

\*I/V Grimes, Ami Transcript C36

On 10/28/09, at approximately 1330 hours, I spoke with Ami Grimes by telephone. I recorded the conversation with my digital recorder and the following is a transcript of that recording.

A CD of the recording will be placed into evidence.

Interviewer: This is Detective Willingham.

Respondent: Hi my name is Ami Grimes.

Interviewer: Hi Ami.

Respondent: I know you have been trying to get a hold of me.

Interviewer: Yes I have, is now a good time to finally talk to you?

Respondent: It is, I have just been avoiding all my phone calls.

Interviewer: I can't blame you.

Respondent: So I thought like in my head I was like I have already given them the statement and I just don't want to talk about it anymore but I just I returned the call to the investigators on the other side today. So I thought I have got to call you guys back as well.

Interviewer: Okay, so you talked to James Ray's investigators today also?

Respondent: Right I did.

Interviewer: Okay. And I know you did go to the hospital, is that correct?

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay, and you gave a brief statement I saw to one of the uniformed officers?

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay. Well, I know and I am hoping that your memory is pretty good, some people have not had such great memories but --

Respondent: And I will be real honest and I told them the same thing that is one of the issues that I have been having, that I am having right, there is a lot of blank spots but I am remembering things and I am doing my best to remember. And then I haven't seen any

report, I haven't watched a single like news clip or read a single article or anything like that. So to the best of my knowledge everything that I remember is actually what I remember.

Interviewer: And not going to be blogs from the internet or --

Respondent: Yeah I haven't read or looked or I haven't looked at a single thing.

Interviewer: Okay. Well, I am going to just ask you to then because I know I have read the other interview and it was pretty short, so I going to ask you to start from the beginning and just walk me through your arrival at Angel Valley and then I will have some specific questions that I may need to follow up with, okay?

Respondent: Okay.

Interviewer: All right, so go ahead.

Respondent: Well, see I flew in on Saturday 3rd and checked in to the ranch and then there was like a welcome dinner that night. I don't remember the specifics of the dinner but I remember that that was on schedule. And then we started, ranch gave everybody their room (Inaudible 2:51) and we just kind of all I guess unpacked and did whatever and then we all went to dinner. And then we started with the conference the next day.

Interviewer: And that was Sunday?

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: And that day was surely just in the conference area.

Interviewer: Classroom type stuff?

Respondent: Yeah, with our breaks and then back to the room, pretty much just like I said classroom type stuff just like a seminar.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: And then well I forgot something that whenever we checked in everybody got a backpack. There was a backpack in each room and it had a like a Spiritual Warrior water jug in it and a packet of salt and then an instruction like a little letter that said you know welcome to Spiritual Warrior instructing everybody to take a teaspoon a salt once a day.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: So anyway so on Sunday night, I think we just probably went to bed after this conference. And then Monday, we started with just, kind of our assignment for the whole thing was to just write and just write, write and write and to pay close attention to like where our thoughts, you have these free thoughts like a thought to just kind of intrude on the thought you are having and to write on that until you get to the end of that thought, and if something else popped in, just to write. And we wrote, wrote, and wrote and that's pretty much what we did. We did some like group meditations and then we just wrote and then we had like a question-and-answer session throughout probably the next two or three days. That lasted I don't know probably like an hour or so I would say, the question-and-answer session with. I am trying to remember, I am trying to like place the days. I am sorry I am just looking at my calendar here trying to remember what day, it must have been Tuesday night that we all went and were told to bring our backpacks and all of the surprises that we were going to need because we are going, after dinner that night we would be taken and dropped into place somewhere in the desert or in the woods back there kind of a ranch, and that we would be there for that night, the next day and the next night and then we would be picked up in the morning. We weren't to bring like a phone or any food or drink, no. We were to just bring our tablets and our pens because like I said we have been writing and writing and writing and then your sleeping back and whatever you are going to need because it was going to be cold. And so I don't recall at what time of night, that was probably like 8 or 9 I don't know it's dark. So we stayed there that night, we stayed there the next day and that next night and then I am sure that different individuals came to different groups of people to get them early the next morning. And then whenever we'd walk back and we at this point in time were not, we were in silence like just to not talk about the experience yet. So they gave us a piece of paper that said you know go back to your room, breakfast is from 8:15 to 9 I think or 7 to 8:15, I don't completely recall. And then meet in the Crystal Hall which was the place where we were having our seminar at 9 o'clock if I remember correctly. And so I walked back to my room and I myself didn't go to breakfast but I had a big fruit basket in my room and I don't know if everybody had a fruit basket but I am part of The World Wealth Society and I don't know if everybody had a fruit basket, but anyway there was a fruit basket so I just ate the whole fruit basket for the breakfast and then went to the seminar and we were there until we went into the sweat lodge.

Interviewer: And that seminar lasted until you got the instructions to go for the sweat lodge?

Respondent: Yeah.

Interviewer: For the Vision Quest which was to be out in the desert, did you know what to expect?

Respondent: I knew, well prior to getting there, I didn't know. I knew that there was going to be a sweat lodge in general terms and just because of the forms or whatever that I knew that we would be out like in the elements by ourselves.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: So I didn't know any details or anything like that, no.

Interviewer: Okay, all right, so what happened next?

Respondent: Well they told us all about the sweat lodge and then --

Interviewer: What were you told and who was they, who told you all about it?

Respondent: Well before, basically that morning we all came in and we met and then we pretty much, if I remember correctly, spent the whole time just kind of talking about the night before and the day before and we were having a whole question-and-answer session. And then we were told that we weren't done yet, we had the rest of the day, what we would be doing is participating in the sweat lodge and that we did know that it was going to be intense, that it was going to be hot.

Interviewer: How did you know that?

Respondent: Well because he said it's going to be very, very hot and you will probably feel like you want to peel your skin off.

Interviewer: Who said that?

Respondent: James.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: And that it would be like he told us basically just what to expect when we got in there. And what I mean by that is that right now there was somebody building the lodge for us and that it was customary to bring like a couple dollars if we could each bring a couple dollars with us because we would like to make a donation to the guy that was building the lodge. And then that whenever we got there, we would just get in the line and that it would be a very low like ceiling and it was built out of sticks and whatever it was that they were covering it up with, and that we would probably need to crouch or crawl depending on our height so we didn't scratch our backs on the sticks, in that there would be a south-facing entrance and as we walked in to walk clockwise, and that there would be two rows of people. And he said just walk in and go to your, walk around the circle in a clockwise fashion. If you come all the way around, I will be sitting right at the door he said and then Megan will be sitting next to me and then Taylor will be sitting next to Megan and then fill in after Taylor. And then he said you know once that back row is filled up, then start filling in, just sit right in front of those people. So there would be like I said two rows of people. Then he said to the people who might end up in the back row because we didn't know at this point, there wasn't like any order or anything like that (Inaudible 11:45) he said that front row would have a tendency to get hotter than the back row, so if someone in the front row, if you are in the back row and someone in the front row asked you to switch seats, that it would be kind to do so, to

switch seats for a short period of time just to give them, just because it would be a little bit cooler back there and then also the ground will be cooler, so it would help to lay on the ground just so it feels like you are getting hot. And then that there would be at least seven rounds because what we had done while we were on a Vision Quest is everyone had brought squares of fabric and tobacco and then what we did with the tobacco is we just put a little bit of it in the center of the square and we made like these pouches. And what they were for, they represented intentions that we are setting for different areas of our life. So each round was to represent one of those intentions. And that in between each round, I don't remember having like an idea of a time limit or anything like that in my head, I was feeling like there would probably be like 10 or 15 minutes but I don't know if I just made that assumption or if it was said, I really couldn't tell you. So we were locked and then that if we needed to leave we needed to leave in between rounds and the door was opened and that we were not to leave during the round like during the ceremony.

Interviewer: Like so when the door was opened to leave if you needed to?

Respondent: Yeah.

Respondent: And so that's pretty much the instructions that we got.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: Ahead of time, which I mean I guess was clear enough because I knew it made sense when I got there.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: Where I needed to go or whatever the case would be. I recall certain parts of being in this lodge and at some point I didn't leave but I was carried out because I passed out, I don't recall at what point like what round. I want to say that it's like the sixth or seventh round. I am pretty sure I remember the fifth one but like it runs together a little bit. I don't remember fainting or anything like that and I know that I was pulled out just because people had told me so and the way that I picture it is it was either four people carrying me like one person for each limb or there were two people carrying, one person carrying my arms and one person carrying my legs. But I know that I passed out in the tent because I don't remember leaving, I didn't leave the tent. Then I woke up and I just didn't know what was going on. And then everybody by then was out I believe because I know that everybody was out of the tent by then. I kind of walked like got up and crawled off because I was one of the, I was vomiting and didn't want to vomit in front of everybody. So I do remember that at that point in time everybody was just kind of like, I feel like it was like a big piece of plastic or a tarp or something that was laid on the ground and I believe that I was being sprayed with a hose just because I was wet. I don't know if I had been sprayed then or if I had been sprayed earlier, I know that they did tell us, whenever he was giving us the instructions of what to expect, that whenever you came out of the door, whenever you came out of the tent that there would

be people, there would be plastic on the ground and there would be people standing there with water hoses. They would spray you to like wash you down.

Interviewer: What was that to do, do you know?

Respondent: You know I don't, I think that it was just to cool you off like to close your pores so you like didn't like sweat profusely, I don't really know. I do believe that he said why, but I don't recall the reason. I just knew that if we got out that there would be someone standing there with a hose and then I do also know that he had mentioned about just being like that we would be filthy because the ground level was ground, there was like a sand.

Interviewer: You are sitting on dirt and laying on dirt?

Respondent: Yeah, and so just to wash that off and to close any pores.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: I don't recall being sprayed with the hose but I know that I was wet. So (Inaudible 17:31) so my assumption is I was being sprayed with the hose.

Interviewer: Okay. When you went inside, where were you seated?

Respondent: I was seated on the east side in the front row, like probably one person off maybe from the middle of that side.

Interviewer: Okay. So from the door away, the door is south, the east side would have been probably to the right of the door.

Respondent: Yeah, like if you were standing in the door and looking to the right, then yeah, that's where I was sitting.

Interviewer: In the middle there?

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay. Do you remember who was beside you on either side?

Respondent: I remember on one side to me, on my left side, there was a girl named Gabriella or is it Gabrielle or Gabriella, sitting next to me. And I can't remember the person that was sitting to the right of me. I do know that it was somebody that I knew and it was a female. But I don't remember who it was, I just can't remember. And then behind me and probably off like one person, like not directly behind me but like one person that was behind me was Josh Fredrickson was sitting.

Interviewer: In the back, behind?

Respondent: Yeah. And then maybe like two people to my right, two or three look through my right was Brandy Rainey.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: I remember that Greg Hurtle was sitting on like the north side on the back row. And then I remember like sitting across from me like so on the west side like Liz Neuman was there and she was sitting on the west side kind of in the same spot that Josh was on the east side, so that back row in the middle. And then in front of her into like my left was a girl named Lynette and I think that there were two Lynettes there, the one that I am referring to is from [REDACTED] I don't know their last names. And then I believe that Laura Tucker was sitting near her but I don't know if she was in the front of back row. And then like I told you, I know where James and Megan and Taylor were sitting. And then there was a guy, so what they would do is before the next round would start someone from the outside would put those rocks on a rake and they would like hand the rake to a guy named Aaron on the inside of the tent and then he would dump rock in the -

Interviewer: Was Aaron also the one putting the water on?

Respondent: No, James put the water on. They had a big bucket and then he would crawl and pour the water on.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: And then I just remember this, they had I remember like, I don't know if I got splashed by the bucket maybe I remember like we getting hit by water at some point like early on, like so I don't know if there was like a spoon in there or I don't know.

Interviewer: Look like they dumped or did they ladle it or --

Respondent: Well, I think there was a ladle in the bucket but I think they dumped it. I don't think they used the ladle to pour on there to the best of my recollection and it was dark like because he would do that after they would close the door but I think that because it must have sounded like more water.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: If it was a ladle in it but I didn't see what they were doing.

Interviewer: Okay. Describe the atmosphere inside, describe what it was like. You said very dark.

Respondent: Very dark and very hot and very sweaty. I don't know I was kind of really trying to concentrate like I was really listen to my own head a lot. There were people in

there that were, everyone was very quite and then like maybe people started to kind of talk later like you know yeah, it wasn't like negative talk. And then I don't know just really I mean you know it was very dark. I had expected it to be a little more crowded than I saw, to be honest, like I thought we were going to be completely squished up. But where I was sitting anyway like I wasn't like I had room to lay down because I kept laying down whenever then whenever the round would be over, like whenever they'd open that door I laid down on the ground because it was a lot cooler on the ground. I don't know just really hot, really dark and really sweaty. I remember like it was steamy like you know whenever you take a lid off of a pot and the steam comes out of it, that's kind of right when the water would go on, that's kind of what it felt like and then it evened out. But I remember specifically like I was sitting with my knees up in front of me, like I would rest my forehead on my knees because it was cooler there, I felt like it was just kind of easier to breathe, I could tell that, I don't know, it just felt like it wasn't as hot to breathe in that air there. So I would describe it as like steam.

Interviewer: Okay, very steamy?

Respondent: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: I don't know if you could, see steam because it was so dark but like you could feel the, it just felt like steam.

Interviewer: Okay. And describe the rounds that you do remember.

Respondent: Well basically I think that what we would do is like we would, I don't recall what each of those pouches represented, like he would say like four, like this intention we're going to release, we remember the things that we're not going to do, that we're going to give away, the old patterns and the habits and the things that aren't working for us, we're going to release those and we're going to set our intentions on what we've discovered and what we're going to do now to make our life better, just to be able to do whatever we need to do, but nothing specific, it's different for every person. And then each round started out with well whenever they would bring the rocks in, the rocks were called I believe grandpas and he told us this before we went there too, whenever he was going over what to expect. And then he said they are heating the rocks and what they would do is they'd bring in the rock and every time one rock passed the door, we would say something grandpa, I want to say it was like hi ho grandpa or something that I don't remember specifically, that we would do that for every rock that came in. And then they would close the door and then James would like do some sort of chant or something like that and we would kind of like repeat like, I don't know, like a chant, I can't remember it, just like something he would say and we would repeat. And then that would probably last like three or four minutes if that maybe, maybe a little bit longer, a little bit shorter, they were each different. And then we were just to focus on that particular pouch that, particular intention.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: And then I felt like the rounds last so like 10 or 15 minutes that I can't tell you that I had any concept of the time and then they would open the door and then whoever needed to leave would leave or people who had left before and wanted to come back in could come in then. And then they would keep that door open for, I don't know, however long, and they would bring the next round of rocks and then we would do the same thing but just with the different focus.

Interviewer: Changing the intention moving up the pouch or the --

Respondent: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. And after you got out, what do you remember?

Respondent: Well, I just remember waking up and having any idea like what was going on and what had happened. I was like really, really confused you know because I didn't remember coming out of it. And then again it felt like there was just a big piece of plastic or a tarp laid on the ground and everybody was kind of laying there. And some people were walking around and were fine and some people were laying there, they were sick like I was. I remember that James was sitting like, I want to say, in a chair, it might have been some sort of seat or like cart I have no idea but I know that he was sitting and I got up and he like waved me over for a second and asked if I was okay and gave me a hug. And I told him that I felt like I needed to go throw up that I was really sick. He said go ahead, that it might make me feel better. I walked off because that's why I had gotten up in the first place because I didn't want to be vomiting in front of everybody. Like I don't recall exactly where I had walked off to, but it wasn't far I could still see and hear everything, I just it was kind of out of the thing and I know that they were all there like the whole team was there like James and Megan and Taylor and everybody were there and they were walking around just answering questions and kind of I guess helping people out, I don't really know.

Interviewer: Had EMS or law enforcement arrived yet?

Respondent: They hadn't. I was sitting there like, I'd been sick for, you know I just kept vomiting and then the girl that I had mentioned earlier Brandy Rainey was sitting with me and she kept bringing me water to drink and it was like an electrolyte water or something I don't know, she just kept making me drink it and I didn't want to, she was like it's going to make you feel better, or just drink it, drink it, drink it. But I think she would like walk off and check on other people or whatever and walk back to me, I don't know. I feel like I was sitting behind some sort of little building almost but anyway it was right there where the ambulances and everyone came to. Like the ambulances started to pull up and at that time like I didn't realize at all what was going on. I didn't realize that anyone was hurt or anything like that, I just thought it was just kind of, I don't know what I thought. But anyway, I didn't talk to any of the paramedics or anything like that at that time. I got up and there was a golf cart there and someone asked me if I

needed to ride back to my room and I didn't want to get on the cart because I felt like riding in it would make me feel worse so I just wanted to walk. So I walked back to my room and I laid in bed and I think I probably laid in bed for quite a few hours. I know that they were gathering everyone and taking them into the dinning hall but I didn't go, I stayed in my room. And then later that night the paramedics came into my room and just ran some blood pressure test or whatever it was they were doing and asked me some questions. And somebody had showed up earlier and told me to come to the dinning room. Then I said no, I wasn't going anywhere and at this point still I didn't know what was going on. I just felt like --

Interviewer: You felt really bad?

Respondent: Yeah, so I just didn't want to go anywhere. And then later on the paramedic came and he is like you are going to the hospital and I was like I am surely not going to the hospital because I am fine. And he is like well you have carbon monoxide poisoning. And I said what are you talking about. He said you have carbon monoxide poisoning. I said how do you know I have carbon monoxide poisoning. He said because we tested and I will be real honest, especially when I look back on it, it just seemed like he was either trying to enflame people or I don't know. He said we checked the tent and that carbon monoxide levels were through the roof. He said seven people died in there today.

Interviewer: Seven?

Respondent: That's what he told us and he said seven people died in there today. And I was like seriously. He is like you guys were poisoned. I was like well okay I guess come in and do what you guys do. He is like you need to go to the hospital. And that's when I agreed, I was like fine because I don't have carbon monoxide poison but I did ask how was there carbon monoxide because there were only rocks and water. And I have a little bit of knowledge of where, well he said it was. And I said okay. And I went to one ambulance and there were two male paramedics and the same one and I don't recall his name who had asked me like are you vomiting, yes I obviously was. And they checked my pupils and my pupils were fine. Because they found out carbon monoxide poisoning, he was like are you dizzy, you had the carbon monoxide poisoning and I said no, I am not because I wasn't. But I mentioned because later on and I was trying to mention everything that I could remember, we had to switch ambulances before we left because the ambulance that I was in didn't work, like it had broken down. So they put me into an ambulance with two other paramedics who were female and the backdoor was opened and the two original paramedics passed my paperwork to them. And I specifically saw on there like on my symptoms which was dizzy which is something specifically that I wasn't, it just felt a little like maybe he was just really excited.

Interviewer: I have no idea where that kind of information came from because that's so off from anything so far I have ever heard.

Respondent: And I wasn't the only one in the room when he said that and I don't know if he was telling other people that but he did walk right in the room and say you've got to go to hospital, you've got carbon monoxide poisoning, the levels in the tent are through the roof and seven people died. So that's why I was like what the heck is going on here but then anyway from there they took me to the hospital. By the time I got there I was feeling a lot better, they had given me an IV.

Interviewer: The fluids I am sure.

Respondent: Fluids, yeah and also some Loprin I believe like anti-nausea medication. I was sick in the ambulance, but by the time I got to the hospital I was not feeling normal, but I was feeling 100% better than I had before. And then they ran my blood test and I was there for probably I don't know about two or three hours maybe and then I was feeling all right. I checked myself out and I went back to the ranch to get my bags.

Interviewer: When did you leave Ami?

Respondent: I left there that night, probably 2 in the morning.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: Well I had had plans to, I didn't know if the event was done on Thursday or Friday and I have a business in [REDACTED] and I had plans to stay there anyway [REDACTED] so I didn't stay that Thursday night, I just went ahead and left.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: And I just wanted to rest. I did go back to get my bags and I was in a house like you know everybody had roommates and so everyone was kind of up chatting, I don't recall specifics about the conversations at that point. We all knew about Kirby and James and Kirby was one of our roommates so I am sure that the conversation was revolved around that but I don't remember what we talked about.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: And then that's basically it.

Interviewer: And then you went home, have you had any symptom sense? Are you are doing okay?

Respondent: No, I am doing real well. I had some like I said I had lost my memory and I mentioned that because I typically have a really, really, really good memory and I have had trouble like and then I explained it to, the other way I know how to explain it is that if you have ever been drunk and then the next day. You are like you have little blank spots, like oh God I wish I got (Inaudible) that. That's how I have been feeling like I have been in trunk but I have been feeling like --

Interviewer: A gap in the memory?

Respondent: Yeah and it was more so right after than it is now and there were things that I remember about Spiritual Warrior that I had not remembered before and I am pretty sure that like everything I remember is true, because like I said I haven't watched anything or felt like I don't know if there was anything else that would influence what I am remembering but I guess I might be trying to just fill in gaps and then raise the funny thing but --

Interviewer: Had you attended Spiritual Warrior before?

Respondent: No.

Interviewer: Okay. Was there a game that you guys played before going on the Vision Quest?

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: Do you recall the game?

Respondent: I recall the game. I don't recall what it was called, let me think about this for a second, what it was was James had learned it when he worked at AT&T and it was a game that he had learned there because it was like a leadership game.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: So they had played it, like at one of their meetings that they had to come to like a manager meeting and so it was like a team building game. And I want to say it had something to do with the Samurai game. And what it was is there were two teams, each team had a leader which was called a Daimio, and what that means I am not sure, it's a Samurai term. And then each team had a priest and each team had something else that I have forgotten what it's called. And then there were ninjas like each team had a ninja. And if you saw the ninja then you had to die, what you would do was just basically you couldn't play the game anymore you had to lay down on the ground. But the point of the game was that like each team had to challenge, there were challenges, like so you would walk one person from the team that wasn't the leader or the priest or the person who I can't remember what it was called. I do know that they had to stand in one position and they weren't allowed to use their feet and they had five balls. And what they do is like we've got those five balls and you could throw them at people on the other team and if one of them hit them then they were gone. So basically you are trying to like, even up the score, you are trying to win. You want to have the most people left on your team. And then they would do these challenges and there were challenges like you had to carry an egg on a spoon or you had to stand in like that karate kick position like that one leg position that never fell, just simple stuff like that. And then --

Interviewer: Did James and his staff or Dream Team participate?

Respondent: They didn't participate in the game but they were, well James participated in the game because he was like the leader like he was telling everybody, he told us all the rules and then he would say when somebody was on the field and they had died, they had to come take them off the field, like they had the Dream Team working to kind of take people off the field because you weren't allowed to open your eyes once you died, so they had to lead you off.

Interviewer: Were they wearing costumes?

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: What kind?

Respondent: They were like black witch looking costumes.

Interviewer: Is that what James was wearing?

Respondent: No he was wearing a white like suit with a red, like a white like toga looking thing with a red like band across it, I don't really know. They looked like Halloween costumes.

Interviewer: How funny! Sorry.

Respondent: That's okay, it's very theatrical.

Interviewer: It sounds that way. Were there times of meditation?

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay, and who instructed on those?

Respondent: Well basically what we all brought a meditation with us in the CD and we just listened to that.

Interviewer: Okay. Any type of breathing exercises that were taught or --

Respondent: There was the Holotropic Breathwork on one night which I completely forgot about until you just mentioned it which I had done before so I knew what to expect from that, which for me is I fall asleep every single time but --

Interviewer: How nice --

Respondent: It just gets so comfortable laying there on the ground but yeah they did the Breathwork where you go and lay down and do some breathing exercises. It's like for two hours and then it just like loud music playing in the background like nobody saying anything to you or anything like that.

Interviewer: Okay, all right.

Respondent: Just breathing like in your nose and out your mouth and in your nose and out your mouth.

Interviewer: Okay. Well, now I am going to kind of start on my cant questions. How did you learn about James Ray?

Respondent: Well, I think probably like a lot of people have watched the movie The Secret and I had like watched it one time and then there was this woman on there that I wanted to basically just find out more information on, so I went Googling and read a bunch of books and things like that and kind of got through all that information and went. And then there was another person that would watch it again and picked out another person that I liked on the movie and wanted to get more information just to see what they taught, because I am a huge reader so I was just like surfing everything out. And then I probably did this two or three times and then saw it oh there was somebody else on there that I wanted to kind of look further into just to see what it was that they did. And it was James Ray so I went at night, came in to work the next day and I Googled James Ray and it have came up that he does introductory events throughout the United States, they're like two-hour events, and he was coming to [REDACTED] like that week or that next day or something. So I went to that free event. Like I said it's an introductory advantage, you just kind of go and it's an introductory event I guess to what they the seminars they offer and things like that. And then from there, I went to Harmonic Wealth and then signed up for like a package after that.

Interviewer: And when was that, how long ago?

Respondent: My first event that I went to wais Harmonic Wealth and that was in April of 2008.

Interviewer: Okay. And then you signed up for a package, so how many have you attended since April of 2008?

Respondent: I just figure this out, I think it's five, I have been to Harmonic Wealth and I have been to Quantum Leap, Creating Absolute Wealth, I have been to the Modern Magick and I have been to Practical Mysticism, so five and then Spiritual Warrior would have been sixth.

Interviewer: Okay, so 6 total.

Respondent: So five before Spiritual Warrior.

Interviewer: Okay. Had you ever been in a sweat lodge before?

Respondent: No.

Interviewer: Did you hear anyone talk or make assurances about the people or the personnel conducting or building the sweat lodge being specifically trained as experts?

Respondent: No, I did know that someone was building sweat lodge and that they had done this lodge every year.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: But I don't recall saying like specifically trained just that I got the impression it was somebody that was experienced to doing so.

Interviewer: Okay. And you are not sure how long you stayed inside because you were brought out and you were thinking it was the sixth round?

Respondent: Yeah. I feel like I made it, I feel like I remember the fifth round, I don't recall if I passed out in the sixth round or the seventh round. I just don't have any idea.

Interviewer: Ami, how much fluids or liquids water did you have to drink prior to going in?

Respondent: I drank a ton like well there was the day that we were on that Vision Quest, I didn't drink anything.

Interviewer: Right.

Respondent: But I will say that they are very adamant about like telling every one, it's like remember to hydrate, remember to hydrate, you can't drink enough water, remember to hydrate. And then also they had given us that salt.

Interviewer: And did you take it?

Respondent: I did. I had that day before and you know I probably didn't drink as much as I normally do because I didn't want to have to keep going to the bath room.

Interviewer: Yeah we do that sometimes -- stuff.

Respondent: So I probably like in real life you know when I am home drink more than that and I was drinking out of the bottle that they had provided, I don't remember how big that is. I probably went through I drank about two of those a day.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: So yeah I did drink a lot but I didn't drink it much later --

Interviewer: Okay. Did you feel prior to going inside the sweat lodge that it was safe?

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: Why?

Respondent: It just never occurred to me that it wasn't because I feel like that this wasn't the first time that they have done it and that they do this every year and I know that they would never have any intention of putting anybody in any harm's way at all. So it really honestly didn't occur to me and I don't have any knowledge of, because I had never been in the sweat lodge before so I didn't know if that was normal, I just didn't know, yeah it just didn't occur to me.

Interviewer: Did you move to a different area at any time while you were inside?

Respondent: No. Like I said I laid down but I didn't move to a different area of the tent.

Interviewer: What if anything besides what you described was discussed for safety procedures if there was a problem inside the sweat lodge?

Respondent: I don't recall like anything.

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

Respondent: All I expected was to be really, really, really hot. I don't recall like them saying like for instance like they didn't say if you start to feel like this or if this starts to happen or anything like that or someone next you does this, like there was nothing that I recall. What they mentioned was it's going to be really, really hot.

Interviewer: Did anyone ever say you might lose consciousness?

Respondent: No. They said that a sweat lodge was an altered state. I wouldn't consider that losing consciousness at all. Some people like I had a vision of this or I saw this whatever, I have never experienced that, I am not really one of those types. But I do believe that they happened so that's what I would consider an altered state like maybe almost like a hypnotic type thing I don't really know but I wouldn't consider it being unconscious. So when they said altered state, I didn't think unconscious.

Interviewer: And who said you might reach an altered state?

Respondent: Well you know I am not sure because there were people in line, there was one woman in particular and I can't tell you who it was, I don't remember her name, was talking about, just remember whenever it's hot, you think you can't stand it, you are going for the altered state, that's you're your going for. I don't know if she was someone who had been there before. So I don't remember like if James had said that but it wouldn't have been unusual for him to say so.

Interviewer: Did he say that often?

Respondent: Sometimes, I wouldn't say like often but when talking about certain things but then he also says he is like an altered state is anything outside of your, he is like when you are sleeping you are in an altered state, he is like it's anything outside of your normal day to day.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: So it doesn't mean you have to be having some sort of experience, just anything is an altered state like when you are meditating, you are in an altered state, that's when you're really relaxed or you are in an altered state, like your normal like everyday busy.

Interviewer: And during the ceremony, most of the speaking was done by James and then everybody would chant in or say their intentions?

Respondent: Yeah, and then I recall like as the rounds, like I remember people kind of being like cheering like yeah I can certainly do this or yeah, this is awesome, like some people were very vocal about their intentions.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: Like I said, I tend to be more one who just stays in my head but there is a lot of people who are vocal and so they were just talking about not do this anymore, I am going to do this or just being very vocal.

Interviewer: Okay. Did anyone leave the lodge other than through the door that you know of?

Respondent: Well, I seem to recall and I don't know this for sure but I do seem to recall, I know for sure that there was a point in time where there was some light on the north side of the tent. And they thought somebody had a cell phone and James said turn off the cell phone. It was not the cell phone but I seem to remember somebody crawling out through that hole, like lifting the tent and rolling out, like getting out, you know what I mean, like pulling up the tent and then just kind of scooching out. I don't remember who it was and I don't even know if I remember it for sure because it must have been a little bit closer to when I was, I mean it must have been like a little farther in like if it was the first round I probably would have remembered it more clearly. But I do seem to remember somebody like lifting up that tent and crawling out.

Interviewer: And crawling out and you were thinking it was later on --

Respondent: I feel like it was probably the third round, like the third or fourth.

Interviewer: Okay

Respondent: It wasn't the first but I feel like it was the third or fourth just because like around the fourth round because I think I remember the fifth round still. I remember them specifically talking about the heart and it might have been the heart pouch or something like that and that's the last round that I remember. So if that means anything at all.

Interviewer: Okay. Did you hear anyone say that they were having problems or difficulties and if so what were they saying?

Respondent: I didn't.

Interviewer: Okay. Did you fill out any medical forms or answer any questions?

Respondent: No.

Interviewer: Did you hear anyone saying they thought they were having a heart attack?

Respondent: I did not, no

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

Respondent: Well yes.

Interviewer: And what was the context?

Respondent: I was going to say in context, it's completely different. James says that a lot. But in context, he is talking about in order for something new to live like he was talking about earlier like something that you want to change in your life that you are not happy with the way things are going and you have your relationship that is miserable, in order to be in a relationship that is satisfying in the order for that new relationship to live, that old miserable relationship has to die. You know that old way of thinking has to --

Interviewer: Old must die out with the old and with the new.

Respondent: Exactly. And so I have never heard in the context of a person at all, it's always your old habits, your old ideas, your old patterns, those have to die for something new to, you are never going to get to hear from here if you don't change the path that you are on.

Interviewer: Right, okay.

Respondent: To get there. So within context, I mean I have never thought if that sounds wrong or anything like that.

Interviewer: Right, in the context that he said.

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: I know you saw how James Ray was reacting to the people that seemed to be in distress. Do you feel that he should have responded any differently?

Respondent: Well I don't know how clear but I feel like he just was, like I said I didn't realize what was going on so I don't know what had happened, I don't know I don't know anything about the whole like situation with Kirby and James or anything like that. So maybe if I had a better context like what would be going on I would think oh you should be acting different. But for what I thought was going on at the time which was just, I don't know if at that time that they knew that anything had happened. I felt like they were walking around and just they seemed very calm, very attentive to everyone. So to me, it didn't it didn't seem out of place at all, it made me feel like I didn't have to worry about, to be honest.

Interviewer: Okay, go ahead.

Respondent: No, I was just going to say so I don't know just because I know that there were a lot of people who weren't unconscious so they maybe have a better idea of what was happening like the time frame. But I just don't know.

Interviewer: Is there any reason Ami that you didn't leave sooner?

Respondent: Because I was being stubborn.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: Seriously, like in my head and that way my nature, it was like a personal challenge. I was very hot and I can't say that I didn't feel like maybe I was going to throw up, because I've got a couple of waves of nausea, but it wasn't so intense that I actually thought I was going to be sick. It just was really, really hot and I was like this sucks and I was like all you've got to do is leave and then my stubborn side was like no, don't be wuss, you can do this because I had just been telling myself, sometimes there will be difficult situations sometime that you might not like feel like doing but just sometimes you just push I tell myself I can do this, then for me everything can be a good (Inaudible) because it's hard to hard. And so really there wasn't anything other than like my own head keeping me from leaving. I hadn't gotten to a point yet, I mean obviously had because I had passed out but I didn't feel like I was to a point where I felt like I was in danger at all. If my head had felt that, I would have left. But I just was feeling like you are just uncomfortable. So it was purely because I just have been stubborn.

Interviewer: Okay. Was there anyone encouraging people to stay and how was that being done?

Respondent: Well, whenever the gate would open and people would leave, well the comment that James would make is that you are more than that but then whenever people

would leave would say hi ya ya and basically hi ya ya is like sometimes if you got up on news and said something difficult or like we do a lot of questioning or instructions where you kind of share what you've learned. And hi ya ya is kind of like an exclamation point like it's good for you, thanks for sharing.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: So, it was kind of like yeah when people were leaving, they were like you are more than that, you are more than that, but when they leave the door, they say hi ya ya and then people would come back, some people would come back the next round. I remember I feel like when I was talking earlier about when I thought that somebody had crawled out of the tent, that somebody said I need to get out of here and like other participants were like come on, you can do, you can do, it's all right, you can do it. And they left anyway. So maybe to that extent, like there must have been people, I remember people saying oh come on, hang in there so there must have been people who were saying I need to leave.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: But I don't recall who it was or like specifically.

Interviewer: I don't think you are going to recall because you were so out of it yourself when you came out if you recall anyone discouraging anyone else from trying to help someone.

Respondent: No.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: Like you said it depends on what time, but I didn't hear anything to that nature (Inaudible 1:2:28) or anything like that.

Interviewer: Okay. Ami, at what point did you actually realize that people had died and something was really wrong?

Respondent: When I was at the hospital.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: That emergency room physician told us that two people had passed away and I did not know who it was at the time.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: So that was this. And I think (Inaudible 1:3:02) I don't know if they were at the same hospital or what.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: Or he was even sure of if he (Inaudible) to tell us and I found out who it was later at some point.

Interviewer: Okay, and you realize now there is three, right?

Respondent: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. What do you think happened that caused three people to die?

Respondent: I just think, for me, I think it was too hot.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: Although I know that there were people that stayed the entire time and were find but for me I felt like it was just really, really hot.

Interviewer: And your location was somewhat close to the door?

Respondent: It was in the middle like it's kind of hard to (Inaudible) was ground.

Interviewer: Right, but if you were to close to door --

Respondent: I was closer to the door than the north side for sure.

Interviewer: Right.

Respondent: Yeah, I was closer to the door than many other people in there.

Interviewer: Okay. Has anyone talked to you about what to say if you were questioned by law enforcement?

Respondent: No. Everything has been just whatever you got to say and I heard people that were there say, well, I remember some stuff that it might not be, I am just to tell the facts whether or not to share and they are like you have say everything that you remember. So the only people I have ever talked to about it would be the JRI team and the other people that were there but I honestly haven't felt that, they have all been like just be honest and tell everything that you --

Interviewer: Well, that gives us an entire picture, not just a little piece.

Respondent: Right.

Interviewer: Did James Ray or anyone else tell you what his qualifications for facilitating a sweat lodge were?

Respondent: I wouldn't like say qualifications really, I just know that he had done this outside of Spiritual Warrior, even had done sweat lodges and hosted I guess, so I don't know whether they call those sweat lodges.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: (Inaudible).

Interviewer: So basically from his experience, it was implied.

Respondent: Yeah. And I know that he has done this sweat lodge, I don't even know what tribe or whatever but like and it is an American Indian tradition that he's worked with several American Indians and that's what he does in sweat lodges outside of (Inaudible).

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: I don't know all of them but I know that he does work with, he has to have American Indian friends or tribes that he is associated with that he does sweat lodges with.

Interviewer: Okay. Any other things that have come to mind since we have been talking?

Respondent: No.

Interviewer: Anything else you think of?

Respondent: I am trying that there has been a couple at the top while we have been talking and I have mentioned them then.

Interviewer: Well, that's good. I am glad you did.

Respondent: So, but, no. I can't think of anything else that I am --

Interviewer: Anything important you think I should know about?

Respondent: No, not really. I have really tried to just tell you everything that I could remember.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: Yeah, I can't really think of anything else.

Interviewer: Okay. Can I ask you what you do?

Respondent: Sure, I am an entrepreneur.

Interviewer: Well good luck.

Respondent: It's a lot of different things.

Interviewer: Do you still have my phone number?

Respondent: I do, the one that I just called, yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. If you would like, I can give you my e-mail, should you think of something you can email or you can call me either one. So --

Respondent: Okay. I have got your number and I will take your e-mail.

Interviewer: [REDACTED]

Respondent: Okay, all right.

Interviewer: Okay. So, if you think of anything, send me an e-mail, give me a call. I want to thank you for talking to me.

Respondent: Okay, thank you. You're welcome.

Interviewer: All right. Bye-bye.

Respondent: All right. Bye-bye.

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