

Turning a New Leaf



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- Promoting healthy relationships and personal growth from a Christian perspective -

Spring 2011

Don't Fall for It - Avoiding a Love Addiction

by Linda Culver, Addiction and Mental Health Counselor



It happens. It starts out as an innocent friendship, working elbow to elbow, solving problems, offering support and listening to each other's problems. But, the next thing you know, you have developed feelings for this person who is not your significant other. How could this happen? "I'm married, in a committed relationship." So, *how did it happen?*

There is no greater joy than "falling in love." When that happens, your brain chemistry alters and you feel a tremendous "high," joyfully ecstatic, and have a lot of energy. But, brain chemistry can wreck havoc on a person's life and relationships, when the innocent flirting becomes an addiction. And just like any other addiction, even if it's from an unseen brain chemical, it has the propensity to destroy relationships.

There is a whole realm of sexual and relationship addictions that have been flying under the radar for many years. Consider "gambling addict." They do not need to consume alcohol or a drug to become physically addicted, but nonetheless they feel a strong "pull" to gamble in spite of the risks and potential problems. Sex and relationship addictions have that same kind of "pull" which is one of the hallmark signs of addiction.

We've known for years that alcoholism knows no boundaries. It can affect a minister, a teacher, a doctor. Relationship addiction (often referred to as "love addiction") is no different. An alcoholic can justify a drinking episode with many excuses, such as "I'm stressed out and needed to relax," or "they didn't serve any food at the party." As with all addictions, a person can "con" themselves into believing that their behavior is a positive force in their life. When a love addict perceives their "relationship" as something positive in their life, it is easy to rationalize or make excuses for their behavior.

Sex or relationship addiction, just like alcoholism, can creep in from what initially appears relatively harmless, innocent or may seem even necessary. It becomes

problematic when "*I have to see the other person*" because you are neighbors, you work together, or you are on the same church committee changes to "*I want or need to see them.*"

Because the addict believes there is nothing wrong with their behavior, sometimes they create a "secret world." In the addict's mind, others would not approve of their behavior or they would be embarrassed by it. So the addict goes underground. The relationship progresses into full blown lies and deliberate planning to see the other person.

Just like other addictions, it becomes critical that the addict see the truth and change direction. If you or someone you know are in this situation and you find that you are unable to change direction or are struggling with the "pull," then a fall is almost inevitable. Before this happens, or if it already has, seek help.

There are 12-step programs and various other support groups, in addition to individual counseling that can provide help.

An addict may believe that they are the only one with this problem, but that's not true. So, don't fall for that either!

Recommended Resources

His Needs, Her Needs

By Willard F. Harley, Jr.
This book's subtitle is "Building an Affair-Proof Marriage" and since many do not feel that they are at risk, it can easily be dismissed—but it does an excellent job of identifying the key ingredients to a great relationship and explaining them in profound ways to both sexes. It makes some thought provoking, perhaps controversial, recommendations for relationship building as a couple. This is the manual that marriage should come with and be referred back to!

Love and Respect

By Emerson Eggerich
Another gem, Dr. Eggerich builds from the Ephesians 5:33 verse commanding men to love their wives and women to respect their husbands. He explains it in a way that makes it clear as to why and how this impacts the success of marriage and how men's and women's needs profoundly differ. Many, many things are perceived and interpreted very differently by each sex and this book is able to help reach both and show how the interaction between the two (reactions of each) can be key to harmony (or not!).

New Leaf Celebrates at Annual Banquet

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Our Mission

New Leaf Resources promotes healthy relationships and personal growth through counseling, education, and consultation from a Christian perspective.

The theme for this year's Celebration Banquet was "Continue to Grow," and that it did. The event attracted more than 300 friends and supporters who recently gathered at **The Center for Performing Arts**, in Munster, to celebrate God's blessings and learn of the ministry's plans to continue to serve and further His Kingdom.

After enjoying a delicious meal by **Trama Catering**, guests were treated to the talent and testimony of Comedian **Jeff Allen**. Through comedy, he openly shared about his struggle with addiction, ADD and how by finding God, he was finally helped.



Associate Therapist Leah Travis greets guests at the annual Celebration Banquet.

Videographer **Chris Climer** debuted three new videos about New Leaf, its mission and a moving testimony from clients who have received assistance from the Marty Doot Fund.

During his ministry update, Executive Director **Terry Top** reported that New Leaf hopes to open a fourth location in DeMotte this year to

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Comedian Jeff Allen shares his gift of comedy and personal testimony with the guests at the Banquet.

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Looking Forward with Confidence

A former client recently shared how her experience at New Leaf Resources has given her hope, help and healing.

"The counselors validated my feelings. I was also taught how to have self-confidence and that I am valued.

I learned that I have post-traumatic stress disorder which made so many things I do make sense.

I've learned to talk things through. Share feelings. Bite the bullet and do things that are frightening. I've learned how to work through the panic attacks.

I'm looking forward to speaking in public and singing on the praise team!! Also, mentoring other women with addictions or unhealthy relationships."

**- Judy, 56
In therapy for grief counseling/panic disorder**



What's "New" at New Leaf Resources

We are excited to welcome Mental Health Counselor **Aneece Alicea**, who will be serving the Crown Point office. Aneece specializes in the treatment of anxiety, depression, behavior management in chil-

dren, life transition issues and mental health issues in individuals with developmental delays. Her goal in treatment is to help individuals become the healthiest version of themselves using practical application and Biblical truths.

After 14 years, the Lansing office said good-bye to **Linda Boender** who handled accounts payable. We wish her well. **Dana Szymczak** will be assuming those duties. Dana lives in Dyer, with husband, Larry, and two children, Paige and Derek. In her spare time, she enjoys watching her children play softball and baseball and socializing with friends. She recently finished school with a degree in accounting.

Aneece resides in Hebron with husband, Adam, and six-month-old daughter, Cadence, who mom reports is extra cute!

"The counselors validated my feelings. I was also taught to have self-confidence and that I'm valued."
- a former New Leaf Resources client

Banquet

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meet the growing needs in an underserved community.

Thank you to all who attended and supported New Leaf's mission. We're excited to report that the event raised close to \$25,000 for the Marty Doot Client Assistance Fund!

Tax-deductible donations are still being accepted. Contributions to the fund can be made securely on-line at newleafresources.org or by mailing your check to:

New Leaf Resources
2325-177th St.
Lansing, IL 60438

Learning to be Imitators of God at CARE 360°

What would over eighty 7th graders do with a day that consisted of **no** reading, writing or arithmetic but, rather a day full of fun? They would enjoy CARE 360°! A day focused on how amazing they are just because of how God made them.

On Friday, April 8, Timothy Christian School hosted CARE 360°. The theme focused on Ephesians 5: 1-2 "Be Imita-

tors of God, therefore as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God."

Speakers and skits addressed issues that 7th graders are facing daily such as grief and loss, peer pressure, gossip, and standing up for our faith in God. Not only did the 7th graders

enjoy the day but high school students from Timothy Christian High School and parents were key components to the days success.

What pre-teen would not want to hang out with cool high school students and learn from them? The day was a success and could not have been done without the staff of Timothy Christian School.

-Kathy DeVries, LCPC

Save a tree

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School's Out for the Summer!

While the kids are celebrating, some parents might be anticipating a stressful few months. Do you need to create a routine for children with AD(H)D? Or need guidelines for parenting college kids home for break? Maybe you need support in managing sibling rivalry. New Leaf Resources can help. Our professional staff can evaluate your situation and provide counseling from a Christian perspective for concerns relating to families including:

- Parenting Issues
- Anxiety
- Eating Disorders
- Depression
- Emotional, Physical or Sexual Abuse
- Self-Esteem
- Divorce or Separation
- Blended Families
- Addictions
- and many more.

For more information about services for children and families, call 708-895-7310 or visit www.newleafresources.org.



 **new leaf resources**
hope. help. healing.

New Leaf Resources is...

A **professional mental health agency** which provides counseling services to individuals, families, couples, children, churches, schools and businesses.

A **ministry** which brings the best possible care to those we serve, striving to reflect God's grace and love to all who seek help.

A **community resource** offering educational services, prevention programs, training, support and coaching.