

# Faces & Places

## SW Community Events Program launch

◆ PEOPLE ◆ STARS ◆ BABIES ◆ ENTERTAINMENT ◆ TELEVISION



# Triumph over adversity

AARON CORLETT

**P**ENNY Garvey is a woman of many hats but her role as a Heal for Life director might be her most important.

The charitable organisation provides camps and training to help people overcome childhood trauma and abuse.

Penny became involved after her own healing journey in 2009.

"A girlfriend heard the Heal for Life chief executive officer speak at the Edith Cowan University South West campus and she told me how inspiring she was," the Bunbury resident said.

"I wanted to get into charity as well and the universe hadn't shown me which charity, so the universe brought Heal for Life to me."

Penny said her own week of healing focused on her mind, body and spirit to help her with trauma faced in her life.

"I've had lots of hurdles - I've had two close family members commit suicide," she said.

"And everyone has got a story because trauma goes so deep - it can be a childhood illness or your parents divorcing.

"It might affect one child different to another and we need to understand that it doesn't have to be massive for it to have an impact on us as an adult.

"Since going on my own healing journey, I found a lot about my heritage - including that I came from a Maori tribe."

Penny said she was so deeply touched by her healing journey that she wanted to become involved in the charity.

"It's run by trained survivors, for survivors," she said.

"So after continuing my healing journey, I said that I wanted to set up a board of directors in Bunbury for all West Australians and that's what I've done.

"I want to continue to help people along their healing journey."

Penny said social issues such as methamphetamine addiction meant the charity would be

needed more. "We've seen the charity provide lots of positives but the sad thing is that our charity is going to be needed more with this methamphetamine issue and we've got to do something and come together as a community," she said.

"I want to see Heal for Life leading the way in doing that because young families are being affected.

"It's not just our youth that are taking it - we are talking about 30 or 40-year-olds.

"It's affecting every part of society and the only way I see us being able to help is going into the schools and educating the youth, because this drug will lead to more cases of trauma and abuse."

Penny said the Heal for Life board had plans for a two-day course to help even more community members affected by trauma.

"I think all of us on the board feel an incredible sense of belonging that we have stuck together, that it hasn't been easy - it's been hard - but we haven't given up," she said.

"For us to be meeting to put a two-day plan together is pretty incredible.

"We are all very busy people that are running businesses and have jobs.

"To give their time and their passion and their belief that the program works... and now we are going to be doing a two-day program, which we hope can educate people, as well doing meditation and yoga."

Outside her charity work, Penny is the owner of Bunbury Muffler Towbar and 4WD.

"I've always been passionate about whatever I do," she said.

"I always give it my best - my skillset isn't necessarily broad but I'm a people person and I have a good understanding of business."

Her latest venture is skincare range BeeBio, which she is excited about bringing into beauty salons and boutiques.



Penny Garvey has faced many challenges in her life but her strength, bolstered by Heal for Life, has helped her rise above.  
PICTURE: JON GELLWEILER

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