

# Turning a New Leaf



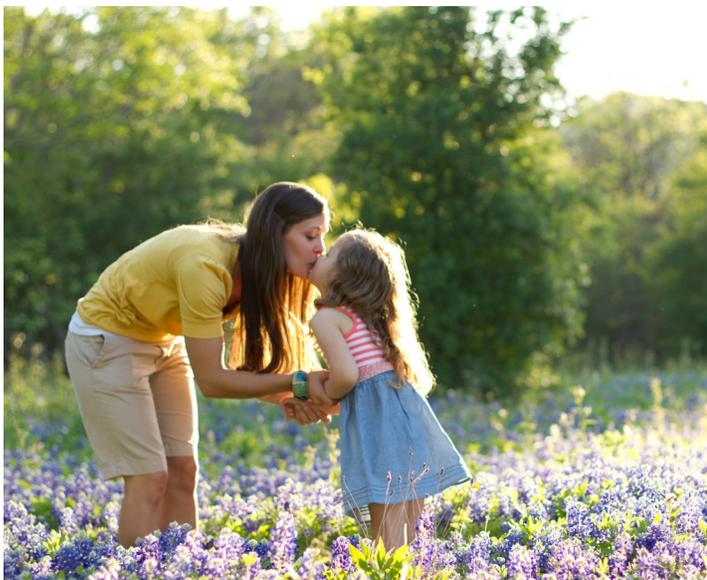
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- Promoting healthy relationships and personal growth from a Christian perspective -

Spring 2019

## Surviving and Thriving as a Single Parent!

By Darla McKim, MSW, LCSW, Family Therapist



**“P**arenting is one of the hardest jobs I’ve ever done.”

This is a statement repeated by every parent. But add the word “single” to that phrase, and it takes on a whole new dimension. Now, the job becomes even more stressful. The parenting tasks that often spread over two people now sometimes all fall on one person. The stress, the work... it’s double!

Some individuals become single parents because of death, divorce, or personal choice. Other homes have similar characteristics of single parenting because one parent’s shift work, out of town job, or alcohol or other addiction pulls him or her away from parenting responsibilities. Being a single parent can add financial strain. It also can become a struggle to cover the round-the-clock hours of

care that a child requires. In addition, you may be trying to work, attend school and be active in your child’s life and school. Just listing all these responsibilities, which are only a few of the common ones, makes me feel exhausted. So, as a single parent, how do you keep from being constantly overwhelmed?

**Accept help.** It is okay to ask family and friends for help. If they offer, take it. You may need help with carpooling and child care or struggle with loneliness. Don’t push away those who care about you because they often want to help. When they do help, accept it without feeling guilty about it.

**Take care of yourself.** Your children need you to be physically and emotionally healthy. It is not only good for you but also for them as well. Exercise, eat healthy, take a long

bath, read a good book, take a Sunday afternoon nap. Get a sitter and go out for a few hours. It’s good for your kids to see you take care of yourself.

**Take advantage of local resources.** Many communities offer play groups for your kids, support groups for single parents, church life groups, or parenting classes. These groups can provide the companionship and support that you need to not feel so alone.

**Find good role models for your kids.** It is important for your children to have healthy relationships with people of both genders. Invite positive role models to spend time or mentor your kids. These mentors can be family members, friends, or a church leader.

**Have fun.**  
*Remember to enjoy fun days and activities with your kids or your friends. Take a break from the regular routine and make some happy memories with your kids.*

As you strive to understand and survive as a single parent, remember that you are not alone. The emotions you are feeling are normal and part of how you grow. Ironically, there are similarities when we reflect on the **stages**

**of grief and loss** to the emotions we feel when we tackle the job of single parenting. In both, we have to find a way to grieve what we have lost or what has changed. For some of us, it is the other partner in the relationship. For others, it is never having a partner to share this journey with. But denial, anger, bargaining, sadness, and acceptance are all parts of how we work through the emotions involved in both processes.

As we come to accept our new “normal” and acknowledge our situation, we can find ways to stop **denying** or hiding our feelings or our situation. We often have feelings of **anger** towards other people, sometimes ourselves or the situation. Sometimes we are even angry with God. But when we take time to understand that our anger does not help us cope, but instead fills us with something that is miserable and hurtful to ourselves and our kids, we can start to find joy again.

The **bargaining** part comes and goes as our emotions struggle with all the ways we maybe should have done something differently. When our emotions begin to bargain, we need to remember to look forward by looking at the adventures and the good things that are part of our story and how we can make that story good, strong and productive. **Sadness** is also a big piece of our emotional work. When we experience loss, we feel sadness and that

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**Our Mission**

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

**LaVerne Jordan Appointed as Interim Director**



The New Leaf Resources Board of Directors is pleased to announce the appointment of LaVerne Jordan as Interim Executive Director, following the departure of former Executive Director, Terry Top.

Coming to New Leaf with over 40 years of counseling and teaching experience, LaVerne currently teaches at Trinity Christian College as an adjunct professor. She previously served as Dean of Social Sciences & Humanities within the College of Adult and Graduate Studies which included the Master of Arts in Counseling and the General Education program at Colorado Christian University in Lakewood, Colorado. She also served as a professor of counseling/

psychology at Denver Seminary and Olivet Nazarene University.

In addition to her wealth of academic experience, LaVerne worked in private therapy practice for over a decade, providing counseling services on personal and family issues. During her time in private practice, she often referred individuals to New Leaf when additional resources were needed.

LaVerne also served on New Leaf's Board of Directors since 2015 and looks forward to serving that Board as an advisor in this new role. She feels uniquely qualified and called to serve in this role saying, "I am a strong believer in the importance of counseling. I've seen how it helps people grow, especially when it's based on biblical principles and the premise that we were all created by God to live fully. I believe our earthly role is to live in healthy relationships with those around us – our spouses, families, friends, and co-workers. New Leaf aligns with my personal values as it works to restore relationships and promote personal growth."

LaVerne lives in Bourbonnais with her husband of 49 years, Gary. In her free time, she loves spending time with her two daughters, sons-in-law and six grandchildren as well as reading, traveling, and gardening.

LaVerne will ensure that New Leaf will remain on solid footing during the search for a new permanent Executive Director and that its clients will continue to receive excellence in services. Her office time will be divided between New Leaf's Lansing and Crown Point offices.

We are so excited that LaVerne has agreed to serve in this capacity as we continue the search for a permanent Executive Director for New Leaf Resources. We thank you for your continued partnership in our mission. Please join with our Board and staff in praying for God's leading throughout the search process for a new Executive Director as well as praying for all those who come to New Leaf in search of the hope, help, and healing it provides.

*Brian Smith, President of Board of Directors, New Leaf Resources*



**Surviving and Thriving as a Single Parent (continued from pg. 1)**

is okay.

Completing all the steps of this process takes time. We need to allow ourselves the time, grace, and patience to work through all of the steps so that we can learn and conquer the challenges ahead of us. It's important to be honest with your kids about your emotions and let them know it's okay to feel them. But, don't let the negative emotions define you. Choose to be better, to work hard, and to fight for the win

in your life.

As our focus changes to acceptance, we can realize that single parenting is hard, but there are ways to still survive and flourish. Continue to approach life and parenting with the right mindset, build a network of resources, and make a constant choice to be a good leader for your family. By playing to win long-term, your family can survive and flourish.



**Darla McKim, Family Therapist**



## What's New at New Leaf Resources?

New Leaf Resources recently welcomed two new therapist interns from Purdue University Northwest.

**Gabriella Boeger and Kaitlyn Gantz** are currently working toward their Master of Science degrees in Child Development and Family Studies, both specializing in Marriage and Family Therapy.

**Gabriella Boeger** sees couples, individuals, and families in New Leaf's Crown Point and Wheatfield offices. Her clinical interests include integrative or holistic health, identity development, family adjustments, sexuality, eating

disorders, self-esteem, anxiety, and depression.

**Kaitlyn Gantz** is currently accepting appointments with individuals, couples, and families in New Leaf's Lansing and Crown Point offices. She specializes in issues relating to infidelity, intimacy concerns, and co-parenting. She also works with clients experiencing body image concerns as well as clients experiencing symptoms of anxiety and/or depression.

If you'd like to make an appointment with Gabriella or Kaitlyn, contact New Leaf today at (708) 895-7310.



New Leaf welcomes therapist interns Gabriella Boeger (left) and Kaitlyn Gantz (right).

## Today is the Day, Day

By *Connie Brott, Development Director*



Do you ever have the radio or television on and hear "nothing" until something catches your attention? Recently, our television was on, but I was not paying any attention until I heard, "Do you have a "today is the day, day"?" My first thought was "Today is the day that the Lord has made..." However, I was relatively sure that was not the reference point of the question. No, it was an ad for Maryville University online registration – "today is the day to complete your degree,

and it is easy to register." Frankly, it was catchy enough that it will most likely motivate some individuals to take that registration step.

However, the catchy question lingered as my thoughts reflected on the new year, my schedule, and our family. Take a minute to let your thoughts capture the question. Today is the day for....

\*\*Beginning a healthy lifestyle of exercise

\*\*Cleaning the garage/closets

\*\*Registering for a class

\*\*Calling a friend, visiting the ill, checking in with the children and/or grandchildren

\*\* Prioritizing and completing undone projects

Of course, any one of us could continue with this list as individuals, families, and employees

or employers have a myriad of "today is the day, days." But before getting caught up in all of the "to do days," focus on Psalm 118:24...*This is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it.*

At New Leaf Resources, as with many organizations, December 31 is a time to recapture the past year for financial and program purposes as well as for planning for the new year. The review provides plenty of "today is the day, day" opportunities. However, at New Leaf, our first focus as we recapture 2018 is "to rejoice" as God has blessed us with...

\*\* 30+ years of being able to provide *hope, help, and healing* to His people who enter our doors

\*\* faithful therapists and staff

\*\* financial support as needed for our clients through *Marty Doot Client Assistance Fund*

All donations go to client assistance. Therefore, because of **YOU...our friends and donors**, our clients who struggle financially can continue to seek help and healing without worrying about "how do I pay?"

Thanks for your generous and faithful support throughout the years. Thanks to our new friends who joined with us in our mission this past year. And, your prayers for New Leaf, its staff, and its clients are invaluable.

For New Leaf, every day is a "today is the day, day," but before we begin our "to do" list, we want our first focus to be Psalm 118:24. Therefore, for our New Leaf friends, donors, and clients, our prayer is that in 2019 you may *rejoice and be glad* in the days God provides for you and your family.



## Save a tree

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## You can provide hope, help, and healing!

Children, adults and families turn to New Leaf Resources every day to help them navigate difficult times, circumstances, and life transitions.

**Are you able to give a gift of any size to New Leaf today?** All gifts are used to provide assistance to those in true financial need.

 **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.