

# PRESS FORWARD CLIENT NEWSPAPER

Quarterly Newspaper Spring 2022

## SPRINGING FORWARD



• Anjula E.

Spring resonates differently with each of us. For some, it's the celebrations that are meaningful and to others it symbolizes a new beginning. Whatever our personal customs or traditions may be, spring does symbolize transition, from one state to another—even if it's just unwrapping ourselves out of our chrysalis of winter coats!



### April Fools' Day

• Digna F.

April Fools' Day is celebrated on April 1st each year by different cultures. It is not a national holiday but is widely recognized and celebrated by doing good-humored or funny jokes, hoaxes, and other practical jokes on friends, family members, neighbors, and coworkers, often yelling "April Fools!" at the end to clue in the subject of the April Fools' Day prank.

#### Q: Why do we celebrate April Fools' Day?

A: The purpose is to laugh and have fun while being kind and respectful to others.

#### Origins

In 1582, Pope Gregory XIII decreed that the calendar be switched from the Julian Calendar to the Gregorian Calendar, which is more accurate for calculating leap years. New Year's Day was then moved from April 1st to January 1st. As word travelled slowly in the 16th Century, some people found out about the change many months or even years later.

Some citizens refused to change calendars, and continued to celebrate April 1st as New Year. These people were labelled "fools", were subject to ridicule, and sent on fool errands. The butts of these pranks became known as a "poisson d'avril" or "April fish", because a young naive fish is easily caught. One common practice was to hook a paper fish on the back of someone as a joke.

Historians have also linked April Fools' Day to festivals such as Hilaria (Latin for joyful), which was celebrated in ancient Rome at the end of March. People would dress up in disguises and mock fellow citizens and even magistrates. April Fools' Day spread throughout Britain during the 18th century.

In Scotland, the tradition became a two-day event, starting with "hunting the gowk," in which people were sent on phony errands (gowk is a word for cuckoo bird, a symbol for fool) and followed by Taily Day, which involved pranks played on people's buttocks, such as pinning fake tails or "kick me" signs on them.

#### Q: How can I get away with an April Fools' Day Prank?

A: To maintain good relations with others, it's best to target a whole group rather than single out an individual, keep the prank local, and don't play a joke where you will need to apologize later.

### Spring Customs

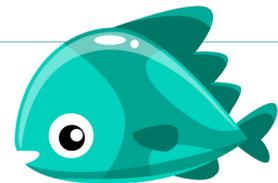
**Q: What are some of our newsletter group's spring customs?**

A: Celebrations, Chocolate, and Cleaning!



*"You can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time."*

- Abraham Lincoln



### Our Name

We chose the name "Press Forward" because of its connotations of perseverance during struggles, because "Forward" is part of the organization's name, and because we are "Press", publishing a newspaper.

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## To Believe in the Easter Bunny or Not

• Yhohannah H.



When I was very young, like most children, I believed in the Easter Bunny. I knew for sure that a rabbit would somehow come in the house where I lived with my parents and hide chocolate eggs for me to eat. Like many children I was blessed with the opportunity to believe in the Easter Bunny. Every night before Easter morning I pictured it before I went to sleep, but when I was only six years old I learned that there was no real Easter Bunny. I remember the day my mother told me that. I had just come home from school and was talking excitedly about the holiday. I was talking about how I couldn't wait until the Easter Bunny came. My mother looked at me with worried eyes and told me, she thought I was old enough to know that the "Easter Bunny" was actually herself and my dad who hid eggs around the house for me. I remember being crushed and feeling upset.

Aside from the fact that most children, even today, are taught to believe in the Easter Bunny and Santa Clause, there seems to be this on-going debate in the world about whether or not it's ok to let your children believe in the Easter Bunny. There are many articles that have been written even, before the internet existed, about how it's not ok to lie to your children about the Easter Bunny, or about Santa Clause for that matter.

I would like to offer my own thoughts about this matter although I have not seen them written down anywhere or any proof that my thoughts are true. Maybe my thoughts are original and maybe I am onto something here or maybe, just maybe, I am wrong and full of what the birds eat but I have to share my thoughts anyways because they sound good to me and that's what writers do, so that's what I must do.

In many articles, books, newsletters, you name it, the brain is talked about as a complex organ that controls thought, memory, vision, breathing, you name it. If you want to do it, sure enough, the brain will be controlling it. Wait! Did I say that the brain controls your thoughts? I think I did. It's the same thing as saying that the brain controls your beliefs. The brain is also a muscle, and that muscle must be flexed and exercised in order to become stronger, which is why I think that believing in the Easter Bunny is a good thing when you're young, because it flexes that muscle that controls your beliefs. The same way that you say to your kids "Eat your vegetables so that you'll grow big and strong". If you can believe in the Easter Bunny, maybe you can also believe in other bigger things. Maybe someday you can even believe in yourself!

As for my mother, well I believe that maybe she was a bit nervous about "lying" to me about the Easter Bunny, but as I've grown wiser my heart has softened more and more to her and now in my eyes, all things set aside, she can do no wrong.

## Chocolate Truffles Recipe



• Ann G.

Homemade chocolate truffles are the ultimate party dessert. This recipe is surprisingly easy to make. These are rich, creamy and indulgent dark chocolate truffles that melt in your mouth.

### Ingredients

8oz semi sweet chocolate chopped.  
2/3 cup 35% cream  
1 tablespoon unsalted butter.

### Method

- Warm cream in saucepan
- Put chopped chocolate in cream
- Stir until melted
- Refrigerate two hours, until mixture is set
- Roll into balls and coat in toppings like sprinkles, cocoa powder or chopped nuts.



*Which bird should you never allow in a jewelry store?*

uphol A

*What did the tree say to spring?*

What a re-leaf

# Easter Chocolate Rating Scale

• Mac



Of course I would like to write about hard-hitting topics like why the Snyder Cut is a lot better than the Joss Whedon theatrical version. But that's another topic for another time. You're here today to hear about which chocolates to purchase for Easter, and from my extensive research I've gone to lengths to discover them, with of course my wife's money conscience, and my weight loss journey—which has been great so far. There was a clear winner, in my humble opinion, and of course it's not the Reese's Pieces Shake & Break chocolate egg one, reasons are that it probably wasn't my go to growing up as a young child but also I'm not a fan of peanut butter. Therefore I'll have to pick my remaining likes and loves of course outside of my daughter and wifey. In third place the cookies-and-cream chocolate Bunny. It was tasty and had that nice amount of crunch to it as well.

	Easter Chocolate	Tester	Rating	Comments
	S'mores Bunny	Mac	4	Tasted like marshmallows but I was disappointed that I didn't have a campfire with some Graham crackers to make S'mores.
	Cookies & Cream Bunny	Mac	4	Pretty good chocolate, the best of both worlds.
	Milk Chocolate Happy Easter	Mac	5	So far my favorite one, melted in my mouth after a cold sip of milk to wash it down made it easier.
	Merci	Digna	4.5	I enjoy having Merci chocolates because they taste great, individually wrapped, reasonably priced, and have a variety of flavours. My favorites are Hazelnut-Almond, Hazelnut-Crème, Marzipan and Dark Mousse. These are ideal for gifting anybody anytime. The name Merci is indeed apt!
	Ferrero Rochet	Digna	4.5	I am excited every time I taste these chocolates! I love the roasted hazelnut centre, surrounded by a smooth filling and a crisp wafer, covered in creamy milk chocolate and finely chopped hazelnuts. I just love the delicate, luscious taste, texture and elegant packaging. I'm amazed at the inclusion of posh gold foil in the packaging. It makes me think that it is made for royalty. It tastes divine!
	Almond Joy	Digna	4	I love the taste of almond mixed with coconut and milk chocolate. This gives me joy and minds me of my childhood days when I received Almond Joy as treat, which would be gone in just a few hours. I savoured every bite, imagining myself at a relaxing beach, seeing and feeling the breeze with the coconuts swaying.
	Oh Henry	Digna	4.5	This chocolate bar has crunchy peanuts, caramel and fudge coated in chocolate. I like it because it tastes great and satisfies my hunger. It has everything that I like in a snack.

## Spring Traditions from Around the World

- Digna F.

After about two years of living with the pandemic and restrictions, people are eager to travel more freely, especially now that the government is easing up on the restrictions. That's a reason to celebrate and it's springtime! Spring means warmer weather, more time to enjoy the outdoors, travel with less restrictions, go to picnics, trails and do other activities. Spring means new beginning, a rebirth, a time to welcome change and to rejuvenate. Let's look at some unique traditions around the world.

### 1. JAPAN - HANAMI OR CHERRY BLOSSOM

Japan is very popular travel destination especially during cherry blossom season. This happens towards the end of March. The people set up mats under the trees and enjoy the shade. Since the eighth century, the Japanese have appreciated picnics and poetry sessions under the cherry blossoms.

### 2. SWITZERLAND - SECHSELÄUTEN

**Sechseläuten** is a Swiss German word that literally translates into "the six o'clock ringing of the bells". This is a centuries-old tradition to proclaim the start of spring in Zurich. The festival is described by medieval association of craftsmen attired in historical costumes, music ensembles, horses, flowers, flags, and the snowman. The snowman is set on fire when the church clock strikes 6 pm. It is believed that the faster the snowman's head (filled with fireworks) explodes, the better the summer will be.

### 3. BULGARIA - BABA MARTA

Baba Marta in Bulgarian means "the grandmother of March," The tradition starts on the first day of the month. Baba Marta is a mythical grumpy old lady who must be treated kindly in order to have better weather. In modern times, Baba Marta Day is a celebration of the coming of spring.

To welcome spring, Bulgarians give out Martenitsi, or red and white bracelets that symbolize health and fertility for women and wisdom and maturity for men. These bracelets can also be worn around the wrist or pinned to clothes as accessory. The people wear these for a certain period, the end of which is usually connected with the first signs of spring like the first blossoms or storks. Some people then tie their bracelet to a tree, others place it under a rock.

### 4. POLAND - MARZANNA

In a tradition from the 16th century, the people in Poland celebrate the first day of spring with the drowning of the Marzanna, a doll made of straw, hay, cardboard and rags. These dolls are dressed in colourful skirts or dresses with head scarf and placed on a stick.

Marzanna is the Polish incarnation of the old Slavic goddess of winter, plague and death. The doll which symbolizes the cold, dreary winter is paraded in the streets then tossed into the water to symbolize the end of winter's rage. In modern days, people are concerned about drowning the doll due to environmental reasons. Instead of drowning away the straw doll, the children can take their Marzannas for a walk and welcome spring by singing special songs.



*"Don't wait for someone to bring you flowers. Plant your own garden and decorate your own soul."*

-Luther Burbank



#### 5. INDIA - HOLI

In a celebration of the triumph of good over bad, the colourful Holi tradition takes place in late February or early March. The festival started as Hindu tradition and is also known as the Festival of Love, Festival of Colours and Festival of Spring. It celebrates the end of winter, the blossoming of love, festive day to meet others, play, laugh, forgive and forget and repair broken relationships. It also celebrates the beginning of a good spring harvest.

To usher in the fruitful spring season, people join in bonfires and parties the night before Holi. The next day, the people gather on the streets for a giant color fight, throwing dyed powder onto each other.



#### 6. SCOTLAND - WHUPPITY SCOORIE

Scotland's Whuppity Scoorie (tradition from the 19th century that is still popular today) is celebrated in Lanark, Scotland where children run around with balls made of crumpled paper swinging around their heads near dusk on March first. They run laps around the town's bell, known as the Kirk, until it rings at 6 p.m. after six months of silence during the gloomy winter.

There are several beliefs for this tradition. One belief is to get rid of evil spirits before the spring season started. Another belief is that it came from the 17th-century practice of taking prisoners from the nearby Tollbooth and whipping them round the church. A third belief is that, during the 19th century, local youngsters would march from the church in the direction of nearby New Lanark, where they would fight and throw stones at boys from that rival town.



#### 7. BOSNIA - CIMBURIJADA

Cimburijada which literally means the Festival of Scrambled Eggs is celebrated by the community of Zenica, Bosnia at a park along the Bosnia River. The egg is a symbol of new life like the start of spring season.

On the dawn of spring, the town residents walk to a large field, put up tents and celebrate together. They break bread and cook scrambled eggs in a giant pot, for them to share.



#### 8. AUSTRALIA - FLORIADE

Floriade in Latin means to design with flowers. This is a month-long celebration in September where more than 400,000 flock to Australia's capital, Canberra, for a massive flower festival.

More than one million blooms take over Canberra's Commonwealth Park each year, offering a breathtaking display of spring color. The festival includes concerts, art displays, horticultural workshops and other recreational activities.



## Spring Centerpieces

- Alama R.

Adding a colourful centrepiece to ANY table, will bring a freshness to your room. Remember to think light colours; pastels, juice colours, whites and light neutrals. You can create something very simple – think of a basket of coloured eggs. You can put this together very quickly using items that are probably already in your kitchen. Create something floral using colourful blooms. This can showcase a number of spring blossoms or more focused on the showy flower of one, such as the iris. Flowers can be either fresh or artificial. A monochromatic look would work too. Choose a fresh, vibrant spring colour, combine it with an appropriate neutral tone. For example lime green with white.



## Spring Cleaning

- Alama R

Never feel like you need to be able to afford to change a whole room at once!

As the pandemic has gone on, the “lines” between work space and recreational space has become increasingly blurred.

Obviously, our storage needs have, and continue to evolve. As such, storage is no longer an afterthought.

- Choose a **NEW FRESH** colour palette
- Think Lighter; White over Black
- Pastels; Pink, Lavender, Sky Blue
- Juices; Orange, Lemon, Lime
- Add Spring Accents
- Artificial flowers are **BEAUTIFUL**, and they will cost you **A LOT** less
- Don't forget aroma; think linen, floral, citrus
- Storage should be a fashion-forward part of the design; no longer a “necessary evil”
- Make sure it keeps with your colour and/or design scheme, or theme, or it will just look like “boxed clutter”



## Why did the Easter egg hide?

It was a little chicken.

# PEOPLE & PROGRAMS



## ART PROGRAMS

• Xiao D.

Artistic exploration helps us find our inner voice and discover our inner beauty. It's an enjoyable pastime for those who are limited in mobility or who don't have access to transportation. Mind Forward has increased its art programs during the pandemic. In this issue we feature several of those art programs.

## Program for Speech & Communication Skills

### Toastmasters Visit

• Anjula E.

Recently, we invited the Toastmasters to come and demonstrate their program to us. Activities included speech improvisation exercises, focus on grammar usage, time management, and assistance with many other skills.

For those who are unaware, Toastmasters is a non-profit organization that helps with speech and communication skills, leadership skills, and provides mentorship for club members.

If there is enough interest, then we will be able to start a club at Mind Forward! Many of us believe that Toastmasters would be a good fit for us—however, we need a minimum of 20 members to start a club.

If you are interested in being part of a Mind Forward Toastmasters Club in the future, please let Shane know!

## BLIND ALLEY

When Your Life Takes an Unforeseen Turn

• Alanna R.

Anjula E. survived a life-altering Traumatic Brain Injury. She continues to persevere and has numerous post-injury accomplishments. She is an active vocal performer, and an award-winning author of young adult fiction, adult fiction, and a collection of children's educational books. This article presents the challenges she has faced and continues to overcome, to become the woman she is today!

Read her story below.



## Stripped to the Core

Finding My True, Authentic Self

• Anjula E.

My thin, canvas shoes slapped against the freezing pavement, as I ran down an unfamiliar road, during the black of night. I could see my breath in front of my face, and the icy air hurt my chest. Dressed in a t-shirt and shorts, one thought pervaded. *If I don't find the right road during the next five minutes, I'm going to lie down in that ditch and die.*

It was the week of Thanksgiving, I was fourteen years old, and I was desperate. I had been kept out of school for days, confined to my bedroom, alone in the basement. My clothes were taken so I couldn't leave the house, and I was given an old ripped shirt to wear. Withholding food was a regular punishment in our home, and that week was no exception. But that wasn't the worst of it.

Just days before, I'd been pushed down, dragged along a concrete floor, and my mother forcibly stripped me. At the same time, my grandmother repeatedly hit me in the head, yelling, "God will never love a sinner like you!" I passed out, and a large bucket of cold water was dumped on my face.

So when I found a summer t-shirt, shorts, and canvas shoes I'd stashed away from my summer job, I quickly put them on—and I ran. I had recently met a lady at church who told me if I ever needed somewhere to go, I was welcome to stay with her until I sorted things out. The problem was—I couldn't remember how to get to her house, and it was pitch black outside.

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## Stripped to the Core

Finding My True, Authentic Self



In the days before Google Maps and before cell phones even existed, if someone was being physically abused, people just looked the other way. They pretended it didn't exist or were in denial. Or they justified it in their minds. I must have been a bad kid for them to beat the crap out of me.

However, the reality was that my mother and grandmother were English and strict Anglican—and my skin color was dark. My grandmother told me it was her job to “beat the East Indian out of me”. I was the mistake my mother made, that would never go away.

Although my childhood was at times horrific, I tried to stay positive. Months after that Thanksgiving, I was finally put into foster care. I had two great foster homes, before I left for post-secondary education. However, I went through years and years of therapy to deal with trauma.

To some people, therapy doesn't make sense. But ask yourself this question. If you lived in an abusive situation for 5,000 days of your life, were brainwashed into thinking you had no right to even take up space on the planet, would you need therapy? Now think of it in terms of formative years—and if you'd never known anything different.

I worked hard to confront and overcome the obstacles in my life. I finished a Masters Degree, and eventually became a Children's Therapist at a counseling clinic. I got married, and had three children. I recorded an album as a singer/songwriter, and my music was on stations across Canada and the US. However, then the 'other shoe dropped'.

I was making a right turn on a green light, when a young driver ran the red light, speeding, and hit my driver's door.

“Oh my God! Oh my God!” I was screaming as the steering wheel was wrenched out of my hands. My head was hit twice, once on impact, and a second time as it rebounded off the frame of the car.

I was so confused, I thought my kids were in the car at the time. My youngest was a newborn at the time, and I remember people looking for the baby at the scene. Then I'd recall they were at home. Alternately, I would become frantic again, convinced they had been seriously injured or killed in the accident. This continued for weeks.

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*If you lived in an abusive situation for 5,000 days of your life, were brainwashed into thinking you had no right to even take up space on the planet, would you need therapy?*

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Over the following months, I lived in a nightmare. A literal nightmare, as I couldn't tell the difference between reality and fiction. I was dreaming when I was awake, and my husband was constantly being awakened by my screams at night—I was screaming in my sleep.

The physical pain was so bad I was getting xylocaine injections into my head, neck, and back regularly, just to take the edge off the pain. The shots hurt like hell, but my day-to-day pain, the feeling of a hot knife plunging into my skull, was more intense.

Light, noise, and seeing movement were difficult to deal with. Think of a never-ending migraine where you need a quiet, dark room. Then factor in three children, seven and under. I was not coping well at all. I needed a life-line.

Things continued to deteriorate until the physical pain became so crippling that I found myself in hospital again. This time, a dear friend, Jeanette, advocated for me, and eventually I was accepted into a brain injury rehabilitation program. As a medical professional and close family friend, she had insight into what was occurring.

There's a certain amount of denial and disbelief that people experience when someone 'looks normal', and they find out otherwise. I think that is one issue that affected my situation. I 'presented' as 'normal' in general, so my care was overlooked.

However, the accumulation of having encephalitis (a virus causing inflammation of the brain) with seizures as a child, years of being repeatedly hit on the head at home both before and after that illness, and being thrown off a horse and knocked unconscious—well, the impact my car accident had on my brain after that was the last straw.

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*There's a certain amount of denial and disbelief that people experience when someone 'looks normal'...*

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Back then, brain injury awareness wasn't the same as it is today. Now studies have been done in the realm of sports injuries that show how impacts to the brain accumulate. Because my injury is 'invisible' doesn't mean it's non-existent.

After my accident I had impediments I needed to overcome. For example, I spent six months walking backwards with proper cross-patterning in a pool. This was because I would occasionally trip while walking forward, as my alternating arms and legs while walking weren't always in sync.

I also had a few issues with my speech. I would sometimes repeat the last word of my sentence uncontrollably. Other times I'd stop in the middle of a sentence and couldn't continue talking or would need to go to sleep at that moment. The worst was saying the exact opposite of what I was trying to communicate. You can imagine how that turned out—it was like social suicide.

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*Because my injury is 'invisible' doesn't mean it's non-existent.*

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I still struggle with these issues if I'm really tired. I have to concentrate and mentally note which foot goes in front of the other. I stumble over my speech and repeat some syllables when I'm tired as well.

I've had to deal with impairment of things like multitasking, and I don't mean in a 'standard' way. There was a time I couldn't get my spoon to my mouth if the radio was on. If the lights were buzzing I couldn't hold a conversation. I still live in the dark with blackout curtains and a dim light on to help me recuperate more quickly from overstimulation, and so I can be more functional during the day.

As time went on and I started to face the reality of my situation, the losses started to accumulate. My job and my career were first to go, as I realized I could no longer work as a Children's Therapist. I had lost my level of proficiency at piano and guitar. With piano, it was because of the multitasking involved playing two different lines, hands together. With guitar, it was due to physical injury. Many of my basic abilities were compromised, which was destroying my self-esteem.

However, that wasn't the end of my loss. When I was away in rehabilitation, I found out I would never be able to live with my children again. They would grow up without me in the home. That was the most devastating loss, and it put me in a deep depression for two years.

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Art Therapy Facilitator, Alex N.

## New Art Therapy Groups

• Anjula E.

After seeing a Mississauga News article about how Mind Forward was using art as therapy, Alex was inspired. He reached out, expressing interest in doing his practicum at Mind Forward. Mind Forward responded and organized a practicum placement for Alex, and he is now facilitating four Art Therapy groups at Mind Forward.

We appreciate Alex stepping up to play an important role in our program. The groups are helping members to explore and express emotions, thoughts, and feelings, some which have remained dormant for some time.

### My Weather

• Anonymous



Happy on the outside,  
while crying on the inside

## Art Therapy Interview with Alex

• Ann, Nigel, Shane, Xiao, Paul

**Ann: What made you want to do art therapy?**

I spent many years convinced that I was NOT an artist, despite drawing and painting regularly. This was because I believed being an artist was something special and reserved for the best and most talented. After I finally realized that anyone and everyone can be an artist I decided that I would look for a career that truly valued that idea. Having experienced my own journey with therapy and having a love for supporting people when I found out about art therapy it all just clicked for me, and I am so thankful for that! Art therapy is a place where people are encouraged to be themselves and express themselves. I believe that in expressing ourselves through art we have the opportunity to connect with the best version of ourselves, the most creative, imaginative and inspirational part of us all. When we access this part of ourselves (our true selves) we can make massive changes for the positive.

**Nigel: Who is your role model? Is there anyone who inspires you?**

It's an interesting circumstance because I interact with a number of students and we've done 16 months of lectures together. They are really inspiring, the diversity of backgrounds, how they embody art therapy, the lecturers, too. The people who are most inspiring are the clients, who engage and take invitations in different directions and really go deep in meaning is really significant. You talk about circumstances or issues that I would never have thought about. Anything from how your lives have been impacted by brain injury, your past, to other issues that have impacted you, ageism, racism, and other that has impacted you. I've been exposed to it thanks to you who have guided me through the process.

**Nigel: What motivates you?**

I really appreciate how art and therapy both have to do with imagination. Imagination allows us to be creative and expressive with art, but is also the way we think about our problems, take on new perspectives, and helps us to heal. I love how we can use our imaginations two-fold in art therapy.

**Shane: What project stands out to you as meaningful?**

It is so hard to choose a single project or invitation that stands out as meaningful because it is really down to the experiences of the clients. Some invitations that I might think of as exciting might not inspire or capture the attention of a client. Likewise, invitations I offer that may feel quick or insignificant to me might really engage a client to dive deep in considering themselves and their reality. Client's who have participated in the art therapy sessions with me might have noticed that I like to offer invitations that can be taken in many different directions and that a client can use to tell or share their story. We are always exploring what is significant to the client.



## Art Therapy



• Xiao



Our instructor told us to draw a safe place we feel happy at and go to retreat. I drew a symbolic impression of a Tim Hortons restaurant because it's a portal that I use to access luxury, social gatherings and it allows me to celebrate the seasons. It is a changing environment that has its own culture, rhythm and commentary on the world.

We were told to draw a line that has power: (The double reinforced nature vine that curves and does not fear twists in its self) // A mark that grows: (The bloom spreading its pollen and expanding in the soil) // A line that explodes: (The yellow and brown wooden fire in the upper left) // A dash that moves: (the black dominoes falling from the sky and cascading on top of each other) // Darts that dance: (the rainbow that radiates // Whispering lines: (Blowing breath in the upper left) // Mysterious mark: (The three upside down quotations that share a dot).



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## Stripped to the Core

### Finding My True, Authentic Self

**'Who are we when everything is stripped away?'**

Take away our abilities, roles, work, social status, finances—all the things we use to define ourselves—and what is left? This was a question that plagued me for years, as one layer, then another was stripped off me. What part of me remained?

During that stripping down, I was emotionally in fetal position. Those were dark years, wishing the world would swallow me so I was no more, so no one would remember me. I simply wanted to erase my existence. I'd lost all sense of self-worth, and I didn't want to be a burden to others. The song by Sarah McLachlan, "Fallen", replayed unceasingly in my head.

My friend, Danielle, approached me during that time, because I had withdrawn inside myself. I had cut off contact with most friends—I didn't want them to see me the way I was now. I told her I didn't understand why she still wanted to be my friend, when I couldn't do anything for her. She told me, "It's not what you can do for me that is important. It's what you bring to the relationship that is important."

**Does our value diminish when we're no longer able to do things?**

This is a question we will all eventually face later in life, or earlier, as in my own situation. Even when I felt I had nothing to offer, during the lowest time in my life, I was reminded that it's the state of 'being me', not 'doing things' that's important. It's the essence of who we are as people, not our capabilities that gives us value.

In a society that emphasizes 'go, go, go', it can be a hard blow to our self-esteem when we're unable to participate in that way. However, our self-worth isn't dependent on doing. It's rooted in our being, our humanity. That's not to say that we shouldn't participate when we are capable. But when we are unable to participate, it doesn't mean we no longer have value.

**When we feel trapped inside ourselves, due to declining capability, what can we do to restore some semblance of normalcy?**

Several years ago, I discovered my passion for writing. Before that, I didn't think I'd ever be passionate about anything again, as I'd lost my passions due to diminished capability. However, I was able to find something to participate in that made life more meaningful for me.

Finding a passion was instrumental in my rehab, and has propelled me forward in my journey towards recovery. My writing is something that brings enjoyment and fulfillment, and is a skill that I'm gradually improving at. Those are three elements of a well-rounded passion.

Over the last several years, I've written three full length novels, and several children's stories on mental health and societal issues. The novel-writing is therapeutic and enjoyable. The illustrated children's books (on issues such as bullying, skin color, coping with anxiety, losing a loved one, and living in foster care), bring a lot of meaning to my life, since I used to be a Children's Therapist. I now have an outlet to channel those skills through, even though I'm unable to continue in private practice.

I also look at the character traits that have developed in me as a result of my life experience. My compassion and understanding has grown for others, I'm less judgmental, my frustration tolerance has increased, and my patience has improved exponentially. Those are just a few of my character traits that have grown, changing my life perspective enormously. Sometimes a shift in life perspective can redefine who we are.

If everything was gone in an instant, and only the core part of us remained, what would that innermost part look like? Would we find substance or emptiness? It's something to ponder about. The reason being—it's only when we strip the superficial layers off that we can find our true, authentic selves.



• Anjula E.

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*Sometimes a shift in life perspective can redefine who we are.*

---

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Three important elements when seeking a passion:

1. It's something you enjoy
2. It brings fulfillment
3. It is a skill that can be improved upon



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*If everything was gone in an instant, and only the core part of us remained, what would that innermost part look like?*

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**“Dan’s Best Friend”**

## Saying a Fond Farewell

What are your parting words of wisdom?

*Be kind to each other*

*-Dan C.*



### Staff Feature: Dan C.’s Retirement

• Nigel

**How many years have you worked at Mind Forward?**

I’ve worked at Mind Forward for nineteen years, as a Client Program Facilitator, at Phabis West, Windsor Hill, and Head Office. I’ve always enjoyed working with the clients and it has been a very enlightening experience.

I also worked at Stonehedge up in Guelph and the Morland’s Center, Men withdrawal also known as the Detox program, and as an addiction Councilor

The most challenging job has been with ABI because of the nature of brain injuries.

**What is the funniest thing you’ve seen a client or staff do?**

At West a client was having behaviors, we escorted him back to his room. When we got back there, I had gotten locked in his room while he was agitated. The staff didn’t realize I was still locked in the room.

**Biggest person to have an effect on me?**

Vic S. strived to become the best he could regardless of his injury. Coming back from many tragedies and the drive that he had to still try to help everybody else. He showed me a lot of humility.

**What was your greatest challenge while working here?**

Working at Phabis West and working with a client who was hard to engage with him. I brought some pink Floyd in one day and he got up and started dancing. It was the first time I had felt a real connection with him.

**How do you feel with traveling to Australia with your dog?**

He’s my best friend, first thing that I checked is that I could take him with me. He’s been with me for the past 8 years and will be joining me in any adventure that I go on. I will be buying a motorcycle for Australia with a sidecar so that he can come out and travel with me. The biggest concern is travelling with the dog as the flight is a total of 28 hours. I hope that he will be able to stretch his legs a bit from the flight.

**Where do you see yourself in seven years?**

Hopefully back in Canada. But if things don’t go to plan, I will look to continue residing in Australia.

**Who has been your biggest influence in your life?**

It was my grandfather, he helped raise me. He came over to Canada with nothing and ended up owning his own construction business, hotels and different real estate. You treat people good and they’ll want to come back. Repeat customers. You get a lot more with honey then vinegar.

**Tell us a fun fact about yourself.**

I played in the CFL for the Hamilton Ticats in the 70’s.

*Thank you, Dan, for being part of our lives at Mind Forward!*



## What is Palliative Care?

• Natasha P.

Palliative care is a medical specialty that is dedicated to providing relief to those who are suffering due to terminal illnesses. This field of care uses a holistic approach and provides comfort, pain management, and socio-emotional support to the clients and families.

The ultimate goal of palliative care is to improve and maintain an optimal quality of life for patients and / or their families, during a medically trying time of their lives.

*“We all need someone in our corner.  
Here I am, proof that someone was  
there for me.”*

- Ann G.



Natasha

## Palliative Care Craft Initiative

Clients caring about other clients

• Anjula E.



Another exciting new program that started up this year, led by Natasha, is “Palliative Care Crafts”. This program gives us an opportunity to work on crafts that will eventually be given to those who are in palliative care.

This program is so important because it gives us the opportunity to reach out a hand to other clients who are going through a challenging time, and to let them know that others are thinking of them.

Those of us who are in the program are enjoying the interesting crafts, and are putting heartfelt meaning into poems, cards, and other various crafts that will eventually be delivered to those in palliative care.



### Palliative Care Initiative—Interview with Natasha

#### Why do you think this project is mutually beneficial?

The goal of the Palliative Care Crafts group is to complete thoughtfully curated crafts and artwork for Mind Forward clients that are experiencing end-of-life care. These altruistic activities range from painting, creative writing, beaded embroidery, and more. Clients and staff have put time, love and care into these crafts, in order to express their thoughts and kind wishes to those who need it most. In return, each artistic participant receives the mutual gift of giving back, while discovering their inner talents.

#### Why did you choose engagement with nature in this project?

Many things in nature endure change, and depict these changes in a figurative and beautiful way. The international symbol for palliative care is represented by a butterfly, and it's meaning towards life after death. The butterfly represents a transformation and metamorphosis that occurs during the journey from living to dying.



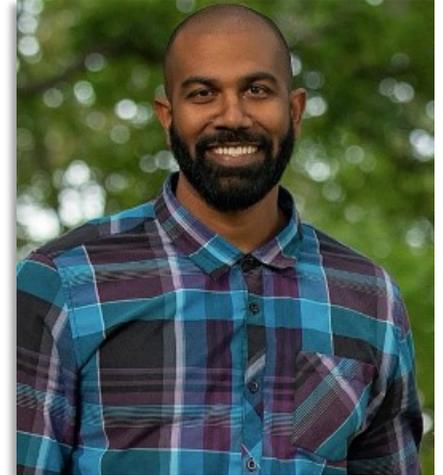
# The Mind Forward Seniors' Team



**Barb**



**Marcia**



**Justin**

The dedicated Seniors' Team at Mind Forward works with elderly clients in long term care settings, as well as in hospital and home settings. One of their goals is to help to increase opportunities for clients to participate in recreational engagement, improving their quality of life.



**Salma**

## **What are other ways we can help those in Palliative Care?**

If you happen to know an individual, or a family, that is enduring the burden of pain / grief (due to end-of-life), you can take simple measures to help them. Although we cannot provide any kind of medical care, we can write letters, engage in a warm-hearted telephone call, be an ear to listen, go on walks (if permitted), or deliver a kind, "Thinking of You" card. Palliative care is more than just medical support, it is being a pillar of emotional and empathetic support to those who may need it.

**You are so passionate about this project, assisting those in palliative care. What other things are you passionate about in your life?**

There is a meaningful quote that I enjoy— it states that, "...the days are long, but the years are short." Now that I am older, I realize how quickly time passes, therefore I am passionate about living life to the best of my ability. In doing so, I have discovered inner joys that include writing, ballroom dancing, keeping close connections with those that I care for, and exploring local hiking trails and adventures. I've also discovered my love for learning sign language and practicing these skills with many of our peers from Mind Forward. Together, we inspire one another, and seek new fun things that add positivity and happiness to our lives.



**Yvonne**

## Art Analysis

### 4 Areas Art Analysis: Archetypal Alliterations and Acquisitions

- Xiao D.

#### 1.0 Asian Aerial Art

A binary horizontal interpretation of upper crust highlights and omitted foregrounds without structural context, creating the appearance of floating mountain tops and unexplained upper horizons. Texture and materially distinguished components of natural terrain are emphasized through mountainous platitudes manicured by functionally tailored brush stroke commentary. Aestheticism is attained either through domesticated pinks on gentle linear lines, or by aesthetically formulated selections of binary plain space alternating with repeating patterns of texturally and chromatically consistent brushwork. A study in ancient calligraphic curvature and natural architecture.

#### 1.1 Andes Ambiance Art

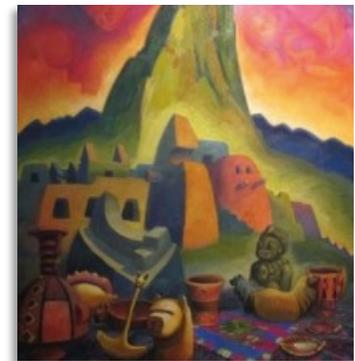
Characterized by complex colour dilapidation in its suggested arenas of narrated climax to communicate a complicated visual and stylistic host. The artwork is procured through extravagant and youthful colour preferences where orange, bright neon green and vibrant red appear as a characteristic cultural praxis of the genre. Variations in complexity and detail function as an aesthetic qualifier in this art style and technical complexity is a compulsory code for collective dissemination. Colour choice is used to communicate fantastical emotion and visual contrast with no attempt at photogenic fidelity to realism.

#### 1.2 African Ancestral Art

Typified by elongated form and hyper realistic cheek or larynx characterization to certify a sobering mood and meditative status of being. Preference is given to bodily monochrome simplifications where dimension and protrusion are highlighted as its main features. Usually lead characters are known by facial emphasis and contextualized in parallelism to an even number of equally similar social commodities. This is done to emphasize the collectivist nature of society. Modern ancestral art tends to display a bold radicalism of colour subversion between separated compartments of functional objects in the story. Land surveying is usually an ignored component of their staged visual iconography.

#### 1.3 Aboriginal Animal Art

Traditionally containing sculpted visages of sacred animal deities with anthropomorphic and theomorphic wisdom, virility, ascetic purity and platonistic spiritualism. These canonical facial hieroglyphs were stacked one on top of another, in a repeating and functionally standardized pronouncement of escalating morale and grandeur. Outside this traditional totem figuration, a newly dynamic interlude of bright contrasts, domesticated pastel shades, display the startling disassociation between life and death, beauty and ugliness, generosity and predatory stalking in an art stratum that glorifies the deification of our collective survival instinct.



## Creative Writing Group

• Anjula E.

One of the exciting groups that started up again at Mind Forward has been our Creative Writing group. Shane, a Mind Forward staff member, presents us with a choice of three prompts, then we write individually on one of those subjects. Help is available in a “breakout room” for those who need assistance.

During the sessions, we usually have time to do two writings—Shane presents us with three additional prompts—or we can continue with the first writing we started on. At the end of the writing section of the sessions, we have the opportunity to share our writings and receive positive feedback from the others in the group.

The purpose of the group is to encourage us to write (fiction or non-fiction). We aren’t limited to the prompts—for example, if we feel like writing about something different we are welcome to. The prompts are just there as guidelines to help us to get started.

As a result, there are some great pieces of writing that have come out of our group, and a sense of overall confidence and accomplishment. If you enjoy writing or want to develop your writing skills hands-on, then sign up for Creative Writing the next time it’s offered. We’d love to have you join the group!



## Shane

Shane is the facilitator of the Creative Writing group and organizes Day Program groups for the Mind Forward clients.

## Writing Prompt:

Describe yourself covered with mud

• Xiao D.

Mud clothes you with the beauty of nature and tells the creatures in the garden you have accepted your invitation to party and be at peace with them and mud has the pleasant aroma of twigs and fallen branches, like an unspoken musical that dances to the rhythm of organic truth, unblended comfort and unapologetic confidence and tranquility. Mud is the father of Adam and Eve and mud is the brother of soil and all other earthly creations.



## Writing Prompt:

Describe weather  
“Fragmented Loneliness”

• Anjula E.



The wind flies through the crackling leaves, whipping them up into a tornado. The frenzied dance continues, in contrast to the torrential downpour that is about to hit, tamping down all fluttering figures until they are flat, pasted against the ground. Shoes smear the painted ground, and sopping flakes of fragmented leaves cover the dirt canvas. This is what is seen from below.

People are whipped up into a frenzy, then are tamped down by overwhelming loss. Isolation causes the paper dolls to lay two-dimensionally on the ground. They have lost their luster, their meaning, their kindness. Mixed into a pot of fragmented loneliness, sprinkled back upon the dirt from which they came. This is what is seen from on high.

## Writing Prompt:

Write about Abundance, Extravagance, Plenty, Joy

• Digna F.



Life has a lot of phases. I’ve experienced abundance, extravagance, plenty and joy. As I grew up, I was able to appreciate abundance more because I’ve seen and experienced the opposite also: scarcity, want and despair. When I am overflowing with joy, I want to share it with others so together we may thrive and enjoy life. This gives me contentment and sense of purpose knowing I do not live for myself alone. Somehow I make the world a more joyful and purposeful place.

For me, abundance is an outlook that allows me to welcome all world could offer. It is a state of mind, that allows me to be content and confident in myself, that I have a fulfilled life. It cannot be bought, it is a lifestyle that needs to be developed.

Also, abundance does not come alone; it comes with joy, prosperity and everything you desire. If you believe you are abundant, you are able to share your blessings and abundance with others who are in need.

# ENTERTAINMENT

*"Movies don't only entertain, they give various perspectives and help me to be a better person."*

- Digna F.

## Movie Reviews

• Alanna R.



### Turning Red

Animated

Starring (Voices): Rosalie Chaing, Maitreyi Ramakrishnan, and Sandra Oh

Genre: Comedy, Family

Done By: Domee Shi

This was a TOTAL coming of age movie, we ALL went through in one way or another.

As it was told from the female perspective, the visit from the red panda has obvious significance!

It's a brilliant metaphor for all the physical and emotional changes that youth experience.

I watched it with my nieces, who are still too young to absorb the significance. But it will be an EXCELLENT tool when they are of that "curious" age.

Kids will love this movie, cause it's FULL of bright colours, the panda hijinx. Adults will enjoy the colourful, playful aspect, but also appreciate the more "adult" messages.

Some viewers may even recognize some landmarks, as Turning Red shows Toronto's Chinatown area, in late Spring, 2002.

FOUND ON Disney +, 2022



*How did Reese eat her ice cream?*

Witherspoon

### The Adam Project

Starring Ryan Reynolds, Jennifer Garner, Mark Ruffalo and Walker Scobell

Genre: Science Fiction, Action, Adventure

Director: Shawn Levy (same as Free Guy)

If you're looking for an Action-Packed, Family-Friendly Film...

We all know Ryan Reynolds as a truly patriotic Canadian, an iconic celebrity, a philanthropist, with numerous character types. Perhaps he's best known as the snarky action hero (...or anti-hero) - that's why we appreciate him and his talent.

In brief, this story is about the time-traveling pilot, Adam Reed (Reynolds), who accidentally crashes in 2022, teams up with his 12-year-old self, and embarks on a mission to save the future.

For such an intricate story line, it was done so seamlessly, that once you bought-in, somehow it all made perfect sense.

The kid, Walker Scobell was PHENOMENAL. He displayed perfect rhythm, and level of 'snark' for the role.

Finally, an action movie that doesn't have to be enjoyed only after the kids have gone to bed. It's hilarious, but also exhilarating to watch.

This was an excellent family story that really shows us that LOVE can bond us even across the greatest distances.

FOUND ON Netflix, 2022

## Brain Teasers

Answers will be in our next issue!

• \_\_\_\_\_RANGE

STANDS  
0\_23456789

√ ENVY  
LUST  
SLOTH  
PRIDE  
GREED  
WRATH  
GLUTTONY

B1L1U1E  
M1O1O1N

i8Σπ

WOWOLFOL

13579 R  
WHELMING

O\_ER\_T\_O\_

AMUOUS

### Swapping Easter Eggs

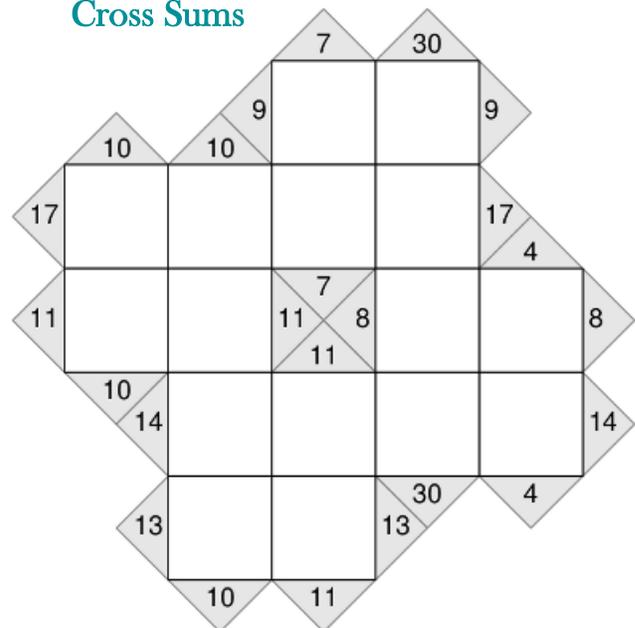
Nigel and Alanna are chatting one day. Nigel says, "You know I was just thinking. If you gave me one of your Easter eggs, then we would have the same number of eggs." Alanna replies, "If you gave me one of your Easter eggs, then I would have twice as many as you!"

How many Easter eggs do Nigel and Alanna each have?

### Mind Bender

How is it possible that 10.70 could equal 11.10?

### Cross Sums



• Nigel



### Spiderman: No Way Home



It is the most profitable movie in nearly three years and one of the best reviewed Marvel films of all-time, but does Spider-Man: No Way Home live up to the hype? In many ways it absolutely does, but in some other ways it does fall a bit short.

The film starts where Far From Home leaves off, with Spider-Man thought to be a killer and his name exposed to the world by Mysterio. This creates a big problem for Peter Parker (Tom Holland), so he goes to visit Doctor Strange (Benedict Cumberbatch) to see if he can help. Strange creates a spell to help, but accidentally opens a portal to the multiverse, allowing villains and fellow Spider-Men to make their way through into their universe.

As a Science Fiction geek I love the whole idea of multiple universes, but as a film reviewer, I can't ignore the glaring plot hole here. Why did only Spider-Men and Spider-Man villains come through the portal?

I also loved the fact that Andrew Garfield and Toby Macguire came back and played a part in the film, however it seemed like they were having a bit too much fun with their roles, and not taking it very seriously.

Finally, where was Miles Morales? This was a perfect opportunity for Disney/Marvel to address the lack of cultural diversity among their superhero franchise and they didn't do it.

That being said, this was every Spider-Man fans dream. The whole multiverse angle was ingenious and I hope it will tie in directly into the next Doctor Strange movie. It was also a blast from the past and brought back great childhood memories to see the other actors who portrayed Spider-Man and villains like Sandman, Electro, Doc Oc, and Green Goblin in those roles one more time.

As always Tom Holland was spectacular, the writing was clever and good for a few laughs, and uncharacteristic of most Marvel films, even the ending was unexpected. Despite the obvious plot holes, I really enjoyed this film and I think you will too.

• Alanna R.



### Green Lantern



Starring: Ryan Reynolds, Blake Lively, Peter Sarsgaard

Genre: Science Fiction, Action, Adventure

Director: Martin Campbell

In brief, this story is about a young, Hal Jordan, who becomes a highly skilled and fearless pilot after his father untimely death.

As such, he is recruited by the super elite, intergalactic police force, the Green Lantern Corps.

Now I'm an average comic book, superhero fan, but I'm sorry, even Ryan Reynolds couldn't save as this one!

Perhaps it was the lack of a strong supporting cast.

As is an often the case, the villain is related to the "evil corporation", and it's the character who is "not pretty".

One "bonus note"; towards the climax, do they show the principal villain in an Electric Wheelchair? Really?!?!?



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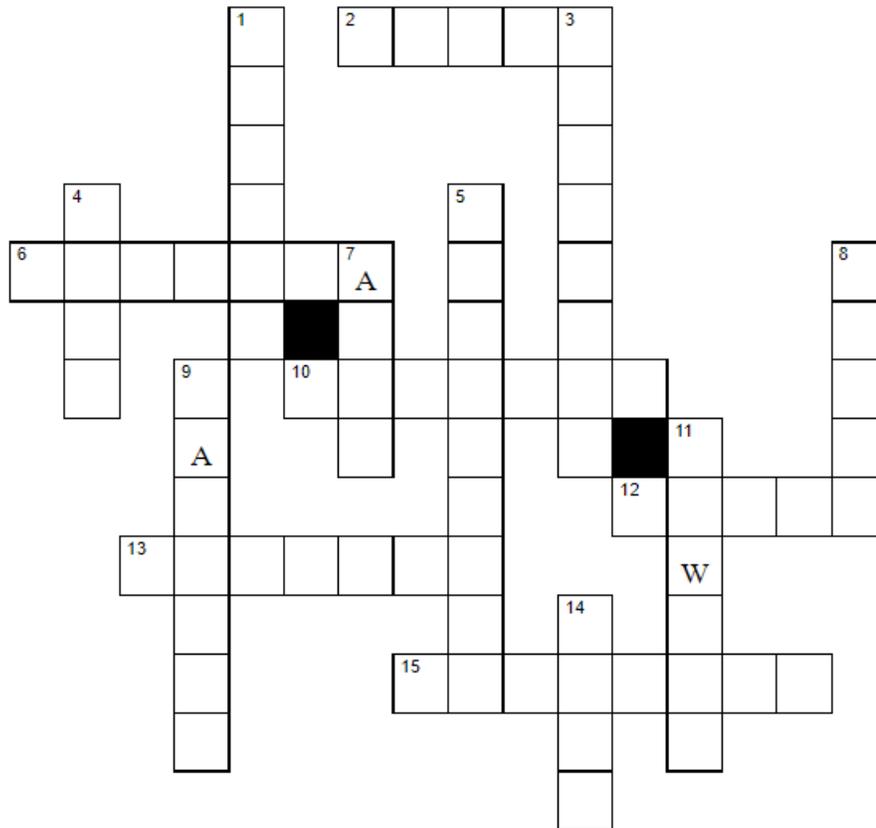
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Page 22 Rotten Tomatoes

# MIND FORWARD INFO HUNT

Answers will be in our next issue



## Across:

- 2. Nigel's favorite color.
- 6. Name of Mac's new baby girl.
- 10. Jessica's occupation.
- 12. Which country are cherry blossoms known to come from? (p. 4)
- 13. Country where Paul M. is from.
- 15. Subject Xiao studied in uni.

## Down:

- 1. What do people throw at each other in India during the spring festival? (p. 5) "Dyed \_\_\_\_."
- 3. How many years did Dan C. work at Mind Forward? (p. 14)
- 4. What was hooked on someone's back as a joke during April Fool's Day? (p. 1) "A paper \_\_\_\_."
- 5. Anjula's favorite food.
- 7. What is the name of the new Art Therapy Facilitator? (p. 10)
- 8. Yhohanna's secret persona. "Yho-Yho the \_\_\_\_."
- 9. Who is the Palliative Care Crafts Facilitator? (p. 15)
- 11. Digna's favorite vacation place.
- 14. What was the highest score given on the Easter Chocolate Rating Scale? (p. 3)

## Easter Egg Hunt

### Enter a Draw for a Free Gift Card!

1. Find all the Easter Eggs hiding in this issue!
2. Email the amount of eggs to Carlene to enter the draw: [carlene.senior@mindforward.org](mailto:carlene.senior@mindforward.org)

For the answers to the Info Hunt, ask around in our Zoom groups or check the page numbers given by clues!

# Mind Forward Brain Injury Services

Mind Forward Brain Injury Services (previously Peel Halton Dufferin Acquired Brain Injury Services) is a non-profit charitable organization, completely funded by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOH & LTC), the Mississauga Halton Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) and Central West LHIN to provide community based rehabilitation and life-long support for adults whose lives have been touched by acquired brain injury.

Since incorporating in 1992, Mind Forward has been committed to offering services to all individuals touched by brain injury (including clients, family members and caregivers) based on an assessment of the individual's needs and through a team approach to service planning and goal-setting. The client and significant others are welcomed as members of the program planning process, along with our staff and other experts.



## Contact Us

Give us a call for more information about our programs

### **Mind Forward Brain Injury Services**

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Visit us on the web at  
[www.mindforward.org](http://www.mindforward.org)

**Mind Forward Brain Injury Services**

### **Mind Forward Brain Injury Services**

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PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE