

**No More Trafficking** connects people and resources to collaboratively create and deliver training and solutions to end all forms of human trafficking and exploitation.

We believe this dream is possible when we all unite on mission together.

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### Come to the Table

by: Cortney Morgan, Founder and President

Twenty-five years ago I studied international relations and developing countries. Now, sometimes I feel like I live in one. The United States exported ideas to develop and maintain thriving democracy and demonstrated the benefits of doing so. Now we struggle to implement our own prescription for healing dysfunction.

We've told many nations that a thriving middle class is critical to the success of democracy. A strong middle class is evidence the system works well for most people whose hard work earns a living wage. They live with the sense of purpose that goals and hope provide. Thriving people with goals and hope participate in a system they believe will propel them forward. Active participation in a society that provides genuine opportunity also curtails bitterness and resentment that envelop people who feel forgotten, exploited, and insignificant.

The United States 'educates' other nations about crucial components of healthy democracies: free speech; freedom of the press; respect for the rule of law; finding common ground. It's time for policy makers to see and address warning signs of our own unhealth: fear that going to public places means assuming the risk of being shot; crumbling bridges; outdated infrastructure; store shelves without essentials; "fake news"; journalists degraded; children with chronic food instability and lead poisoning from dirty water; parents working multiple jobs to make ends meet. No wonder people are too tired to keep abreast of current events, prioritize voting, and participate in our system.

"Large parts of the American citizenry feel devalued, forgotten, exploited, and insignificant. If our nation is going to survive and thrive, this must change."

Polarized politics lets people busy themselves fighting the other "side" instead of fixing what's broken. Instead of degrading people associated with the other political party or a different position, we have an obligation to listen, learn, and come together to articulate solutions. Solution-building begins with identifying common ground. Common ground is this: Large parts of the American citizenry feel devalued, forgotten, exploited, and insignificant. If our nation is going to survive and thrive, this must change.

Those who feel forgotten, exploited, and insignificant are prime targets for human trafficking. Implementing solutions will take engagement from every sector.



## **CALL TO ACTION -** What you can do today to protect your family and community

As part of a monthly No More Trafficking series, we'll build on No More Trafficking CEO and former FBI Agent Suzanne Lewis-Johnson's comments during media opportunities and speaking engagements. Use the video tools and content below to facilitate community groups and professional groups and to begin conversations at home, work, school, sports arenas, and wherever you go, to protect against trafficker tactics and bring freedom.

## Finding Freedom from Accusations by Suzanne Lewis-Johnson, CEO

Social media myths and rampant misinformation might lead to belief that human trafficking usually starts with an obvious abduction. NewsNation Anchor Marnie Hughes and I recently discussed that even missing persons cases that don't lead to trafficking often look like something else because of false narratives, which explains why no one calls 911 in most instances.

Traffickers frequently reel victims in through fraudulent relationships, then conceal their own conduct by wielding accusations against victims, and sometimes others, that create cover stories. Additional accusations keep victims compliant and quiet when they buy traffickers' lies or when they are afraid no one will believe them. A version of this trafficker tactic, known as gaslighting, has become so culturally common that <a href="Merriam-Webster">Merriam-Webster</a> named it their 2022 word of the year.

Words carry the power of life and death. Accusations, absent perspective, and validated information can lead to death of noble efforts, of relationships, of corporations, of countries and of individual human lives. We can implement this trafficker tactic accidentally or intentionally. Logical leaps that cause us to believe and speak the worst about someone sow seeds that reap catastrophic consequences and help prepare them for a predator. Let's speak life. Let's have honest, respectful conversations, and seek to understand one another.

# Going Deeper.....

- → Find video and related material on our website at www.nomoretrafficking.org.
- → Email us at info@nomoretrafficking.org if you need help finding the resources.
- → Please preview the content before introducing it to others.



### **Start a Conversation**

Look at times when you've felt accused.

- · Did the situation involve assumptions instead of gathering information and perspective?
- · Did the instance seem to involve intentional or accidental deception? How do you know?
- Did the conflict resolve appropriately, or did the cycle continue?

Look at times when you might have committed similar conduct.

- Did you make counter accusations in response to feeling offended?
- · Did you make logical leaps? Did you ascribe intent to someone without seeking context?
- · What were you protecting? What impact did you see? What impact might you have missed?

