

# Turning a New Leaf



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

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## Are You Ready to Say "I Do?"

By Tonya Moore, MA, LMFTA Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist Associate



During the 1950's a popular song was produced for the Broadway musical, "The King and I," called "Getting to Know You, Getting to Know All About You." The chorus of the song went on to say, "Getting to like you, getting to hope you like me." When considering marriage, a realistic view of *knowing self* and *knowing your partner* are both fundamental to building a strong and healthy marriage.

In marriage, you bring your partner into all your *junk in the trunk*. The reluctance to look at *self* and uncover blind spots or deal with the elephant in the room for personal growth and change will lead to an unhealthy and dissatisfying marital bliss.

When *knowing your partner*, are there things about your partner that make you uncomfortable? What about the critical voice parenting you when you get too loud or how about the aggression when you've been too emotional? Do you feel pressure to change or conform to your partner's likes and dislikes?

### Understanding Self

You have tendencies toward certain characteristics (traits) and qualities rooted in genetic predisposition and influenced by many environmental factors called *personality*. During childhood, specific traits may have been embraced over others because they were rewarded with love, attention, affection, or acceptance by caregivers and helped you to protect

those relationships. The traits that caused negative outcomes (harsh punishment, criticism, judgment, or feeling unloved) you may have learned to hate, labeled as bad, and therefore, concealed them. Surprisingly, the bad parts of *self* can remain concealed (suppressed) throughout the stages of life unless they are recognized and confronted by you.

Fast forward into adulthood, the subconscious held belief that parts of *self* are bad undoubtedly becomes the conflict that married couples face. What moved you to be in the relationship with your partner, for example, his easy-going part of *self* is now what annoys and triggers you. Your partner's easygoing traits are like a mirror reflecting the parts of *self* you hid away.

Are you showing signs of discomfort by trying to control, punish, or push away your partner's parts of *self* the very traits or qualities you concealed and learned to hate in yourself?

You and your partner may misjudge how well you know each other when nobody has dealt with their blind spots. When specific traits or qualities in your

partner cause you to be defensive, ask the tough question, "Is this the missing part in me?"

### Helpful Tips

- Before making a lifetime commitment consider confronting the elephant in the room, YOU. *Knowing* starts with a beneath the surface; personal exploration to acknowledge any concealed parts of *self* that cause problems for you.
- Develop self-awareness of your feelings and emotions and talk them out with a trusted friend or professional counselor.
- Be honest with yourself and learn about your personality and how you were influenced (culture, social norms, religion, family of origin, media, etc.).
- Admit your blind spots and learn to be vulnerable with your partner.

Trying to fix, reshape, or control your partner may be tell-tale signs that you have not gotten to *know self* and, therefore you may never *know your partner*. You owe it to your relationship as a partner to expose all parts of *self* so that in the future you can feel confident that you are ready to say I do.

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**Our Mission**

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

## Connections Coupled With God

*By Connie Brott, Development Director*



Television is a limited choice – mostly sports and game shows -- for my entertainment. However, a year or so ago, I happened to see a show called “Bluebloods.” As you might guess, it is law enforcement related...New York police commissioner (Tom Selleck) and his family who are all involved with the NYPD.

In a recent show, his daughter was challenging the weekly family gatherings. Selleck’s response was – “Our gatherings are not about eating, though the food is good, it is about connections.”

Is this statement not true of all of your past and future holiday gatherings? Of course, everyone loves special meals at holidays, but it is really about the family coming together and staying connected.

Are you waiting for this to make sense as an article for New Leaf Resources (NLR)? Here we go.....

NLR was blessed in 2017. First, a donor offered NLR a generous matching gift – gifts to establish the Foundation’s Marty Doot Endowment would be matched up to \$50,000. The endowment will continue to “give” for years to come as the earned income will be gifted annually to NLR general operating fund for the purpose of client assistance. Therefore, thanks to our donor and all who participated in the matching gift challenge as we did reach and surpass our \$50,000 match. Second, thanks to all 2017 donors who stayed connect-

ed, re-connected, or joined us for the first time in our mission.

BUT....the donations “are not about money though the goal was reached for the challenge endowment and general budget, it is about the relationships.” Your NLR connection/relationship coupled with God’s guidance and blessings are paramount in assisting NLR to fulfill its mission. Your dollars provide financial assistance to those who struggle financially to receive counseling needed for a healthy restoration of their lives.

Thank you again! You are appreciated! May each of you experience a blessed 2018, remembering the importance of your family/friends connection as well as the importance of your connection to NLR and its clients. We at NLR appreciate your partnership with us.

## John Collins Earns Masters in Theology

**John James Collins** achieved his Master of Arts (M.A.) in Theology degree with a focus on Christian Ministry from Franciscan University of Steubenville. This is John’s second Master’s degree with his first being a Master of Social Work (M.S.W.) from Loyola University Chicago. John

works in New Leaf’s Lansing and Crown Point offices. He works with those seeking assistance with managing anxiety and depression, enhancing communication skills, managing anger, processing trauma, recovering from addictions, grieving and adjusting to the challenges of their spiritual journey and relationships.



## Board News

New Leaf proudly welcomed several new members to its Board of Directors this year.

**Ken Cowan, Carol Moxey, and Denise Williams** have all agreed to give of their time and expertise through participation in this governing Board.

New Leaf extends a huge thank you and fond farewell to its retiring President, **Joel Sheeres**.

## Angie Cerniglia Earns LMFT and LCPC Lincenses

**A**ngie Cerniglia earned her LMFT (licensed marriage and family therapist) license and her LCPC (licensed clinical professional counselor) license this year.

Angie sees clients in New Leaf's Crown Point office and specializes in the areas of marital, couple, and relationship issues, parent-

ing and family issues, premarital counseling, communication issues, stress, coping and transitions. She also works with individuals and families struggling with chronic illness, self-esteem issues, and with military couples and families.

If you'd like to make an appointment with Angie or any of our highly-trained



therapists, call us today at (708) 895-7310.

## New Leaf Resources Welcomes New Therapists

**T**hese are exciting days at New Leaf Resources! In January, New Leaf welcomed two new therapist interns, **Micah Brown** and **Mollie DiTullio**.

**Micah Brown** comes to New Leaf Resources' **Lansing office** with a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology and a minor in Addictions counseling from Indiana Wesleyan University. He is currently pursuing his Master of Science in Child Development and Family Studies, specializing in Marriage and Family Therapy, at Purdue University Northwest. Micah is a member of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy as well as the Indiana Association for Marriage and Family Therapy.

Micah specializes in couples and families with relational concerns, managing depression, anxiety, and other mental health concerns. He

also works to help his clients navigate identity and gender roles and enhance their self-esteem.

Micah loves being a part of his clients' life journeys saying, "My favorite part about working with clients is being a witness to their growth. It's a joy to be a witness to the human experience in its purest form, the good and the bad."

**Mollie DeTullio** comes to New Leaf Resources' **Crown Point office** with a Bachelor of Science degree in Family Studies from Central Washington University. She is pursuing a Master of Science degree in Child Development and Family Studies, specializing in Marriage and Family Therapy at Purdue University Northwest. Mollie is a member of the Indiana Association of Marriage and Family Therapy and the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy.



*Micah Brown (left) and Mollie DeTullio (right) joined New Leaf Resources as Therapist Interns in January.*

Mollie works with individuals, couples, and families who present a variety of communication, relational, and individual concerns. She specializes in working with attachment issues, symptoms of depression or anxiety, stress, identity formation, parental development, and difficulty coping with life transitions or change.

Mollie loves being a therapist



and is inspired to see her clients grow. "I believe clients have all the strength, wisdom, and capacity within themselves to be the change they desire," she explains, "I love being able to not only be on that journey with my clients but witness them realize that for themselves."





### Save a tree

Would you prefer to get this publication via e-mail?  
Please let us know by sending us your e-mail address to [lisa@newleafresources.org](mailto:lisa@newleafresources.org).



*Join us at the Barn on June 14!*



**M**ark your calendar for **Thursday, June 14**. For the second year, we'll be heading back to Pentwater Barn in Crown Point, IN for our annual celebration banquet.

This year's event will bring back some of the fun, informal, festiveness as last year but include some new elements.

- **A delicious pig roast**
- **Personal testimony**
- **Fantastic entertainment**

Watch your mail in April for your personal invitation to this once-a-year opportunity!



### 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.