A Father’s Journey To Save His Son
Exclusive Interview With Sebastien Cotte

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Interview Transcript
John Malanca: Hi, this is John Malanca again with The Sacred Plant Healing Secrets Experienced, episode number two. We have a special guest today, Sebastien Cotte. I'll say he's a cannabis refugee with he and his family, but he's back in his... I don't want to say home state, because he's from France, so welcome. But Sebastien Cotte became actively involved in the field of medical marijuana in 2013 while seeking alternative treatments for his son Jagger, which has a rare terminal mitochondrial disease, and in 2014 with his wife Annett, they became medical marijuana or medical cannabis refugees that moved to Colorado to access safe and legal cannabis oil for their son, Jagger. But now, I'll let Jagger, or excuse me, Sebastien, tell his story, but they're back in... they actually lived in Colorado for 18 months but they're back in Georgia and so I'd like to welcome Sebastien to the show. So thank you, Sebastien, for taking some time to be with us today and sharing your family's story.

Sebastien Cotte: Well, thank you very much for having me. I appreciate that.

John Malanca: Well, good. Well tell us... let's just get right to this. There's a lot of information. We have a lot of families that have followed us, so I just wanted to let everyone know and I should let everybody know, ailments, whatever they might be, affect us all, and they affect the brand new baby up to the geriatric and end of life families. So... and families that you would never expect anything to happen, like what happened to my wife and I, with Corrine. But if you'd like to share your story, Sebastien, so if you'd tell us about Jagger's battle with mitochondrial disease and the steps that brought you into The Sacred Plant and where you are today.

Sebastien Cotte: Yes, absolutely. I'd be happy to. So Jagger was born in September of 2010. Just a regular kid and no issues. He was our first kid. At about three months old we found out during a routine pediatric visit that he had a heart condition. So we were very surprised, of course. We had no idea where it came from. So we were kind of gearing up for that. It was very serious as we ended up in the cardiac ICU within a few hours of finding out about the condition.

Sebastien Cotte: But we were able to go home after a few days. They did a few tests, and we were able to go home right before Christmas. And everything was fine after that. I mean, Jagger was not eating very well. He had some failure to thrive. But he was, you know, a lot of kids do that.
Sebastien Cotte: Unfortunately, about six months old or so, he started losing some skills. So he started sitting up a little bit and holding his head up, and within a couple of weeks that was totally gone. And we had no idea why. We went to the hospital, in and out of the hospital for months. Nobody could figure it out until somebody said, I think we need to test him for mitochondrial disease. So we did in the summer of 2011, we tested him for mitochondrial disease with a muscle biopsy. So it's where they take a little piece of his muscle from his thigh muscle during surgery. And we found out late summer... I mean, we found out about early November or early, sorry, we found out early September before his first birthday that he has in fact a mitochondrial disease.

Sebastien Cotte: But we didn't know which kind. Mitochondrial diseases are very, very wide range. Pretty much what happened with mitochondrial disease it's just an energy, the mitochondrial which makes the energy in your body does not work properly for Jagger. So when he was an embryo, he didn't have enough energy to form all his organs, so he has a brain lesion, he has the heart condition, he has a lot of lung issues, he has issues with his GI tract, he has muscle issues, and he also gets very, very tired very quickly, which can also make things worse.

Sebastien Cotte: So we know he had a mitochondrial disease. We started putting him on vitamins and supplements that they give for mito, and a few weeks later, he had some really bad stomach issues, so we took him to the hospital. And during that stay at the hospital, he screamed so much in pain that he actually stopped breathing and he coded. So right there, the team just rushed to the room and they had to actually resuscitate him in front of us which is pretty dramatic for a new parent of a one year old kid. And they got him incubated, they got him back to breathing. They put him in the ICU and when in the ICU they did an MRI. And in the MRI we found out he had a lesion, a bi-symmetrical lesion in the basal ganglia part of the brain, which correlates with Leigh's Disease.

Sebastien Cotte: So on December 1, 2011, that's one of the dates you never forget, we were sent home on hospice and told that Jagger just had probably a few months, maybe a year at best. We also found out by doing research on Leigh's Disease, that's what he was diagnosed with, it is a very progressive terminal form of mitochondrial disease, if he gets a diagnostic before the age of two, 98% of the kids do not make it at four years old. So that's obviously for a brand new parent, with your first kid, we didn't know anything about being a
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parent. We go home with a one year old in December and knowing or thinking that that was probably going to be his first and only... his second and only Christmas. So it’s definitely a shock.

Sebastien Cotte: But as parents, especially parents who do a lot of research, who look at a lot of things, and we were able to get him an FDA-approved drug in Ohio. Unfortunately, during one of the trips there, we almost had to have an emergency landing of the plane because he stopped breathing and had a breathing issue on the plane. So after that, we kind of got blacklisted from flying commercial with him. So we’re not really allowed to fly anywhere. Which would explain why we drove to Colorado, but we’ll talk about this in just a minute.

Sebastien Cotte: So we had this kind of FDA-approved drug that kind of helped him a little bit for a few months. And he really plateaued. We petitioned the FDA for an increase, nobody had done that before. We were allowed a drug increase. So it helped him again a little bit. But that kind of plateaued again. And it was probably around the end of 2013 we were left with really not a lot of options coming onto Jagger's fourth birthday in 2014 and his life... what we were told was his life expectancy.

John Malanca: It’s not what you want to hear as brand new parents. I mean, you never want to hear this, but you know, having a child and having to go through this at age one, that’s not what you want to hear. And so you’ve been... this has been part of your life now for, what are we going on now? Seven years?

Sebastien Cotte: Yeah, Jagger just turned seven.

John Malanca: Yeah, so, I don’t want to finish your story, but that is pretty scary. So how many prescription drugs? I know you petitioned the FDA to see if you can up the doses and do that. So how many prescription drugs was Jagger on from, I guess in the past seven years? Starting when he was diagnosed at one.

Sebastien Cotte: So, one thing about hospice, and a lot of people don’t know, is when you get put on hospice there's no limit, right. They will give you whatever you need. As many drugs as you need. As high of a dose as you need. Because it’s all about quality of life and to make you comfortable in the few weeks or months that you have. So we were sent on December 1, 2011 on hospice with a crazy amount of drugs for Jagger. And that increased and increased more, and the height, at the most, between the drugs and the supplements, some
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of them were supplements, but the drugs and the supplements, it was 22. 22 for 39 doses for a little baby.

Sebastien Cotte: But what’s important to know about that was what kind of drugs we got. Jagger was put on methadone, Valium, macrophen, Neurontin, morphine, Oxycontin before he was two years old. As much as we wanted. At some times we had to give him 20 to 30 milligrams of morphine just to calm him down. Not to jump ahead, but we were able to definitely decrease that a lot when we started using cannabis for him.

John Malanca: Yeah, we went through this with Corrine in hospice and so, like you said, they say, “take as much as you want.” Take as much as you want. And, in my opinion, it’s almost like a human euthanizing. The more you give them, the better they’ll feel and they’ll go to sleep. And so, that was a very hard decision for myself and our family and with Corrine, because she was very still coherent when we were going through this. And having a one year old, they trust you, you and your wife. And so, the stress that you and your wife and family must’ve been under with what you want to do for your child is... that’s a tough decision.

John Malanca: So I’m going to fast forward a little bit. So when did you first start hearing about the possibilities of medical cannabis and The Sacred Plant as an option? And how long have you been in the states? Is your wife, Annett, also from France?

Sebastien Cotte: So I came here as an exchange student when I was 16 years old, so I’ve been here since 1993. And in 2000... now I’ve got to remember this. In 2014 I believe, no, 2012, I actually became a US citizen. So that was a really, really proud day and that I was allowed to actually become a US citizen. My wife Annett is actually from Germany.

John Malanca: Okay.

Sebastien Cotte: But she lived in the US since she was four years old. She grew up in Manhattan. She became a citizen many years ago as her mom was a diplomat for the UN. So she's pretty much American from almost the beginning.

John Malanca: Uh-huh.

Sebastien Cotte: So yeah. And Jagger was born in Atlanta.
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John Malanca: In Atlanta. And so with medical cannabis, bringing it back to you and Annett researching, how did you get to the steps of even looking at medical cannabis as an option?

Sebastien Cotte: So it kind of... sometimes you get signs. And this was a sign. I was just one day at home watching TV and there happened to be a weed documentary from CNN on TV. And I'm looking at this and not really paying attention. Maybe doing some work or whatever. Multi-tasking. And it kind of caught my attention because they were talking about seizures and the little girl that was having less and less seizures and Jagger had seizures as a symptom of his mito. As one of the symptoms is seizures. So I'm watching this, and the more I'm looking at it, the more I'm trying to pay attention. And all of a sudden I'm really watching and I'm like, “Wow, there might be something to this. This is interesting.” So I tell my wife and she’s a little bit more scientific than I am. I'm more in the business, sales background, and she's the scientist of the family. And she said, “Well that's kind of interesting.”

Sebastien Cotte: And then I'm looking back and I'm like, “What do I know about cannabis?” And I said, “Well, all I know is kind of from college, right?” But I don't remember much from it from college. I remember it was kind of a fun thing to do, but could it really have medical properties? So one thing that almost every special need parents and patients have in common is that when you're looking at something, the research we do is better than the FBI or the CIA will do on anything.

John Malanca: Totally.

Sebastien Cotte: Nobody will research like a special need parent or family member, when you have a sick family member. So I started researching this and looking into this. I was very involved in the mitochondrial disease Foundation and group in Georgia. I'm actually one of the ambassadors, so when people get a new diagnostic of mitochondrial disease they send them to me so I can give them the patient point of view and what to expect. And a couple of the mito parents reached out, and they saw the documentary too, and were like, “Wow, maybe we need to try this.” So we actually founded a small group on Facebook, Mito for Cannabis for Georgia so we could exchange our ideas and exchange research together. And we were not finding anything on mito itself and cannabis, but we were finding it could help a lot of the symptoms of mito. The muscle pains, the seizures, the connective issues. You know, a lot of mito
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kids lose eye traction or they're not really aware of their surroundings. And we keep finding that cannabis could possibly help for that. So that's kind of what happened. I was just watching CNN and then I've done a lot of research with other parents and we decided that was probably a good option for Jagger at some point.

John Malanca: Good, good. It... I don't know if you know the story of Cash Hyde. Cash Hyde, he's a dear friend of ours and we're great friends of the family. But Cash Hyde was the youngest legal medical cannabis patient here in the United States. And he was actually the first. First, youngest, and legal medical cannabis patient in the United States, so he paved the way as a pioneer of parents looking at medical cannabis as an option for children. And it was sad because back then in 2010 with him being diagnosed, and he actually beat his brain tumor twice... you had CNN, you had Good Morning America, you had Anderson Cooper, all these big network television stations were contacting them for an interview. And they said, "We'll get back to you on a time." They said, "Great." So a day, two days go by, and they called back and they said, "I'm sorry"... everyone canceled on them. Everyone canceled on them because, I guess the higher ups on the network were saying, "We can't talk about medical cannabis and pediatrics."

John Malanca: Fast forward now, it's on every day and every channel. So they paved a lot for this. Cash, he ended up passing in 2012 at the age of four. His last night on earth was at Corrine and I's place in Montana. So that family was just near and dear to us, and they're continuing on helping families and giving back and educating. So, back probably when you and your wife were doing a lot of research, you probably saw a lot of stuff on cancer. Pediatric cancer.

Sebastien Cotte: Yep.

John Malanca: And so, mitochondrial, it's a very rare disease. I think what is it, less than 20,000 have it. And can you pronounce what Jagger has? Is it Leaf?

Sebastien Cotte: It's Leigh. L-e-i-g-h. Leigh's.

John Malanca: Which is even rarer than the typical mitochondrial.

Sebastien Cotte: Yes, correct, that's very rare. There's actually a number that's saying there's maybe less than 4,000 people born within the US every year out of 4 million births in the US a year. So it's very rare.
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Sebastien Cotte: And very progressive and [inaudible 00:15:11].

John Malanca: So when you and Annett took the step of saying let's do this as a family and research medical cannabis, now you're in an illegal state, you're in Georgia. So I'm certain you said, “Great, what do we do now? Where do we go?” Did you... were you able to... it's not something you go to your doctor and say, "Hey, doc, check this CNN report. We'd like to try this." And I'm certain he or she was like, “Where do you go? I don't know where this is.” So, can you tell me what was going through you and your wife’s mind, and then two, what was your next step? Did you automatically go, “Colorado, we have to go?” Or did you know that you had to find out some options and Colorado was your option?

Sebastien Cotte: So pretty much at that time, I also only knew as a first about CBD. So as I was doing the research I found out there is much more than CBD, but CBD was kind of the big hype after the weed documentary. So what we did is we created, we joined with another group and we created a group of parents and we lobbied the legislation in 2014 in Georgia. When we were not able to pass a bill in 2014. Georgia legislative session is what we call a part-time session, so they only work 40 days a year. So by pretty much the end of March, early April, it's over. If you don't pass a bill, you need to wait until the next January.

John Malanca: Wow.

Sebastien Cotte: Yeah. So we didn't pass the bill by April of 2014. So now we were left with okay, what do we do? So I told my wife, I said, “I think we might have to move.” So I actually took a week from vacation off work, I flew to Colorado and I talked to growers, I talked to doctors, I talked to parents, and I just kind of researched, researched, researched. I was in a hotel in the morning and I got a rental car and I was running all around town talking to as many people as would listen to me.

John Malanca: Yes.

Sebastien Cotte: And really quickly, within a couple days, I was like, “Yeah, we just gotta do that. “So I actually remember flying back home. On the plane home and I was just like, “Okay, now I've got to sell my wife on this, right?” So I'm like, “I'm a sales guy. That's what I do. I've
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been doing sales my whole life. That's all I know. So if I can't sell her on this, then maybe I should go to another job, right?

Sebastien Cotte: But right away, she was also okay. She was like, "Yeah, I think we need to do that." So we started talking to doctors. Because Jagger was still on hospice, it's a little bit different, so we told the doctor and they were like, "Well, you know, you should try it. Potentially. But here's the problem. You can't fly." Because remember the thing about we're not allowed to fly anymore? They were like, "He's not going to survive the trip, the driving to Colorado. It's about 50/50 he won't make it to Colorado."

John Malanca: Oh my gosh.

Sebastien Cotte: So that made the decision a little bit harder. But at the end of the day, we didn't have a lot to lose. We knew that if anything were going to happen in Georgia it was not going to be until 2015. So August of 2014, we packed up the car and we drove to Colorado. And I can tell you, I've done a lot of challenging things in my life, coming to the US at 16 years old without speaking a word of English by myself was pretty hard. That was nothing compared to that trip to Colorado. It was six days of hell, honestly. There's no other way to put it. Jagger was in so much pain. We had to stop every two to three hours and spend the night in a hotel. It took us six days from Atlanta to Denver which should be a 20 hour drive. It took us six days.

John Malanca: Wow.

Sebastien Cotte: It was horrible. It was really horrible. But, we got to Colorado in August of 2014. We got to see two doctors, because that's what you've got to do in Colorado to get the medical card. We got a medical card. And August 20th, that's another one of those dates you never forget. August 20th, 2014 we gave Jagger his very first dose of medical cannabis.

John Malanca: So, we work with a lot of cannabis refugees, and it affects not only the child, but the family. And if you had even immediate family here, your parents and grandparents, it would affect everybody. Because one, you're leaving your home. You're leaving your jobs. You're leaving your friends. You're leaving your support system. And you were in a situation... a lot of families will have the access where they can fly in for a weekend or a week and try it and see if it works and then come back and bring the whole family out. So you never even tried medical cannabis for Jagger before you uprooted your
Sebastien Cotte: No, we didn't know. We didn't know if it was going to work. We kind of took a little gamble, but again with him being on hospice, we were like, there was nothing else we could do. I mean, the only drug that could help him, we were on it. It was the FDA approved drug trial. There was nothing else. There was nothing else on the horizon. There was no research coming. There was just... I mean, there was research, but nothing coming on the horizon for mito. So we said we have to try that. And we took a chance, we took a gamble. But yeah, it's very difficult. We don't have a lot of family here, so that part was kind of okay for us. But we have jobs. We just bought a house.

John Malanca: Oh my gosh.

Sebastien Cotte: Which was a handicapped friendly house. It took us almost a year to find the house for Jagger which was hardwood floor, wide hallway, accessible bathroom, because Jagger does not walk or even move at all. He has no muscle tone, so he's laying down all day or either on a wheelchair or on a bed. So we found this house. We love the house. We were able to talk to our jobs, to our works, and told them we were going to be gone for three months. Because that was actually our original plan. It was to go for three months.

Sebastien Cotte: But it worked so well. Jagger did so well once we got to Colorado and put him on cannabis that we ended up staying for 13 months. But yeah, it was very difficult and there were a lot of factors people don't see. You leave your friends, you leave your work, you leave your family, if you go to church, you leave your church family. For us, one of the hardest things to do was to leave all the specialists. Jagger is followed by still a lot of doctors that knows him really, really well. And we don't have to reinvent the wheel, they trust us with his care. All that changed because we were leaving.

Sebastien Cotte: Medical equipment, just things like getting his oxygen tank or his suction catheter or his machine. They do that in Georgia. We had to find all that new stuff in Colorado. But mostly, more than... to us, the biggest burden to be honest was financial. It's incredibly expensive how much Colorado costs and it's even worse now, but people don't really know that. We had a savings account and we took all of it out. And just to give a little bit of perspective, our house, our big, accessible house in Atlanta, our mortgage was less than a small two-bedroom apartment in Denver. Colorado's
extremely expensive. So my advice to anybody that is thinking about doing this is do your research, know what you're doing, know where you're going, but also save money. Sell things if you have to sell your things. I know it's not what you want to hear, but this could be life-changing decision, but more than likely this is going to be able to give your son, daughter, friend, husband, wife an opportunity they don't have if you stay in a non-legal state.

Sebastien Cotte: So do what you have to do. We also got very lucky that we have programs in Georgia and we have some very nice people, philanthropists, that helped us out financially a little bit. So we were very lucky to do that. State Rep Allen Peake was one of those persons in Georgia, he actually had a program to help and he paid for our U-Haul and our move to Colorado. So we were very lucky to have a lot of help. But Colorado is very expensive and the move is very expensive and it's life-changing. So you've got to be ready for that, too. It's not just as easy as just grabbing your bag and packing up.

John Malanca: So, Sebastien, in regards to your... that was my next question too, about your specialists. Families have their specialists already in their home, and now you're moving just to get this plant, this medical cannabis plant. So how did your doctors feel about you giving up almost on them and saying, "Hey, I need to try something here in another state." Back in, I believe it was 2014, when you were going through all of this, we wrote a blog about Atlanta, about Georgia, and the topic, or the title was, 'Georgia, the Pretend State.' And we got a lot of coverage on that, because they're saying, “Okay families, you can try all the medical cannabis you want, but you can't buy it here, you can't sell it, and you can't bring it in because it's all illegal.”

John Malanca: So how do you expect me and my family to try this? It's like saying, here, you have a driver's license. You've passed your test. But there are no cars and you can't drive. But you can have a driver's license. So we work with a lot of Georgians and we get a lot of Georgians that call and say, “Help, what do we do?” So, back to your specialists that you've been with for quite some time. That like you said, they know the machinery that you're on. They know the oxygen. And they know you and they know Jagger. So did you share with them, “We're moving to try medical cannabis with The Sacred Plant?” or did you just say, “We'll talk to you in three months?”
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Sebastien Cotte: So, a little bit of both. I mean, what happened was by then, we already had one legislative session, and being one of the co-founders of the group of parents, we were on TV a lot. Jagger’s story was shared a lot about one of the kids that could be helped by cannabis. So a lot of the doctors already knew that we were going to do that. A lot of the doctors that know us also know that my wife and I are very stubborn when it comes down to Jagger. So just because we couldn’t pass a bill in Georgia doesn’t mean we’re going to give up. It doesn’t mean we’re going to stop.

Sebastien Cotte: But yeah, some of the doctors were just like, “I don’t know anything about this.” Some of the doctors were like, “It’s not going to work.” And then some of the doctors were like, “Well, he’s on hospice, which in that case I guess was a little bit of the silver lining, because you’ve got nothing to lose. So if it was my kid, I would do it too.” So we got a little bit of everything. But I know when I was talking to a lot of parents here in Georgia and around the country, that was not the case. Especially if the kid was not a hospice patient, the doctors are very... it’s changing. Slowly changing. Thanks to you guys and a lot of education about the program out there. It’s slowly changing. But I get messaged probably on a weekly basis from a parent somewhere in the country saying, “My doctor won’t do it, what do I do?” And my only advice is, you’ve got two options. Get some documentation, bring them some information. Send them to us. Very often I’ll send them to watch The Sacred Plant. Give that to them, get them to watch it. Or I say, change doctors. You know. That’s kind of the only two options you’ve got. You either talk your doctor into it or you change doctors.

John Malanca: We hear that with patients of all ages. All ages. We speak to parents with pediatric and we speak at retirement communities and the seniors are asking their doctors about medical cannabis, and they hear that too. One, “I’m going to act like you never asked me that question” is what they’ve heard. Or two, “If you ask again and I hear that you try, I’m going to ask you to get another doctor.”

John Malanca: And I had this one 85 year old lady, I said, “What did you do?” She said, “I fired my doctor after 30 years.” And so it’s the same thing with you. So you living it, one, with your child but also being a cannabis refugee, what obstacles did you and your wife encounter when becoming a legal patient in a legal state?

Sebastien Cotte: Yeah, so pretty much what we had to do, and again, it’s a little bit different with Jagger because he’s so handicapped. We couldn’t put
him on the plane, we could put him in the car. He doesn't talk. So we had to be super prepared. Everything we do we have to just research and be really, really prepared. So actually I went back to Colorado after the first trip and I looked for an apartment - I was there for three or four days. I found something and then what I did is I got a U-Haul with some of her stuff, and I went there first. So I got the apartment, then I started paying bills, electricity bills and all that stuff so we could be a resident as soon as we got to Colorado, I could get a driver's license. A Colorado driver's license. So we did all that stuff.

Sebastien Cotte: I drove a U-Haul stuff to Colorado, moved all the stuff in the apartment, flew back home, and then we got in the car and drove with Jagger to Colorado. So it was definitely a difficult process, definitely a difficult process. But by the time Jagger got to actually Colorado, I had a Colorado driver's license and we could right away go to the doctor. I was already a resident of the state.

John Malanca: Gotcha. And so when you did become a resident of the state, you did that and I know the first, when you first went on a trip you did your research. And did any of the doctors know about mitochondrial disease as well as Leigh’s Disease? And in treating pediatrics with that? And one, you’re also dealing with Jagger on hospice. So did you run into any doctors that were, “It's too much.” Because I have heard doctors one, that want to shy away from pediatrics, but also two, at all levels of age when they hear you're on hospice, they kind of back off and say, “This is not my... I don't feel comfortable working with a hospice patient.” You know, this happened to us with my father-in-law. He was given weeks to live. He was on hospice. And I asked about medical cannabis. Like you, it wasn't our lifestyle, and his doctor said, “I know nothing about it. You have weeks to live. Good luck.” And our outcome is, he's still alive. And he's had 10, 11 scans and they've all come back with no evidence of recurring disease. So did you run into any doctors that were kind of hesitant one, on working with a family that has a young pediatric child, but also two, who's someone on hospice?

Sebastien Cotte: Uh, not really. We kind of got a little bit lucky on that. We went to see a doctor that does a lot of pediatric cannabis cases. Now he did not know anything about mitochondrial disease. That was for sure. But Jagger qualified under seizures in the state of Colorado.

John Malanca: Oh, yeah.
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Sebastien Cotte: And actually, to this day, to today, the only state in the country that has mitochondrial disease as a qualifying condition is Georgia, and that was actually put in the bill for Jagger.

John Malanca: Wow.

Sebastien Cotte: So actually Jagger is the very first legal mitochondrial patient for medical cannabis in the US.

John Malanca: Wonderful.

Sebastien Cotte: Yeah, so that was... but in Colorado, we qualify under seizures. He had a lot of bad seizures. But yes, we did get a doctor that did not know much about mito, and he said, “You can try it if you want to try it. I'll sign off on it because of the seizures, but I cannot tell you anything about the mito.”

Sebastien Cotte: Our biggest obstacle honestly was hospice, and even it wasn't that bad. But there's only one hospice, pediatric hospice in Denver. So if they were not going to take us because of the medical cannabis we would've been in really big trouble. But they were very understanding. But they were still very hands-off. They were like, “We don't really want to know. Do it, do what you got to do. We don't really want to know what you're doing, what you're giving. We just want to make sure you're doing your research it's not going to interact with some of the other medication,” you know, then 19 medications Jagger is on, at that time. But they were very hands-off, but they were okay as long as we kind of just did it and didn't talk about it.

John Malanca: Gotcha. So back to your doctor, because we get this quite a bit as well with drug-to-drug interactions and you just brought that up. So did your doctor know about the 19 other medications that Jagger was on and the combination of the cannabis and we can talk offline about this doctor, because I think formulations and dosing are very important. So did he or she, were they up-to-date on formulations and dosing, or was it kind of a trial and error with Jagger?

Sebastien Cotte: No, it was really trial and error, and it was honestly just us doing research and finding out about the P450 liver enzyme on the internet from other parents and unfortunately I think we're still there a lot in this country where the information's coming from parents with support groups, from organizations by helping patients. We do need definitely more doctors who know about this, who know about

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possible interactions, who know about possible side effects. Because even if there are very few of them, it’s not even close to being as bad as side effects you’d get from regular pharma, there’s still things you need to be careful and know about and watch.

Sebastien Cotte: But no, it’s better now, I can tell you that, but it’s still... we were kind of left on our own back then, and just doing our own research to find out about this.

John Malanca: Did you have any horror stories, where, oh, that was too much. Don’t want to do that again.

Sebastien Cotte: We really haven’t. We did have some strains that didn’t work at all for him, that actually made him a little bit worse if you want to call that. But we did not have some major horror stories with the medication or nothing like that. We were very lucky. But we were also being very, very careful.

John Malanca: Yeah, so I know 2014 to the present day, testing has become very important as well. And so were you and your wife, did that ever come up? How do we know that the medicine we’re giving Jagger is safe, is tested? I’m certain at first you didn’t think about that, and of course now being a veteran in the industry, there’s quite a few things that you would look for before putting it into your child. So did that ever cross your mind back then when you were so new and scared, virgin parents, so to speak?

Sebastien Cotte: Oh yeah, absolutely. Especially because Jagger’s immune system is very compromised. So if we were to give him something with e-coli or mold or yeast or something, we could be in very, very big trouble.

John Malanca: Yes.

Sebastien Cotte: So that was very important to us. We also got lucky, or maybe we provoked the luck by doing our research. But we found somebody, Jason Cranford. I don’t know if I can say his name, but Jason Cranford in Colorado, via, that made Haleigh’s Hope, and that was a tested product. So we started with that, and we know we had labs with that, so we know by my research, when I wanted to see what kind of extraction method it was, so if had any solvent in it. I wanted to see the microbial test result. I wanted to see pesticide and all that stuff. But again, it was kind of left to me doing the research and just finding somebody like that. But that was definitely a worry. Especially because of the microbial. You know, if I were to give
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yeast or mold to Jagger, that could have catastrophic results. So I was very worried about that to be honest. And I was very lucky that I found somebody that had tested medicine right away for us.

John Malanca: Good, because that's what I was getting at in regards to immunocompromised. Especially in Jagger's condition. And so, with the mold, pesticides, metals, fecal matter in a lot of cases as well. And they can't jeopardize any type of illness, but most certainly like the mold on the ingesting. So back to that, and we're going to have a lot of people contacting us, because a lot of people still think the only way to consume medical cannabis is via smoking. And so can you share, was it an oil? Was it a tincture? Was it a sublingual dropper? Was it vaporization? Or was it smoking? Can you share that with our followers today?

Sebastien Cotte: Yes, absolutely. So Jagger's case is a little bit particular because he cannot have anything in his mouth. Anything that goes to his mouth will end up in his lung and he will end up with aspiration and pneumonia, which could kill him, and he had about seven of those already in his life. So it is very dangerous. So if it's maybe one drop, like a rescue or something, we could potentially put it in his mouth and rub it on his gums. But his everyday cannabis that he takes actually goes to his g-tube. So it's an oil that we mix with formula because it works better with the fat for absorption. You know, because CBD and a lot of the cannabis is fat-soluble. And we put that into his feeding tube directly into his stomach. So it goes directly into his stomach. And that's how he gets his cannabis every day. We also use topical oils when he has a really bad day for his muscles, but his daily regiment is going to his feeding tube.

John Malanca: Gotcha. And that's what the Hyde's did with Cash. They were doing it in his feeding tube as well. And they even went to, when Cash got out of the hospital, and that's a whole other story, but they were also juicing. So have you tried juicing leaves and doing it that way? But I know - can he swallow today?

Sebastien Cotte: No, he still cannot swallow at all. We did try a little bit of juicing when we lived in Colorado and we actually had access. Actually, in Colorado, I was legally allowed to grow some plants. So I had a few in my closet, I had a few plants growing for Jagger if needed. It's much more complicated than people think, especially when you have a special need kid, it's a lot of work checking your plants, checking your pH. Making sure everything is correct and then drying and extracting and trimming. It's a lot of work for special need parents, so to me, it's better left to the professionals. It was an
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Enjoyable experience, but it was a lot of work. But because of that, we were able to have some.

Sebastien Cotte: We did try to juice a little bit with him, and we just put it directly in his tube also, as well. We haven't seen a lot of difference in the juicing, but it's not because of the juicing, it's because actually Jagger does not respond very well to THC-A...

John Malanca: Gotcha, yeah.

Sebastien Cotte: He responds much better to CBD, CBN, and THC. So we were able to juice, but Jagger was not responding very well to the juicing mostly because of the cannabinoid.

John Malanca: Gotcha. And you bring up a good point. A lot of people after that CNN documentary, everyone thought the golden portion of the plant was CBD. So everyone went CBD happy. And still to this day everyone’s going CBD happy. We get a lot of calls and I'm certain you work with a lot of families saying, I need CBD, I need CBD, I need CBD. But that was... you made a good point about THC.

John Malanca: So Jagger... so a lot of people think CBD is the medical portion of the plant and THC is the recreational portion of the plant. And that's not the case. And so can you share a little about the formulations of THC and CBD that Jagger's using and the success that you're having with that?

Sebastien Cotte: Yes, absolutely. And yes, I get that... honestly, probably on a daily basis. “Oh, THC is bad. THC is bad.” I can tell you THC is not bad. You know that. But I want to make sure everybody that's watching today knows THC is not bad. So we started with Jagger with CBD, with the Haleigh’s Hope CBD, which is a 20 to 1 CBD to THC ratio. That's the first thing we started with. Right away, within a couple days, we saw connective improvement. We saw Jagger having better eye traction, looking at us again, being more aware of his environment. And for the first time in years, he actually smiled back at us. So right there, we were like, “You know what? If nothing else happened, the hell we went through to go to Colorado, it's still worth it. It's still a win because he smiled again.” And I know it's hard for people to understand, but if you have a kid that's smiled before and for two years never smiled at you, and you see him smile again, I can't even explain the feeling that we had that day. It was just - I get chills right now just thinking about it. It was a little overwhelming, but right now we knew we made the right decision. So that was the first thing we saw.
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Sebastien Cotte: And as we went around, a few months after that, we added THC to his regimen, and what we did with the THC is we used an oil also and it was full-spectrum oil, so it was a whole thing with THC, had CBD in it, it had a little bit of CBG, some of the other cannabinoid. But we used that for his muscle pain, and that worked really good. But actually, the best seizure control we ended up getting is when we added the THC to the CBD. We had a little bit of seizure reduction with the CBD, but when we added the THC, we got better seizure reduction. And right now, we’re still holding the seizure reduction years later. And we went from 10 to 15 a day, depending on the day, to about 3 to 4 a day, with even a few seizure-free days here and there. Not every day. Far from it. But, maybe once a month we get a day here where we have no seizures. So that was great. A great wait for that.

Sebastien Cotte: And then a little bit later on, we added CBN at night to help him sleep. For his sleep issue. So right now, we’re using CBD, THC, and CBN, all from the same guy, Jason in Colorado. All tested. All lab result. But the one thing that people need to understand about this, and need to see, is that we reduced the seizure, but we reduced the pain. And to see your kid scream in pain and there’s nothing you can do about it, it’s one of the most heartbreaking things you will ever experience in your life. And sometimes he’d scream for five minutes, sometimes he would scream for two, three hours. And we would give him 15, 20, 30 milligrams of morphine and not be able to stop him to scream. And he would only stop when he exhausted himself and fall asleep. He used to do that and that’s just really heartbreaking. And mitochondrial disease can break down the lactic acid in your muscle. You can have a lot of horrible muscle pain. Kind of like a constant cramping that you can’t fix. And Jagger was going to this, but Jagger doesn’t cry. He doesn’t have any tears. So he only knows how to scream. So he was screaming for hours, and I can tell you that with cannabis, we reduced his episodes for about 90% once we added the THC. And as of today, Jagger is 100% off the Oxycontin and about 95% off the morphine.

John Malanca: Gosh, so happy to hear. Now I have chills.

Sebastien Cotte: Yeah, and if you know anything about those drugs. It’s so, on TV every day, opiates, people dying from it. If you know anything about those drugs, if you can get off of those drugs, it’s amazing. And if you can even just reduce them, the side effect of those drugs are horrible. And again, you come back to being on hospice, “It doesn’t
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matter how much I'm going to give you, I'm going to give you enough to fall asleep or, God forbid, pass away in your sleep, because I want you to feel comfortable. I want you to stop having pain." So they would give us crazy amounts of it and it would mess with Jagger. He was like a zombie. It would slow down his intestinal tract. It was just a horrible thing for him. So to be able to get him off the Oxy and almost entirely off the morphine has been a blessing when, something amazing... I can't even describe.

John Malanca: Yeah. Boy oh boy. So with this whole journey that you've gone through and having some success at the end here, cannabis has now become your life. And you've not only become an activist, but you're back in Georgia trying to pass laws for other families that are going through this or don't have to go through this and don't have to move. Can you share some of the milestones that you've hit? I know there's a federal case that you're involved with. If you can touch upon that as well. Just helping in education. I think education is so important, but educating the law-makers. I mean, this is what we've done for years. I think education at the legal and government level, at all levels, local, state, and international governments, is so important. This is what Corrine and I have done for years. And before you draft these laws, learn about what laws you're drafting.

John Malanca: Like the CBD-only laws. You've made a perfect example. The CBD-only laws don't really benefit who the CBD laws were designed for. And a perfect example with Jagger. You know, we've seen that with CBD. CBD is wonderful. But add a little THC, and I've always said 75%, but for you to say 90% improvement by just adding a touch of THC, you know, the outcome, and I think again having these CBD-only laws passed, they really aren't benefiting who they're designed for and they're not benefiting the pediatric cancer patients. And that's sad. And we know a lot of families that live in a legal state. Excuse me, live in a CBD-only state, and they have two children, one has seizures, which is a legal patient. And the other child has cancer, which is an illegal patient. So I cut you off there, but if you can share what you're going through with the federal case and you becoming an activist, I think our viewers would love to hear that as well.

Sebastien Cotte: Yeah, absolutely. You know, the way I always look at it is I didn't ask for this. I got put in this situation. This is because by necessity. But I never asked for this. And now that it's been such a blessing for me and my family and Jagger, I'm trying to do my little part in the repay by talking about it as much as I can. By educating people. By seeing, trying to pass laws. It's just my way to pay back the plant
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that is giving, that gives Jagger at least already three years past his life expectancy. Three years that just every day is a blessing because of that.

Sebastien Cotte: So we started Georgia's Hope group by joining a few other parents group in 2014, early 2014 in Georgia. And we could not pass legislation that year. But looking back at it, it was a CBD-only for seizures legislation, so it was probably a blessing we didn't pass it. Because we came back the next year in 2015, when we lived in Colorado, so I was actually flying back and forth at least two times a month, if not more, to lobby in Georgia, so it was very tiring. But I know I had to do that. And we had a wonderful group of parents. And we were able to pass the Haleigh's Hope Act in 2015 that gives us legal possession, and you touched about this. No legal access, but legal possession of anything under 5% of THC. So we're not really considered a CBD-only state, because we have a 5% THC, but we don't have access. So at the end of the day, you can give me 95% THC, if you don't give me access, it doesn't really matter.

Sebastien Cotte: Since that day, we've been fighting for in-state cultivation and distribution. Unfortunately, we are going against law enforcement, which are very powerful in the state of Georgia, and of the governor. And unfortunately, probably the next governor since we have an election this year, but we know already who's probably going to win. He's also not a great, great guy on medical cannabis. So we've been fighting for that. We're trying to share our stories. And we're just trying to do advocating.

Sebastien Cotte: And at the end of the day, I always say to all of the parents that want to get involved, there is nothing more powerful to sharing your story. Because you speak from the heart. Tell how much cannabis changed everything for you. And don't even worry about everything else. Just share your story, and at some point you will find, you will meet the legislator. You will find somebody that is willing to listen. And might have somebody that died from... something that could have been helped by cannabis. Or is going to something with maybe seizures in the family or cancer in the family. And make them think. Make them think about, “What if I was using cannabis?” And if you can do that, you are more than likely be able to maybe pass legislation. The key, I always say, is doesn't matter which state you're in, find a champion of your cause.

Sebastien Cotte: We got very lucky in Georgia with State Rep Allen Peake, he's our champion. Find a champion. Somebody who's willing to listen. Somebody that is willing to put himself out there or herself out there

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to help. And Allen Peake’s story was really quickly - he met Haleigh from Haleigh’s Hope Act. He met the little girl Haleigh in the hospital and he told us many times, he said when I walk into the ICU room and I see that little girl having seizures, the only thing I could think of is, “She looks like my granddaughter. This could be my granddaughter.” And he said, “If she was my granddaughter, I would walk on glass to get this to her.” And he has done that. And he has put himself out there to help us. And when we couldn’t pass a bill, he actually started a not-for-profit to pay for families in Georgia to move to Colorado, including my family. And he’s still every day in the session fighting.

Sebastien Cotte: But you’ve got to find a champion. And if you find a champion. There’s one there. He might be hard to find. He or she might be hard to find. But there is somebody in that legislation in every state that is going to listen. That is going to care about your story and about cannabis. So find that person and just work with them and try to pass a bill. But again, no CBD-only if you can avoid it, because at the end of the day, it’s not going to help that many people. And I don’t want to give anybody legal advice, but you can get more CBD products probably shipped right now under the pharma bill, it’s probably okay. But again, I’m not a lawyer, so don’t take my advice. But CBD is not that hard to get. Right. The rest of the stuff is hard to get. The THC, the CBN, the THC-A. That’s where you get challenging. If you have a CBD-only bill, you can’t get that in the state.

Sebastien Cotte: And again, Jagger is not the exception. He is more the rule than the exception. Full-spectrum, all cannabinoids working together, is going to work better. Jagger did great on CBD, but when we added that THC, it was night-and-day difference. And I know, John, you have thousands of stories like that. So again, don’t fight just for CBD if you can avoid it. There’s some exception to that, obviously, some states, that are not going to pass anything. But try to file for everything - for the whole plant. For full-spectrum plant.

Sebastien Cotte: And very quick, on the federal lawsuit, this is ongoing right now. It’s kind of very exciting. I met some of the lawyers in New York back in July of 2017 and they heard of Jagger’s story and they said, “We’re going to take on Jeff Sessions, the DEA, the Justice Department. Would you be willing to put yourself out there, knowing that we don’t know the repercussion of if this is going to happen, because this is the federal government and you’re going to piss off a lot of people?” And I said, “Yeah, absolutely.” Again, to go back about paying back and trying to help and trying to get this more

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mainstream because it helped us so much, trying to pay back for everything it gave us - gave my wife and I. And all the extra time with Jagger. I said, “Absolutely, without a doubt, I want to do this and I want to help.”

Sebastien Cotte: And the lawsuit was filed in the summer of ‘17 and we actually, we’ll have oral arguments coming up. We’re very excited about that. We don’t know what’s going to happen, but the premise of the lawsuit is having cannabis on schedule, in the CSA, is unconstitutional, so we want to take it altogether out of the Controlled Substance Act. All cannabis off the Controlled Substance Act so people can use it all over the country. That’s what the lawsuit in a nutshell is trying to do.

John Malanca: So you look at this as a human rights issue. You know, having access I think families should have access to medical cannabis or another option. We went through this, I think I mentioned earlier, with my father-in-law, back in 2011 with medical cannabis. His doctor knew nothing about it, but he said, “Go for it.” And my father-in-law’s a very humble man. He’s alive. And we talked about, and I know you mentioned Schedule 1. No medical value. The US government has a patent on medical cannabis as medical - it has medical uses. And so my father-in-law, he sat there, he's a retired dentist, so he's a thinker, and he does a lot of studying. But the same thing - he said, “How come now one's sued the US government for murder?”

John Malanca: And he looked at us. You know, Corrine and I at United Patients Group did an article on that. And it got a lot of coverage. And people were saying, “Aren't you afraid?” I said, “I'm not” - we're just getting the information out. Why hasn't someone sued the US government for murder? And my father-in-law is still alive. A lot of families that we work with who don't live in legal states, who don't have access and don't get a second chance for their child or their family member, it's tough. We were very fortunate. You were very fortunate that you had access. That you were able to become a refugee and you're back home now. But it affects a lot of people, and a lot of people don't have the same type of resources that you and your wife did to leave and come back. So that must - I know it affects a lot of people. So now with you back in Georgia, do you see any laws changing or have you seen any of the laws changing? Has this helped?

Sebastien Cotte: So to answer the first part of the question about the human right, yeah, I absolutely believe it's a human right. I believe, back from my college days, right, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness is
guaranteed in the US constitution. Well, my pursuit of happiness is
to keep my kid alive. Keeping my kid alive is using cannabis.

John Malanca: Yes.

Sebastien Cotte: So it's my right, technically, under the US Constitution to use it. I
know I cannot get a court case on that, but that's how I look at it.
I'm happy to keep my kid alive. When my kid is alive, I'm happy. My
kid is alive in great part today because of medical cannabis. So
yes, to me it's absolutely a human right. And I've seen people, it's a
bad thing, and you know that way too well, but the bad thing about
doing what we do and advocating and helping people, is you
unfortunately see a lot of people passing away.

John Malanca: Yeah.

Sebastien Cotte: And the first year when we couldn't pass that bill in Georgia, before
we passed the bill, we lost two kids to seizures. It's heartbreaking.
The following year, we lost another one because we didn't have any
access.

John Malanca: Yeah.

Sebastien Cotte: And you know, I honestly lost track of how many kids we lost in
Georgia and around the country because we have no access. And
I'm not saying, again, cannabis will save everybody's life. It's not
what I'm saying. But for many, it could help and it could keep you
alive and it could give you a better quality of life. One seizure can
kill you. One seizure. You can never have a seizure before, you
could have your first one and die. People don't understand that.
You can have seizures for five years, ten years and still be okay,
and then all of a sudden, one day, that one seizure can kill you. So
cannabis can help with that. But yeah, so to me it's a human right.
To me, it's absolutely a human right. And it's something that I think
should be legal and there is no reason for it to be illegal. It's not
dangerous. If you do take safeguards and know what you're getting,
how you're getting it, how it's made, you can have a very, very safe
and clean product that can definitely help.

Sebastien Cotte: And as far as Georgia, I don't know. When you got a kid on
hospice, you've got to always be optimistic. Always see the best out
of everything. But Georgia's going to be tough. Georgians still have
a mentality - unfortunately we have this mentality now from the
legislation that, "Oh, you have medical cannabis. We passed a bill." I
said, "You did, it's a possession only bill. So what happens if I go
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to Colorado, bring it back, and I get stopped over in Kansas, and they want to take me to jail?” Do I tell them, “Oh, I got a Georgia card. No, you can’t touch me.” I can’t do that. I asked the governor in his office directly, and his answer to me was, “Well once you get back in Georgia, you’re legal.” And I said, “I understand that. What happens before I get back to Georgia? That’s my issue.”

Sebastien Cotte: And their answer to that was, “Once you get back to Georgia, you’re legal.” So they’re playing, they’re just being blind to it. They think they did us a favor and they think they’re done with it, but we’re far from being done. And one thing we got over here - it’s not just a Georgia thing, it’s something everywhere, every parent. Every special need parent, every patient, every husband, wife, granddaughter. Anybody, that if you have somebody that you care about that can use this plant, that plant is giving you hope. It’s powerful - hope. It’s something that is untouchable. And as long as there’s hope, as long as you have hope, then you have life. And you know, especially parents, if we’re known for one thing, it’s they don’t lose hope. Because if they would lose hope it would mean they give up. Especially parents never ever give up. I’ll give you that. We never give up.

Sebastien Cotte: So we are going to keep fighting in Georgia, we’re going to keep fighting around the country, we’re going to keep fighting with the federal lawsuit. And it might take a few months, a few years, but we will get this and I will fight as long as I can, even when Jagger is gone, I will still be fighting. And this is now my life’s mission, and I never asked to be a part of this. I never know, I never imagined I’d be a part of this. But now, I'm too deep in it and I've seen it first hand how much it can change people's lives, so I will fight until I can't fight anymore.

John Malanca: And not to bring up a sad subject here, but you just said when Jagger is gone. Can you share his life expectancy?

Sebastien Cotte: He’s way past his life expectancy now, so we taking - I know this is going to sound very, very cliché, but it’s one day at a time.

John Malanca: Yeah.

Sebastien Cotte: He really is one day at a time. And we enjoy every little moment. Every moment, every Christmas, every birthday, every little milestone we enjoy and we try to appreciate that and take it in, take as many pictures and video as we can of him. Because we want those memories.
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John Malanca: Yep.

Sebastien Cotte: We’ve been doing a lot of art with him, with his fingerprint. Making little frames of little animals made of his fingerprints. We’re doing all that kind of stuff. Because we know, at the end of the day, we have to be realistic. We know when Jagger is still in hospice, he’s still a terminal patient. We know cannabis is not a cure for him. But cannabis give him a longer life and a better life, which when you’re on hospice is really all you can ask for.

John Malanca: Yeah.

Sebastien Cotte: So we know sooner or later. We almost lost him a few months back. He went into septic shock and we almost lost him. But we were - even the doctor was surprised that he’s still alive but after three weeks in the hospital on life support, we made it home. So we’re very thankful and grateful and every day’s a blessing.

John Malanca: God, okay, how long was your drive home from Colorado to Denver -- Colorado to Georgia on the way home? Also six days?

Sebastien Cotte: No, on the way home was much - well, kind of. It was much better on the way home. We had one of our friends, a great friend, that is a philanthropist, and he actually flew with his wife to Colorado and rented an RV and he drove us back in the RV so we were able to go longer because we were able to lay Jagger in the back.

John Malanca: Yeah.

Sebastien Cotte: I know that’s not legal, but hey, you’ve got to do what you’ve got to do, right? We did put a seat belt on him. But believe it or not, something crazy happened. Jagger, before moving Colorado, had I believe, top of my head, 17 admissions in the hospitals from age one to age four when we moved to Colorado. In the 13 months in Colorado, we were not admitted in the hospital a single time.

John Malanca: Wow.

Sebastien Cotte: On the way home...

John Malanca: Yeah.

Sebastien Cotte: We got to Nashville, and he got so sick, we ended up having to go to Vanderbilt Children’s Hospital and we got admitted for three days.
in the ICU. So we were in Colorado for 13 months, we leave Colorado. Three days after we gone from Colorado, he is back in the ICU.

John Malanca: Wow.

Sebastien Cotte: So the trip home ended up taking five days, but that's including three days in the ICU. So it was much faster if you don't count that. Those days in the ICU in Nashville.

John Malanca: So Sebastien, we have a lot of patients that have tried different types of application methods. One that we've seen is rubbing the roll-on or the ointment on the bottom of the feet for seizures. Have you ever tried that? Does it work? I've only seen a couple patients that have had success with that.

Sebastien Cotte: We have tried it. I haven't really honestly seen a difference with it. But just like you, I've seen people that it works. Honestly, everybody is absorbing differently, so that's probably why it might or might not work as a topical. Because we've seen that with topical cream when we use it for his muscles, sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't work. For seizures, for rescue medication, right now there are nasal sprays on the market which honestly can be great for - instead of using diazepam, which is Valium, which you give rectally that can suppress your breathing and make stop your breathing. A lot of people having issue with nasal rescue spray to get kids out of seizures. So that would be probably my preferred application for rescue for seizure patients.

John Malanca: Gotcha. So you mentioned a bit earlier about the legal case and what you're doing in Georgia. Can you help and share with any families out there and grandparents with their grandkids and parents and brothers and sisters that one, live in an illegal state and may be going through something like this with their loved one, their pediatric brother, sister, child, grandchild and don't have legal access. Can you share some tips?

John Malanca: I know you mentioned reach out and find that golden nugget in the government that you can share your story and hit a nerve with them. Can you share some tips for families that may be going through this right now?

Sebastien Cotte: Yeah, absolutely. Now again, I'm not a lawyer. Don't take this for the gospel what I'm going to tell you. But at the end of the day, especially when you've got a kid on hospice or a very sick kid, you
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have to do what you have to do. Okay. And I'm not saying anybody should break the law, but you've got to do what you've got to do. Depending on what you do, don't talk about it. No, that being said, yes get involved. Talk to your legislator in DC and at the state level. Share your story. Reach out to the press. Ask to write a co-op, a co-ed, I'm sorry, for your local newspaper. Share your story. Again, the best advice is to share the story and advocate as much as you can and just show people that are not educated on cannabis and cannabis is safe, and it can really help. And if opiates is legal, there's no reason for cannabis not to be legal.

John Malanca: Yeah.

Sebastien Cotte: Opiates are much more dangerous than cannabis and it's legal every day and people die every day from it. I think we're up to over 90 people a day in this country dying from opiates overdose. It's ridiculous. It's avoidable. And share your story. If you want to take another angle with legislators, something that is working right now honestly is also the financial situation. A lot of states having issue with their budget, so cannabis can bring money. That's most going to happen on the rec side, but what it can do on the medical side - we just had a speaker in Georgia talking about this from the University of Georgia did a paper on it, it can reduce by billions of dollars if we were to make it legal in all 50 states - it could reduce by billions of dollars Medicaid and Medicare spending if people were to use medical cannabis instead of the prescription drugs. That's not what the big pharma wants to hear, so that information is not going to be widely available, but that's a published paper by the University of Georgia that shows that. So if that's an angle that you want to use, use that angle, then you can save money to the states. And again, not money by taxing the cannabis and dispensary, money by saving Medicaid and Medicare funds.

John Malanca: Yeah.

Sebastien Cotte: There's many angles you can take with this.

John Malanca: Well, I appreciate you sharing your story. I know the feedback that we had in The Sacred Plant docuseries with you and Jagger has touched a lot of people and I want to thank you for taking the time to be on The Sacred Plant docuseries because it reached a lot of people.

Sebastien Cotte: Well, actually, my dad - my dad's a doctor in France, so at first he was kind of like, “Well, I'm not really sure about this. I don't know
much about it.” And he’s older, so he never learned a lot about the endocannabinoid system or any cannabis in med school, because it was way before that. He went to med school before it was even discovered. But now he’s seeing. You know, he doesn’t see Jagger very often, but he gets to see the difference when he sees him, and he’s like, “Yeah, absolutely, go for it, do it. Do what you got to do.”

Sebastien Cotte: And unfortunately my mom just went through breast cancer a few months back, and there was no way to get her cannabis, so she went through the chemo and the radiation. She seems to be doing okay right now, but I really wanted to get her cannabis, but there was no legal access in France and obviously I was not going to ship something internationally. It’s too risky. So, I really, really wanted my mom to use it during her cancer treatment, especially as she had really bad side effects of the chemo. I know it would have at least helped with that. But unfortunately I was not able to get her access to that.

Sebastien Cotte: But they are believers now. They really are believers and they’re telling everybody, they’re sharing my story with everybody. Every time there’s a news report or a news clip or a story about Jagger or like The Sacred Plant, they’re always like, “Hey look, my grandson.” So.

John Malanca: Yeah, Sebastien, I can't thank you enough for taking your time today and sharing your story and Jagger's story. And it brings a lot of hope. And like you, I always share with people, this isn't the golden ticket. I don't want to ever give anybody false hope. I personally have seen it work. You personally have seen it work. But hope is sometimes the only thing that a patient has to hang on to. And I know that first hand and I know you know that first hand as well. But I just thank you and knowing that Jagger is back to smiling, boy, that must be beautiful. And so I'm very happy for you and your wife and family and I look forward to meeting you face-to-face one of these days as well. But again, I thank you and is there anything you want to send out to our listeners today or our viewers today about Jagger and you and your wife and what you're doing?

Sebastien Cotte: Well, first of all, I want to thank you guys too and thank The Sacred Plant and all you do and United Patients Group, all you guys do for everybody around the country.

John Malanca: Thank you.
Interview with Sebastien Cotte: A Father’s Journey to Save His Son

Sebastien Cotte: It takes a village.

John Malanca: Yeah.

Sebastien Cotte: But we have a really good village.

John Malanca: We do.

Sebastien Cotte: So I'm very hopeful that it's even going to get better.

John Malanca: Yeah.

Sebastien Cotte: And, no, I mean, all I want to say is cannabis gave us time that we never thought we'd have, and for that I am forever thankful. And it's not a miracle drug that's going to cure everything. But in my case, in my wife and Jagger's case, one single day past his life expectation is a miracle, so we're going on over three years now. So we're just very thankful.

John Malanca: Well, good. And Sebastien, I just want to thank you and Annett for being brave parents and continuing with hope as you mentioned and fighting for a cause for Jagger and having the success that you're having with Jagger. So I appreciate you being on the Healing Secrets Experienced webinar series, and you are number two in our webinar series. And again, thank you so much and we will see you soon. God bless.