

Turning a New Leaf

Singlehood

By Aneece Alicea, LMHC

Singlehood in one's 30s and beyond can be challenging for many individuals socially. Although it is becoming more prominent to be single after one's 20s, many find most of the peers their age are married or are in long term committed relationships. Typically, their fellow single peer group diminishes as time goes on. The social distancing measures due to Covid-19 has created more distance for single adults living alone.

Often, there is a struggle with knowing where singles fit in socially. Many single's focused groups, especially in churches, are narrowly accommodating to never married singles in their 20s without children. This is challenging for older singles and singles with children. Many times, singles are faced with the choice of socializing with other singles that are much younger or socializing with married individuals their age. Many singles find that communities overall are focused on a married lifestyle. "I'm tired of being single in a married world", stated one female single in her 40s. It's common for individuals to feel they are asked to accommodate schedules of married couples especially those with kids, leaving them to feel that their lives or schedules don't matter in the relationship.

Another area of challenge is combating loneliness. Some singles feel that they don't have "a person" that they check in with daily and process their day with. Feeling that they are not anyone's main priority is a common experience. They may feel that, although a friend or family is the first person they check in with, they are not necessarily the first person their friend or family member checks in with. Attending holidays or events, running errands, or enjoying outings on their own becomes a lifestyle. "A big challenge of being a guy that is single and 42 is coming to terms with the fact that most of my friends are married with children now, so I can't just call up a buddy and expect them to be able to do things like when we were 25", says another single.

Covid-19 has magnified these challenging areas for singles. When many states were experiencing a lock down, many singles quarantined alone. As Covid-19 peaked in many areas around the holidays, some singles celebrated alone. This was a very isolating experience for many singles, while families quarantined and socially distanced together.

There are some things that can make singlehood easier to navigate. First of all, it is beneficial to find a support system that understands and accepts one's relationship status. Many find leaning on encouragement and acceptance from



others that are not focused on fixing the single or on changing the relationship status is helpful. Spending time with friends and family that will include them as a single is essential. It may also be helpful for individuals to find ways to fill their time by joining a group or developing a hobby or interest. These activities are likely to lead to more social opportunities. Singles may also find it necessary to focus on being one's own person. Prioritizing oneself and self care will guarantee that their needs are being met. Single individuals can benefit from finding spiritual significance or deeper meaning to being single. Some find ways to further develop their faith or find support in God. Finally, it is necessary for singles to reach self acceptance. Some singles experience self blame for their relationship status. Self acceptance will help to bring true contentment in life.

If you know a single, check in with them. Many cherish being thought of and checked in on during the pandemic. If they are under quarantine for either exposure or illness, asking them if they need anything - an errand run or some groceries - is an easy way to show you care. Singlehood presents challenges, but over time, singles can also develop a contentment and satisfaction in their current lives.

Aneece Alicea, MA, LMHC meets with adults, adolescents, and children in New Leaf's Crown Point office.



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

'The Ripple Effect'

a message from the Executive Director

*"I alone cannot change the world,
but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples."
-Mother Teresa*

One of the biggest surprises during my first year at New Leaf Resources was the number of children and teens who were being seen by our compassionate therapists.

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are traumatic events that occur during childhood. One can see the negative ripple effect of such experiences, often having a significant impact on a person's physical, emotional and mental health throughout their life.

Although ACEs increase a person's risk of certain health conditions and behaviors in adulthood, they do not guarantee them. With support, children who face adverse events can learn to manage their experiences and lead meaningful lives.

Your prayers and gifts are making positive ripples, for some as early as childhood!

Others come decades later seeking hope, help, and healing as a result of the stress that has been caused by poor choices and mistakes. A good number of us can relate to these words from author Heather Blanton:

*"It's been much harder to forgive myself.
My mistake was like a pebble dropped in a pond.
The ripple effect has impacted everyone I love"*

Your prayers and gifts are making positive ripples as we supply the encouragement needed to work through the issues involved, often leading to self-forgiveness and the mending of broken relationships.

New Leaf values the privilege to partner with pastors and faith leaders who are interested in learning more about mental health. The teams they lead and serve touch so many lives, responding to the call to:

*"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ."
(Galatians 6:2)*

Your prayers and gifts are making positive ripples as we better equip our community to serve.

God has blessed us and called us to continue to be a blessing to others (Genesis 12). God's loving care and provision continues to touch our team and this ministry; and we are blessed to have people like you who help make these positive ripples a reality.

Your prayers and gifts are "casting a stone across the waters" and making positive ripples as many come to experience hope, help and healing! Thank you for making an impact!

In God's strength,

Rev. Corky DeBoer



New Leaf Welcomes Therapist Denise Williams to Lansing

We at New Leaf are excited to announce the addition of therapist Denise Williams to our Lansing staff!

Denise received her B.A. in Psychology from Chicago State University and M.A. in Counseling Psychology from Trinity Christian College.

Denise has a special interest in working with those who have experienced grief and loss, disrupted attachments, parenting issues, marriage/ family problems and spiritual growth concerns. She specializes in working with families and couples on relationships, as well as helping those experiencing a crisis of faith.

In addition to her clinical training, Denise has provided pastoral care and spiritual guidance to individuals and their families for the past 10 years as an ordained minister. Denise is experienced in working with grief, anxiety, depression, eating disorders,



PTSD, suicidal ideations, substance and sex addiction, and emerging adulthood.

In her spare time, Denise stays busy with her husband and 4 children. She plays an active role in her local community and school district; and helps her spouse co-pastor a growing church.

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



October's Mental Health First Aid Class

This October, New Leaf Resources partnered with Sertoma Centre to offer a 1-Day Mental Health First Aid class, hosted by Bethel Church in Lansing. The class ran from 9am to 5pm and ended with a room full of newly certified community members - better prepared to assist those in need.

Just as CPR helps you assist an individual having a heart attack, Mental Health First Aid helps you assist someone experiencing a mental health or substance use-related crisis. In the course, we learned risk factors and warning signs for mental health and addiction concerns, strategies for how to help someone in both crisis and non-crisis situations, and where to turn for help.

Topics covered included:

- Depression & Mood Disorders
- Anxiety Disorders
- Trauma
- Psychosis
- Substance Use Disorders

Mental Health First Aid teaches about recovery and resiliency - the belief that individuals experiencing these challenges can and do get better, and use their strengths to stay well.

If you'd be interested in joining us for our next class, email us at info@newleafresources.org

And a huge thank you to our partners who allowed us to put this class on at no cost:



Together
we give.

**GIVING
TUESDAY**

Nov 30, 2021



**[Update:]
#GivingTuesday
went great!**

**Gifts were matched
for the first \$10,000
and we reached that
goal! Totaling over
\$20,000!**

prefer
paperless?

Email us at:
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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.



Support New Leaf Today!

Are you a person who found hope at New Leaf Resources?
Do you have a friend or family member who experienced healing through New Leaf's counseling services?

Many of our clients require financial assistance.
Will you consider blessing them through a life-changing gift?

Simply return your gift in the enclosed envelope or visit www.NewLeafResources.org to impact a life today!