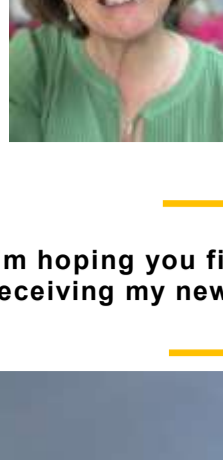


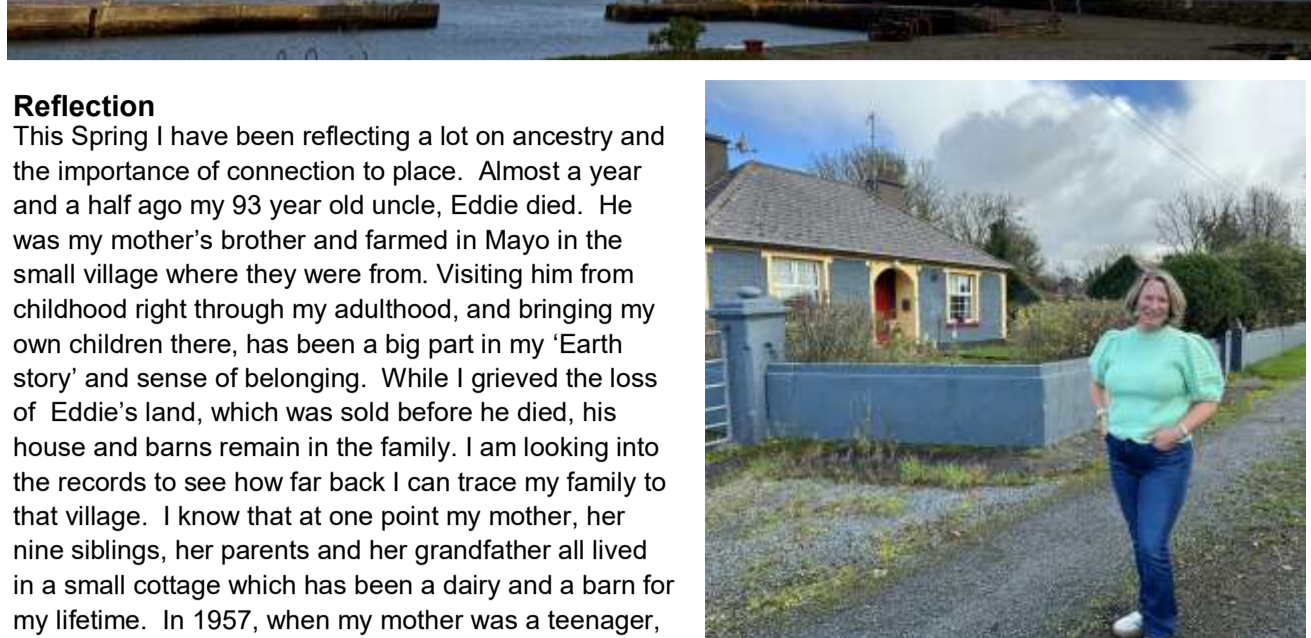
Welcome Back to Bealtaine



May 1st marks the arrival of the Summer season and the Celtic festival of Bealtaine. It marks the half way point between the Spring Equinox and the Summer Solstice. With fresh colour in the landscape, bird song and the buzz of insects, we delight in all that the summer promises. In the last week or so I have been thrilled to see some House Martins and Swallows or Swifts arriving back to my neighbourhood after their very long journey from Africa. As I write I am still awaiting the first Cuckoo call.

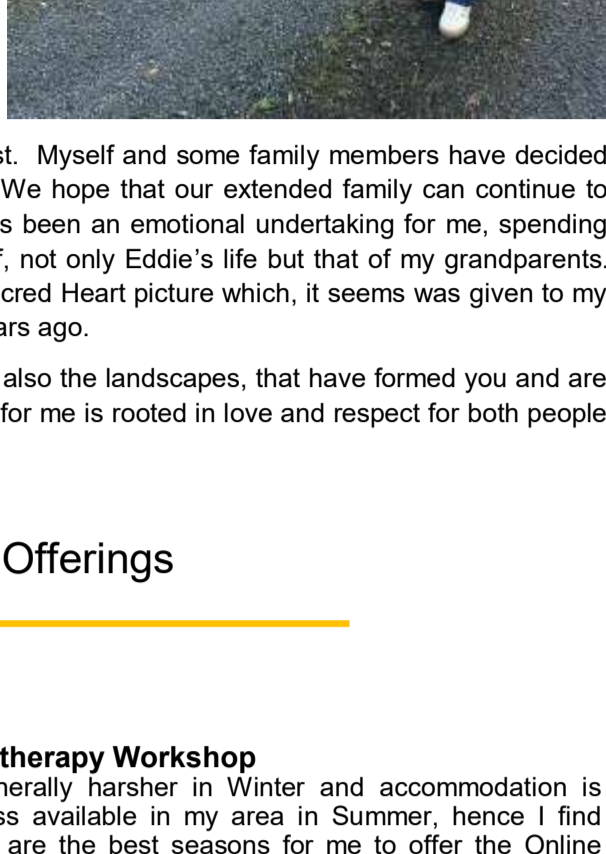
Welcome to all of you who have been engaging with me over the last number of years and to those of you who are new to this newsletter. I hope you enjoy a browse through its contents and I wish you renewal and plenty of joy this season!

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

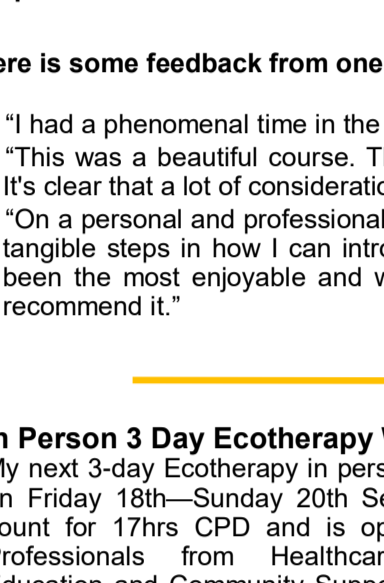
This Spring I have been reflecting a lot on ancestry and the importance of connection to place. Almost a year and a half ago my 93 year old uncle, Eddie died. He was my mother's brother and farmed in Mayo in the small village where they were from. Visiting him from childhood right through my adulthood, and bringing my own children there, has been a big part in my 'Earth story' and sense of belonging. While I grieved the loss of Eddie's land, which was sold before he died, his house and barns remain in the family. I am looking into the records to see how far back I can trace my family to that village. I know that at one point my mother, her nine siblings, her parents and her grandfather all lived in a small cottage which has been a dairy and a barn for my lifetime. In 1957, when my mother was a teenager, they moved into a new house next door. This, I have always known as Eddie's house and has stood empty since he died.



This Spring, for me, has been all about honouring the past. Myself and some family members have decided that Eddie's house needs to be cared for and renewed. We hope that our extended family can continue to visit and find peace, and rest on this piece of land. It has been an emotional undertaking for me, spending weekends emptying out the house and salvaging parts of, not only Eddie's life but that of my grandparents. One such treasure was a written note on the back of a Sacred Heart picture which, it seems was given to my grandmother on her wedding day in 1929 – almost 100 years ago.

I encourage you to, look into the history of your family but also the landscapes, that have formed you and are fundamental to your connection to the Earth. This project, for me is rooted in love and respect for both people and place.

Upcoming CPD Offerings



Online 3 Day Ecotherapy Workshop

The weather is generally harsher in Winter and accommodation is more costly and less available in my area in Summer, hence I find winter and summer are the best seasons for me to offer the Online version of my Ecotherapy Workshop. In keeping with that logic the next dates for my 3 day Online workshop will be Friday to Sunday June 19th – 21st from 8.30am to 2.30pm per day. 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 who are interested in working more with the natural world as they support others. 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. The cost of the workshop will be 400 euros. Your first step to secure your place is to fill in the expression of interest form here:

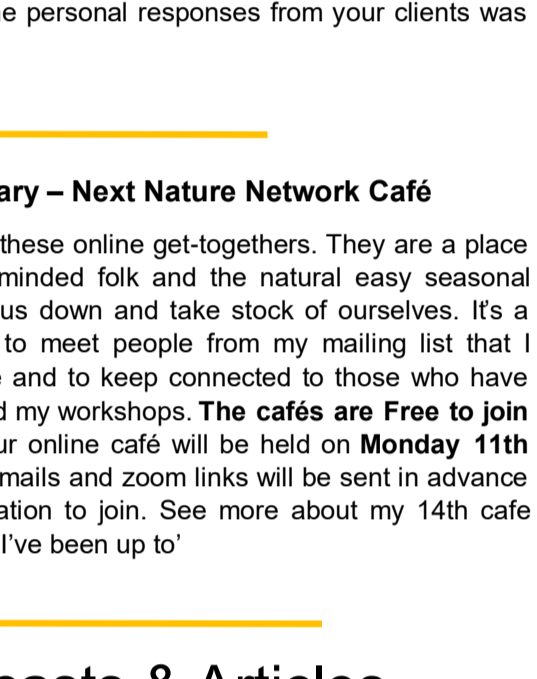
Express an interest via this form: [Expression of Interest for Summer/Autumn Ecotherapy Workshops – Fill in](#)

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."

In Person 3 Day Ecotherapy Workshop

My next 3-day Ecotherapy in person workshop will be held on Friday 18th—Sunday 20th September 2026. This will count for 17hrs CPD and is open to Therapists, Other Professionals from Healthcare, Social Work/Care, Education and Community Support. Again 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 €400 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.



Express an interest via this form: [Expression of Interest for Summer/Autumn Ecotherapy Workshops – Fill in form](#)

Here's some feedback from the last in person workshop:

- 'Thank you for a unique training experience. You covered all areas, it was important to be the client again for me experiencing the process and to be reminded of how the natural environment can mirror what's happening for one at an unconscious level and at the same time supporting us by providing natural pauses and anchors for our nervous systems. Amazing'
- 'I really appreciated being in your therapy space on day 3 and seeing how you bring the natural environment into the room and use it with clients. Hearing the personal responses from your clients was very impactful.'

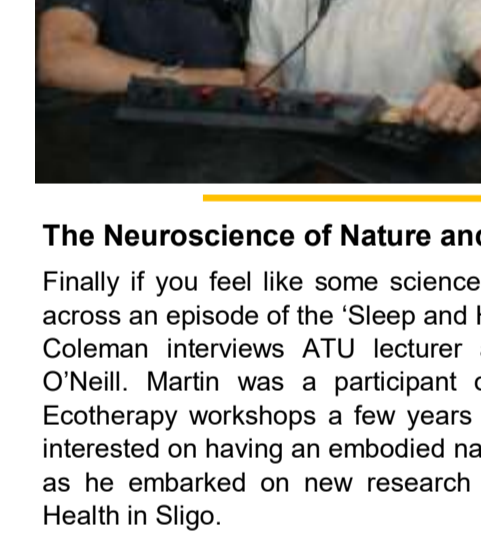


Date for your Diary – Next Nature Network Café

I'm really enjoying these online get-togethers. They are a place to meet other likeminded folk and the natural easy seasonal themes help slow us down and take stock of ourselves. It's a great way for me to meet people from my mailing list that I haven't met before and to keep connected to those who have previously attended my workshops. **The cafés are Free to join** and my next 1 hour online café will be held on **Monday 11th May at 7.30pm**. Emails and zoom links will be sent in advance with an open invitation to join. See more about my 14th café 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 Stubborn Light of Things – A nature diary' by Melissa Harrison

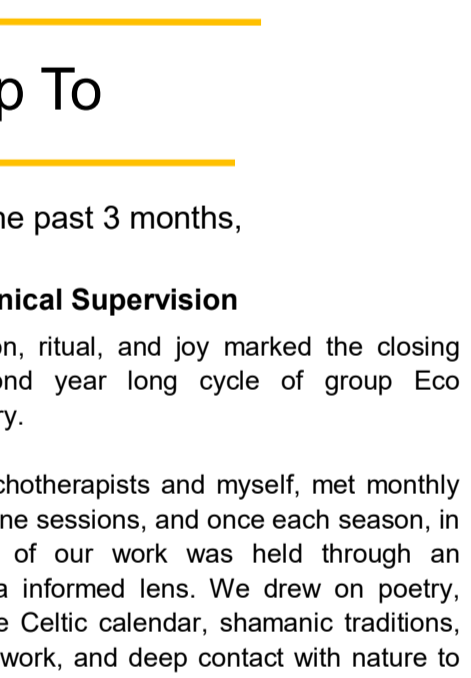
On a recent road trip I chose 'The Stubborn Light of things – A nature diary' to listen to on Audible, and it did not disappoint. Longlisted for the 2021 Wainwright Prize for UK Nature Writing the book is a collection of diary style essays written (and narrated) by Melissa Harrison for her Nature Notebook column in The Times. Entries follow her natural observations living in both the city of London and the Suffolk countryside, between 2014 and 2020.

Melissa's beautiful descriptive prose brings the reader, or in my case listener, almost into a mindful meditation filled with birds, bugs, animals, trees and plants. While much of the book feels like an imaginative wonderland, Melissa also reflects on climate change issues, biodiversity loss and practical concerns such as mowing of road verges or lawns in full wild bloom, routine non-essential hedge cutting and use of weed killers.

I'd recommend this as an easy dip in and out book to slow you down, bring you joy and inspire you to be more present and attentive to the rest of nature. Personally I don't listen to podcasts, music or books when I'm out walking, but if you do please don't listen to this book while out and about it will totally defeat the purpose! Instead, pay attention to the natural world all around you and save Melissa's fabulous descriptions for an indoor or car experience!

The Blindboy Podcast – Climate action for Spring with Collie Ennis

In his latest podcast Blindboy, in his usual very unique style, interviewed Collie Ennis, who is the Trinity College Biodiversity Officer. This is a really interesting chat. Any of you who listen to Blindboy know that you can expect all sorts of diversions, which I find amusing. The interview itself starts about 14 minutes in after we hear Blindboys experience with his new weighted blanket and an ad break. Collie's knowledge is remarkable and this is a perfect interview for this time of year as new life begins and we try to consider how we can help the rest of nature.



[The Blindboy Podcast on Spotify: Collie Ennis](#)



Post Wild Podcast – Mary Reynolds Acts of Restorative Kindness

Also ideal for Bealtaine is a Mary Reynolds interview. Mary, bestselling author and inspiring voice in the rewilding movement not only in Ireland but globally, was interviewed recently on the Post Wild podcast. I have reviewed Mary's beautiful book "We Are the ARK: Returning Our Gardens to Their True Nature Through Acts of Restorative Kindness" on a previous newsletter. Mary always challenges how we think and her passion, in my view, truly ignites a call to action.

[Post Wild Podcast - Mary Reynolds](#)

The Neuroscience of Nature and our Health: Martin O'Neill

Finally if you feel like some science and research, I recently came across an episode of the 'Sleep and Health' podcast where host Tom Coleman interviews ATU lecturer and Nature researcher Martin O'Neill. Martin is a participant on one of my 3 day outdoor Ecotherapy workshops a few years ago. At the time he was really interested on having an embodied nature based learning experience, as he embarked on new research into Nature and Psychological Health in Sligo.

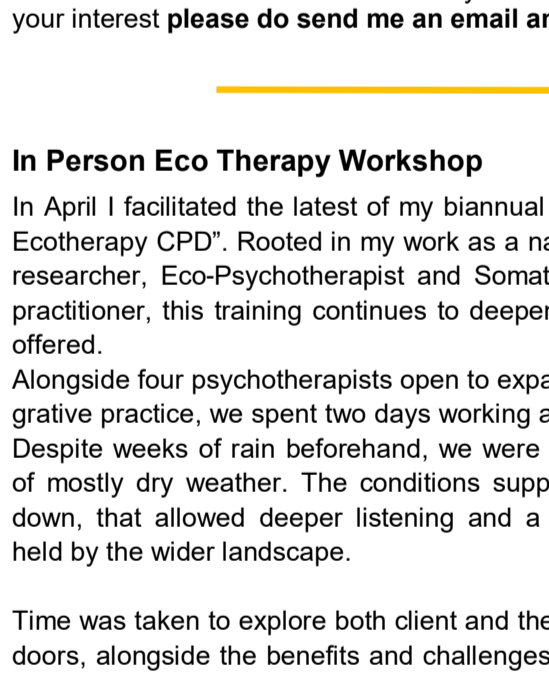


[Sleep & Health Podcast - Martin O'Neill](#)

While the first half of this podcast looks at various aspects of scientific research into human behaviour, the second half specifically focus on our relationship with Nature. Martin introduces much of the Nature and health research and discusses the emerging science behind forest bathing, sensory immersion, and nature-based interventions.

What I've Been Up To

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



Not So Clinical, Clinical Supervision

Reciprocity, connection, ritual, and joy marked the closing session of my second year long cycle of group Eco Supervision in February.

The group, three psychotherapists and myself, met monthly in a hybrid format: online sessions, and once each season, in person outdoors. All of our work was held through an ecological and trauma informed lens. We drew on poetry, natural symbolism, the Celtic calendar, shamanic traditions, movement, sand tray work, and deep contact with nature to regulate, slow down, and support reflective practice.

Our final gathering was about giving back: to one another, and to the more than human world that had held and taught us throughout the process.

The river and the glen where we explored therapeutic practice supported us to embody experience, make meaning, express emotion, and turn inwards while also looking outwards. Together, the group and the environment created the safety needed to work at real depth. We marked this with reflection, ceremony, and by planting trees as an expression of gratitude.

I have not set the date as to when my next supervision group of this style will commence, but if this peaks your interest please do send me an email and you can learn more and potentially join in next time.

In Person Eco Therapy Workshop

In April I facilitated the latest of my biannual "3-Day Outdoor Ecotherapy CPD". Rooted in my work as a nature and health researcher, Eco-Psychotherapist and Somatic Experiencing practitioner, this training continues to deepen each time it is offered.



Alongside four psychotherapists open to expanding their integrative practice, we spent two days working among the trees. Despite weeks of rain beforehand, we were gifted a window of mostly dry weather. The conditions supported a slowing down, that allowed deeper listening and a sense of being held by the wider landscape.

Time was taken to explore both client and therapist roles outdoors, alongside the benefits and challenges of stepping beyond the traditional therapy room.

On day three we moved to my therapy room and garden, where embodied experiences were reflected on and integrated consciously, both personally and professionally.

Post workshop feedback included:
 "Fantastic experience; the pace worked well for me - I felt I had enough time to 'deepen into' each of the exercises and there was a good balance between exercises, sharing and education ... I will highly recommend the training to colleagues and peers."
 "It was amazing, I felt so lucky to attend and experience it. Inspiring to hear about this work and the stories of real clients were so helpful. Filled with hope after."

Whether you work indoors, online, or outdoors as a helping professional, I believe it has never been more important to remember our place within the wider ecosystem and to allow that relationship to inform our work.



Nature Network Café #14

My March Nature Network Café featured practitioners with backgrounds in social therapeutic horticulture, horticulture, ecology, equine learning, and a deep affection for the more-than-human world. Our conversations wandered from weaving willow and hazel, to growing from seed, painted flowers, horse strolling, pet grief, stream-side reflecting, and canal-bank skimming.



We also spoke about those moments in practice when we must be brave enough to stand at our edge, sometimes bravely feeling the discomfort of 'winging it' in order to spread a wider view of health and wellbeing, as part of, not separate from, the larger ecosystem.

There were so many small synchronicities in the group, which is a good reminder that people working with an ecological lens often find themselves thinking along similar lines, even when meeting for the very first time. Those who joined helped create a warm and thoughtful space.

CPD/Events I've Attended

An Update on some of the workshops and events I've attended

Somatic Experiencing CPD

In February I returned to Ballycastle in County Antrim, where between 2018 and 2021, I trained as a Somatic Experiencing Practitioner. SE is a body oriented approach to healing trauma and has become a fundamental lens through which I view both my personal wellbeing and my professional practice. It was wonderful to be back in Ballycastle for an Advanced CPD with our inspiring Canadian tutor and SE International faculty member Linda Stelte. Linda's workshop on "Intentional Touch as a way of supporting repair of early trauma" added greatly to my knowledge on therapeutic touch and the importance of somatic trust. It was also fantastic to connect in again with the SE community in Ireland and meet up with many of my former classmates.



Thank you for reading !!

