

GREAT LAKES PARANORMAL RESEARCH TEAM

Team Work

For the most part, investigating the paranormal, is done as a team or group. There are a few who do it alone. However, from experience from many, it is strongly advised to do so as a team due to the volatility and safety needs in this field.

Safety and accuracy in numbers. For this type of investigation, it helps to do it with others. You need a variety of skills to address the different situations that might come up. You also need the common sense type people to keep everyone grounded and clear as to what needs to be done. It also helps to have others watch your back as you do the work and set up equipment. Sometimes we think we are doing a great job with the equipment and we forget to either plug it in or put in batteries. Keeping the buddy system helps.

Communication skills. This is really important. You might say, *well of course*. But it is truly important to answer emails on time, to ask important questions, try not to irritate each other, to put in your ideas and contributions, be able to talk to clients, etc. Being able to have positive verbal exchanges with everyone makes things work much better and less confusing. Speak up, respectfully and clearly. It does not pay to be a lump on the log.

Honesty. Team members need to know what your comfortability level is for this type of work. It is O.K if you have limits, we all do. Some are fine taking photos, working tech stuff, but when it comes to actually communicating with whatever is there, people can get a bit edgy, so be aware of where each member stands. This author gets a bit impatient when an entity begins to lie. Investigating is complicated enough without an entity lying to you. Give me a break! But hey, we can't require honesty from something we can't see or hear. As a team member, be honest and clear as to where you stand, what you need and what your limits are. If you decide this work is not for you, say so, people will understand.

Care of others. As a team, it is important to give support to one another the best you can. That means in every sense, with loading and unloading equipment, with health needs, listening to a client in distress, with calendar complications, help organize an investigation, being patient with each other, etc. If we are going to do this folks, we gotta support one another. It is not an easy job by any means.

Flexibility and patience. This is the paranormal field, unpredictability is to be expected. This author can't stress this enough. Scheduling might change, someone might become ill, a client is unpredictable, the weather changed, etc. The paranormal can also just not happen. It was a boring investigation all the way through. But that is what usually happens. Sometimes it takes a long time for a paranormal event to happen, sometimes you have to try a few things before it does. Sometimes the paranormal hits by storm and you were not quite ready. Or the paranormal hit by storm and now all your tools are useless. Always learn a few old school tricks in the paranormal world in case this happens. Learn to count to ten.

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Help organize. When you are going into a case, it always helps to share responsibilities. The case manager can't do it all. The director can't do it all. Chip in for paranormal sake! Take a few moments as a team to agree on who will take responsibility for what. On the investigation itself, it is always helpful to do a huddle and agree on what you will do 1st, 2nd, 3rd and last.

Time management. As a team it is important to respect everyone's efforts and the client's needs. Being on time, leaving on time, helps a great deal to keep things rolling smoothly. It makes things more predictable for everyone involved, especially the client who has already gone through a rough time. Keep yourself organized and ready to go.

Reduce stress for everyone. Never wonder off on your own. If someone will remain alone in an area for whatever reason, always plan it as a team and have someone close by. Wondering off on your own could complicate things really fast whether it be due to safety or the validity of the data. Stick together in small groups, the whole team does not have to walk around as if glued together. Just plan if you break up, who will go with who. You can swap small teams during the investigation. Having too large of a group in one area can contaminate your data. Keep noise and traffic down that way.

Make sure you have your emotions in check as best as possible. There is nothing worse than being on an investigation and having a team member run out of the building screaming. We are supposed to be the professionals in this. If you feel overwhelmed, inform your team lead you need to step outside. You can also ask someone to go with you and talk things over. We are emotional beings, so emotions are to be expected, especially if things get a bit bumpy or emotional. Sometimes the entity themselves can share their emotions in a paranormal sense and that can overwhelm us. So be aware of how you are feeling as you investigate.

Emergency situations. It could be weather problems, could be an ill/injured investigator, could be an all blown-out paranormal incident, etc. **STOP** what you are doing and go **CHECK** how you can **HELP** to make things a bit better or solve the problem. Pay attention to your team-lead and their instructions. In groups it is easy to say "oh someone will take care of that" and in the end little is done to work the problem through. Just remember, be aware, stop, go check and make your best suggestions or take whatever action needs to happen as a team.

Roles. Your team will benefit from assigning specific tasks according to each persons skills. It helps with making sure tasks get done. For a team to function adequately, you need at minimal: Director, case manager and researcher. Check to see in your team who does what. Learn the responsibilities of each role. Offer to learn some of the tasks. You never know when you might need to fill in.

Usual roles on a team:

Director (is usually the founder, but not always)

Case Manager (First line of contact for the team)

Researcher (Person who researches the property / history of town and state)

Tech manager (Person in charge of making sure you have the equipment needed for each case)

Lead investigator (Person who leads and coordinates the investigation)

Investigators (People on the team who investigate)

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Webmaster (Person who maintains the team website)

Each of these roles needs to be in close contact with the director and case manager. There can be more roles, but it depends on the size of the team. Having roles and responsibilities also helps with taking ownership of the work at hand.