

*Pfankuch, Daniel 10/31/09 C23

Interview by Detective Ross Diskin:

On 10/31/09 I interviewed Daniel Pfankuch. Daniel attended the Spiritual Warrior program in 2005. At that time Daniel had a wife and a six figure income. Daniel was in medical distress after the sweat lodge and was transported to the hospital. Daniel believes he had an out of body experience and did not fully return to his body. Daniel is now divorced and homeless.

I told Daniel I wanted to find out what happened at the 2005 sweat lodge. Daniel said the sweat lodge was not conducted in a "traditional Native American nature". Daniel said it went very long "almost 4 hours". Daniel stayed in the whole time but some of the others went out and came back in.

Daniel said it was difficult to explain but he feels like he left this world and went somewhere else. Daniel said he was later revived and "brought back here to this place." Daniel was then taken to the hospital where they did a lot of tests. Daniel said the hospital staff thought he was "on something" but he wasn't. Daniel said they rehydrated him through the night and he was released the next morning. He said they did extensive blood tests.

I asked Daniel what took place the entire week he was there. Daniel said they did different exercises and group medicating. They also had a vision quest. This was before the sweat lodge. This lasted "at least 24 hours". Daniel did not have food or water during this time.

Daniel first learned of James Ray from his wife who had heard something about him. Daniel then attended a free James Ray event in Boise. After that event, Daniel paid \$40,000.00 for him and his wife to attend James Ray's events for a year.

Daniel said he has been in saunas before but this was his first sweat lodge (2005).

I asked Daniel if anyone said anything to him to assure Daniel that they knew what they were doing concerning the sweat lodge. Daniel said they didn't say anything other than they had done previous sweat lodges. James Ray did not say how he was trained to do a sweat lodge.

I asked Daniel if he felt safe going into the sweat lodge. Daniel said he felt safe by "they" said there may be some discomfort and to work through that. Daniel said they didn't mention anything like "You could really die in here."

I asked Daniel if he remembered anything near the end of the sweat lodge. Daniel didn't remember anything because he had passed out and was hallucinating and dreaming. Daniel was actually hitting and kicking people.

I asked Daniel if he talked to James Ray after the incident. He said "very, very briefly." Daniel went to James' room and spoke to him for a few minutes. Daniel wasn't angry but he wanted an explanation as to what happened. James Ray did not offer an explanation and did not offer to help pay for medical bills.

Daniel said he has researched what a shaman's responsibility is in these kinds of situations. Daniel said a shaman is supposed to "retrieve every soul, and to be with every person that's within their care and I don't feel that was ever done."

Daniel said neither James Ray nor his staff went to the hospital to check on him. Other participants came to the hospital and then took Daniel back to the retreat after he was released.

I told Daniel I learned from other participants that he had an out of body experience and did not fully return to his body. I asked Daniel about this. Daniel said he still feels that way. I asked Daniel to explain that. He said he sometimes feels like he doesn't belong here. Daniel said it was hard to explain. Daniel said the place he went (during the out of body experience) was peaceful and wonderful and it was difficult to come back to this world where people are killing and hurting each other.

I asked Daniel if he had gone to any follow-up visits with his doctor. Daniel said he hadn't. I asked Daniel if he had any permanent damage caused by this event. He said he has no idea. I asked Daniel if he has done any research to see if hyperthermia could have been the cause of some of his symptoms. He said he hadn't. I asked Daniel what the hospital told him was wrong with him. Daniel said "heat stroke, and severe dehydration".

I asked Daniel if he would be willing to be a victim if we determined there may have been a criminal offense in 2005. Daniel said, "Yeah, I'd say there is a good possibility that I would, yes."

I told Daniel that other people around him at the time of the incident told me that James Ray's staff was reluctant to get him help. Daniel said people have told him that when he came out of the sweat lodge people were looking for James Ray but couldn't find him. Daniel said he learned that once James Ray was located he got into a heated debate with the owners of Angel Valley. Daniel said it was Amayra Hamilton that called 911 and not James Ray.

I asked Daniel if he knew of other participants of James Ray events that have been injured. Daniel said he didn't know of any, other than slight pain from hitting a board.

I talked to Daniel about the possibility he could have received permanent damage from the incident in 2005. Daniel had not been examined by his doctor for possible damage from the sweat lodge incident.

I told Daniel about concerns from his friends that he has never been the same since the incident in 2005. I expressed concern that there may be some type of minor brain

damage that could have occurred. Daniel explained that he went from a six figure income to being unemployed, unmarried, and homeless. Daniel thinks there was brain damage but maybe some "subconscious or unconscious thing that I can't explain or I can't get a grasp on." Daniel said he believes he should have gotten help from the facilitator (James Ray) to help him understand what happened.

I asked Daniel if he has filed a lawsuit against James Ray International. He said no. I asked him if this is something he thought about. He said, "Not really, until recently I guess." He said this has popped into his head from time to time. Daniel believes James Ray should have at least paid for his medical expenses. James Ray has never offered to do this.

I told Daniel that we needed to determine if James Ray knew, or should have known, that the sweat lodge could have caused serious injury. Daniel said, "He certainly knew afterwards, he told me that his ego got in the way and he needed to sit down and learn from this." Daniel continued, "After hearing the recent reports, I guess he didn't learn maybe what he needed to learn."

I asked Daniel what James Ray meant by "his ego got in the way." Daniel answered, "That he pushed people for his own gain, pushed people past what, 'cause he thought he could do it, handle it."

I told Daniel that I recommend he talks to his doctor and explain what he went through in 2005 to determine if this incident could have caused any type of permanent damage to anything. Daniel said, "At this point I don't have any insurance, I don't have any doctor, and I don't have the means to really do that."

Refer to audio recording for further.

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