# The somewhat controversial Lama Ole Nydahl

by Lama Tendar Olaf Hoeyer, May 2026.

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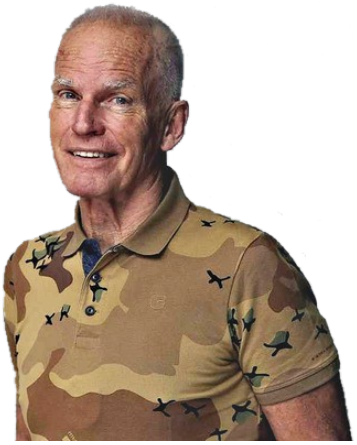
Ole Nydahl was born in 1941. He grew up in Virum north of Copenhagen, Denmark. Here he also met his later wife Hannah already as a teenager. After College they moved to the inner city of Copenhagen. Ole Nydahl ravaged the local pubs of the inner city and became infamous as a bad bully, that everybody was afraid of. In the old days he always ended up fist fighting with people, that he did not like. Why he was so aggressive is not known. The writer Jan Poulsen quotes Ole Nydahl (in his book [in Danish] 'Eik Skaløe' ISBN 978-87-02-16771-9; page 221): "I was a warrior and liked to fight – [I] liked to empty pubs." There were allegedly several pubs that got ravaged repeatedly by Ole Nydahl and his little brother Bjørn.



The picture shows Ole Nydahl;
photo by Jonathan Wong.

But it is indeed remarkable, that he completely changed this pattern of behaviour after he met with the 16th Karmapa Rangjung Rigpae Dorje by the end of the sixties in Nepal. After this meeting, Ole Nydahl has never assaulted anyone, except verbally naturally. It was a radically changed young man that came back to Denmark with a mission to spread knowledge about *Buddhadharma* in the West, encouraged and directed by Karmapa to do so. You may still feel his aggressiveness, when he talk about Islam today, but it is verbally and with a mentally complete rejection – more about this later.

Ole and Hannah Nydahl studied Buddhism in India and Nepal in the late sixties with such brilliant Dharmateachers as the 16th Karmapa, Kalu Rinpoche, Tenga Rinpoche and other Tibetan Lamas for several years. They received both important transmissions and teachings on the Buddhist view. In between they trained in meditation, particularly the preparatory practices (ngoendro) for Mahamudra meditation. They never managed to find time and opportunity to do a formal Yidam retreat at that time. Later, back in Europe they became too occupied with their missionary work to do such retreats also. You have to spend at least one year for such a purpose. Anyway, the Karmapa empowered them to teach Buddhism in the West and give formal Buddhist refuge, before they returned to Europe.

Ole Nydahl is in many ways a very pleasant and easygoing person. He appears sympathetic and manifest a sharp ability for judging the character of people and their potential. He would have become the perfect *Bodhisatva*, if only he had been able to overcome his own shady traits. Unfortunately, he has not been quite so able to evaluate himself. That has resulted in strong limitations and some prejudice, that in many ways

overshadow his many qualities and idealism. This is a shame and pity for him. Something very good and some not so good may therefore be said about Lama Ole Nydahl.

First of all, he is a Buddhist missionary. As such, he has achieved great success of spreading knowledge about the Buddhadharma all over the globe. He has founded meditation centres on all continents, except for Africa. And he is capable of gathering thousands of people for his seminars. This is quite extraordinary. In fact, he has managed to establish about 600 centres of various sizes in this way. There are not many other missionaries, who successfully went out and met with people in so many different places in so many countries. Ole Nydahl apparently has an extraordinary karma in terms of the art of missionary work.

He also behaves as many other missionaries by establishing his organisation, Diamondway Buddhism, so he is in full control of it. The many Western Lamas that over the years have been educated and formed in France in particular, are not invited to teach in this organisation. Instead, Ole Nydahl has developed a model, where people, that he trust and know well, are appointed as Dharma-teachers. This model nourish some serious doubt about the qualifications of these teachers. The curriculum of Ole Nydahl include the preparatory practises (ngoendro), introduction to Mahamudra as an existential and philosophical view, and Guruyoga. In the 'old days' Ole Nydahl would send his students to Lama Tenga Rinpoche for further education and training in more advanced forms of meditation. Later, this job went to Lama Chechou from Bhutan and Nepal. At the latest, the 17th Karmapa Thaye Dorje and several Lamas close to him, have received such students.

The name 'Diamondway' is often alleged to be a translation of the term 'Vajrayana' – but that word does not mean a way; it is a vehicle (yana). Way is called 'marga' in Sanskrit. It is not established where this confusion of concepts originate from. It is just a bizarre detail.

Ole Nydahl started out as a missionary about 1970. It was a small and hard enterprise. Together with his wife Hannah Nydahl he held a cleaning job in order to make some money. They both travelled here and there in an old rusty Volkswagen bus mostly in Denmark and Germany. Some friends would do their cleaning job for them, while they were away. In due time, they received enough money from donations and income from the sales of their books to finance the enterprise. In the start of the eighties, he received the title of 'Buddhist Master' from Shamar Rinpoche. This happened, because Ole Nydahl wanted the title of Lama, but Shamar Rinpoche did not think it was proper at that time. 'Buddhist Master' was thought of in line with a 'bachelor' degree from an University. No one else have ever received that title.

But in the later part of the eighties, Ole Nydahl persuaded Tenga Rinpoche to give him title of Lama. Both for his knowledge of Dharma and to support his missionary work. Shamar Rinpoche then confirmed the title. There are many rumours that Ole Nydahl is not

a ‘real’ Lama, but that is not true. Normally a Lama has accomplished a 3 year meditative retreat with a strict daily training programme. Ole Nydahl never got the opportunity even he wanted to join the first retreat, that Kalu Rinpoche organised in France at the start of the eighties. But Karmapa said no. Ole Nydahl was supposed to spread the Dharma and create Dharma centres. Ole Nydahl really liked to travel all the time like a circus. And his calender was very comprehensive back then, visiting a new place every other day the year round. Very unusual.

Lama Ole Nydahl has a somewhat fuzzy reputation because of his promiscuity and ‘enlightened’ autocracy. He has never hidden, that he cultivates erotic relationships out of his marriage. Some people do not approve of this, but Ole Nydahls erotic partners have always been in agreement, as far as I know. It must be difficult with many lovers, but it is not by itself immoral. Some people criticise, that he as Lama is in dominance of his students, when they become lovers. Ole Nydahl has denied this and think, that these erotic relations always are equal. They are of course not quite so, but grown up people aught to take responsibility for their own erotic life, even they are his students. Nothing indicates misuse nor coercion in these relationships. And they are carried out completely in the open.

The autocracy of Ole Nydahl is not uncommon among missionaries – nor in Asia, but it is not exactly a good thing in the modern world, where transparency and member democracy is perceived as necessary prerequisites for the control of misuse of power and embezzlement of trusted funds. He calls his system for ‘meritocratic,’ but it is he who rules. Despite the lack of transparency in the autocracy of Ole Nydahl, there have been no sign of misuse of power nor fraud. So he has not made scandals.

That is except for his extreme attitude to Islam and Muslims in general. He does say though, that it is the religion of Islam, from which he distances himself; but Islam is the religion of some human beings, so it is unavoidable that this distance must be understood as a rejection of Muslim people. Ole Nydahl takes exception of Sufi-Islam, that he for some reason accepts. He has not yet been able to explain, how rejection of his fellow human beings can be reconciled with the *Bodhicitta* attitude, that is expressed by the love of friendship, compassion and understanding of emptiness, Sanskrit: *sunyata*. This subject is a great weakness and flaw in his activity. (Read the paper: *Buddha and Islam*.)

Good cooperation existed between Ole Nydahl and myself, when I was the manager of the centre in Copenhagen, Karma Drub Djy Ling (Karma Kadjy Skolen, aka: The Kama Kagyu School) from 1985 to 1989. Maybe because I was never a student of his, while we had many Lamas in common as teachers of both of us. The period was not without problems with Ole Nydahl, but it did not destroy the cooperation. At that time, he also did not express so extreme views in his lectures as he does now. I was a monk then, but he apparently respected that. At least at that time.

The picture shows the 14th Shamarpa

In 1992 the division of the Karma Kagyu tradition took place between the highest ranking Lama, Shamar Rinpoche and the not quite so high Lama, Situ Rinpoche and his conspirators, among who was the government of the Communist Chinese Empire.

The party of Situ Rinpoche appointed the hesitant Ogyen Dorje as the new incarnation of Karmapa. Shamar Rinpoche had avoided any influence from the Chinese government, and he did not want any political appointment of so important a Tulku as the Karmapa. So at the same time he was cautiously seeking confirmation on his own presumed candidate. The year after, he acknowledged with confidence Thaye Dorje as the new 'classical' incarnation of the 16th Karmapa. I must stress here, that Thaye Dorje had proclaimed himself to be the Karmapas Tulku. Actually in a dire difference to Ogyen Dorje, who cannot remember his previous life. The very first words, that Thaye Dorje spoke in this life, was literary: 'I am Karmapa.' He was just a toddler of 3 years. Until then, he had not spoken any discernable words.

Such a division was unheard of in the old Karma Kagyu tradition, though there had been some trouble around the Tulku of the 15th Karmapa, because of the intervention by the then Tibetan government in the nineteen hundred and twenties. That intervention was quickly over, though. The Karmapa candidate of the Tibetan government died by a serious accident on Tsurphu Monastery, where upon the 16th Karmapa Rangjung Rigpae Dorje was acknowledged everywhere.

Rangjung Rigpae Dorje had proclaimed himself already and had been recognised by the then Situ Rinpoche in the Eastern Kham. At that time the Eastern Kham was ruled by China directly, outside of the territory of the then independent Tibetan government. It was Rangjung Rigpae Dorje, who had inspired Ole Nydahl to become a Buddhist in the late sixties. And it was this Karmapa, who had asked Ole and his wife Hannah to teach Buddhism in the West at the start of the seventies. It must have been this strong connection between them, that made Ole and Hannah Nydahl join in support of Shamar Rinpoche's acknowledged 17th Karmapa Thaye Dorje.

The picture shows the 16th Karmapa Rangjung Rigpae Dorje and Lama Jigme Rinpoche. Photograph from the seventies.

The Nydahls were also very active in providing support for the documentation of the political plots, that took place in the nineties; particularly so among the Tibetans, but also by us in the West. This engagement

was very important at that time to consolidate Thaye Dorje's position and organisation. This activity was very laudable, beneficial and full of merit.

Shamar Rinpoche got some trouble with Ole Nydahl in July 2010. You may read about this in the 'old news' in the Danish section of Tilogaard's website:
www.tilogaard.dk/html/gamle_nyheder_2010.html (The text is in English.) In light of our present knowledge about his Alzheimer dementia, it might be presumed that his aggressiveness expressed in this confrontation with Shamar Rinpoche – is due to his beginning illness. It is not known for sure, of course; it is just a possibility.

In contradiction to what many people think, the two of them never got along very well. But they both recognised that they were in the same spiritual family. I was myself a witness to this relation and spoke often with Rinpoche about Ole Nydahl and his attitudes. Shamar Rinpoche died in 2014.

## Ole Nydahl and Islam

Ole Nydahl has this strange ability, on the one hand to attract many people to practise Buddhadharma, while on the other hand repelling quite a lot of people from Buddhism, so they will not work with the Dharma in the future. Anyway not in any connection with him or the Diamondway organisation. This is both good and bad. It is maybe a classical missionary syndrome.

"Ole has evolved from an interesting and lovely Buddhist to a sectarian and splitting force," does a former student of his say. The citation is from a Danish magazine, Weekendavisen of the 19th of July, 2019 – written by Kristian Lauritzen. It is possibly somewhat misleading to describe these characteristics as a development. It seems, that he has manifested all of this all the time. The paper of Kristian Lauritzen describes the recent developments. In Germany, the anti-Islam attitudes and talks of Lama Ole Nydahl has had the effect, that his organisation in order to save face, had to leave the German Buddhist Union, before they were thrown out. Ole Nydahl said at the occasion, that the German Union lacked in freedom of speech, so the Diamondway organisation had to withdraw from membership. It is a little bit strange statement, because the German Union did not want to close his mouth. They just wanted to get rid of him.

In Germany and Austria, Lama Ole Nydahl has been convicted in a court of law. His speech has at occasions been hate speech. links:
https://www.allgaeuer-zeitung.de/allgaeu/gericht-lama-ist-fremdenfeindlich_arid-187397

https://www.deutschlandfunk.de/buddhistischer-meister-lama-ole-unterliegt-in-rechtsstreit-100.html

https://www.ursachewirkung.com/blog/3979-das-drama-des-ole-nydahl-rechtsextrem-statt-erleuchtet

Ole Nydahl was not punished by the court of law. He had himself sued a German blogger for defamation by postulating, that Ole Nydahl was inciting hate against foreigners in

Germany. The case was dismissed by the court of law, and the judge in her verdict made it clear, that the designation of 'hate speech' about Ole Nydahl's lecture was justified.

A majority within the Union was ready to expel him and his organisation on the grounds of his hate speech against foreigners from the Middle-east and Africa. Encouragement for hate towards others cannot be a Buddhist attitude. Buddha Sakyamuni encouraged people to avoid promoting hate against others and emphasized everybody's likeness and equality. But does Ole Nydahl really encourage hate against Muslims? Kristian Lauritzen wrote the following citation of Ole Nydahl: "It is all in the Quran. To kill infidels. Big problem, that we have brought upon ourselves, isn't it? People should have read the Quran. Then maybe not so many have been let through the frontier? Or even picked up from the water." The citation have been translated by Kristian Lauritzen to Danish from German. And from Danish to English by me. Such a statement is hateful or seeds hate in the minds of people towards the Muslims. Because the logic is and can only mean, that Muslims intend to kill us all, when they get the opportunity and the power. Ole Nydahls statement is a mistaken interpretation of the Quran.

The citation shows very clearly, that Ole Nydahl has an unrealistic perception of Islam. He used to claim, that it is his 'civic duty' in a free and democratic society to warn us all against Islam. But the prerequisite for any perception of 'duty' is, that the Muslims really would nourish such an intention of killing us all. There is really nothing to indicate that they indeed have such intentions. Nor that they might develop such an intention later on.

You can quote the Quran for encouragement to kill the Jewish tribe, that lived in Medina at the same time that Mekka was at war with Muhammed and Medina. The reason for this, was that the Jewish tribe had taken a wow of military assistance and loyalty with Muhammed and the other tribes of Medina. But in the middle of battle, they changed sides. The decision of Muhammed to kill all these deceitful people was of course rather immoral, viewed from a standard humanistic perspective. Just like the English terror bombing of Dresden and Leipzig during World War Two. But it was a military decision, that made sense at that time under such circumstances, where the very same destiny threatened the Muslims and their allies in Medina. It was not because the religion of this Jewish tribe was different.

This is a bit like accusing the Christians of wanting to kill us all, because their God in The Old Testament demands from the Jews, that they kill all the people of Canaan. (The people of Canaan was the former Palestinians, that lived in Palestine before the Jews conquered the territory 3000 years ago.) And the Christians believe in the Old Testament, is it not? Such a postulation is of course not realistic.

This is also illustrated at Muhammed's later conquest of Mekka. Mekka surrendered and no one of Mekka's non-Muslim population was killed in contradiction to the events before in Medina. And the majority of the populace in Mekka at that time, were not yet Muslims.

Just like really many people from Medina that were the allies of the Muslims – and not just the Jews – were actually not Muslims either at that time.

There are of course certain extreme people who think, that all non-Muslims should be removed from the surface of the Earth, but I think, that such extremist people cannot be designated as Muslims, because such an attitude is quite simply not in accord with Islam. Buddhism is normally described as one of 'the religions of the Book' by learned Muslims. Muhammed respected the 'religions of the Book,' and such religions were traditionally not outlawed in Muslim societies.

The very wild Turks that invaded India in the Middle-age, apparently was not aware of that when they burned Nalanda Monastery and killed all the monks. But this behaviour was not normal for Muslims, neither on that particular time. On the other hand, such behaviour was quite normal for both Turks and Mongols in the same period, when they conquered new lands and kingdoms. Later, these Turks and Mongols became tolerant towards their newly subdued populace, that had other religions than Islam, which is the normal in Muslim cultures. So, Ole Nydahl has simply misunderstood something, like so many others who also think, that the Muslims should not be in Europe. By the way, there have been Muslims in Europe for more than a thousand years without these people committing genocide on any one.

So, the German Buddhist Union did nor desire to limit the free speech of Ole Nydahl. They just did not want him as a member of their union, when he cultivates attitudes that are contrary to some of the basic attitudes of the Buddhadharma. The Union did in this way not think, that he and the Diamondway organisation belonged in the Union. While no one tried to stop his speech nor the statements of the Diamondway organisation.

This story illustrates how, he is not just quite stubborn and is not receptive to criticism – he is also not very good at listening to things that he does not want to hear. In stead he bypasses the issue in order to change the subject matter of the conflict. He is actually quite one-eyed and he therefore has a one-track effect on the people that follow him. But particularly his anti-Islam attitudes renders it doubtful whether he has properly understood the teachings of Buddha. At the same time, it makes proper people distance themselves from him. And no one is trying to take away his freedom of speech. The question is really, where he belongs. Apparently not in the German Buddhist Union.

You can read the paper of Kristian Lauritzen (in Danish) on this link:
http://kristianlauritzen.dk/wp-content/uploads/Larm-om-Lama-Ole-e7461dd6.pdf

Read also: https://buddhismus-kontrovers.info/meine-zeit-bei-ole-nydahl-und-dem-diamantweg/ (The author Stephanie Mörchen grew up within the Diamondway Buddhism circle of followers. In 2003 , she left the organisation because of the internal contradictions. There were fear of Muslims within the organisation, she wrote in a paper on the internet. She had discovered Bodhicitta. The article is in German.)

## Limitations

This is also the reason that he has not engaged the Western Lamas from Karmapa's main seat in Europe, known as 'Le Bost' (Kundreul Ling) that is a part of the *Dhagpo Mandala* in France. It is people that he cannot control, and who think differently in a more encompassing way and without self-contradiction – so the logic seems to be, that they should not be allowed within the Diamondway organisation because of that. The result is, that the kind of Buddhism presented within the Diamondway organisation seems **abridged**, both in terms of view and meditation.

Ole Nydahl teach Mahamudra as Buddhist view to some extent, but he does not explain Mahamudra as a meditation system.

The picture shows Lama Ole Nydahl as an old man.

Neither does Lama Ole Nydahl teach real Tantra, nor give initiations, Sanskrit: abhisheka. Except for the phowa sadhana, that he actually has propagated to quite a lot of people over time. Bur he has ceased to do that in the later years, perhaps because of the obligations, Sanskrit: samayas, that phowa incorporates are too demanding for him, and maybe he is afraid that his students cannot handle these obligations. Samaya includes the so-called 'pure vision' which means to regard all sentient beings as Buddhas, including the Muslims and Africans. In all circumstances, it must be difficult to explain how distancing from this kind of people and sustaining samayas avoid to contradict each other. But it is exactly this self-contradiction, that he seems not able to recognise for some reason. Or maybe he just ignores it. It has to be mentioned though, that the concept of samaya actually is a little difficult and complex discussion.

Also, Ole Nydahl does not teach erotic Tantra, Sanskrit: karma-mudra. Even so, he does encourage married couples to perceive and visualise each other as different well known Yidam forms, though they have not received initiations for that nor do they practise Yidam sadhana. People should not play such games, but apparently Ole Nydahl thinks that it is harmless.

Lama Ole Nydahl is the author of several books, some of which are quite excellent introductions to the subject of Buddhadharma. Most of his books though, are self-biographical and not so interesting.

So, Lama Ole Nydahl is a stunning mix of good and bad. The bad and unhealthy take up too much space, and it is difficult to relate to Ole Nydahl without accepting the many faults and misunderstandings in the Diamondway organisation and its founder. He is in

this way in category with Trungpa Rinpoche, that also wrote good books, while his organisation cannot be recommended, because of too many errors, deficiencies, limitations, misunderstandings, self-contradictions, prejudices and problems with ethics, Sanskrit: shila. This is of course just my own opinion.

In 2015 several Danish broadcasters reported that Ole Nydahl had received a prize for his 'goodness and compassion' by a United Nations foundation. Actually, it was a local citizen society in Malaga, Spain (UNESCO Association for Intercultural and Inter-religious Dialogue in Malaga - or: Asociacion UNESCO para el dialogo intercultural e interreligioso en Malaga) that issued this prize; most likely because Ole Nydahl's centre near Malaga had build a very large stupa overlooking the city, that attracted tourists.

The myth about a 'UN' prize appears to have originated from a Diamondway Buddhist press brief, that omitted to mention the very local character of the society and the complete lack of association with the United Nations.

It is a comprehensive subject to describe everything about Ole Nydahl and the Diamondway organisation. But there exist a paper that attempt to do that. It is written by the German Bee Scherer, who has both experienced to be a student of Ole Nydahl and having left the Diamondway organisation because of its limitations. She tries to tell the full story. Not about herself, but about Ole Nydahl and the organisation. It is well documented and academic in style.

You may read it on this link:
www.tilogaard.dk/Lama_Ole_Nydahl_and_the_Diamond_Way_by_Bee_Scherer_2018.pdf (Bee Scherer seems to forget to tell, that the Diamond organisation was not established before the conflict about the two Karmapas arose.)

Ole Nydahl experienced a serious accident while parachuting about 10 years ago or more. His back broke at several places. Since then, his activities has been somewhat diminished. He still travels the whole globe, but with much larger pauses between each engagement with the public. He is still both nice, controversial and keeping up his prejudices. He married again in 2014, got divorced in 2017 and married a third time in 2019. He is father to 3 children. Since 2022 he made no more international teaching tours because of a severe and chronic illness.

## Alzheimer

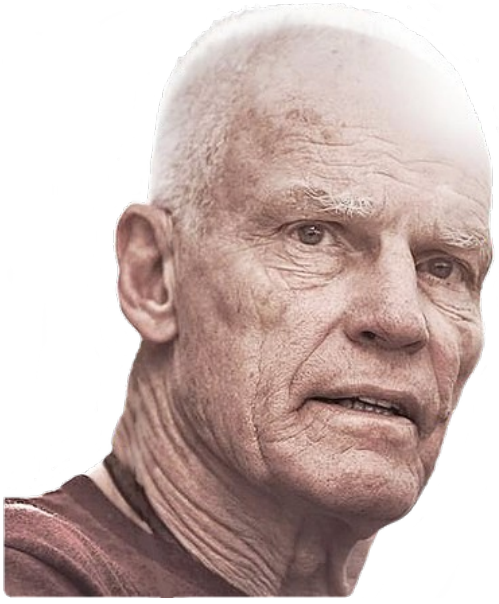
Lama Ole Nydahl has in the last 10 years become increasingly more sick with Alzheimer dementia. Slowly his brain has burned down, so he remembers very badly, forget where he is, lose the thread of conversations and now he can not even read a text any more. It is all very sad. And a surprise to most people.

Lama Ole Nydahl has cultivated serious prejudices in his time, that has pushed many people away from him and his centres. But he has also been very friendly and accommodating towards thousands of seekers, that sought a meaning with their lives. His activity has therefore for years been a point of meeting for many very different kinds of people and an inspiration for them to understand and practise the teaching of the Buddha. This perspective has changed in the later years, when his disease became bad and then worse.

The leadership of his international organisation 'Diamondway Buddhism' has persistently insisted, that he is not sick. Even he obviously is in a very bad shape. Particularly in the latest year (2021), this has led to a split among the members of the organisation. The 'true believers' in control of the organisation have excluded people with the proper consideration and real compassion from leadership and influence within the Diamondway. Many well known Dharmateachers has been told, that they will not teach any more in the Diamondway centres, because they 'imagine' that Ole Nydahl suffer from Alzheimer. Therefore a peculiar atmosphere has spread everywhere among Ole Nydahl's followers. And quite a number of people is in denial about his disease. They 'imagine' that he is displaying 'crazy wisdom'. This is a tragedy within the tragedy. It is not a ‘pure view’ but an unrealistic view. And these people of course appear foolish to everybody else.

The Diamondway organisation apparently does not think, that special consideration should be given to the sick Lama. For instance, he ought not try to read texts to the public, since he is quite unable – nor answer questions in gatherings, because he does not remember the question after just a little while. **He really should not teach at all**.

A recent photograph of Lama Ole Nydahl



He is incapable to speak coherently in a short length of time. Briefly, it does appear that he is being **misused** by the people, that for the moment control the Diamondway organisation. This is a tragedy because he obviously need care, support and compassion.

Also, this situation may be perceived as **disregarding his dignity**. He ought not sit in front of many people trying to teach, when he obviously is not capable of doing that. He will only appear as a fool and a ridiculous person to the general public. He certainly deserves better. Also his followers become laughing stock to everybody else.

It will not stand to pretend, that Ole Nydahl still is able to – and actually *does* lead the Diamondway organisation. He is simply cannot – he is very unable – so the leadership of the Diamondway organisation – mostly Germans - do things and decide much in his name and on his behalf. (While Ole Nydahl does not know, how his name is being misused, because of his handicap.) It seems this is why these people think, that he should not be perceived as suffering from dementia, because they might otherwise lose their power over the organisation. It seems unlikely that the leadership is in any doubt about Ole Nydahl's condition. Though of course, they might simply be in denial. It could be so – in theory. But the realistic bet is, that they know very well, that he is sick. Or they ought to know. So the truth is not welcome by his 'helpers'. Very bad or unwholesome thinking and lies is cultivated. In stead of putting Ole Nydahl in the centre of things and take care of his special needs. And leave the general leadership to Karmapa. Obviously, these people do not want that.

So, there is a scandal on top of the obvious tragedy. There is a complete lack of wisdom and an attack on the dignity of Ole Nydahl. He certainly deserves better.

According to a normally truthful source, it is Lama Ole Nydahl that want and insists to continue teaching. That may be so. But it does not help at all. Both he and those attending his teachings become fools in the eyes of the world. But of course, it does to some degree lift the responsibility of the Diamondway organisation, though only so far. They ought to do whatever they can to make him stop making a fool of himself in public.

The situation is similar to the catastrophic sinking of the great ship Titanic – in slow motion. One of Ole Nydahl's close students have said so. It is a question, how many will jump into the lifeboats, and how many will go down with the carrier.

Right now, it appears that the organisation will brake apart in the middle. Half the members will follow Karmapa Thaye Dorje. And the rest will perish with time on their own. It is very sad, even Ole Nydahl had many prejudices and limitations. He also had many qualities and has done many good works in his time. But now he is finished as a leader, a missionary and Dharmateacher.

Hopefully, consideration will prevail and he will be able to live the rest of his life in dignity with the proper care and peace around him.

(The information behind this last paragraph about Ole Nydahl and Alzheimer has been obtained by anonymous sources, that are all well known to me, Lama Tendar Olaf Hoeyer and I can vouch for the accuracy of the information, because it has been confirmed from other sources.)

## 2023

In 2023 and2024 there were little news about Lama Ole Nydahl. He does not lecture any more and only seldom appears in great assemblies of people as for instance during the seminar with Karmapa Thaye Dorje in August 2023 in the 'Europe centre' in Southern Germany. This of course indicate, that his organisation have recognised his disease, but they say nothing about it in public for whatever reason. What will happen to the Diamondway organisation in the future is not clear at all.

## 2025 - 2026

Now in August 2025, several Diamondway members in the Danish leadership of the national organisation has underlined, that the Diamondway organisation always has simply followed Lama Ole Nydahl's own wishes about what he ought to do in public. Or to phrase it differently, it is his own fault, if and when some people may regard him as a fool because of his handicap. His followers and students have not thought of themselves as the laughing stock of the world, because they felt a great blessing in his presence. They also have not been happy about this portrait of the sick Ole Nydahl in this paper, because it does not follow the official line of the Diamondway organisation. They cannot understand, that someone from the outside may experience the situation in this way, so unlike their own.

This may very well be. So an alternative explanation of the way the Diamondway organisation have handled this situation – that obviously is very difficult for them – is that they definitely have not tried to exploit Ole Nydahl for personal or institutional gain. They have acted as they did, in a sort of solidarity with him and so have simply followed his wishes without questioning. That this is the way in which you become the laughing stock of the world, have not appeared to them. So this story is maybe more that of a tragedy than about power struggles. Actually, I am not able to judge that from the informations available to me.

I earlier wrote that the Diamondway organisation had 'misused' Ole Nydahl and disregarded his dignity. Misuse, I now think, is too much of a strong word to use here about the leadership of the central Diamondway organisation, even it really looked like that back in 2022. If and when the secretaries of Lama Ole Nydahl is just doing, what he asks them to do. There are 5 of such secretaries, that in fact constitute the central or international leadership of the organisation. But they are disregarding his dignity, because he does not know, how his behaviour is being perceived by the general public. Someone ought to have told him so, and indeed, it seems that has happened during the last couple of years. Since the 5 secretaries represent Lama Ole Nydahl, they are the actual international leadership and therefore have a big problem. When Lama Ole Nydahl no longer is seen to

be responsible because of his sickness, all the 5 loose their position. This has not yet happened. When it happens, the Diamondway organisation will no longer have an international leadership. The actual leadership will then be transported to the national level of the various national boards of directors, that constitute the Diamondway organisation. It is actually quite strange, that it has not yet happened.

Some people have criticised me for writing about this issue, because I am not really involved in this organisation and have no interest in it. This is literally true, but I feel that I have to engage due to our common history. I am indeed connected to the people of the Diamondway organisation and their Lama Ole Nydahl, who is an old friend of mine. We used to work quite well together, though not always without problems. But we managed. That was back in 1977 to 1989. Ole Nydahl did not speak badly about the Muslims back then. But when I returned to Denmark in 1994, Ole Nydahl had become very outspoken about his dislike of Islam and consequently Muslims. I tried to limit his antagonism to only the Islamic terrorists, but he would not do that. Therefore our cooperation could not continue, but our common history is of course still there. As another Danish Karma Kagyu Lama, who follow the 17th Karmapa Thaye Dorje, I find it important to distance myself from such attitudes, that have become Lama Ole Nydahl's calling sign over the years.

To campaign against the Muslims in general in Europe is simply against the Mahayana principle of love and compassion. Only the most extreme Buddhist monks in Burma, Thailand and Sri Lanka will agree with Lama Ole Nydahl on this point. They are actually very few, but they are there. Also in Europe, those with such erroneous views are in fact few. Most of us do not dislike Muslims at all and have respect for the authentic religion of Islam as a humanistic endeavour in its core. It remains an important issue to stress these days. The problem of immigration is not about Islam at all. It is of a problem of social integration. Everybody, please understand that. The problem of integrating millions of strangers on the other hand, is very serious and have not always been handled well by our politicians. Also many of the strangers have enormous problems with integration. They do not feel welcome and may on top of that also not feel at home in the lands of their origin. So they suffer a double whammy. Their children on the other hand stand a much better chance of integrating very well with European culture and social norms.

I have been told, that Lama Ole Nydahl at a given time after various discussions with those near to him, did agree to follow the advice of his doctors about his appearance in public, what he can do and what he should not try to do, because of his disease. That is why we no longer see him trying to teach and so on. This is very good. People should be able to meet with him and receive his blessing. His brain may be boiling down, but there is nothing wrong with his mind.

In the month of May 2026, Ole Nydahl could no longer eat and drink anything because of his disease. He died shortly after on the 18th of May in his beloved Europa Centre in south Germany. He was 85 years of age. What will happen to his Diamondway organisation is still rather unclear.