

## **IT COULD BE YOU – PODCAST - NOTES**

Time: NOON – 26<sup>th</sup> of June, 2024 (2PM central Time) – Wednesday.

### **SUMMARY:**

These are Dan's notes and comments from the podcast. Not everything below was mentioned or covered during the Podcast so this supplements what was not discussed.

### **INTRODUCTION:**

My name is Dan Wright, I live in Oregon, I am the co-founder of CAGE. Our son was arrested in a 2016 sex sting operation. Net Nanny #5 in Thurston County, Washington State.

### **FORMATION OF CAGE:**

CAGE: Citizens Against Government Entrapment

Contact info: [www.cage.fyi](http://www.cage.fyi), [info@cage.fyi](mailto:info@cage.fyi)

Formed: 2020

Details:

- Anyone can join up – no members fees, we are just a loose collective of individuals fighting these stings. We have a mailing/reply list we use to convey information. We currently hold two meetings a month (1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday's of the month). We will likely go to one meeting in 2025.
- No fees, dues, etc. We have been in contact with Florida Action Committee and NARSOL. Some others as well over the years (WAR, Reset Missouri, some others).

### **CAGE MISSION / GOAL:**

- Stop the stings as they are being conducted (proactive).
  - o They are not doing what they claim to be doing (targeting men seeking minors).
- Educate people about these stings (e.g. Books, Articles, Podcasts, etc.)
- Help make things right. Diversion, changes laws, etc.

Overall **Goal** is to help others through the process and provide information and support. Generally, no one is winning in trial, best to resolve quickly to move on with life. In Oregon resolution is more reasonable (30 days in jail or none and 36 months' probation for luring a minor). In WA State typically 5 years in prison with Felony A (lifetime CC) or Felony B (36 months CC). Prosecutors really strong on these. Almost impossible to win. More than 90% arrested end up with some form of Felony AND a Sex Offence so they must register for 10, 15 or more years.

No one stands a chance alone. **Ecclesiastes 4:12** says "Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken." I knew the only way to fight these STINGS was STRENGTH IN NUMBERS. To find others in similar situation and LEVERAGE their knowledge, their cases, their research. To stand on the shoulder of others. By doing this I and other like minded individuals were able to get together to form CAGE.

### **CAGE HISTORY:**

This is a brief history of CAGE and how it got started.

#### **Sept 2016:**

- Dan met Bruce in front of the jail as we both awaited our 20-year old sons, arrested in the weekend sting operation, to be released. We just so happened to talk to one another and stayed in touch throughout the process.
- Started building connections after this with others impacted by STING operations.

#### **June 2017:**

- Creation of the website SS Repentance (<http://ssrepentance.com/>) a website tracking and providing research information on these sex stings.
  - o The website tracked major sting operations from about 2015 to 2023. Stopped recently – too frequent and increasing in number.

#### **July 2018:**

- Met Kathleen thanks to FAC website – Florida Action Committee
- More advocacy born as she fought for her son Jace and his sentencing.
- Kathleen’s site: <https://ladyjusticemyth.blog/> was started around May 2018.

#### **Sept 2018:**

- Met Aracely also via the FAC website.
- Aracely and her son appeared on the Dr. Phil show in 2020.

#### **July 2020:**

- Our FIRST Meeting. We were called “Washington Citizens Speak Out” WACSO.
- In NOVEMBER we changed over to CAGE. (Nov 22<sup>nd</sup> to be exact).
- Early on we had meeting EVERY WEEK.

#### **Aug 2020:**

- NY Times Magazine Article went live (this was A LONG time in the making).
- Included 3 stories – Chapman, Hambrick, and Wright (ours).
- Concentrated on Washington Net Nanny Stings

#### **Nov 2020:**

- Creation of CAGE Website (Re-branded under CAGE and had first meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> November).
- Bruce, Dan and Kathleen make up the co-founders of CAGE.
- We make sure to go live before Dr. Phil show aired.
- Had a Meeting every week in these days and for a few years.

#### **Dec 2020:**

- Dr Phil TV show has Sting show (December 7<sup>th</sup>).
- Aracely and her son Sebastian and Kathleen and her son Jace were on the show.

#### **2021:**

- Met Bonnie (~March 2021) who wrote a book “Manufacturing Criminals: Fourth Amendment Decay in the Electronic Age” that was published in Dec 2020.
- Norm’s case was discussed in the book and Norm helped write/edits parts of the book.
- A LOT of MEDIA and articles were posted to the website related to stings.

#### **Sept 2022:**

- Presentation before WA State Sex Offender Policy Board.
  - o To get recommendations for legislature – Diversion program.

#### **June 2023:**

- In Washington State this was commissioned in 2021-2023 budget to study sex stings.
- WSIPP Study released. We were hoping this report would help encourage Legislature to work on Diversion programs as a result of this study.
- CAGE provided Rebuttal – over all results was disappointing and we pointed out issues with the study.
  - o <https://cage.fyi/legislation/>
  - o [https://www.wsipp.wa.gov/ReportFile/1767/Wsipp\\_Internet-Stings-and-Operation-Net-Nanny\\_Report.pdf](https://www.wsipp.wa.gov/ReportFile/1767/Wsipp_Internet-Stings-and-Operation-Net-Nanny_Report.pdf)

**Sept 2023:**

- Jace has retrial and wins full acquittal.

**Jan 2024:**

- Our son, Ezra, gets post-conviction resolution (due to a strong PRP). PRP expenses exceeded \$30k.
- Lowered sentence from Felony A with lifetime CC down to Felony C, time served, probation (12 months) complete. Still has registration requirement. This put his charge in line with about 10% of the sentencing.
  - o This was AFTER having served full 50 month sentences (10% off for earned time).
  - o Between arrest and trial was almost 2.5 years.

**June 2024:**

- We only have 2 meetings a month.
- July will mark our 4<sup>th</sup> year doing meetings.
- November will be 4 years CAGE has existed.

**CAGE WEBSITE AND ADVOCACY:****Website details:**

- Details on stings in other states – concentrate on WA State
- Legislative action
- Media details we have been involved in or following related to stings.
  - o Podcast, Dr. Phil show, NY Times Mag article
  - o NARSOL conference – Kathleen participated in this years (2024) with a presentation.
  - o Books, articles, etc.

**Advocacy:**

- We have been able to help a few and point them in the right direction.
- There are over 300 cases in WA State. We have been able to help a few. Information is key and we share with anyone who reaches out.
- We have written many (either in jail, prison or at home) to try and reach out and provide support and point them in the right direction—get a good lawyer, get all discovery, get an investigator to go through evidence, work to get a dismissal and or best resolution possible. Do everything you can to get out of highest felony charge and lifetime community custody.

## **SEX STINGS:**

General information on these internet child sex stings include:

- Most are bait and switch. Acting as a minor (often 13-year-old). Or MOM/DAD pimping their kids.
- Always a vagueness to them.
- Always pictures that do not seem underage.
- People often follow through (travel) to try and determine what is reality.

### ***What are the top 1-2 “red flags” that should warn a person that they are getting into a sting operation?***

- Anytime the person changes their age from ADULT (18+) to minor (15 or younger).
  - o This is 100% law enforcement on the other end.
  - o A real teen would NEVER do this, especially not upfront. If they were underage they would keep the age in the legal realm (16-18 years old). Yes, we have seen cases like this.
- They will say they are not a cop/police/law enforcement and ask if you are a cop/law enforcement if you do not bring it up first.
  - o The goal here is to get you to drop your guard. Apparently people still believe the police can not lie (they can and do and are allowed to deceive).

### ***What are the top 1-2 “buttons” sting operators usually “push” to keep a person involved, right up to an arrest?***

- They are VERY quick to keep the conversation going (not typical).
- They will do their best to steer the conversation (to sex), meeting location, rules, etc.
  - o Trust your gut, if something seems strange you are probably dealing with a scammer or law enforcement.
- They will try to “shame” you if you turn away or will try to “manipulate” you to turn away.
- They will tend to re-engage and force the conversation back to sex – any other talk will stall/stop the conversation.

## **IN CONCLUSION:**

- We (CAGE) DO NOT like the aggressive nature of these stings.
- We (CAGE) DO NOT like that they are done on Adult Dating and Hookup sites.
  - o We REALLY want to stop what law enforcement is doing; this is bait and switch and not targeting those seeking to sexually exploit or abuse minors. This is NOT addressing the real problem.
- We know they are using grants (ICAC) and outside money (O.U.R.) to help fund and continue these stings.
- They are NOT pulling in predators but catching many off their guard who ARE NOT seeking minors.
  - o Perhaps 10% of whom they do catch could potentially be or have any history of sexual assault.
- There is sentencing disparity. In WA State the WSIPP Study show similar sentencing for sting vs hands on.
  - o There is NO diversion option.
  - o Only 1% of the cases are resolved without felony or registration.
  - o Less than 10% are resolved with minimal sentences (0-3mo jail, registry, felony C).
  - o Over 75% take pleas, 20% go to trial and 95% lose in trial.