

TRAUMA RECOVERY NEWS

Welcome again to *TRN's newsletter*. Our last edition reached a total circulation of 350 contacts and we have been encouraged by the positive feedback received at the Office.

In this issue we have more detailed information on some key projects which we are developing around Research and Information and on how groups can participate. In addition at this critical stage of TRN growth as an independent forum we are expanding our membership base and details on how to join and membership benefits are included below. At what is a very important time for the trauma recovery field with uncertainty in relation to the Victims Commissioner appointment and associated plans, TRN is moving ahead in the development of an energetic and influential forum open to all who subscribe to our ethos. We would therefore encourage everyone to seriously consider membership and welcome feedback or further discussion at any stage.

At our AGM and Annual Conference 27th/28th November in the Armagh City Hotel TRN membership development and direction will be further explored and members will have a direct say in the election of Officers and strategic planning.

We can also announce that our website has now gone live and that more information can be accessed at www.traumanetwork.org!

Those of us who have worked over the last three years to progress TRN's ethos and planning believe that working together on a common focus of recovery from trauma has a real potential to assist integration and reconciliation. We have been encouraged by many of those working in the sector that an



independent forum is a key way forward if policy, funding, trauma recovery practice and transgenerational trauma are to be addressed in ways that are supportive of and responsive to the sector's needs.

Paula Beattie
Network Regional Manager

TRN RESEARCH PROGRAMME - UPDATE



In our first edition of Trauma Recovery News back in May we outlined our plans to conduct an initial study concentrating on needs analysis of organisations working with victims and survivors of NI Political Conflict.

We are now pleased to announce that through support from Community Foundation for NI, The Ireland Fund of Canada and the Ark Project at Queens University this work will commence November 2007.

Through a combination of postal and e mail questionnaires, 1-1 sessions and follow up Focus Group meetings the study hopes to carry out an initial analysis as follows:

- An investigation of the policy and working relationship between victims/survivors groups, groups and funders, and between community, voluntary and statutory sector service providers.

- Analysis of working relationships around funding, practice, needs and relevant policy constraints.

- Initial audit of the development, practice, support and planning around service level agreements within the sector.

It is our intention that the outcome of this initial study and emerging recommendations will be published by February 2008.

All groups will be invited to become involved in this work and more information will follow shortly and will be made available on our website.

Any groups who wish to contact us directly on this study are asked to ring our office to discuss further.

All groups who have already registered their interest will receive more update in the coming weeks.

An Assessment of Mental Health and Developmental Needs in Whiterock, West Belfast

On Wednesday 5th September Corpus Christi Services launched a report by the Post-war Reconstruction & Development Unit of the University of York which provides an assessment of mental health and other core developmental needs within Whiterock, West Belfast. CCS has been providing services in the community of Whiterock and beyond for almost 20 years. While formerly an Action for Community Employment Project, from 1999, CCS has been addressing the Effects of the Troubles through a combination of programmes.

CCS will endeavour to make the findings widely available in order to provoke further discussion in addition to community-wide planning and initiatives.

If you would like to find out more please contact Corpus Christi Services on 90240653 or you can download the report from the website: www.corpuschristiservices.co.uk

MEMBERSHIP OF TRN AS AN INDEPENDENT FORUM

Trauma Recovery Network (TRN) is a regional network offering cross sector advocacy, organisational development support and research facility to victims and survivors groups and those working with the impact of trauma through a partnership and community development method of working.

Established in 2004, TRN has a founding membership of diverse organisations ranging from local community based projects to regional service providers and from both a community and public sector background.

Membership of TRN has been growing over the period since Spring 2005 when a consultation exercise was facilitated across NI involving representatives of over 30 groups working in the sector. Our current development direction and planned programme of work has been based on the outcome of these consultation meetings. One main outcome of this exercise has been the recognition that the common focus of recovery from trauma, however that may be identified, has the potential to assist integration and reconciliation.

TRN ethos is underpinned by the following:

Vision: A society where there is real understanding of what precipitates political trauma and what is required for trauma recovery.

Mission: To develop the lead regional network that will energise, connect and influence the Trauma Recovery Sector.

Our established aims have been developed in various ways and some examples are detailed below:

1. To build an independent forum that is safe enough to hold challenging dialogue.

(TRN have hosted a series of well attended seminars and workshops 2005-2007 to debate and discuss conflict related counselling and therapy approaches, political approaches to trauma recovery, human rights and trauma recovery and funding challenges)

2. To influence policy and funding in ways that are responsive to, and supportive of, the needs of the Trauma Recovery sector.

(TRN lobbied successfully for an additional extension to the Peace II extension in 2006 which helped some groups who were struggling in a gap period. In November 2007 we are commencing our sector needs analysis study supported by the Ark Project at Queens University.)

3. To encourage creative and ethical practice to aid trauma recovery and prevention, and break the cycle of transgenerational trauma.

(In November 2005 TRN held a 3 Day Conference attended by 45 delegates representing a cross sector of practicing clinicians, service managers and project leaders working in the victims/survivors sector. This introduction to Somatic Experiencing and ground breaking training was facilitated by Larry Heller an international authority on healing and opened up the debate on differing approaches to trauma healing. This debate will be further developed at our Conference in November)

4. To influence the Trauma Recovery agenda regionally, nationally and internationally.

(TRN has worked continuously since our inception to develop a network within the sector to support the needs of the sector servicing victims and survivors. In addition to the Lusty Beg Seminar we have been working to establish links outside NI with others working in the same field. Further developing our membership base is crucial if through participative working we are to become an energetic and influential voice for the trauma recovery sector)

For more information on how to become a member of TRN and on membership benefits please see the enclosed flyer.

TRN WEB GOES LIVE

www.traumanetwork.org

You can now find out more about TRN and our work programmes, how to become a member, forthcoming events, updates from others in the field of trauma recovery work and much more on our website. We have just gone live and will continue to develop the website to make it as accessible and up-to-date as possible!

Another exciting feature of our website is the Central Information Database and Reference Service that TRN is developing detailing all

services available to victims/survivors across NI and beyond. Information will be available on service provision from community, voluntary, and statutory sectors as well as from independent sources. This is still in its early stages of development however; we hope to have it up and running soon!

If you would like to access our website please log on to www.traumanetwork.org

TRN MEMBERSHIP



Membership is open to organisations from statutory, voluntary and community agencies and individuals who subscribe to the objectives of the Network.

Membership is renewable running for a full year from 1st October annually.

TRN Membership Benefits include:

- Direct involvement in the only independent Forum to energise, connect and influence the Trauma Recovery Sector
- Shared information, support and partnership working at a regional level to influence policy and funding responsive to and supportive of the sector
- Direct access to Regional Database of service provision to victims/survivors of NI Political Conflict
- Quarterly newsletter
- Involvement in needs analysis of organisations working in the Trauma Recovery Sector
- Promotion of services and dialogue on TRN website
- Voting rights at AGM

Annual Membership Rates

Statutory Groups - £50.00
Voluntary Groups - £50.00
Community Groups - £20.00
Individuals - £10.00

If you are interested in becoming a member please fill in the information below and please send to: Colleen Symington, Development Officer (Membership), TRN, 61 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast, BT15 2GB or email colleen@traumanetwork.org

Membership - Expression of Interest

Contact Name: _____

Organisation: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____

Email: _____

Nature of your organisation: Please tick

Community

Voluntary

Statutory

Individual

Training Opportunity

Advanced Training for Practitioners in Solution Focused Brief Therapy

Derry Well Woman has received funding from the Community Relations Council to deliver their high quality Advanced Training for Practitioners in Solution Focused Brief Therapy.

There will be 75 hours of course delivery including a weekend residential.

The course will be delivered in Derry Well Woman's premises on a Monday evening beginning 15th October 2007 through to February 2008.

The course seeks to promote a model of helping based on the construction of solutions rather than on placing the focus on problem solving as practised in the more traditional approaches. It will address the needs of clients presenting with a variety of different issues and will consider the cultural, social, familial and systemic positions of clients. It will also encourage participants to apply a solution focused approach to their own self-management and their personal development.

The course will provide specific skills in Counselling and Listening to those Counselling Staff and Volunteers engaged with agencies who are working with Victims/Survivors. There is no charge for this course.

For further information or an application form please contact Christine O'Kane in Derry Well Woman on christine@derrywellwoman.org or on 71360777.

Participant Feedback on 'Building Good Relations' Workshop

I recently attended a Community Relations Council workshop on 'Building Good Relations': An introduction to the principles and values of community relations for groups working with victims and survivors.

This took place on the 3rd of May at the CRC Office/Conference Centre in Moygashel.

As a delegate I found the event was very good for networking with more rural groups, and it provided a good platform for learning and broadening of understanding, on some of the current community relations issues, affecting communities today, and for the future.

Of particular note, was the appropriateness of the venue for accessibility in terms of parking,

and is only 45 minutes down the motorway (less than the time it usually takes to get across Belfast), and more importantly to meet with rural groups and form vital networking for us all in this sector. I would encourage other groups to attend this venue for future events.

Ms Martina Mullin O'Hare,
Development Officer,
The Wider Circle

TRN DATABASE AND REFERENCE SERVICE

TRN are compiling a Central Information Database and Reference Service detailing all services available to victims/survivors across NI and beyond. Information will be available on service provision from community, voluntary, and statutory sectors as well as from independent sources.

We have now almost completed this work and the database will be accessed through our website once complete. In the early stages the database will be open to **TRN members only** although subject to further funding and support it is hoped that the database may be made more widely accessible including the option of general public access.

TO MOVE THIS PROCESS FORWARD WE ARE NOW FORMALLY ASKING ALL ORGANISATIONS WHO WISH THEIR INFORMATION TO BE INCLUDED IN THE TRN REFERENCE SERVICE TO MAKE AN INITIAL CONTACT WITH OUR OFFICE TO REGISTER AN INTEREST.

IF YOUR ORGANISATION IS INTERESTED IN BECOMING INVOLVED OR WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT OUR DEVELOPMENT OFFICER COLLEEN SYMINGTON BY EMAIL: COLLEEN@TRAUMANETWORK.ORG OR BY TELEPHONE OR POST.

The Wider Circle Trauma Programme

Many of us are close to someone who has experienced a traumatic event in their lives. Or perhaps we have been traumatised ourselves.

Through its structured self-help trauma programmes, The Wider Circle seeks to restore a sense of hope in the lives of people who have suffered a trauma. Traumatic experiences can range from a serious car accident: to abuse, and, of course, as a result of the conflict in Northern Ireland. A traumatic event can be anything where someone suffers a severe shock.

Many traumatised people experience disturbed memories, feelings of isolation, and helplessness. The Wider Circle is not a counselling organisation and cannot offer counselling to individuals. However, through its Trauma Programmes, The Wider Circle provides a supportive and safe environment where people can deal with frightening emotions and experiences. They can share their stories and their problems, and know that they are not alone in their suffering. They are encouraged to accept their trauma as something that happened in the past, rather than something they have to live with all the time.

The Wider Circle Trauma Programmes are free of charge, and take place this year in a number of locations in Belfast, and in Armagh as well as Dundalk. They are available both to those who have suffered a trauma and to those who care for traumatised individuals.

The new series of Trauma Programmes begins in September. Sessions focus on sharing traumatic experiences through a process of story telling in a supportive and confidential small group atmosphere. A range of visual materials and reflection are also used. The trauma is put in the context of being a part of a person's life, rather than becoming their whole life. New participants are welcomed into a friendly and warm atmosphere. This is a group support situation. It is where people can come together to support and develop rather than going it alone as an individual.

The details of these programmes are as follows:

Belfast

Monday 10th September 7pm-9pm- Trauma Programme & Information Evening followed by Trauma Programme
Corrymeela House, No. 8 Upper Crescent, Belfast

Tuesday 11th September 7pm-9pm- Trauma Programme & Information Evening followed by Trauma Programme
NICEM, Australia House, Stockman's Lane

Dundalk

Tuesday 25th September 7pm-9pm
St. Josephs

Prisoner Release Victim Information Scheme

You may be aware that the Northern Ireland Prison Service administers a statutory scheme which offers victims the opportunity to give and receive information about the prisoners who have been convicted of a crime against them.

Prisoners Returning to the Community

Of those who register with the Prisoner Release Victim Information Scheme (PRVIS), the main motivation is to receive early warning of the prisoners return to the community. For many victims, the greatest fear is unexpected contact with an offender.

Temporary and Compassionate Release

As prisoners approach the end of their sentence, they can be considered for periods of temporary release (TR) to help them prepare for their return to the community. Registered victims will be invited to make their views known which will be taken into account when deciding on whether TR will be granted, and if any conditions should be imposed on the prisoner whilst on release.

A prisoner can make application for Compassionate Temporary Release at anytime.

If a victim has made representations, the views will be taken into account.

The Importance of Registration

Uptake on this scheme is low; currently only one in five eligible victims has registered to date. We're conscious that many victims mistakenly believe that someone will inform them of a prisoner's release. This is not the case; only those who actually register with us will be informed

If you would like further information, please contact Jackie Hamilton or Roisin Coleman on 0845 247 0002 or apply online at www.niprvis.gov.uk

Training at Corrymeela!

Dialogue for Peaceful Change
There will be training held at Corrymeela from February 10th-15th 2008 looking at Dialogue for Peaceful Change. D.P.C is a methodology that creates a setting and provides a pathway for overcoming division.

D.P.C. is not the goal but the instrument in a process which seeks to build the creative and practical skills of peaceful change.

It's about facilitating the road to solutions found and agreed by the people caught in negative conflict patterns.

D.P.C. is a global coalition, dedicated to creating safe spaces to overcome division through structured and skilled process of mutual empowerment.

D.C.P. Web site is www.dialogueforpeacefulchange.net

Promoting Wellbeing 2ND-4TH
November 2007

Welcome to a weekend of finding ways to relax. With many stresses and tensions each of us experience in life, Promoting Wellbeing is an invitation that opens up the chance to get away and treat your self and re-engage with self care and good practice.

For more information on these events please contact Rachel Craig at Corrymeela on Tel: 028 207 62626.

TRAUMATISED BY PEACE

Feedback from the TRN Seminar 27th April 2007

48 delegates attended the TRN roundtable discussion and debate on Chris Gilligan's critique of five assumptions in the theory and practice of conflict related trauma policy in NI, back in April.

In preparation for the debate TRN facilitated a process whereby three papers were produced as three separate responses to the Gilligan paper with varying critiques and alternative positions proposed.

Response papers were written by: Bríd Keenan, (Psychotherapist); Cathy Nelis, (Cúnamh) and Geraldine Hamilton (Belfast Trust Trauma Resource Centre). Bríd's paper delivered an independent perspective from experienced psychotherapy and community based work. The other two papers consisted of organisational responses from a community and statutory perspective facilitated by discussions at separate workshop events, also facilitated by TRN.

Chris Gilligan in his critique challenged the conventional view on the growth of conflict-related trauma referrals and in so doing asked for responses from those working in the field to address the issues he raised and viewpoint expressed.

The five assumptions challenged in the Gilligan Paper are as follows: A dichotomous view of war and peace, an assumption that a traumatic event is the cause of traumatic symptoms, the growth of the 'market' in counselling referrals based on a patient-led demand, whether or not the treatment of trauma is necessary/worthwhile and the link

between the growth of referrals and the end of conflict in NI.

Through support from TRN the response papers were produced and then presented at the Seminar to 48 delegates for further debate and discussion. It was generally recognised that the Gilligan paper has helped to widen discussion on the role of mental health support in the community and has offered an opportunity to reflect on and critically evaluate practice to date.

Inevitably the provocative critique evoked an emotive response from those working in the field as well as critical counter challenges to reasoning believed to be based on very questionable assumptions on therapy theory and practice.

The lively and sometimes emotive discussion which followed the presentations consisted of a detailed and thorough response from experienced practitioners and others working generally in the field of conflict related trauma.

All four papers will soon be available on the TRN website and can also be e mailed directly to organisations if requested.

On evaluation of the Seminar it was clear that the debate on this area has only begun and most delegates felt that further discussion and analysis is essential if a full understanding of trauma recovery is to be achieved.

TRN hope to develop this debate at our Annual Conference in November and through member meetings as our membership grows.

The Educational Shakespeare Co Ltd, a Belfast charity and accredited training body, is currently recruiting ex-prisoners interested in participating in a professional film/video training and production programme. This accredited 25 week course is free to ex-prisoners and begins in mid-November 2007. Anyone interested in participating should contact Jennifer Marquis, Project Coordinator, at 028 9024 3338 or via email at longabbeyjen@yahoo.co.uk.

TRN Board Members and Staff

Fergus Cumiskey, TRN Chairperson
Clinical Director
Contact Youth Counselling Services

Anne MacSherry, TRN Vice Chairperson
Clinical Specialist Physiotherapist
North and West Trauma Resource Centre

Joelle Gartner, TRN Secretary
Psychotherapist and Trainer

Philip Cahill, TRN Treasurer
Counsellor

Irene Sherry, TRN Board Member
Project Manager
The Ashton Centre

Mary Grant, TRN Board Member
Lifespring Health and Healing

Pauline Rice, TRN Board Member
Manager of Support Services
The Peace Factory

Rachel Craig, TRN Board Member
Family Worker
Corrymeela

Paula Beattie
Network Regional Manager

Colleen Symington
Development Officer (Membership)

Sara Mc Closkey
Administrative Officer

Date for your Diary...

TRN ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND AGM

27th - 28th NOVEMBER 2007
ARMAGH CITY HOTEL

TRN will hold our Annual Conference

“Truth Recovery, Reconciliation and Therapy
What’s the Connection?”

in the Armagh City Hotel over a two day period on 27th and 28th November 2007. Information on keynote speakers, workshops and Information stands to be circulated over the coming weeks.

Our AGM including presentation of Annual Report, Accounts and election of Board members will also take during the Conference. This will be a key opportunity for members to have a formal say in the future development of TRN as the lead regional forum in the Trauma Recovery sector. All contacts on our database will be invited to attend with full voting rights to paid up members. Papers will be circulated well in advance of the AGM and more information will be made available to groups as they sign up for membership.

Focusing Workshops

Focusing is an inner process that opens the door to personal growth and development by accessing the wisdom of the body.

Two day experiential workshops offer the theory and practice of this gentle and safe process.
An introductory workshop takes place on 13th /14th October 2007.

Certified Focusing Coordinator: Pat Duffy

Costs £60.00

Calendar available detailing the various workshops.

For further information please contact
Margaret Maguire
Daneo Human & Spiritual Development Services
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Belfast
BT15 3BU
Tel: 028 90772842 email: margaret@daneo.org



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