

‘Uncomfortable’ but Necessary: Dan Orlovsky Explains Why He Prayed for Hamlin Live on ESPN

More than two-and-a-half years have passed since Buffalo Bills safety Damar Hamlin suffered cardiac arrest during a game, yet the memory of ESPN analyst Dan Orlovsky’s spontaneous, live-television prayer continues to inspire fans who believe in the power of faith.

Orlovsky, a former NFL quarterback, paused ESPN’s “NFL Live” the day after Hamlin’s collapse and told viewers, “I heard the Buffalo Bills organization say that ‘We believe in prayer,’ and maybe this is not the right thing to do, but it’s just on my heart, and I want to pray for Damar Hamlin right now.” He then bowed his head and prayed aloud: “God, we come to you in these moments that we don’t understand ... We just want to pray ... for strength for Damar, for healing for Damar, for comfort for Damar. Be with his family to give him the peace.”

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That clip quickly spread across social media, and the overwhelmingly positive reaction “%” affirmed his decision, as reported by Fox News.



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Still, Orlovsky admitted on the “Awful Announcing” podcast that publicly praying was “uncomfortable,” knowing that “prayer is ‘not for everyone.’” But he felt compelled: “Someone should actually pray for Damar, like actually pray

for him, instead of saying thoughts and prayers. ... God's telling you, go pray for Damar."

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Emails and texts from skeptics arrived, yet Orlovsky said "overwhelmingly, I think a lot of people just connected, and it resonated with [them]." ESPN offered no reprimand, and he recalls "an overwhelmingly positive" response from the network itself.

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Hamlin, hospitalized for roughly a week, returned to action in the Bills' 2024 opener and has since reestablished himself in Buffalo's defense, a testament, Orlovsky believes, to the impact of collective prayer. For countless viewers, his televised prayer remains a reminder that public faith can encourage unity, hope and healing when tragedy strikes.

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