

BERYWN WELCOMES VILLAGE MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELLING

Pia Barnes, raised on a farm just north of Berwyn, returned to retire in Berwyn last October, that is, some 30 years later, just a half-mile down the road from the farm where she grew up. For the last 10 years she worked in the Carewest Operational Stress Injury Clinic in Calgary, funded by Veterans Affairs Canada, as a mental health nurse clinician doing therapy with RCMP, veterans, and still-serving military. Where she worked all staff of a multidisciplinary team were cross-trained in various evidence-based therapies. This unique career opportunity prepared Pia to do the work she now does in her business in Berwyn, called Village Mental Health Counselling (VMHC). For over half of her nursing career Pia has worked in various diverse mental health roles - acute care psychiatry, non-profit CMHA, community mental health, teaching psychiatry to nursing students for Mount Royal College, and coowner of a former self-employed company called Brainstorm Fundamentals inc. with another RN, where they assisted families struggling with the mental health system.

On May 6, 2019 Pia opened the doors to VMHC next to the hair salon in Berwyn and has been seeing her business slowly ramp up. No referrals are necessary and waitlists are short. Pia chose Berwyn for her business as this is her hometown and, she believes, is the perfect location for her office, being midway between Fairview and Peace River. The first appointment at VMHC is complementary and gives an individual the opportunity of meeting the therapist, sharing what they are looking for and then asking any questions they might have while hearing what therapy Pia suggests she would use and why. The individual then decides if this is a good fit for them. What sort of conditions does Pia do therapy for? Adults have been coming having suffered trauma from MVA 's, sexual assault, bullying, first responder traumas, grief and loss, low self-esteem issues, chronic adjustment disorders, anxiety, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, panic and clinical depression. Individuals with addictions related to their mental health issues are welcome, as well. Behind all addictions is pain! Pia assists her clients in getting to the root cause of their symptoms.

Currently, VMHC operates Monday through Friday from 9 am to 5 pm. Mondays and Fridays the office is open for booked appointments only - Pia did say she will work part-time until and if demand requires more. Her favorite thing about being a business owner in Berwyn is definitely the people! "It is so wonderful to return to a community where people are friendly, care about one another, smile and say hello! My husband and I have been made to feel very welcome. We are fortunate to have returned to many friends that we have had for years! We couldn't ask for anything more at this period in our lives."

In the July/August 2017 edition of the national 'Canadian Nurse' magazine, Pia was named as one of the top 150 nurses profiled in the magazine, marking the 150th anniversary of Confederation. She was interviewed in 2001 due to her work with Brainstorm Fundamentals. The article, "Storming through the Stigma" has become her trademark where she has spent years aiming to ease the stigma and pave the way to understanding. Pia lives with Bipolar Disorder and puts a real face to mental illness along with

the message of hope. Help and Treatment are there! Pia has also won a number of scholarships and awards, her favorite being the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2012 as being nominated by one of her veteran clients in Calgary.

Are you ready to get to the root cause of your problem? Trauma is often where it's at. In Pia's office she is there to talk about what no one else will talk about - mental illness and mental health issues. She will ask what your goal is for therapy? Together a plan will be created. She believes that an individual has to buy-in - has to feel in control of the process. Trust is paramount. As VMHC has to be a private business, the upside to having to pay is that it keeps the therapist accountable. Pia endeavors to provide affordable counselling so fees are on a sliding scale according to income, No one in need of urgent help will be turned away.

This fall - Pia has made a commitment to see any teen, pro bono who is feeling suicidal. Please help save our youth and them to come to VMHC. All adults struggling with encourage suicidal feelings are encouraged also to phone and book an appointment. Don't choose a permanent solution to a temporary situation. There are better options. There is help and there is hope!

Pia believes that our perspectives are not necessarily inaccurate they are just incomplete. Where you are at is a bump in the road. Remember that we don't necessarily see things the way they are, rather, we tend to see things the way we are! At VMHC Pia is there to help guide you on your road to recovery. You do have a future! VMHC is located at 5115, 51ST, Berwyn, Ab.









ATB Berwyn Agency would like to thank the following people that helped and contributed to the Chili and Corn we had on August 30th 2019. All proceeds will be going to the Stollery Children's Hospital.

Andy Peterson for making and donating the delicious chili, Jo Ann Wald-Mcken for making and donating the delicious buns, TEL Enterprise (Twyla Lovas) for donating the corn.

Thank you to the following for all of your help : Lenny Lariviere, Jo Ann Wald-Mcken, Andy Peterson, Jayden Peterson, Bonnie Landaker.

We would also like to thank everyone who gave us a monetary donation. We have to mention one person who donated \$240.00 - Keith Yampolsky. Wow. Thanks so much Keith.

Thank you to the Village of Berwyn and to Merv Foot for all your help.

And a big Thank you to everyone that came out and enjoyed the lunch. We could not have raised \$1057.00 without all of you.

This year we raised \$7231.45 all together for this great cause.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU.

NOTE: If you have items that you would like included in the Community Newsletter, please email them to: vberwynfcss@serbernet.com by the **20th of every month.**