



# BRIDGEPOINT

CENTER FOR EATING DISORDERS



ANNUAL  
REPORT 2016



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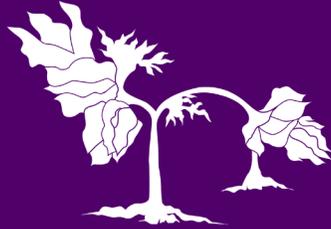
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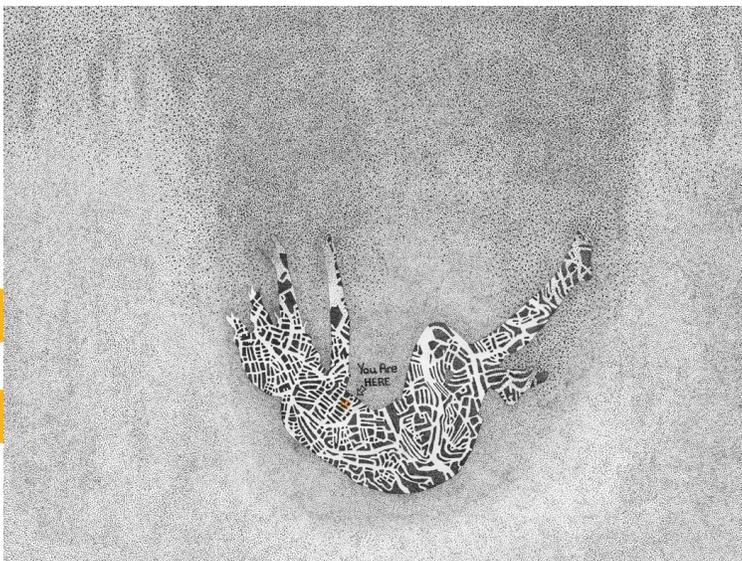


# BRIDGEPOINT

CENTER FOR EATING DISORDERS

## MISSION

BridgePoint Center for Eating Disorders, a provincial resource, provides program options that include intensive rehabilitation, recovery and healing for people who are experiencing eating disorders.



## PHILOSOPHY

To support individuals through a multidisciplinary team approach.

To have a safe environment for individuals to heal that is away from the stress of their daily life.

To provide ongoing, individualized support services.

To ensure ongoing interdependent planning among BridgePoint, the health districts and the province.

To offer you a safe, comfortable, nurturing environment in which you may begin or continue to heal.

# HONORING THE SYMBOLISM

Yvonne Romano is the artist behind the original BridgePoint logo. We asked her to reflect on the symbolism and creation of what we know to be the identity of BridgePoint. The initial BridgePoint logo was co-created in the early days of BridgePoint by a number of team and volunteers.

The flower is a crocus that symbolizes new beginnings. Crocuses are the first flowers that use their strength to fight through the fierce prairie winters and emerge in the freshness of spring.

A "bridge" formation represents the participants journey with eating disorders and their links to past... present... and future.



The roots are an integral part as they lay the foundation of being grounded. The rocks that can be seen at the base are an epiphany of the artist in that she had the vision of rocks falling away, with the weight of what is being carried around also falling away as healing and transformation begins.

As we modernize our identity, we hold the symbolism of the original artwork in the highest honor.

Trapped, trapped in every moment,  
thoughts going through my head so fast.  
I'm unable to breathe, unable to move, stuck in time.

Fat  
Ugly  
Worthless  
Hopeless

Sinking, lower and lower every moment.  
Not knowing if this time I will slip  
so far I will be unable to get out.

I forget everything I used to be.  
I am now just a shell, empty, cold and tired.

I've tried for so long to come up for air,  
yet no one understands reaching out,  
trying to find someone to hold on to, somewhere to belong.  
Yet I never do.

All people see is the shell,  
not knowing how shattered the human being inside really is.

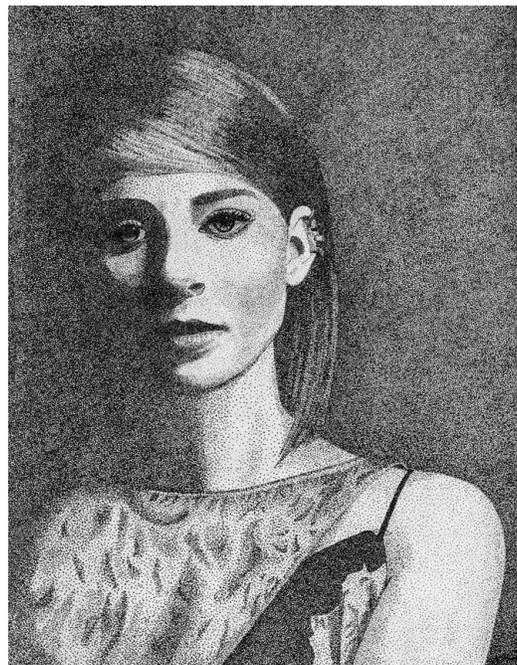
I don't want to be this way.  
Shattered, broken, a shell.  
Not knowing if I will ever make it out of that deep dark hole.

I want to live  
have fun  
have life.

But yet I'm trapped. Trapped in every moment,  
thoughts going through my head so fast.

I'm unable to break  
unable to move  
stuck in time.

- S.M.



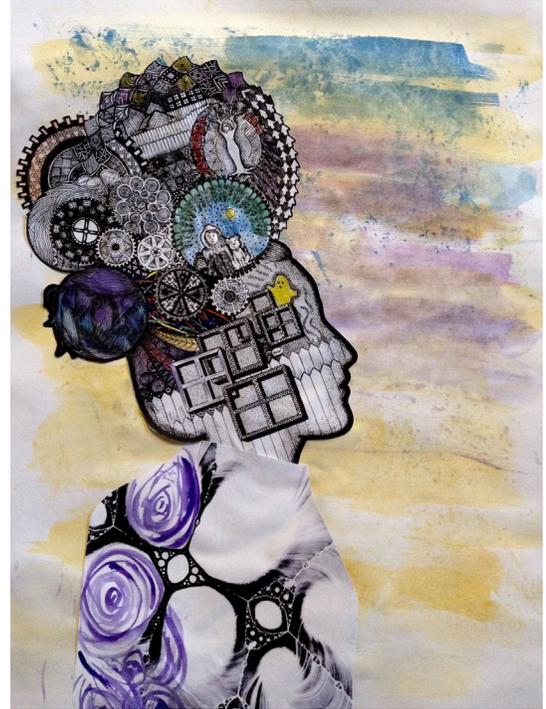
## PARTICIPANT FEATURE

# NOTES FROM BRIDGEPOINT

It was a good year that organizationally ended strong. The team worked hard to keep things running smoothly in the absence of leadership. I felt supported through the process and have much appreciation for the team.

*Helen Uhrich*  
*Interim Executive Director (April - December 2015)*

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It's difficult to measure the impact on paper of what is done at BridgePoint Center for Eating Disorders. The essence here is something that is experienced as you walk in the doors, participate in group, create a network of support and leave with a plethora of tools and a nugget of hope in your back pocket. In this annual report, we are hoping to give just a glimpse inside the journey of our participants as they transform themselves through the process of recovery and discovery. Participant stories, works of art and their quotes will be spread throughout this document.

What started out as a pilot project over 18 years ago has turned into an innovative eating disorder program that has gained attention at a national level and has positively impacted thousands of lives. Saskatchewan residents are truly fortunate to be able to access holistic residential programming for disordered eating – including bulimia, anorexia, binge eating disorder and eating disorders not otherwise specified.

In the few short months that I have been the Executive Director in BridgePoint, I have made some powerful observations. BridgePoint has been a bit of a hidden gem over the years that needs to be shared wide and far. Even after all this time, there are people who do not know where to turn for help with disordered eating, and medical professionals who do not know where to refer their patients who are experiencing disordered eating. In order to address this, BridgePoint will continue to expand awareness and communication to outside agencies.

We are participating with National Initiative for Eating Disorders (NIED), a not-for-profit coalition of health care professionals, counsellors and parents with children suffering from Eating Disorders, as part of a collaborative group on a goal to put together a National Eating Disorder Strategy. We have also renewed our membership with the Eating Disorder Association of Canada (EDAC-ATAC). Having a membership has allowed us to join group therapy and nutrition focus groups who are working together with eating disorder professionals from across the country to educate each other regarding best practices, share information and promote a reflective and responsive approach in the provision of care for eating disordered patients and their families. Being a part of these groups is important allowing us to stay current and have confidence in our program. What we are seeing is that we are gaining attention and support from the medical community, who is seeing the impacts of holistic health as a compliment to their medical treatment.

We have also participated in a national project initiated by the Looking Glass Foundation called “Something’s Gotta Give” (SGG). Their intent is to capture and document viewpoints about eating disorders that need to change. We have sent submissions from participants and team in answering the question, “If we’re really going to get to the other side of eating disorders, something’s gotta give ... What IS it?”. Drawn from SGG submissions, digital media conversations, and their public rally, a feature length documentary will reflect and collate multiple themes for action. Scheduled for release in October 2016, the documentary will include insightful interviews, in-depth commentary, and provocative facts.

## Corporate Identity & Outreach

There is always opportunity to move an organization forward. While we hold our history near and dear to our hearts, it is exciting to embrace the future and focus on the horizon and opportunities that lie ahead. We have started to modernize our current branding. Work has begun on revamping our corporate identity and creation of a new website, which will be released in summer 2016. Having an updated online presence and integrating the use of social media in our promotion will compliment the current word of mouth awareness of BridgePoint. New literature and information packages will be disbursed among the medical community and professionals. We have enjoyed the renewed community engagement and receptiveness of presentations about who we are and what we can offer. BridgePoint is getting more and more requests for tours and presentations from health districts, school divisions, professionals, concerned family members and those interested in attending the program.

## Team and Program Development

One of our biggest assets is our Team. We could not offer the programming that we do without the combined efforts of our staff. Training and staff development will continue to be a priority. We were able to recertify the staff in First Aid/CPR and AED this spring. We look forward to more personal and professional developmental opportunities that are planned for this upcoming year. We are excited to have been approved to access funding through the Canada-Saskatchewan job grant program for new training. Being able to access new and incremental training for our team is an exciting opportunity to ensure that we continue to have the skills needed to provide leading edge programming in a safe environment.

A special thank you needs to be given to the team who continue to keep the essence of BridgePoint alive. Thank you for your patience and support as I learn the BridgePoint way and offer my ideas to strengthen and shape our organization. Many thanks need to be given to the board who tirelessly offer volunteer hours and support my efforts in bringing about organizational change. Another thanks goes to the participants who are brave and make a commitment to themselves to begin or continue the process of conquering their disordered eating. BridgePoint really is a place of transformation. We all learn something here everyday. *I am looking forward to the year ahead as BridgePoint continues to nourish the mind, body and spirit of those impacted by disordered eating.*



*Carla Chabot,*  
*Executive Director (December 2015- present)*

# REPORT OF THE BOARD CHAIR 2016

Persons living with disordered eating patterns are a continued presence in our society. They are our family members, our neighbors, in our service clubs, and among professionals serving in our community and provincial systems. Their plight is sometimes obvious, and sometimes not. And although there are statistical trends, these individuals may be of any age, gender or socio-economic status. They are people using their selected coping mechanism to deal with the issues and circumstances with which they have been dealt.

It is my sincere honour to serve on the Board of Directors for this not-for-profit organization, BridgePoint, whose mission is to assist these individuals in discovering the roots of their need to use this coping mechanism, and in doing so, learn to build a kinder, richer relationship with themselves such that they can use newly learned skills, strengths and abilities to regain control over their pattern of disordered eating.

This organization is so very fortunate to have a diverse membership on its Board. Each individual brings a wealth of knowledge, skills and insights from their work and life histories. Additionally, this Board benefits from having a mixture of seasoned members, intermediate serving members, and relatively new members. The contribution of our liaison for Heartland Health Authority is greatly valued. Together, this group holds close to five decades of history of this organization, which is in its 19th year of operation.

During their life, organizations evolve just as individuals do. We hope and aim for this with our clients, and plan for this within our organization. Our challenges of the past year have furthered the Board's resolve to stimulate and grow BridgePoint to a more recognizable entity within the provincial healthcare sector. In order to accomplish this, we have initiated an evolution within our leadership. Originally and historically the position of Executive Director has been chosen on the basis of education and experience in the health and social sciences. This past year, the Board considered the merits of seeking leadership outside that field. Subsequently, with the valuable assistance of various Heartland Health personnel, we recruited an Executive Director with strong business and administrative education and experiences. Carla Chabot assumed the position of Executive Director in December 2015. The Board is very pleased to report already experiencing the benefits of her professional input and personal leadership style.

Albeit, the Executive Director recruitment was our Board's major goal, this past year has seen the accomplishment of several other organizational aspects. A new Chart of Accounts has been initiated thanks to the diligent work of Board member, Marie, Office Manager, Linda, and Auditor, Carl. In addition the second building that we hold responsibility for, the "Residence", has, under the committed oversight of Board member Marie, seen a major upgrading. This structure supports our program as it provides housing to Team members and visiting professionals during program sessions. We have also reviewed and will have a renewed contract with the Heathland Regional Health Authority.

Last year, as part of the Board's strategic planning event facilitated by Wendy Manson, we committed to a Program Evaluation. However, we knew we needed to establish the incoming Executive Director before embarking on this goal. The commencement of this evaluation will become one of the goals for the upcoming year.

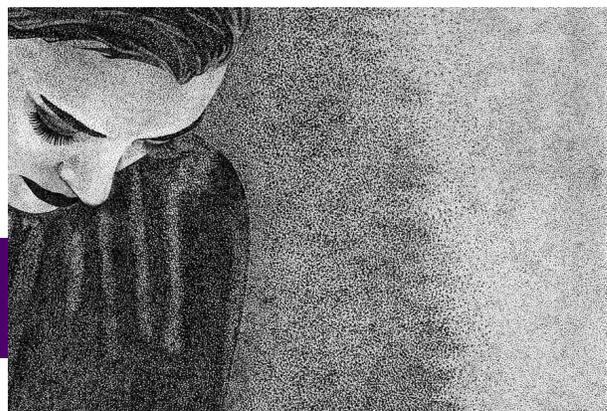
Without hesitation I acknowledge that Board efforts can be of little consequence without the support of individuals working within the organization. Our Board is continually heartened by the resolve of Team members who, regardless of external stresses, unflinchingly give of themselves to provide quality and life enhancing programming to participants seeking their assistance. I thank the Team for their focus and their ownership of this program, and on behalf of the Board, extend appreciation for your faithful contributions during this year of change. In particular, our Board wishes to publicly acknowledge the value Helen Uhrich has brought to this organization in her roles as Program Manager and Interim Executive Director. Especially over this past year, Helen has made personal sacrifices to provide stability and initiate growth.

Medical and behavioral science discoveries are being made regularly in the field of Eating Disorders. Our Board recognizes the importance and value of supporting team education and development. We encourage the Team to continue to extend their reach as they learn of and implement innovative programming efforts.

I am excited and optimistic about how BridgePoint will evolve over the coming year! We have a solid structural and financial base to build upon, a progressive Board, and an entire Team of dedicated personnel. *I wish us all much success as we focus on enhancing the lives of individuals living with disordered eating patterns.*

Respectfully submitted,

*Anne Rankin*  
*Chair Person*  
*Board of Directors*



# TEAM PROFILE 2015-16

## Executive Director

Carla Chabot, B. Admin

## Program Manager

Helen Uhrich

## Office Manager

Linda Bahr

## Program Facilitators

Kara Carlson BA

Marilyn Erickson

Janelle Kapeller, School Counselor

Louiese Kemp

Janine Lefevre RD

Rosanne Maluk RD

Joyce Nicholson B.Ed, MA, CCC

Sky Pryor BA

Barbara Sanderson M.Ed., RP, CCC

Amy Simpson

Helen Uhrich

## Dietitian

Janine Lefevre RD

Rosanne Maluk RD (on leave)

## Registered Nurse

Rahul G P Sukumaiaamma RN

## Nurse Consultant

Shirley Brown LPN

## Kitchen Coordinator

Sandra Hellings

## Night Support

Sandra Hellings

Carole Evacheski

Susan Clark

Kendra Hellings (maternity leave)

## Contractors

Barb Hanna (Housekeeping)

Glen Adair (Maintenance)

Programming is facilitated by a multidisciplinary team of professionals, paraprofessionals and peer support with extensive and diverse experiences and skills. The diversity among team members is well suited to the diverse individual needs of our participants. All members of the team understand the nature of eating disorders and are committed to the philosophy of BridgePoint.



*Carla, Amy, Linda, Helen, Janine, Joyce, Barb, Sky, Louiese, Sandy, Marilyn, Kara*

My whole life I have never seen anything past 40. When you're a kid, 40 seems like the end of time. .. but as we grow up, most of us adjust our paradigms accordingly; the older we get, the longer our expectation of life grows with us. This hasn't happened for me. The older I've got, the more sure I've believed that there is no life beyond 40... and I didn't even try and imagine one. If I have suffered and struggled the way I have in my life, why would I possibly want to extend the imagination of that pain longer than I had to? When I first got to BridgePoint, I remember meeting the team and panicking because I wondered how on earth these older women with imperfect bodies were supposed to help me become the younger woman with the perfect body that I so desperately needed to be to make life worth living...After all, wasn't that why I was here?!! How naive I was over these past few months. I have gotten to know these women. I've heard their stories and watch as they do their lives. And you know what I've seen? What I've heard?

## Authenticity, beauty, strength, joy, courage, wisdom, tenacity, and hope!

I've discovered that life begins at any age. Life begins when you choose to engage, and learn, and own your story... Just as life ends when you choose to shut down who you are... What you've done, or what's happened. When you choose to exist... based on the rules of others, when you choose expectation over experience... That's when life ends. Biological life is merely a series of functions which keep us upright and allows us to exist. Real life, or living, is a choice. I have that choice. I can choose life beyond 40. I can hope and dream and strive for courage, compassion, and connectedness for as long as God allows my biological heart to beat and my biological lungs to receive breath. And for the first time in 32 years, I want more... I want more time... I want more years... I want more life... I do not simply want to survive. In fact, I am so tired of surviving. I want to live. I want to thrive.

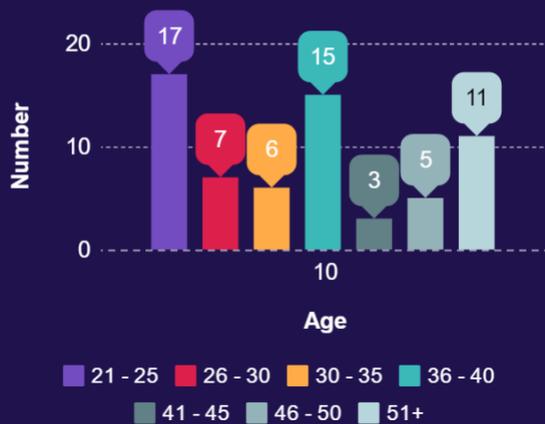
## PARTICIPANT FEATURE



## Who are our participants?

Approximately half our participants are between the ages of 21-45. Most of our participants are in their mid twenties and late thirties.

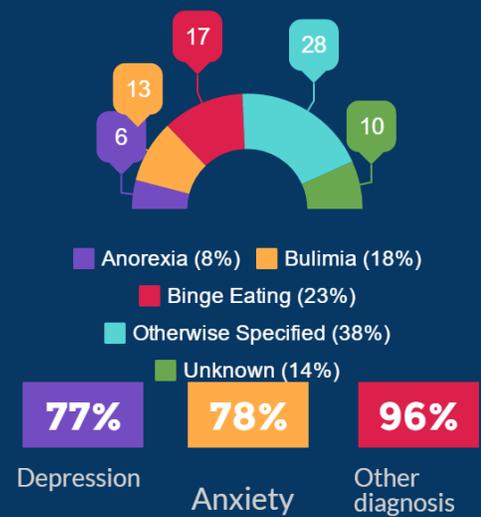
### Participant Ages



## Co-Morbidity

Common eating co-morbidities that we see in our participants are: Depression, Anxiety, Mood Disorder, Bipolar Disorder, PTSD, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder and Self-Mutilation, among others. We are one of the only places in Canada that treats binge eating disorders.

### Eating Disorder Diagnosis



**69%** Unemployed/Social Assistance

**18.5** Average age of diagnosis

**16.5** Average years with disordered eating.

# PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

## RECOVERY



## DISCOVERY

I am a 49 year old woman. I am a full time Elementary School educational assistant, mother of 2 (ages 9 and 23), and wife of 26 years. Approximately 16 or 17 years ago I was taking counseling in Outlook once a week for what I thought at the time was just grief (from our 5th miscarriage). That wonderful woman made me aware of BridgePoint.

My previous vision of clients from "eating disorder clinic" did not match who I saw in the mirror each day. After much thinking and praying I summed up enough courage to go to a weekend retreat. Upon arrival I sat outside the "clinic" for close to an hour, bawling, reciting every possible scenario of rejection from the center's staff I could imagine. That did not happen. True, I was the biggest person there, the oldest client, but you learn very quickly that you have way more in common with other people there than differences.

I was always treated with respect, kindness and understanding. I didn't feel smothered. There was some "tough love" applied in sharing circles, not always appreciated at the time, but very necessary. Opening up emotional wounds does not tickle, but I learned a lot about myself. Through interaction and socializing you learn other's stories and their journey and you learn life lessons. One highlight for me was "Tea ceremony". One staff member was about 6 months pregnant and I had recently suffered my 5th miscarriage, the tears we shared at the tea ceremony have made a lasting imprint.

We are now raising a pre-teen girl, and daily seeing the media onslaught of unrealistic body images through her eyes.

I am more convinced than ever that places like BridgePoint are essential and so important for girls and women of all ages to re-educate, re-evaluate, and support them and their families of the road to recovery.

*Thanks BridgePoint,  
Cathy Smith*

“Eating disorders are a lifetime struggle and I strongly believe in building and maintaining a strong positive support system.

I am so thankful for the BridgePoint programs for planting the seed of self-acceptance that I needed at that time to begin my road to recovery. ”



Dear Food,

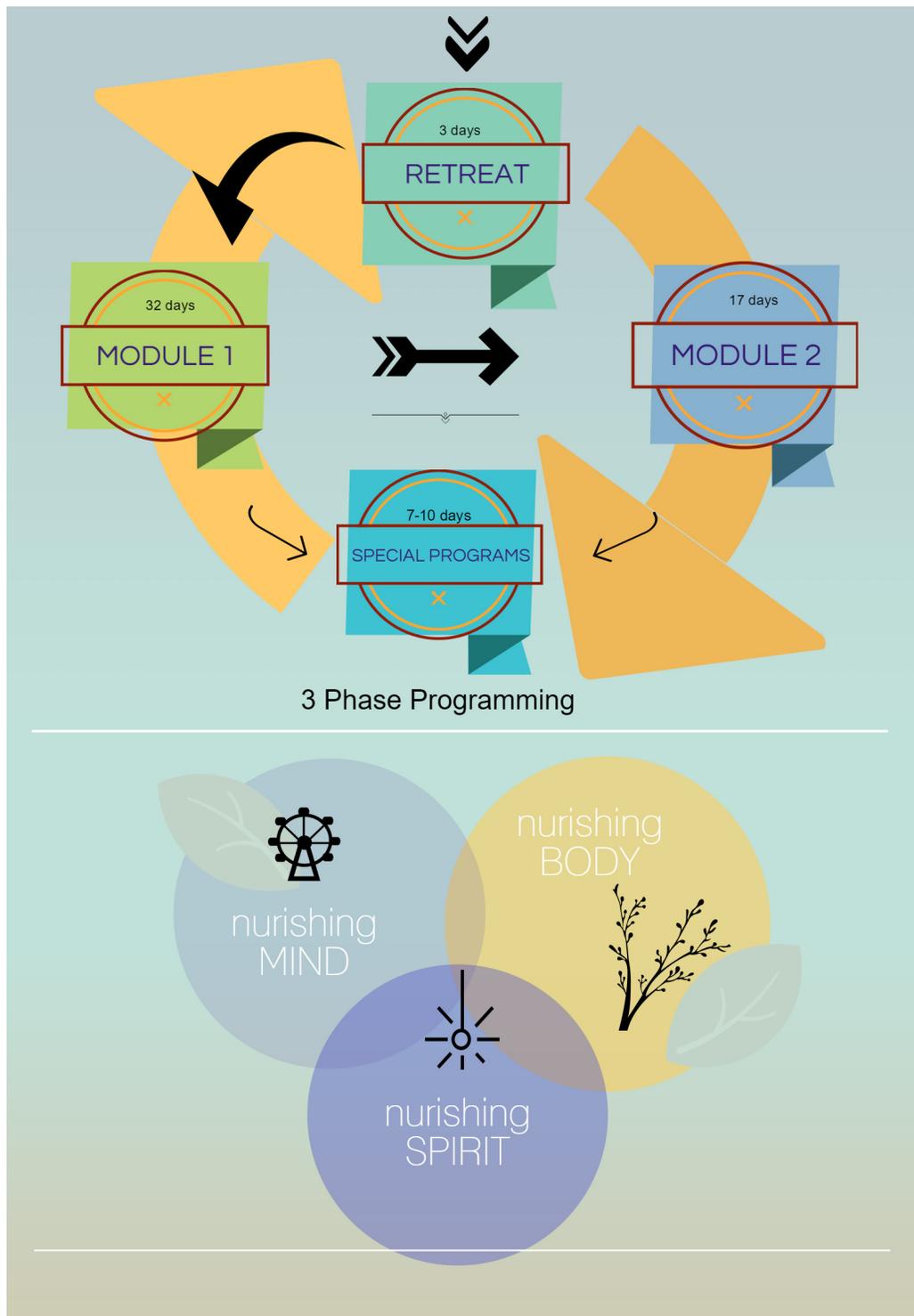
In this next chapter of my life, I hope to finally fill your void with meaningful relationships and self acceptance so that I may rely less on your companionship. I accept myself and the role you now play in my life. I vow to one day love myself enough to let go of our up and down relationship. I'm coming at you, because I matter and deserve to be healthy and strong. So look out! Despite everything, you come back and fill me up. My light will shine bright enough that you'll just be the fuel to my memories, fuel I need to live the vibrant, full life I have. When those dark and lonely hours come, I will have friends to hold me, and I will be my own salvation. I will be ready to have that last dance. You will be just what my body needs for nourishment. Nothing more, nothing less. Food. You are many things to me. I thank you for your bounty.

*Sincerely,*

*Participants of January 2016 Module*

# PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The role of BridgePoint is to support self-discovery, as well as skill building, in the transition from letting go of old, unhealthy life patterns to discovering a variety of new and healthy choices in how to respond to the challenges of life. This support is provided in a program with three sequential modules that symbolize the process of building a bridge to recovery.



## MAYBE

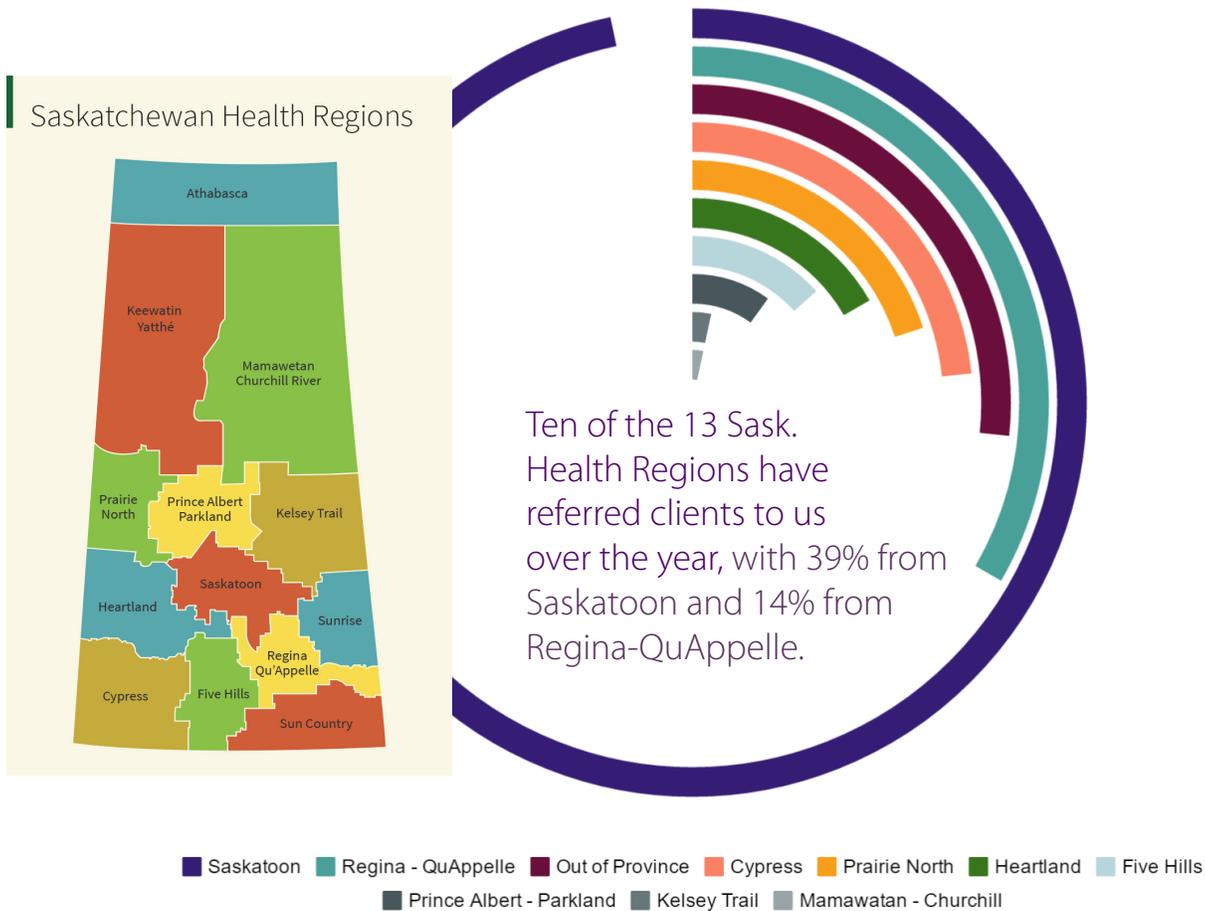
And maybe, just maybe she questioned  
It wasn't her that was fault.  
But her circumstances  
Maybe if she wasn't that she didn't fit the fabric  
But that the fabric didn't fit her  
Maybe she wasn't so fundamentally flawed  
the edipomy of sin. A hell fire curse  
But maybe she was just told that  
And maybe it wasn't her  
wrong doing that she believed that  
Is it the fault of a rose for not blooming with the absence of  
water and sun?  
She's spent her life with her head down in  
attempt to mask her shame.  
Desperately trying to cascade  
through life unnoticed and isolated.  
Pushing loved ones away for fear of exposing  
them to the evil she believed she was.  
But maybe, just maybe  
her presence wasn't an  
inconvenient hinderance,  
But a delight. Maybe if that same flower  
was cared for, nurtured, watered, given optimal light  
tended to, appreciated  
It would rise from it's wilted state and grow, thrive, bloom.  
Become the beauty it was destined to.  
Maybe the neglect that lead to it's near death state was merely  
a prerequisite for the full, beautiful life that lie ahead.  
Maybe it's never too late to bloom.

- Megan Brooks

## PARTICIPANT FEATURE

# COST EFFECTIVE CONTINUUM OF CARE

## Saskatchewan Health Region Referrals (2015-16)



BridgePoint offers an eating disorder program as a continuum of care, funded by Saskatchewan health. If the participants who attended programming at BridgePoint over the last year were to have received private treatment, it would have cost approximately \$1200 per day. This equates to \$2.47M. BridgePoint is able to offer our programming at 25% of this cost.



# OUR IMPACT April 1, 2015 - March 31, 2016



“There’s no comparison to anything else I’ve tried and it’s a real blessing and an opportunity to be able to come here and an opportunity not to be taken lightly. It’s a privilege to be here and I know that I will leave here a different person. ”

## PARTICIPANT PROFILE

**MY JOURNEY AT BRIDGEPOINT** started in 2005. I was in my teens and struggling to find support for an eating disorder that I could no longer control. I had been very isolated in my disorder before I came to BridgePoint; meeting girls who were also struggling was a revelation. The team was very supportive, even at points when I was definitely not the easiest person to support. BridgePoint gave me tools that I could practice with my family, allowing us to begin to shift some of our dysfunctional dynamics. I loved that we didn't actually focus on the food. I felt better able to deal with stress because I gained so much awareness about coping. I also got a much deeper understanding of why people have eating disorders to begin with --that Log Story is pretty effective, even 11 years after first hearing it!

“There was no judgement of behaviours. No shame.”



The fact that BridgePoint operates so differently than the traditional medical model was very refreshing, and proved to be vital to my experience and healing. As a teen I had experienced the medical model of eating disorder treatment, and it was cold and impersonal. BridgePoint is anything but that. Are we doing difficult work here in order to battle something insidious? Absolutely. But team is right there, doing the same stuff they are asking us to do. That, to me, is amazing. It's the first thing I tell people who ask about programming. :)

THESE ARE STUNNING EXAMPLES OF "POINTILLISM" AND "ZENTANGLE" AND SHOW JUST WHAT CAN BE ACHIEVED WITH SIMPLE DOTS AND SIMPLE DOODLES.



I came back many times over the years. I spent most of 2012 at BridgePoint, but had not been to programming in a while when I called Helen in the spring of 2015. Since programming in 2012, I'd made a lot of progress with my eating disorder, but my life had dramatically changed in other ways since team had last seen me. I was dealing with a serious and progressive illness, and I was at the end of my emotional rope. She convinced me to come for a retreat, even if I couldn't participate fully. I could not see, I could not stand or get down the hallway on my own, my speech was slurred, and my hands shook so badly I couldn't even hold a pen, but what I experienced was pure compassion. They took me as I was, supported me in my old and new struggles, and offered a hand up from the tremendous grief I was experiencing. I cannot stress enough the emotional nourishment I continue to receive from the wonderful women on team.

One last thing: Creative expression is another huge way in which BridgePoint has impacted me. I had always shown great resistance to CE. I fought Amy tooth and nail on every project we did. I didn't know what would come out of me, and I didn't want to find out. In 2013, I finally began to draw. My artwork is the result of the emotional work BridgePoint helped me to start, and I am forever grateful. All those anxiety-filled CE sessions actually impacted my academic and professional pursuits as well; when I am able to return to school, I will be doing a Master's in Art Therapy **(the irony is not lost on me).**





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