve Dinan was then, (in October), working to organize a take-down article about Marc in the New York Times, (NYT). Just as the Dinan email thread suggested would happen, a columnist from the New York Times called in October 2015. He pretended to be a reporter interested in the work of the fabulous think tank, the Center for Integral Wisdom, which Marc co-founded with Ken Wilber . . . and so it began. That article was published Christmas Day 2015.

The question of course, is, “Why would Stephen Dinan make such a move?” The fact that Dinan does not know Marc—to be clear, Dinan has literally never had a conversation with Marc—matters not. In fact, respected leaders on Marc’s board, people with profound liberal sensitivities on victim advocacy, have asked Dinan more than once, to either sit down and check facts with Marc, or at the very least, review the reams of objective material on Marc’s site. That material makes mince meat of the claims that Dinan was broadcasting and supporting. Marc wanted to meet; Dinan refused. (You’ll note that this behavior becomes a bit of a pattern in those who are perpetuating a smear campaign. While I did not talk to Stephen Dinan, I have spoken with others taking part in the campaign who have refused to sit down with Marc. More on this later.)

I’ll say more about Dinan’s motives, along with the source of the e-mails later in this essay. Suffice to say for now that his reasons have nothing to do with protecting victims and everything to do with the fact that he is very angry. Stephen Dinan got very angry, (from where I sit, he’s in the grip of self righteous rage), when Barbara Marx Hubbard decided she wanted to work with Marc, rather than work exclusively for him. This is not simply my opinion. [Barbara has told this story herself](#), and she has the e-mails from Dinan to back up her claim.

Of course all of this was behind the scenes, not visible to the public as they began reading and evaluating articles about Marc. The public has not been aware that, rather than an impromptu call to arms against Marc Gafni, this whole thing was an orchestrated smear. Moreover, the smear campaign was launched by Stephen Dinan in conjunction with Marc’s former student, David Ingber, and Marc’s former wife, Chaya

Lester. (Step one in prosecuting a smear campaign is to find your victim's past enemies. Dinan performed this step well.) Clint Fuhs provides an in-depth discussion of all this in his lengthy piece, [Anatomy of a Smear](#). In that article Clint probes the motivations driving each party to the smear. Further, [Marc shed light on Chaya's motivations in a recent public response](#) to the virulent, public, letters she has published against Marc throughout the last ten years. (Ten years! Seriously, I'm not kidding. I mean, come on, does spousal bitterness now qualify as reliable testimony?)

My point is simple: this was not a spontaneous attack. It was and is an intentional and coordinated smear campaign. This has been relatively unknown outside of a small circle of leadership. *My purpose in writing is to make the facts about the smear known to a wider circle.*

That point made, let's return to Christmas 2015. Even with the warnings we received, none of us could have believed the level of organized malice and malevolence that would be unleashed upon, not only Dr. Gafni, but also his friends, his family, and his associates. The NYT's column, filled with distortion, and deception by omission, was bad enough, but it was just the opening salvo. It became clear in the next few months, that writers were being enrolled to write negative articles about Marc and post them around the internet, particularly in the Jewish press. These were people Marc did not know, people he had never even heard of, people with no direct, first-person knowledge of him. The articles called Marc, among other factual absurdities, a sociopath, or a pedophile. They insidiously implied, though never explicitly stated, that a mature, adult, Marc Gafni was right now, or just a few years back, sleeping with 13 or 14 year old girls and they kept implying it until headlines assumed it to be true—things like "Accused Pedophile Does This or That." This is grossly untrue.

Let me tell you this, and it is important! I am close enough to Marc Gafni that if those accusations were true, I guarantee you that I, a) would know about it, and b) would not be writing this article. I would be standing against him, (me, along with everyone else I know who calls him friend). But once you distribute a canard like this on the Internet—the big lie—then, as any propagandist will tell you, it will stick. Marc has responded in depth to this particular set of claims, the pedophile claims, [here](#). A very brief summary

of the in depth piece can be read [here](#).

Some of the media outlets that published and promoted these claims were themselves, involved in the smear campaign. You can get a sense of how this unfolded from a recent [CIW Newsletter](#) that outlines the basics of how this went down. Read these pieces yourself and see what you think. I know it takes time, but this is a question of fairness; a man's life and reputation are at stake. Reasonable people need to speak; they need to demand truth. (I mean hell, if we don't, we might end up having to live through some sort of demagogue wrecking havoc in the White House. . . . oops.)

Lisa Engles, a tenacious feminist and mother of a 14 year old girl, has taken the time to write two incisive articles debunking the [absurd claims](#), that were made, [by Nancy Levine](#), as well as others who were enrolled into the smear campaign. There are a lot of very fine people who know better than to believe the smear and they've taken the time to write. (Believe me, I didn't get paid for this.) That ought to reveal something to the fair minded souls reading this essay.

As the smear campaign got into full swing and CIW began to develop a response, we sought a way to bring facts into the mix—what a concept. When a professional staff person from [CIW, \(the Center for Integral Wisdom\)](#), called one of these enrolled writers I mentioned, called with the naive hope of engaging in a dialogue and correcting at least the gross factual misstatements, the writer hung up the phone.

As these absurd claims were made in the bizarre echo chambers of the Internet, many readers believed them. Then, as has been so well-documented in the so-called “Pizzagate” incident, the disgusting practice of trolling began. Here follows just a couple of those trolling comments to give you a brief taste. “Marc should be murdered on sight.” “Someone should shove a baseball bat up his ass.” Those are the ones I can print.

Can you imagine waking up every day and reading this stuff about yourself? Make no mistake, this wounding of my friend Marc Gafni, makes me furious. It took a while to edit the four letter words out of the first draft of this article. But this is not only Marc's nightmare. Can you imagine the impact all of this has, not only on him, but on his family, his children, his mother?

Consider too that while tragic, it is also true that Marc is not the first revolutionary teacher who has offered a new vision and then has had to bear such an attack. If you really get what is happening here, you will come to realize that this smear campaign doesn't undermine Marc's leadership but instead, *paradoxically validates it*. Really, it is clear enough to me that, if Marc had nothing to say and no presence to transmit, this obsession to take him down would soon disappear.

What is going on is even worse than it appears. Beyond taking Marc down, there has been an orchestrated attempt to inflict professional damage on many of Marc's associates. The basic tactic is simple. A strategy of subtle intimidation has been deployed. People were told that association with Marc would threaten their life work. Of course, the people that would be doing the damage to their life's work are the ones running the smear campaign to begin with. But several people have lost jobs and contracts. They have been dropped from professional associations. Life trajectories have been tragically changed. The smear campaign activists have called or written the employers of Marc's associates, seeking to get them fired, and to my horror, this revolting tactic has, occasionally, succeeded. Do you see what the energy of a smear campaign can do when good people do not stand up and demand facts? At least ten women I know, ten women who are my friends, have been hurt by this smear campaign in significant and measurable ways. Dinan says he is trying to help women. What a load of horseshit.

When you think about it, very few leaders would have the capacity to withstand such an assault. Marc found that capacity in himself. I think that speaks to the truth of who he is. It confirms the integrity and commitment Marc has to his unique calling. This is true for me, and many others who know him. It is a reflection of the courage and the love at the core of his being. But for some of those supporting the smear campaign, his ability to survive, and even somehow thrive, in the midst of this, is simply "evidence" of his alleged sociopathy. People claim that only a sociopath could survive this kind of assault and attempt at public degradation? Isn't that a bit like the Salem Witch trials—you try to drown the witch. If she dies then clearly she wasn't a witch, but if she survives then obviously she was a witch so you execute her. Hogwash. (The word was the best I could do in the editing process.)

The answer to how he has survived is as simple as it is extraordinary. Marc Gafni may be imperfect—I'm close enough to know that—but I'm also close enough to know for a fact that he's the real deal. He is a person who seeks, every single day, to express love into the world. Marc works hard to be what his teachings call, "an outrageous lover," which means that the source of his strength has its origins in Spirit. Does he experience outrageous pain? Oh God, yes. In this sense the core of this teaching these last two years, captured in two sentences, seems almost prescient. "We live in a world of outrageous pain. The only response to outrageous pain is outrageous love."

This is usually the moment when people start screaming back at me, telling me all about the horrible things that Marc Gafni has supposedly done to deserve this. (Actually, the screaming usually starts well before this.) They forget two things: Marc has long ago responded, in the public space, to the false complaints and distortions that had been promoted in the past. There is genuine evidence these false complaints were built on lies. (Even the 2006 claim that police complaints were registered, was a lie.) Marc has also made it clear that he "takes full responsibility for any part in creating the conditions that allowed the false complaints to take place." This material has been housed in a dedicated section of Marc's personal website. It's there for anyone to read.

But here's the second thing and it's really, really, important: you, the reader, have no idea what Marc Gafni has done or hasn't done. There has been no finding of fact, no objective forum in which to mount a defense. That is the point. A smear campaign is built on lies and innuendo, not fact. It is built on distortion, driven by hidden agendas and self-righteous hatred, the kind of hatred that sucks the life out of human society. A smear cannot survive when scrutinized in the daylight.

The hatred of course, seeks a way to disguise itself. In liberal circles especially, the easiest form of disguise is victim advocacy. The truer motives, the malice, are disguised under the seemingly noble fig leaf of protecting "victims." This requires three key components to make it work. The manufacturing of victims, the demonization of Marc, and the avoidance of any genuine conversation or dialogue. Any genuine dialogue would include fair fact checking and would expose the hidden motives, and behind the scenes collusion, driving such a grotesque public action. Clint Fuhs has written a long

and penetrating essay on the [Anatomy of a Smear](#). It does in depth what I seek to do through several brief illustrations—uncover some of the tactics and motives that have produced this ugliness. While Clint's article exposes the anatomy of this nightmare, [Mariana Caplan has written an excellent article](#) about the false complaints in which Ingber, directly or indirectly, played an important role.

The first step in orchestrating a smear campaign, as I've said, is to identify your target's past enemies—easily done in an Internet Age. The second is to hide the fact that the campaign is orchestrated to begin with, and instead make it look like a spontaneous outburst of public anger at alleged misdeeds. (There wasn't even a new alleged misdeed to start this whole thing.) In this case, Steve Dinan had made contact with past enemies: David Ingber, Marc's former student, Chaya Lester, Marc's ex-wife, (the one who he refused to re-marry), and Donna Zerner, a former friend, lover, and board member of Marc's Israeli organization. What do these people have in common? In 2006 they all participated in catalyzing or supporting false complaints against Marc in Israel. This was serious. This was wrong. This successful effort to ruin Marc's work there, included erasing e-mails from Marc's computer so that he could not defend himself against their lies. Those e-mails, as well as erased Skype chats, were in fact, eventually recovered. (Do you know what it costs, do you know how long it takes, to have an expert reconstruct a hard drive?) Those e-mails—no less than reconstructed truth—conclusively proved that the allegations against Marc were false. Literally everyone who has read them thinks so. Some of them are adduced for the first time in Clint Fuchs article on the [Anatomy of a Smear](#).

Several excellent articles, all supported by professional evaluation, have been written in this regard—[Mariana Caplan](#) and [Clint Fuhs](#). Dinan could have contacted any of these people to check his facts. He has not. He could have met with Marc or his team and reviewed the primary source material on which these reports are based. He did not. It is pretty obvious that Stephen Dinan is not the least bit interested in the truth. He had already joined forces with David Ingber, who as Clint Fuhs makes abundantly clear, was a major player in the false complaints debacle in Israel.

Marc has responded directly to Donna Zerner in a [series of revelatory videos](#) which I

would recommend to anyone who wants to understand how a smear campaign unfolds. It's extremely illuminating, especially in light of the fact that smear tactics continue to haunt our public life in so many arenas. [Marc, from necessity, has worked hard to understand this](#). He details in great depth the distortions, and outright lies in Donna's dramatic faire. He does this while pointing out the ways in which she has hidden her own sexuality within the story. (When you do the things she's done, you leave your target no choice but to respond with truth. This same merry band, especially Donna Zerner, were also involved behind the scenes, in catalyzing an the attack on Marc in 2011, (to which I will return shortly). False complaints in Israel, spurious attack in 2011, and now an organized smear campaign. All involve the same group of people, all are based on similar distortions and outright lies, and all of this is pretty much unknown to the public. It seems all they needed was someone with the marketing skills and experience to put together a powerful smear campaign. That turned out to be Stephen Dinan, a man who has based his career on knowing how to collect and make use of Internet sales techniques. Together, their obsessive dedication is, I believe, fueled by fear and malice, not a desire for justice, not a desire to protect victims.

These people cannot admit of their malice so they are also claiming to be protecting victims. Further, over the years they have become expert in the manufacturing of victims, victims who will support their obsessive quest to bring Marc Gafni down. Clint Fuchs has pointed out in his key article, Anatomy of a Smear, that one of the major motivations of Ingber and Lester in the smear campaign was to cover up their involvement catalyzing, directly or indirectly in the false complaints in Israel.

Andrew Harvey, The Goddess Weeps: A Failure of Integrity

"Oh yes," you might say, "but Andrew Harvey, among others, has talked to women who have suffered at Marc's hands and verified their accounts." Yeah, I know, but so have I. I told you, I've checked my facts. Not everything is as it seems. But before I go into that, I'd like to ask a prior question, "Why were Andrew Harvey, and other colleagues, weighing in on this to begin with?" Answer: that's the way a smear develops. Once you get an article into a reputable news source like the New York Times, (though I've got to tell you, after this I'll never read the "paper of record" the same way again), then you get reputable teachers to support your attack. That was Dinan's next move. Dinan

organized a list of teachers to sign [a letter condemning Marc](#). The fact that most of them do not know Marc and that none of them has crosschecked any claims, or evidence, with Marc was apparently beside the point. What do these teachers who signed Dinan's letter against Marc, have in common? Answer: [nearly all of them work for The Shift Network, Dinan's Internet teaching platform](#). That's right nearly all of the signatories to this petition have worked for the Shift Network at one time or another. Others are financially involved with the Shift Network through various marketing agreements. The remainder are professionally networked with Dinan or other signatories socially.

You can believe me or not on this, because I cannot divulge sources on this particular claim, but teachers, (plural), have told us that they signed onto the petition because they were afraid to cross Dinan. They need him to support their work on the Shift Network. A couple of well-known teachers told us that they were personally pressured to sign the petition by Steve Dinan himself.

Maybe it seems like that shouldn't be such a big deal. After all, how much influence can the Shift Network have? Most people don't know that popular teachers on the Shift Network earn six figures a year. I know that only because Dinan has fired two people in the wake of this smear campaign, and they've told me. Andrew Harvey has worked for Dinan and his Shift Network for a while now. It is not unreasonable to conjecture that a significant part of his income comes from there. Might that have some influence on him?

It is, after all, easy to go along. Anyone who is even vaguely familiar with the group dynamics involved in this kind of public situation, will tell you that once people start sharing a distorted story, the facts often get buried. In other words, even if several people tell you the same story, that does not mean it's true. Before accepting the story, its important to ask some of these salient questions: How do these story tellers know each other? And for how long? Have their stories influenced one another? Are they in a field of "group think" which has been colored by a particular hermeneutic, one that dominates their social circle, one from which it is virtual heresy to deviate? Might they be closely associated with obsessed adversaries of the person they are accusing? Might collusion or social pressure, overt or subtle, be playing a role in the development of their narrative? But most of all, you need to ask yourself if you've checked the other

side of the story. Did you speak to Marc, or other people of well-known integrity supporting Marc, people who are deeply familiar with the stories? Did you check other evidence that is plainly available on the web that might directly contradict the stories you have been told? I'm quite sure that Andrew Harvey, whom I single out because of his particularly damning audio post, early in the smear campaign, cannot answer any of these questions with an appropriate response.

Early in this story Barbara Marx Hubbard related to me that Andrew called her to "warn her" about Marc. He did this even though he didn't know Marc. It became obvious later that Stephen Dinan had suggested he make the call. Barbara asked Andrew what the issue was. Andrew, stumbled and said, "I really do not know," and added that he would check—with Stephen—and get back to her. He never called back. Understand, I'm not attributing heinous motives to Andrew Harvey here. I'm simply saying that he was taking dramatic action without having searched out the truth. I mean really, he called her and didn't know what the issue was?

In any case, I have no doubt that Andrew Harvey spoke to women who have known or been involved with Marc. I have too. When I was the Board Chair of Center for World Spirituality, an earlier incarnation of Marc's think tank, I was contacted by a friend who wanted me to know "the truth" about Marc Gafni. Understand, I took this role very seriously. I was clear that, if Marc had actually done the things they claimed, then I, as Board Chair, had an undeniable responsibility to do something about it. I'm not the sort of person who shirks such a responsibility, to the contrary, I embrace it.

I arrived at Starbucks near Boulder, CO for the meeting. The promise was that I was to hear all about what Marc had done. When I got there I found two women who had recently been involved with Marc, and one woman, Donna Zerner, a woman who was involved in the false complaints against Marc several years earlier. Two of the women brought male friends with them for support—no problem. I figured, in their shoes I might too. Donna did most of the talking. In retrospect, but also even in the moment, it was clear to me that she was stirring the other two women to action. At the time I was not clear on her role in Israel so I had not brought that bias with me. I listened; I listened carefully.

If you heard these women, as Andrew Harvey and I have, I mean to tell you, that at first, their story sounds convincing—very convincing. Like Andrew, I believed them. They were convincing enough that it was clear to me we needed to get the facts on the table. I sought to convene a meeting during which both sides could be heard. Why Andrew didn't conclude that, why he didn't connect with Marc to hear what he might have to say about all this, is a mystery to me. It was a missed opportunity.

I was looking for some way to have these women tell their story in a safe and supportive environment, one where Marc could tell his side as well, in an equally safe and supportive environment. My hope was that it could be a healing environment, but then my faith in God's ability to redeem an impossible situation is legendary. I'm a fool in this regard and proud of it. The three women and I agreed that, if Marc were willing, we would meet with Marc and a therapist we had agreed on, Marc's therapist, who would be present to guide the discussion and use whatever was said the way he thought proper. They agreed to the idea in the hopes it would promote healing in Marc. Donna in particular said that she did not want to hurt Marc any more than she already had, she insisted she was seeking his healing. I wonder if you can imagine what an extraordinarily intense time this was for me. I was in the unenviable position of telling my close friend, Marc, that I was taking these women very seriously and that he needed to meet with them in his therapist's office.

What do you suppose he said? I'll tell you. He didn't skip a beat. "Yes," was his immediate response. In fact he was happy about it. He really wanted to meet with them. That said, he was also pretty sure they would bail out. Can you imagine? He told me not to be too disappointed if, when the time came, they refused to meet. At that moment he was worried about me! He said that while he prayed he would be proven wrong, he was all but certain that once they had gotten involved with Donna, the two women would not be willing to engage in serious clarification of facts and so would refuse to meet. I assured him this was not the case and set about the business of arranging the meeting.

When I called the women to set this up, each of them, in turn, bailed out. They claimed that they were convinced that Marc was too smart, that he had so much sinister power, that they wouldn't be able to speak their truth, so there was no point. This was the claim,

I found out later, that Donna had used for years to avoid being challenged. There is no other way to put this: what a load of horseshit. At that point, the fog cleared from my eyes and I understood what was going on. Here Donna Zerner, still wanting to complete the vengeful work begun in Israel, had sought out these women and stirred them to action. They had tried to co-opt me into their effort to destroy Marc, my close friend. I felt used. I was disgusted.

So all I have to say Andrew, is that not everything is as it appears. I dearly wish you had taken the time to talk to Marc. It seems to me that you got drawn in. I know I did. Their story is told in a way that makes you feel you have to rush to judgment. That's how this works. That is why Internet hysteria is sucking the life out of civil society.

Why did this happen anyway? Why did Stephen Dinan go to all this trouble? We have an answer to that question and it is disturbing indeed. It is not the fig leaf motivation to take care of the injustice done to women.

Dinan had been working closely with [Barbara Marx Hubbard](#) for several years. They had some success together in a global event called Birth 2012. It came time to plan a similar event in the year 2020. However, in 2015, Barbara decided that she did not want to work exclusively with Dinan, but wanted to work with Marc Gafni as well. Here's what, Barbara reports, that Dinan said in response: "No, . . . I HAVE THE STRUCTURE. YOU WILL FAIL. YOU MUST DO IT UNDER ME." He then wrote Barbara a series of virulently disrespectful emails. Barbara pleaded with him to check facts and meet Marc. He refused. (Have you noticed? It is a bit of a pattern.) Instead, he asked Barbara to keep the fact he was badmouthing Marc, a secret from Marc himself.

Barbara did what you would imagine a strong thought-leader would do. She stood up to Dinan. So he fired her and with that she lost most of her income. His prerogative I suppose. But really now, don't tell me you are trying to work for justice for women and leave Barbara Marx Hubbard in this position so late in her life. That's just horseshit. (Maybe you can tell that this is the word my editors let through.) But Stephen wasn't done there. He contacted her daughter and tried to get her to hire a cult buster. He told Barbara's daughter that he was going to "save the world from Marc Gafni." And he

thinks Marc is a sociopath? All of this is supported by e-mails from Stephen Dinan's accounts.

As I've said, the e-mail threads are clear. Dinan was arranging a NYT article that would be part of a larger public attack intended (in Dinan's own words quoted in the email thread), to "stop [Marc] in his tracks." We know why Ingber, Donna, and Chaya signed on. They were shown up for having arranged false complaints; they want to be rid of him. We know at least part of Dinan's motivation as well.

The Tell Tale Sign of a Smear Campaign: Intense Demonization

It has been months since this all began. I have been deeply gratified, overwhelmed in fact, to see how the Center for Integral Wisdom has responded as a community. As I said earlier, I sat in on a Zoom call last February, at the beginning of the smear campaign, with some thirty of my friends, as each of us stated our commitment to try and find Spirit's next move forward in this. Not one vindictive person in the whole group and that tone was set by Marc Gafni himself. We know that Marc is not the only person who has ever been smeared. So we decided that it would be helpful to public culture if we responded by showing people what has been done here. We want people to understand that while this happened to us, it happens to others and we need to stand against this sort of smearing in our society. Witness 11/8/16—the future depends on it.

It took some real effort to create this smear campaign. Dinan, Ingber and the others gathered the resources for this smear campaign, planned its phases, let the lies unfold, and watched the damage tear people apart. This organized campaign has generated almost a hundred articles, blog posts, and Facebook posts. The same set of distorted facts, rumors and outright lies were repeated again and again within the self-referencing echo chamber on the web. The lies started with the assumption that the 2006 'complaints' in Israel were true when they are clearly FALSE!—[Mariana Caplan](#) and [Clint Fuhs](#). But this was only the beginning of the effort.

One of the tell tale signs of something very corrupt is the quality of virulent demonization that accompanies a smear campaign. Listen to the following article, which appeared at the beginning of the smear campaign. The writer, Carolyn Baker does not know Gafni.

She has never spoken to him, nor did she contact him, with any request for information. She appeared out of nowhere in early 2016, obviously enrolled by smear campaign organizers. When you read what she writes you have to understand that this level of demonization opens up the most frightening impulses within human beings. It [represents the kind of behavior that Lisa Engles referred to](#), when she called the smear campaign against Marc, an act of attempted social murder. Here is what Carolyn Baker wrote.

“In the case of Gafni, evidence is mounting that he may be a sociopath, devoid of conscience and therefore the pangs of guilt with which most humans struggle. The shadow, in fact, may not be the issue for him in this situation because the dynamics of the shadow require that an individual have a conscience. The presence of conscience causes us to repress aspects of ourselves that do not resonate with what we consider morally sound, and we therefore bury those in the unconscious mind, or we choose to examine them and resolve the issue. Individuals without conscience, however, live out rather than repress their demons.”

These statements are utterly groundless. They are based on speculation without any supporting evidence or clinical evaluation. Hell, the word “sociopath” first appeared in an angry letter posted by Marc’s ex-wife back in 2006. It’s irresponsible and cruel to write about someone you’ve never met and suggest he has no conscience. Calling someone a sociopath in an online smear campaign is the modern day equivalent of calling someone a witch in Salem, MA. But none of this bothers the writer. This in and of itself reveals ulterior motives. Will Dinan and company stop at nothing? The answer is sadly, “Yes.” But unlike Carolyn, or Stephen for that matter, I know Marc—and this damaging, groundless and just plain mean rhetoric does bother me. It makes me suspicious. It seems Carolyn was enrolled into this, which to me, somehow makes it worse. Was money exchanged? I cannot say. But I do know that when Marc’s representative called Carolyn Baker in an attempt to clarify issues and set up an interview, she hung up the phone.

Contrast what she writes with what the single most qualified person on the face of the globe has to say about Marc’s inner psychological nature—that would be his therapist, Peter Dunlap, Ph.D., and it all becomes very clear. The following

evaluation appears as part of [58 blog posts](#) written in response to the smear campaign last February. Simply compare the tone and content of those posts to the tone and content of the smear campaign, and you can find your own truth. It is worth reading Dr. Dunlap carefully. I was initially going to excerpt him here, but have instead included the post in its entirety:

I am writing in support of Marc Gafni. I am a therapist and a political psychologist. Normally I work behind the scenes but, in light of recent public assault on Marc Gafni, I feel morally obligated to call out the irresponsible attacks that are not only harmful to Marc but also are destructive to the Integral community.

I have functioned as Marc's therapist over the last several years, which places me in a unique position to know his consciousness, his strengths and limitations. While intellectually brilliant, Marc is committed to ongoing psychological work as part of his life practice, which he approaches with genuine humility. While others have known him longer, I know him well.

In light of the recent spate of attacks, let me just say that Marc is psychologically sound, a significantly empathic and ethical person whose character bears no resemblance to the projections described on the web. Marc's goodness, commitment to transformation, and core integrity are, based on my work with him, beyond question. To even need to say this is almost inappropriate, but given the memes that have expressed themselves in the blogosphere, the self-evident may need to be stated.

To really understand Marc is to realize that he is somewhat of a mutant. What I mean is that he is gifted in very specific and important ways that are unusual and rare. Those gifts need to be protected even as Marc continues to model what I believe all leaders should do — to continue to do ongoing work with foundational issues. What is unusual about Marc are his larger than life gifts as well as his profound humility. Marc has specifically said that he is willing to meet and work with anyone who might have an issue with him. I have seen him make that offer and have seen those who are willing to dialogue as well as those who have refused, preferring to attack him rather than look at their own self responsibility and personal dynamics.

While he can be fiery and is quick to speak, he also pauses and listens. And when he listens you can see him taking in the feelings of another; he slows down,

his face relaxes, showing his pain, and he turns to meet the other in their difference. This is part of his integrity. Since first meeting Marc he has worked to expand his understanding of his own responsibilities in leading people into the work of forming an integral global consciousness.

To understand the projections on the web, to borrow Ken Wilber's thinking, all four quadrants need to be taken into account, including and especially the cultural, political lower quadrants on both the right and left side. In order to fully understand the false complaints against Marc of ten years ago we need to examine the political complexity within Integral and the organizing force within the new age community that helped catalyze these events—[Clint Fuhs](#). We can understand and meet this attack by recognizing it as, in part, a mythic/archetypal phenomenon and respond to it in relation to group dynamics. From this frame it is possible to contain and redirect such scapegoating energies. In other words, we need to catch our collective breath and show enough humility to not resort to the type of black and white thinking that currently dominates our political world. It is not surprising that we too would internalize and act out such chaotic dynamics.

The current attack on his person is unwarranted and obligates the Integral community to do its own soul searching. It is my hope that we can turn our attention toward our own shadow, much as Marc has shown me he is willing to do. As William Stafford writes: "the darkness around us is deep."

Peter T. Dunlap Ph.D.

Clinical and Political Psychology

The smear campaign against Marc, replete with its smug, self-righteous judgments proclaimed loudly by bystanders, has surfaced in a loosely gathered group of people who think of themselves as "evolutionaries." In other words, these are people who believe that the whole point of life and creation is for the evolutionary impulse to move towards greater beauty and unity. We know that growth and development are extraordinarily difficult. We know they require a person to look into their lives and view those things that bring deep shame. To do so raises huge fear—the opposite of love. We know that this must take place in an environment of care, a context that calls forth healing. Marc has always been available to engage in a serious process of fact checking and transformation in which all parties, himself included, acknowledge

responsibility for whatever they have done—such a serious process would have to include the airing of false complaints and smear campaigns. Marc is, far and away, the person most hurt by all of this, and yet he is the only one who has offered an apology for his part in “creating the conditions” that allowed false complaints to happen. That pretty much says it all.

We let Marc down. We let one another down. We let the feminine down. We must do better.

So I say to Marc’s virulent enemies: enough is enough. It is past time to cease and desist. Integrity cannot move forward from here—not with you manipulating the system, trying to distort our perceptions. We shall always seek transformation, development, and growth. Marc’s friends will challenge him to develop and grow just as he challenges us. Why do you think we love him? Because he has brought profound and challenging insight to our lives and has guided many of us through moments of growth. We all must seek maturity though, for this process of evolution takes wisdom, an understanding of the way creation evolves. That has been sorely lacking.

It’s time, time for this to end. Too many people have been hurt. The way it ends is for good people to stand and be counted, doing what spiritual teachers so rarely do, when there may be a price to pay. We need to stand for the ideals that we preach and one of those is “truth.” If we’ve learned nothing in these last weeks, it is that we must demand and seek truth. So I ask you, “Where will you stand? Where will ‘we’ go from here?”