



## The 'Seanchaí' Project:

### *The Storytelling History of the Island of Ireland Continues*

Discussions on 'The Experience of Being Irish' in 2022

Oct 1<sup>st</sup>, Oct 29<sup>th</sup> and Nov 26<sup>th</sup>

#### **Introduction**

Our intention is to provide a space for people to come together and share their stories of being Irish in the current time. We have been sharing our stories with each other over the last few years, and have found it to be deeply connecting, resourcing and healing. We also realise how many stories have not been heard, and we have a sense that we are all the poorer for that. We hope to offer an opportunity to connect – to our home, to each other, to our complex history, particularly with our neighbour England – and to make sense together of where we come from, what we've lived through, and where that might lead us. Together we will have the chance to share our personal and unique experiences and explore together what it means to be Irish in London today. Our ancestors knew the importance of knowing & sharing our stories to keep us healthy in both body and spirit– we believe this old tradition can bring forth new opportunities for us all. Through becoming more fully aware of the rich tapestry of the Irish experience in London, we hope to come away with a greater understanding and appreciation of ourselves, as individuals and as a collective. Please join us.

#### **Three Sessions**

In each of the three sessions, we will facilitate group-based discussions on different aspects of the experience of being Irish in 2022. This will focus on each of our lives in the present day but also how this has been affected by the past, and in particular the complex relationship between the Island of Ireland and England.

#### **Background**

A *Seanchaí* (shan-a-key) was a traditional Irish *storyteller*. In a literal sense, the word means 'bearer of old lore'. The *Seanchaithe* (plural) were custodians of history and culture on the Island of Ireland for many centuries. Historically, they were highly valued by their local Chieftain and had a wide range of roles that involved dealing with legal issues, literature and genealogy. Following the English Conquests of Ireland - from the 1500's onwards - the work of the Seanchaithe became more and more centred on storytelling and passing on Irish folklore, myth and legend. This rich and ancient way of being will guide the work of this project and the storytelling events hosted as part of it. Our hope is to bring an updated version of the spirit of the Seanchaithe to better understand ourselves

#### **Our Approach**

The spirit of the Seanchaithe will guide the overarching approach of this work. We will fuse this with an approach to facilitated community dialogue that is grounded in Process Oriented Psychology (POP) or its group-based application, Worldwork. If you are interested, you can find more information [here](#) but ultimately there is no requirement to have any interest or knowledge of this. These sessions are about telling, sharing and listening to each other's' stories.

#### **Who are these sessions for?**

These sessions are open to anyone (over the age of 18 years) who has a relationship with being Irish and the many different ways that this shows up in the world - in particular in London, in 2022. No previous experience of such sessions is required. It is of note that these sessions are participative and experiential. Sharing and processing our experiences and stories in relation to these issues may involve people expressing different emotions and it is best to be prepared for that. However, this may mean very different things for different people. For some, it may involve sharing openly in dialogue and emotion whereas for others it may involve listening and contemplating in a quieter way. All are welcome.



## Venues

- London Irish Centre, 50-52 Camden Square, London, NW1 9XB - <https://londonirishcentre.org/> (Oct 1<sup>st</sup> and Oct29th)
- Irish Cultural Centre Hammersmith, 5 Black's Road, Hammersmith, W6 9DT - <https://irishculturalcentre.co.uk/> (Nov 26<sup>th</sup>)

## Dates and times

- Oct 1<sup>st</sup> from 10:00 – 13:00
- Oct 29th from 10:00 to 16:00
- Nov 26th from 10:00 to 16:00

There will be a lunchbreak of approximately an hour on Oct 29<sup>th</sup> and Nov 26<sup>th</sup>.

## Fee

These sessions are free of charge. They are being supported by the Jean Claude Audergon Memorial, '[The Far in, Far Out](#)' Project. Tea and Coffee provided.

## To Register - Book your place here:

Oct 1<sup>st</sup> from 10:00 – 13:00, London Irish Centre – [Click Here](#)

Oct 29th from 10:00 to 16:00, London Irish Centre – [Click Here](#)

Nov 26th from 10:00 to 16:00 – Irish Cultural Centre, Hammersmith [Click Here](#)

## The Facilitation Team



### *Paul Callery*

Paul grew up in the northwest of Ireland but has spent most of his adult life in the Basque Country and in London, where he now lives. His background is in education where he focussed on developing generative and integral models using critical and reflective practices. He currently mentors and supports Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Minors. Paul is continuously engaged in learning and development within the field of Process Orientated Psychology, working in private practice with individuals, couples, and organisations. He has a deep interest in the Irish experience, how we live it and how it lives in us.



### *Dr Pádraig Cotter, D Psych Sc*

Pádraig is a Clinical Psychologist in the NHS and member of the Research Society of Process Oriented Psychology United Kingdom (RSPOPUK). He has worked at the National Suicide Research Foundation in Ireland and in Adult Mental Health and Clinical Health Psychology in Ireland and England. Pádraig has an interest in how social, political, and economic issues arise within individual psychotherapy and individual psychotherapy within the processing of world issues. One such area is the relationship between Ireland and England and how it arises at an individual, systemic and societal level.

We are hosting these sessions in association with The 'Far in, Far Out' Memorial for Jean-Claude Audergon, [CFOR Force for Change](#) and the Research Society for Process Oriented Psychology United Kingdom ([RSPOPUK](#)).

## For Further Information

Please direct any queries to [theseanchaiproject@gmail.com](mailto:theseanchaiproject@gmail.com)