



# Get to Know us

Student Newsletter  
First Edition

**Facebook:** Dublin North North East Recovery College **Phone:** 01 700 8887 **E-mail:** RecoveryCollege@dcu.ie  
**Twitter:** @DNNERecoveryCol **Website:** www.RecoveryCollege.ie

*'The DNNE Recovery College aims to create an inclusive culture of Mental Health Recovery in the North Dublin, Louth and Meath communities by providing empowering education and inclusive group settings to everyone with an interest in mental health & wellbeing.'*

## WHAT THE HELL IS THE RECOVERY COLLEGE?

This is what I asked myself when the possibility of attending was suggested to me! Well, we all have mental health & we all have struggles with it, which is very natural. For some of us, the struggles reach a degree where living a 'normal' life may seem completely out of reach. This is why the possibility of recovery is so important.

Recovery for me means getting back on track; outrunning the black dog (so to speak). Most people can't do that alone, so support is vital. This is what intrigued me about the Recovery College: courses custom made to help support people who, like me, want to get their lives back on track.

*"The Recovery College takes an empowering & inclusive educational approach to mental health & wellbeing." You bet I signed up. Meeting people from all walks of life & across all age-groups, coming together in a safe and confidential environment to learn & grow together may have been the most important decision of my life. I certainly hope to meet y'all next year, & for those of you considering signing up, you won't regret it! Thank you all at Recovery College for all the support you have given me.*

Sincerely,

Jude x



## THE TRIALOGUE GROUP - 'A SPACE FOR PEOPLE TO FEEL VALUED'

*'Sometimes you might feel lost in diagnosis, ignored in your role in work or helpless when supporting a family member.'*

The Trialogue is a place where you can come and talk or just listen. It's a space where nobody has a title, there are no hierarchies, it's a space where you can express your feelings without fear of judgement. It's also a place to share information or personal experience and suggestions of things which have helped other people in the Trialogue. The group is made up of three sections of the community, services users, workers and family members. The idea behind the space is for people who felt isolated either in services, professions or families, could come together in an informal setting and discuss things important to them.

If you would like more information email us on northdublintrialogue@gmail.com

- Adele

## CHIME

***We asked Students if the Recovery College enhances their sense of...***

**Connectedness** - 'It helps you become connected with others without worrying about your surroundings.'  
'We are connected with each other through our need to be listened to.'

**Hope** - 'Talking about options and recognising our ability to change gives a good sense of hope and responsibility.'

**Identity** - 'Participating in the Recovery College helps me get a better sense of who I am and feel good about myself.'  
'When unwell you can lose yourself in diagnosis, the Recovery College can help regain your sense of self.'

**Meaning** - 'This is a Recovery Family where each member has a place to 'be' in their own way, their own tune, a safe community.'  
'The Recovery College gives me a chance to engage with others in a way that's beneficial to both myself and the group.'

**Empowerment** - 'Being respected for who I am is both powerful and empowering.'  
'I will survive, I will get back up, I will keep going forward and if I fall I know I can get up again.'

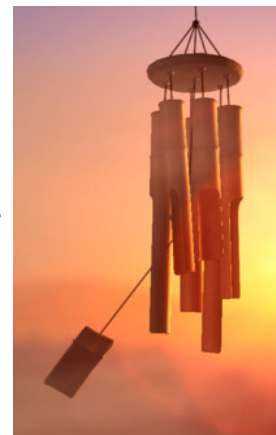
## FROM STUDENT TO CO-FACILITATOR

Before joining the Recovery College, I didn't know anything about it and was a bit apprehensive with regard to what it was all about. I was also lacking in self-confidence and control over my life. As the course took place I felt more at ease and began to see what it entailed.

I was attracted to the idea of service users and professionals working hand in hand to put together a series of courses. It was amazing how much material we came up with in such a short period of time. We managed to design two courses, namely: 'Infected with Happiness' and 'Out on a Limb.'

I was delighted to be picked as one of the co-facilitators for the 'Infected with Happiness' course with Mags Mc Hugh as lead. We had a full course of participants during the four weeks. I wasn't sure if I could do it, but Mags filled me with confidence and encouragement. Before long, I was enjoying the whole experience and learning lots at each session. By the end of the course I felt empowered and amazed at the new me! I would like to do more facilitating in the future.

- Caroline



## FUELING A SENSE OF IDENTITY

I can clearly say that participating as a student of the Recovery College has impacted on my sense of identity. I developed the ability to participate in a group setting and share my own particular ideas and views. I think the non-judgmental method adopted by the Recovery College really contributed to this. Through participating here, I'd say identity isn't a static thing and new skills may be developed and areas for growth identified. This became evident while working as a co-facilitator, an experience that allowed me to build opportunities and explore new areas. For me this was a challenge but overall the experience was a good one and I enjoyed acting in this role.

From co-facilitating I can say I have benefited through building confidence and identifying a sense of worth coupled with a sense of moving forward. When acting as a co-facilitator I would suggest to be yourself – this will bring the best out of you both for yourself and for those you are addressing in your role, it also makes things easier. If you have the opportunity to co-facilitate, I would say give it a go, you may surprise yourself. Looking forward from my experience with the Recovery College, I would like to continue to remain connected. I will be entering year 3 of Applied Social Care in September 2017 at DKIT and hopefully on completion of my degree I will be able to contribute to the Recovery College in a more active capacity.

- Michael Lavery

## MY EXPERIENCE AND HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

I got involved with the college steering group through my work when my line manager asked me to represent our service. I had some knowledge of recovery colleges, so was delighted to get involved and learn more. The decision was made to run the course 'Recovery: Learning Together' in DKIT in Dundalk. I applied to attend so that I could get to know more about how co-production and co-facilitation works. The participants were a mixture of people who either attend or work in services.

The learning environment was very relaxed, respectful and also very democratic which really impressed me. From this course we decided on two courses to develop and run in DKIT. I then went on to attend the

'Infected with Happiness' course that came from this process. Again the facilitators created an atmosphere that was so friendly, relaxed and encouraging. The course was fun and helped us all to look at what makes us happy and to actively do things which bring laughter and happiness in our lives.

I am full of hope for this recovery college, I really believe this way of working together to improve and maintain our mental health is the way forward. I hope more and more people have an opportunity to get involved with the college in the future.

- Rose Marie Murphy

## FRIENDSHIP SURVIVAL KIT (A gift from Carmel)

**Jewel** – because you are as valuable as any precious stone!  
**Eraser** – to remind you that every day you can start with a clean slate.  
**Cotton Ball** – cushioned support for those rough roads.  
**Toothpick** – to help you "pick" out the good in others and yourself.  
**Marble** – to replace the ones you've lost along the way.  
**Rubber Band** – to be flexible.  
**Clothespin** – to help you "hang" in there.  
**Button** – to remind you to sometimes "button" your lip.

**Band Aid** – for hurt feelings either yours or someone else's.  
**Tissue** – to wipe the tears of joy and sadness.  
**Paper Clip** – to help you keep your friends together.  
**Tootsie Roll** – to let things "roll" off your shoulder.  
**Hugs and Kisses** – for when you need a hug and kiss.

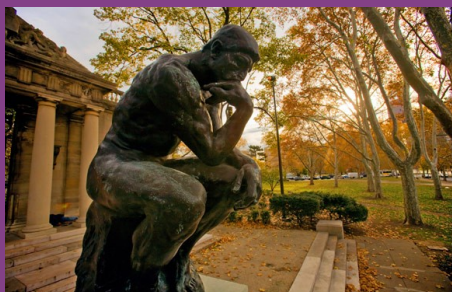


## CREATIVE CORNER

### Until I Stop and Start Again

degradation humiliation in poverty and squalor,  
 meaningless thought devoid of feeling  
 for freedom lost with insignificance  
 sitting watching waiting as time passes  
 or does time remain still and watch me as i pass  
 laughing I lose the race  
 and yet not begun  
 such is living life  
 it's all I have  
 until I stop and start again

Bernie Sellick



### Changes

Rattle your cage – break old moulds  
 Push open some doors – let the light in  
 Speak Out – say it differently  
 Make it different – it makes a difference  
 Change a thought – walk down a new street  
 Speak your truth – be loyal to you  
 Making changes - makes it different  
 Different choices change the world – your world  
 Listen to an inkling – follow a dream  
 Get rid of something old – say something new  
 Locate your heart  
 Changing a little – changes a lot  
 Blow away some cobwebs – clear the closets  
 Sit in a new chair – change your mind  
 Listen to your heart  
 A different perspective – makes it different  
 Make changes however small  
 Little changes make a difference  
 Doing something different makes Life different  
 A different way of seeing – makes a new world.

Marian Reilly (Inside Colours)

## CONNECTIVITY: A DYNAMIC WORTH STRIVING FOR

Connectivity is a dynamic balance between sharing, listening, involvement and personal reflection, inner space, silence, aloneness. Having the freedom to choose from these different forms of being and forgiven for mistakes is the most supportive environment someone can get. Connectivity also means for me balancing the personal need and the community or common need and the art of knowing which one goes first, if any, in a given situation. My hope to the Recovery College is that although it can never reach perfection, still, their members (students, facilitators and those working in the background alike) will always strive to offer a safe and forgiving place for healing and personal growth through connectivity."

- K.R.

Thanks to our supporters:



**Want to stay Informed? If interested in signing up for our courses of community initiatives, please follow us on social media, check out our website or give us a call!**