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"Corruption is only as effective as the corrupt
-Diederik van der Veen

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Diederik van Nderveen



Trophy Husband

My time observing the 1% feeding on the 99%

Chapter 13
Cognitive Dissonance

In a thick Japanese accent she said in broken English, “*Me no longer do Nu Skin. Solly, solly... Me no good do MLM ... Me now wolking finance in bank ... Nu Skin no good for me ... Bye bye.*” Mrs. Ayumi’s voice droned through the receiver.

She was number 578 on the list of *former* Nu Skin distributors that I’d called. All of them had left the business. I looked at the name-filled bag on the floor. If I weren’t so exhausted, there were at least another 150 people I could call. For three weeks I dedicated two hours a day to calling Nu Skin distributors who’d left their cards in a large bowl Sandie had placed in her office during Nu Skin conventions. Many had also handed me their cards directly when I met them on our trips to Italy, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Holland, France, Belgium, Sweden, Brazil, Guatemala, Peru, Hong Kong, Florida, New York, Chicago, Korea, Taiwan, Japan, and other places Sandie and I had traveled to promote Nu Skin and meet distributors.

At the time of my calls it had been about five years since I met most of these people, and I had no idea what had happened to them. In many cases either the phone number was out of service or the message I received was a variation on “*Me no longer do Nu Skin, me velly solly.*”

In some cases I got lucky. Several people in Europe and the US were willing to share a bit more about their departure. “What? Nu Skin? Oooh man ... sorry to disappoint you but I left that business years ago. It was a total disaster. I gave it my best for over a year, but I never seemed to get anywhere and it was eating up every penny I owned. I had to get out.”

Yes, you and everyone else I’ve talked to, I thought to myself.

Distributors who didn’t change their numbers or who didn’t mind speaking about their experience told me versions of the following conversation I had with one man: “Yes, I went to the Salt Lake Nu Skin convention. That was wild. What an awesome show!”

“Okay, so you flew in all the way from ...” and I’d insert the appropriate homeland such as Sweden, Germany, or Brazil, “... to be part of the big event. How did things turn out for you after that? Were you happy with the company?” I asked.

“Yes I did, and yes I was. I became an active distributor and worked like hell, and then my down-line just collapsed. It simply wasn’t working even though I did everything my up-line told me to do. I even spent \$15,000 of my own money to make it work — well, to make it *look* like it was working. You know, as a leader you have to look like you’re actually making money to convince anyone in your cold market to even sign up.”

“I’ve heard that a lot,” I’d reply. “What have you been doing since then?”

“Anything *but* Nu Skin or any of those other MLMs. I found websites that spell out the truth, and now I understand the deception. I’ve called all the people in my down-line and apologized.” *Interesting concept, I thought — apologizing to all the people you lured into Nu Skin who had no idea what they were getting into.*

What he told me verified everything I've heard from other individuals associated with Nu Skin. One former Chicago-based distributor who didn't want me to mention her name said, "I only invested about \$2,000, maybe \$3,000, but I lost *all* my friends, and I estranged several family members and wasted about two years of my life. It's simply impossible to get anywhere in that business unless you were one of the early birds —a Tillotson, Roney, or McDermott — or if you're related to one of the founders. Trust me, I've done what I was told to do. I talked to anyone with a heartbeat and invited them to meetings where my up-line would ramble through the same hyped-up opportunity pitches only to watch the people I signed up quit within a year."

The conversation I had with former Hawaiian Blue Diamond Executive Marc B. was particularly revealing because I never thought that once you reach that magic level of income immunity, things could turn against you. "Hey, Marc, how are you?" I asked. "What was it that made you get out of Nu Skin?"

He said, "After Frank Kelley, the Attorney General of Michigan, attacked Nu Skin, calling it an illegal pyramid scheme, my group lost momentum and collapsed. I couldn't keep the growth going, especially when Barbara Walters went on the air with her rants against MLM."

"What was your best month's income bonus?"

"The best I ever did was \$135,000, which was great while it lasted, but it's hard to keep fifteen frontline executives going with the enormous attrition rates."

Marc's challenge wasn't unusual. The attrition that occurs when distributors drop out and are not replaced with more warm bodies is the biggest problem in the MLM world. After that call, I took a look at the charges the Michigan Attorney General made and noticed that he was of course right to call Nu Skin an illegal pyramid scheme, but he failed to point out all the flaws in the system. A big one is the requirement that every distributor must purchase \$100 worth of Nu Skin products every month in order to remain active within the distribution down-line. Blake Roney and Nu Skin Spokesperson Jason Chaffetz never mentioned that in their sales pitches. In other words, Nu Skin *seems* to be a product-oriented sales-driven company, but the reason why most of the products get sold is because the whole distributor force is *required* to buy them month after month, not because there's a huge market of independent consumers out there looking to purchase Nu Skin products.

A corporate investigator contacted me recently about Nu Skin. One of the first things she said was, "I attended a Nu Skin meeting, and a woman stood up and declared that she was going to quit her job as a city bus driver and dedicate all her time and money to Nu Skin. I thought, '*Oh my God, she's going to lose everything!*' The whole deal was sickening and so obviously misleading."

This is exactly what my friend Linda, a forensic scientist in Oslo, said after attending a meeting. "The whole thing reeked of brainwashing and deceit. It's all

about getting people ‘signed up’ and ‘on the product’ and then getting to their warm market — essentially sucking them dry of their money, time, and friendships!”

“This is a sick business,” said another former Nu Skin distributor who described how she had lost everything she put into the company plus all her savings, while Sandie, Nedra, Blake, Steve, and others at the top of the pyramid raked in the millions. “I didn’t get it until it was too late.” The disparity between the lucky few at the top and those at the bottom is striking, to say the least.

According Nu Skin’s own Distributor Compensation Summary for 2011, the average top-tier Blue Diamond Executive made \$48,555 a month (that’s \$582,660 a year), whereas the hundreds of thousands of distributors who make up the bulk of the company averaged a grand total of \$41 a month (that’s \$492 a year). But when you factor in the \$100 a month that each distributor has to spend on Nu Skin products, plus the cost each has to pay to travel, attend meetings, and pay business-related phone bills, the average distributor always ends up in the hole.

After listening to hundreds of variations of these stories, the pattern was clear. Everyone I talked to confirmed the basic MLM principle that vast multitudes must lose money in order for a tiny percentage to prosper. To find out more about this sordid phenomenon, I decided I’d ask someone who is an authority in the world of MLM: Nu Skin’s former President of Pacific Asia, Grant Pace. I really wanted to know if someone as embedded in MLM as Grant would tell me the truth.

During the conversation we had in his living room in Provo, Grant not only confirmed what all those ex-distributors had told me, he provided an even more in-depth understanding of the nature of the problem. By expressing his own concern for the attrition that plagues the entire MLM industry, he earned my respect. He had obviously struggled with this issue and had tried to correct it by advocating reforms to the Nu Skin corporate structure.

Much to my surprise, he told me that Blake Roney had once commissioned a team to research the mental and emotional states of former distributors, people who’d given up and left the company after failing. Blake really wanted to get to the bottom of the attrition problem and find out why so many people quit. He was likely still reeling from the latest domestic class action suits that cost Nu Skin a lot of money and set a very damaging legal precedent. Nu Skin had been cited throughout the court case as a prominent example of what lawyers and judges call a *pyramid scheme or Ponzi scheme*.

“The purpose of this research,” Grant calmly said, “was not only to evaluate the impact of the reality that the success of a few in the MLM industry is built on the backs of many who fail, but we also wanted to get a read on how those failed distributors perceived Nu Skin.” I could understand Blake’s concern. After all, what would happen if these people became so upset that they organized a political and legal campaign that could trigger a *global* class action suit?

The results were surprising to Grant and his team. They hadn't expected such a pervasive lack of concern about the time, money, and effort people had wasted trying to build their Nu Skin businesses. "To our relief, most people don't hold grudges. They don't blame Nu Skin but rather themselves," Grant said.

When I asked Grant why Blake, Sandie, Steve, and all the other Nu Skin corporate leaders didn't purge the deceptive practices from the program, he answered, "But they can't since they're the ones who put it in place for the system to work. Correcting the problem would be like admitting fault and would render the system a loss."

We all know of people, perhaps even friends and family, who have spoken about some deal they've joined or are thinking about getting involved with. Whether this is a business deal or a religion, the recruiting scheme takes advantage of the prospect's weaknesses — a lapse in judgment, a desire for money, or simply a lack of knowledge. None of those prospects, however, gets involved in Nu Skin without being coached and primed by a Nu Skin missionary, a family member or friend who is connected to an up-line sponsor, the type of man or woman who will eat, sleep, breathe, and practice the business 24/7. The opportunists seek someone who can build a global network of leaders who will feed his bonus check non-stop, just as Nathan Ricks described it: "When I wake up, people in Europe have already been churning away eight hours to fill my pockets on their side of the globe, and by the time they sleep, the vigorous US market takes over, only for the Japanese to continue by the time I am drifting off into REM sleep."

I asked Grant, "What do you call a system that feeds less than one tenth of a percent of sign-ups enough money to even call it 'making a living,' let alone a way to early retirement?"

He thought for a moment and said, "I know it's hard to look at the numbers of these compensation plans and feel good about them. That's why I didn't sign up when you asked me to join Synergy World Wide, before you were aware that these systems are a lot of work that most can't do because their way of recruiting is not duplicable and simply doesn't pay off for most who join."

He referred to my short-term involvement with Synergy at a time when I still believed these MLMs actually had the potential to make money honestly. Grant had been between jobs after leaving Nu Skin before he joined Shaklee, and I should have known better than to ask a man who had always been on the corporate side of the MLM business to become a distributor.

The whole world around me was filled with people busy building down-lines, and it just seemed like the natural thing to do. Like believing in a cult, I mindlessly followed what many others were doing and believing. It was only after I started to call all the numbers on the business cards that it all started to come together. After hearing one tragic story after the next, I found information through the internet that led me to

Jon Taylor and Robert Fitzpatrick, and I studied their devastating critiques of the MLM industry. Once I saw the deception of the Nu Skinners, my eyes were opened.

On the day I finally understood the reality of MLM, I looked at my reflection in the mirror and said, ***“The only reason you are talking to people is because you want them to become distributors like yourself, but you’ll continue to lose money unless they all do what you do and recruit others!”***

To hear so many of the people I’d met through Nu Skin confess their plight, some of them sobbing, others angry and resentful, jolted me emotionally. At first I couldn’t believe it, and I kept looking at the numbers and then realized how disturbing it was that the insiders who know the truth actually still go out there and sell Nu Skin as an opportunity. Then feelings of anger and confusion took hold of me, and I wondered how Sandie could explain her own part in all this, knowing that most of the distributors who join Nu Skin have zero chance to succeed.

I wasn’t done — far from it — so I sought the help of Dr. Jon M. Taylor, the author of several books and articles on the MLM industry who holds a PhD in psychology and an MBA degree. Grant had told me that when distributors fail and leave the company, they don’t hold grudges and blame themselves. I asked Jon why this was so, and the answer he gave me explained what goes on in the minds of people when they make a bad judgment call. “Most people wrongly assume that if they failed, it must be because they didn’t work hard enough, or else they neglected to do what it takes to succeed — it’s their fault, not the fault of the system. The mental process is called ‘cognitive dissonance.’ It happens when you commit yourself to something you totally believe in, but when you receive contrary evidence that challenges your beliefs, you refuse to process it. You ignore the reality in favor of the illusion because reality forces you to act out of your comfort zone and acknowledge that you’ve been wrong. The ‘dissonance’ is the psychological discomfort you experience when you hold those two incompatible beliefs in mind simultaneously, before you take refuge in the lie. They’ve done studies on this. One group of people was asked to hammer 100 nails into a board for \$1 per nail, and another group was paid \$20 per nail to do the same thing. Both groups were later asked how they felt about the task. Which group do you think enjoyed the task most, those who got \$1 per nail or those who got \$20?”

I answered, “Well, this is a trick question, but let me say the group who got \$20 per nail.”

“That’s what you might expect,” Jon answered, “but it was the other group, those who got \$1 per nail who were most satisfied with the task. They invented all kinds of reasons why this pointless activity was meaningful and rewarding to them. Some said it was challenging, something that tested their skills or whatever. They came up with reasons for what they did to add value to a menial task. I see ‘cognitive dissonance’ all over this Nu Skin program. People will go to great lengths to find plausible excuses for their failure rather than admit they were wrong. To admit they

were duped by their own friends and family members is harder to swallow than to blame themselves for their loss and move on with life.”

Jon and I corresponded about these issues for some time, and when I later wrote to him, probing for more information about why failed distributors don’t complain to the authorities about Nu Skin’s fraud and deception, he wrote back to explain: “This is one of the issues I have with Nu Skin — and all MLMs — and with both civil and church authorities. As you know, I have gone to great lengths to protest these connections for years. They certainly don’t do the reputation of the church — or of law enforcement — any good. The most important observation I would make in answer to your question is that victims of endless chain recruitment programs almost never complain about their losses to either civil or church authorities — or the Better Business Bureau, for that matter. This is because in the endless chains of MLM, every major victim is of necessity a perpetrator. He/she must recruit others in order to cover the ongoing costs of participation. So if a victim quits, he or she fears the consequences from or to those they recruited — who are often close family and friends. They fear self-incrimination.

“Also, MLM victims have had it drummed into them by promoters (like Nathan Ricks) that success or failure is entirely up to them — not the fault of the program itself — which has the Olympic rings and other important symbols or role models who have allowed their names to be attached to the program. So, MLM (and I include all of them) is the perfect con game. The very persons who are out selling the program to friends and neighbors are themselves victims who drop off the vine and go away quietly.

“In law enforcement, the squeaky wheel gets the grease. No complaints, no law enforcement. And no law enforcement, no complaints. It’s a vicious cycle. What I’ve said about law enforcement applies to the media, the Better Business Bureau (which gets some of its funding from MLMs), and to church and other influential groups. Without more complaints from victims, nothing gets done. It makes me very sad — and is one reason I spend so much time educating victims that their ‘failure’ is not their fault. I hope my explanation helps.”

In my efforts to understand what Nu Skin was doing to the lives of its employees, I wrote to lots of distributors and asked about their experience. One Blue Diamond Executive wrote to defend the company: “I would like to point out that 99% of all actors and models also fail, even those who go to school to study acting and modeling. For every Brad Pitt, there are thousands of exploited hot young boys who never make it. However, there are some who make a part-time living out of it, no? And what about Ebayers who expect to start a store on Ebay? Those statistics don’t paint a rosy picture, either. And let’s not forget all those seminars that teach good folks how to get rich flipping real estate or trading stock. Even Donald Trump was running around the country touting programs like that, and BILLIONS lost! The failure rate for a new restaurant? 87%. Should we sue the culinary schools if a chef

can't make it? The truth is that MLM is a viable business model. There are Nu Skin products I absolutely love and buy. I totally understand where you are coming from, but I feel a balanced view should be presented. I'm sure I could interview star-crossed talent who went to Hollywood only to get eaten up by the machine. It might make for salacious gossip, but Hollywood keeps on keeping on, sex scandals and drugs notwithstanding. As for the premise that the pyramid model doesn't work, that's nonsense. All franchises are based on a percentage and leveraged model. Franchises haven't run out of people to sell to. MLM hasn't either."

I took this person's comments seriously because I understood what she was saying about Hollywood. I can't speak for anyone else, but when I went to Hollywood I took acting classes and went to hundreds of auditions, and I landed 52 jobs. Only one director told me I had a chance to make it big. Actually, all my coaches and plenty of other actors have told me how hard it is and how few ever make it. That's all true. But no one ever asked me to recruit every friend and family member I could find and ask them to invest in acting classes and pour all their savings into the film industry. Nor did anyone promise me stardom and riches. I also never heard of an actor getting exploited and losing thousands of dollars because of a deceptive movie role. I did a lot of films and at least a hundred photo shoots and never heard of anyone being abused by the business. Acting may be tough, but it's honest work. I can't say the same for Nu Skin.

Jon Taylor and Robert Fitzpatrick have pointed out the mathematical reality that it is simply impossible for every Nu Skin distributor to sign up five people, who in turn sign up five more people, each of whom signs up another five people, and so on. These distributors would exhaust the global population within thirteen levels. Contrary to what the leaders of Nu Skin say, there is no amount of hard work that would make it possible for the billions on the thirteenth level to sign up even one more person. In other words, the pyramidal structure of this business has been proven quantitatively impossible. The truth is that the business is designed not so that the masses will make money, but so that only a select few at the top of a huge group of losers will reap large rewards. One look at the published list of top Nu Skin earners, the so-called "Million Dollar Circle," shows that one third of those individuals in the top income level are all members of a handful of elite families. The list is also padded since many individuals are listed more than once, giving the false impression that there are huge numbers of Nu Skinners who are making millions. The padding is even worse in the "Twenty Million Dollar Circle," where eleven names are listed three times, and another seven are listed four times!

My friend George, an ex-distributor in Provo who knows the business well, invited me to dinner to talk about the Nu Skin disease. On my way to his house I did a quick calculation in my head and could hardly believe the result: only one in 4000 people who sign up to do the Nu Skin song and dance actually make any money at it! If I stood next to Blake and Sandie on that Nu Skin stage and surveyed the 16,000

distributors in the Salt Lake auditorium, I could point at four of them and say, “You are the four chosen ones; now go forth and multiply!” I actually hit the nail on the head of the miserable truth. Before I recovered from my first revelation, the next one flashed before my eyes: the other 15,996 wannabes are merely there to nourish and support the lucky four!

After I parked my car and greeted George, we settled into an intense conversation. I asked him how the state of Utah could allow Nu Skin to continue doing business, even after it had been declared a pyramid scheme, and even after it was forced to pay \$1.5 million in civil penalties for violating an FTC order not to engage in false advertising. George answered, “You’ll have to ask Jon Taylor and Robert Fitzpatrick how Nu Skin has skirted around the law so successfully. I’m sure it has to do with political lobbying. Remember that Utah’s Attorney General Mark Shurtleff supported new laws allowing MLMs to continue in the state, and he received a hefty campaign contribution from Nu Skin to support his election. But it’s also clear that the lawmakers have never taken a close enough look at the facts. They never went to the opportunity meetings, and they certainly haven’t looked into Nu Skin’s outlandish claims about its age-reversing products. The Attorney Generals are too easily impressed with Nu Skin’s corporate AAA rating and don’t ask the distributors and corporate lawyers enough questions. If they actually attended the meetings and looked into the business further, there would be no way for this stuff to continue, and Nu Skin would be shut down pronto!”

The Canadian class action lawsuit against Nu Skin that ended in favor of the plaintiff, Natalie Capone, awarded damages for personal loss and suffering, but most of the government agencies spent too much time listening to the hyper-slick jargon of Nu Skin attorneys and what they kept pumping out of their hats. George added, “It’s time Wall Street analysts and government agents did a total bottom-up review of the actual experience of the 99.94% who lose and never see a dime. The first thing that would reveal itself is the non-duplicability of the deal and the fact that most products are shipped at the end of the month, right before the deadline for each distributor’s required monthly purchase, indicating that this is an opportunity-driven and not a product-driven scam.” George then predicted, “Once lawmakers attend these hype- and BS-stacked meetings and experience the entire process first-hand, it will trigger a whole new level of scrutiny, and that’s exactly what your book should initiate.”

George said to me, “You asked me how these guys can build a company like Nu Skin and feel good about it. I may have the answer.” This was what I had been waiting for. Would he actually be able to break it down?

“For Nu Skin it all starts with religion — in this case the Mormon religion. Before Nu Skin, Amway used their religious system to create what amounted to a sales cult. In the Mormon religion you’re trained from early on to argue away rational reasons not to believe the Mormon story, and through years of indoctrination you’re made to believe that ‘the spirit talks to you.’ You get into a state of mind where you

feel that so long as you have a nice story to tell, and so long as that story feeds the Church lots of money and your family is happy and things keep growing, it doesn't matter that for the few who make it, many thousands lose."

He went on. "Remember when I told you about my youth, a time when I was told all the lies about Mormonism? Well, think about it. In order for me to believe all the nonsense about how Joseph Smith translated those golden plates, I had to argue away some major healthy feelings of disbelief and confusion. Once anyone can argue away common sense, anything goes at that point. Look at how Nu Skin has been sued and reprimanded for taking advantage of people all around the world. Blake and all the other scammers still climb up on stage and say, 'Don't sign up dishonest people,' while Blake is the most dishonest of them all!"

Whoa! I was floored! Did George just tell me that the man who conducted my marriage ceremony to Sandie, the man who promoted himself as a Saint and who is now preparing to go on a Mormon mission to France, is a fraud? Yes he did!

I sat quietly for a few seconds and realized that I could come up with nothing to contradict George's statements. He was right. Despite the rhetoric used in the class action suits, in addition to the damaging facts I'd heard from former distributors, it was still hard for me to grasp the enormity of the deception. "Look, D, these guys live and die for their Church. They gladly take the high positions the general Church authorities offer them, partly because they donate millions to the Mormon cause. Instead of being excommunicated for running a scam, it's people like Jon Taylor who fear being kicked out for going against his leaders. Steve Lund is now a General Authority in the Church, and Jon Taylor *cannot* speak ill of his leaders, lest he be punished. Dallin H. Oaks said it on the PBS *Mormons* program, 'It's wrong to criticize the leaders of the Church even if the criticism is true.' It's sick and it's true. It's the power of money and brainwashing."

We stood on George's back deck and looked out over the lights of the valley. I asked him if he could explain why Utah is such a hotbed for MLM.

"Again, the Amway founders started all of this misery and tinkered with the laws long enough to make it stick. The founders of these MLM programs are religious zealots, and that's exactly what inspired their sales strategy. In these religious communities, you learn how to parrot a line of doctrine and use it to bring others around to your way of thinking. During our missionary training, we were taught to scan people's faces and look for signs of gullibility, for any weakness that might allow you to penetrate their defenses. We were programmed to sell religion to total strangers. A good evangelist makes a great salesman. I know about this, D, since I was a Mormon and I've done it!"

It took George about an hour to go through his entire explanation of how being a Mormon sets you up to become a perfect sales machine. "If you change the labels and the names on the LDS-issued pamphlets with Nu Skin logos and recruiting mantras, then you can be in business within hours. Just replace the promise of eternal

life in the Kingdom of Heaven with financial freedom, and you have a winner of a sales pitch. It's a capitalist dream grounded in religious psychology."

It was amazing to hear him describe the obvious parallels between the way religious groups operate and the recruiting techniques employed by Nu Skin. "One system bleeds over into the next. A Mormon kid who learns to walk on stage and proclaim his faith in the Church has a lot less trouble speaking to strangers, especially if he has been groomed at the Missionary Training Center. If you still don't believe me when I say the LDS Church and Nu Skin are bedfellows, just drive down to Center Street in Provo and see for yourself. Occupying the same block are the Nu Skin headquarters and the burnt-out Provo Tabernacle, which is currently being renovated into a Mormon Temple."

George gestured for me to follow him for dinner. I thought dinner might slow him down, but I must have hit a nerve because he launched right into an explanation of why ex-Nu Skin distributors have never organized themselves and filed a massive complaint. "It's because your friend Jon Taylor is right. It's all about cognitive dissonance. Distributors who have failed to succeed brought in others who also failed and see themselves as perpetrators and are not willing to step forward and call attention to their failings and lack of judgment. It's the exact same mental mechanism that keeps Mormons from leaving the Church."

I remembered how Jon had told me the same thing. "People will try to hold on to their established beliefs of possible success and try to ignore the hard reality for the sake of feeling okay about it when reality tells them they have been misled."

George finished his dessert and said, "The only real pyramid that the modern-day tribes of distributors ever get to see is the abusive compensation plan that Jon told you about. It feeds only the very few on top over the backs of the suckered-in masses who vanish anonymously into thin air, since only the chosen few will be heralded on the Nu Skin stages around the world."

I was getting nauseous. I asked if we could go out on the deck again and look across the valley. He nodded and put his arm around me and said, "I know it's hard for you to realize that your ex-wife is a stone-cold abuser, someone who profits from the misfortune of millions. Look at the way she treated her ex-lovers, how she treated you — just because she can. No one is stopping her. Meanwhile, you're getting calls from investigators for a reason. People on Wall Street are also sick and tired of Nu Skin's abuse."

He stepped a few paces, then turned around and said, "You know, I'm concerned about you. I am serious. These people will go to great lengths to make sure that your book gets pulled off the shelves, or they will do what it takes to discredit you. One thing I know for sure, you are not going to just walk away from this without more pain and misery. All they care about is making more money. I know who Sandie is, and I know the others. You're in for a treat, D. Are you ready for it? You're not just dealing with a corrupt bunch of Nu Skinners. You will also piss off the LDS

Church, not simply for exposing the nasty deal that it is, but for going after a company that sponsors them.”

I took a moment to let all of this sink in. I saw his normally chipper mood had become somber. He took a deep breath and said, “There’s a lot about the LDS Church you don’t know, that many don’t know. Even ordinary Mormons have no idea these things exist, such as a ‘Second Anointing’ or ‘Calling and Election Made Sure.’ It’s a ceremony performed in a temple by special invitation only. Those who receive this extra confirmation of their status within the Church are usually wealthy and have been Stake Presidents or Mission Presidents. In practical terms, it gives them immunity to do whatever is necessary to further the work of the Lord. If you continue to write your book and you actually get it done, and upon its release it has the impact you are trying to have, I will not be surprised if someone among these zealous freaks will go after you. The LDS Church makes millions from Nu Skin, and they’re not going to allow you to simply reveal the truth and walk away.

“Think about it. Sandie makes millions per month. She knows you could have taken her to the cleaners during the divorce, but you didn’t. She knows how hard and deeply emotional it has been for you not to see your daughter, essentially because you were too kind and naïve in your handling of the divorce. Even your daughter has been verbal about missing you. Despite all of that, Sandie still doesn’t come to fair terms to permit a healthy father–daughter relationship. That should tell you something. Then there’s Blake, about to become a Mission President for three years. And Steve, he’s already been a Mission President and is now elevated as a General Authority. You’re about to tell the world to look into the insanities of the Nu Skin scam and also expose the Church, and to make matters worse, you’re also drawing attention to Mitt Romney’s financial connections to Nu Skin. Do you see what’s at stake here?”

For a moment, I didn’t know what to think. Was I getting myself too deep in dangerous waters? Was this all going to end well for my daughter and me? What was I going to do about it?

I felt the old, all-too-familiar cramps in my stomach once again. Throughout the marriage and the years following the divorce, I’ve had spells of anxiety whenever I had to deal with Sandie. It always baffled me that ramming a yacht straight into 40-foot breaking waves during a storm on the South Atlantic was a lot easier than riding the choppy sea of emotions fueled by manipulation and fear — fear of losing close contact with my daughter. It had been years since the divorce, and life had been an emotional hell. Several people had warned me about my daughter’s wellbeing, and I was unable to do anything about it. Sleepless nights, stomach cramps, and mood swings were all part of my life since leaving Utah, and now, with the help of my friends, the emotional, logistical minefield of my life was laid out before me. I suddenly saw more clearly what I was dealing with.

I looked at George and said, “I’ve already told my close friends that if anything happens to me, they should go ahead and publish the book without me. If that’s the

way I have to go, so be it. I will not let a bunch of abusers get away with it. I will send them and the rare Nu Skin distributor, the 0.06% who made it happen, a signed copy of my book, a bottle of alcohol, and a fuse — since they've beaten the odds it's time to celebrate. What is more fun than to burn a book filled with truths?"

George smiled, shook his head, and said, "I think you're onto something. You are the Trojan horse about to present the material compiled by people like Robert Fitzpatrick and Jon Taylor into the public eye. I expect to see a lot of people come to your support. Maybe then lawmakers will take a closer look and strip the great American flag off of the Nu Skin building and show the world who they really are! I got your back, D — just don't give up."

\$500

Reward [CLICK HERE](#)



Mr Logic *Apr 19th, 2012 @ 03:17 AM*

Years and years ago my girlfriend and I went to speak to a couple that advertised about selling Amway in the local paper. My girlfriend was interested in making some extra money and wanted me to attend since she thought it might be a rip-off...this was late 70's and Amway was in its infancy. They got us pretty hipped up, but I would not commit since I knew nothing about their product and its quality, I said; "We cannot sell something we do not believe in". With that the couple gave us hundreds of dollars of sample products for us to try, and than were to return the samples to them. The next day we tried out the products, especially the cleaning supplies, and they held no special properties above what were already in our cabinets. Actually, good old Mr Clean worked much better. We than analyzed the numbers and the amount of effort it would take to recruit the number of people we needed to quit our jobs...we realized we could start off with family and friends, but after that we'd need major advertising and much money to continue. I came to the conclusion that this was probably a pyramid scheme and not only did we not get involved, we kept the sample products and told the couple to f*ck-off.

We are prob one of the few people who scammed the scammers at Amway. Good luck with your book and expose these sociopath for what they really are, greedy, selfish lairs. And I'm not surprised of the religious background, the biggest scam there has ever been.



Jodi Armstrong *Apr 16th, 2012 @ 01:51 AM*

I was directed here from another forum. Very interesting stuff, Mr. Diederik. I

applaud you for having the cojones to take on a corporation of this size. Good for you. These MLM's need to be put out of business. If you don't mind, I'd like to post this link on my Facebook page. I'll be back.



H. Barton Apr 12th, 2012 @ 04:01 PM

I enjoyed reading this, a bit long, but kept me enthralled. Unbelievable how long this 'business' has stayed afloat. Do people really buy into their bs, greed-driven sales pitch? Of the few Mormons I've had the unfortunate experience of dealing with, they seem to all come from the same mold. Always proselytizing their silly cult. I am surprised they don't send out their spawn on missions with a case full of Nu Skin products. I can't wait to read your book! Great title, by the

way 😊



Steve DiMaggio Apr 12th, 2012 @ 09:03 AM

Diederick,

For years I have heard Richard Kall and Nathan Ricks blantly lie. I am so glad you have the balls to expose these scammers. My wife and I are super pissed about losing \$18.000

Keep going...!

Steve DiMaggio, NYC



Goos T. Apr 12th, 2012 @ 08:10 AM

Hi Diederik,

It is great to finally read something from the stories you have told me.

This chapter is awesome to read. I am looking forward to get my own copy of your book!

We'll keep in touch.

Goos



Janet Apr 12th, 2012 @ 03:27 AM

I have always known NuSkin to be a garbage product with very aggressive sales tactics. Their MLM business model is quite the scam, yes, and I am still amazed at how people continue to be suckered into this Ponzi scheme. It may have made the founders and their families very wealthy, but I can guarantee that their cardcastle will collapse....it's only a matter of time. Doesn't matter how many politicians they keep in their back pocket...the truth will be exposed, and karma will catch up to them. It always does. I emailed you my info. and experience with NuSkin, and am looking forward to joining your crusade. Keep up the good work!



Zack Apr 11th, 2012 @ 10:55 AM

As a real Christian, I'm really ashamed about what these people do to drive their business.

I think it takes the right amount of public disposure to get them out of business.

Please go on and let the public know that MLM is a sin and a curse of greed.

Zack



Frank Stegmüller Apr 11th, 2012 @ 10:46 AM

Vielen Dank. War ueber viele Jahre Nu-Skin Distributor und verstehe jetzt erst warum ich nie Geld gemacht habe.

Was fuer eine Scheisse !!!

Wunderbar dass Du den Mut hast diese Leute jetzt am Pranger zu stellen. Nur weiter so....!!!



Willem Ten Bengevoort Apr 10th, 2012 @ 02:23 PM

Finally some one stands out and has the balls to say out loud what others didn't dare to say:

MLM is a fraud, only a few will make money, the rest is feeded upon. Keep up the good work Diederick

Willem



Diederik Apr 5th, 2012 @ 12:20 PM

P.S. Smooshy, I understand from your angle what you're saying, but if you were standing next to the pile of information that I have including the personal details and corporate deception as well as the blatant lies systematically promulgated by the leading distributors and how the Mormon church is symbiotically intertwined within, you may actually think my little chapter is very sanitary. The whole book, however, will not be. Just to give you an indication, I've got Wall Street investigators calling me weekly and none of questions they're asking about these Nu Skinners want me to answer.

None of what these guys are doing is either Christ-like or adheres to the vision of the founding fathers.

I've been reasonable and kind to all of them but that's apparently not appreciated.



Diederik Apr 5th, 2012 @ 11:49 AM

To Smooshy, Thanks for taking the time to read my chapter and post. It may be boring to you but if you are a distributor wondering why you aren't making any

money, like 99.94% of everybody that ever signed up in Nu Skin, you may find this one chapter very enlightening; and this is just one chapter out of 40 that will tell you about the personal lifestyles fed by these 99.94% losses and the political lobbying to keep it going.

You will also read that when anyone stops reading the Deseret approved literature and sniffs through the real scientific data not much of what Jo Smith pulled out of his little overstuffed hat has any base of adherence. So you can believe whatever you want, but trust me when I'm done with my little prose the whole world will view this kind of business and Mormonism in a whole new light.

There are thousands of ex-Mormons to back me up and ready to add a lot more stuff to it that will blow your sensitive mind. Then are many scientists who will back up everything I have to say about Nu Skin. So looking at it from my point of view the feast is only beginning.

-Diederik



Smooshy Apr 5th, 2012 @ 10:01 AM

This is really long and kind of boring. Also, I think it's a bit sad that you are parroting tired old arguments about MLM from tired old critics. Everyone has a story and an opinion on this...some positive, some negative.

But what's truly despicable is your mischaracterization of the Mormon church and it's role. It's cool if you don't believe in their teachings...a lot of people don't. But to suggest that Mormon's and their teachings are to blame for anyone's bad experience with MLM is absurd and the very definition of bigotry.

It's really too bad that you feel like to settle a personal vendetta, you need to drag others and their deeply held convictions through the mud.



James Apr 4th, 2012 @ 12:56 PM

D,

Well you finally got it going and launched the first truth cannon! I can hear the MLM's squirming in their fancy leather office chairs paid for by the backs and failures of their distributors. No one can hide from the numbers cause statistics and calculation is what it is. Talked to my lawyers for you and we got your back if they think they can shut down your right to free speech and your personal story, so don't worry and keep blasting the truth cannons cause I can hear the wall starting to come down and the screams of the Nu-Skin elite as the iron curtain starts to fall down on them. I heard Sandie is stepping down as a board-member or should we say pushed out by her kin. This will become a juggernaut and it will take a life of it's own after you release the first 10,000 books. I'm sure Wall Street is watching and paying attention. This book was long overdue and you let them slide long enough with your kind soul and nature. Just think that if Sandie had just let you be with and nurture the relationship with your

daughter Sophia you would have left sleeping dogs lay and just continued being a good father. I guess it is your destiny and purpose to expose these corrupt, misleading and truly criminal practices, bringing them to an end or at least into the light so people are totally aware that it is a sham-scam from jump-street! What they did to you and your daughter is just sickening! Keep up the good fight and don't stop for anyone or anything. We have your back here on the east coast.

Stay strong my friend and defend the truth, cause it is that which truly sets you free!

J


* indicates required field

* Name:

* E-mail: (this will not be published on the website)


Website: (must start with http:// or www.)

* Comment: maximum characters **2500**, **2500** remaining




Git-r-done

I know a lot of people who were some of the 15,996. I wish they'd read your chapter. I sent the link to a few people but they d that alot. But thats what happens when you ruffle some feathers. I say keep going and Git-r-Done!



Rob Sivulka

Thanks for referencing my site! I really enjoyed reading this chapter, and look forward to reading your whole book someday! connections between Mormonism and MLMs. Keep on keeping on! Truth is more important than popularity, riches, and eve matters. I'm sorry for what you had to go through and what you're going through now with your family and friends, but I know you'll ult your X as well as your daughter. God bless you for taking the hits! I pray God will use this to draw people out of financial/religious sca



Mary

Yes, I would agree you are wandering into dangerous territory, but please don't stop writing! I live in Utah county and this dis look forward to your book release.

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