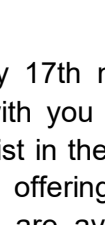


My newsletter is optimized to display on mobile devices, but if it does not display properly on your Windows PC or MAC, please see attached PDF or go to the newsletter download on my [website](#)



Training the Wild Atlantic Way

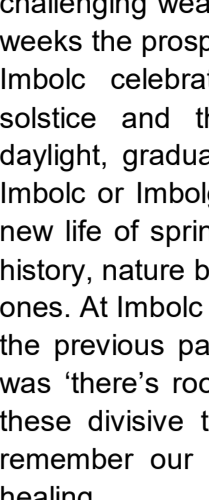
Newsletter: Spring 2025



Psychotherapy the Wild Atlantic Way

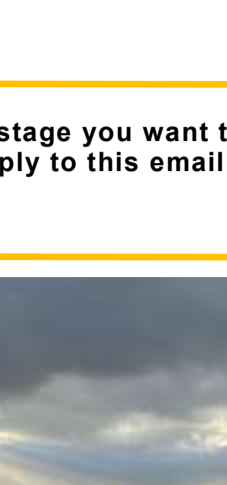
www.JoanneHanrahan.ie

Welcome Back to Imbolc

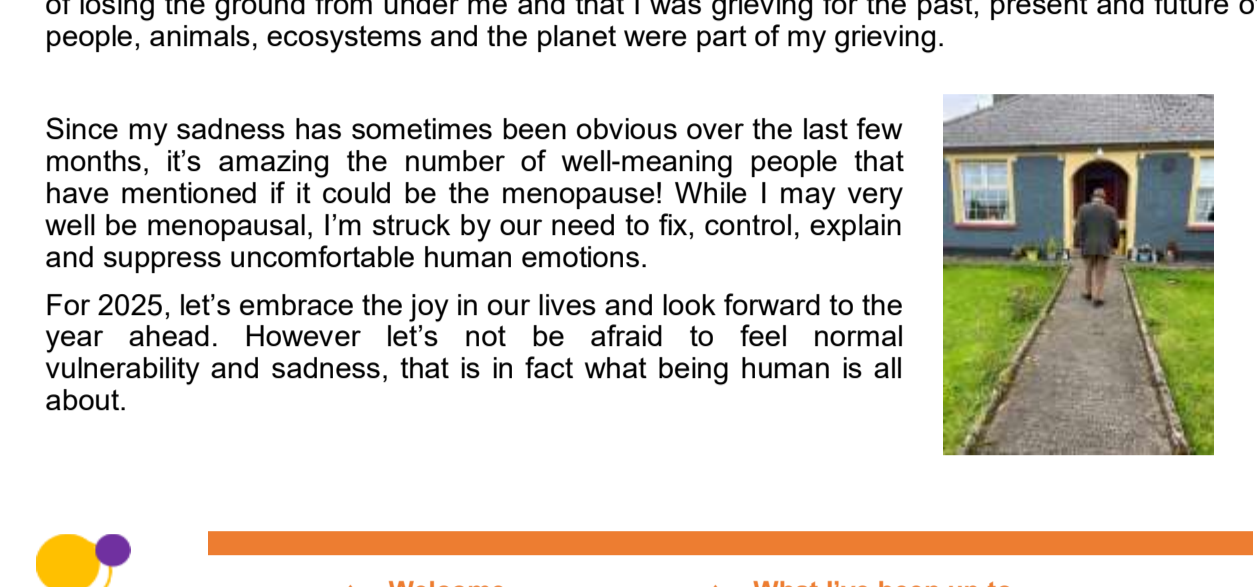


Welcome to my Imbolc Newsletter. This is my 17th newsletter and marks the start of my 5th year of engaging with you all this way. I welcome all those who have joined my mailing list in the last season. I hope you enjoy my nature and therapy themed offering and I remind new friends and old that previous newsletters are available on the home page of my website should you wish to review the resources mentioned in them.

February 1st is the Imbolc festival in the Celtic seasonal calendar marking the beginning of Spring. With the challenging weather we have had over the last couple of weeks the prospect of Spring will bring great joy to many. Imbolc celebrates the midpoint between the winter solstice and the spring equinox, the increasing in daylight, gradual increasing temperatures and new life. Imbolc or Imbolg means 'in the belly' of speaking to the new life of spring birthed by mother Earth. Often, in our history, nature based festivals were aligned with Christian ones. At Imbolc we also celebrate the life of St Brigid and the previous pagan goddess Brigid. An old Irish saying was 'there's room for everyone under Brigid's cloak'. In these divisive times, honouring Brigid may help us to remember our true humanity, inclusion, harmony, and healing.

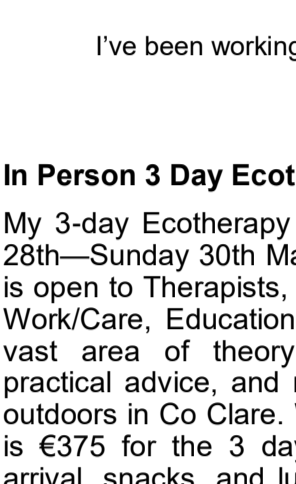


I'm hoping you find this information useful but if at any stage you want to take a break from receiving my newsletter, just [click here](#) or reply to this email with "Newsletter Opt Out".



Reflection

As we enter 2025, we often feel the need to leave behind negative emotions and focus on positivity. However it's important that normal human emotions are not suppressed.



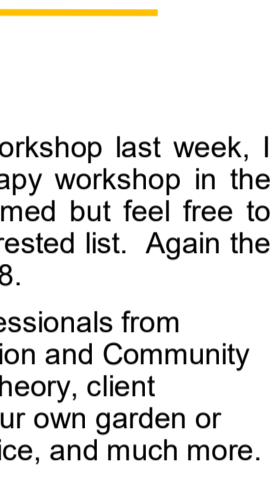
Loss has been with me over the last six months for many reasons. My most recent grieving has been about the death of my 93 year old uncle. A farmer from Mayo, Eddie was the elder of my family and a big part of my 'Earth Story' or roots in the land and nature. My childhood was enriched by visits to Eddie and time spent on his farm and I continued the tradition by bringing my children every summer.

The loss of Eddie, coupled with the loss of my ancestral place, the village where generations of my family and neighbours lived in community. With his passing, it felt like the memory of these people and place would be lost forever.

The day of the US election results I gave the go ahead for Eddie to be moved to hospice care. Both events happening simultaneously seemed to intensify the visceral experience. A sense of losing the ground from under me and that I was grieving for the past, present and future of people, animals, ecosystems and the planet were part of my grieving.

Since my sadness has sometimes been obvious over the last few months, it's amazing the number of well-meaning people that have mentioned if it could be the menopause! While I may very well be menopausal, I'm struck by our need to fix, control, explain and suppress uncomfortable human emotions.

For 2025, let's embrace the joy in our lives and look forward to the year ahead. However let's not be afraid to feel normal vulnerability and sadness, that is in fact what being human is all about.



In This Issue

- Welcome
- Upcoming CPD
- Books & Articles
- What I've been up to
- CPD I've attended

Upcoming CPD Offerings

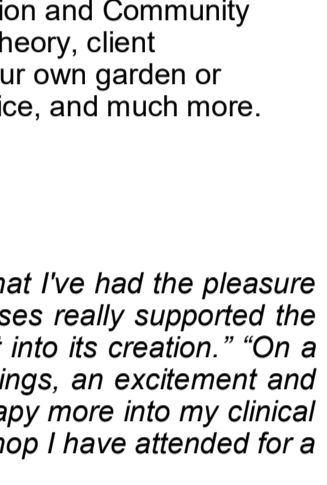
I've been working on some new ideas and on ways to reimagine my existing offerings.

In Person 3 Day Ecotherapy Workshop

My 3-day Ecotherapy in person workshop will be held on Friday 28th—Sunday 30th March 2025. This will count for 16.5hrs CPD it is open to Therapists, Other Professionals from Healthcare, Social Work/Care, Education and Community Support. We will cover a vast area of theory, client vignettes, experiential exercises, practical advice, and much more, all while being immersed in the outdoors in Co Clare. With a max number of 8 participants the fee is €375 for the 3 days and this includes tea/coffee scones on arrival, snacks, and lunch on the final day. Any past participants from my 3 day online version of this training will get a 20% discount if they would like to join in person.

Expression of interest form available here:

<https://forms.office.com/r/tX5vqNkiYA>



Online 3 Day Ecotherapy Workshop

Following a very successful online workshop last week, I aim to run my 3 day online Ecotherapy workshop in the Summer season. Dates to be confirmed but feel free to email me to put your name on an interested list. Again the max number of places on offer will be 8.

This is open to Therapists, Other Professionals from Healthcare, Social Work/Care, Education and Community Support. We will cover a vast area of theory, client vignettes, experiential exercises (in your own garden or close by outdoor space), practical advice, and much more.

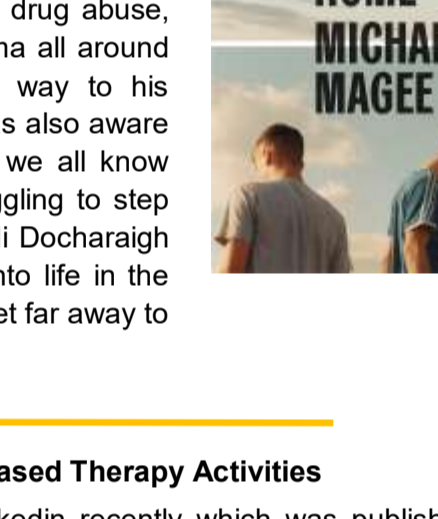
Here is some feedback from one of my previous online courses:

"I had a phenomenal time in the course. One of the best courses that I've had the pleasure of attending!" "This was a beautiful course. The experiential exercises really supported the integration of the material. It's clear that a lot of consideration went into its creation." "On a personal and professional level I came away with many new learnings, an excitement and practical, tangible steps in how I can introduce nature and eco therapy more into my clinical work and life. It has been the most enjoyable and worthwhile workshop I have attended for a long time and I would really recommend it."

Date for your Diary – Next Nature Network Café

My next free one hour online café will be held on an evening in March date to be confirmed. Now running these gatherings for over a year I have decided to start opening these cafes to all on my mailing list and no longer just to those who have done one of my workshops. Emails and zoom links will be sent with an open invitation to join us to chat and swap ideas. See more about my seventh and eighth cafes below in the 'What I've been up to'

sixth cafe below in the 'What I've been up to'



Interesting Books, Podcasts & Articles

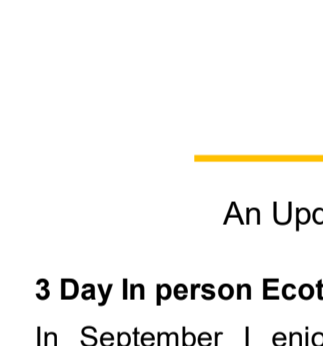
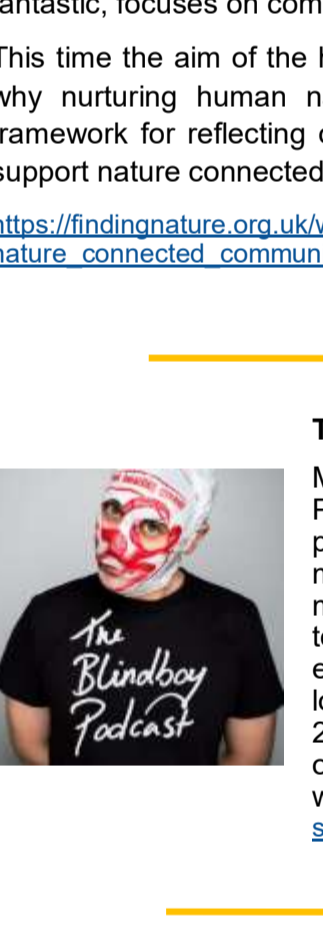
Here are a snippet of books and interesting resources that I've read or listened to over the last few months. I hope you enjoy them

The Ministry of the Future

At the end of 2024 I listened to 'The Ministry of the Future' by Kim Stanley Robinson on Audible. While this is a work of fiction it includes hard science and economics and looks at possible consequences of, and responses to climate change in the coming decades. In the novel the Ministry of the Future are a body formed under the Paris Agreement in 2025 and given the task of advocating for future generations of humans and more than human life.

The group is led by an Irish woman called Mary Murphy. As soon as she was introduced I wondered if she could be based on Mary Robinson and when I googled, it seems the character is indeed drawn from a composite of Mary Robinson and two other strong international female voices on climate issues.

The audio version, which is twenty hours long, is narrated by several people and accents from around the world are used which I felt added to the audio experience. Be prepared for a very harrowing first chapter describing an extreme heat event in India and some theoretical chapters which require concentration. On a whole though, I was captivated by Mary, the other main characters, the scientists, activists, bankers and even the illegal activities of the dark wings of organisations that finally brought hope and new ways of moving forward together. This book really left me with lots to think about and question in terms of our 'business as usual' ideology.



'Close to Home' by Michael Magee

This was the first book I read in 2025. It was an excellent read about a young man in his 20s who has returned home to Belfast after college in Liverpool. Set in 2013 Sean is trying to find his feet amidst Belfast's collapsing economy and in the complex shadow cast from the Troubles. From a psychological perspective this is really well written giving a real sense not only of Sean's thoughts and emotions but the subtleties of discomfort and awkwardness. With drug abuse, addiction, violence and the effects of generational trauma all around him I found myself truly rooting for Sean to find his way to his metaphorical home. While this story is set in Belfast I was also aware that Sean's character could align to many young lads we all know caught in a cycle of alcohol and cocaine use and struggling to step away. I'm also grateful that authors like Magee, Kerri Ni Docharaigh and Louise Kennedy have given me a deeper insight into life in the North, a world that in many ways, has always felt close yet far away to me.



A Beginners Guide to Nature-Based Therapy Activities

I came across an article on LinkedIn recently which was published in Sweden's Brainz Magazine. It was written and shared by Eco therapist Karina Jaskova. I find Karina's writing very clear and full of practical tips and I have included other pieces of her work here in previous newsletters. Personally, this time, I think the title of the article is a little misleading as you may consider it to be about the practice of eco or outdoor psychotherapy but it is actually about solo activities we can all engage in ourselves. This article gives loads of ideas of how you can not only allow nature to be your therapist but also reminds us about the importance of developing a reciprocal relationship with the rest of nature.

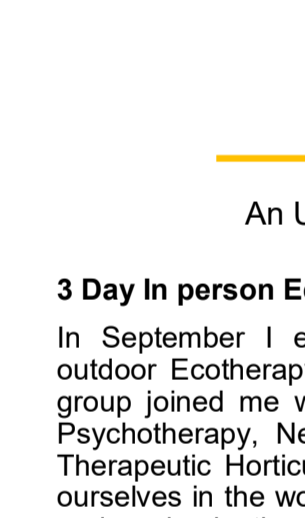
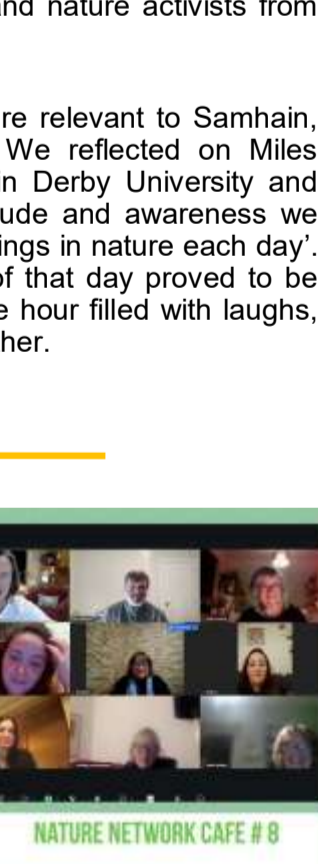
<https://www.brainzmagazine.com/post/a-beginner-s-guide-to-nature-based-therapy-activities>

Nature Connected Communities Handbook

If you have been reading my newsletters for a while you will know that I am a big fan of Miles Richardson and his teams work in the University of Derby. In the past they have produced great resources for individuals and organisations in the form of research summary handbooks. These handbooks are super at bringing to life the research in the area of nature connectedness. The latest offering by the team is fantastic, focuses on community and includes case studies.

This tuning the aim of the handbook is "to help communities understand why nurturing human nature relationships matters, and to offer a framework for reflecting on and designing the sorts of things that will support nature connectedness" in your community.

https://findingnature.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/nature_connected_communities1.pdf



The Blindboy Podcast – Dr Pat Bracken

My podcast pick for this newsletter is Blindboy's interview with Psychiatrist Pat Bracken. Pat is in many ways critical of his own profession and much of the medicalised model used in the approach to mental health. Pat is also a board member of Kyrie Farm which I have mentioned in this and other newsletters and I have met him and listened to him speak quite recently and found his breathe of knowledge, experience and insight fascinating. This interview is a total of 90 mins long. The whole podcast is 2 hours but the interview itself starts about 28 minutes in. Absolutely worth a listen to have a better understanding of the recovery oriented rights based philosophy we need to approach wellbeing. <https://open.spotify.com/episode/5bGielg2X30JSGsdUJkGM?si=F2ZLsLUTGifB4PNuTMNwq>

What I've Been Up To

An Update on some of my activities over the past 3 months,

3 Day In person Ecotherapy Workshop

In September I enjoyed a beautiful weekend facilitating my outdoor Ecotherapy Workshop in Co. Clare. A truly wonderful group joined me with expertise and experience in Psychology, Psychotherapy, Neuroscience, Research, Nutrition, Social and Therapeutic Horticulture and much more. We immersed ourselves in the woods for 3 days and came to my therapy room and garden by the sea for day 3.

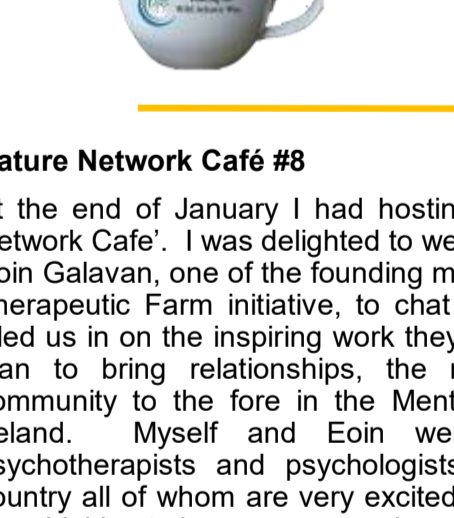
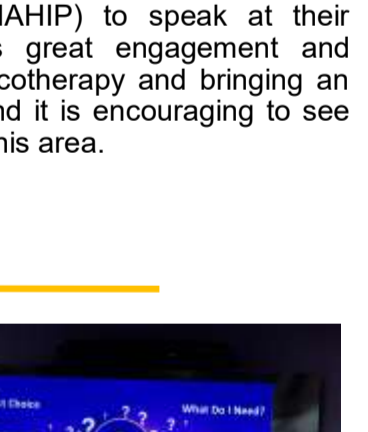
We gave ourselves permission to let go of all the usual business of the head and to experience ease, fun and emotional depth while being safely held by the group and the environment. We had lots of experiential learning and discussions about theory and practice of Ecotherapy and helping ourselves and those we work with connect deeply with all of nature.

Great feedback from the group included:

"I thoroughly enjoyed this immersion in the mystical landscape of county Clare. A very informative and relaxed learning experience with nature as our classroom"

"Overall I came away with what I wanted from the course, to feel and ground my own connection with nature before working with others. I liked the practical examples and felt I was in the company of a true expert in this area".

ECOTHERAPY WORKSHOP JANUARY 2025

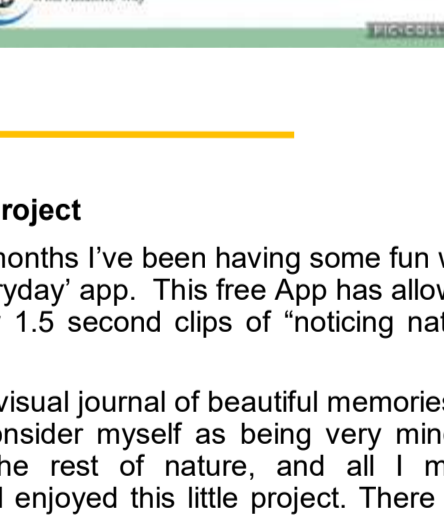


IAHIP Branch Ecotherapy Talk

11th November I was invited by the South Connaught branch of the Irish Association of Humanistic & Integrative Psychotherapy (IAHIP) to speak at their online meeting. There was great engagement and discussion on the topic of Ecotherapy and bringing an ecological lens to practice and it is encouraging to see such growing enthusiasm in this area.

Extreme Networks TY Programme

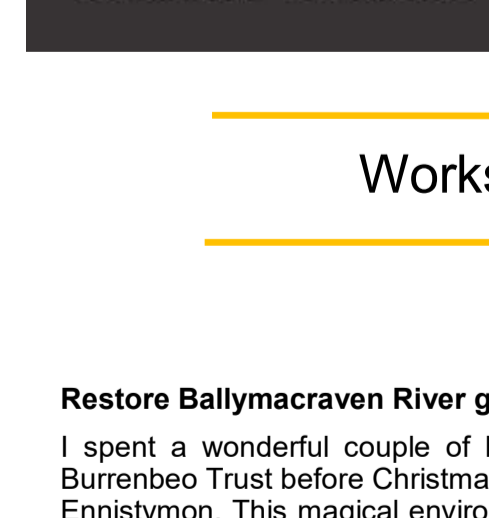
It's always great to be involved with the Extreme Networks Ireland biannual Transition Year Programme. This is a great bifunctional 2 day careers offering for students in the Midwest. With my Guidance Counselling hat on, I ran an interactive session on subject choice and career research to a great group of curious students in November. I was glad to be invited in to help the company continue their great work in giving TY students early insight into work life.



Nature Network Café #7

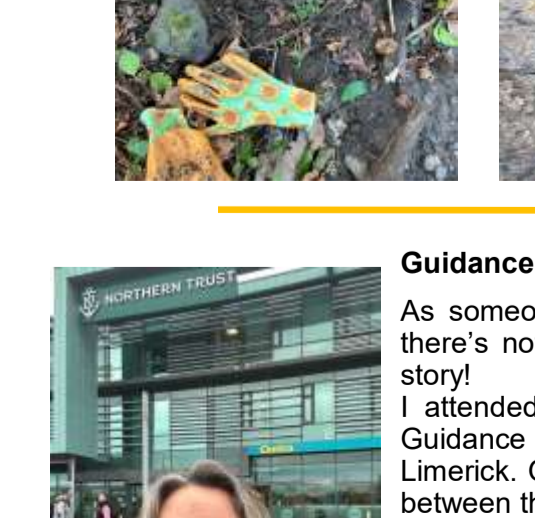
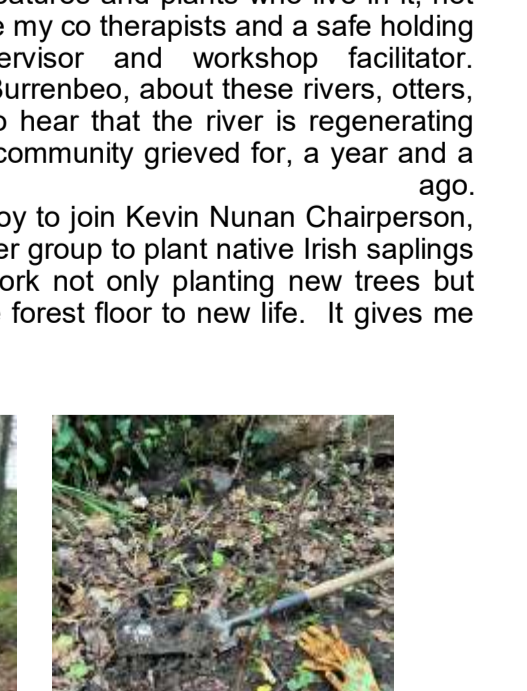
In November it was a year since I started hosting my 'Nature Network Cafe' For my seventh Cafe was joined by 12 therapists, researchers and nature activists from Ireland and the UK.

Our themes for the session were relevant to Samhain, Harvesting and Thanksgiving. We reflected on Miles Richardson, and teams, work in Derby University and thought about the simple gratitude and awareness we get from 'Noticing three good things in nature each day'. Sharing our own experiences of that day proved to be such a delight! A truly enjoyable hour filled with laughs, info and a chance to come together.



Nature Network Café #8

At the end of January I had hosting my eight 'Nature Network Cafe'. I was delighted to welcome Psychologist Eoin Galavan, one of the founding members of the Kyrie Therapeutic Farm initiative, to chat to the group. Eoin filled us in on the inspiring work they are doing, and the plan to bring relationships, the natural world, and community to the fore in the Mental Health space in Ireland. Myself and Eoin were joined by 10 psychotherapists and psychologists from around the country all of whom are very excited and eager to bring new thinking to how we approach emotional wellbeing.



Noticing Nature Project

Over the last few months I've been having some fun with the '1 Second Everyday' app. This free App has allowed me to record daily 1.5 second clips of 'noticing nature moments'.

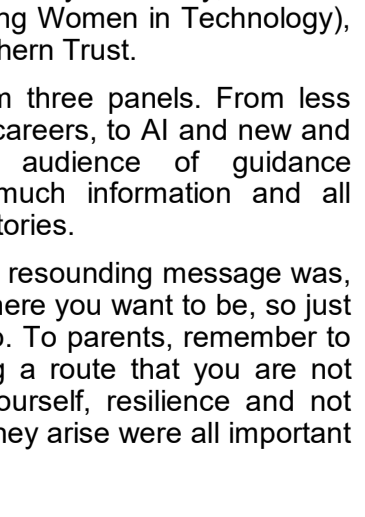
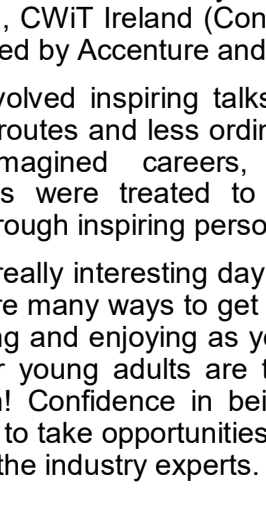
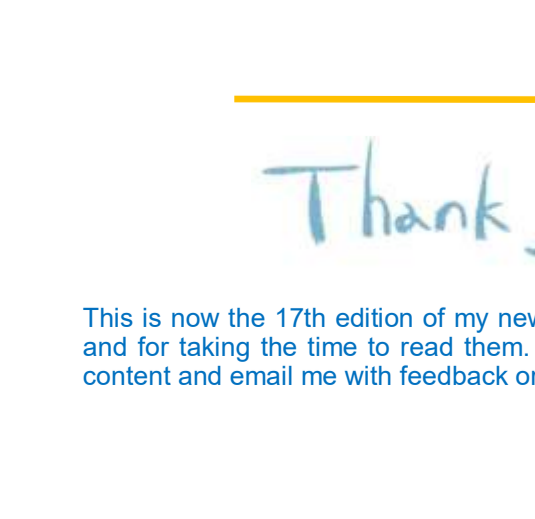
I now have a mini visual journal of beautiful memories of each month. I consider myself as being very mindful and present to the rest of nature, and all I meet outdoors, but I still enjoyed this little project. There are so many ways to slow down and notice. Sounds were often part of the experience!

Below are links to my November reel but follow me on my social media channels to see the others.

Check out my November 1 Second Everyday:

Linkedin: <https://shorturl.at/nkexl>

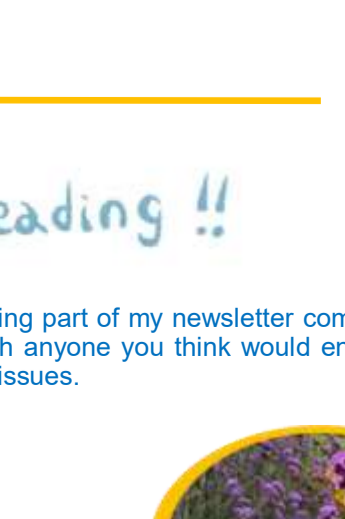
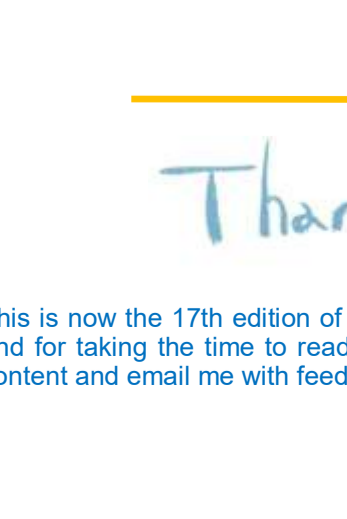
Instagram: <https://shorturl.at/Ffx9c>



Workshops I've Attended

Restore Ballymacraven River group

I spent a wonderful couple of hours with the Restore Ballymacraven River group and Burrenbeo Trust before Christmas. The Inagh and Ballymacraven rivers meet in the Glen in Ennistymon. This magical environment, and all the creatures and plants who live in it, not only support me in my own wellbeing but very often are my co therapists and a safe holding embrace for my work as eco therapist, supervisor and workshop facilitator. I learned so much from Ruairí Ó Conchúir invited by Burrenbeo, about these rivers, otters, heron, eels, salmon and much more! I was thrilled to hear that the river is regenerating itself after the massive fish kill I, and so many of my community grieved for, a year and a half ago. Once the walk and talk was over it brought me such joy to join Kevin Nunan Chairperson, Ruairí and others from the Restore Ballymacraven River group to plant native Irish saplings on the river bank. This group have done fabulous work not only planting new trees but cutting out invasive Cherry Laurel and opening up the forest floor to new life. It gives me such hope to experience community at its best.



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Thank you for reading !!

This is now the 17th edition of my newsletter. Thanks for being part of my newsletter community and for taking the time to read them. Feel free to share with anyone you think would enjoy the content and email me with feedback or suggestions for future issues.