

# Turning a New Leaf

## Knowing What We Can and Cannot Change

by Linda Culver, Addiction and Mental Health Counselor



You might be familiar with the **Serenity Prayer**. It says, “God, grant me **Serenity** to accept the things I cannot change, **Courage** to change the things I can, and **Wisdom** to know the difference.”

Sometimes it’s the little things in life you can change that make a big difference. Whether you are struggling with something about yourself you don’t like, having trouble in a relationship or difficulty getting along with someone, there maybe a different way to look at the situation or something you can do to make the experience a more pleasant one.

If it is a relationship issue, our tendency is to complain about the other person and how they should change. Even if they should change, we cannot make them do it. There is almost always something we can do to improve things.

But, it can be difficult to determine what things you can change and what you should you learn to live with.

We cannot control another person’s actions, but we can change our actions, attitudes and perspective. This can be a difficult thing to accept. When we focus on ourselves, we are able to influence things that we can control. We don’t waste energy trying to change others when ultimately we have no control over what they will do.

So let’s begin with changing what we can. For example, in terms of our own health:

- We cannot change our genetics or predispositions, but we can change our lifestyle to reduce the risk of developing a serious illness.
- There’s no changing the amount of fat/calories in food, but we can decide which ones to eat.
- We cannot change our basic body build, but we can make good choices about the food we eat and exercise we get.

Changing the way we think about or react to a situation, can help reduce our anxiety and stress-level:

- We cannot change the way other people think or what they say, but we can change the way we respond.

- Sometimes others will be upset, disappointed or become angry with us. Keeping an open-mind, we can listen patiently and consider their side.
- We cannot determine our spouse’s mood, but we can choose how to respond or react to a negative mood or behavior.
- We cannot change the fact that sometimes things will go wrong or problems will arise, but we can decide not to take our frustrations out on others. Sometimes problems are well disguised opportunities for good and growth. Being challenged to work through the difficulty instead of avoiding it can be life-changing.

Life may not always go “our way,” but we can change how we react or behave when things do go wrong.

In more serious circumstances, you cannot change it if someone lashes out at you verbally or physically, but you can choose whether to strike back and what you need to do to protect your safety. No one can control life and protect themselves from painful experiences or difficulties. But, we can seek caring and loving support from our friends, family, pastor and/or a trusted counselor.

### More Tips on How We Can Change

- If you live or work in a very chaotic or changing environment that you cannot change, take time for prayer, relaxation or meditation.
- You may not be able to change how “smart” you are, but you can apply yourself and put forth an effort to learn and improve your knowledge and skills.
- In the workplace, you may not be able to change your boss or co-workers, but you can change your attitude towards them and focus on doing your job well.
- You cannot force your teenager to make good choices. But you can set up and follow through with appropriate consequences if he or she makes poor choices.
- We cannot make a friend be loyal or honest, but we can let that friend know what bothers us or what we need from them.

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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 Expands & Grows in Northwest Indiana

For decades, clients have had to travel from Northwest Indiana to our Lansing office for services. To help accommodate that need, New Leaf rented a small office in Crown Point in 2004. The ministry quickly outgrew that space and purchased a suite of three offices, a group room, and small play therapy room in the On Broadway Complex. After five years, we have now outgrown that space.

In April, New Leaf will be moving to a new suite within the same complex increasing the square footage from 1600 to 2700. There will be six offices, a group room and large play therapy space. Currently, seven therapists work at the Crown Point location.

“This new space will give more availability and flexibility in terms of scheduling,” said Executive Director Terry Top. “The waiting area will be much more spacious and

the play therapy room much larger to allow for safer movement. Our current play therapy room is not ideal and doesn’t allow us to do all that we’d like to do.”

Also this Spring, New Leaf will open a satellite office with one therapist in Wheatfield.

In a cooperative arrangement, we will be leasing space in the Krol Family Medicine Clinic, seven miles

east of DeMotte run by Nurse Practitioner Lori Krol. Krol was looking for a mental health referral partner when she approached New Leaf.

“One advantage to working with a clinic is you can serve both the medical and mental health needs all in one facility,” explained Terry. “With a demonstrated strong need for services, New Leaf hopes to continue to grow and expand in Indiana.”

## What’s “New” at New Leaf

We are excited to announce the addition of two new Board Members to the ministry - **Dave Larsen** of Palos Heights and **Rev. Joel Sheeres** of Crown Point.

Dave’s professional career has been in youth ministry, Christian higher education, development work in a suburban Christian school system and, most recently, financial resource development for urban Christian schools in Chicago. Dave is the Director of the Bright Promise Fund for Urban Christian Education.

Married to his wife Cathy for 43 years, they are blessed with three married children and five grandchildren. Dave is a member of the Hope Christian Reformed Church in Oak Forest, Illinois, and is eager to serve on the New Leaf Board.

Having formerly served on New Leaf’s Board of Director and as Board President, Joel returns to serve another term. Joel is the Senior Pastor at First Christian Reformed Church in Crown Point, where he has served for almost 11 years.

Prior to serving Crown Point, Joel was the Associate Pastor at Faith Christian Reformed Church in Elmhurst.

Joel and his wife, Christine, have three school-age children and live in Crown Point. During his previous tenure, Joel was a strong advocate for opening the Crown Point office.

Thank you to **Tom Visser** and **Jack Elzinga** who retired from the Board. Their time, dedication and passion for New Leaf Resources is greatly appreciated.

## Special Gifts

Contributions to New Leaf Resources can be made in memory or in honor of a loved one or friend.

**In Memory of  
Chris Postma**

Jack & Carol Elzinga  
Dr. Rich & Barb Grevengoed

**In Memory of  
Shirley Pals Van Schepen**

Ruth & Nick Zandstra

## Learning Boundaries Has Lessened Anxiety

**A** client recently shared how her experience at New Leaf Resources has given her hope, help and healing. She came to New Leaf after realizing her panic attacks and migraines could have been a result of living with alcoholic parents.

*"Counseling stopped me from suicide. It taught me boundaries and how to say "no." As repressed memories surfaced, I was slowly relieved of migraines after suffering for eighteen years.*

*Now, I am able to work and support myself instead of*

*being housebound. I can drive my car and travel further from home than I could before. I stopped generational sex abuse.*

*I am now on a maintenance program. I connect 6 to 12 times a year (with my counselor). I am still working on self-esteem and hope to be panic-free.*

*New Leaf's support got me through life. If there is a doubt one needs help, go get it. There is no stigma on those that seek help."*

**- Female client, 65  
in therapy  
for panic attacks**



**"If there is a doubt one needs help, go get it. There is no stigma on those that seek help."  
New Leaf client**

## Special thanks to...

New Leaf continues to be blessed with a generous, giving and supportive constituency who through their gifts make a daily impact on those we serve. One of our donors, who is a former client, told us she wanted to return the blessing to others by making a gift.

"I give with a grateful heart for the message of hope and healing in Jesus Christ that was so tenderly and lovingly shown to me at New Leaf," she shared. We are truly grateful for her gift and all the blessings we have received this year and we give special thanks to:

- Our **Church partners**, who faithfully take offerings for those in need of services and trust in our work by referring their members for counseling.
- Our **generous Banquet, Annual Fund, Christmas Card donors!** Because of your gifts, clients in need can receive the needed financial support and

peace of mind through the Marty Doot Client Assistance Fund.

- Our **dedicated and selfless Board of Directors** who give of their time and talents to further the mission of New Leaf.
- Our **courageous clients** who anonymously share their personal stories, to encourage and uplift others who are hurting. If you are interested in sharing a written or videotaped testimonial, please contact the office or take a brief survey on our website at [www.newleafresources.org/forms/survey.cfm](http://www.newleafresources.org/forms/survey.cfm).
- Finally, thank you, **our friends and supporters!** Whether you prayed for our ministry, referred a friend, volunteered your time or gave a contribution, it's because of your unending dedication, New Leaf can continue to provide hope, help and healing. For that, we are truly grateful.

## Kids are Focus at CARE 360°



**New Leaf and Timothy Christian School partnered again last Fall for CARE 360°, a day long prevention program focused on staying drug-free, caring for self and others, and living in a God-honoring fashion. Speakers and skits addressed issues that 7th graders face such as grief and loss, peer pressure, gossip, and standing up for their faith. Thanks to the TC High School students and parents who volunteered their time together with counselor Andra Hersey. Therapists Kathy DeVries (former New Leaf Intern) and LaSaundra Gordon helped coordinate the event.**



## Save a tree

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## Save the Date!

**Annual Celebration Banquet**  
*Thursday, April 26, 2012*  
**The Center for Visual & Performing Arts,**  
**in Munster, Indiana**

**Featuring**  
**Speaker, Author & Artist**  
**Ben Glenn,**  
**the Simple ADHD Expert**

**Enjoy dinner,**  
**fellowship & fun!**  
**RSVP by April 12 -**  
**(708) 895-7310 or**

**[banquet@newleafresources.org](mailto:banquet@newleafresources.org) or**  
**[www.newleafresources.org](http://www.newleafresources.org)**

**Interested in hosting a table? Sponsorships?**  
**Please call Terri for more information.**



 **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.