

This is an open email sent out to the Reiki community in 2005 by Pati in Pennsylvania, USA

Dear friends in the Reiki Community,

I have been through what I consider to be a pretty serious situation and having thought about it, asking for guidance, all that stuff, I feel the need to share with you.

I've taken some time to make sure I am not doing this out of spite, to get even, but because I would hate for anyone to have a similar experience.

I met a fellow Reiki person from New Zealand online. His name is Liam Richards, or Daneian Richards. We instantly hit it off, like brother and sister.

Much later, he was coming to Canada to give a workshop and we decided that he could also give one here, at my place.

He was teaching a form of traditional Japanese Reiki. He claimed to be the only one in the West with this knowledge and training, that he had been granted Shihan status by the Gakkai.

There has been considerable investigation and questioning, and I have to admit this isn't where I hang my hat. From what I can gather, it is very much in question that Liam's background is as he claims. People are unable to find any trace of the person he claims taught him. People have asked at the University he claims his teacher was professor, etc. and can find no trace of anyone by that name.

Liam, when asked, either doesn't respond or responds but doesn't provide any information that would be helpful in verifying his credentials.

He gave two classes while here, and I enjoyed them. Others seemed to enjoy them as well, and got a lot out of them. What he taught seemed to have a new spin for us westerners, and at the time it didn't cross our minds to doubt his "pedigree".

He was a very charming, personable person. When we went out to dinner, for example, waitresses would come talk with us on their break and remember us when we went back. We hit it off very well. He was the brother I never had, and we'd sit up until the wee hours laughing and talking on the porch. Others seemed to like him as well. He was certainly loved and embraced by his students here.

He stayed at my place for four months. As time went on, unfortunately, I began to see a pattern of dissembling. He would say he was going to someone's house, but when I spoke to that person, he hadn't. Another example is he told people he was paying bills here, which he wasn't.

We formed a business partnership. Since I believed in his "mission" and people seemed interested in coming here to study with him, I had no problem with using my funds as seed money for our business. I was told repeatedly that I would be paid back.

He claimed he had severely injured his ankle. That may be true, but he did tell another friend his ankle was fine. He said that because of his ankle he needed a car with automatic transmission. I ended up paying for car rentals, and eventually since they were so expensive, bought a car for him. (He told others that he had paid for the car, and that when he left, I kept it because I wanted an "upgrade".)

He also ran up very expensive phone bills, totalling over a thousand dollars.

He claims, and it is probably true, that his credit card charged a surcharge for international purchases. Since he was staying here for an extended period, I secured two credit cards for him. One from a personal account, one from business. He maxed out both cards and went over limit without telling me. He made one or two minimum payments on the cards, but that is it.

He claimed to be an attorney, and claimed to be handling a legal situation for me. Here is an excerpt of him giving legal advice to a friend:

"Hey Kim...

A brief introduction might help, my name is Liam, a friend of Pati's (more like a brother I think). I'm originally from New Zealand, but have been here in the states over 3 months now. Back home I worked as an attorney. "

On the website "The Reiki Cafe"

<http://www.nexuscafe.com/bin/profiles.cgi/ShowUser/reiki/liam>

Liam wrote this bio in 2001.

" i was trained in japan under kimoko koyama, the president of the reiki society in japan in the methods of master usui without the influences of master's haiyashi or takata. i am also a law student specializing in international law to aid sexually violated children throughout the world. love, light, peace and healing to you all."

After he went home, I found he had done nothing as far as the legal situation he claimed to be handling for me. I then contacted the New Zealand Law Society and was told

"Dear Ms Wolfgang

Neither this Society nor the Manawatu District Law Society (which covers the Feilding area) has any record of a Danien, Damien, Daneian or Liam RICHARDS having held a practising certificate as a barrister or solicitor. It is possible that Mr Richards has been admitted as a barrister and solicitor but has never practised as such (we would not then necessarily have a record of him). "

He repeatedly told me he worked for a top law firm in New Zealand.

The final straw for me was he had claimed to have made a phone payment on a credit card bill. I kept looking online and no payment was posted. I asked him several times and was told he had made the payment.

I finally called the company and was told no payment had been made. I questioned Liam and was then told he had tried to make the phone payment but it didn't work. I said, "Liam, you and your lies." and got told, "You would see it that way."

At that point I told him to leave. I had spent fifteen thousand dollars of my money. Some of it would be hard to verify, or I just felt that I should cover. But, with his credit card balances, car rentals, phone bills, the total we agreed that he owed me was close to ten thousand dollars.

I warned a few key people. I was concerned that this situation would repeat itself. He found out that I had talked to others, accused me of lying and claimed that I had violated a "non disclosure" clause in an agreement that I never saw and certainly never signed.

He said that because I told others, he was in no hurry to pay me back. That is the last I have heard of him. This was last November, I have seen no money, or gotten any response to mail, and it is now March.

I own that it was my own naivete in trusting him so completely. I am now paying five hundred dollars a month for that, and will be for the next two years or so.

I hate tarnishing someone else's reputation. I have always believed that if they didn't do it on their own, it wasn't my job to do it for them.

However, this is dangerous, this could happen to someone else and I feel the need to stick my neck out here.

I am happy to send anyone copies of bills, and other verifications. Feel free to give my name, or share this with anyone that might come in contact with Liam.

I'm sorry to be spreading bad news. Perhaps your experience with Liam is, or would be, positive. I hope so. Perhaps he's changed. I also hope that as well. I have reason to believe that this is beyond one unfortunate situation.

Thank you,
Pati