

The Fourteen Root Downfalls

Below is an ethical analysis rather than a sectarian interpretation.

Root Downfall	Used to justify silence?	Ethical analysis regarding child abuse
1. Disrespecting the vajra master	Frequently	Respect does not require enabling abuse.
2. Transgressing Buddha's teachings	Sometimes	Protecting children aligns with non-harming.
3. Anger toward vajra siblings	Sometimes	Reporting need not arise from hatred.
4. Abandoning love	Rarely	Silence abandons vulnerable children.
5. Abandoning bodhicitta	Rarely	Compassion favors protection over reputation.
6. Denigrating Dharma	Often	Critiquing misconduct is not denigrating Dharma.
7. Revealing secrets	Frequently	Crimes are not tantric secrets.
8. Abusing one's body	No	Abuse violates bodily dignity.
9. Doubting purity	Sometimes	Ultimate truth does not erase ethics.
10. Befriending evil	Relevant	Protecting abusers enables harm.
11. Misunderstanding emptiness	Sometimes	Emptiness never excuses abuse.
12. Destroying faith	Frequently	Cover-ups often damage faith more.
13. Neglecting samaya	Broadly	Compassionate protection best reflects samaya.
14. Denigrating women	Indirectly	Sexual exploitation violates dignity.