



March 14, 2021

Dear Sir or Madam,

It is my honor to share with you 20-year-old Jessica's story and what led to her showing up at Butterfly's doors. Jessica came to Butterfly after years of struggling with an eating disorder that remained undiagnosed throughout her teenage years. When Jessica was 13, her parents went through a painful divorce. With an abusive husband, Jessica's mother worked hard to protect her children from the verbal and physical abuse she endured. Despite this, Jessica remembers hearing the name calling and fights between her mother and father. After the divorce, Jessica found herself a child of a busy single mother. During this time, she remembers being bullied in school for her weight. While her home now a safe space, the outside world did not seem to be one. Without realizing, Jessica slowly slipped into disordered eating. She began restricting her meals, exercising for hours a day, and purging at the end of each day. Despite being surrounded by loved ones, Jessica felt alone. She did not want to burden her family with the struggles she was facing. Now in college, Jessica's disordered eating has not changed but it becomes harder to hide. Her friends begin to wonder why she will not eat meals with them, and her roommate starts to question what she's doing in the bathroom for so long every night. When she visits home from college, finally her mother notices there is something wrong. The Jessica she knew is not the same, she is a shadow of who she once was. Through finally talking they both realize that Jessica needs help.

Who We Are

Jessica's story is a painful one, but only one of the many that our organization has experienced. Butterfly has the privilege of working with hundreds of girls and women like Jessica that struggle not only with an eating disorder, but unresolved trauma that affects their day-to-day life. Butterfly is an organization that exists to create a path towards recovery for women that are struggling with disordered eating and in addition to being an eating disorder clinic, Butterfly provides a wholistic approach of empowerment by providing care for co-occurring disorders and trauma through individual and group therapy and nutritional and trauma education. Moreover, our treatment team include LCSW's, therapists, who have experience in this area and field and are passionate about making a change. We work with eating disorder specialists as well as registered dietitians. Our therapists are trauma informed and follow trauma-informed psychodynamic interventions.

How Can You Help?

The goal of this letter is to tell you how you can help with our biggest challenge in working with our patients- our need for a kitchen facility in which our treatment team can run programs geared towards healthy eating. With this addition, a cooking class can be held 3 times a week and allow every single one of our patients to learn hands on how to create the meals in the meal plans provided by our dietitians that they can then continue to use once they have left butterfly. In addition, this facility will allow butterfly to create evidence-based cooking interventions that studies has found to yield positive psychological and physical benefits ¹ (Farmer, Touchton-Leonard, & Ross, 2018). The estimated cost to add this kitchen facility totals \$15,000.

Why does this matter?

The creation of Butterfly was research driven and this what the numbers show us:

- The National Institute of Mental Health has published data showing that eating disorders are a fatal disease (Eating Disorders, 2019).
- Research² performed by the Eating Disorder Coalition states that Anorexia is the deadliest mental illness. Their studies have found that people with anorexia are 56 times more likely to commit suicide than people without an eating disorder (National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders).
- The National Eating Disorders³ Association has found that 97% of people hospitalized for an eating disorder have a co-occurring health condition. Mood disorders, like major depression, are the primary underlying condition followed by anxiety disorders, such as obsessive-compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, and substance use disorder (National Eating Disorders Association, 2020).

While this data is troubling, studies also that 80% of patients who seek and complete an eating disorder recovery program will fully recover (Eating Recovery Center, 2020). By donating you will be a part of an organization that it will joins only two⁴ organizations of its kind in Chattanooga. Our goal is to help women find their wings, and rehabilitate, recover, and move forward in being able to live healthy lives. Will you help us reach this goal? **Please consider a gift of \$1,000 to help us build the facility that will be a part of someone's recovery journey.**

Sincerely,

Beatrice Ngugi

Fundraising Committee Chair

1 Farmer, N., Touchton-Leonard, K., & Ross, A. (2018, April). Psychosocial benefits of cooking interventions: A systematic review. Retrieved March 11, 2021, from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5862744/>

2 Eating disorders. (2019, November). Retrieved March 11, 2021, from <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/eating-disorders.shtml>

3 National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders. (2021, March 03). Eating disorder statistics: General & diversity stats: ANAD. Retrieved March 11, 2021, from <https://anad.org/get-informed/about-eating-disorders/eating-disorders-statistics/>

4 National Eating Disorders Association. (2020, May 08). Statistics & research on eating disorders. Retrieved March 11, 2021, from <https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/statistics-research-eating-disorders>

5 Eating Recovery Center. (2020). Eating disorder facts & statistics. Retrieved March 11, 2021, from <https://www.eatingrecoverycenter.com/conditions/eating-disorders/facts-statistics>