

Is Your Relationship Wi-Fi Compatible?

By Angie Cerniglia, MA, AMFT, LPC, Associate Marriage & Family Therapist



When our phone gets low on battery, we are frantic to find the charger—we will dive over beds, run into doors or risk electrocution to get our phone plugged into an outlet in time. Are we doing the same for our relationship?

Taking a realistic look at how technology is affecting your relationship can be a game changer in helping you further connect with your partner. Is technology enhancing your relationship and helping charge it up? Or is it draining the battery? Here are five helpful rules for how to use technology to supercharge your relationship:

1. No technology in the bedroom. Going to sleep with your laptop and waking up with your phone can easily become a habit, but at what point does your device replace your partner? Keep your bed and bedroom a space just for

you and your spouse. This will allow you to always have a place and time to connect, no matter how busy you both may get. Waking up and saying good morning to your partner is a far better way to start your day than checking your e-mail.

2. Save the big discussions for when you're together. Whether you need to share something positive or negative with your partner, when it comes to the important things, those need to be done in person (or on the phone if in-person is not an option). Texts, emails and instant messages are easily misunderstood leading, ultimately, to miscommunication. When it comes to something important, you deserve to have your partner understand what you are saying, and your partner deserves to hear it from you, not from a phone.

3. Ask yourself: Would this make my partner feel loved or hurt? Social media has allowed us to connect to others in more ways than ever before. You can catch up with old friends, find new ones, discuss important topics and even share ideas. However, the ability to connect to others can lead to issues of trust and security in your rela-

tionship. Every relationship is different, so the basic question above is a great way to know if you are using social media in a way that is honoring to your partner. In the end, enriching your relationship is far more important than how many Instagram followers you have.

4. Never use technology as a weapon against your partner. All couples go through struggles, but how you handle those struggles is what either builds your relationship up or tears it down. When you are working through an issue with your partner, just because you have the ability to contact them in multiple ways, does not mean you should. This only leads to your partner feeling attacked by you and completely bombarded. Using social media, texting or instant messaging to degrade your partner will in no way strengthen your relationship—though it may be difficult at times, save the technology for praising your partner.

5. Make time to be unplugged. Have date nights, vacations or even just a weekend at home where you are both completely unplugged from technology. Having your phone so you can call your partner if you

are apart or for family to get ahold of you in an emergency is important. However, keeping your phones for just those purposes and not getting on social media, email or your laptop will quickly charge up your relationship!

Even if there are no pictures to Instagram, Snapchats to send or statuses posted about your time together, it still happened, and better yet, it is a memory and time together that just the two of you share. Taking that time will help you connect with your partner on an even deeper level and create a lasting bond between the two of you.

We can either allow our relationships to be controlled and consumed by how we use technology, or we can allow technology to become a helpful piece in the way we communicate and connect with our partners.

So, tonight, instead of just looking at your phone, take a good look at the way it's used. Then put it away. Technology will continue to change and grow, but the way we connect with our partner, is something that Wi-Fi can never replicate.

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Our Mission

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

“When Life Happens” Theme at Annual Banquet



(Top) Executive Director Terry Top, Therapist Norm LeClercq and Board Clerk Rev. Gerrit Veenstra share a laugh with comedienne Tracy DeGraaf after her performance. (Right) Sandy Benes, Kaye Stegenga, Marty Benes and Mel Stegenga, of Crown Point, enjoy the evening’s festivities. (Below) Therapists Aneece Alicea and Angie Cerniglia share tips on dealing with stress and living well.

This spring, close to two hundred friends and supporters came together at the Center for Visual & Performing Arts in Munster, Indiana, to celebrate all God’s blessings, learn ways to cope “when life happens” and help those who are searching for hope, help and healing. After a delicious meal, Comedienne **Tracy DeGraaf**, “The Laugh Anyway Mom,” encouraged the audience to not only find laughter in the midst of life’s challenges, but also seek support and help when those circumstances become too overwhelming.



Thanks to the generosity of our sponsors, the cost of the evening was completely underwritten. To date, close to \$23,000 has been raised for the **Marty Doot Client Assistance Program**, which helps those who cannot fully afford the cost of counseling. Annually, close to \$150,000 in aid is given to those in need.

Donations are still being accepted online at www.newleafresources.org or by mailing your check to:

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Counseling Provides Compassion During Crises

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

"I started going to counseling in 1989 and have been seeing my counselor off and on over the years because he has helped me grow through

many crises and overcome personal challenges.

Throughout the years, counseling has gotten me to a better place of self-awareness and mental health. My counselor helped me dig into my childhood neglect and abuse and heal through compassion and faith.

He provides a safe environment so I have been able to come back over the years for help with my crises such as my divorce, the death of my best friend, and marital issues."

**- A client, 43
in therapy for childhood
issues, grief, divorce**



**"...counseling
has gotten me
to a better
place of self-
awareness..."**

- a client

What's "New" at New Leaf

Congratulations to Therapist **Evie Davy Romano** and her husband **Carl** as they welcome a baby girl, **Layla Ann**. She joins big sister **Piper** at home.

We are excited to welcome Clinical Psychologist **Eddie Taylor** to our therapy staff. Dr. Taylor is also the Director of Mental Health and Lead Psychologist for the Indiana Department of Corrections and has served as a Chaplain and paratrooper in the U.S. Army. Dr. Taylor and his wife **Jesseann** reside in Lansing with their three children and is a member of the Church of Christ.

With specialization in the areas of military/veterans issues, spiritual leadership, PTSD and depression, Dr. Taylor will be seeing clients in our Crown Point office. When not working he enjoys riding his motorcycle.

Our administrative staff also grew this past spring with

the addition of **Diane Emanuelson**, Accounts Clerk and **Pam Jacobson**, Client Liaison.

A resident of St. John, Diane and her husband **Mark** have four sons and three grandchildren. She grew up in Lansing and attended Lansing Christian and Illiana Christian Schools. In her spare time she enjoys anything creative like knitting, crocheting and quilting, as well as leading a ladies Bi-

ble study and co-directing Vacation Bible School at First Church in Lansing.

Born and raised in Roseland and Lansing, Pam most recently lived in Maine before returning to the region after her husband's passing. While out East, she worked for a nonprofit social services agency. A graduate of Calvin College, Pam is a member of Crete Church and enjoys reading and creating stained glass work.

"Keeping it Simple" at Fundraiser

Friends of New Leaf Resources are hosting an event to raise funds for the **Marty Doot Client Assistance Program** at Sandy Pines Golf Course in DeMotte, Indiana, Thursday, July 9. The evening kicks-off at 6 pm and features an informal dinner, enjoyable fellowship and an opportunity to support the nonprofit.

"As we have expanded into the DeMotte and Wheatfield area, we want to share how we can be a resource to the entire community and include them in our ministry," said Executive Director Terry Top.

For more information or to RSVP please call Terri at 219-270-3395.

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
Ralph Troller
Henrietta Troller**

**In Memory of
Emma VanderWeele
Herbert VanderWeele**

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Thelma Venema's
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**“You are what
you choose
today, not what
you have chosen
before.”**

-“Breaking Free From the Past”



Kass' Quotes

A compilation of Therapist
Kass Cooper's favorite quips & quotes,
humorous & inspirational.

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Summer 2015

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.



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New Leaf Resources is...

A **professional mental health agency** which provides counseling and consultation 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.



Celebrating 
35 years of
hope, help & healing