

Turning a New Leaf



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

Spring 2013

Overcoming Eating Disorder Took Faith, Love & Support

by Kaitlyn Dykstra, Administrative Staff



When I was in 5th grade I was diagnosed with Epilepsy and continued to struggle with it for many years. I was in and out of the hospital, on and off medications trying to find one that would work for me and not cause an allergic reaction. Because of my illness, I needed to be home-schooled a good portion of 7th grade and was made fun of by kids who had no idea what was really going on. It hurt more than I could ever express and really affected my self-esteem. I had always struggled with the way I looked, what people thought of me and often questioned in my own mind if I “measured up” and was “good enough.” I continually sought approval from everyone else.

As a sophomore in high school, I began cutting and started bingeing and purging.

It was something I felt I had control over since I didn't have any control of my epilepsy or what other people thought of me. It was somewhat of a release of anger and hurt. Once I would do these hurtful things to my body I would regret it, get upset again, but do it for the “high” all over again. Cutting, bingeing and purging became my way of dealing with my emotions so I could face the next day and put a big smile on my face. It was a way to express my pain and hurt.

The night my mom saw some cuts on my arm was a night I will never forget. It was that night that I really started turning to God and asking for help. My parents expressed to me over and over how much they loved me and decided to send me to a Christian counselor. It was the greatest thing they could have done. It was something I never really knew anything about, but soon discovered what an awesome gift and healing process it was.

I saw my therapist for four months about once a week. She helped me realize how I was beautiful inside and out, made in God's image, and that He loved me no matter what I was going through. She helped me better understand that my body was “a temple of the Holy Spirit” (1

Cor. 6:19), and she also made me see more clearly that what I was doing was not only affecting me, but also my relationships with those closest to me.

Now that I look back on my past, I realize that God has had me in His arms the whole time and carried me through those difficult times. I give thanks for my Christian parents who helped me through the hardest part of my life and loved me unconditionally. I also thank the Christian therapist who helped me realize my worth was not based on what others thought of me.

Seeking counseling was one of the greatest decisions my parents could have made for me. I am sharing my story to help raise awareness of the many kids and teens that struggle with their body image and self-esteem. The pressure kids feel from sports competition, family, homework, friends and media is unbelievably intense. Eating disorders and cutting are dangerous and harmful not only to the person practicing these behaviors, but also hurt the people they care about most. I am proof that I lived through the battle and won through the strength of Jesus Christ. (“I can do all this through Him who gives me strength.” Phil. 4:13)

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Eating Disorder Resources

If you or someone you know is suffering from an eating disorder, here are some helpful resources recommended by Staff Therapists **Kass Cooper** and **Megan Fisher**.

Books

Anatomy of A Food Addiction

by Anne Katherine, M.A.

Art of the Inner Meal by Don Altman

Bulimia, A Guide to Recovery

by Lindsey Hall & Leigh Cohn

Food and Love by Dr. Gary Smalley

The Deadly Diet by Terence J. Sandbek, Ph.D.

The Monster Within Overcoming Bulimia by Cynthia Joye Rowland

The Secret Language of Eating Disorders By Peggy Claude-Pierre

Websites

National Assoc. of Anorexia Nervosa & Associated Disorders
www.anad.org

Overeaters Anonymous
www.oa.org

Find more at
www.newleafresources.org

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Offices

2325-177th Street
Lansing, IL 60438
(708) 895-7310

11035 Broadway, Suite D
Crown Point, IN 46307
(219) 226-1810

165 E. Robbins St.
Wheatfield, IN 46394

info@newleafresources.org
www.newleafresources.org

Our Mission

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

“Life, Laughter & Love” Felt at Annual Banquet

We celebrated the lives healed, love shared and the great gift of laughter at New Leaf’s Annual Celebration Banquet, held in April at the Center for Visual & Performing Arts in Munster, Indiana.

Nearly 200 guests enjoyed a delicious meal followed by the humor and antics of “Playfully Simple,” an improvisational trio featuring Doug Pruim, Gary McFall and Martin Fernandez.

The annual event could not be possible without the generous support of our major donors. Thank you to our sponsors:

“Hope” Sponsors

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Long time supporter Judy Doot passionately spoke about her late husband Marty’s involvement with New Leaf and his work to help those with addictions.

“Healing” Sponsors

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Thank you to all who attended and supported New Leaf’s mission. All money raised goes directly to support clients who are unable to fully afford the cost of counseling.

Annually, New Leaf provides approximately \$140,000 through the Marty Doot Client Assistance Fund to those in need. We’re excited to report that the event raised close to \$26,000 to date.

Tax-deductible donations can be made securely online at newleafresources.org or by mailing your check to:

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

Special Gifts

Contributions to New Leaf Resources can be made in memory or in honor of a loved one or friend. Thank you to the following donors:

**In Memory of
Barbara Hatch
Frank Hostetler**

**In Memory of
William Jellema
Louella Jellema**



(From left) Executive Director Terry Top hams it up with Doug Pruim and Gary McFall of Playfully Simple during their improv comedy performance.

Client Learns How to Express Feelings Appropriately

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

"[I contacted New Leaf after] I went through a divorce. I knew of their reputation because my friend received help after his divorce.

I received the tools necessary to help make my life better.

My counselor is a great listener. He helped me find the root of my problems and taught me how to deal with them. He has helped me to change my view of myself. I don't feel guilty about things that I shouldn't feel guilty about.

I am no longer afraid to express my feelings. I don't just 'clam up' like I used to. I don't bottle up my feelings. I

speak up and defend my thoughts and feelings.

I can now express my feelings in appropriate ways, but I understand its okay to feel upset, angry.

The staff understands how to get you where you need to be."

**- a client, age 51
in therapy for
post-divorce counseling**



**"I am no longer afraid to express my feelings."
- a client**

What's "New" at New Leaf Resources

We are excited to welcome Addictions Therapist **Megan Fisher** to the therapy staff. Megan most recently worked as a counselor at a residential substance treatment center on the West side of Chicago. There she provided individual, group and family therapy.

Megan looks forward to bringing New Leaf back to "it's roots" as a leader in outpatient addiction counseling. Working in both the Crown Point and Lansing offices, she plans to provide individual, family and group counseling.

Megan grew up in Tinley Park, but currently resides in Valparaiso with her husband, Mark, daughter Danni, 5, and step-daughter, Alice 10. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with her family, exploring caves

and walking labyrinths.

Addiction & Mental Health Counselor **Linda Culver** has announced she will be leaving New Leaf in June. She

and her husband, Lyn, recently purchased a RV and plan to travel the country. We wish Linda and Lyn all the best.

Trinity Lutheran Donates Gifts



Tracy Winter (left), Missions Coordinator at Trinity Lutheran Church in Lansing, recently delivered toys, puzzles, coloring books, boxes of tissues and postage stamps that her congregation collected for New Leaf. Marketing Communications Director Terri Kasper gratefully accepted the in-kind gifts.

Eating Disorder

(Continued from page 1)

I am now a wife to my best friend Steve, as well as a mother to our beautiful 15-month old daughter Mikayla. I have been seizure-free for more than 2 years and give all the glory to God.

I have such a passion for New Leaf Resources and its mission because of the experiences I've had. If you are or know of anyone struggling with an eating disorder or practicing self-harming behaviors, the best thing you can do is seek help. Do not hesitate to reach out for the hope and healing it can bring. Our God is powerful, wants the best for His children, and works in amazing ways.

Save a tree

Would you prefer to get this publication via e-mail? Please let us know by sending us your e-mail address to terri@newleafresources.org.



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Speakers Available for your Group

Need a speaker for your next group or church function? New Leaf Resources' therapists are available to address groups of any size and age from youth to senior citizens. Whether its for a Stephen Ministry program, MOPS group, business organization or youth gathering, New Leaf can address a variety of topics including:

- Addictions/Substance Abuse
- Blended families
- Bullying
- Caregiver Stress
- Cutting and Self-injury
- Depression and Anxiety
- Disaster & Mental Health
- Divorce Recovery
- Forgiveness
- Geriatric Depression
- Grieving During Holidays

- Marital issues
- Managing Stress
- Parenting
- Time Management

For more information or to schedule a speaker for your next event, call the office at (708) 895-7310.

Not on Our Mailing List?

Sign up today to receive New Leaf Resources quarterly Newsletter full of helpful information, informative articles and stories of hope and healing. You can select print or email version. sign up online at www.newleafresources.org or email your request to terri@newleafresources.org.



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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.