

# JOURNEYS



The Recovery College provides empowering and transformative recovery-based education for everyone

## FIRST FORTNIGHT EVENT BECKON!



We're really excited to be hosting two First Fortnight 2020 events entitled 'Journeys' in DCU on January 10th and DKIT on January 17th. Thanks to everyone and all our partner organisations for the amazing work in making this all happen. Including Pavee Point, Silver Thread, Akidwa, Cairde and so

many others including of course our Recovery College students.

On both days, you will get to experience first-hand how creativity can help to heal. On each day along with a fantastic selection of workshops and performances, you will get to hear the creative talents from writers, artists, musicians and singers – as our first book of creative writing and our first music CD is launched... Amazing, we hope you get to join us for these fantastic events.

To register email or call us now!



## THE SONG CRAFT COLLECTIVE

What do you get when you cross a creative music teacher, courageous students, and the Recovery College? The Fearless Eagles!

This musical adventure explored the transformative effect that music and song writing can have on our mental health. Over the six weeks, students were supported towards working in collaboration with each other to write the lyrics and composition for their own song. The course bolstered self-esteem and hosted the space for friendships to form. As the band's confidence grew, the idea of a public performance by The Fearless Eagles was suggested and met with great eagerness.

We were invited to perform at the Navan Day Hospital Christmas party. The students had great fun expressing themselves and sharing their creative abilities with an audience. All who attended greeted the performance with great enthusiasm.

We have an audio recording and a live video recording of the gig, which can be found through the Recovery College webpage.

A big thanks to all involved!

Bernard

## DELVING CREATIVELY

I am currently a member of the recovery college in Dundalk. Having been on so many courses over the past two years my favourite one so far has been creative writing. By delving into our minds, and into our past and back to childhood even - we can spot areas of our lives where we haven't previously given much thought to. By writing one's thoughts down on paper one can transform something that seems dull and drab maybe into a new creation, a masterpiece.

A lot of us had childhood memories mostly spent on farms, and one of us even spending some time in the African jungle. No doubt there would be plenty to talk about there

All in all it was a very good experience which brought out the poet in everyone

Thanks to Carmel Conroy for hosting it,

David



## UPCOMING SPRING COURSES!

### North Dublin Area

- Crafts for Wellness
- Cultural exchange
- Hearing Voices
- Mama Wellness

### Louth Meath Area

- Get yourself Connected Through Drama
- Lessons of Unmodesty (Gaining Confidence)
- Do my meds define me?
- Understanding & Renegotiating Trauma

*Note: Applications are now open. Information about course arrangements will be available from the Recovery College website From January. For further queries, call 017007907*

# HOPES FOR THE NORTHEAST

I have worked in healthcare for many years. I experienced mental health symptoms after my baby was born. I was looking for a broader understanding of mental health outside of my own mindset and personal bias. I was also seeking validation for my own personal understanding of mental wellbeing.

From my experience, the Recovery College is promoting recovery through experiential opportunities that help develop resiliency skills and break down barriers to recovery in a sensitive respectful manner. The College has been very inclusive in developing a prospectus that is coproduced with students making suggestions and then deciding on the term courses.

I would hope that the NERC has more of a presence in my locality as travelling required is a barrier sometimes and that all community wellness supports are more integrated and connected. I see the start of this already happening this year with the development of the outreach-working group

In the future, I hope that the resources are available to bring a greater selection, enabling more students to commit to more classes and build momentum. I would hope that the courses get more promotion from the big stakeholders, students and communities on the ground - there is a need for community building at a grassroots level. These are my hopes for the future, a more integrated and localised North East Recovery College. - Clodagh

## A WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR!

Hello to all Recovery College students. My name is Paula.

I am the new Student Chair. I am beginning a new journey in my recovery and I feel great anticipation with my new role. I wish to thank Lianne, my predecessor, for the wonderful job she did.

I have always used art and craft as a way of coping with my illness. I found peace of mind and a calming effect. As I spent a lot of time in hospital, working away, I often found myself sharing my materials and soon many patients joined in, working alone yet together. We each felt an hour of peace and contentedness. It gave me a sense of purpose and I wanted to share this space with others to provide a way to rediscover a relaxed place perhaps lost for a while through illness.

It was pure luck that I was told about the RC, yet it took many months to get the confidence to join in. I began by co facilitating a course 'Crafts for Wellness' with the RC. I really enjoyed the experienced and met wonderful people along the way. I never believed I would be able to move out of my illness and be of any use to anyone. Reaching out changed my life - I hope it can change yours. The College is full of opportunities and support. We want to reach out to anyone who wants to take a positive step forward on their journey to a fuller, funner and interesting life. We welcome you and look forward to meeting you.

Paula

Grandiose

I could be somebody  
But they tell me  
I have grandiose ideas  
So I imagine I'm in a parallel universe  
I've written a bestseller  
Or starred in a movie  
Do you take your medication?

Bernie Sellick



## ACTING THE MAGGOT

My husband and I heard of the Recovery College whilst attending a monthly support group meeting for relatives of adults with mental health problems. The programme 'Act the Maggot' caught my eye and seemed like fun. I have just completed three weeks of the programme and the experience has been wonderful. The venue is great and very accessible.

The course leaders, especially Amy, are fantastic. The participants are great and everyone is treated respectfully and appear to enjoy the experience. I would love for people I know to experience 'Act the Maggot' - maybe next time. The inclusion of service users, carers and professionals is a great initiative and adds to the enjoyment of the course.

I am looking forward to the coming weeks, but will be sorry when it is over. In recent times, I have become stressed at home and attending 'Act the Maggot' has provided me with a great diversion. It has been great meeting such interesting and nice people in a fun environment; people I will not forget.

Kay

## FACILITATION SKILLS TRAINING

We had 16 participants and 3 facilitators for the two full days (10-4pm). All walks of life were represented which added to the richness of the learning.

Day 1 comprised of Setting the Scene, Facilitation Skills and Roles, Session Planning, Icebreakers and Energisers, Brainstorming (Thought Showers), Open Dialogue and Walking Debates, and Group Dynamics. The learning was through PowerPoint, Discussion, Groupwork and Activities. A melon race tested teamwork, skills and timing. The Group work really elucidated knowledge and the facilitators were really impressed with what came back on Flipcharts. We had an impressive collective.

Day 2 saw the roles somewhat reversed as four participants got to test their creative facilitation skills by standing up and doing the cycles from Day 1. They were coached and mentored by the main facilitators. All were excellent.

An Evaluation piece evidenced the enjoyment and satisfaction of the group. More participants want to co-facilitate in Day 2, so we shall have to enable that. We look forward to delivering this course again in 2020.

Peter



Artwork by Paula.