The Genealogy Do-Over is a success-driven program created to improve your genealogy skills. Learn the latest technologies, tools, methodologies and more so you can share genealogy research with your family.

In December 2014, I made a big announcement online and in social media: **Genealogy and I are parting ways. Done. Finished. Game over.**

Have you ever said to yourself, "That's it! I've had it and it just isn't worth it anymore!" Well, have you? Sort of like the character Howard Beale in the movie Network when he says, live on air, "I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take it anymore!" By the end of 2014, after more than 35 years of researching my own family history, that is how I felt.

MY PAST GENEALOGY RESEARCH FRUSTRATES ME!

While many who read my post thought that I was leaving the genealogy community or closing my genealogy business, I had to clarify what I meant by "leaving:" Starting in 2015, I planned on setting my years of genealogy research aside and starting over. From scratch.

Seriously. How many times have you thought about doing the same thing? Did you start your research the same way I did, by just collecting names, grabbing stuff from other online trees, or pasting text into your genealogy software? Lately, has the prospect of going back and citing sources or proving facts and evidence brought you down and ruined your genealogy buzz? Do you throw up your hands and say, "I give up!" only to return to the same review and edit process days or weeks later?

If you are like me, you need a genealogy makeover. Better yet, a Genealogy Do-Over. That is what I decided to call the journey upon which I embarked in early 2015. Now I want you to come along.

THE GENEALOGY DO-OVER: A NEW JOURNEY OF GENEALOGICAL DISCOVERY

Here is the short summary of The Genealogy Do-Over: I set aside *everything** related to my genealogy research including notebooks, papers, and even digitized files and my genealogy database files and **START OVER**. I'm hitting the reset button. I'm allowing myself to have a do-over!

> ** certain items such as vital records ordered and paid for or research gathered on long-distance trips can be retained.*

Since I started my initial research, much has changed in the areas of genealogy research methodology and education. I now realize the need to collect facts and track them properly, including the use of source citations. I now understand the process of analyzing evidence and proving facts to reach a conclusion. In essence, I know a lot more about the "process" of genealogical research and I want to put it to use.

Yes, I have been following proven guidelines when it comes to finding family history. For my research clients, I employ all the methods advocated by many in the genealogy community. However, when it comes to my own research from years ago, I am not walking the walk . . . I have just been talking the talk.

It is not always easy to "walk backwards" and review every bit of information gathered over the years. Instead, I wanted to do more than re-walk a trodden path: I wanted to head out from the same starting point and see where the journey took me. I knew I would have access to better tools, better knowledge and be better equipped for each twist and turn. Now, I encourage you to join me on this journey.

The Genealogy Do-Over journey is constructed of 12 Steps that can be easily followed. You can choose to pace yourself as you see fit. You can even decide to drop some of the less important tasks and add your own. Do whatever it takes to ensure that you are on a firm footing to finding your ancestors.

A short synopsis of the route:

- Take inventory of what you have, box up the physical items and set them aside.
- Move all digital genealogy files into a HOLD folder.
- Gather tools to research.
- Set research goals.
- Start with your own knowledge and write it down.
- Start tracking research.
- Interview family members.
- And more!

And then, continue with research, add more skills and areas of focus including citing sources, tracking searches, building a research toolbox, creating an educational plan, researching offline as well as online, and more.

By the end of the program, hopefully you will have completed a firm foundation in genealogy and family history via research skill building. I realize that some focus areas may differ; anyone along for the journey has the freedom to add or remove content. This program should work for you and should not be something that you dread each week or that you find you are working against.

YOU'RE INVITED – YOU GET A GENEALOGY DO-OVER TOO

I created The Genealogy Do-Over as a collaborative community effort to re-examine the way in which each of us has personally pursued our genealogical research. My intent was to be honest with myself without beating myself up. I wanted to feel the joy of looking at one small fact and perhaps realizing that I never looked at it from all angles. I wanted the discipline of not following a possible lead just because it shakes or makes more noise than other leads.

Most of all, I wanted to be open to all possibilities on my journey of genealogical self-discovery and to enjoy that journey. This has meant researching genealogy with a plan, with a purpose, with sound practices and with the support of my fellow researchers. I do not intend to make this journey again. The Genealogy Do-Over is my chance, and your chance, to get it right!