

Great Lakes Paranormal Research Team

Care of Self in & off the Field

Intro:

The paranormal field can be complex and at times stressful. It is essential that all those involved in the field make efforts to care for their well-being, especially before, during and after any investigation. These types of investigations take time, dedication, emotional and mental efforts. There are steps we can all take to make sure we go in and out of an investigation and remain healthy for many more investigations to come.

Confidentiality:

As we know, not everyone believes in this field. Some people are quite afraid of it and others are on the fence. It is important that you choose wisely who you strike up a conversation or share about your interest. You know who to trust. If you have family, it is important to test the waters and see how they feel if you are interested in becoming involved. See if any ground rules will be necessary or required.

On the part of any paranormal team, you must keep all information about an investigation confidential from family, friends and co-workers. That is not always easy. For us in the field, our work is exciting. You can yack it up with any team member, just not outside of the team. However, with all the limitations, we usually recommend if going out on an investigation, to let your family know the general area you will be heading to. But you must never disclose location, name of client or what is going on. These dynamics might change however, if the whole family is involved on your team.

Preparing for an investigation:

Scheduling is a big part of the preparation. Check your calendar well. Check mainly with family and work. If all looks clear, go for the best date the client has requested.

Don't stress it at the last minute or at any minute for that matter. Keep your equipment up and snuff. Make sure all batteries are good to go. Check all needed equipment before you leave for the investigation. That way if all fails at the investigation, you know you did your part. The paranormal might be doing their part on your stuff! But that would be on "them" not you. Just make sure you have learned some old methods pre-technology in the field so you don't go in empty handed.

Stress can get to us all in various forms. Going into something unknown can be unnerving all on its own. Do what you need to do to relax before an investigation. Go take a walk, read, watch a

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good movie, take a nap, etc. Find what works for you to relax. Do avoid alcohol or any other drugs at any time, under any circumstances before any investigation. You really do not want to be impaired in any shape or form. Trust us, the paranormal will find your weak point before any team member does.

Get good rest before any investigation. Don't go all rushed and frazzled, take your time. If you go tired and worn out, you will open yourself for being distracted.

Your health matters. This author can't stress this enough. We have written about this topic in other areas. But this is a crucial one. If you have a bad cold, a migraine, or other health issues the day/evening of the investigation, **STAY HOME!** There will be many more investigations to come. Why do we say this? Because you could become vulnerable to mishaps during an investigation. Some paranormal energies are also not so kind. They could take advantage of your situation and toy with you. Other energies will not be tempted to mess with you. But it does leave a door open for trouble. So, don't go there. Not to mention if you are contagious, you could infect other members of your team, which is just not polite to do. Just make sure you are healthy, relaxed and rested to attend the investigation; as simple as that.

During an Investigation:

Now, you are on the site and getting things set up. Just be aware of how you feel. If you need to stretch, yawn or breath deep, do so. It is easier said than done. We investigators, go in with our senses and emotions a bit heightened. It is normal, because we don't know what we are walking into. This author believes it takes practice to be able to go into an investigation, relaxed and confident. It is almost like going into a job interview. Dress for the occasion; feel confident on how you will go about things. You know your stuff. If you are in the learning faze, know that your team has your back, nothing to worry about. You are surrounded by experienced members.

Having a brief meeting and dividing up how you will go about the investigation helps. That way each person will know how things will play out. Be clear on what tasks you will be responsible for. If you have questions, don't let them eat at you, just ask. No question is a dumb one.

If things start to happen in a normal fashion (if there is such a thing) great; just go about the tasks as needed. Continue to remain relaxed. If there is a big all blown-out paranormal or man-made incident, help with what you can. If you freeze and you are shaken up a bit, just take a break. Let your team know you need a breather. It always helps to talk it over with someone on site. Input always helps. We can't know everything and we never know how we will react in various situations until we are in one. Learning about yourself in each situation is important. This author

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will never forget the first time she began to have a full and fluid conversation with an unseen and unknown person. Minutes later it was clear it was really two people, a husband and wife actually. It was exciting, surprising and did drain a bit of personal energy. This was a positive situation, but when it is a negative one, it is important to take a break and regroup if need be.

Caring for yourself during the investigation also means drinking water and eat well. Bringing water or other fluids is important, keep hydrated, especially in difficult weather. Snacks always help too. My team usually brings snacks to share. If you have dinner before an investigation, don't pig out, it could make you groggy and uncomfortable. Eat something that satisfies, but avoid heavy foods, or food that could upset your stomach and interrupt your work. Each person is different and has different needs; you know what is good for you.

After an Investigation:

You are done for the evening. You are now packing up and getting ready to leave the site. It is important to also care about your departure. You will probably be tired after 3-6 hours or more of investigating. If you are driving, make sure you keep yourself alert just as you would on a long drive. You know the drill, fresh air, radio or chatting with your team partner on the way home. If you are a passenger, keep the driver happy. Don't drive him or her nuts, just help keep them alert. If someone needs to stop for a soda or other caffeinated drink, do so.

Be aware of the weather and the road around you. If it is raining, snowing, foggy, or unfamiliar roads, just go at a prudent speed, no need to rush. You might say, *like I did not know that*; but we are saying all these things for a reason, for paranormal reasons. Yes, the paranormal has its short and sometimes a long arm. In the history of paranormal investigators, crazy things have also happened when returning home. We are saying, don't take any chances, just be prudent, alert and aware of your surroundings. It could pay off greatly.

You and your buddies are now home. Always dump the clothing you used during the investigation in the wash as soon as you get home. Turn on the washing machine in the morning. The places we investigate are usually clean, but you never know what you might have picked up. When in doubt, wash it out! (Yes, that is an intentional twist taken after Jason Hawes's, *when in doubt, get the hell out!* (Jason, you can take this up with me later). ;o)

Get a good night sleep. Plan to wake up whenever you are ready. Get some good rest during the day. Don't plan to review evidence until you feel rested, alert and have time to do so. Take it easy the day after an investigation. Regaining energy is important. Monday comes quick.

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If for whatever reason, you start to notice odd things happening in your home after an investigation, don't just let it slide and no need to panic. After all, you are an investigator. Talk to your team lead and see if something needs to be done. Sometimes these energies just fade and don't cause much of an issue. In the paranormal world we say that it is very rare for an entity to follow us home. However, it has happened. For you and your family's sake, take care of it sooner rather than later.

Final comments:

These are a few pointers on how to keep yourself healthy in this field of the paranormal. You can't do a good job, if your health suffers. Be kind to yourself and do what you know is helpful for you to be well. It is never easy to miss an investigation due to health. So stay well and investigate plenty!