



# The Recovery College in Spring

I recently attended a course entitled, "So, what the hell is Coproduction" at the North East Recovery college. After years of working and studying in institutions I was intrigued to find an approach to Mental Health that genuinely strives to value all ways of knowing and being. It was a positive and hopeful experience for me and afterward I was drawn to re-reading this old classic novel that gave me personal hope as a young teenager struggling; Charles Dickens – *Hard times*. 'Girl number twenty,' said the gentleman, smiling in the calm strength of knowledge. Sissy blushed, and stood up. 'So you would carpet your room – or your husband's room, if you were a grown woman, and had a husband – with representations of flowers, would you?' said the gentleman. 'Why would you?' 'If you please, sir, I am very fond of flowers,' returned the girl. 'And is that why you would put tables and chairs upon them, and have people walking over them with heavy boots?' 'It wouldn't hurt them, sir. They wouldn't crush and wither, if you please, sir. They would be the pictures of what was very pretty and pleasant, and I would fancy –' 'Ay, ay, ay! But you mustn't fancy,' cried

the gentleman, quite elated by coming so happily to his point. 'That's it! You are never to fancy.' '... Fact, fact, fact!' said the gentleman. And 'Fact, fact, fact!' repeated Thomas Gradgrind. 'You are to be in all things regulated and governed,' said the gentleman, 'by fact. We hope to have, before long, a board of fact, composed of commissioners of fact, who will force the people to be a people of fact, and of nothing but fact. You must discard the word Fancy altogether. You have nothing to do with it. You are not to have, in any object of use or ornament, what would be a contradiction in fact; You don't walk upon flowers in fact; you cannot be allowed to walk upon flowers in carpets. The Recovery College recognises hard times, it reaches out to not only to Sissy Juppe but also to Mr Gradgrind and asks, can fancy and fact meet? In a spirit of co-production, it says: my flowers are as strong as your boots, this carpet belongs to us all. Bring any object or ornament to dress it up and together we can sit and learn without crushing, without discarding, anyone or anything.

Laura

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## Winter Well-being day

On the 18th of January our community came together in DKIT for a day of wellness, laughter and education. There was something for everyone on the day with taster workshops, guest speakers and a chance for questions and answers with our facilitators. The day was organised by a small group of students from the Louth area and welcomed over 70 people through the doors. As our college continues to grow, we hope to see everyone at our summer wellbeing day that will take place in DCU later in the year.

Lianne

## UPDATES

### Upcoming Events

Summer Wellbeing Day – Invitations Open to our Summer Well-being Day on 14th June 2019.

### Upcoming Courses

We are delighted to announce our Spring schedule of DNNE Recovery College courses for the Nth Dublin, Louth and Meath Areas. This term we are again expanding our course output with a total of 14 Adult Ed programmes scheduled across 3 counties. Visit our website [www.recoverycollege.ie](http://www.recoverycollege.ie) for the details of the course.

### Student Forum

Students are always welcomed and encouraged to get involved in the decision making processes of the Recovery College. Join the student forum and shape how the college works!

### North Dublin Dialogue

Our Dublin North Dialogue, a community forum of open dialogue, is accessible to everybody and is held on a Monday evening, once a month on the All Hallows campus of DCU.

## Sweep The Floor

Since I can't do it any more  
 I wish that I could sweep the floor  
 Now that my legs ache with pain  
 I wish that I could walk the lane  
 Since my sight is on the wane  
 I wish that I could once again  
 See those places of which I've said  
 "How many times have I made  
 That same journey up and down  
 Those boring street in this boring town  
 Same houses, paths, the motorway.  
 And see the same things every day."

But since these things are yet to be  
 There is a choice that's left to me  
 To every day walk down the lane  
 And see no two days are the same  
 And in the town stop and see  
 What's good in what's ordinary  
 And while I'm able it's not a chore  
 So every day I'll sweep the floor.

Sean



*be good to yourself*

Hi Guys. My name is Paula and I am a student with the Recovery College. I'm a long time sufferer of mental health problems with the added bonus ...of living with a chronic pain condition. Staying fit for me is not a choice but a necessity, feeling low and constantly in pain takes a toll on my quality of life. Facing every day mostly on my own. I struggle to keep motivated.

While I was looking for extra support, I found a First steps to fitness group starting with the Recovery college, It's a group of people with an assortment of health difficulties, who want to be the best they can be. Its run in Sportslink under the encouragement of Dr Noel Mc Caffery. I was nervous committing to a course but we met up beforehand and I liked and felt comfortable with the other participants and facilitator, Alan, I did not need to feel anxious. There was a lovely friendly atmosphere, friends meeting up chatting,

laughing. Noel began the class explaining to all that we could work at our own pace. He reminded us how powerful exercise is for our body and mind, and off we went, The time flew by, I felt energised and tired by the end.

I really enjoyed the class but after a busy stressful week, I tried to convince myself that I hurt too much, I was tired, the cat was sick, I could just skip the class.....But the memory of how good I had felt, How I mattered to the others in the group, my commitment I made to myself and the group, I put all thoughts of hiding in bed aside and made it to class, It was even better the second week, It's so nice to exercise with others, have a moan, comparing aches, laugh and be proud of ourselves for making it. I hope this course is run again, however I will continue myself but would love to have friends come along too. Thanks to all involved.

x Paula

## Is it me or the meds?

The topic of medication use in treating mental or emotional distress is a contentious one with many people having to navigate the pros and cons of their effectiveness. Once prescribed, some practical issues and some of a more complex nature arise. In fact, it could be argued there are as many issues with medication as people taking them. Thankfully with a safe place such as Recovery College some common ground was found and explored. In this course familiar experiences such as stigma, disclosure, lethargy, aspects of self, diversity, compassion, and taking credit for successes were all encompassed and peppered by students own personal stories. Credit also to our facilitators, Mark and Helen, who steered a steady ship with utmost professionalism and empathy. This course definitely highlights the therapeutic maxim that the whole is bigger than the sum of its parts. I would recommend to it anyone with an interest in this area.

Cormac Daly



## Mindful Listening.

Nobody's listening.  
 To the dog's bark.  
 They want to get in, it's cold.  
 Nobody's listening.  
 The wind is howling  
 And the dogs are howling harder.  
 There's traffic in the distance.  
 The neighbours are a nuisance.  
 And nobody's listening to the dogs.  
 But I am.  
 I can hear at least three.  
 It saddens me.  
 Nobody's listening.  
 Rowena