

*I/V Dennis Mehrava By Det. Willingham #C36

On 10/23/09 at approximately 1045 hours, I spoke with Dennis Mehrava by telephone. I audio recorded the conversation.

Dennis said they fasted for a day and half with no food or water. On Thursday morning he only ate a toast and tea, but did not get lodge. After about two hours of class they were told to prepare for the sweat lodge. They were to change into shorts or light clothing.

Dennis said when they entered the sweat lodge it was immediately hot. He stayed through the 5th round and wanted to stay longer to finish the ceremony but felt he just couldn't. Dennis said he tried to crawl out but must have passed out does not remember how he got out of the lodge.

When Dennis came to he was outside and the dream team members were pouring water on him. He was really dizzy and could not get up. He thought he was down about 10 minutes and then started throwing up severely. Dennis thought he would then feel better, but he did not. Then he started having trouble breathing and thought he was having a heart attack. Dennis said he was trying to breathe but could not and thought his heart had stopped. Dennis said he was screaming he did not want to die. Lisa and Christine from the dream team were holding him while he was unconscious. He does not know how long he was out, but when he came to there were ambulances helicopters. Dennis was able to get up and at first thought he was well enough he did not need to go to the hospital. When trying to walk he was having a hard time so he went over to the paramedics. They gave him oxygen and he was so dehydrated they could not find a vein to start an IV. At about midnight the doctor told him he could leave, but to check with his doctor when he got back to [REDACTED]. Dennis did not have medical insurance.

Dennis followed up with his doctors and had another experience with chest pain and part of his body like falling asleep. They ran blood tests and checked his heart and found that his body must have gone through a big shock and it still recovering. Dennis feels that the only explanation he has is that it was much hotter this year and those by the door could get fresh air, but where he was at he never felt fresh air. Dennis felt it took them to long to get emergency help on scene. Dennis said a lot of people were sick well before Kirby and James were found to be not breathing. Dennis described that everywhere he looked people were crawling and throwing up.

Dennis learned about James Ray by attending a free seminar with that featured Donald Trump Jackie Robbins and James Ray three years ago. He has since attended Harmonic Weekend, Creating Absolute Wealth, Quantum Leap and Practical Mysticism. Dennis said that he has volunteered at other events as a Dream Team member. This was his first time at Spiritual Warrior. At many of the events you do things that you don't think is possible and then you do. Dennis had build a certain amount of trust through this was because after doing those things you realize wow "I just did that." Dennis said he came to believe that James would push you limits, but not do anything that would harm you. Dennis had doubts about the other things James Ray put them through and it all turned out okay. Dennis said he stayed longer because he had come to trust James Ray to know better than Dennis that he can do more than he ever thought.

Dennis had never been inside a sweat lodge before and been in a sauna maybe three times and stayed about 5 minutes and did not like it or enjoy it.

Dennis said that he did not hear any assurances about the lodge, but about the fire. He remembers being told that the person who built the fire to heat the rocks had done this before for James Ray.

Dennis said he knew James Ray had done this before because this was the 7th year he had held this. James Ray told them even the natives feel James Ray's sweat lodge is one of the hottest ones ever.

Dennis said he was in the back of the lodge and was seated by Christie (the oriental girl) Lou was also beside him and Greg was near. Dennis left at round 5 and did not return. Dennis was part of the inner circle.

Dennis said they were not given and safety instructions. They were told to enter clockwise and exit clockwise.

Dennis said the only thing they were told was if it gets to hot put your face close to the ground because it would be cooler.

Dennis said James Ray was speaking throughout the ceremony, but by the third round Dennis could no longer tell what Ray was talking about.

Dennis said he heard comments by others, but could not remember what was said.

Dennis said a couple of people behind had opened the back of the lodge trying to get some air and James Ray told them to put it down.

Dennis said people were saying they wanted to get out, but James Ray would say you are bigger than that, you are better than that to encourage everyone to stay.

Dennis said had the sweat lodge taken place the first day, most likely everyone would have left. Dennis said you combine everything they did through the week and the trust he had in James Ray it did not seem so strange.

Dennis did not fill out any health questions or give any health related information. Dennis did say they signed a waiver form that JRI is not responsible. Dennis said they sign the same waiver for all the events, but it was never this extreme. He said they were never given prior information about what would take place throughout the week.

Dennis said James Ray did not respond in a way to take care of them. Dennis said as he lay out there with a lot of others who were sick. James just continued with the ceremony instead of stopping and taking care of everyone. Even afterward James Ray just sat on a chair. All he told Dennis was "oh you were reborn, go take a shower and go to dinner. (While CPR was being performed on two people.

Dennis said he is struggle with thinking first this was an accident, but now he feels that James Ray was just reckless with them and he should have encouraged them to go out cool off get water and be sure you are okay. James seemed very intimidating and controlling.

Dennis said he wonders if James Ray used more stones, made it hotter or people were more encouraged to come and go.

Dennis said he has not returned any of the JRI calls. Dennis is feeling a lot of guilt for encouraging others to go to James Ray events.

Dennis said James Ray did not tell them about his qualifications for the sweat lodge were other that he had done them before.

Dennis said the heat became very extreme very fast in the first round as soon as the stones were brought in, the water poured onto the stones and the door closed. There was not feeling of air coming in when the door would open.

Dennis wants to know why they did not call medical sooner when he went out having trouble breathing in the 5th 6th round.

Dennis feels James Ray is the most responsible for what happened to everyone who died or became sick. Dennis felt this was accidental, but should have been prevented.

Dennis said the first three or four days following the event all he wanted to do was sleep. He is just now getting some strength back.

Nothing Further.

Detective Shonna Willingham C36