

## Painting of Lee's Place donated by a generous client



In 2020 Lee's Place turns 20 years old. Averaging around 300 clients per year – we have served over 6,000 community members following a life changing event. Those events include death, divorce, suicide, homicide, domestic violence, abuse, crime, rape, loss of home or job, foster children, and many other instances where a life was turned upside down and needed assistance in their struggle to find a sense of normalcy again.

An old card someone gave me once said “sometimes the world looks upside down, and you have to stand on your head to see it clearly.” Many of the children, teens, and adults we see in therapy feel this way. Yet their grief or struggle makes them so exhausted, unsure, and insecure that they cannot begin to think of how to help themselves, much less friends and family who are also struggling. For 20 years Lee's Place therapists have led thousands of people through the process of coping, of learning about their feelings and developing skills to move through them, and of knowing they can be okay again.

Lee's Place has several videos where you can hear first-hand how we have affected people's lives after their tragedy (go to [leesplace.org](http://leesplace.org) and scroll down on the home page to access these). All of them are very powerful, but one stands out to me. It is our incredible founder and executive director, Brenda Rabalais, talking about a client who really touched her heart. She was an older woman who had lost her spouse and now her grown daughter. Her heart was completely shattered. She was all alone in the world and saw no reason to go on. She cried through every therapy session. Eventually though she cried less. She was able to hear more and try some of the coping skills taught to her. Then one day, after a very long time, she said to Dr. Rabalais “Brenda, I felt the sun on my shoulders today.” And they both knew she would be ok. She will always miss her loved ones, but she went on to find contentment in her life. Often that contentment comes through noticing the simplest of things, like feeling the warmth of the sun, when previously, she had been too numb to feel anything. This is why we do what we do for the last 20 years, and hope to for 20 more years. We want everyone to have another chance to feel, to be alive, and to know there is someone who cares, and to help to feel the sun again.



Thank you to the Tallahassee Community Chorus for choosing Lee's Place to be the recipient of your Fall concert fundraiser in November!

The music was incredible and we are so grateful for all of the donations we received, especially from Chorus members, who supplied us with snacks for children, copy paper and other paper goods we use regularly, as well as monetary donations from concert goers.

What a fantastic experience!



# Depression in Teenagers

by Dr. Brenda Rabalais

Differentially diagnosing depression from sadness due to a loss can be especially challenging in teenagers. They are already going through many developmental, social, mental and emotional changes, some teens handling them well and some not so well. Developmentally, teens are learning to individuate, separate from their parents, and make more of their own choices without parental supervision. Socially, their friends become more influential in their lives and often are more important than family, they are having to cope with peer pressure concerning use of drugs, sex, alcohol, etc., and are trying to find their niche in the social continuum. Mentally, they are being challenged to do more critical thinking, make decisions that may affect the rest of their lives, and many are competing academically to get into college. Emotionally (and this is the fun part), they are on a roller coaster, with their hormones raging, the acne blaring, and true love around every corner.

So how does one know if their teenager is just going through a phase or is appropriately sad, or is suicidal? In essence...what's the difference between sad and depressed? The answer is not clear cut, it is more a matter of degree. It takes a vigilant and observant parent to notice when sadness turns into depression, or to decide when they need outside help. Sadness from any kind of loss, i.e., a romantic breakup, didn't make the football team, parental divorce, can result in symptoms such as lethargy, irritability, sleeping too much or too little, isolation, an increase or decrease in eating, distractibility and physical complaints such as headaches, stomach aches, and muscle aches.

Depression manifests itself with many of the above symptoms, but depressive symptoms last longer and are greater in magnitude than sadness. For example, when one cannot get to sleep several nights in a row, or conversely, when your teen is sleeping 15 hours a day or cannot get up in the morning after 8 hours of sleep, it's time to take some action. It's OK and normal for one to want to be alone when sad, but when a teenager totally isolates him/herself from others, quits social activities that they used to love, this may be depression. Some other symptoms to look for in a depressed teenager include: changes in friends, begins to engage in high-risk behaviors, threatens suicide, unexplained fears, apathetic toward once-loved activities, hurting themselves, extreme irritability, uncontrolled angry outbursts, a sudden change in school performance, and alcohol and substance abuse.

So parents, get your magnifying glasses out when it comes to figuring out when your teenager needs help. Developmentally, they are supposed to be pushing you away (or in psycho-babble, individuating), but don't be deceived by their adult looking bodies and their astute ability to argue a point. They still need your tender care and devoted attention, just not too much. So walk that tightrope of monitoring them loosely while allowing them their space, with as much grace and stamina as you can muster. It's how you keep your teenager as safe as you can while allowing them to grow.

# Therapy - I don't need it

by Karen Lockard, LMFT



Every now and again, a person will confess that when they first began therapy, they thought, "what good can talking to someone do?" One client I have been seeing for quite some time now, said the same thing on his first visit. My response to him was simply, "you can use this time and

this space to talk about things that you cannot talk about with other people. You can figure out things for yourself without the fear of judgement, criticism, or opinions that friends and family will often bring with them." Though he still showed many signs of skepticism throughout his first session, he had a lot to say. So much, that when it came time to end this particular session, I found myself continuing therapy with him all the way out the front door. I knew he had gained something from our discussion, but what I did not

know was if he was going to come back, in fact, I doubted it. Much to my surprise, he did indeed come back, regularly, and when I shared my doubts with him about his return, he said, "well, I realized that I felt better last week, and if

doing nothing but showing up here and talking about my life makes me feel better, then why not do it?"



Just this past week, another client of mine shared the popular statement with me that, "all a counselor is going to do is tell me to get over this, and I know I need to do that already!" Unfortunately, we still live in a world where counseling is attached to a stigma. Until a person truly realizes the vast benefits sharing your problems and concerns to a therapist can have, they may likely view counseling as a resource instead of a "crutch." As this client continued coming to therapy with me, I received uplifting reports of her life and the coping strategies she was implementing. She showed feelings of optimism, and even once told me, "I wish more people knew how helpful this really is." Fortunately, many people in need of counseling will indeed seek it out, even with their doubts, and find that they too can feel better.



# THANK YOU...



Thank you **JEANNE KIMBALL** for years of board service, being a regular donor, chairing our Fall fundraiser, helping every time there is a need, and continuing as our Landscape Committee chair. Your dedication to Lee's Place fills our hearts and helps so many people. You are the best!



## The Zachary Group



## NASTURTIIUM CLUB



### 2019/2020 Lee's Place Board of Directors



Seated L-R

Kristin Whitaker (Board Chair), Brenda Rabalais (President),  
Harriet Williams, Donovan Brown,

Standing L-R

Lucy Westfall, Carin Butler (Secretary), Mack Rush (deceased),  
Jody Elliott, Jeanne Kimball, Danielle Kosberg (Treasurer)

### Lee's Place Mission Statement:

To provide quality therapy to adults, children, and families, regardless of their financial circumstances, who are coping with loss, trauma, and life changing experiences, while offering specialized training and education to the community.



Lee's Place

### A sad goodbye to MACK RUSH

In 2019 our dear friend, supporter, and board member Mack Rush died. We honor his memory in all we do. Thank you Mack - you're one in a million!

"Like us" on Facebook and stay up to date on events and happenings at Lee's Place.

[www.facebook.com/LeesPlaceTallahassee](https://www.facebook.com/LeesPlaceTallahassee)

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Lee's Place, Inc. / 216 Lake Ella Drive / Tallahassee, Florida 32303

AUG 2019

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## Lee's Place Staff



**Brenda Rabalais, PhD**  
Founder  
and President



**Karen Lockard, LCSW**  
Therapist



**Beth Tedio**  
Director of  
Development



**Catherine Shoultz**  
Part-Time  
Bookkeeper



**Lauren S. Walker**  
LCSW  
Therapist

## Wish List

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New Phone System

Copy Paper

Paper Towels

Individual Snacks