

# Turning a New Leaf

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

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## Goal Setting with the Brain in Mind

by Jeff Berdine, MA, LMHC-A

Do you make resolutions only to watch them fall flat after a month or two? Perhaps this year already?

Many find it easy to set a goal, but difficult to follow through. When we make goals for ourselves, we don't always put as much thought into them as we should. I'd like to share some strategies that utilize the negative and positive emotions that our brain relies on for influencing our behaviors. Tapping into our brain's natural mechanism for motivating behavior will help you become more *resolute* in your resolutions.

### 1. Identify a Goal to Work Toward

Often, the goals we make are not about what we are trying to accomplish, but what we are trying to avoid. We want to stop eating junk, stop being selfish, stop staring at our phones...

Our brains use negative emotions to move us away from unwanted behaviors, and positive emotions to motivate us to accomplish our goals. A goal that gives a positive direction to move toward will create the positive emotions we need - resulting in the behavioral changes we want. So be sure to set goals of accomplishment, not avoidance.

### 2. Count the Cost of Your Goals

In Luke 14:28, Jesus tells a parable about counting the cost before building a tower. Sounds nice, but how does that help you lose weight?

If you wanted to count the costs of building a home, you'd need to define the home you are building with as much detail as possible. Counting the cost of our goals is all in the detail. It means understanding everything that will go into achieving the goal.

The more detail we put in our goals, the more clearly we can understand the sacrifices we'll need to make to achieve them. Instead of having a goal to lose weight, define *how much* weight you want to lose and



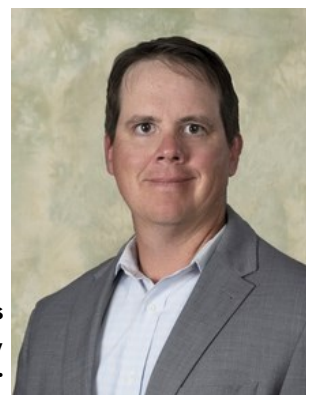
by when. Instead of simply aspiring to be a better spouse or parent, define the characteristics of the type of person you are trying to become. The more detail in a goal, the more likely your success.

### 3. Consider What Failure Would Look Like

What does the current trajectory of your life look like in 5 years if things remain the same? What will your marriage look like if you do not attend to the unhealthy patterns of behavior you notice? What will your health be like in 10 years if nothing changes? Understanding the risk of failure will give more motivation to keep us pushing toward our goal.

Now our goals have been identified, detailed, and we understand the consequences of not reaching them. These three steps utilize both positive and negative emotions to push us toward whatever we are aiming at. Choose a goal that is both challenging and attainable, and a little accountability never hurts .

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**Our Mission:**

To promote healthy relationships, personal growth and healing through professional counseling, education, and consultation from a Christian perspective.

**“The Blessing”**

**Esau** cried out, “Do you have only one blessing my father? Bless me too, my father!” Then Esau wept aloud. (Genesis 27:38)

You will be receiving this newsletter around Valentine’s Day. I don’t know about you, but I have a hard time finding a card that isn’t idealistic or overly saccharine. I usually end up buying the card that speaks about the ups and downs of life, and how I’m grateful for my wife and the mutual love and support that has sustained us over the years.



Love can be expressed in many different ways, and one of the most powerful ways this occurs is through receiving the blessing. Genuine acceptance is a need that goes unmet in thousands of lives each day. Perhaps you have this need or know a loved one who is struggling with a need that the blessing helps to meet. Below you will find the five elements of “The Blessing”, which Gary Smalley & John Trent share in their book, The Blessing.

- 1) Meaningful Touch: At times, the smallest act of touch can be a vehicle to communicating love and personal acceptance.
- 2) Spoken Words: Take time to speak words of love and affirmation today.
- 3) Expressing High Value: When we bless someone, we’re declaring that he or she is of high value.
- 4) Picturing a Special Future: Words that picture a special future act like a campfire on a dark night. They can draw a person toward the warmth of genuine concern and fulfilled potential.
- 5) An Active Commitment: The first four elements of the blessing can be seen as the building blocks, while this fifth element is the mortar that holds them together.

Many who have not received the blessing have found support and healing through small groups in churches or through a care ministry through pastors or lay pastoral caregivers. Others have found the additional care, compassion and expertise from our Christian counselors to be life-changing.

Since our beginning over 40 years ago, New Leaf has been blessed by God in so many ways, and we have been privileged to have the opportunity to bless thousands who are seeking support, healing and health in their lives and relationships.

Whether you have been a long-time supporter of New Leaf, or a newer member of our community, please accept my sincere thanks and know that you are a tangible part of God’s blessing to us! Let us remain open to receiving and sharing God’s blessings in tangible ways as we continue to bring help, hope and healing!

In God’s strength,

Rev. Corky DeBoer

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As part of our partnership with Barnabas, we are able to offer you, your family members and friends FREE access to their learning center at: [BarnabasFoundation.com/interactive](http://BarnabasFoundation.com/interactive)

## A Joyful Welcome Back to Therapist Judy Farwell!



**Judy Farwell, MA,  
LMHC, LCPC**

### **Announcing** the return of Judy Farwell to New Leaf Resources!

Judy has joined our Crown Point office to provide therapy for children, adolescents and adults.

We're happy to add her many years of experience working with individuals and families as a school-based and outpatient mental health therapist. She also brings us several years of administrative experience in a special education therapeutic day school & residential program.

Counseling from a holistic perspective, as well as drawing from her education and life experiences, Judy uses a multi-modal approach to therapy. During the therapy session, she seeks to provide a personable therapeutic relationship with each of her clients, in a safe, non-judgmental space, where clients are welcome to share and explore their life experiences. With the belief in God's restorative healing power, she journeys with her clients through the process of restoration, hope and healing in their lives.

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

## Providing for a Loved One's Future through Ultimate Gifts that Pay Income



**Through** a partnership with Barnabas Foundation, supporters can further the ministry of New Leaf Resources through gifts that pay income.

Through a lifetime income gift, you provide meaningful support to this ministry *and* secure steady lifetime payments for you or your loved ones.

But what if you want to provide for a loved one beyond your own lifetime?

**Including a life income gift in your estate plan is a generous and creative way to bless your children, grandchildren or other individuals with special needs.**

For example, John wanted to provide additional retirement funds to one of his faithful, long-term employees, Sharon. He included a gift in his will that offers Sharon steady payments until the time of her passing when the remainder will go toward ministry.

Another couple was concerned their children would receive a single large lump sum when they go to be with the Lord. Instead, they set up lifetime income gifts that will provide each of their children 20 years of steady income, after which their favorite ministries will be blessed.

*Is a lifetime income gift the right charitable solution for your goals and situation? We'd love to tell you more. Call Corky at 708-895-7310, ext. 1012 or email [corky@newleafresources.com](mailto:corky@newleafresources.com).*



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## So what does New Leaf Resources

# Give?

As a mental health agency & Christian ministry,  
we seek to bring the best possible care to those we serve.  
We strive to reflect God's grace and love to all who seek help,  
turning no one away regardless of ethnicity, religious belief or age.  
**With help from donors**, financial assistance is available to those  
who cannot afford the cost of counseling.

