

**Subject:** Re: Straight Arrow Apex in WA helped me become a man  
**From:** riadam riadam <riadam360@gmail.com>  
**Date:** 6/2/2020, 5:17 AM  
**To:** Angela at HEAL <angela@heal-online.org>

Yea, thats fine. Thanks for getting back to me. Im not sure what occurred the years I wasn't there but yes, my experience was a positive one and I'm sure those two made mistakes but they really cared about what they were doing and from what I saw and felt, they are good humans trying to help. There is a boarding school called Jon dewy academy in Massachusetts. My brother was sent to it. Unfortunately our parents failed us in many ways. The place was incredibly verbally and emotionally abusive. They seem to have a lot of money and pull because they are still operational and from the stories I read and was told by my brother, they should have been sued and shut down many times over. Forced to sit in hours and hour of emotionally abusive groups. My brother first developed back problems because of these groups but was forced to continue them sitting on marble floor and you where not aloud to sit back or move in particular was. In the ground people would tell one another what a worthless POS they are and completely berate one another under the false petence that this was therapeutic. There was some peer group system where basically the students were encouraged to tell on one another. If a student had more seniority and another student ask them a direct question you were punished. Of course the students who were put there by their parents for a variety of issues, abused one another because of this peer group system and because it was being done to them. You were told you were free to leave only to get the cops called on you, if you avoided getting arrested, a man named Tom batter who

may still run it im not sure. Would manipulate the parents to not take you back home under the guise that the parents would be enabling. He would contact you telling you that you were worthless would have to prostitute yourself and the only way to not kill yourself or be a loser for ever is to come back. They brain washed one another. The building is a castle built in the early 1900's i believe. So the basement was catacombs. I was told if you were very bad they would lock you in them in the dark.. I am close with my brother and I recognize that he has anxiety and possibly some kind of PTSD and I truly believe that JDA had a hand in damaging his mental health. This pace had a facade of "this is a matter of live and death so we will use any means necessary" but in reality the tactics were demented, manipulative, sick and verbally and mentally abusive. Not sure if this is only a list for wilderness type programs, but I would imagine that JDA has hurt a lot if people who may want to voice the abuse. Thanks again, your doing a good thing.

On Mon, Jun 1, 2020, 11:51 PM Angela at HEAL <[angela@heal-online.org](mailto:angela@heal-online.org)> wrote:

Dear Ross,

Thank you for contacting us! Do we have your permission to print your message(s) to .pdf (which would include your e-mail address) and add it to the Feedback page as well as <http://www.heal-online.org/straightarr.htm> via hyperlink to the .pdf?

Perhaps Bruce and Shirley will see it and feel validated. Let me

know.

Best Wishes,

Rev. Angela Smith

On 6/1/2020 6:14 PM, riadam riadam wrote:

> I went to this place, I googled it and found your site. I can't speak

> for what other people experienced and it wasn't all fun, but this

> place actually really helped me. My family was dysfunctional and in a

> lot of ways failed me and raised me poorly. These people took me in,

> granted they were paid for it but as physically difficult it was, i

> felt safe. Bruce and surely are good hard working people. I got into

> incredible shape and that has actually followed me for about 15 year,

> I train hard and that physical and mental strength was cultivated from

> things I learned there. I learned how to farm and how to enjoy working

> with my hands. I learned masonry, carpentry and how to farm/irrigate.

> The place was an apple orchard with cherrys, nuts, Almonds, pears,

> asain pares and more. Honestly it was pretty incredible. I can't speak

- > for any employees, or other peoples experiences only mine. It was
- > tough, but it was good and I think Bruce and Shirley marelli are good
- > people. I still call them sometimes. I have known of really horrible
- > programs, I had been to others and know how abusive and mentally
- > devastating they can be. From what I experienced, this place and the
- > people may have been flawed but speaking from what I perceived, these
- > people are good.
- > -Ross