

A Reading on Liahona Academy in UT

By Joseph Ramos, Guest Sermonizer for July 21st, 2022 (and beyond)

My experience at Liahona Academy was dreadful.

I stayed at Liahona Academy for 13 months straight because I wanted to graduate Highschool with a diploma, and I did just that.

I remember being a part of a level system where as advancing through the levels you would gain more freedoms.

If you broke rules then you would get demoted to lower levels and lose privileges. One incident in particular I was a level 3 group leader and talking to a lower level team/family member in my group about continuing using alcohol when at a legal age.

I mentioned this to my counselor and was immediately put on work crew which resulted in oatmeal for breakfast and one piece of cheese for lunch.

The counselors would harass me and my family member who wanted to use alcohol again by beating us outside and making us preform physical workouts.

They purposely found workouts for us to that we didn't have physical strength to preform, thus leading to a longer workout.

One task I particular we would have to preform was picking up a rock, and carry it to another rock 30 feet away, pick up the other rock and carry it back to where the original rock was. The counselors defined this as the ultimate form of physcological tortue which was continuing on a task with no end in sight and this task would last for hours.

So because I asked for tools from my counselors for tools to not drink again, the result was me and my family members being food deprived and psychologically tortured.

The counselors would make us memorize 4 pages of quotes that were to be memorized verbatim and if we failed to do so then we would lose our freedom privileges and be placed on 'work crew' again.

All it took to be placed on work crew was breaking 3 rules within a 7 day period... rules like not putting the toilet seat down, leaving the light on, and talking without getting permission from a staff member.

I was placed on work crew 3 or 4 times and other students who refused the staff giving them work crew would get beat down.

The staff was trained in knowing all the bodies pressure points to submit us and one student even went to the hospital for having his skull split open and he was given stitches.

I had a prior history of depression and mental illness before getting sent away to this facility. Liahona academy refused to give me medication, and they deleted the tests I took which diagnosed me as bipolar depressive.

Liahona academy also failed to work with me in regards to the childhood abuse I received from my parents and wouldn't acknowledge the scars I had on my back and scars I had on other parts of my body.

They would make us run barefoot around the track a levels ones which resulted in sprained ankels and also resulted in us getting many stickers in our feet, along with blisters and bloody feet.

[END OF SERMON]

Commentary by Rev. Angela Smith:

Please see <https://www.cope.church/liahonaprogress.pdf> for additional information. The mission and church are thankful to Joseph Ramos for participating and contributing in-kind. Ramos was notified that the following two questions should be addressed in guest sermons about programs on the watch-list:

1. Did you report fraud or other unlawful actions to the proper authorities? If not, why? If so, what happened with the reports? (So, 2 part question)
2. Why do you believe Liahona Academy should be denied merciful release from the COPE Conversion Program?

Ramos responded to the first question in an e-mail message not part of the sermon that read "I can't affiliate myself with law enforcement..." and I believe the second question is fully addressed in the body of Joseph's guest sermon above.

For those reading this who need to report false advertising, misleading marketing, or scams of any sort (including diploma mills), you can report to your home state's attorney general by filing a consumer complaint or file a complaint with the FTC. You can find reporting resources at <https://www.heal-online.org/report.htm> and <https://www.heal-online.org/liahona.htm> . It is my hope that all find this helpful.

There are opportunities to send messages, receive mystery bonus blessings, and more with or without donating available now on our "Pass the Basket" page at <https://www.cope.church/basket.htm> . Thank You.

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:32 KJV Willful blindness is an abomination.

COPE accepts Feedback, critical and complimentary. Learn more at <https://www.cope.church/feedback.htm> . For the sake of keeping myself and others humble, a sense of humor is welcome on all sides.

For More About COPE and the HEAL Mission, see:

<https://www.cope.church> and <https://www.heal-online.org>