

The Balancing Act: Managing Work and Family

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It's the end of a long work day and you head home to get your school-aged children off the bus before picking up your youngest from daycare. Your spouse calls to ask you to grab the carryout order so that you can eat as a family before rushing out the door to your son's basketball game. Then, your boss calls to inform you of a mandatory meeting for the next evening: the same evening as your daughter's dance recital. What a dilemma!

Balancing work and family life can be challenging. Many families today are working more hours and rely on two incomes. Not only is the cost of living demanding more hours of work, but also our society demands more busy lifestyles as a whole. Accessibility of technology is creating an expectation of working additional hours from

home. With our busy schedules, there can be limited time left for families to be together and fully present.

There are some ways to make balancing family and work life easier. First of all, priorities need to be outlined for our family, while considering the most important factors. Boundaries that support those priorities need to be clearly established as well. It will be easier to maintain focus and minimize unnecessary demands from work when the priorities and boundaries are focused. Having a schedule and routine at home and work is essential and having clear communication of job responsibilities from our employer is helpful.

Secondly, having open communication with our family will keep us in balance. One may be fine working

the optional overtime or taking the second job, but if it hinders connection with the partner or children, it may not be worth the extra money. Having time to discuss how the rest of the family feels about the work hours will help keep the conversation open and will assist in making balanced choices.

Thirdly, we need to know our current season and have realistic expectations. We live in a culture that expects immediate gratification. But it is impossible to have it all right now and at the same time. Certain goals may be better achieved in a season in which family demands are low. It may be unrealistic, for example, for both parents to have demanding careers when their children are young. Time with loved ones is priceless and cannot be returned. Sometimes parents feel caught up in trying to achieve supermom or dad of the year status and overwork themselves. The factor that makes for heroes as parents is simply loving and caring for our children.

Lastly, we should reach out to our support system. Balancing work and family life can be easier if we have friends and family that offer encouragement and even a helping hand from time to time. Our support systems can give us the

boost we need to continue being great parents. Balancing work and family can be a struggle, but if families work together, we can accomplish great things.

Work-Life Balance Tips for Busy Parents

1. Plan meals ahead
2. Use the internet for shopping and bill-paying whenever possible.
3. Talk with your employer about flexible hours.
4. Keep a family calendar and display it proudly. Color-code each family member's chores and events to improve organization.
5. Don't bring work home.
6. Take care of yourself. Prioritize sleep, date nights, friend-time, and exercise.
7. Divide and conquer – communicate and delegate to your spouse or kids. Families should work as a team.
8. Don't strive for perfection!



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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 Trains Church Leadership



New Leaf's Terry Top and Gerrit Veenstra recently led leadership and discipleship training for Bethel CRC's staff and church council members. In the training, they explained family systems, characteristics of different generations, and how to best minister in order to meet each generation's individual's needs.

Because Bethel's congregation and council encompass members of each generation, they facilitated discussion about how different generations bring different expectations into worship and leadership. Pastor Nick VanBeek found it especially encouraging to hear Top and Veenstra talk

about how to handle different viewpoints saying, "I was thankful that Terry and Gerrit talked about the different types of people we'll encounter in ministry. Instead of seeing people with differences as oppositional, we learned that we need to look at them as people who bring a different voice or fresh perspective."

New Leaf's therapists are available to provide speaking or training services for your church or school. Contact New Leaf today at (708) 895-7310 to book your date!

What's "New" at New Leaf Resources



New Leaf is proud to welcome Jessica Rhein to its staff. Working as New Leaf's Intake Specialist, Jessica will welcome clients to our Lansing office, handle incoming calls, confidentially collect information

from and schedule appointments for existing clients, as well as help verify client insurance information.

Jessica comes to New Leaf Resources with extensive experience working in an office environment. She places a high value on customer service and is eager to make New Leaf's clients feel welcome and secure in New Leaf's commitment to confidentiality. She's thrilled to join New Leaf's team saying, "I am happy to join New Leaf because the staff is so nice and the atmosphere is so welcoming!"

In her free time, Jessica enjoys spending time with her husband Lenny, their two sons, and her parents. An avid reader, Jessica loves to learn and can easily become submerged in a book's storyline. She also stays busy managing and attending her kids' extra-curricular activities – and she loves every minute!

The next time you phone in to New Leaf or visit our Lansing office, please make sure to welcome Jessica. We're excited for you to meet her!



“You are Strong Enough to Face Your Pain ‘Head-On.’”

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

“Due to counseling, I was able to cope much better with my painful memories and give my own family the love and support they deserved.

Counseling is a real life-saver! New Leaf and time with my counselor has made more of an impact and helped me get through the painful memories.

Counseling doesn’t ease all of the pain, but it helps you to understand and live life with it. Seeking counseling doesn’t

make you a weak person—it just shows you that you are strong enough to face your pain “head-on.”

**- “Ruth”, 79
in therapy for
life trauma**



“Seeking counseling doesn’t make you a weak person—it just shows you that you are strong enough to face your pain ‘head on.’”
- “Ruth,”
a client

Multiple Choice By Connie Brott, Development Director



Looking for a new fun family dinner conversation – ask each member to list the choices made for the day.

- What to wear today?
- Which cereal to choose from the pantry?
- Closest location or the best price for vehicle gas?
- Pack a lunch or choose fast food restaurant?
- Watch TV (and what to watch), read a book, exercise, visit, or volunteer?

Mind boggling when you give it conscious thought.

There is another choice we engage in with our dollars – as the yearend approaches, are tax deduction choices, relationship choices, and/or heart choices made as to whom we support? Obviously, in the Christian world, each ministry trusts that the service it provides is worthy of the heart and relationship choice.

New Leaf Resources is no different. We trust that as we focus our ministry on *hope, help, and healing* for those who pass through our doors, you our reader know with God’s help we are making a difference in clients’ lives. Client Kari Poortinga recently shared about her time at New Leaf – *“dealing with the death of my husband was like being thrown into a hole. It’s dark, it’s lonely, you don’t know where you are, and you don’t know how to get out. Going to New Leaf was like having*

a light in the dark place.”

Because you are on our newsletter mailing list, we are confident our ministry has touched your heart in some way – maybe you know a friend or relative who has experienced Kari’s life, know our ministry personally, have a heart for those who struggle with life’s issues, or believe in supporting Christian ministries in general. No matter what your relationship with New Leaf is, thank you.

We look forward to and appreciate your yearend support and ask for your continued prayers – for our ministry, our therapists, and our clients. New Leaf’s confidence is first trusting God to keep us focused in our ministry and, secondly, having a relationship with you as your support helps provide Kari’s experience of being a “light in a dark place” for our clients.



“Dealing with the death of my husband was like being thrown into a hole. It’s dark, it’s lonely, you don’t know where you are, and you don’t know how to get out. Going to New Leaf was like having a light in the dark place.”
- Kari Poortinga,
former client

Save a tree

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Tips for a Fresh Start this New Year



Be Realistic. Whether it's a diet, a healthier relationship, or a resolution to get back in shape, set attainable goals.

Track Your Progress. Keep track of small successes and celebrate them!

Stick to It. It takes 21 days to form a new habit and 6 months for something to become part of your personality.

Talk About It. Don't keep your resolution a secret.

If you need extra support or accountability, New Leaf's therapists can help! Call us today at (708) 895-7310

 **new leaf resources**
hope. help. healing.

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.