

*I/V Souter, Laura (transcription) Anne Gordon C913:

See Sup 31 for initial report/C16

On 10/27/09 Laura Souter was interviewed by VIP Anne Gordon-Lorentzen. The following is a transcript of that interview:

Interviewer: Hello.

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: Yes, Laura.

Respondent: Yes ma'am.

Interviewer: Yeah, this is Anne calling you from the Yavapai County Sheriff's Office.

Respondent: Yes ma'am.

Interviewer: All right do you have a few minutes?

Respondent: Yes, I do.

Interviewer: I have a question. We are trying to re-contact after the initial interviews, do follow-up interviews with all those who participated in the Spiritual Warrior event and that's why it's taken us a while, we are trying as you can imagine we have done a number of people's interview and to reach out to. And what I would like to do is ask you these questions and then perhaps once I have everything written down, or written up tomorrow, get back to you and make sure I have interpreted everything you said correctly if I have any follow-up phone calls. The first question I have is how did you learn about James Ray?

Respondent: I went to an event in New Orleans a couple of years ago that was a business event for the salon industry and he was one of the speakers at this particular event.

Interviewer: So do you remember his particular segment what it was called?

Respondent: What now?

Interviewer: Do you remember what his seminar topic was?

Respondent: I think that it centered around the book that had come out The Secret.

Interviewer: Okay. His book you mean?

Respondent: Now it wasn't his book but he was quoted in it.

Interviewer: Oh I see. I have heard about The Secret but I am not clear on what it is, I have to educate myself on that. Do you remember what year approximately this would have been that you went to this seminar?

Respondent: Let's see this is 2009; it was 2007 it was in the summer.

Interviewer: Okay. Was it part of your own background and your business the reason you went or was there another reason?

Respondent: Well I went to that event because it was a business event for salon owners.

Interviewer: I see and I presume that's what you are, is a salon owner.

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: Since that 2007 event how many other events or seminars have you gone to?

Respondent: With James Ray or?

Interviewer: Oh I am sorry, with James Ray.

Respondent: I went to Harmonic Wealth which is a two day in Atlanta and then Spiritual Warrior and that's it.

Interviewer: Okay. Do you remember when you went to the Harmonic Wealth one?

Respondent: Yes, it was in October of 2007.

Interviewer: Okay. And then Spiritual Warrior and that was it?

Respondent: Precisely.

Interviewer: Have you ever been in a sauna or a sweat lodge?

Respondent: Yeah I have been in saunas on a couple of different occasions over the years never a sweat lodge before.

Interviewer: Never a sweat lodge okay. Did you hear anyone talk about or make any assurances concerning the Spiritual Warrior personnel who were conducting or building the sweat lodge that they were trained or they were experts?

Respondent: I do not. All I know about the people that built the sweat lodge that they were hired by James Ray International by that group. They were hired to build that lodge that's what I remember being told okay and that they had hired the same people to do this subsequently many times, several times when they had done this, it's the same people. That was my understanding.

Interviewer: So they used the same contractors previously?

Respondent: That's my understanding.

Interviewer: Did you ever meet or talk to any of those contractors, were they onsite or do you know who they were?

Respondent: They were that day and we were introduced like the group was introduced, they were introduced to the group before the sweat; I didn't have particular like personal conversation.

Interviewer: Do you remember what they may have said? Did they describe what they had built?

Respondent: No. I think that James described how it was put together before had gone that they took these saplings or branches you know small branches and stripped them and then used them to create the foundation which we could also see during the week they were building it. My cabin was close to that area so I saw the progression of it. And they told us that it was best, that it was built from branches or saplings and then blankets and tarps draped over that, that it was going to be extremely hot inside and that it was going to be very dark when the door was shut.

Interviewer: Did they give you any temperature of how hot?

Respondent: No, nobody said anything. I do not remember them saying anything about like how hot.

Interviewer: They just emphasized it was going to be hot?

Respondent: Yeah that it was going to be very hot, very hot.

Interviewer: Do you remember then, I think I may have asked you this but do you remember the name of the contractors when they were introduced?

Respondent: I don't. I know it was a man and I think his wife and then a couple of other people but I don't remember their names.

Interviewer: How did you feel prior to going into the sweat lodge? Did you feel it was safe or did you not feel it was safe?

Respondent: Well I was a little nervous but I wasn't afraid. I felt like they seemed very confident so I was confident even though I had a little bit of nerves but then that's the stuff you have never done before. So going into it my attitude was I am scared but I am going to do it.

Interviewer: Okay. I am jotting things down as you speak that's why I am, I just want to make sure I get this like a case of nerves because you had never done it before but you were confident and you wanted to do it.

Respondent: Yes, I was confident and I wanted to do it.

Interviewer: Do you recall where you were situated in the sweat lodge?

Respondent: Yes. I was just short of the west coast. Okay it's a perfect circle and you have north, south, east and west marked on the circle, and the doorway was in the south and I was a few people before the west coast, closer to the door. Does that make sense?

Interviewer: Yes, it does. I am drawing a little figure as you are describing it so I have it fairly accurate in my own mind when I write this up. So you were just short of the west side closer to the door?

Respondent: Right.

Interviewer: Do you recall who may have been around you?

Respondent: Yes, the person on one side of me was Kristine Mattson.

Interviewer: Kristine Mattson, okay. And do you recall which side she was on to you?

Respondent: She was on the side of me that was even closer to the door.

Interviewer: So she would have been south of you then?

Respondent: Right, and then the young lady on the other side of me.

Interviewer: Which would have been closer to the flap, another flap at the side or closer to the inside of the circle?

Respondent: No, I mean because we were bunched up against the back wall.

Interviewer: So were you on the inner circle or the outer circle?

Respondent: There was only one layer of it where I was. I would say there was only one circle where I was.

Interviewer: So Kristine was closer to the door and you were lying down correct or were you sitting?

Respondent: We were sitting to begin with but by the end of the first round James had told us that if you felt lightheaded, to get your head down as close to the ground or on the ground as you could because it's going to be cooler. So after the first round I just lay down on my back with my knees pulled up. And then the people that were immediately around me that I could see, when the door was opened, were also lying down most of the time.

Interviewer: So Kristine's in front of you which would be further closer to the door and then do you remember who was behind you?

Respondent: Like they were on each side of me. Like if you are sitting in a circle, we were facing into the middle of the tent where the pit was. And so Kristine was on one, she was on my right side which was closer to the door then the young lady that was on the other side I can't remember her name all of a sudden; I can't remember her name I think it started with an "L".

Interviewer: Okay. I am just glancing up the list here. Louise?

Respondent: No.

Interviewer: Lynette?

Respondent: Lynette?

Interviewer: There is two Lynette actually, there is Ly and Li.

Respondent: Okay. I think Lynette, she was very young she was young like I would say in her 20s.

Interviewer: Was she Hispanic?

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay. (Inaudible 00:12:23) is the name that I have got; the other one that has a very German name.

Respondent: Right, she was Hispanic.

Interviewer: I am looking. I am just taking a quick look at the ladies with L for names and that's about the only L that has a Hispanic sounding last name so. Could have been Lynda?

Respondent: No.

Interviewer: No, wasn't Lynda.

Respondent: That was longer than that so.

Interviewer: Lynette; the other lady is German and she is older. The other ladies have very short L names. Okay. So can I presume that it was Lynette?

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: So I am going to put "Ly" all right so that's another person on your other side.

Respondent: Right, she was on my left side.

Interviewer: Okay and I am drawing her in there. So we have got Kristine on one side of you and Lynette on the other. Can you remember any of the other person's names?

Respondent: I am not sure. There was a man on the other side of Kristine I think his name is Mike. And then in the other direction, Laura I believe her name was also Laura L-A-U-R-A just like mine.

Interviewer: And where would she be then?

Respondent: Closer to the west in the west side, close to that western side and then Liz who was the dream team person.

Interviewer: Okay she was--?

Respondent: Sitting in the western spot.

Interviewer: Was she the nurse?

Respondent: I am not sure.

Interviewer: Okay I will look it up. There is a lady that evidently came forward as part of the dream team and self identified as a nurse but I will check her name with my other records. Do you recall how long you stayed inside?

Respondent: I know we did 8 rounds and it's hard to tell time but let me just say this okay, because I work with a clock in my head all day long because I do hair all day and I do hair color and so I can tell like I don't know why but innately a 30 minute time span I can guesstimate that. Do you understand what I am saying?

Interviewer: I do exactly yes.

Respondent: So knowing that about myself it seemed to me that the rounds lasted between 10 and 15 minutes each, some faster than others. Like at the very beginning it seemed like it took a little bit longer for us to go around and do what we had to do and then as we progressed through the 8 rounds, they got to be shorter. So my estimate is somewhere around very close to two hours like an hour and 45 minutes to maybe two hours.

Interviewer: Alright so I will put that down. I am trying to capture as much as you are telling me to make it very clear about how you are breaking it down. I realize that you folks went on a Vision Quest into the desert in the days prior to the sweat lodge, correct?

Respondent: Yes ma'am.

Interviewer: And do you remember what you ate prior to going into the sweat lodge in that Tuesday to Thursday window?

Respondent: I ate dinner Tuesday night. Before we went out on our Vision Quest, I ate dinner and everything was pretty vegetarian, we did have eggs and cheese with every meal. They had hard boiled eggs that you could eat there with lots of different cooked vegetables as well as salads and fruits for every meal. So I don't remember exactly what it was Tuesday night but I did eat dinner and then I didn't eat again until Thursday morning when we came back, we had breakfast and it was scrambled eggs and oatmeal and some fruits. So that's what I ate that morning and then the sweat was that afternoon.

Interviewer: And breakfast was about what time?

Respondent: Between 8 and 9.

Interviewer: 8 and 9 a.m. okay. Now you were you drinking throughout this whole event or can you break down when you were drinking water or anything else?

Respondent: I was drinking water. I drank pretty much water with the exception of maybe ice-tea at dinner but I drank a lot of water the whole time because they kept stressing to us drink water, drink water, drink water. And then of course when we were on a Vision Quest I didn't drink anything but as soon as I got back I filled up my jug and immediately started drinking water again even before I knew about the sweat.

Interviewer: Were you drinking or did you fast from water and food at the Vision Quest?

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay no water or food during the Vision Quest.

Respondent: No water or food, right. That was like midnight, I think just the moon was like straight up in the sky so it was roughly midnight when we went out.

Interviewer: Midnight Tuesday night?

Respondent: Right.

Interviewer: Tuesday morning?

Respondent: Tuesday night Wednesday morning and then somebody came to get me, the sun wasn't even up above the mountains so it was still real dawn. You know what I am saying? I don't know it was probably about 6:30ish maybe when somebody came to get me on Thursday morning.

Interviewer: Okay. So it was Thursday not Wednesday morning because you were out there all Wednesday, correct?

Respondent: That's right. We went out there all day Wednesday and all night Wednesday night.

Interviewer: Did you know what to expect from the Vision Quest?

Respondent: Well I mean I read the papers that they sent, you know we got this whole booklet and I read through that a couple of times and it did say on that that there was an expectation that you would be by yourself and that also you might be without food for a period of time. I knew that I was going to be alone. I think it was explained, there it was explained very clearly this is what's going to happen, I knew that I was going to be dropped off and then I would be by myself but I also was aware that we weren't very far away.

Interviewer: Okay alright. So you read a booklet a couple of times and you knew you were going to be by yourself and fasting and that was also explained at the event?

Respondent: Yes, it was.

Interviewer: Do you know who explained it?

Respondent: James. I mean I took very clear notes too as to this is what we have to do because there were tasks that we had to perform while we were out there.

Interviewer: Do you remember what tasks you had to do?

Respondent: Well we were supposed to continue writing in our journals, we had a list of questions that we were supposed to use as a guideline to expand, memories of situations that were emotional or had negative energy involved, fear that kind of thing and we were supposed to be writing about those things and getting all of that out of ourselves and on paper. So that was one of the tasks. And then we were supposed to set new intentions for ourselves moving out like in a true Vision Quest in the Native American culture you are out there to shed an old life and create a new life in your mind.

Interviewer: Now how do you know about that, from your reading or from what James Ray said or?

Respondent: No, from my personal readings, my personal readings. My family is Cherokee my father's family so it's something that I have been drawn to study.

Interviewer: So your father is Cherokee, okay.

Respondent: Right.

Interviewer: Did you know what to expect in the sweat lodge?

Respondent: No. I mean truthfully all I knew was that it was going to be really hot. Like I said I have been in saunas before, I have done the steam rooms so I knew that they were going to bring these stones in and they were going to be pouring water on them and

that it was going to steam up the inside of the tent and that it was going to be really hot. That's prior to the whole thing and then during the explanation beforehand I expected that it was going to be really hot and that I was going to be very close to all of these people that we were going to be very close to each other and that it was going to be very low and that it was going to be really dark. Other than that I didn't know what to expect in the way of how things were going to happen from there.

Interviewer: Okay. Let me go back to the previous question. I think I have got the answer but, did you stay into the entire 8 rounds?

Respondent: I did.

Interviewer: So you stayed in for the whole time?

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: Safety procedures, were there any discussions prior to going in for safety procedures if anything or a problem should develop in the sweat lodge was that discussed by James Ray or any of his staff members?

Respondent: Well the only thing that I can really specifically remember is that him really harping on the fact that the pit that we needed to stay away from the pit, stay as far away from the pit as possible and that if you were going to leave, if you had to get out and you were going to leave, you had to go in a clockwise manner and to be careful and orderly so that somebody wouldn't end up in the pit.

Interviewer: So it was a true pit, it wasn't just a pile of heated rocks like a fire?

Respondent: No, the rocks, I couldn't even see the rocks. They were deep, the hole was deep enough that if I was standing there it would probably come up to my chest.

Interviewer: Oh alright so it was quite deep then.

Respondent: Right. Well I am not very tall but I mean it was deep enough. Like I said they had 12, if you take 12 stones the first time and then maybe another 12 stones the second time and then after that probably 8 stones for another 6 rounds, those stones were the size of a nice fat loaf of Italian bread or something. That's how many stones were in there and I could not see them over the edge. You see what I am saying like they weren't sticking up.

Interviewer: Okay, that gives me a lot more clarity so stones not sticking up, okay. It was very deep, the stones were size of a fat loaf of Italian bread and stones did not stick up.

Respondent: No, they did not stick up above the edge of the pit.

Interviewer: Did anyone tell you what to expect inside the sweat lodge and how to respond to any reactions you might have?

Respondent: Other than somebody saying if you feel like you are going to be sick, let yourself be sick because it's better for it to come out than to stay in and lie down if you feel like you are going to faint, get down on the ground, that's it.

Interviewer: And how did you feel? I mean you stayed in there a long time; how did you feel during your period there?

Respondent: Like I have never been so, I felt pushed to the absolute limit that my body could probably take. But for me and I know I am always speaking for me okay, it was a good thing. I felt totally drained of everything that I was trying to get rid of okay. When I came out, when I got out and I was able to get on my knees and crawl out and go clockwise around and then when I got out, they were hosing everyone down with water immediately and then we were all just lying down in the gravel just lying down covered with water. It didn't take me very long before I was able to get up and I started realizing that there were people around me that were not in very good shape but I was able to get up and walk around. So I started to go get blankets and towels and Kristine who was next to me she was trying to help somebody else who wasn't doing very well and so I was bringing them electrolyte water. So it was really, really, really intense, I don't know how else to say that.

Interviewer: You are making yourself very clear. I just want this one statement you made, you felt totally drained of everything that you had been holding on to.

Respondent: Yeah it's everything that I went there to get rid of. Like emotionally, like the physicalness of the experience took all the emotion out of me.

Interviewer: So the physical experience drained you emotionally?

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: When the people came out that you saw were they in distress or any of them in distress other than the people you--?

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: How were they manifesting around?

Respondent: Well the only people that I saw immediately were one of the girls that was saying in my cabin with Kristine and me, her name was Tess. And her eyes were rolled back in the head a little bit, not all the way, I could still see her pupils but her eyes were rolled back in her head and she had like foam like light foam coming out of her mouth and she had mucus coming out from her nose and there were a couple of people including Kristine, as soon as we got out, there were a couple people who were helping Tess and massaging her and making sure that she was breathing and that kind of thing. I have no medical training whatsoever myself so for me to know anything about what was happening from that perspective like what was really going on, I had no clue I just could tell that there were some people who were not okay.

Interviewer: Were they outside or inside?

Respondent: Outside. I was just going to say I don't recall anybody, you know once again I was lying flat on my back and it was loud in there, we were all talking, we were repeating things that James told us to say just you know chant different things, prayers, a couple of them were actually from the book of proverbs and then I was talking to myself out loud in between that. So I was very aware of Lynette on one side of me and what she was saying to herself and Kristine and what Kristine was saying. I was not aware other than hearing James's voice projecting over, I was not really aware of what anything else going on until it was over with. When we were coming out and some people were coming out and some people were moving and then there were some people who weren't and so other people were coming in and moving them out. So I myself personally was not aware while we were in the lodge of anybody being in any kind of serious distress until we got outside. I think that somebody said something about Liz who was the staff person, the dream team person that was in the west, I think that she fainted and that was inside right towards the end.

Interviewer: Towards the end of this ceremony?

Respondent: Right, of the sweat, before we got out.

Interviewer: Do you know what happened to her, did they have to carry her out or help her out?

Respondent: Yes, they did, they had to carry her out.

Interviewer: Do you know if anyone left the lodge other than through the door?

Respondent: Well from my own knowledge, no, but somebody told me that a guy I don't know, who I can't remember his name, went out the tent under the edge of the tent like he pulled up the side of the tent and just went out where he was. And what we thought when we were inside because all of a sudden there was light everywhere, it was like light and it seemed like there was a flashlight like somebody had a flashlight in there.

Interviewer: Did Ray say anything about that, James Ray say anything about that?

Respondent: Well I am thinking he said something about whoever's got the flashlight, turn that off. And then I think after that somebody told me afterwards after the whole thing was over with, somebody told me that there was this guy who was disoriented and that he crawled out under the bottom of the tent on that side of the tent which was on the northeast.

Interviewer: Northeast okay. Was there anyone else that left that you know about that didn't go out through the door during the breaks?

Respondent: Not that I know of.

Interviewer: Did you hear anyone say while in the sweat lodge they were having problems?

Respondent: I know that there were several people who went out at different point, some of them went out and then when they would go out the people at the door would say their names kind of like acknowledge them and then some of them came back in, some of the same people that went out came back in. The only person that I heard saying she couldn't deal with it or whatever was Lynette the girl that was on my left and she left, she went out towards the end like she stayed almost maybe even through the 6th round I suppose and then she said I can't do this anymore, what she said was I can't do this anymore I don't want to die but she did crawl out on her hands and knees, she did not have to be helped out.

Interviewer: So she crawled out on her own power?

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: Did you fill out any medical forms or do you recall filling out any medical forms or were you asked about any health issues?

Respondent: Well I think the wavier, nothing specific.

Interviewer: Okay. That's fine I am not trying to put words in your mouth. Okay so nothing specific about that. Can you tell me what specific symptoms you had when you were in the sweat lodge and if any of those symptoms have continued?

Respondent: Okay. In the sweat lodge I felt nauseous, I felt very, very, very lightheaded. I have never sweated so much in my entire life you know I felt like my body like all of my fluids were just pouring out of my body. And I continued to feel a little nauseous for I don't know about another six hours or so afterwards after it was over but I also hadn't really eaten a whole lot and I got a headache, I am not sure whether it had anything to do with the sweat or it was because I hadn't really eaten very much. And that was it, I feel very, lucky.

Interviewer: Well I would imagine you do. And we have already covered the question about the flashlight that in the above answer you mentioned that James Ray yelled out whoever has the flashlight shut it off and in retrospect it may have been that gentleman going out through the side.

Respondent: Right.

Interviewer: When you left was there anyone left inside?

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: Do you know who it might have been or what their condition was?

Respondent: No. We were supposed to be moving in a clockwise fashion on our hands and knees which was really hard on your knees in the gravel; my knees are still skinned up. But I have got to that area in the northeast of the tent, when I got to that area Kristine was behind me, there was someone else in front of me and then there was somebody that was lying down and then another person that was talking to them, and I went around them. I don't know who it was I was focused on getting out. Now at that point it was truly just self preservation I have to get out.

Interviewer: Okay, self preservation, have to get out.

Respondent: At that point I felt like it's over, we are done, we are supposed to be out and I did hear some people from the dream team and James saying come on guys, you all have to come out, come out it's time to come out.

Interviewer: Okay, let me jot that down. Did you hear anyone saying they were having a heart attack?

Respondent: No.

Interviewer: Or anyone say they thought they were going to die?

Respondent: I did not hear anybody say anything like that except for Lynette saying she did not want to die.

Interviewer: Okay let me jot that down. And Lynette is the young woman, correct, the young Hispanic woman?

Respondent: Right.

Interviewer: Did you hear anyone say something like it's a good day to die?

Respondent: No.

Interviewer: You have to realize that with all these people that were milling around and some not being well and others being well and others being very, very tired and dehydrated, they may have thought they heard something and we just have to ask you these questions as foolish as they may sound, okay.

Respondent: Right, I understand.

Interviewer: How did James Ray respond to the people who were in distress if you witnessed any of that?

Respondent: Immediately he, like I only saw him when I first got out and then I was helping people and getting blankets and that kind of thing and also by this time after a few minutes I started to get cold, they still had the fire burning outside and it was really low and so I was getting blankets and towels and bringing them to people and then going and standing by the fire to warm up again and then I would go get drink whatever. So I

saw James with people doing CPR. Like I didn't see him doing CPR but I saw him with whoever it was, I don't know who it was and I don't know who they were doing it on and that was on the side of the tent almost kind of behind from where we were so it would have been once again in that northeast corner but it was outside of the tent.

Interviewer: Okay, let me just jot all this down. Do you think he should have responded any differently than what he was doing other than what little you saw of him?

Respondent: Well you know hindsight, from my perspective, I think that they probably should have had like an EMS unit that was going to just be there waiting. Like I said, I had never done this before, I did not know really truly what to expect, I certainly didn't expect what happened.

Interviewer: Yes. Well unfortunately I think those poor folks didn't either so it's a terrible thing and a terrible time for everyone particularly the surviving families who have had to bury their beloved. How did you feel about leaving the sweat lodge during the ceremony? Were you pushing yourself to stay in or what kind of feelings did you have for yourself?

Respondent: Well just for myself, at first like in the very first couple of rounds I was like okay the next time the door opens I am leaving you know I am just going to leave. And then I just talked to myself and said you are going to do this, you are not your body, you are not your body, I just repeated over and over again I am not my body, I am not my body, I can withstand, I am going to do it, I am going to do it, and I stayed in. I don't feel like anybody pressured me into that.

Interviewer: Okay. I am glad you are making that clear.

Respondent: I mean I just did that for myself.

Interviewer: I am just kind of recapping this because I want to get it all down, first couple of rounds you thought you would leave right?

Respondent: Right. I felt like oh my god I can't do this, I am going to get out, as soon as the door opens, I am going to get out and then I made it through that round and then the next round I was like oh my god I am going to get out, I am going to get out. And then I got to the 3rd round and I had settled into, I guess I had gone into a place mentally and I had figured out that if I stayed on the ground and I kept breathing to the side, like I was lying flat on my back and I would turn my head and breathe to the side like over my shoulder because the air was cooler, the air was cooler. I could actually feel cool air coming under the tent in the area that I was in, not much, but I could feel it.

Interviewer: Right, and it was getting later in the evening and the cold air settles in that area.

Respondent: Right.

Interviewer: Is there any reason, I realize it's not going to sound redundant but I need to ask them to make sure I cover everything in case something triggers another comment from you. Is there any reason you didn't leave sooner other than your own wish to get through this?

Respondent: No. I stayed because I wanted to.

Interviewer: Was anyone discouraged, that you witnessed, anyone discouraged from helping anyone in distress and if so how?

Respondent: No, I did not personally see nor was I told to not help. I will say that it seemed very chaotic and I feel like they did not expect this to happen either and they were not prepared.

Interviewer: Do you remember when you first realized that something was wrong and that there was a widespread problem?

Respondent: When I saw them doing CPR on somebody, it was a man then I realized oh my God that doesn't look good. And then EMS was there very quickly. I mean at least from my awareness it didn't seem like it took them very long to get there but a minute is a lot of time when somebody is in distress. I didn't realize how widespread it was or how many people were sick until much later. You know when I first came out and initially when I was up and walking around, I only saw maybe I don't know four or five people I think that seemed to be unconscious or were in some way not fully aware of their surroundings. There were people who were conscious that were saying that they felt bad and they didn't get up or they were nauseous that kind of thing but not unconscious, there were only about four or five people that I could see that were unconscious.

Interviewer: When you came out were you vomiting at all or were you just very dehydrated?

Respondent: I was not vomiting. I mean I felt nauseated but I did not vomit. I didn't vomit until I got back in the room as a matter of fact but that was purely emotional.

Interviewer: Oh I am sure, yeah. So did you know what was happening though? I mean did you have any, I realize you said you weren't medically trained but did you have any idea what you thought may have been happening?

Respondent: Well I mean once I saw the CPR going on I knew that something had gone wrong. So I knew that something was wrong. Now obviously there were people who had been severely affected; one of them was one of the roommates that I had her name was Tess, I think her real name was Teresa. I mean she was in obvious distress but like I said I did not know what that meant because I am not trained and so for me it didn't make any sense I just knew that she was not okay.

Interviewer: Is she Chinese?

Respondent: Yes or something Asian.

Interviewer: Okay because I have a Tess Wong on the list.

Respondent: Right.

Interviewer: How was she manifesting her distress? I mean what did she look like?

Respondent: She was the one that her eyes were kind of rolled back into her head and she had like white froth coming out of her mouth and she had mucus coming out of her nose. I know that she was not, I mean her eyes were open you could still see her pupils but I know that she was not conscious. And we were rubbing her feet, Kristine was rubbing her legs and somebody else had her hands and then we rolled her on her side at one point, wiped her face and cleaned her face off and then I went and got the electrolyte water and brought it back and was giving you know like just trying to get something in her mouth and holding her up.

Interviewer: And you detailed that above in a previous question; can you tell me has anyone talked to you or tried to interview you or tried to tell you what to say if someone like myself from law enforcement called?

Respondent: No, I have not spoken to anyone except Kristine she is the only person that I have stayed in touch with at this point.

Interviewer: Okay, with one of your fellow participants, correct?

Respondent: Right.

Interviewer: Okay. Did James Ray ever say or tell you or anyone in the group what his qualifications were for running a sweat lodge?

Respondent: No, technically no, but what was said was that they had done this same exact event seven times previously and that he introduced on the first day, he introduced all of his team members. He said what events each one of them had participated in and every one of them had gone through this event and one of them which was Liz the woman who was in the west, she had done it 3 times previously. So yeah just the fact that they had done it that many times and that these people were there and had participated in it themselves.

Interviewer: But did he go into where he had studied or that he was certified or recognized by any--?

Respondent: He talked about, I mean he has, and many times, while I say many times but I mean just in talking listening to him discuss where he had studied like at the Harmonic Wealth weekend the thing (Inaudible 00:56:17) corporation that had gone first and then at the beginning of this event that he had spent a couple of years studying with a shaman and the Indians. Like at the Harmonic Wealth event he had photographs of his time that he spent there that he lived with these Indians and the mountains and so he showed

photographs of that. And another Shaman culture that he studied with in Hawaii, at the time, he just seemed to be very knowledgeable about the rituals and the way that they are done and what the meaning is. I also will say that I myself studied religion at LSU when I was in college, I took a number of semesters of religious studies classes so this is something that has always been of interest for me something I have always been seeking I suppose and a lot of the things that he said lined up with stuff that I had learned in school so it made sense to me. But to be specific about running a sweat lodge, no there wasn't anything. I didn't realize that that was the requirement or something that you could do, get certified to run a sweat lodge, I don't know you know.

Interviewer: Right okay.

Respondent: I assumed I guess because they had done this event and they had done it at the same place that they knew what was happening, they knew what they were doing that was my assumption.

Interviewer: Well I know you have a daughter at a dance class and I know I have kept you a long time, thank you so much for your time. Do I have your permission to call you back if I need to clarify any of these answers once I get this pulled together and typed up?

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: Is there any better time Laura to call you?

Respondent: Well what I will say is tomorrow I am going to be back at work, it's hard to get me during the day and if you leave me a message, this is my cell phone, this is my main telephone except for my work phone and so if you leave me a message on my cell, I can call you back.

Interviewer: Okay right. And we are two hours different right now.

Respondent: Right.

Interviewer: So alright that's fine, I appreciate. If in the event that I need to clarify, but you were very clear and I had plenty of time to jot down what I need to pull together and to put this together for the case detective. Again would you like me to give you my name and badge number or do you need any other identifiers from me?

Respondent: No, I am fine.

Interviewer: Okay. Well I wish you the best and I am sorry you had to go through this to the degree that you had to witness some people who passed.

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: And I wish you the best of luck, and if I do have any questions I will get back to you no later than the end of the week.

Respondent: Alright, well thank you. And your name is Anne right?

Interviewer: My name is Anne and I am the only Ann who works right now in the Criminal Investigation Section of the Yavapai County Sheriff's office and we are in Prescott which is about 75 miles from where you are, we are on the other side of the mountains towards California. But Sedona is incorporated into our county.

Respondent: Okay, well thank you Ann.

Interviewer: Well thank you and I wish you the best of luck after your experience.

Respondent: Thank you very much.

Interviewer: Alright good night.

Respondent: Good night.

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