

DEBORAH COFFEY
KAISER SIGMUND STR. 12 • D – 86609 DONAUWÖRTH
Tel. +49 (0)906 981 66 19 Fax. +49 (0)906 981 69 25

To whom it may concern,

This is a statement about incidents of physical and psychological abuse by Ms. Devra West towards her students, staff and course participants. These incidents described here were witnessed by me, Deborah Coffey. I was a student of Devra West for approximately seven years and unofficially employed for a brief period of two months.

I read a letter that Ms. West wrote to a staff member, her personal assistant, whom had given notice to her employer, Ms. West, to leave her job. She had taken the appropriate steps to terminate her position responsibly. The letter from Ms. West was full of intimidating statements of a psychological nature. One in particular stated that she (her personal assistant) would fail miserably in her life if she left; that this assistant had a soul contract with herself (Ms. West) and that if she broke that soul contract she was doomed to suffer not only in this life but for many life-times. I have read three other letters that were written to three individuals whom had not complied with Ms. West's desire for their money, attention or services. The method used in each letter was psychological manipulation using seduction, coercion, intimidation and ridicule.

I witnessed two occasions in which Ms. West threw water in peoples' faces. On one occasion while she was teaching in front of a group, Ms. West forcefully threw the contents of her glass of water in the face of her personal assistant. She did the same to a student during a teaching session.

I witnessed three occasions in which Ms. West violently pulled the hair, of three female staff members. In each case the hair was pulled and the head was shaken forcefully from side to side. On some occasions she would hit people in the face. I witnessed one occasion in which she hit a man in the forehead, leaving an abrasion where her ring cut the skin. She said afterwards, that she didn't do it, God or a deity of God did it. This was the rationale she often used to justify her own violence. I was present in Montreal in which Ms. West tore a woman's ear. The woman was kneeling in front of Ms. West and had quietly challenged her authority. Ms. West reacted physically. She grabbed her hair on both sides of her face and shook her and told her to leave. I learned later that the woman was injured. Evidently the woman's ear had been grabbed too and then torn. She underwent reconstructive surgery for the injury. I was present in the room on two different occasions (but did not witness the precise moment) in which Ms. West hit students in the face. One of those women reportedly suffered a dislocated jaw, the other was hurt but not injured.

I was personally involved, as were others, in what I will call public humiliation or degradation rituals. The pattern of dominance, humiliation and “bonding” was essentially the same in all cases. In my case, I had just moved to Montana two days prior to the incident to build a life among the other members of the group and contribute to the goals of the organization. That day, and for the first time, I became the focus of degradation. My apparent flaws and failings were paraded by Ms. West in front of the group. It was personally shocking and humiliating. She continued until I was sufficiently disorientated. Then at a strategic moment, she began to build me back up. Because I had nothing left of my self to stand on, I connected to her to make it through. In this way a false bonding to her, the teacher/leader occurred. She said afterward to me that she did it with love. She often said this to people whom she abused. I witnessed many of these kinds of “treatments”.

This is my statement.

Sincerely,

Deborah Coffey, November 18th, 2003