

## A Sermon on Child Abuse Experts

Sermon by Rev. Minister Angela Smith of COPE for September 12th, 2021 (and beyond)

I begin this sermon here by disclosing or discussing my credentials. I understand this may result in an “eye-roll” and/or sigh from some who read or hear this one. I am an expert on child abuse. I qualify as such because I have a certificate in Child Development, passed the Washington (State) Educator Skills Test, have been paid to work with children, have worked with children in a volunteer capacity, have worked with children as part of course requirements for specific classes I’ve taken, and am also a survivor of child abuse in various settings. My being a survivor though is not something on which I rest my claim of expertise on this issue. It is pertinent knowledge to understand my perspective more fully when commenting on the issue of child abuse. You can see my credentials at <https://www.cope.church/credentials.pdf> for more information. As you know, the HEAL Mission (Mission of COPE) is one of victim and consumer advocacy where the majority of victims receiving assistance were abused as children. The mission has been active since 2002 and remains active. I do not have any children myself and find the odds of that situation changing astronomical in part because I had tubal ligation surgery (AKA my tubes are tied).

All dependents are considered vulnerable in terms of likelihood of being exploited or abused including those of age of minority (under 18 years of age in the US in most jurisdictions), the disabled, and the elderly. 5 children die from child abuse every day in the US. Source: <https://americanspcc.org/child-abuse-statistics/> 70% of those living with disability report having been abused by caregivers. Source: <https://www.disabilitycoop.com/2013/09/04/survey-abuse-widespread/18652/> 10% of the elderly are reportedly abused too. Source: <https://www.ncoa.org/article/get-the-facts-on-elder-abuse> . That means 1,825 children die from abuse each year in the US. There are 74,200,000 children and youth under 18 in the US as of 2010. Source: <https://www.aecf.org/resources/the-changing-child-population-of-the-united-states> That means 0.0024% (approx. 1 in 50,000) of children in the US appear to be at risk of dying from abuse before reaching age of majority.

It is my opinion that there are two personality types that are prone to being abusive or considered abusive towards dependents regardless of age or infirmity of the dependents. Abusers are either power-tripping sadists who demand blind obedience assuming absolute authority over their dependents, or, individuals who in moments of weakness, which may vary in frequency and kind, fail to exercise self-discipline in a moment they are seeking respect or recognition of responsibility. The former describes the personality of those the majority tend to agree are monsters and/or whom the majority may dehumanize or demonize in full support of the victims. The latter tends to be forgiven more often than not depending on frequency and kind of abuse with consideration of full context.

The best solution I’ve found is independence and individual responsibility to reduce instances or likelihood of being subjected to extended periods of abuse. This is why I provide the Emancipation Guide at <https://www.heal-online.org/emancipationprep.pdf>.

And, where total independence is apparently out of reach due to age or disability, being as independent as possible while recognizing remedies available at law remains the best option. Power-tripping sadists are often guilty of multiple crimes that simply need to be reported to law enforcement with enough evidence for a conviction beyond a reasonable doubt. Society hates power-tripping sadists and supports all such people being sent to prison or executed. However, society tends to be merciful to those who commit crimes of passion in the heat of the moment that regret their actions with willingness to commit to greater exercise of self-discipline going forward.

To make sure all power-tripping sadists are reported to law enforcement in the proper jurisdiction as well as any civil regulatory body responsible for enforcing regulations in their purview, HEAL Mission provides reporting guides so every power-tripping sadist, regardless of storefront or cultural influences, can face justice and be held accountable. And, even I wonder at times whether failures to report are a result of fear, forgiveness, or awareness of more context than has been provided to me at any given moment. Sometimes the truth reveals itself in regards to whether it is fear, forgiveness, or awareness of more context over time.

Isaiah 41:10 (KJV) “Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.”

Forgiveness can be a result of recognizing your own failures to exercise self-discipline at times where you find that where you hope others forgive you, you decide to lead by example and forgive others where the failures are similar in offensiveness.

But, the 8<sup>th</sup> Commandment says "Thou shall not bear false witness" and lies of omission or spinning a narrative that doesn't contain full context is doing just that. If you want God to be on your side and understand God is representative of the whole truth and all the virtues combined so you have nothing to fear, you really can't violate the 8th and expect to be free from fear. If you seem to demand forgiveness and mercy without ever showing any, that too is hypocritical and against church rules where even Jesus refers to you as a child of hell. Matthew 23:13-15 (KJV). But, if you embrace the whole truth, are honest (including intellectually honest), and know even Jesus said “But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.” (Matthew 18:6), while understanding power-tripping sadists tempt everyone to the sin of wrath, then you better understand the law and why you should report it for the sake of justice.

Amazingly enough, more often than not self-discipline is how to prevent abuse of dependents. And, where that fails, the justice system is ready to hear your case. As always, I remain understanding and happy to help.

For those interested in starting #TaoFu Self-Defense Exercises, please see <https://www.cope.church/taofu.htm> and begin at any time.

There are opportunities to send messages, receive mystery bonus blessings, and more with or without donating available now on our "Pass the Basket" page at <https://www.cope.church/basket.htm> . Thank You.

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:32 KJV Willful blindness is an abomination.

COPE accepts Feedback, critical and complimentary. Learn more at <https://www.cope.church/feedback.htm> . For the sake of keeping myself and others humble, a sense of humor is welcome on all sides.

For More About COPE and the HEAL Mission, see:

<https://www.cope.church> and <https://www.heal-online.org>