

Elaine Martin and Steve Potter: Ghosts in our National Psyches



Elaine Martin and Steve Potter have been working together for fifteen years on the theme of cultural and national identity. Steve Potter was ICATA's first chairperson and brings a sociological imagination to psychotherapy. He has been focusing on combining mapping and writing with voice work co-creative in session with clients. He is the author of 'Therapy with a Map' and 'Talking with a Map'. He lives in London. Elaine Martin is the current chairperson of ICATA. She has a special interest in using CAT tools to think about cultural identity and social change. She lives in Dublin and works in the Health Service Executive in the role of Principal Psychologist Specialist with the national Anti Human Trafficking Team & Women's Health Service.

Summary of presentation

CAT offers the conceptual tools to help us be in simultaneous dialogue with our inner emotional world, interpersonal and group relations and wider social forces and conditions. In this example we show how mapping brings us into an open dialogue with our respective (hi)stories which incorporate wider cultural and national psyches. We demonstrate how mapping can help us to negotiate the 'push and pull' of social and political discourse.

The workshop will give participants an opportunity to use bits of CAT letter-writing, mapping and giving voice together to explore their personal experience of national psyche and identity. We will share experiences and then reflect on the implications for CAT therapy of bringing individuals' wider cultural identity into dialogue.