

Briana Benn-Mirandi: Helping with Mental Health



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Dec 25, 2024 8:30 AM



Briana Benn-Mirandi and her team at the Soul Voyage Trauma Center are trying to help people who dealing with mental health iss... The subject of mental health and personal trauma has become a growing topic of discussion for people, especially during the past few years. According to a study done by the National Alliance on Mental Illness, there are 1,122,563 people in Connecticut who believe that they live in a community which does not have enough mental health professionals. However, people like Briana Benn-Mirandi and her team at the Soul Voyage Trauma Center are working to change that situation.

Briana has many different titles with the work she does, including being a licensed professional counselor, a clinical licensed art therapist, and a board certified registered art therapist. The most important thing for Briana in her job is to try and help people who are experiencing a mental illness or dealing with challenges, while being a "beacon for the... community and more," she says.

One of the reasons why Briana got into this field had to do with her life as a teenager. Briana remembers having a bit of a strained relationship with her mother when she was in high school, but that began to change when her mother started to seek out a therapist in an effort to strengthen their relationship. Briana found that therapy seemed to work and help people with expressing their emotions, as well as understanding the feelings and emotions of others, and she credits it for the better relationship which she has with her mom as an adult.

Briana's path to the work and help that she provides today is a unique one. Briana and her husband, who works alongside her at Soul Voyage Trauma Center, have had to deal with their fair share of trials and tribulations in recent years.

“My husband had already suffered from two strokes by the time he turned 39 years old,” Briana says. “My mental health was eroding, and it was such a hard time for us and difficult to even do our jobs.”

Since then, Briana and her husband have both recovered well, leading to the opening of their new building space on Durham Road in Madison in April 2024. They both wanted to take the negative experiences and emotions which they had felt in the past and use them as a way to put something good into their community. Their services are very diverse, providing multiple different kinds of treatment and options for people wishing to use their them.

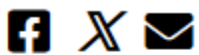
One of the more interesting treatments which Briana provides is called ketamine-assisted psychotherapy. Briana says that it has been very helpful in the treatment of various illnesses, such as anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and chronic pain.

“It is one of the safest medicines that we use,” she says. “We can use it to help so many people and treat and help so many different things.”

In addition to helping adult patients and clients, Briana, her husband, and the team at Soul Voyage Trauma Center also work to provide a nurturing environment for children and young adults. Briana says that they host an afterschool group for teens in an effort to help them with social skills and making friends, as well as teaching them how their own brain works and how to better take care of themselves. This is all in an effort to make their space more inclusive and open to all kinds of people who may be going through a multitude of problems and challenges. They even include different types of programs, some having to do with yoga and art, in an attempt to further connect with their community and provide a fun and safe space.

“We wanted to really open up our space to not only medical professionals, but all kinds of people who help to heal,” Briana says. “We are working to bring together the medical and wellness fields in an attempt to strengthen our relationship with our community.”

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