

February 27,2023

David DeLapa

Boy Scout

I want to thank Bill Seitz and Jessica Miranda for sponsoring H.B. 55. I also want to thank all the co-sponsors. Isaacsohn, Baker, Forhan, Lipps, Brown, Brennan, Hillyer, Weinstein, White, Gross, Click, T Young, Denson, Leader Russo, Upchurch and Williams, for doing God's Work.

I wrote my story back in 2020 when I was 64 years old. My abuse occurred in the fifth and sixth grade. The school years of 1967 through 1969.

I will try to stay on track as it relates to the physical, psychological, emotional, and economic effects the abuse had on my life thinking back, but not knowing it at the time.

My story begins in the fifth grade, I was asked to come up front of the classroom while the other kids left the room when school was over. I was going to be paddled for something I did. Mr. Dalton paddled me; we went over to his desk, and he sat down in his chair. Mr. Dalton pulled me over and bent me over his lap. He rubbed my butt with my pants on and said now that did not hurt did it. I said no. He pulled my pants down and spanked me some more and he rubbed my butt. Mr. Dalton then pulled my pants back up. He told me that he would not call my parents to tell them about my paddling and my behavior in class if I kept quiet. Mr. Dalton sent me away to catch the bus.

This sexual behavior continued two, three or even more times every week during school. Mr. Dalton would always paddle me first, never to hard. Always after a paddling he would pat my butt, and we would go over to his desk, sit in the chair, and he would play with my butt with my pants on or pulled down. Mr. Dalton would also rub my penis while sitting on his lap with my pants on or with my pants pulled down.

Mr. Dalton would ask me to come up front while the other kids left for lunch, recess, or when school let out. I would sometimes just stay in my seat knowing what was going to happen, because I just knew. I would be slow in getting up so the other kids would get in front of me to leave the room. I would always be called before I got to the door. You just knew what he wanted.

Sometimes, I would miss my bus and he would take me home. On those drives home, he would have me pull my pants down and he would play with my butt and my penis. On one of those times Mr. Dalton came into the house to meet my parents. When Mr. Dalton had left. My parents asked me out right if Mr. Dalton had ever touched me in any way. That question just came from nowhere. I was petrified and scared, I told my parents no and they asked me if I was sure, I said no he has not. I was so scared that I was going to get in so much trouble if I said something.

Sometimes Mr. Dalton would ask me if I wanted to touch him. He said it was ok. Sometimes he would grab my hand, and with his hand on my hand, he would rub my hand across his penis.

Mr. Dalton would have sleepovers at his house with the boys that were in the scout troop. During these sleepovers, Mr. Dalton would call a boy to his room.

On one of those occasions, Mr. Dalton called for me to come in and asked me to pull his boots off for him, which I did. After pulling his boots off, he asked me to sit next to him on the side of the bed, which I did. We started talking and he started to rub his hand on my legs and my back. Mr. Dalton started to undress me, and he laid me down on the bed. Mr. Dalton started to rub my body down including rubbing my penis, rubbing between my legs, and had me rollover to rub my butt. Mr. Dalton lay down next to me and he pressed up against my backside, took my hand, stuck it on his penis, and asks me to rub it. When Mr. Dalton was done with me, I went back to my sleeping bag.

I went to Boy Scout camp for two summers, the summers of fifth and sixth grade. During these trips, I had a great time during the day with the boys. After dinner and when it got dark out on multiple occasions during both summers, Mr. Dalton would call for me. Meaning that another scout would find me and tell me that Mr. Dalton wanted to see me in his tent.

Mr. Dalton would like before undress me, lay me down on his bed and start playing with my penis, my butt, and rubbing the rest of my body. This rubbing went on for a long time with him just touching me where he wanted. After a while, Mr. Dalton would lay behind me and press up against me with his pants on and kept on pressing up against me while rubbing my penis. After that, he would grab my hand and ask me to rub his penis. After a while of that, he pulled his pants down and had me rub him again. After having me rub him, he continued rubbing my penis

and he started to rub my hole with his fingers. After a while of that, Mr. Dalton would try to stick his penis in me. I kept telling him it hurt, and I would try to push him back with my one hand, trying to push his penis away (out) from my butt. It did not work; Mr. Dalton was a big, tall man, at least to me at the time. I do not know how far he got it in me, but I do know I was hurting, and I started to cry.

This went on most of the night. When Mr. Dalton was done with me, we got dressed and we talked for a bit reassuring me everything was ok. Mr. Dalton cleaned me up and sent me to my tent. He told me to be very quiet as I walked back as not to wake anyone up since we were not allowed out of our tents at night.

This went on several times during each week I went to summer camp with the boy scouts.

During Summer Camp in the summer of six grade going into seventh grade, I had enough. I felt that people knew what was going on by the way they looked at me and some of the boys would make comments to me like what were you doing in Mr. Dalton's tent? I would ignore it and run off.

After the summer of fifth grade, Mr. Dalton was not my teacher anymore and Boy Scout camp was over. I enjoyed the rest of my summer vacation, all the while thinking about what was going to happen to me next year going into the sixth grade. I convinced myself that everything was going to be ok, and I would be safe, since I was on the third floor and my old fifth grade class was on the second floor.

I would run into Mr. Dalton several times a week in the lunchroom or on recess and we would talk. Sometimes he would ask me to come to his room after school would let out. Mr. Dalton would be waiting for me near the stairs as I came down from the third floor. I would make eye contact with him; I would follow him into his classroom. As mentioned above the same abuse occurred during my school year of the sixth grade. Sometimes I would miss my bus because I was with Mr. Dalton in his classroom. Mr. Dalton would take me home, and the touching as I mentioned above would continue.

The last time I was abused by Mr. Dalton was the summer of 1969 after sixth grade was over at Boy Scout camp. I remember it as if it happened yesterday. I remember getting in my parent's car sitting in the back seat in the middle of the station wagon, thinking to myself I am finally done. No more Bath Grade School, no more boy

scouts, and no more camp. I was going into the Junior High School next year, and Mr. Dalton could not get me. I remember looking up, looking at my dad's face in the rearview mirror and then I looked over to my mom's back of her head, and I said to them I do not want to go to camp next year. I remember looking at my dad's eyes in the mirror, my mom turned around and asks me why. I told them that it's just not any fun anymore. I never told them the truth why.

I estimated a few months back that Mr. Dalton abused me on the low end about 117 times and on the high end about 153 times by doing the math. Either way it's too much for any kid to bear. Looking back, no wonder, I am a cold, non-emotional person.

In the summer of fifth grade, my parents took me to the YMCA in Cuyahoga Falls for swimming lessons. They made you take all your clothes off and you marched out to the pool, stood on the side of the pool naked until they told you to jump in. I was shaking inside; I was afraid something was going to happen to me like with Mr. Dalton. When I got in the car, I told my dad that they made you swim with no clothes on, he said yeah, that's what they do there. Every swimming lesson I had that summer I would coward down and hide in the locker room the whole time or until someone came in and dragged me out to the pool. I was so scared, I was petrified, it was a nightmare for me. I wasn't abuse but just the thought of it was gut wrenching.

The abuse made me so afraid of adults that it changed my entire life as a young person, as a father and a husband. Some examples, I would not go out for sports. For one reason, and only one reason only, I didn't go out for sports was, because I could never bring myself to go into a locker room. I was too afraid what might happen to me in there. I was afraid to take a shower; I didn't want to be touch. I didn't want to put myself in a position of the past. I could not ever overcome that fear of being in a public shower/locker room.

At the end of the summer of 1969 after Boy Scout camp, I became very depressed because I quit boy scouts. I wanted to become an Eagle Scout, but I just couldn't go back. I was ashamed of what I had done, and what I thought others might know. When I entered seventh grade at Eastview, I was a bitter kid, I lost interest in school, developed a smart-ass mouth, got detentions in school, and was suspended several times.

By the end of the summer of seventh grade, I was smoking cigarettes, drinking some beer, and had smoked pot. This behavior continued to grow and by the tenth grade, I was getting high walking to the bus stop, smoking cigarettes in the restroom at school between classes and being a drunk on the weekends.

By the end of tenth grade, I asked my parents if I could go to another school, I told them that there were too many drugs there, and I wanted to get away from it. I enrolled in St. Vincent St. Mary's High School. I met a lot of nice people. I still drank and smoked pot, and still didn't give a damn about my grades. At best from junior high through high school my grades were D's at best, with a few C's mixed in. Sometimes they were all F's, but I did manage to squeak by to the next grade. Sometimes I had to go to summer school to get through to the next grade.

I enrolled in the University of Akron in the fall of 1975. I always wanted to be an Oral Surgeon like my father since I was little. I declared my major as Premed. My heart wasn't into school because I needed time away to get my act together, which didn't happen. I rarely went to class; I dropped classes and got incompletes for three years. I join a fraternity, and all I did was drink and party.

My life was going nowhere fast, I had no direction in life and my girlfriend broke up with me. Most of my friends were getting close to graduating from college and I was in a bad place mentally.

I told my parents that I was dropping out of school to get my head together, they agreed. I told them I had to get my life in order and the only way for me to do that was to get out of town where I didn't know anyone.

I packed my bags and drove out west by myself. I stopped in Las Vegas to hook up with my ex-girlfriend parents who were in town for a convention. Short story, I enrolled in the University of Nevada Las Vegas.

I got straight A's for three years. I study my butt off. Never did that in junior high or high school. I was so proud of myself, but I was also very depressed. My depression was due to my lifelong dream of becoming a doctor like my father. By this time, it was 1981 age 25, thinking another eight years of schooling I would be 33-34 years old and nothing to show for it. I couldn't see that far ahead. All my

friends back home had already graduated, had good jobs, some had married and had kids. Here I was with a BS in Hotel Administration. Big Blankley blank deal, making \$25,000 a year, working twice as many hours as everyone else. People ask you what you do, and you tell them I am a restaurant manager. Now that is impressive-not. It was embarrassing; people expected more out of me. I did it because at the time I had nothing to show for my life when everyone else I know was so far ahead of me.

My life dream was simple from day one. Go to school, go to Ohio State just like my dad, go into his practice, become a partner, make a ton of money, live in a big house, join Portage Country Club, have six kids, and live the life, just like my parents.

None of that ever happened. I believe looking back that I was so bitter, so mad and disappointed in myself. I Lost focus, I was mad at the world, I didn't care about anything except when the next party was. Let's go have a beer mentality.

When my daughter Samantha was born, I became very protective of her, to the point that everyone and I mean everyone was telling me to stop.

At the time, I thought I was doing the right thing. In hindsight, I made a mess of her life thinking I was doing the right thing. I went overboard with my daughter in trying to protect her in life. I didn't want her vulnerability as a child to fall prey to someone. I was afraid of her being abducted by someone, being molested at school, being raped on a date, being attacked going downtown or going out with her girlfriends. Along with all those other scenarios, that life throws at you. It made me a nut case according to my family.

My daughter and I are very close, she comes to me about boyfriend problems all the time and asks for advice since I am a guy and I would give the guy side of thinking. I tell her to dump the guy. Just walk away and move on. Sam would always tell me Dad I am not like you; I can't just turn off my emotions like you do. I love the guy.

The first time my daughter said that to me, it floored me to hear that. But now looking back on my life I can see why. Before my abuse, I was a loving caring person. During my abuse I was harden during those actions. I had lost all emotions.

Throughout my life after that if something bad happened to me such as being bullied, not getting a job, an argument with a girlfriend, anything that a normal person would respond to, I showed no emotion, I had a poker face. Even if I was hurting, so bad in the inside I never, ever showed emotion on the outside. I could just walk away and be done with it. Because of this lack of emotion, it was hard for me to love someone like I should, or to open up to anyone.

I have been married for thirty-eight years. We have had our share of blow-ups. My wife would accuse me of being heart less, not caring, and how could I walk away from her after all those years. How can you not care, I told my wife and daughter that is just the way I am. I don't give a crap. As I look back at my life, I believe I developed this numbness or this zombie state of existence to get me through the day with Mr. Dalton. Being mad at the world for such a long time just grows on you, sad to say.

When I started to date and beyond it was hard for girls to get to know me. They always wanted to know more about me than what I wanted to tell. This caused problems in most of my relationships. I didn't have a past to talk about. I was bitter, I wasn't a good student, and I wasn't in sports, really not much to say about me. I was more of a troubled soul inside and not at all willing to spill the beans.

Below are some letter quotes from a girlfriend of mine back in college. I'm changing her name to Nancy to protect her identity. I will try to show you why I was such a trouble soul. These excerpts from these letters I will try to sum up what I have been trying to say.

Postmark 24 January 1976

"I think I learned a lot about you. I can understand now the way you are about talking and that's O.K. cause, I hope you can understand me and not think that I'm trying to pry into things you don't want to tell. I'm really glad you are studying and not partying as much; I hope you keep it up, you are right to think about your future. I hope someday – probably never we can just spend an afternoon not doing anything instead of always being on the go, not that that's bad but it would be different."

Postmark 13 February 1976

I received a Valentine card from Nancy. Inside the card was this written note.

“David, you are a hard one to understand but I want you to know that I always am ready to listen. O.K.? Love Nancy

Postmark 2 March 1976

“Thanks for coming down to see me. It seemed like it had been such a long time. I feel I learned a lot about you this weekend. I felt that maybe I was beginning to understand you; I hope that is not too much to assume. The fence that you have built around yourself isn’t as solid as I thought. I know my weekend wouldn’t have been as fun if you hadn’t come. Write you later. Love Nancy”

Postmark 10 March 1976

“I know this is a boring letter, but you asked me to write you, so I did. If you have the time, I like to have a long talk with you. I have known you for a long time, but I feel like I met you the other day and I know you feel the same.

Postmark 12 April 1976

“It was good to talk to you Friday. It was the best part of my night. I wish we could always talk as easy as we did that night. “

These letters may show you the difficulty I had in sharing my past. It never happened. Not even with my wife. As I write this for the first time, with tears while having flashbacks to that time in my life, I feel awful. The only person in my life at the time who loved me, who was trying her best to understand me, cared about my schooling and my future, I treated her like crap. Not crap, like I was a bad boyfriend, but in a way that related to myself if that makes sense.

I loved that girl, and I blew it. She was the only one who had my back and I walked away from her, never to see her again ever, which sucks. As much as I loved her, I don’t think I ever told her I Love You, that’s sad. I think about her from time to time at how much fun we had together down at Ohio State when I went to see her or when she came home to see me. I don’t think we ever did have that quite afternoon together, which is a shame. I will never know if that one quite afternoon together would have changed my life. I pray that Nancy is well. My selfish actions towards her makes me sick to my stomach even after 44 years.

How do you tell your girlfriend, the girl you love, that a man had sex with you when you were little? I remember when I went down to see Nancy in her dorm at Ohio

State, laying there with her in one of those quiet romantic moments talking quietly. Nancy would try to find out in a nice way what made me tick. You know one of those intimate moments in time that two young people would just talk. I would tell her I just can't, then I would think about it for a minute or two and I would say ok, just give me a few minutes to figure how I am going to say it. As I lay there looking at her and my brain would race in thoughts, trying to form the words to say it out loud. I just could never say it.

I loved Nancy too much; I didn't want to lose her by saying the wrong thing. How does a young man or any man for that matter, tell his girlfriend (wife/kids/family) that a man had sex with me over a hundred occasions?

I would always tell her I would, and when I was about to, I could never form the words or have the courage to do so. I would always say maybe the next time I see you I promise I will tell you.

I would drive home always thinking about how I would tell her. I always had a plan, but when it came right down to it, I just couldn't do it.

I watched a video the other night on Facebook titled why you should love yourself first, by Goalcast on November 6, 2019. It made a lot of sense to me the later part of her speech. She says in part, self-love is about believing deep in the core of who you are, that you are worthy of love. The love we need first and foremost is our own.

As I look at her statement, "The love we need first and foremost is our own". I realize now after watching that video, that for so many of my early years I did not love myself because of what I had done. By not loving myself like I should, I made a lot of bad decisions in my life because I had a huge chip on my shoulder. It made me incapable of being that loving person that I know before the fifth grade. I put myself in a bubble that no one could penetrate, even to this day.

I remember when I was in college at the University of Nevada Las Vegas, I received a letter from my mom in 1979 telling me that Mr. Dalton was arrested for molesting young boys in his classroom.

I called my mom, and I asked her about it. She said everybody in Bath was talking about it. It was a big story in town. I think my mom knew that I was one of those boys Mr. Dalton molested.

My Mom did not come right out and ask me if I was one of those boys. I knew how my mom was talking that she wanted to ask me, or for me to say something. By this time, I was twenty-one or twenty-two years old, I just couldn't confess, it was too hard to do so. I tried not to show any emotion, and I played along as Wow, I cannot believe that. Ever since that day, I have overwhelming guilt of not speaking up. I could of have stopped all the hurt and pain that those boys went through. It brings tears to my eyes for what I have done and for the lives, I had ruined. It's a guilt that never goes away.

When I got off the phone with my mom after talking to her, I was so torn up inside and out with a million thoughts going through my mind. I got into my Ford Pinto drove to the edge of town to where the road turned to desert, drove into the desert to the base of the mountain and got out. The mountain is all rock and cliffs. I climbed that mountain to the top to where I could see the other mountain range over the valley below. It was such a beautiful sight. That sight is ingrained in my head to this day.

I stood there for hours at the edge of the cliff thinking about all the bad I had done with Mr. Dalton. I was thinking of all those kids, all the pain I caused for them. It was overwhelming. I wanted to jump off that mountain so bad. A voice in my brain told me to get off that mountain. I looked up across that valley and saw the sun coming down over the mountain range. It was the most beautiful sight I had ever seen in my life. I believe God spoke to me that day.

February of 2020 I was sitting in the middle of my couch in my robe having my morning coffee as I always do watching the news. A commercial came on about the Boy Scouts of America, I didn't pay any attention to it until this overwhelming power came over me and I swear the room lit up in a light-yellow color. I was like frozen, bawling my eyes out for no reason; tons of emotions going through my head, flash back after flash back went through my head. It was like my life was flashing before me at warp speed, I couldn't control myself. I sat there for a good twenty-minutes bawling.

I got up and got in the shower to get ready for work. As soon as I got in the shower, I started to ball again. More flash backs, over and over. I kept saying to myself, what is the hell is wrong with you. I never cry, ever. I was out of control.

Since February of 2020, every day I think about what is going on with me. I would have flash backs to my childhood times. It's crazy of all the soul searching I have done since that morning on the couch. It tears me up inside.

I believe the reason why I am not dead, is because God has a plan for me. Even if it did take me 53 years to realize it. I believe because of my passion wanting to help others throughout my life, and the suffering that I have had, has brought me to this point in my life. I believe what happen to me in 1979 on top of the mountain and February 2020 sitting on my couch is a message from God (if you believe in that). I feel an overwhelming power over me that will not go away, that is pushing me to make a strong statement about child abuse.

So, looking back had I not gone to Bath Grade School and had Mr. Dalton in the fifth grade, had I not joined the Cub Scouts, then the Boy Scouts in the fifth grade. Had I not been that vulnerable boy that gave in to fear. Had I found the words to say to Nancy in person or in a letter about my past. Had I open up to the only person who loved me at the time. Had I known Nancy did really care, which she did, and I know that now. Had I open up to her before I walked away from her without an explanation. Had we had that quite afternoon together loving and enjoying each other. I feel now that Nancy would have fixed my head, because she was the only one in sixty-four years who saw me hurting and tried her hardest to tear down my walls, to get to know me as I am. She came so close to doing it but came up short because of my fear of losing her if she knew the real truth. In the end, I lost her regardless. I never dated anyone after Nancy until I met my future wife in 1983.

After Nancy, I didn't want to put myself out there with anyone else. I didn't want to go through the pain of getting to know someone and having to answer questions about myself. I didn't want to put myself through another relationship, nor did I want to hurt anyone else. It was just easier not to get close to anyone.

I wish I never had heard that commercial, but I believe things happen for a reason. But it's beginning to suck right about now. I'm tired of thinking; I want it to go away. I want to feel normal again.

I'm tired of all the raw emotions, the tears I have shed every night thinking about all of this. It's not normal or healthy. Like I said before, I never, ever cry. But since February 2020, I have cried more tears than anyone has done in a lifetime. It needs

to stop. At age 64 who does this? Even if I never tell anyone about all this, it does help me to write about it after all these years.

In reality, I was terrified; I was hiding from my past. I had a straitjacket of guilt, but instead of seeking help from Nancy which I knew she was there to listen and help, I chose to run and hide.

I'm still living with that straitjacket of guilt. I know now, when you're hiding that inner truth, it's debilitating. You can't talk, you can't think, you feel like you have no control. While I was hiding the issues of my past, which I know now, is that you can't move forward while carrying the disgraceful secrets that I can't share. I realize I need to take back some control.

I realize now that I had a choice. I had a choice to either be a victim and continue to hide or be a survivor and move forward. I realize that my experiences did not have to define me. I realize by me not opening up to Nancy it truly did transform my life.

You can't fix yourself if you don't love yourself, I see that now.

I have only written a few stories about the abuse and my past. But in reality, I have over a hundred stories to tell. I have written about loss of innocence, loss of trust, fear, loss of emotions, loss of loving myself, loss of someone who I loved, and the thought of jumping off a mountain cliff to kill myself.

I have written words to describe my experiences throughout this story, such as: Debilitating, Hiding, Trouble Soul, Pain, Shame, Fear, Terrified, Straitjacket, Bitter, Gut Wrenching, Tears, No Past, Hurt, Mad, Awful, Flashbacks, Ashamed, Cold Non-Emotional, Guilt, Harden, Disgraceful, Secrets, Numbness, Cried-Crying, No Control, Consumed, Depressed, Zombie State of Existence and so on. To me it's mine blowing, even after all these years.

So, there you have it, some, but by no means all of my feelings about the physical, psychological, emotional, and economic effects the abuse has had on my life.

I can go on forever writing about all this, but it is exhausting to do so. If you need to know more just ask. It's easier for me to write about it than it is to talk about it.

But I will talk to you about it. It's part of the healing process. This is just the short story. If you wish to read my whole story, I would be happy to send it to you.

My contact number is 330-696-3796 and you may email me at djdelapa@gmail.com.

Thank you,

David DeLapa