

## Glimpsing Evil in a Sacred Space

by Norm LeClercq, Clinical Supervisor, Marriage & Family Therapist



**W**hen I began my work at NLR I never imagined that it would include my coming to terms with the human heart's capacity to do evil. After working here a few years, a type of atrocity began to arise in the memories of some of my clients that showed me I had no idea what genuine evil looked like. Cruelty is too mild a word for what these individuals have suffered (and continue to suffer) throughout their childhood and adult lives. Through my clients' flashbacks and emerging images of memories demanding attention I have had to face the reality of **Satanic Ritual Abuse**.

In the therapy field there has been a distinction made between five basic levels of

Satanism. The first level refers to individuals who develop an interest and begin to dabble in Satan worship. For many, this can be a passing phase but for others such a fascination can develop into something dangerous both for themselves and those they victimize.

The second level refers to formalized Satanism such as the late Anton Levay's Church of Satan. Though these groups perform Satanic rituals, it appears to me that the actual articulated philosophy is closer to an embraced hedonism, uninhibited self-promotion and the acquisition of personal power.

The third level is typified by individuals who do not belong to any organization, group or cult. These individuals are criminal deviants and are extremely dangerous. Richard Ramirez often referred to as 'The Night Stalker' came to national attention due to the manner in which he killed his victims. He sometimes would spray-paint pentagrams on the walls of his victims' homes

and some of those he left alive were forced to swear allegiance to Satan.

The fourth level is represented by a widespread group of drug smugglers called the Narcosatanists who are known on both sides of the Texas-Mexico border. Though the focus of their activity involves drugs, money, and power, they are known to practice ritual murder. Their beliefs draw from various cult religions including Satanism and Santeria.

The fifth level of Satanism is referred to as Satanic Ritual Abuse and refers to the practices of multigenerational groups who literally worship Satan. It is the practices of these groups that I have become familiar with through my work with clients who suffer because of them. These groups are intentionally secretive since the kind of practices they engage in involve acts that are by their very nature criminal. Whenever you hear of animal or human sacrifice, these are the types of groups that engage in such activities. They are very skilled at psycho-

logical and physical torture and their techniques are clearly aimed at stripping away the humanity of those to whom they have access. By performing acts of extreme cruelty, the members of these groups believe they are earning the favor of Satan and empowering themselves.

One of my responsibilities as a therapist is to care enough to ask the hard questions and to reflect back to the client what I am hearing, seeing, sensing, or feeling as I work with them. The hardest work of therapy involves a willingness on the part of clients to focus their attention on what they are experiencing within themselves and to somehow share it with me. To do this requires of them a voluntary letting go of their defense strategies (humor, silence, denial, etc.) which results in a state of genuine vulnerability. It is not possible to self disclose at this depth and be defended at the same time.

It has been in such sacred space that I have glimpsed

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**Our Mission**

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

**New Leaf Recognizes Donors' Generosity**

The New Leaf Resources' Board of Directors recently honored **Thelma Venema** for her generous support of the Crown Point office. Thelma was instrumental in opening the Northwest Indiana location and continues to be a strong supporter of the ministry's efforts in the community.

"New Leaf's Crown Point location would not be what it is today without the vision and generosity of Thelma," said Terry Top, Executive Director. "Her incredible support over the years has been an inspiration to all of our staff and board."



**Board President Tom Visser (right) recently unveiled a watercolor painting dedicated to Thelma Venema (left) which will hang in the Crown Point office. Venema was honored for her long-time support and efforts in opening a Northwest Indiana location. Since launching in 2004, New Leaf's presence in Crown Point has seen tremendous growth, providing approximately 200 client sessions per month.**

**Glimpsing Evil...**

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the degree of evil the human mind is capable of conceiving and executing. As my clients' emerging memories of what has happened to them are articulated and expressed, I have come to understand how abuse and torture are actually used as tools in "programming" a person. Those fortunate enough to get away from such a group will still have to struggle with the emotional, mental, and somatic torment that are the legacy of ritual abuse torture.

I wrote this article in order to acknowledge Satanic Ritual Abuse as a contemporary reality and that real evil exists hidden in our own communities. Although the work of recovery from such abuse and torture is intense and requires years of therapy, the good news is that it is possible for survivors to reclaim their lives and their selves. May this provide some hope for those survivors who have not yet found help and encouragement for those who are presently in the process of recovery.

**Great Lakes Bank Continues to Support**

Great Lakes Financial Resources recently donated gently used office furniture and a copy machine to New Leaf. The desks, bookcases, file cabinets, chairs and tables will be used to replace worn and broken furniture in the Lansing office and for the growing needs in Crown Point.

"We didn't have a copier in Crown Point, so we had to do all our duplicating in Lansing," said Executive Director Terry Top. "This will be extremely helpful and a better use of our time. We are truly grateful for Great

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## Finally Finding Peace in God's Time

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

"When I called New Leaf Resources (recommended by a friend) I wanted a women (counselor) but the person who spoke with me wanted to take my case. Very glad that happened. I had moved back "home" to look after my parents and aunt. I had come from Florida leaving a great

job, but 20 years of a bad second marriage. During this time I realized I had not been able to cry. I always cried when I was young. I wanted to know why I couldn't even cry when my beloved aunt died, then my father, then I was mugged. Nothing scared me.

My therapist told me that some day, some way, something would happen and whatever I was holding in would come out. Another two

years and then something bizarre happened and I found myself crying for all these years. I almost hated to say what happened but my therapist said the Lord had found a way to bring this peace to me and that I wouldn't have been ready before that time. He never thought I was crazy and addressed it like it was normal. Loved that.

I feel having a person (counselor) who is not a friend or family member is the best thing that has happened to me. I know I always have someone who knows more about me then I know about me in my corner. Thank you!"

- Marilan, 69, in counseling for depression, life transition



**"...the Lord had found a way to bring this peace to me that I wouldn't have been ready before that time."  
- a New Leaf Resources client**

## What's "New" at New Leaf

**A**ddiction & Mental Health Counselor **Linda Culver** has received her Clinical Addiction Counselor license from the Indiana Professional Licensing Agency. In 2009, Gov. Mitch Daniels signed the Indiana Addiction Counselor Licensure bill into

law, which according to addictionpro.com was written to "minimize consumer confusion among the various certifications and to clarify the scope of practice of the addiction counselor."

Clinical Psychologist **Angie Valente** recently took part in the Indiana Dept. of Homeland Security National Level Exercise at the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center near Butlerville, Indiana.

Together with 1,200 Indiana emergency responders, Valente, a volunteer with the District One Disaster Mental Health Response Team, tested the state's emergency response capabilities including assessing the state's ability to meet the emotional needs of disaster victims.

## Great Lakes

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Lakes continued support and involvement."

The staff at the Great Lakes Lansing branch volunteers to label and seal the quarterly newsletter and help with other mailings. In 2009, the Great Lakes Foundation awarded New Leaf a grant to upgrade the Lansing office software and purchase a new copy machine for the organization.

## The Strong Black Woman: Redefining Strength

Why do we **lie** to ourselves and those around us? Because we don't have the **FREEDOM** to -

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## Resources for Businesses

**M**anaging the interpersonal side of a company can be one of the biggest challenges for business owners. New Leaf can provide help for owners, management and employees:

- Consultation for the complexities of families who are in business together
- Referral source for employees with counseling needs
- Assessment for Employees with struggles
- Team Building
- Workplace Relationship Consultation
- Conflict Resolution
- Leadership Consultation

For more information, call Terry Top at (708) 895-7310.

## Save the Date!

Annual Celebration Banquet  
Thursday, April 26, 2012

**The Center for Visual & Performing Arts**  
*Featuring Ben Glenn, The Chalk Guy, who gives a powerful and inspiring message about his struggles with ADHD and a live rapid chalk drawing on a 6 x 8 foot canvas.*

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## 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 copy or email version. Call Terri at (708) 895-7310, sign up online at [www.newleafresources.org](http://www.newleafresources.org) or email your request to [terri@newleafresources.org](mailto:terri@newleafresources.org).

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## 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.