

RPI Newsletter – 2nd October 2026



Hello everyone,

And hoping this finds all our readers well. No surprises for guessing our big story this month, it's our long awaited (three years in this case) National Conference. We have the full workshop program attached and, just to say, it's going to be a hard choice to decide what to attend alongside the keynote speaker, Joe Brummer, such is the array of diverse contributors this year.

This month we also feature a number of other fantastic events and training. Read on for details of:

- Le Cheile Mentoring Restorative Justice Conference
- Punch the Restorative Justice play comes to Dublin next year
- Brand New Irish RP Podcast from the 2J's (Jenn and Joe)
- and other upcoming RPI CoP and Book Club dates

It's all happening this month, but pride of place, once more, has to go to the conference launch.

RPI National Conference 17th October, Maynooth University



As we mentioned above it's been three years since we last gathered, but our National Conference is almost here. With the theme of "Safe Spaces, Healing Places: Intersecting Trauma Awareness, Wellbeing and Restorative Practices" we will gather in Maynooth University with the international expert Joe Brummer as our keynote speaker and an incredible line up of workshop speakers and presenters (see the full schedule attached).

To date, there have been almost 100 people from all over the island and all different professional backgrounds sign up and the day promises to be a great opportunity to connect with colleagues new and old, learn new theories and practices and energise ourselves and each other in our collective aim to make a more restorative society.. The day kicks off at 8:45am and ticket prices include lunch and tea/coffee. Further details of the day's schedule and how to register can be obtained by clicking on the [Eventbrite link](#). This is going to be a day to remember and we call on anyone and everyone with an interest in RP

and bringing change into our community to come along and soak up the inspiration.



Le Cheile Mentoring Restorative Justice Conference 13/11 Limerick



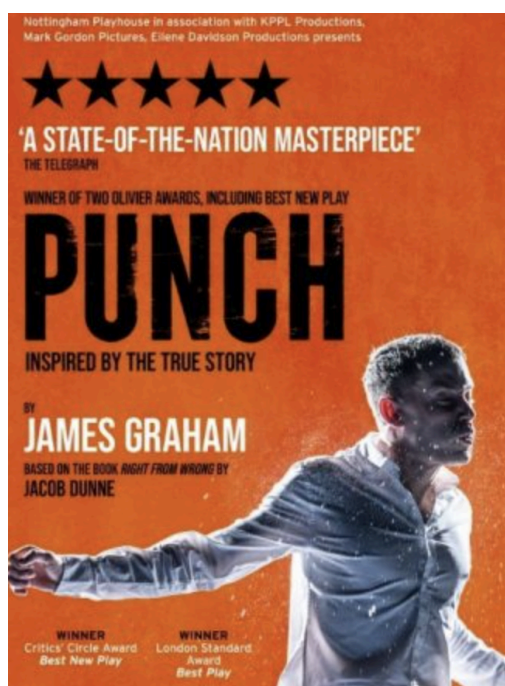
If the RPI National conference isn't enough to whet the appetite, Le Cheile Mentoring Restorative Justice will hold their National Conference on Friday the 13th of November at Thomond Park, Limerick from 9.30am until 3.30pm.

The theme of the conference this year is **"Masculinity, Violence and Restorative Justice"** with guest speakers on the day include Janika

Cartwright, Jacob Dunne, and Dr. Darragh McCashin. Several workshops will be available for selection when registering on the day, with registration commencing at 9.30 a.m. Lunch will be provided free of charge on the day. There is free car parking on site for the event.

There is a limited number of free tickets available at time of writing so don't delay and click on this [link](#) for full details as well as to get your tickets. It promises to be a great day.

Punch - Restorative Justice play comes to the Gaiety next April



This acclaimed production will visit the Gaiety Theatre from Tuesday 6 – Saturday 10 April 2027.

Following sold-out runs across England, and simultaneous openings on Broadway and in the West End, Punch comes to the Gaiety Theatre for one week only as part of its UK and Ireland tour.

Don't miss your chance to see this critically acclaimed play in a 'powerhouse of a production' (WhatsOnStage). From Olivier Award-winning writer James Graham (*Dear England, This House, BBC's Sherwood*), Punch brings Jacob Dunne's extraordinary true story to the stage in a gripping, high-energy and deeply moving production directed by Adam Penford.

Jacob Dunne, a teenager from Nottingham, spends his Saturday nights seeking thrills with his friends. One fateful evening, an impulsive punch leads to fatal consequences. After serving prison time, Jacob finds himself lost and directionless. Searching for answers,

Joan and David – the parents of his victim James – ask to meet, sparking a profound transformation in Jacob's life.

A powerful true story of hope, humanity, and the possibility of change. Full details, including [booking here](#)

New Irish RP Podcast - Unwrapping RP



We're back again this month to give a little more focus on the new Irish RP podcast, [Unwrapping Restorative](#), which is the brainchild and creation of Jenn Little and Joe Power. After many years of incubation, Jenn and Joe have finally released their podcast, with the first three guest episodes last month and a further two (or maybe three even they say) this month. Each time they "unwrap" (their metaphor for the series) a piece of restorative with a

guest, and so far they have given voice to a number of diverse Irish practitioners, who may otherwise not have been as forthcoming about sharing their remarkable practice. This aspect, i.e. sharing the homegrown talents, is the other main purpose of the enterprise. And, if you haven't tuned in so far, you are sure to love the contributions, reflections and stories of Andy Battell, James Bowes and Roisin Doran. They share stories, insights, challenges and their hopes for restorative practice. Oh, they also share their favourite restorative process (not that we're supposed to have favourites I know).

In another interesting aspect of the podcast, Jenn and Joe offer an additional, shorter episode after each main episode. This "extra unwrap" allows Jenn and Joe to dig a little deeper into the sharings of people, offering some of the connections they have made and, in some cases, their own stories as well. In this way they offer newcomers to RP an extra insight to what has been shared.

New episodes this month will feature Jolene Scullion from Northern Ireland and Leaf Seligman from the US (who last month co-hosted the RPI Community of Practice), so be sure to "like and subscribe" as they remind us. It does help to get the word and practice out to as wide an audience as possible. And if you would like to come on the podcast, or you have someone to suggest, please be sure to let them know.



Joe and Jenn in "action" with guest Roisin Doran from Education Authority NI

Upcoming RPI Events/CoP's/Book Club details

In other news the ever popular book club has its next gathering on 12th October (7-8:15pm). You don't need to read a full book for this (or to even be an RPI member) in case you're wondering. Discussions centre around short articles, podcasts, videos or a specific aspect of RP. Details here can be found by emailing judith.lardner@gmail.com. This month's article is on the topic of a Joe Brummer (who else) podcast. New members always welcome.

Finally, anyone looking for information on possible training available, check out

- **CDI** <https://www.cdi.ie/our-programmes/restorative-practices/> (schools and non-school)
- restorativeliving.ie (schools and non-schools)
- **OIDE** (formally PDST) schools only
- **Local Education Support Centre** (schools only)
- **Connect RP** (schools only)

That's all for now Folks. As always, please remember to send in information, photos, updates and events you may be running and we'll spread the word for you. Also, do get in touch via info@restorativepracticesireland.ie or on LinkedIn if you would like to get involved in RPI activities as a volunteer. Membership can also be obtained by signing up at this [link](#).

Best wishes, Joe Power, newsletter editor powerjoseph1@gmail.com 087-2879679



NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2026 PROGRAMME

SAFE SPACES, HEALING PLACES

Intersecting Trauma Awareness, Well-being, and Restorative Practices

SATURDAY, 17 OCTOBER 2026

TSI Building, Maynooth University

Welcome

Thank you for joining us for the Restorative Practices Ireland National Conference 2026. This year's conference theme explores how restorative approaches can help create safer, more connected and supportive environments across education, community, social care and other professional settings.

We are delighted to welcome Joe Brummer as our keynote speaker. Joe is an internationally recognised trainer, author and restorative practitioner whose work brings together restorative practices, trauma awareness, resilience and well-being. His keynote will provide the starting point for a day of reflection, conversation and practical learning.

The day includes facilitated breakout circles, eight afternoon workshops, an interactive Q&A with Joe Brummer and time for networking, sharing experiences and connecting with others who are interested in restorative approaches and in building stronger, healthier relationships and communities. Whether you are an experienced restorative practitioner or simply interested in learning more, the RPI National Conference offers a welcoming space to learn, reflect, connect and share.

Richie Walsh (Chairperson, RPI Events & Communications Committee)

(Events & Communications Committee: Joe Power, Judith Lardner, Nuala Dalton, Noreen Duggan, Niamh Fowler, Jean Gilmore & Richie Walsh)

NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2026

Conference Programme

Saturday, 17 October 2026 • TSI Building, Maynooth University

08:45 - 09:30	Conference Registration, Networking, Coffee.
09:30 - 10:00	Chairperson's Opening Address
10:00 - 11:00	Keynote Speaker: Joe Brummer
11:00 - 12:00	From Keynote to Conversation: Reflecting on Joe Brummer's Talk
12:00 - 13:30	Lunch (included in your ticket) & Book Signing (Joe Brummer)?
13:30 - 14:30	Afternoon Workshops - Eight practical and engaging workshops.
14:50 - 15:50	Q & A with Joe Brummer
15:50 - 16:00	Closing Address: Noreen Duggan, Chair, R.P.I.

Keynote speaker: Joe Brummer

Joe Brummer is an internationally recognised trainer, consultant, author and speaker specialising in trauma-informed restorative practices and restorative justice. A trauma survivor himself, Joe has transformed his own experiences of violence, abuse, neglect and hate crime into a lifelong commitment to healing, peacebuilding and relationship-centred practice. His work brings together restorative approaches, trauma awareness, neuroscience and practical strategies that support safer, more connected communities and learning environments.

Joe works with schools, organisations and communities to move beyond punitive responses towards approaches centred on healing, accountability, empathy and meaningful change.



He is the co-author of *Building a Trauma-Informed Restorative School: Skills and Approaches for Improving Culture and Behavior* and *Becoming a Trauma-Informed Restorative Educator: Practical Skills to Change Culture and Behavior*. His work equips educators and practitioners with practical skills including mindfulness, honest expression, empathy, restorative questioning, circles and restorative dialogue.

Joe is also the host of **The Joe Brummer Podcast**, launched in 2026, where he brings his professional expertise and lived experience into conversations about trauma, healing, relationships and restorative practice. Through personal stories and conversations with guests, the podcast explores how connection, understanding and restorative approaches can support healing and meaningful change.

From Keynote to Conversation

Following Joe Brummer's keynote, delegates will move into small facilitated breakout circles to reflect on the ideas, questions and themes that stood out for them. Each circle will provide a safe and inclusive space to explore what participants have taken from Joe's talk, how it connects with their own work or context, and what they may take forward from the experience. Delegates will also be invited to identify questions or key points they would like to put to Joe during the later Q&A session.



Afternoon workshops & Q&A

Delegates will take part in their pre-selected afternoon workshop, with eight sessions offering a diverse range of perspectives on restorative practice in action. The day concludes with an interactive Q&A with Joe Brummer, shaped by questions and reflections gathered throughout the conference.



Afternoon Workshops — Eight Practical and Engaging Workshops

Room 1 Developing Kinship and Solidarity

Restorative Circles as a Healing Pathway for Victims/Survivors.

Workshop overview

Andy and Joe, experienced Restorative Practice facilitators, talk about their restorative justice work with victims/survivors of institutional sexual abuse, with a particular focus on their use of restorative circles. They share insights about how the circles have worked (they have now facilitated over 40 in the last two years) and the many benefits that participants have reported.

ABOUT JOE POWER

Joe is an independent restorative trainer/facilitator. Working for over 6 years with schools, youth and community organisations and local communities, introducing restorative mindset and skillset. Also available to facilitate restorative meetings/conferences in cases of conflict or dispute. Believes strongly in a relational and preventative approach and combining other practices such as Nonviolent Communication, Collaborative and Proactive Solutions and Open Space Technology. Was previously RP Development Officer for Limerick (2018-2023) and worked 18 years in residential childcare services. Joe is available for introduction sessions, training, implementation support and everything in between.



ABOUT ANDY BATTELL

Andy has been a restorative practitioner for 16 years, and in 2010 co-founded the Waterford RP Network. From 2011 – 2017, he was a Certified Trainer, and Trainer of Trainers, with the IIRP. Since 2017, he has been a freelance Restorative Practice trainer, and an RP Quality Specialist at the Childhood Development Initiative (CDI). Between 2019 and 2021, with CDI, he co-devised, delivered and assessed an online Professional Training course - 'TReP' (at QQI Level 6/7) in Restorative Practices, as part of an EU Erasmus+ Programme certified by MCAST in Malta. Since December 2022, Andy has also been a senior member of a Restorative Justice team, led by Professor Tim Chapman, working with victims/survivors (v/s) of clerical abuse, at Spiritan-run schools in Ireland and abroad; supporting v/s through a restorative process, preparing a number of v/s for restorative meetings with the Congregation, and facilitating meetings. In addition, Andy has co-facilitated, with Joe Power, 42 restorative circles to date, with many other v/s.

Andy has been a facilitator with AONTAS since 2018 and a trainer/facilitator with the NPC (National Parents Council,) since 2022. Since 2012, Andy has tutored apprentices, asylum seekers, refugees, and other adult learners in a range of QQI courses.



Room 2 Fostering Connection and Empathy

Three models of intersecting practices

Workshop overview

In this session, three experienced practitioners will present their models of practice, drawing from mediation, sound healing, community circles, and restorative and trauma-informed practices. They offer three insights on combining methods, models, practices and experiences to foster safety, empathy, connection, listening, and ultimately healing. Their presentation will be followed by an open discussion where participants will be invited to ask questions, reflect and share their own insights.

NI Alternatives

NI Alternatives is a community-based restorative justice organisation working across Northern Ireland. Through RP, mediation, training, and early intervention, they support communities to strengthen relationships, respond to harm, and develop trauma-informed approaches to conflict, wellbeing, and community resilience.

Moderator

Dorothee Daniau, RP Quality Specialist for CDI, will moderate the discussion.

ABOUT JIM MCGRATH

Jim is a qualified Social Worker, trainer and consultant with 40 years' experience in child and family services, Family Group Conference (FGC), restorative practices and mediation.



ABOUT DEIRDRE HOWARD

Deirdre has 20 years' experience in facilitating Community Circle Drumming and Voice and Sound Healing Workshops. Her practice aims at restoring, empowering and healing, through rhythm, integrating sound, ritual, and restorative practices for trauma recovery and well-being.



ABOUT BEN RIDDLES

Ben is a Restorative Practitioner, Counsellor and trainer in suicide prevention, trauma-informed practice, RP and mental health, with Greater Shankill Alternatives. Working on the STARS (Striving Towards A Restorative Society) Project, he aims to embed restorative practices across the Shankill community through group training. As a counsellor, Ben integrates therapeutic insight into his restorative work to ensure support is both accountable and healing-focused.



Room 3 Bridging Divides - Restorative Dialogue in Times of Conflict

Restorative Dialogue in Times of Conflict

Workshop overview

This workshop will explore how restorative practices and dialogue circles can support communities experiencing tension and conflict relating to international protection applicants and migration. Drawing on current work to develop a team of restorative dialogue circle facilitators, the session will outline how these circles create structured opportunities for people with differing perspectives to listen, speak and engage respectfully. Participants will be invited to consider how restorative dialogue might be adapted and used within their own communities to reduce polarisation, strengthen relationships and support constructive community conversations.

ABOUT CLAIRE CASEY

Claire Casey has over 30 years' experience in community development, adult education, training, facilitation, conflict resolution and mediation. She is Restorative Practice Manager with the Childhood Development Initiative in Tallaght, where she leads the implementation of its Restorative Practices Programme. Claire is passionate about addressing poverty, discrimination and inequality. She holds a BSc, a Postgraduate Diploma in Adult and Community Education from Maynooth University, and an MSc in Restorative Practices from Ulster University.



Room 4 Safe Spaces, Brave Spaces

“Restorative Practice is a values-based philosophy; it aims to consciously build relationships, respond to harm / conflict in a way that honours relationships, and CONNECT us to our best selves and to one another” (Stowe 2017)

Co-creating Relational School Cultures



Workshop overview

In this workshop we will explore how schools (and organisations) can facilitate processes that breathe life into the key tenets of the restorative philosophy - that we are profoundly relational, interconnected and inherently good. This interactive session will illustrate Restorative Practice as a practical and effective care model for the adults who work within caring professions, modelling ways to cultivate and co-create ‘safe and brave spaces’ which tap into the collective wisdom and enhance wellbeing.

ABOUT MICHELLE STOWE

Michelle is an educator at heart and the founder and director of Connect RP. In her role she, along with her team, supports schools and organisations in using Restorative Practice (RP) as a vehicle to enhance a relational school culture through mentoring, resourcing and measuring the impact of an RP journey that puts values, people and relationships at the heart of community & effective teaching & learning. Check out www.connectrp.ie to find out more.



Room 5 The Power of Connection

Building Safe, Connected School Communities

Workshop overview

This workshop will explore how Restorative Practice can build positive relationships and support wellbeing for children and staff. Drawing on their experience as primary teachers and Restorative Practice practitioners, Nuala Dalton and Kate O'Neill will share simple, practical approaches that can be incorporated into everyday school life.

ABOUT NUALA DALTON

Nuala is a primary school teacher who returned to the classroom in 2024 after working with Oide as a Professional Primary Leader in Wellbeing. During this time, she facilitated Restorative Practices (RP) training in both primary and post-primary schools. She trained as an RP Trainer with CDI in 2019 and as an RP Champion in 2022. She continues to work as an Associate with Oide, facilitates summer courses with CDI, and supports Communities of Practice. Since returning to the classroom, Nuala uses Restorative Practices in her school and has seen the positive impact they have on relationships and school culture.



ABOUT KATE O'NEILL

Kate O'Neill is primary school teacher from Scoil Naomh Eoin, Navan. She has worked with the national teacher support services for over a decade, leading and contributing to key wellbeing initiatives including Wellbeing in Education (WPSFP), Bí Cineálta, Child Protection, as well as the curricular areas of SPHE and PE. Kate has a strong interest in Restorative Practices, completing a Professional Certificate in Restorative Practices through MCAST in 2021. Passionate about supporting schools to foster safe, inclusive and thriving learning environments, Kate brings a depth of practical expertise and national-level experience to her work.



Room 6 From Safe Spaces to Brave Spaces

Courage, Connection and Community

Workshop overview

We often talk about creating “safe spaces”, but safety is shaped by our experiences, relationships and context. While we cannot always guarantee safety or comfort, we can pay attention to the conditions that support people to engage openly and honestly, navigate vulnerability and discomfort, and remain connected. Drawing on the experiential approach of the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) and more than 30 years of facilitating workshops in Irish prisons, this interactive session will explore how we create these conditions in environments where trust, safety, choice and power can be particularly complex.

waiting for details

ABOUT LISA OELSCHLEGEL

Lisa is the Coordinator of the Alternatives to Violence Project (Ireland), where she supports volunteers delivering workshops in Irish prisons on conflict transformation and nonviolent approaches. She has a background in peace and conflict studies and psychology, and brings over ten years of experience working across international development cooperation, local NGOs, and the academic sector across Europe and Latin America, with a focus on mental health and psychosocial support, migration, gender, diversity and inclusion.



Room 7 From Unrest to Understanding

Creating Spaces for Connection, Healing and Action • Using the Coming to the Table approach within restorative practice

Workshop overview

What happens when racial tensions and unrest within the wider community enter through the school gates? This interactive workshop explores how restorative practitioners can create safe, relational spaces in which young people can make sense of difficult events, understand different experiences and perspectives, strengthen connection and consider how they can contribute to positive change. Drawing on the four pillars of the Coming to the Table (CTTT) approach: Uncovering History, Making Connections, Healing Wounds and Taking Action, participants will explore how this framework can be incorporated into a restorative programme for young people impacted by race-related community tension. Rather than simply hearing about the approach, participants will experience elements of the programme themselves through restorative circles, structured dialogue, storytelling, reflection and practical activities. Attention will be given to creating emotionally safe spaces, recognising the impact of individual and collective experiences, supporting voice and belonging, and facilitating challenging conversations without causing further harm. Participants will leave with practical ideas and relational activities that can be adapted to support young people to move from understanding, to connection, to healing and meaningful action.

ABOUT GILLIAN DOWDS

The workshop will be facilitated by Gillian Dowds and Philip King, practitioners from the Education Authority Restorative Practice Team. Gillian brings a background in teaching. Both have experience in special educational needs and disability. Together, they support schools and young people through relational, restorative and trauma-aware approaches, promoting connection, belonging, dialogue, understanding and positive change.



ABOUT PHILIP KING

Philip brings a background in Youth Work. Together with Gillian, he supports schools and young people through relational, restorative and trauma-aware approaches, promoting connection, belonging, dialogue, understanding and positive change.



Room 8 Circle Experience

Workshop overview

“Join Judith Lardner and Jenn Little for a unique circle experience, where we hope we will all gain new insights into the power of the circle process.”

ABOUT JUDITH LARDNER

Jude has a vision of the world that recognises and supports the work of creating and maintaining meaningful relationships. And she loves to use her skills as a teacher and facilitator to contribute to this vision. In 2000 she received a BA in Transpersonal Psychology from Burlington College Vermont, and in 2008 she received an MA in Liberal Studies from Empire State College. Both of these degrees were independent studies and her experience with independent study inspires much of her peer practice work. She is a certified Circle facilitator and Circle facilitator trainer, as well as a certified trainer with the Center for Nonviolent Communication (www.cnvc.org).



ABOUT JENN LITTLE

Jenn, a Restorative Practices champion, trainer, facilitator, and coach, infuses her work with innovative and creative energy. With over 30 years of intentional professional practice, she prioritises individual and community transformation through shared learning experiences. Informed by her RP training and practice, Jenn works with individuals and groups seeking cultural change. Trained as an RP trainer in 2016 and an RP Champion in 2019, she designs and facilitates original courses for both teenage and adult learners, fostering optimal learning environments. Jenn also serves as a school leadership coach, supporting leaders in implementing RP within their communities. With Joe Power, Jenn has co-authored a book ‘A Year of Restorative Living’ and co-hosts the podcast ‘Unwrapping Restorative.’

