

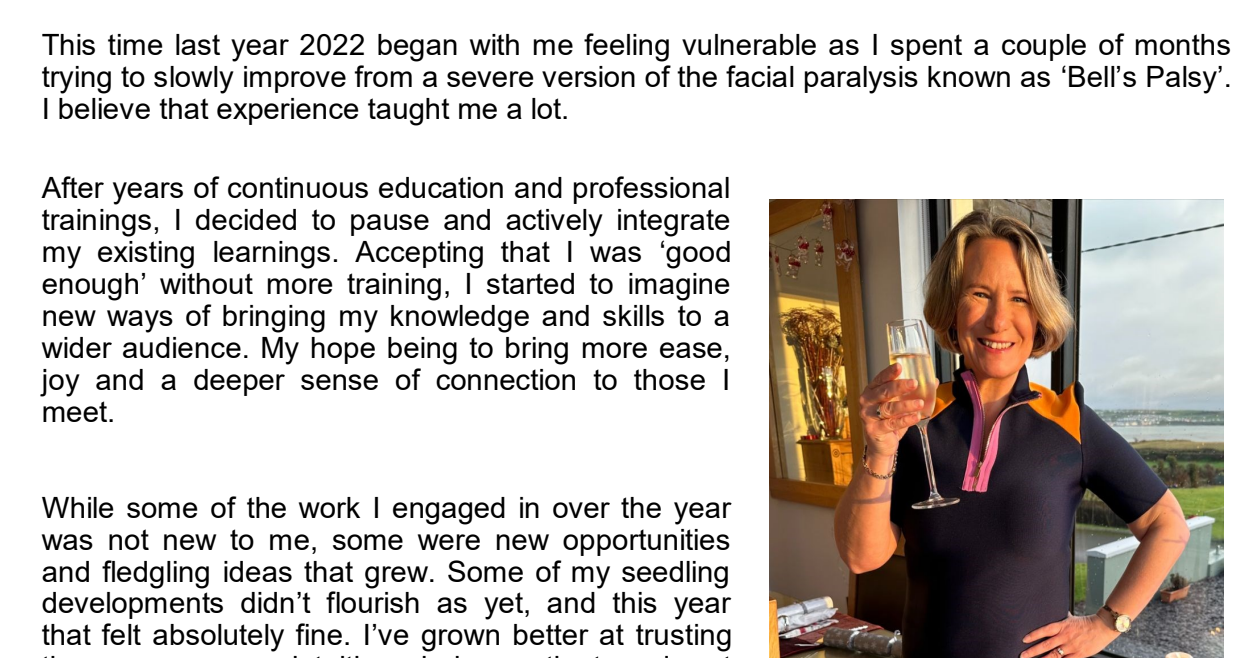
## Welcome Back to Imbolc!



### Welcome

February 1<sup>st</sup> is the Imbolc festival in the Celtic seasonal calendar and also we celebrate the life of St Brigid. It marks the beginning of Spring and 'new beginnings'. It is now 2 years since I began this newsletter. My mailing list has grown significantly over the last 2 years and I'd particularly like to welcome all of you who are receiving this newsletter for the first time today. It is lovely to have you in my network and I hope you enjoy my seasonal updates on all things nature and therapy! As always, feel free to drop me a line with any thoughts, comments, or suggestions.

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".



### In This Issue

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- ♦ Upcoming CPD
- ♦ Unique Supervision Opportunity
- ♦ Nature Networking Cafe
- ♦ Books, Podcasts & Articles
- ♦ What I've been up to
- ♦ Blue Therapy
- ♦ Recent Training Courses

### Reflection

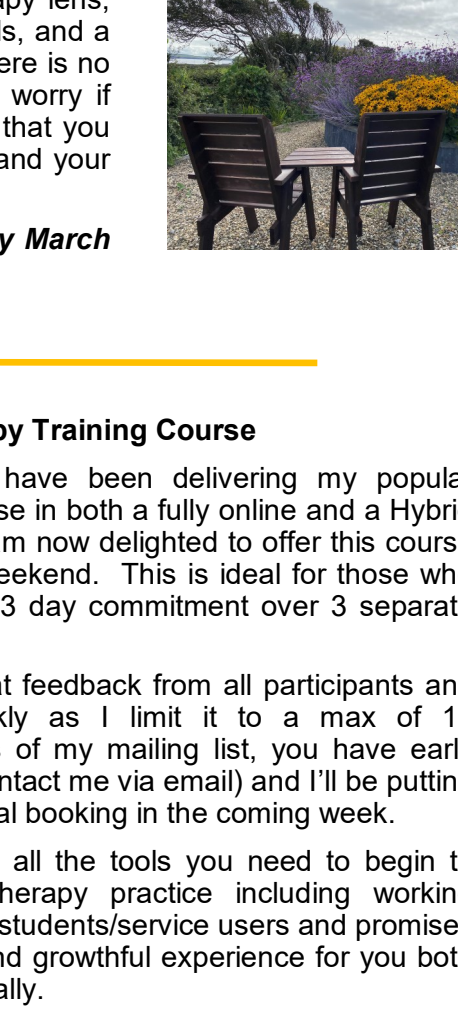
Starting a new calendar year and the lead up to Spring and new beginnings is always a time of reflection for me. This year that reflection feels very embodied and present to me.

This time last year 2022 began with me feeling vulnerable as I spent a couple of months trying to slowly improve from a severe version of the facial paralysis known as 'Bell's Palsy'. I believe that experience taught me a lot.

After years of continuous education and professional trainings, I decided to pause and actively integrate my existing learnings. Accepting that I was 'good enough' without more training, I started to imagine new ways of bringing my knowledge and skills to a wider audience. My hope being to bring more ease, joy and a deeper sense of connection to those I meet.

While some of the work I engaged in over the year was not new to me, some were new opportunities and fledgling ideas that grew. Some of my seedling developments didn't flourish as yet, and this year that felt absolutely fine. I've grown better at trusting the process, my intuition, being patient and not always having to have a plan which works out!

To all of you here I've met or engaged with over the past year, I thank you for your encouragement and support. For 2023 my wish for you, and myself, is the gift of noticing more moments of joy, turning up for yourself and accepting uncertainty and imperfection



## Upcoming CPD & Supervision Offerings

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

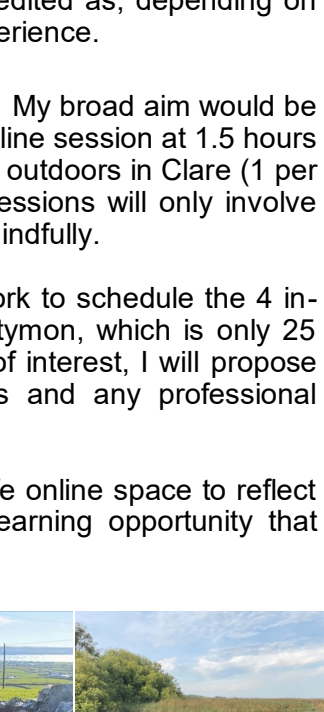
### Past Participants – This is for you!

Calling all past past participants from my '3 Day Online Core Ecotherapy/Outdoor Psychotherapy' course and my '4 day Hybrid 'Home & Away' Course'. This new 1 day in-person event has been designed exclusively for you and will not be advertised anywhere, other than directly to past participants via this mailing list.

I have been offering these 15hr and 20hr CPD courses for over 2 years now, with the first group of graduates completing the CPD in Nov 2020. The courses have now been delivered to nine groups. Since I am opening this new offering only to this, relatively small cohort I do not expect to be running it very frequently so please do sign up and enjoy this opportunity now.

The 'Embedding your Learning' day will be held in-person outdoors in Ennistymon Co. Clare (just 25 mins from the Ennis motorway exit). It has been designed to help you revisit your learnings, relook at your practice through and ecotherapy lens, engage in peer work, network with likeminded individuals, and a enjoy restorative day immersed in the natural world. There is no prerequisite to have brought clients outdoors, so don't worry if you haven't taken that step. As you know my hope is that you develop and ecological mind that will nurture both you and your clients.

**This CPD will be run from 10am to 5pm on Saturday March 25<sup>th</sup> and will cost €120.**



### New Weekend Ecotherapy Training Course

As mentioned above, I have been delivering my popular Ecotherapy Training Course in both a fully online and a Hybrid Home & Away format. I am now delighted to offer this course in-person over a single weekend. This is ideal for those who find it difficult to make a 3 day commitment over 3 separate weekends.

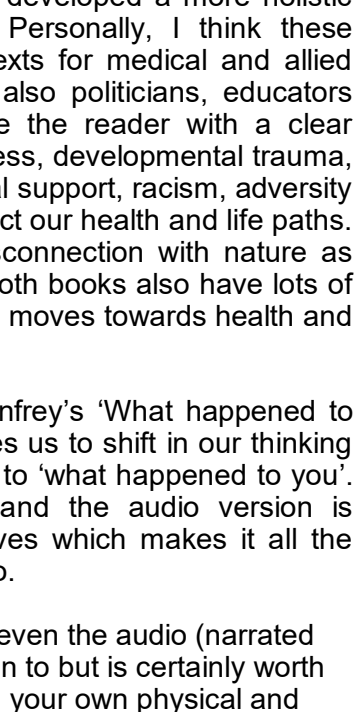
This course has had great feedback from all participants and generally sells out quickly as I limit it to a max of 10 participants. As members of my mailing list, you have early access to booking (just contact me via email) and I'll be putting it on my website for general booking in the coming week.

This course will give you all the tools you need to begin to develop your own Ecotherapy practice including working outdoors with your clients/students/service users and promises to be a truly nourishing and growthful experience for you both personally and professionally.

Based in The Glen in the grounds of the Falls Hotel in Ennistymon the CPD workshop will run from Friday morning May 19<sup>th</sup> to Sunday afternoon May 21<sup>st</sup> – exact times and details to follow. Cost will be €300

### What Do You Think?

Finally, as I continue to imagine ways of further developing Ecotherapy in Ireland, I am dreaming up another big idea. I'm thinking of facilitating an online 'Nature Networking Cafe' where I would host a 1 hour session every ~6-8 weeks. My idea is that I would invite a guest speaker each time to speak about their work embracing nature and that we would then have breakout rooms, opportunities for networking, and sharing of ideas. I would like this to be a 'Giving Back To Nature' event, so I would purpose charging a nominal fee (~€5) and that this would be fully donated to a nature based charity to support our environment. As always I really would appreciate any feedback or thoughts on this.



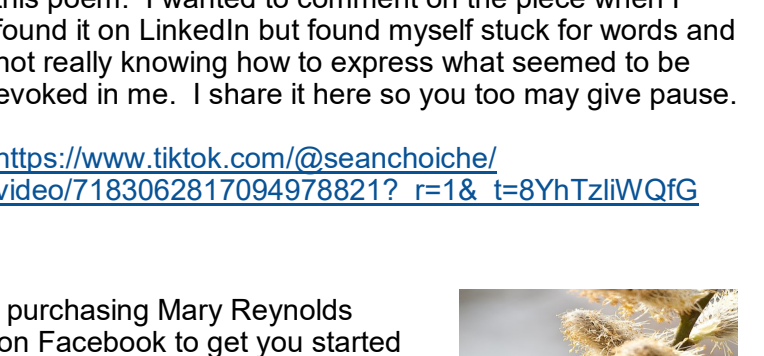
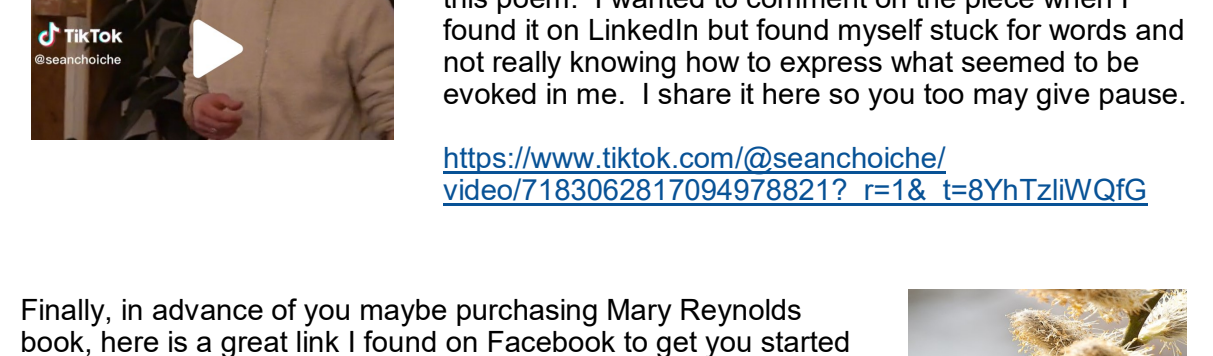
### Unique Group Supervision Opportunity - Express Your Interest

I am now accepting expressions of interest for my hybrid small group supervision. While the delivery of this supervision will be creative and will integrate nature, you are **not required to have any experience of working outdoors with your clients**. Please express your interest whether you are accredited or not yet accredited as, depending on demand, I may be able to group people based on their level of experience.

The group will contract to work together for the period of one year. My broad aim would be 10 monthly sessions (excluding July & Aug). There would be 6 online sessions at 1.5 hours each, and then there will be four in-person 2.5 hour sessions held outdoors in Clare (1 per season). While you will need to be physically mobile, outdoor sessions will only involve sitting, standing and engaging with the body in the environment mindfully.

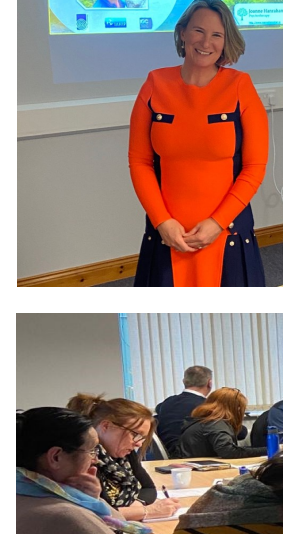
While some may be concerned about the travel element, I will work to schedule the 4 in-person sessions at times that allow for travel to and from Ennistymon, which is only 25 mins from the Motorway exit at Ennis. Once I have expressions of interest, I will propose dates and allow potential participants to consider times, dates and any professional boundary issues and then will move ahead with 4 participants.

This is a unique Supervision opportunity where we will build a safe online space to reflect on your practice, but also integrate an experiential in-person learning opportunity that invites place, movement and body into the reflective process.



## 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



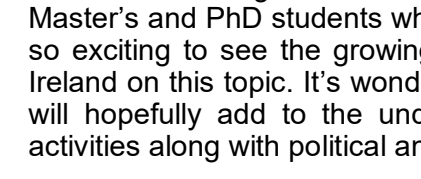
Over the last few months I have listened to audio versions of both 'What Happened to You? Conversations on trauma, resilience and healing' by Dr Bruce Perry and Oprah Winfrey and 'The Myth of Normal: Trauma, Illness & Healing' by Dr Gabor Mate.

I have been a fan of both Perry and Mate for a number of years now. Both coming from mainstream medical training initially, through their clinical practices' and ongoing research in neuroscience and physiology, have developed a more holistic and comprehensive view of health. Personally, I think these authors should not only be standard texts for medical and allied health students and professionals but also politicians, educators and social scientists. The books leave the reader with a clear understanding of how, high levels of stress, developmental trauma, lack of emotional holding, lack of societal support, racism, adversity or lack of connection to community impact our health and life paths. Interestingly both also highlight our disconnection with nature as being an integral part of our malaise. Both books also have lots of examples of real life stories and peoples moves towards health and healing.

I've been recommending Perry and Winfrey's 'What happened to you' to many of my clients. It encourages us to shift in our thinking from wondering 'what's wrong with you' to 'what happened to you'. It's written in a conversational style and the audio version is narrated by Bruce and Oprah themselves which makes it all the more enjoyable and very easy to listen to.

Mate's book is a much heavier tome and even the audio (narrated by his son Daniel) takes 18 hours to listen to but is certainly worth it. It will give you great insight to explore your own physical and psychological health and healing.

### The Nature Connection Handbook

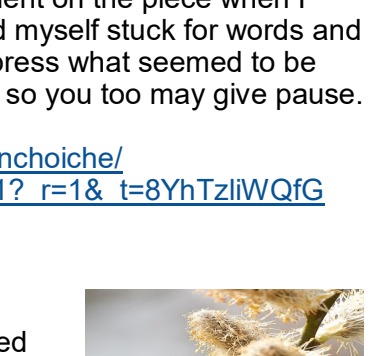


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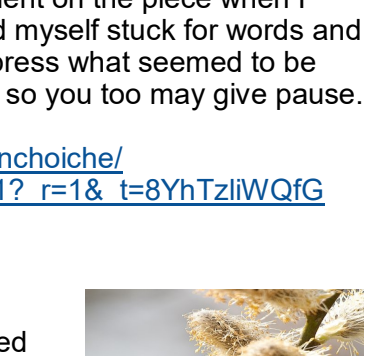


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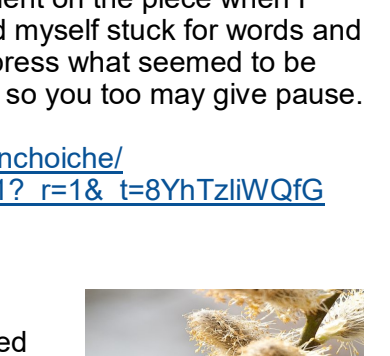


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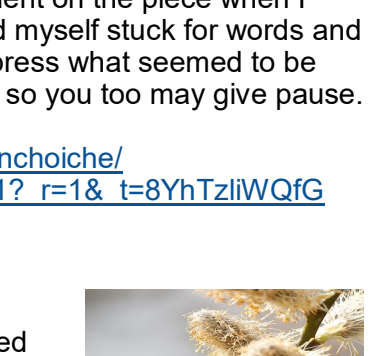


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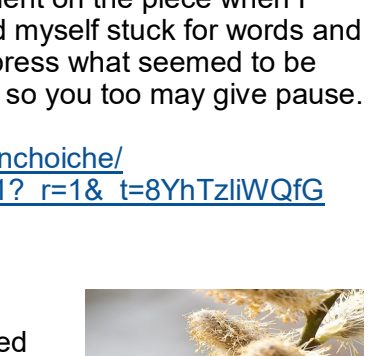


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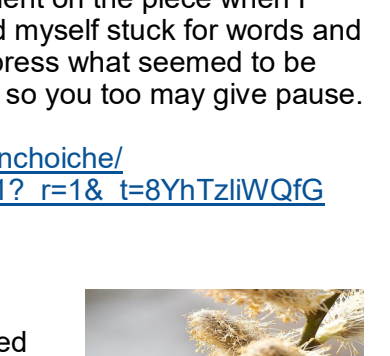


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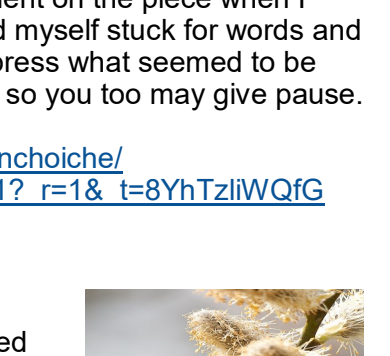


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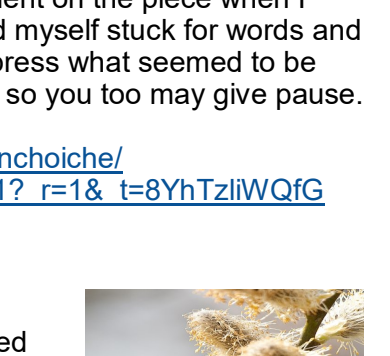


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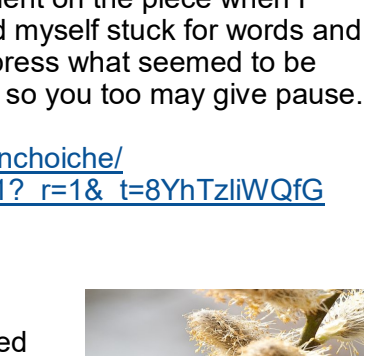


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Living by the sea, knowing lots of surfers and having a big interest, obviously, in the power of nature to heal I was drawn to Eastey's book. Easkey is a Donegal born big wave surfer and marine social scientist and her book title is 'Saltwater in the Blood - Surfing, Natural Cycles and the Sea's Power to Heal'. While the book is an account of Easkey's life and travels thus far, it is also beautifully descriptive of her embodied and psychological experience of being part of the sea and environment. Deeply reflective this book is proving to be a fascinating read for me, and the therapists amongst you may be interested to hear that Easkey's mother is also Psychotherapist.

'We are the ARK' is a beautifully illustrated hardback, big font easy read book by 'reformed internationally acclaimed landscape gardener', Mary Reynolds. ARK standing for Acts of Restorative Kindness is a movement and message for which Mary is now getting recognition around the world. As Mary became increasing aware of and uncomfortable with the biodiversity crisis she made it a mission to remind us that 'we are here to be of service to the Earth and all her creatures, we are here to be guardians not gardeners' The hope of ARK is to encourage all of us who own some piece of garden/land or who have authority to work with public spaces to give some, ideally, she suggests, half of our land back to nature. The book gives great ideas on how to create your ARK and support a rich ecosystem. A gorgeous book to keep picking up and browsing for inspiration.

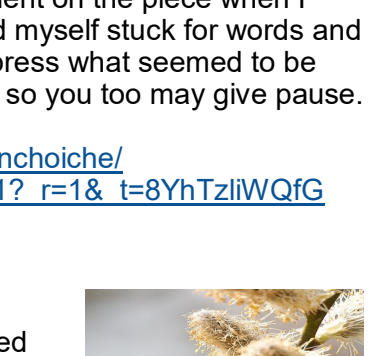


I read both a journal article, and a summary blog on a recent meta-analysis on the importance of, and how to increase, our nature connectedness. The research was completed by University of Derby professor Miles Richardson and others. I was subsequently delighted to come across the super resource 'The Nature Connection Handbook', which is a really well presented and user friendly version for the research findings. I hope you benefit from it.

<https://findingnatureblog.files.wordpress.com/2022/04/the-nature-connection-handbook.pdf>

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