

Just Like Francis

~
...reflections, memories
& journeys inspired by
one special man



Ballinasloe, Co. Galway

Just
Like
Francis

~

Aknowledgements

We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone that made the publication of this book possible.

- The coproduction project team for 'Just Like Francis'
- Francis's colleagues and friends who shared their personal stories for the book
- Those who expressed their narratives through the medium of art, poetry and photography
 - Michael Byrne and his team in Zest for collating & designing the book
 - HSE Office for Mental Health Engagement and Recovery
 - Local HSE Mental Health Services
 - Mental Health Ireland

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Finally, we would like to extend our deepest sympathies to Francis's mother Nancy, Sister Mary, brother in law Danny, nephews Donal and Michéal, niece Aoife and all his extended family on the loss of dear Francis. We hope that through this book you will get a sense of the important role Francis played in so many lives and the lasting impact he had on those he met throughout his life and career.

For More information on Mental Health Engagement and Recovery:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/mentalhealthengagement/apply/>

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www.mentalhealthireland.ie



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Foreword

Over the past number of years, many of us have had the privilege of working to develop the recovery approach within our Mental Health Services. We have started to see the person centred principles of recovery begin to become embedded in much of how our service is delivered and experienced. Many of these principles, of course, come from the values known as CHIME, Connectedness, Hope, Identity, Meaningful roles and Empowerment. Over the past number of years, many people have achieved recovery through being supported to engage with these concepts and begin to reach the full potential of their lives. One of the people who worked alongside us towards the goal of developing truly recovery-focused services was Francis Walsh, who offered inspiring leadership and enormously empowering support.

In this book, we are going to hear some of those narratives and journeys and how they came about from the people experiencing them. In all of those narratives there is a mentor or champion, someone totally committed to supporting people to achieve recovery and that person was Francis Walsh. Francis manifested what recovery is, both from how he lived his own life and how he worked as a professional. As a professional, Francis knew his role was to respect and empower the person's own choices and goals and to work with the person to achieve those goals. In his own life, Francis achieved his full potential as a person living life to the full. Values such as of empathy, compassion, acceptance, and respect are prerequisites in relationships to foster recovery. Francis epitomised these and more which is so evident in many of the recovery narratives shared in this book. His death was a devastating loss to his friends, colleagues and everyone he supported, but he has left an inspiring legacy.

We hope that by reading this book you will learn more about recovery and will be inspired to be 'just like Francis' in supporting yourself and those around you to live out the principles and values of recovery just as Francis did.

Francis we all owe you a debt of gratitude. Rest in Peace, dear friend.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Ryan".

Michael Ryan,
Head of Mental Health Engagement and Recovery, HSE



Francis - a True Champion of Recovery



Francis Walsh
1971 - 2020



Introduction

The National Mental Health Engagement and Recovery team along with our partners have coproduced this book in memory of our colleague and friend Francis Walsh, RIP. This book will describe the principles and values of recovery and show how we all have a role in recovery by giving examples of how it can be encouraged and achieved when we have people 'Just like Francis'.

This book is a tribute to Francis and his work in Mental Health Engagement and Recovery. It explores Francis's contributions throughout his life and career and how this influenced others on their own recovery journey. We explore different themes of recovery, which we can connect to Francis' work, values and belief system.

This book includes;

- Contributions from Francis's colleagues, friends, those he supported using the mental health services, families and supporters.
- Recovery narratives outlining how Francis supported people's understanding of recovery and how this has changed/influenced their lives.
- Stories expressed through poetry and creative art
- Memories of Francis captured through photography

There are contributions from people who met Francis through the many recovery initiatives, from his nursing career to his work with Mental Health Engagement and Recovery, through many training opportunities, in workshops, education and working groups, to his neighbours and friends.

To acknowledge Francis's unique role and contribution to Irish mental health services, this book is underpinned by education where readers can learn more about recovery, peer support, recovery education and coproduction. We hope that these examples of recovery in action and the theoretical background will encourage people to be 'Just like Francis'.

Recovery in Ireland

We know that people can and do recover from mental health challenges.

Recovery is about people experiencing and living with mental health issues and reaching the personal goals they want to achieve in life, with or without the continued presence of those mental health issues and regardless of their severity. Put simply, it is living a life of one's own choosing, having and realising dreams and ambitions.

The principle of recovery has underpinned Irish mental health policy since the publication of A Vision for Change in 2006. In the intervening years, efforts have been made by various stakeholders in mental health to articulate what recovery means to those who experience mental health issues, to their families, carers and supporters, and to those charged with providing care and treatment. Today we have a much richer understanding of recovery than that which existed in 2006. Much of this has been captured in 'A National Framework for Recovery in Mental Health (2018 - 2020)' and in the new mental health policy 'Sharing the Vision' (2020). An important component of the work of the Framework was to expand the common understanding of recovery across all interested parties: those who use mental health services, families, carers and supporters, service providers, community and voluntary organisations and the public. Significant progress has been made towards developing mental health services that are more recovery-oriented with national developments in both the HSE and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as well as a recovery focus at local Community Healthcare Organisation level.

Francis worked persistently to support the understanding of recovery. He did this in a number of ways; locally at Community Mental Health Teams, working with people with mental health difficulties, clinicians and supporters. Through his involvement with NGOs and community groups, Francis built many important relationships with services and people working outside of the HSE. He led a wide range of projects and working groups exploring what recovery really means to those working towards it and how mental health services need to adapt to provide effective support for the unique recovery processes of each person. He continued this fostering of the understanding of recovery nationally through conferences, publications and collaborative working. At the heart of Francis' work was the art of conversation. He was always having conversations about what recovery meant and these simple conversations brought more people on board and increased their understanding. Francis was a passionate supporter of the concept and practice of co-production, whereby people with mental health challenges, their supporters and clinicians would participate in all decisions regarding the design, development and delivery of mental health services in a tri-partite process at every level of the organisation.



This understanding of recovery has been enhanced by the narratives of people experiencing and living with mental health issues in their lives and in the pursuit of the personal goals, they want to achieve in life. Francis recognised that the narratives, opinions and experiences of people with mental health challenges are an invaluable addition to clinical interventions.

Francis supported many people to recover and change their lives profoundly. He witnessed great change in the mental health services provided in Ireland and saw clearly how much more remained to be done. He also supported a whole army of people from all perspectives to empower themselves to carry on his work. Many of us do so in his name with gratitude for all he gave us.



In Francis' own words - Finding my identity as a nurse through recovery

I am a nurse and would like to thank service users for supporting me to find my recovery identity as a nurse.

I was trained in an apprentice type system where I worked alongside many great nurses who supported me develop my nursing skills. The focus of my training was to care and protect people. The culture of most services was to mind people, keep them safe for harm and stress free. I worked hard at trying to keep service users safe and protected. As I reflect I now realise I wasn't listening to service users and wasn't offering much choice. I looked at what was wrong with services users rather than looking at their individual strengths. No harm was meant by this approach, it was how support was offered.

Due to listening to services users, attending recovery training and personal development that was co-facilitated by service users, my philosophy and values to recovery has changed my nursing practice. Because of service user involvement I can see the culture of organisations changing to becoming more recovery oriented which is empowering and hopeful.

I've worked with a lot of very competent capable practitioners who worked in a recovery focussed way before the word recovery was ever used. Now the focus for practitioners is to let go and give the responsibility back to the person. That can often be the most difficult challenge for nurses and practitioners.

I would say being recovery focussed is a human-to-human relationship between people, the Health Care Provider and the person using the service. That connection and relationship is formed based on trust, dignity, being heard, being listened to and the persons views being supported to develop their recovery plan for their own journey. That for me would be the key for supporting someone on their recovery journey. I think what's on the horizon it's a continued cultural change.

I now work alongside service users in many pieces of work, I am now able to see service users live a life of their own choosing which is inspiring.

So I would like to thank service users for helping me find my identity as a nurse.

Francis Walsh

Francis the Academic - making a difference

Francis was always focused on service improvement and contributed to many studies such as those listed below. This literature has supported continued development towards more recovery-oriented services.

Oral Presentations

Cleary, A., Walsh, F. (2006) *Care-Coordination in Mental Health - Sharing Best Practice Conference - NMNC. Galway (Poster Presentation).*

Cleary, A., Walsh, F. (2008) *Developing a Community Mental Health Team in a Rural Setting - Mental Health Nurse Managers Ireland Bi-Annual Conference. Portlaoise.*

Peer Reviewed Publications

Cleary, A., Walsh, F., Connolly, H., Hays, V., Oluwole, B., Macken, E. & Dowling, M. (2012) *Monitoring and documentation of side effects from depot antipsychotic medication: an interdisciplinary audit of practice in a regional mental health service. Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing, 19(5), 395-401.*

Walsh, F., Cleary, A. & Dowling, M. (2012) *Maximising psychiatric nurses' contribution to interdisciplinary working. British Journal of Community Nursing, 17(6), 270-275.*

Cleary, A., Walsh, F., Dowling, M. (2014) *Family Caregivers lived experience of a relative with an ongoing mental health issues. British Journal of Mental Health Nursing 3,(4) 151-156.*

Walsh, F., Meskell, P., Burke, E. & Dowling, M. (2017) *Recovery Based Training in Mental Health: Effects on Health: Effects of Staff Knowledge and Attitudes to Recovery. Issues in Mental Health Nursing 38(2):1-10.*

Other Published Articles

Cleary, A., Walsh, F. (2007) *Teamwork - the Way Forward. Nursing in the Community.*

Walsh, F., Cleary, A. (2008) *Introducing Core Assessment to a Community Mental Health Team.*

Cleary, A., Walsh, F., Connolly, H., Hays, V., Oluwole, B., Macken, E. & Dowling, M. (2012) *Monitoring and documentation of side effects from depot antipsychotic medication: An interdisciplinary audit of practice in a regional mental health service. Journal of Psychiatric & Mental Health Nursing 19, 395-401. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2850.2011.01807.x*

INTRODUCTION: This audit reviewed current practice within a rural mental health service area on the monitoring and documentation of side effects of antipsychotic depot medication. A sample of 60 case files, care plans and prescriptions were audited, which is 31% of the total number of service users receiving depot injections in the mental health service region (n = 181). The sample audited had a range of diagnoses, including: schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, bipolar affective disorder, depression, alcoholic hallucinosis and autism.

RESULTS: The audit results revealed that most service users had an annual documented medical review and a documented prescription. However, only five (8%) case notes examined had documentation recorded describing the condition of the injection site, and alternation of the injection site was recorded in only 28 (47%) case notes. No case notes examined had written consent to commence treatment recorded. In 57 (95%) of case notes, no documentation of recorded information on the depot and on side effects was given. The failure to monitor and record some blood tests was partly attributed to a lack of clarity regarding whose responsibility it was. A standardised checklist has been developed because of the audit and this will be introduced by all teams across the service.

Walsh, F., Cleary, A. & Dowling, M. (2012) *Maximising psychiatric nurses' contribution to interdisciplinary working. British Journal of Community Nursing 17(6), 270-275.*

INTRODUCTION: Internationally, the deinstitutionalisation of psychiatric care has resulted in expanded roles for mental health nurses within a community interdisciplinary team setting. This presents an opportunity for mental health nurses to improve service delivery. This opportunity also results in a more empowered nursing team. This article identifies change issues within one community psychiatric nursing team and the team's contribution to an improved service delivery where service users can avail of same day assessment for crisis referrals, a reduction in waiting times for assessment and coordinated delivery of care with an identified key worker utilising a recovery model philosophy.

Gaffey, K., Evans, D.S. & Walsh, F. (2016) *Knowledge and attitudes of Irish mental health professionals to the concept of recovery from mental illness - Five years later*. **Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing** 23, 387-398. DOI: 10.1111/jpm.12325

INTRODUCTION: A study of Irish mental health practitioners (Cleary & Dowling 2009) identified the need to improve knowledge and attitudes towards recovery. This led to the Advancing Recovery in Ireland Project (ARI), which promoted recovery-orientated services and a need to 'benchmark' progress. There is little evidence regarding the types of educational interventions that maintain positive recovery knowledge and attitudes in providers.

AIM: The study assessed current knowledge and attitudes to recovery.

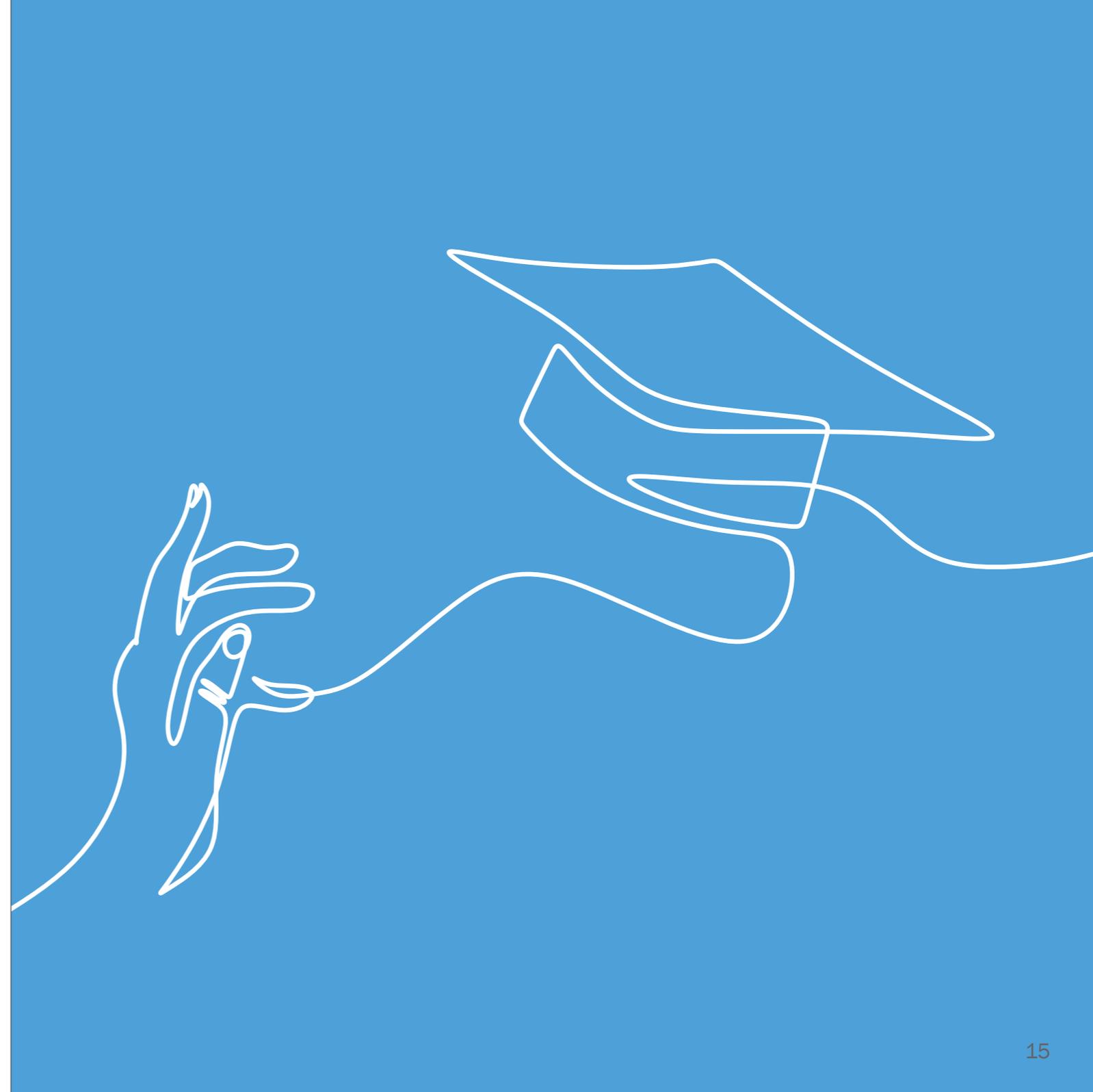
METHODS: The methodology of Cleary & Dowling (2009) was replicated. A survey was administered to practitioners (n = 337) using the adapted Recovery Knowledge Inventory (RKI) (Cleary & Dowling 2009). Results: No significant differences were found in recovery scores compared to Cleary & Dowling (2009) or by level of experience. Working in dual settings, being a non-nurse, and training was associated with better recovery scores. Significantly more respondents had received training in recovery (40% versus 23%) compared to Cleary & Dowling (2009). Training appears to be the strongest factor predicting better recovery knowledge.

CONCLUSIONS: There is considerable scope to improve recovery knowledge. Key recommendations include the need for more recovery training, using 'Recovery Champions', introducing peer support workers and developing local policies and protocols to support recovery working.

Walsh, F., Meskell P., Burke E. & Dowling M. (2017) *Recovery based training in mental health: Effects on staff knowledge and attitudes to recovery*. **Issues in Mental Health Nursing** doi: 10.1080/01612840.2017.1346014.

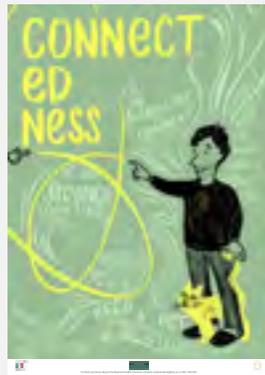
INTRODUCTION: This longitudinal study describes the effects of recovery-based training on staff knowledge and attitudes to recovery. Mental health staff (n = 101) completed the study questionnaire (the Recovery Knowledge Inventory (RKI-20) and Recovery Attitudes' Questionnaire (RAQ-16)) before training and after six months. On the RKI, significant changes between pre- and post-training scores ($p < 0.01$) were found. On the RAQ, the scores showed significant changes in Factors 1 ($p < 0.001$) and 2 ($p < 0.009$).

RESULTS: The results indicate a significant difference in confidence using a recovery model of care following training suggesting that recovery-based training positively affects staff knowledge and attitudes to recovery overall.



Understanding Recovery Through CHIME

Francis saw the benefit of CHIME as a mechanism for achieving and supporting recovery in his own practice and in supporting our mental health services across Ireland to become more recovery focused. Francis was involved in many different initiatives that supported recovery through the processes of CHIME, a framework devised by Mary Leamy et al, 2011.



'C' stands for Connectedness.

Having a sense of being understood and supported through our connections with other significant people in our lives.

Connectedness can be developed through Learning Sets learning and sharing and meeting with others; when families experience Family Recovery; and linking in with community organisations.

“Having supportive others, whether they are family members, professionals, community members, peers, or animals, to provide encouragement through the difficult times and to help celebrate the good has been noted as being critical to recovery” - Davidson (2009)



'H' stands for Hope.

Having a belief that good times will come again and that there is a reason to have a sense of optimism in our lives.

Hope can be experienced through recovery education workshops and at peer support groups through shared recovery experiences.

“Hope is the thing with feathers, that perches in the soul, and sings the tune without the words and never stops at all.” - Emily Dickinson



'I' stands for Identity.

Having a positive sense of self and knowing that we are more than a diagnosis or a label.

Identity can be strengthened through coproduction opportunities where we can feel valued for our contributions, and taking part in local engagement forums.

“So, I guess we are who we are for a lot of reasons. And maybe we'll never know most of them. But even if we don't have the power to choose where we come from, we can still choose where we go from there.” - Steven Chbosky



'M' stands for Meaning.

Having a purpose in life and day to day meaning in what we do.

Meaning can be found in all sorts of ways, including peer support, volunteering in our community, and in employment opportunities such as IPS (Individual Placement Support).

“Every individual matters. Every individual has a role to play. Every individual makes a difference.” – Jane Goodall



'E' stands for Empowerment.

Having an inner belief that we are deserving of what we need, that we can stand in our own truth, be strong in who we are and get what we need for ourselves, taking control of our own lives and our own recoveries.

Empowerment can be experienced through housing supports; recovery colleges and education services where we learn together about what is important for our recovery and by setting and achieving goals for ourselves.

“Education is the foundation for our future. It is empowerment to make choices and emboldens the youth to chase their dreams.” - Nita Ambani



Portumna Forest Park, Co. Galway

We Think of You Often

(An Ode To Francis Walsh)

~

Dear Francis, we think of you often
You live on in peace in our hearts
Breathing the same breath, speaking the same words
Hope, Conversation, Empowerment, Choice and Respect

Dear Francis, we think of you often
When we can't find our way and hope fades like the evening sun
You appear like the North Star
Guiding us back to the true purpose of our journey

Dear Francis, we think of you often
When people who never got the chance to meet you
Chime with joy, just as you did
At the prospect of a full and meaningful life for everyone

Dear Francis, we think of you often
Sometimes in sadness
But mostly in love and gratitude for the time you spent with us
And the beautiful light you shone into our lives

- Billy Clarke -

~

Francis,

*you were a true friend
and a champion of recovery.*

We miss you.

~



A great colleague ... and friend

~

When I think of Francis and CHIME, I think of how he encouraged people to participate and use their identity to make a difference. He was an advocate of coproduction and made sure that we always had meaningful representation and participation from all perspectives at our meetings while developing recovery initiatives. This was important to him, he saw the real value of it and supported this to happen.

Equally as important, Francis challenged people's perceptions of their own and others' identities. He encouraged people to push the perceived boundaries or limitations of being 'just' a family member or 'just' a person who used services and he often did this with the use of humour. He had a great sense of humour and some of my strongest memories of Francis are the times we laughed together.

He brought a warmth into a room with him and people were drawn to him because of this. People enjoyed being in his presence, enjoyed his energy and his sense of humour. He was able to put people at ease and bring out the best from them while always getting the work done.

I never realised how much Francis actually meant to me until he was gone, but I am very happy to have had him as a friend and colleague in my life. I can thank him for making me realise that the people I believed were good colleagues in my life are actually great friends and that I need to cherish those relationships and the value they bring to my life.

- Gina Delaney -



FEW THINGS HAVE SUCH A
HUGE IMPACT ON
HAPPINESS AND
THE ENJOYMENT,
DEPTH AND PLAIN
FUN OF LIFE
AS THE RELATIONSHIPS WE HAVE)

× × ×

A builder of relationships

~

We first met Francis in Sept 1999 in Tralee General Hospital, having all come from different disciplines of nursing to complete a post-grad in general nursing. Francis had completed his psychiatric nursing in Fairview in Dublin and we quickly built up what was to be a lasting friendship.

Francis was the kind of person we all looked up to, both in our personal lives and on our career paths. He always seemed to know the right thing to say and what needed to be done! He said it as it was...no frills..... just as we needed it! Frankie had an infectious smile, he was so witty and was great fun. There was a security about him.

Francis built up great relationships with the people he worked with and never failed to make everyone smile, whether they were the person in the bed or the nurse on her 7th twelve hour shift of nights.

During our time in Tralee between working and exams we managed some socialising too! We had some great nights out and Francis loved these nights, the chats, the laughs and dancing the night away. He was the rock of our group the one we all turned to. When our time in Tralee came to an end in 2001, we all went our separate ways. However our friendship remained and we continued to travel and catch up regularly.

Francis was the kind of person that made an impression on everyone. He was a great nurse, a wonderful son, brother and uncle and, to us, a fabulous friend. Our lasting memory of Francis is his sense of humour, his infectious laugh and his general ability to make us smile.

It was an honour to have been part of his life. Thank you for your wonderful friendship Frankie.....

We miss you

- Cathy, Lelia, Rosie & Belinda -

Fáilte  Welcome
Mionlach
MENLOUGH

YOUR SPEED
km/h

900

Menlough, Co. Galway - Francis's local childhood village

A true people's person - and my friend

~

I met Francis on my second day in work! I was attending a national event and was advised to sit beside the 'gang' from the West as they were friendly, and that was so true. I remember everyone who was at that table that day. For the first few years I was working nationally whilst Francis was based in Galway, but, boy, he knew what was happening across the country! He was an encyclopaedia of knowledge on mental health services, recovery, but most of all, people. He knew everyone! He was a people's person, making friends everywhere he went. When I look back something that stands out about his interactions with people was that it did not matter who they were or even who they represented, he treated everyone the same, always chatting, with his hearty laugh a key feature!

Francis joined our national team and with that our connection grew deeper and stronger. We connected with others but also with each other. Travelling across the country, we chatted freely about work, family, friends, holidays - Francis had a story for everything! Wherever we travelled, he knew someone's house on the side of a hill or down a road, Francis was connected to so many people across many counties. Our customary trips to Costa Coffee en-route to Dublin for our morning coffee started the day off, and depending on the mood a trip to the deli was also included! Our evening trips home from Dublin always included a

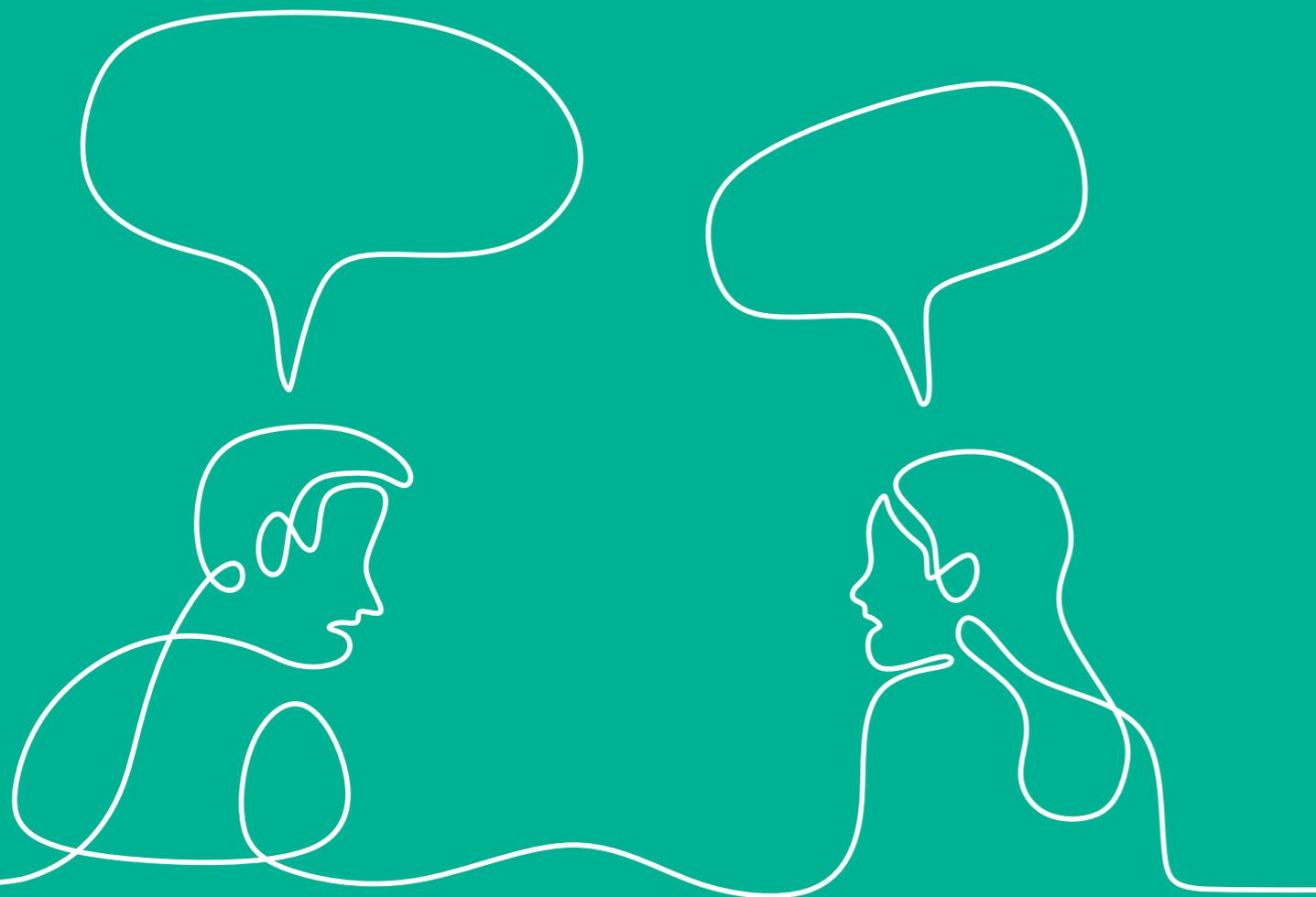
bottle of coke zero and, depending on how a particular meeting had gone, a bag of crisps.

When we weren't travelling, I would head to Ballinasloe to meet him, these meetings were planned around where we would get our breakfast and lunch. We enjoyed the socialising but the work always got done as well. On those trips too I learned how he was connected to his adopted town, always waving hello or pointing out someone he had supported, worked with or lived near. He knew so many and was known by so many. Francis was extremely organised, after we lost him someone said to me that he would have his actions from a meeting completed before they had even got back to their desk!

Francis taught me so much about mental health services and how we could support them to become more recovery focused. He knew the system inside out. He brought with him such a wealth of knowledge and insight. Francis has left such a gaping hole in our quest for Recovery focused services; his unique connection with people could never be replaced. I am so thankful for my friendship with Francis, the daily laughter with him and the mentoring he gave me without it ever being called that. For me, connection was so important to Francis in all of his interactions and relationships.

Francis, you were one in a million my dear friend





Pointing the way

~

Francis came into my life and career when I needed him most. As a recovery champion and a person with lived experience working within Mental Health Services, I found myself feeling rather isolated and alone. I felt at times I was the only voice, chiming on about recovery. I knew I wasn't, but I had lost that connection with other recovery champions and was losing my direction and motivation. Then along came the wonderful Francis, full of enthusiasm, energy and his can-do attitude that we all know him so well for. Francis was the Recovery Lead in our area, so we were blessed, and his recovery legacy is still making a difference to so many people's lives in

our area. Francis was inclusive, passionate and, most importantly, made everyone feel that they mattered and were heard. I miss him every day, but am eternally grateful to have been able to call him a friend and colleague and for the positive impact he had on my life and, indeed, so many others. Thank you for seeing me Francis, and bringing me back into the recovery fold. I hope I am doing you proud in the work that I do. You are an inspiration to us all. Rest in Peace, my dear friend.

You will always be in our hearts.

- Maria McGoldrick -

Area Lead For Mental Health Engagement & Recovery,
Community Healthcare West

Francis the Nurse

~

I was privileged to work alongside Francis for many years as a nursing colleague as part of the Loughrea/ Athenry Community Mental Health Team in East Galway where the values of Recovery Focused Care underpinned our multidisciplinary service delivery. These years saw his passion for service enhancement, embracing recovery principles develop and flourish and he had the vision and ability for promoting the contribution of nursing to the wider team. He had a fierce pride in his profession. I look at the chapter titles of this book and see how in his nursing leadership role he embraced and inspired us as a profession to be, connected, to always have the candle of hope lighting for ourselves and the service users. He inspired us to have a clear vision and belief of our identity within a MDT team, developing our roles to be meaningful and

sowing this seed in the student nurses who came on placement. Above all he empowered his nursing team to take responsibility for their work, make career choices, and encourage further education. He made us aware that if we did not embrace these attributes within ourselves as individuals and as a profession how were we going to promote them and empower others to do so for themselves. Publishing the contribution of nursing to Multidisciplinary recovery focused care helped share his vision for the profession to a wider audience, and a list of his academic work we penned together is included in this book.

To my friend and colleague, I am grateful to have known worked and learned from you. May you rest in peace.

- Anne Cleary -

Advanced Nurse Practitioner in Recovery and Rehabilitation in Psychosis
- Retired 2014





Influencing my life through CHIME

~

Francis touched me cerebrally by discussing and encouraging me to embrace an opportunity at a very busy time of my life in 2019. He was always a Recovery mentor and he took a keen interest in my professional development. He CONNECTED me with the opportunity through comment and advice which led me to consider change. He inspired HOPE within me by telling me how able and capable he thought I was to achieve more. My personal and professional IDENTITY was something he cared about and nurtured. This nurturing gave my life MEANING and purpose. He encouraged me to EMPOWER myself and inspired me to embrace and chase the opportunity. It turned out to be a real positive life changer and to Francis I am eternally grateful for giving me the confidence to take time out to take a chance at a very busy time.

- Peter Byrne -

Recovery Educator



The Fair Green, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway



Just like Francis

~

For anyone reading this who never had the opportunity to meet Francis it is difficult to capture in words the great person he was. He was one of the funniest people I knew and could make a whole room laugh; he had one of those larger than life personalities. When I relate him to the CHIME recovery process I think of each particular area and how he lived by those principles himself.

C - Connectedness: As evidenced from the many people I have spoken to, Francis was great for keeping in touch with friends and colleagues, whether it was by WhatsApp, meme, quick phone call about how you

were doing, followed by “while I have you now” can I pick your brain?” or “I’m passing through town - are you free to meet for a coffee?”. He made the most of every minute. He was a tremendous support to a lot of people along the way and did so privately. He was a confidant to so many people and they respected him for his trust as well as practical advice and friendship; these are qualities we can all practice ourselves in our everyday lives. He made a conscious effort to reconnect with people and realised the importance of it. We all need someone like this in our lives in order to feel valued and listened to and it is something we can all practice.

- Geraldine Hodgins -

“
**CONNECTION
IS THE ENERGY THAT EXISTS
BETWEEN
PEOPLE
WHEN THEY FEEL
SEEN, HEARD
AND VALUED**
”

Tokenism was not in his vocabulary

~

Knowledge on its own is useless unless you possess the wisdom to know when and how best to use that knowledge. Francis had both in abundance. His ability to connect and converse with either health professional, person who uses services or family member was a personal trait he had that most of us can only aspire to. Francis spoke with a smile that added meaning and strength to his words. He had communication skills that allowed people to connect in such a way that allowed us feel we were all equal. He valued the importance of lived experience and treated it the same as any qualification from any university or college. Tokenism was not in his vocabulary.

Co-production was an element of recovery that he lived. After co-producing a recovery education module some time ago with Francis I spoke to him about how challenging the process was for me. “Yea, but challenging in a good way” was his reply. He told me if it wasn’t challenging or if I wasn’t being challenged it wasn’t co-production. During all those co-production sessions his ability to listen to and understand all view points and then to connect everything together with such balance and dignity demonstrated his true leadership skills.

In those early days of recovery in Ireland, Francis saw the big picture and was already connecting the dots long before we could even see them.

- Greg Clark -



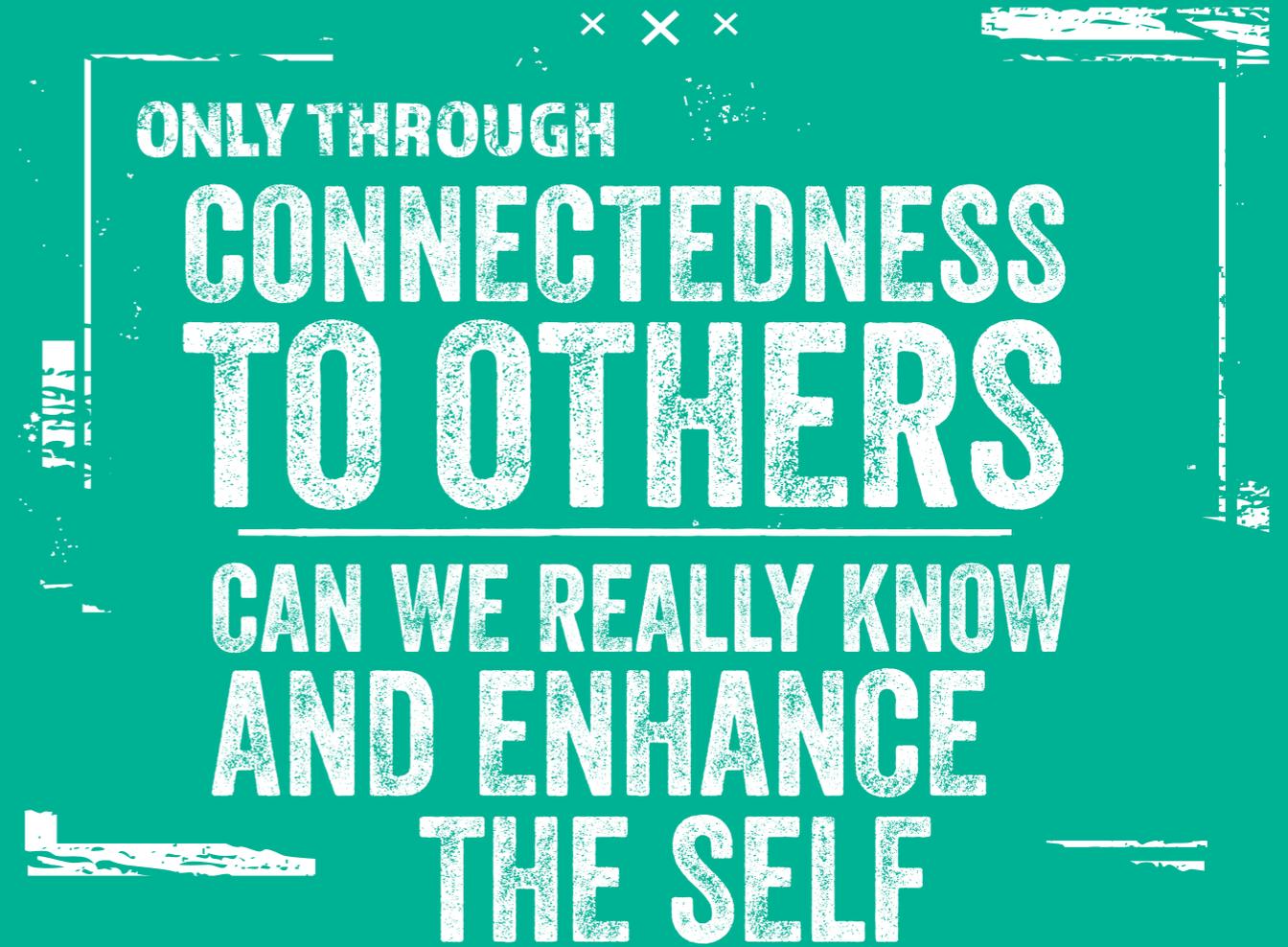
Leading through communication

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My every experience with Francis was marked by his warmth and generosity of spirit towards others. At a time where leadership was often defined by dominant, loud voices, Francis's softly-spoken manner made him far more successful at persuading hearts and minds, than many who went before him. It was clear that he understood the suffering of others – and not in a cold, distant, clinical fashion – but in that messy, personal and human way that maybe only comes from time invested in really listening to others. He certainly taught me that listening can be a more persuasive a way of changing minds than talking.

While most of the elements of CHIME can be applied to Francis, it is perhaps this sense of 'connectedness' that will stay with me from his approach. He understood that one of the greatest sources of healing lies in our ability to connect with each other, and his approach embodied this. In a way it is a consequence of the fact that he 'connected' with so many that he leaves such a legacy of positivity towards the ideas of Recovery and recovery-oriented practice. With thanks, Francis, Rest in peace.

- Dr Pádraig Collins -



EVERYTHING IS WITHIN
YOUR POWER,
AND YOUR POWER
IS WITHIN YOU

x x x

*An inspiration to me
every single day*

~

I only worked with Francis for 2 years but such was his personality that I feel like I knew him forever. We worked together on the National Family Recovery Advisory Group, and also some other initiatives. The first thing that inspired me about the group was the range of people involved and the level of commitment Francis inspired in people around him. Francis really understood the need to have a broad range of voices for proper co- production.

He really listened and encouraged me and was so complimentary about my contribution. I believe that encouragement help me feel empowered. Feeling like that enabled me to grow in understanding of family recovery. That sense of empowerment gave me the confidence to tell my story in Athlone at the Learning Set, Recovery - Together it Happens.

I am now better able to see my story from a recovery perspective even though not everyone in my family has fully recovered. I totally believe in the necessity for family recovery. If families are properly supported and educated this can avert a breakdown in family relationships. This can only be good for the person using services, their family or supporter, the service itself and society as a whole.

In late April 2020 my daughter and I made some videos for the international day of the family. Francis reviewed them and messaged me with such a nice comment This year I completed level 2 WRAP training and delivered my first course. I could not have done that in the past .

Reading this back I realise how far I have come and how I empowered feel. His amazing positivity has inspired me to continue working as a family member for the recovery families deserve.

- Patricia O'Dowd -

My Memories of Francis

~

I got to know Francis way back in 2013, during the Advancing Recovery in Ireland (ARI) pilot phase, when Roscommon and East Galway were chosen as a pilot site. Using the IMROC methodology framework, a group of individuals, people using services, family members and service providers, came together organically to select and deliver recovery projects in the west. Francis quickly became a key figure in advancing recovery in Galway and Roscommon and later became ARI lead for the whole region.

Francis was a naturally charismatic leader. His genuine passion for advancing recovery and bringing about change shone bright and people wanted to follow. As a leader, Francis was astute, brave and determined, overcoming barriers by letting common sense prevail, and rules bend but not break, in pursuit of positive change.

Francis had huge emotional intelligence and a finely tuned radar for the genuine article. He could chair complex and challenging meetings and forums with skill and warmth, allowing all involved, however disparate, to feel heard and affirmed.

When Francis took the National ARI leadership post in 2018, I worried that we in the west had lost our finest. It transpired however that Francis continued to be with and support us in myriad ways. His prolific work ethic and astounding energy somehow allowed him to continue to hold us whilst developing relationships and building recovery throughout Ireland. Francis was always loyal to his friends and ready to help shoulder their burdens as if his own.

Francis had a wonderful, wicked sense of humour and was great fun to be with. One could locate Francis in any building by following that effervescent voice and laughter.

His natural intelligence, people skills, gregarious nature and boundless energy and motivation, made him the ideal fit for the role. He was a wise manager of his own energy and creativity, ensuring regular holidays to replenish stores. Francis was one of life's rare and irreplaceable people, one of a kind for all the right reasons.

He enriched my life during the time I knew him and I thank him for that.

- Orla O'Duinn -





A leader with spirit

~

I had the pleasure of meeting & engaging with Francis many times over the last few years. Without fail Francis was always friendly, welcoming & displayed a lovely sense of humour which would put anyone at ease in his company. He also displayed an authentic enthusiasm about making positive change in the mental health services.

The first time I met Francis was back in 2010 when I was organising a public information talk for GROW on community mental health supports in Loughrea. I was very nervous about it as it was my first time organising a public talk and I didn't know anyone in Loughrea. I needn't have worried. I approached Francis & asked him if anyone from the Loughrea mental health team would be available to talk at the event. Francis said yes immediately. He organised everything in double-quick time. On the night of the talk he arrived with two other members of the MDT & gave a great presentation on the importance of recovery in the mental health services. Getting members of a mental health team to participate in out-of-hours events can be understandably quite difficult. This didn't put Francis off and I'm sure his powers of persuasion helped to convince the other team members to attend.

The night of the talk was cold, wet & wintery. The attendance suffered as a result. In fact there were probably more speakers than audience members. This didn't affect Francis' enthusiasm. He spoke to those few people with the same passion as if it was a full house. It was evident that he truly believed & wished for a more warm, welcoming and inclusive mental health service - a mental health service where everyone had a voice and where hope, recovery and compassion flourished. I was struck by Francis' unwavering optimism & positivity that night. I witnessed the same optimism & positivity on each subsequent meeting with Francis, whether that was in Tri-alogues, ARI groups, Recovery Principles and Practice workshops or the development of Galway Recovery College.

On reflection I realised that this would not have been an easy task for Francis. All of the above projects came with their own challenges and on many, many occasions there was resistance to change. In these circumstances going with the flow and accepting the status quo is the much easier path to take. Francis actively chose not to take that path. That took a huge amount of courage and inner strength, characteristics Francis had in bucket-loads. He will be sorely missed, but has left a lasting legacy - both in substance and spirit.

- Paul Clabby -

**IF YOU HAVE
A STRONG PURPOSE
IN LIFE**

**YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE PUSHED
YOUR PASSION WILL
DRIVE YOU THERE**

Two peas in a pod...

~

Francis, like myself, was someone who got it, this whole recovery thing, so when we first met, sometime in 2014, we connected instantly, similar backgrounds, reared on a small farm, small rural community, him of sheep and small stone walls, me of furze bushes and lots of rushes, both nursing from an early age, loved people, loved working with people and really wanted to make a difference in people's lives.

Francis was my hope and inspiration on the days when I felt like giving up, when the challenges at times overwhelmed me, and I felt alone on my journey, trying to navigate services and grow recovery approaches and practices.

On days like this Francis was the sounding board, the encyclopaedia, the go-to person, the professional, the comedian, but most of all, a great friend and colleague. I miss you, friend.

- Clare Fitzpatrick -

The smile that said so much

~

Francis a chara,

I can't remember when we first met, but the smile stayed with me as I know it did for so many more. The smile said so much without verbalising anything, it was innate, it was natural, it was human warmth, it was the epitome of a beaming smile.

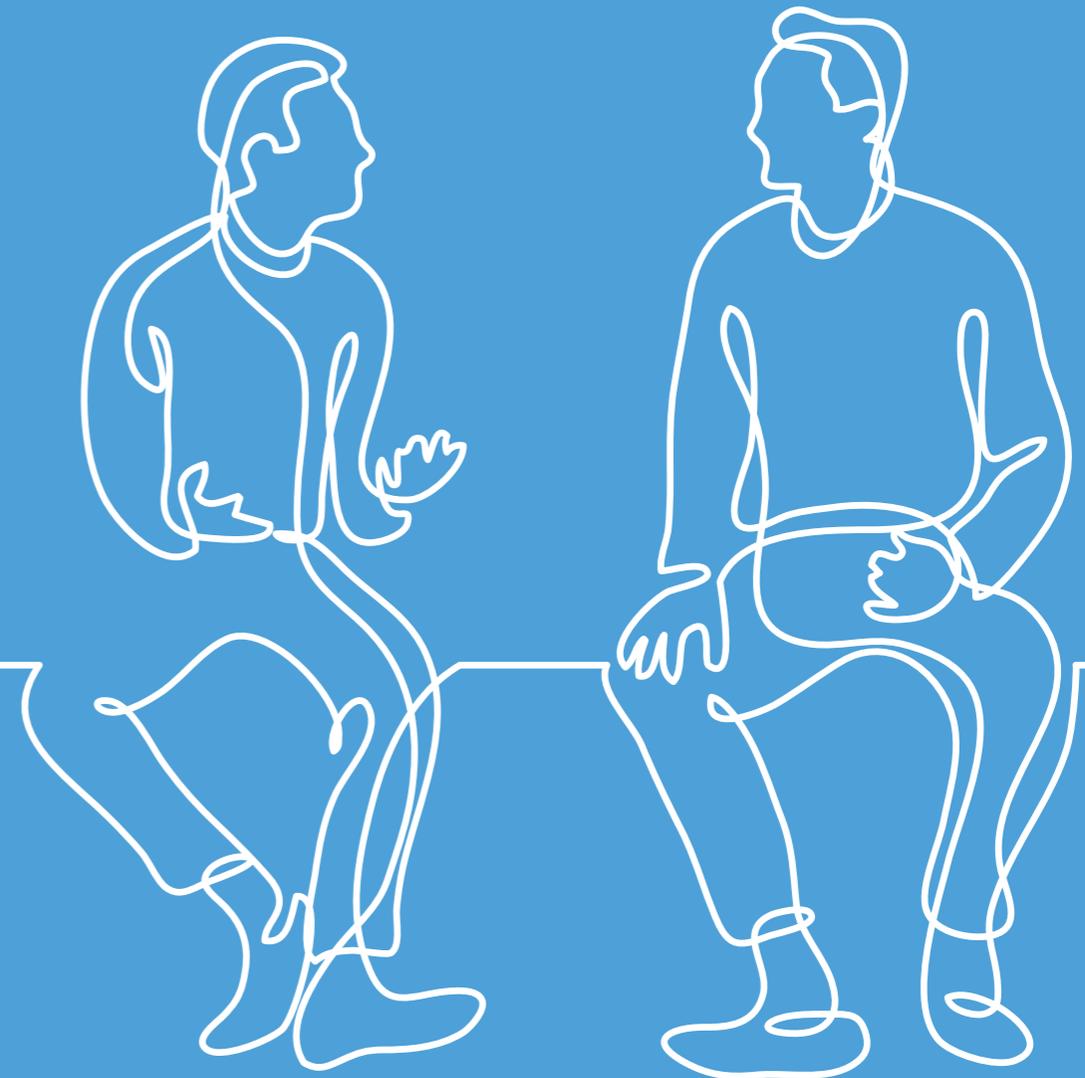
Over the years I got to know you better, got to know a small piece of the person behind the beaming smile. Always a laugh at the start of the meeting and then ever mindful, ever dutiful to the bigger picture, it was down to work. A laugh yes, absolutely, but now to work.

I remember listening to you at one point and imagined the people you would have nursed in the past. What warmth and light they must have felt from you when they were in the coldest and darkest of places, how they probably felt lifted when they saw it was you coming on to duty. We felt the same, those of us that had the privilege of working with you, we left the meetings lighter and brighter. You were bright because you cared. You were bright because you loved and we were lucky enough to have that beam fall upon us at times. It warmed us, fed us.

The shock that you had left was just that, a shock. It reverberated around the HSE and really did "stop all the clocks" so I can only imagine what a wrench to the soul it must have been to those that knew you well.

But in a myriad of ways you haven't left. The memories, the work, and the changes that you initiated are the inspiration of so much of what is carried on today and into the future. Still influencing, still beaming.

- Fergus Callagy -





A view of Pollnabrone, the townland where Francis grew up



Passion was his key

~

I first met Francis in the early 1990s when he commenced his training as a student nurse in St Vincent's in Fairview. We reconnected again in East Galway services when he came to Loughrea, Athenry Community Mental Health Team. Through his unique skills he quickly gained promotion to Clinical Nurse Manager II. It is difficult to try and describe these skills through a single CHIME recovery process as Francis didn't work in a singular way. Each and every day he went about his role with an unfailing passion that was underpinned by compassion for all he encountered, be it colleagues or people using services. He was instrumental in creating engagement between people using services, the community and the community mental health team well in advance of it becoming a national target. He had a unique ability to always find the strengths and positives in each individual that would enable a creative approach and gain better outcomes. I couldn't possibly confine Francis to one theme as he connected with everybody in the community whether at a local level in Loughrea or a national level. He didn't believe in seeing illness as debilitating and was always hope inspiring. He had the unique ability to be able to identify the potential in everyone and enable them to focus on their strengths and achieve things beyond even their own beliefs, whether people using services or staff. He had an underpinning philosophy of empowerment for all. I worked with Francis for many years and I can safely say that each day I met him was a happy day as he seemed to create joy and humour even in the most challenging times.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam

- Padraig O'Beirne -

Area Director of Nursing, Cavan Monaghan Mental Health Service

Encouraging my sense of self belief

~

I first met Francis Walsh in The Glen Royal Hotel in Maynooth, Co. Kildare while taking part in an Advancing Recovery in Ireland (ARI) project of co-production of Recovery Principles and Practices and Train The Trainer Level 6 course. Francis spoke with great knowledge, he was shy and nervous when it was his turn to address the group, but he openly admitted to being so. I remember his laugh made me laugh, as he had a cheeky schoolboy type of giggle which was contagious and heart-warming to hear, just like himself.

I next met Francis the following morning in the lift going to the conference room. He knew I was nervous, even though I was putting on a front and a smile and he said that I really needed to believe myself as much as he did. He told me that I had so much to offer this group and that my views and input were valuable and he could see that I had passion for the subject. Francis made a point of sitting beside me that day; his presence gave me an overall sense of calm and a real feeling of strength and a massive boost to my confidence. We spoke quite a lot that day; Francis encouraged me to face the conflicts of my past and to meet them head on and deal with them. I remember thinking 'how does he know I am struggling with past issues?' but Francis just knew, he could sense it. I took his advice and I have been working hard on myself since. Francis told me that my story and journey would help others, again he was right, as it has and will continue to do so. I no longer need medication for anxiety and life is pretty good for me at the moment. I still support people struggling at times with mental health challenges and/or outside stressors and also ask for support myself if/when needed.

Francis encouraged this hope, strength and self-belief in me and I will forever be grateful for our wee chats and his advice. I am no longer isolated, although I live alone, I seldom feel lonely as my mind is not cluttered due to acting on the advice Francis gave me.

- Margaret McCormack -

YOU CAN, YOU SHOULD,
AND IF YOU'RE
BRAVE ENOUGH
TO START, YOU WILL

“
**IDENTITY
CANNOT BE FOUND
OR FABRICATED
BUT EMERGES
FROM WITHIN
WHEN ONE HAS
THE COURAGE
TO LET GO**
”

Leaving a rich legacy ...

I first met Francis in the early 2000s. At that time he was working as a psychiatric nurse in a tiny mental health day hospital in Loughrea in Co. Galway. He was so warm, friendly and sincere to deal with. I mainly met him to get blood tests done but even then that multidisciplinary team were strongly recovery focused and, indeed, won an award in their early years in recognition of that. That team in general, and Francis in particular, encouraged and supported me to collaborate and work on recovery policy and practical implementation of that policy.

Francis helped create an environment where people using services or with lived experience of mental health difficulties and their family members could come together with the professionals in the HSE and be given parity of esteem. In a practical sense Francis was aware of financial constraints such as mileage needed for people having to drive significant distances across the counties in CHO West to attend these recovery planning meetings.

Francis spearheaded a very democratic approach to implementing recovery principles. We set up forums or information meetings in as many towns as we could. We looked at the 10 Recovery Principles covered by IMROC in the UK and we presented these 10 areas and then had all the people in the room: people using services, family members, mental health professionals vote on the top 3 or 4 we should try to implement. When detailed and quite expensive training was being arranged to be delivered in CHO West Francis insisted that it would not be limited to mental health professionals but also to interested people using services and family members. I was lucky enough to be one of the recipients of this WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) training and I spent such an enjoyable week at training sessions in Merlin Park and truly felt as an equal participant to the paid full-time mental health professionals in the room.

Francis's legacy will be our warm memories of him and the exceptional work he did in mental health recovery.

- Alan Keaveney -

Belief in Recovery

~

“I can feel things now, I can think clearly, I can figure things out” said one of the Recovery College students as she walked with me down the long hallway of GMIT in Castlebar. I smiled at her as she told me some of her story. I thought, ‘If these walls could talk, what stories would they tell?’. The walls being those of St. Mary’s Hospital, previously known as the “Asylum” when it opened in 1866 or locally known as “the Mental” from the 1920s to its closure in 2006. Now this big, beautiful story filled building was converted for use as the Mayo Campus of GMIT, proudly housing the Mayo Recovery College since 2014 onwards, the first Recovery College in Ireland at the time. Now here is this lady telling me simply how recovery education works for her. Her words meant more to me than the most insightful information.

When I told you this story, Francis, you too smiled, I cannot remember your exact words but you spoke about giving and receiving education and support that is true and empowering. You spoke about believing in people’s recovery and that they have the ability to take responsibility for themselves. Today, Francis, I will remember that it is my job to provide the vessel for that recovery to happen and have many a smile and a laugh along the way. You will never be forgotten.

- Karen McHale -

Peer Educator, Mayo Recovery College



*I was lucky
to have known him....*

~

I worked with Francis for a long time in Loughrea Day Hospital and would say that he was one of my best friends throughout my working career. He was brilliant to work with, always very professional but enjoyed a laugh even when things weren't going our way. He loved work and was very passionate about recovery and mental health. He had a great sense of humour and everyone would feel that you could always turn to Francis in a time of need. Outside of work we maintained a great relationship and he was always great for film or Netflix recommendations. Francis was kind, enthusiastic, dedicated to work and positive all the time. I was lucky to have known him and to have worked with him for all those years.

"Your life was a blessing, your memory a treasure, you were loved beyond words, and missed beyond measure"

- Aine Caulfield -

**IT'S NOT WHAT
WE HAVE IN LIFE,
BUT WHO WE
HAVE IN OUR LIFE
THAT REALLY
MATTERS**

Moving beyond the theory of recovery

~

I first encountered Francis Walsh at an Advancing Recovery in Ireland (ARI) workshop in Dublin. The objective of the workshop was to train facilitators for the roll out of Recovery Principles and Practice workshops in our respective community health organisations. I still use the example that Francis gave that day when he delivered his recovery narrative. His narrative had immense power and resonated with everyone in the room mainly because it wasn't asking us to undertake a seismic transformation or to change the world overnight; it was asking us to talk to people, elicit their views and preferences and create a service just within our sphere of influence that worked for everyone. Whether we realised it at the time, we had been introduced to the principle of co-production.

Francis could move beyond the theory of recovery because his narrative was grounded in real experience gained within the mental health services over many years. As you got to know Francis you learned that he was first and foremost a gentleman who was sensitive to the needs of those he encountered at every level. He was also a professional who was an extremely competent administrator who had the capacity to get things done. Francis' handprint rests on so many initiatives that we now take for granted. The training modules and resource materials relating to recovery principles training were in large part due to the tireless efforts of Francis.

Francis championed the involvement of people using services and family members in the coproduction and co-delivery of recovery principles and practice training throughout the country. It is recognised and borne out in the evaluation of this training that the recovery narratives had a major impact on staff who attended. This is yet another of his legacies to the mental health services.

There was one particular aspect of recovery on which Francis had very definite views on and that was the non-linearity of recovery. He understood this principle, upheld it, and emphasised that we must always believe in the capacity of people to recover and, if necessary, to recover again and again.

Ní bheidh a leitheid arís ann

- Pat Smyth -



Corrib River running through the Dangan / Menlough area of Galway

Francis' Impact on my Life

~

I met Francis when I was working with the Galway Volunteer Centre. We had co-produced a course with Esther Crowe Mullins in Peer Support to enable volunteers recovering from mental health challenges to support other people in a similar situation to volunteer as part of their recovery journey. Francis asked me to co-facilitate Recovery Principles and Practice workshops for HSE staff.

I had lived experience of a diagnosis of clinical depression after a brain injury, taking medication that made me feel like a zombie, struggling to convince my doctor to support me to come off the meds and, eventually, when he did, getting my life back into fairly good shape, although my confidence and self-esteem had been badly dented. I also had more than twenty years' experience of adult education and training and a QQI level 5 award in recovery in mental health. Yet, when Francis asked me to take part in recovery education in mental health – for staff! – I just didn't believe that I had sufficient knowledge, experience or expertise. Francis wasn't having any of that! Right from the start he treated me as an absolute equal, valuing my lived experience and community connections far more highly than I did at the time. I started taking part in co-facilitating Recovery Principles and Practice workshops and then in co-production and participating in the working group which was seeking to establish a recovery college in Galway. His solid, consistent, joyful support enabled me to empower myself to the point that I had as much faith in myself as he did. I will always be so grateful for this.

We would drive from Ballinasloe for meetings in Maynooth or Dublin and would be so engrossed in discussion that the journey just flew.

With Francis's encouragement I applied for the job of peer educator when the college was established and was thrilled to be offered it – the job of my dreams. The last two years have been the most fulfilled of my entire life. With Francis' support I always felt that I had someone to turn to in an organisation that isn't always easy to navigate. I'd call Francis with any concerns I had and he would say 'Trust your own thinking' or 'In the HSE it might be better to do X instead of Y' or 'Leave it with me and I will sort it' – and, if the latter, he'd 'sort' it within a day or two. I do have other good people on whom I can rely – but I will always miss Francis. Now if I have a concern my first thought is always "What would Francis say?" He always gives me a helpful answer!

With love and gratitude for a wonderful man

- Virginia Moyles -



“
**THAT'S HOW
WE KNOW WHEN A
CONNECTION IS REAL.
WHEN SOMEONE ELSE
PREVIOUSLY UNCONNECTED
TO US KNOWS US IN A WAY
WE NEVER THOUGHT OR
BELIEVED POSSIBLE**
”

*A genuine man of empathy
and compassion*

~

I was lucky enough to have got to know Francis over the last seven years. He was a man with a gentle caring nature who connected with you immediately with his warm friendly smile and that lovely west of Ireland accent.

When I met Francis I was new to recovery in mental health and felt a bit misplaced among all the other people involved. After attending services for more than twenty years there was a touch of paranoia and suspicion and a lot of mistrust on my part that I brought with me. Meeting someone as genuine as Francis who showed real interest in who I was and my story and who shared his life experience gave me the courage to continue with my journey towards recovery. I suppose I've learned that stories are a powerful tool for change, and Francis connected with me in a way that supported and encouraged me to share my story and reclaim my voice that had been silenced by shame and stigma. He never looked down on you; he had this ability to make you feel equal and involved and he would bring you into every situation. He was a man with enormous empathy and compassion who understood how much recovery meant to people like me who spent years looking for help with a long term mental health condition.

Francis had a gentle way of getting the best out of you. We really connected and it wasn't an effort because he genuinely cared about you and how you were doing whenever we met. He was definitely one of the good guys. I've got to a lovely place in my life and it's thanks to and deep appreciation of people like Francis who took the time and interest to connect.

- Mags Sweeney -

Always looking for the positive...

~

Francis always looked for the positive aspects in people, he empowered both service users and staff by focusing on their positive strengths, by encouraging them to partake in courses, further education, challenge themselves in order to build on their resources and learn new skills. By doing this it had the impact of improving self esteem, broadening the circle of friends, people began to believe in their abilities and felt empowered to make change, all because someone else believed in them. This is something I have tried to model in my own day to day interactions because of Francis.

- Geraldine Hodgins -





A view across Derrylissane Bog near where Francis grew up

**BELIEVE IN YOUR HEART
THAT YOU'RE MEANT TO
LIVE A LIFE
FULL OF PASSION,
PURPOSE, MAGIC
AND MIRACLES**

Pure Joy

~

I was blessed to experience Francis as my CNM2 in Loughrea for about 10 years - 10 years that I feel I never worked a day of, 10 years that totally changed me as a nurse and gave me the gift of Francis as one of my best friends in life until that unspeakable day we lost him.

Before Loughrea I'd never really heard of Recovery - he, and the amazing team there, totally changed that. Like watching a Master at work, I saw how he instilled hope and inspired confidence and self-empowerment in those who couldn't see it and taught them to have a renewed sense of themselves and purpose again. Francis connected with EVERYONE, he knew no divisions and where he saw them, he, 99.9% of the time, turned them on their head.

He fought tirelessly for fairness, opportunity for all and a voice for those who felt unheard, their families and supporters. He educated me and those around him through example, compassion, authenticity, common sense and, of course, that huge sense of fun. You laughed till you cried when you worked with Francis, but you went home in the evening a better nurse and a better person.

We had many nick-names for Francis, from "God" downwards! And we were delighted the day the new Pope was named after him! But to me he was always "Best Boss".

Thank you for everything dear Francis - pure Joy

- Mary McHugh -

Leading a winning team



For any of us who worked with Francis it was a privilege. I was privileged to work with him during the late nineties and early 2000's in what became the award winning community mental health team in Loughrea and Athenry. His dedication and skill as a nurse was obvious for all to see, and what set him apart was his calmness and kindness to all of us, staff and people who used the service. He developed the role of the nurse within the team, helping to bring interdisciplinary team working to a new level. Not only was he an excellent clinician, he was also an excellent manager and he found time to publish on his practice. His paper on 'Maximising Nursing Contributions to Interdisciplinary Working', I believe describes some of Francis's greatest contribution to Irish mental healthcare.

- Dr Anne Jeffers -



**YOUR GREATEST SELF
HAS BEEN WAITING
YOUR WHOLE LIFE;
DON'T MAKE IT WAIT
ANY LONGER**

One man made such a difference

~

There are not enough words to describe the positive effects that knowing Francis has had on my mental health journey and recovery. He was there from the start of a difficult time up until my life changed for the better. We first met when Francis was a young nurse and had to call to my home as I was refusing to take my medication. There was just something about him and the way he gently spoke to me that you just knew you could trust him. He even managed to persuade me to get support and go to the hospital.

Over the years I met him many times at outpatient clinics in Athenry and Loughrea. Just seeing him there gave me a sense of security, here was a friend onside! Fast forward to my last stay in hospital (I hope) in Galway in 2016, when I came across an ad for Advancing Recovery in Ireland (ARI). I took the number, months later I rang and Francis answered. We met for lunch and he explained about Roscommon East Galway Advancing Recovery in Ireland (REGARI) and how I could actually contribute!! I signed up and attended modules in Loughrea, going on to train and co-deliver. I even got to co-deliver a module with Francis! He also encouraged me to train to be a facilitator for the Eolas Project.

Francis had the gift of bringing out the best in people. He could see what we couldn't see in ourselves. He turned mental health challenges into a turning point for many. Francis was also a lot of fun and his sunny disposition and huge smile broke through the barriers of mental health difficulties. I've met so many people on the road of recovery and Francis is one shining star I will never ever forget. He. Made. A. Difference.

- Martina Forde -

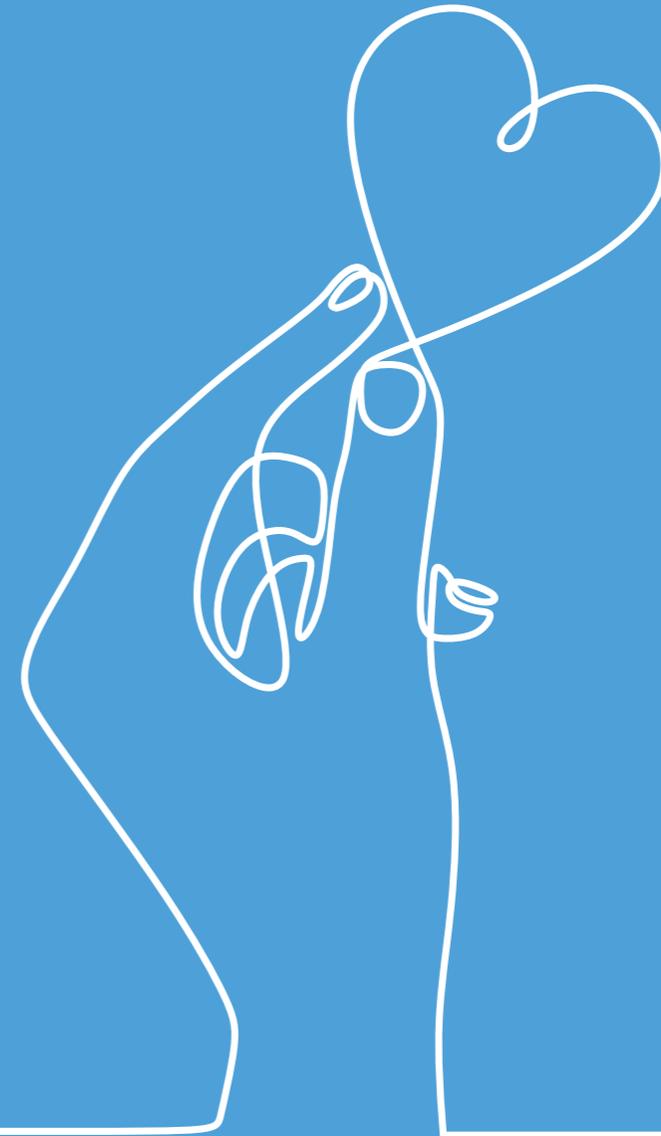
A great human

~

Spending time with Francis both on a personal and business level was always a pleasure, as he was a great human being. He was empathetic, caring and always willing to listen. He always answered and returned phone calls when I needed advice. Nothing was a problem for him. He was great for the laugh which was so important through tough times for him at meetings etc.

He gave me hope and encouraged me in everything I was involved with throughout my time working with ARI, both at local and national level. I will be for ever grateful to dear Francis and will always cherish the time I shared with him. Rest in peace.

- Evelyn McHugh -





In memory of Francis - student turned teacher

~

When I heard the heart-breaking news of Francis' untimely death, I was taken back to the times we spent together in St Vincent's Hospital Fairview. Francis was starting out his career in mental health nursing and I was a 'relatively' young nurse teacher. We were both from rural parts of Galway and often noted how the 'maroon and white jersey' gives people an immediate connection once they cross the Shannon. When Francis and I left St Vincent's we lost contact; some years later however he came back into my life through his involvement with the EOLAS programme and his work as National Engagement and Recovery Lead.

While I may have been Francis' teacher and mentor at the outset of his career, in the latter years the

roles reversed. As I write this, I can feel his gentle presence and hear his infectious laughter. Francis was an inspiring guy, full of passion, commitment and a belief in the power of each one of us. Each encounter with him was a peaceful pleasure; he certainly knew how to create and hold a space for constructive and empathetic dialogue, while engendering lots of laughter. His very way of being was a constant reminder to me of the importance of respectful and compassionate connection, courage in the face of adversity and above all, as they would say in the west, pure decency. Although Francis walked lightly upon this earth, he left a big footprint on my heart and soul. May you rest in peace.

- Agnes Higgins -

Professor in Mental Health , School of Nursing and Midwifery, Trinity College Dublin



Francis, my friend!

~

Francis taught me the real meaning of CHIME in my life and my work. Through his example he influenced my thinking around CHIME and how it fits with my life.

Connection – Francis reminded me what connection means in my life. He made instant connections. His smile lured you in. The way he spoke, the fun and laughter. The why connection was and is so important. Connecting is the first rung on a ladder of recovery. Francis taught me that the value and meaning of connection can never be underestimated.

Hope – The last thing left in Pandora's box was hope and Francis made me realise that no matter how many times we get knocked back there is always hope that things can and will change for the better. I saw how Francis supported people in their search for hope and how he held hope for people when they couldn't find it for themselves.

Identity – To make sure that we are truly recovery focused we need to examine who we are. Francis demonstrated that when he told his narrative and how

his way of working and being changed through true coproduction. I remember the first time we spoke about our narratives and how I found it strange to look inwards but I had to do that to really understand what identity in recovery meant for me.

Meaning and purpose – Francis walked the talk. His passion, energy, humour, commitment and ability to bring everyone on the journey together provided such meaning and purpose in his life and by association he taught me how this is where values and culture change.

Empowerment – Being in the same space as Francis gave me a sense of empowerment. You knew he had your back and wanted you to be the best you can be. The impact he had on so many lives including my own will never fade but will continue to pollinate and blossom. He has left a lasting legacy and any of us who have been touched in any way through our interactions with Francis will continue to blaze that trail in his memory.

- Catherine Brogan -

Our last encounter...

~

"Sorry I'm late, Francis," I said as I sat beside him in a café in Roscommon.

I didn't know it then, but it'd be the last time I'd ever see him.

"Are you alright?" he said. *"You look flushed."*

"I came across a car accident, a mother and a baby, and I had ta stop," I said

"GOD. Are you alright? Are they alright?" he asked.

"I'm sound, but the poor mother is in shock. She wouldn't let go of her baby for dear life," I replied.

"Mothers, always protecting," he said. I nodded in agreement.

"I love me MAMMY," he said, followed by a big Francis Walsh chuckle.

"Me too," I said. *"Coffee, tea?"* he asked.

"Seeing as this is our last supper and you're moving on, I'll treat ya ta the breakfast," I said.

"Ah God," he said rubbing his belly. *"I'll be out pounding the roads again tonight."*

"And I'll have ta bring the dog for another walk," I said.

The waitress arrived and took our order.

"Are ya happy going ta your new job, Francis?" I asked.

"Ah, I am. It's time ta go, and they're a lovely bunch I'll be working with," he said

Later on, breakfast arrives.

"This looks great," he said slowly buttering his toast. *"Tastes even better,"* I said.

A woman squeezes past me to get to her table, and I spill my tea.

Francis reaches over and wipes the table clean. His phone rings.

"I have to go," he says gobbling breakfast.

"Best of luck in the new job, and ditch the long hours," I said.

"I'll try." He smiles.

"Make sure," I said.

"And you, don't forget ta walk the dog," he winked.

"I'll try." I watched out the window as Francis's car sped away.

- Pauline McNamee -



Sharing a great connection

~

I first met Francis when I joined ARI before we became the Mental Health Engagement & Recovery Team. Francis was organised, competent and efficient and was always first to return reports, stats or pieces of work, usually before the deadline. Before we met in person I was convinced that Francis would be distant and introverted because he was so organised and efficient - but the person I met was empathic, warm and companionable.

He was a champion for the rights of people using services and family members and was an advocate for recovery focused services and of co-production and co-facilitation by people with lived experience of mental health challenges.

After I moved on to a new job I thought I would miss having Francis on my team but I needn't have worried as we phoned each other at least once a week and shared daily WhatsApp banter. I'd like to think that I am a better person for having known Francis. I am inspired by the memory of his positivity, exceptional good humour and by his commitment and passion for his work.

I look back at photographs of myself and Francis and in every one we are hugging. I believe we shared a great connection.

In these days of COVID - 19 we all know of the importance to our mental health of feeling connected and of basic human touch and I am thankful every day for the time I shared with Francis. Sending big virtual hugs to a dear departed friend. Rest in peace Francis.

- Jackie Farrell -



**SOME PEOPLE HAVE
THOUSANDS OF
REASONS WHY
THEY CANNOT DO
WHAT THEY WANT TO,
WHEN ALL THEY
NEED IS ONE REASON
WHY THEY CAN**

A champion of recovery

~

I first met Francis when I came to work in Loughrea in 2005. From the start it was easy to see why so many people liked him. He was always bursting with energy, motivated, funny and a true, true professional. He always had our service users best interests at heart. He was so proud of the team he worked with, and demonstrated how to be a true team player, again with the service users best interests to the fore. He was brilliant at organising meetings, working groups, and always trying to better the service he worked in.

With the things mentioned above, you would think that Francis would be a very serious character, but to the contrary, he was able to conduct business with a light hearted approach to “getting things done”. He would often tell stories of his experiences, and there would always be a humorous angle to what was being told. It is not surprising that Francis went on to work in a recovery based occupation after leaving Loughrea.

I, myself was tasked with the job of trying to replace him at the Loughrea Day Hospital, as CNM2, I task that overwhelmed me, I don't mind saying. Trying to fill Francis shoes, or attempt to follow in his footsteps.

But as per usual, Francis made himself available on the phone, and in person, to reassure me, and offer guidance with my role, and reduce my anxieties. (it never seemed like a hassle to him)

I could fill pages about stories Francis would tell, but I am going to finish with what I believe Francis has done for recovery, and the Mental Health Services as a mental health professional. He is the symbol of recovery, patient focused, instilling hope and demonstrating that if you treat people as people, anything can be achieved.

He leaves mental health services in a better place, after his efforts and time spent in nursing. He had some funny sayings like “voluntary/ mandatory” “positive negativity”

I'll leave you with a quote from Francis himself,

“ if you attend our services, our aim is to give you the best service possible. We might not have all the answers, and if we don't, we will do our best to find them”

May his gentle soul rest peacefully. Is mise le meas.

- Paul Moran -

Our time was but short....

~

I met Francis for the first time when I started working with the Mental Health Engagement and Recovery team in February 2020. I know I only knew Francis for a short time but it felt like I knew him forever and I want to let people know just how caring, supportive and funny he was to me and how grateful I am to have met him. I was nervous meeting the team but Francis made me feel very welcome immediately. Shortly before I started working with Mental Health Engagement and Recovery I had lost my mother and I would talk to Francis about her and how the loss had made me feel. Francis was so easy to talk to and he would speak with me about my mother like he knew her too, which was really nice.

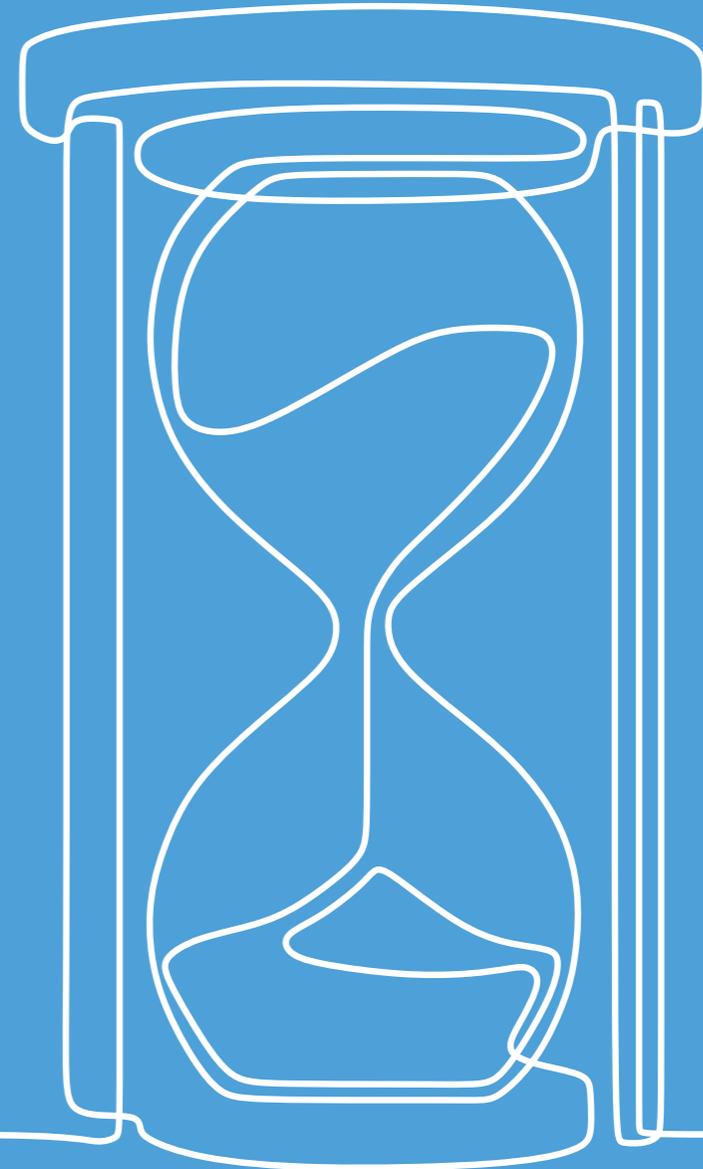
A couple of weeks after I started working alongside Francis we went in to lockdown and we were all working from home. I was feeling overwhelmed, still grieving the loss of my mother, missing close contact with my Dad and not being able to support him with his grief, plus starting a new job where I was still finding my feet and hadn't had the chance to meet everyone. I would speak to Francis about this and he would put me at ease. Francis rang me to check in with me to see how I was getting on with work and to see if there was anything

I was unsure of. He would say to me "it's not the best start for ye is it? But don't worry, we will get there and we are all here to help".

He was always at the end of the phone when I needed advice and support on something. Francis called me during the week in relation to work but made sure he called me on Friday afternoons to see how I was, how my Dad doing as well and how my week had gone. We would laugh at all the eating we were doing during lockdown and how we would go on strict diets after it finished. I told Francis about the Zoom fitness classes I was doing with my sisters and he would have a proper belly laugh when I would tell how there was more rhythm in a damp cloth than me and that I thought my sisters only invited me to the classes to laugh at me. He would tell me about going to the shops and spending €20 there and getting home and realising how only €4 of it was on healthy stuff and the rest was goodies.

I know I didn't know Francis for very long but I will be forever grateful to him for all he did for me in that short time. Francis, you will always be remembered for being professional, funny, kind, supportive - and for that amazing belly laugh. Thank you.

- Debbie Murphy -



He changed my life for the better

~

There probably hasn't been a day that has gone by since May 8th 2020 that I did not think of Francis Walsh. He changed my life for the better, more than he ever knew.

Francis... you were amazing. A guiding light, a beacon of positivity and change in a stagnant world. You inspired me. You taught me to believe that positive change was possible, that it was the right way. That while we could never change the past, we could improve both the present and the future. You taught me about Recovery in mental health services. You were amazing, compassionate and real. We spent many hours together travelling to workshops in Dublin. You were always so open and honest and I really miss being able to call you for a chat or some advice. You were the A+ student in the course we took, but still so humble. We joked about normal stuff and your love of horses and good craic were similar to my own. I will never forget the day you died. I cried so much and still think of you daily.

I try to live like I think you would have if you had known that your life was to be cut short... make the most of every opportunity... life is too short. I miss you so, so much Francis. I hope you knew how much you meant to me.

- Antoinette Gallagher x -

“HOPE IS THAT THING
INSIDE US THAT INSISTS,
DESPITE ALL THE
EVIDENCE TO THE CONTRARY,
THAT SOMETHING BETTER
AWAITS US IF WE HAVE
THE COURAGE TO
REACH FOR IT AND
TO WORK FOR IT AND TO
FIGHT FOR IT”

“HOPE FINDS THE SEED
AT THE BOTTOM
OF YOUR HEART
AND BRINGS FORTH
A FLOWER”

A true believer in 'Recovery'



I was really saddened by Francis's sudden passing. He was someone that I got to know really well since I joined the service in 2016. He was a go-to person for me as I was returning to work in mental health services after an absence of 14 years. The concept of Recovery was new to me at the time and Francis was someone who instilled in me a genuine belief of its value and its place within the development of services. He emphasised the need for organisational commitment that puts Service User lived experience, coproduction and education for staff and Service User's central to the development of a recovery orientated service.

Francis had a genuine belief that every individual had the capacity to recover and was able to influence at all levels of the service and provide real leadership in bringing around that change. He was able to connect with everyone and was central to advancing the concept of Recovery in Community Healthcare West. He was a remarkable man and helped progress many of our excellent services during his time with us. He also provided leadership at a national level and has left a proud legacy behind him. Francis was a highly valuable and respected member of our service; he was good humoured and had a great way of connecting with others. He was a great listener and good story teller and was a highly valued member of our team.

He is sadly missed. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam.

- Charlie Meehan -

Head of Service, Mental Health, CHO2:Galway, Mayo and Roscommon

A natural leader with vision...

~

I first met Francis in 2005 when I joined the Community Mental Health Team in Loughrea, as a Social Worker. He was welcoming, respectful and inclusive; he had a great understanding of and enthusiasm for multi-disciplinary working in Mental Health. Whilst understanding the value of different roles on the team, he was also flexible. Many of us on the team began and continued on our recovery journey with the Loughrea team, and Francis was an integral part of that journey, with work completed on multi-disciplinary working, care planning and care coordination. He also led out on co-producing a mission statement for the team. A wonderful communicator, he naturally brought people with him.

Francis's work with ARI and then Mental Health Engagement and Recovery highlighted his skills and his capacity to embed and enhance principles of Recovery in the Mental Health Services. His capacity to build connections and bring people together. Francis, the great leveller....whoever you were, User of services,

Family Carer, Consultant Psychiatrist, Social Worker, you got the same Francis. Open, warm, genuine, fun and so, so skilled. His enthusiasm and passion for Recovery in Mental Health and his belief and passion in the value of what clinicians on the ground could bring to Recovery conversations. Crucially, the bridge he effortlessly built between Service Providers and those with, and open about, their lived experience of mental health challenges.

I profoundly miss his presence and influence in mental health services. I find myself wanting to phone him and ask him about new recovery initiatives and challenges I'm facing. I regularly find myself saying to colleagues "if Francis was here.....". There is a void left by his passing, one that will be incredibly hard to fill. I feel lucky and privileged to have been able to spend so many years with him in my life, both professionally and personally. Francis, you are missed by so many.

- Paula Street -

**EACH CONTACT WITH
ANOTHER HUMAN
IS SO PRECIOUS
ONE SHOULD
PRESERVE IT**

“
**IF YOU ARE WORKING
ON SOMETHING THAT
YOU REALLY CARE
ABOUT,
YOU DON'T HAVE
TO BE PUSHED.
THE VISION
PULLS YOU**
”

A true Recovery champion

~

“So you can drive and we can have a chat along the way”, was one of my fondest memories of Francis as we drove across from Galway to University College Dublin on one of our invitations to talk everything Recovery with the post-graduate mental health nursing students. These trips to Dublin occurred once a year and were full of laughs and interesting conversations between us. I had come to know Francis in the early days of the Advancing Recovery in Ireland (ARI) project back in 2013. Working in the Dublin South Central site at the time, I remember first meeting Francis at one of the national learning sets organised as part of the ARI project. The ARI learning sets were an opportunity to network and meet people from other sites in Ireland. I remember having an instant admiration of the passion and charisma that were profoundly natural to him.

Relocating to Galway a few years later, I reconnected with Francis in our shared passion for Recovery and nursing. I remember having many fascinating and enriching conversations with him on the topic of Recovery. Francis always had a way of empowering people, whether through his presence, natural charisma

- or by having the difficult conversations if needed. When I heard the news of Francis moving to the national Recovery role I was absolutely ecstatic. It was great to hear that his skills would aid in the national development of Irish mental health services.

As I write this reflective piece, I think of his ability to empower others. I think of the current mental health nurses listening to Francis talk about Recovery when we were guest presenters to them as post-graduate students. I see the legacy of Francis when I work with the Recovery colleges in Galway and Roscommon. Most importantly, I see the imprint that Francis left on me when it comes to Recovery. This continues in my work whether co-facilitating with the Galway Recovery college, teaching undergraduate mental health nursing students or facilitating the QQI Recovery in Mental Health module I run in the Centre for Nursing and Midwifery Education (CNME) Galway for healthcare staff.

Francis was an inspiration. I am glad to have had the opportunity to know and work with him.

- Brendan Power -

Mental Health Nurse Tutor: Centre of Nursing and Midwifery Education Galway



The drive home ...



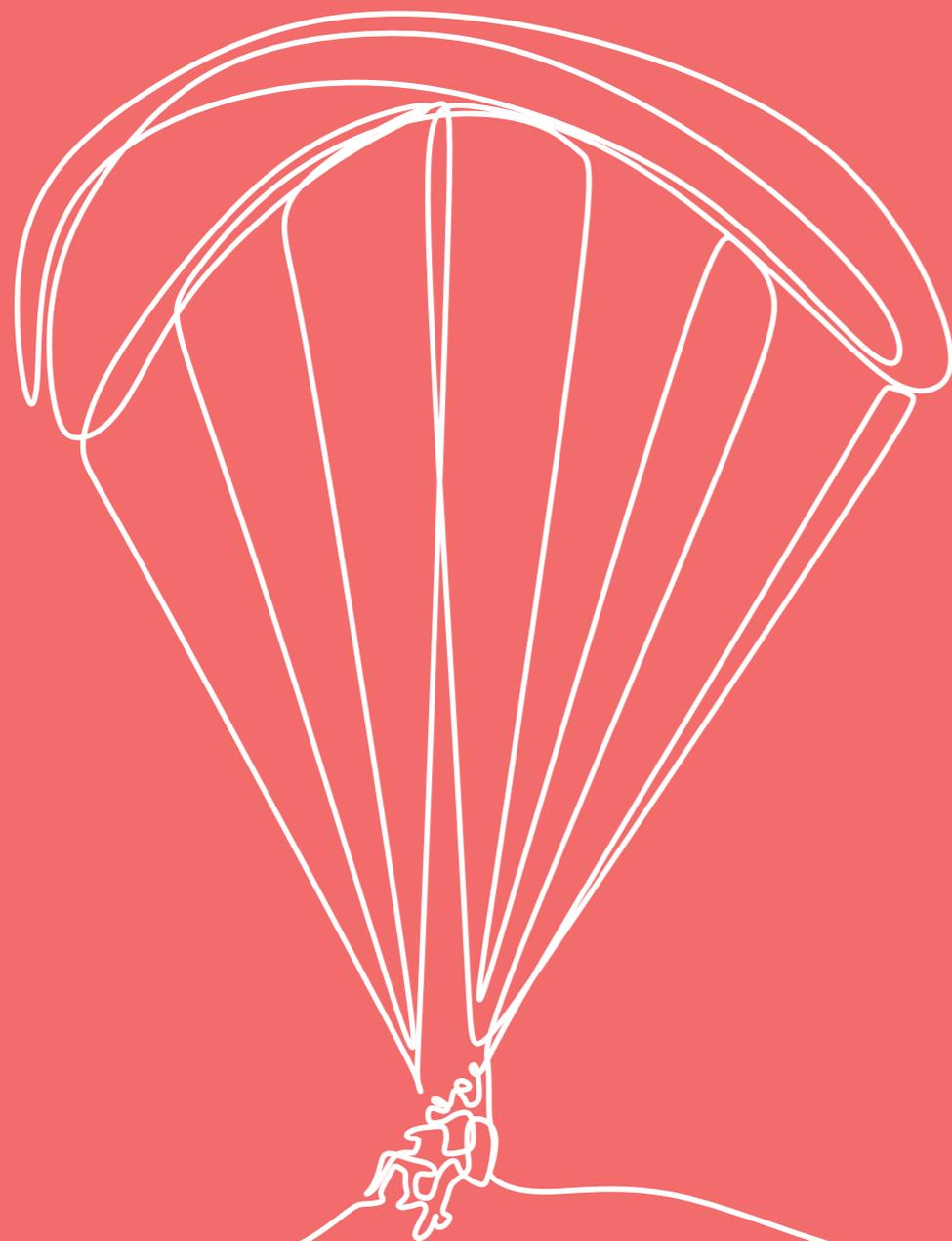
A trail of beautiful memories



I met Francis for the first time in the Loughrea Day Hospital in 2009. From that day on I can only say that it was a complete and utter joy to know and work with Francis. Francis took his job very seriously but he always had time for a laugh and plenty of them we did have, we even shed the odd tear. Francis taught me how to empower service users to reach their full potential, to achieve goals and support people using the service to empower themselves to reach their full potential and achieve their goals. Francis was truly inspirational to all that knew him and he will be fondly remembered.

“A life that touches others goes on forever”

- Geraldine Curley -



A vision for life... through recovery

~

There are many adjectives that you could describe you, Francis; astute, sharp witted and intuitive, all characteristics of the visionary that you were. But you never sought the limelight; instead, just preferred to bask in the rays of hope achieved through consultation and collaboration.

Time passed quickly in your presence; your practical and sound advice was always valued and valuable, thinking outside the box a speciality. But most of all your humility and sense of humour were ever present. The words of the Persian poet Rumi express a fitting tribute more succinctly than I ever could: You are not a drop in the ocean but an entire ocean in a drop.

- Kieran McMahon -

He was the Elite



Francis has been an inspiration to all walks of life,
Never seeking out any trouble or strife,
His friends and colleagues always the same,
Never looking for any praise or fame.

He was always joyful, happy and obliging,
Never came across as whingeing or whiney,
Always supportive to all he did meet,
Never boastful or authoritarian to those in Barrack Street.

Never shy but always discreet,
Twas a pleasure to know Francis,
He was the Elite.

- Catharina Furlong -



'Transformation in Recovery'

~

I first heard about Recovery in 2014, at a time when I was experiencing severe mental health challenges.

I had been out of work for several years as a result, and my life revolved around doctors' appointments, hospitalisations and medication. My housing situation was precarious and I was in constant fear of homelessness. I became reliant on the medical model of care, wanting to be cured or saved and I didn't have any motivation to do anything for myself. Eventually I sought support by attending Aware support meetings, where a chance overheard conversation about an upcoming course on peer support set me on a path that would change my life completely. I also started psychotherapy, which became an anchor and a focus for me for several years. This led me on to train as a peer supporter, and to go on to co-deliver a QQI Level 5 course on peer support. Gradually my confidence grew and I went on to train as a facilitator with Aware and Shine.

Meanwhile I started getting more involved with Recovery projects. I was drawn to the idea that someone like myself could take responsibility for my life, that I was the expert and that I could empower myself. This was the beginning of my own recovery journey which was to bring about a profound transformation in me. I was lucky to have great support from people who believed in me when I did not believe in myself, and who held hope for me when I had none. I was able to make a full clinical recovery because of all this work and support. I am no longer on medication and I have plenty of support to keep well. I am living happily in a secure and lovely home. Through my own therapy process, I was inspired to become a psychotherapist, and have just finished my training. Back in 2014, when I first heard about recovery education, I dreamed about working as a facilitator in recovery education. Two years ago Galway Recovery College opened and my dream came true. It was the happiest day of my life. I am now in fulltime employment with the college, working in mental health, which I am passionate about.

I first met Francis in 2014, when he was encouraging people to set up a consumer panel for mental health in Galway. I was drawn to his enthusiasm and passion for recovery, and the possibilities for people like myself to change our lives. There was a great sense of equality about him... no airs and graces. He showed belief in me and encouraged me to train in Recovery Education, giving me many opportunities to get involved in what was, for me, an exciting and life changing project. He worked tirelessly, flying around the country supporting us all, never more than a phone call away. My last meeting with him was the open evening for Galway Recovery College and we were both bursting with pride and excitement. He was a pleasure to work with and such good fun.

I remember Francis every day - his passion and generosity helped me along the road to recovery.

- Teresa Nilan -



Francis, a leading light...

~

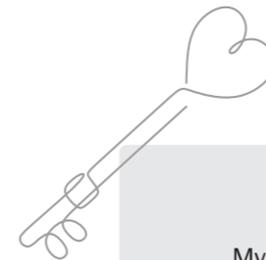


What a fabulous idea to commemorate a fabulous gentleman. I met Francis on a few occasions here in Kerry and at Recovery Principles and Practice events. On every occasion his passion and belief in Recovery shone through. Ar dheis Dé go raibh sé.

- Mary Young, HSE -

Francis had a way of making you believe in something. His approach to the work always made you feel included and you were guaranteed a laugh along the way. He was a great man to talk on the phone and many an evening both our dinners had got burnt by the time we had put the world to rights!"

- Catherine O Grady, HSE -



My deepest sympathies to the Walsh family on the sad loss of Francis. I had huge respect for him as a colleague; he was a leading light in the care of people with mental health difficulties. May he rest in peace.

- Ann King, HSE -

My sincere condolences to Francis' family and friends on this terrible loss. Francis was a ray of sunshine and it was always a pleasure to be in his company. He was so competent within his field and he combined that with an incredible positivity, good humour and a natural ability to put everybody at ease. He will be dearly missed.

- Poul Walsh Olesen, HSE -

I had the pleasure of working with Francis for a number of years when I started with the HSE. Francis had the kind of personality that could just light up any room he went into. He was a joy to work with - kind, supportive and passionate about the work.

I have not known Francis for as long as many people in this book have, but I am grateful to have known him for as long as I did. These stories are a testament to all the lives he has left a positive impact on.

- Michaela Meenaghan, HSE -



More kind words...

My sincerest sympathies to all of Francis' family. I shared a house with Francis a life time ago when he was nursing in Dublin!! He brought me to my knees with laughter on more than one occasion. He was the funniest person I ever met. May he rest in peace.

- Joanne Traynor -

Nancy, Mary, Danny & family, sincere sympathy on the untimely passing of Francis, A lovely man and and a marvellous ceili dancer. Rest In Peace.

- Anon -

My condolences and thoughts to his family and friends. Francis did so much for people in recovery and his kindness and empathy shone through as he implemented Recovery in the mental health services. He touched so many people's lives with a smile and showed passion in his work. He encouraged people who attended the services to be seen as equals on their recovery journey. Visitors to the Involvement Centres would like to thank him for his years of support and dedication to those in recovery and may he rest in peace. We will not forget him.

*- Belinda Coyle
Involvement Centres South East -*

It is with tremendous sadness that we have learned of the passing of our dear colleague Francis. Over the past number of years, Francis has been a huge supporter of Shine and his untimely passing has left everybody who worked with him in a state of shock and disbelief. His dedication and commitment to developing a mental health service that provides dignity and respect to all those who engage with it, will form part of a rich legacy that will be honoured and respected by all those who had the pleasure of knowing and working with Francis. As a person, Francis was a gentleman and his kindness and generosity of spirit were always evident, regardless of circumstances or the nature of the encounter. Everybody in Shine would like to extend our heartfelt sympathy and condolences to Francis' Family, Friends and Colleagues. May he rest in peace.

*- Shine Supporting People Affected
by Mental Ill Health -*

Sincere condolences to the Walsh family on the loss of Francis. A huge loss for people using services and tremendous loss for HSE. A truly great clinician that brought openness and wellbeing to mental health. Rest In Peace

- Joe Treacy -



...more kind words continued...

Francis Walsh, we will remember you with huge fondness and love. Your commitment and dedication to the development of recovery orientated mental health services never wavered. We are all very saddened by your sudden departure from this world. We offer our sincere condolences to your family at this time. You were a true champion of all people, full of kindness and compassion. Thank you Francis, for the laughs, the fun and for being with us every step of the way on a journey that had many twists and turns, up and downs. We will miss your presence, your Galway spake, your infectious laugh, the great knowledge that you shared with us all, and your wonderful belief in people's recovery. It was indeed a great privilege to have known and worked with you. May you rest in peace.

- Recovery College South East, Kilkenny -

Francis was an amazing, kind person, full of passion, enthusiasm, and a great sense of humour. His positive, up beat attitude was always infectious and you couldn't help but smile and share a laugh in his company, even if you were having a bad day. I was lucky to have known and worked closely with Francis. He was so passionate about recovery and mental health. He will be missed so much, more than words can express. My thoughts and prayers are with Francis's family, colleagues and friends at this time.

- Louise Murphy, Galway -

The memory of Francis is a happy one. He would always make you glow with his smiles. His gentle words of hope and positivity gave us the confidence to keep going. I will remember happy times of laughter and stories to inspire. He has left behind a legacy of happy memories and life changes for many. Bless you Francis. May you rest in peace.

*- Alice and Joe McDonnell
Mullingar Transformative Recovery College -*

I can't believe you're gone, Francis it doesn't feel too fair today. You always brought great fun and respect to the working day. Your enthusiasm and motivation was infectious and reignited hope and belief in my own work ethic. I know your family will be absolutely heartbroken - they will be in my thoughts and prayers. Goodbye for now.

- Brenda Daniels -

I can only hope Francis knew how widely respected and liked he was, how influential he was, how appreciated his characteristic wit and humour were. He had so much to give, and gave so generously. He will be so missed by so many. I can't imagine how those who knew him and loved him are feeling right now.

- Martha Clark -

My deepest sympathy to the Walsh family. I was so privileged to meet Francis back in 1995 in Drumcondra, Dublin. I have treasured memories of all the fun times. He was an absolute gentleman, he'd simply light up the room upon his entrance. Francis will be sorely missed, a beautiful, kind soul. Rest In Peace my friend.

- Anon -

Francis was a true gentleman with such a witty sense of humour. He went above and beyond to help and support others and I will be eternally grateful for the support and encouragement he had shown me over the years. May you rest in peace, dear Francis.

- Kelly Delaney -

We will miss Francis as a great neighbour. He was a kind, gentle man and will be greatly missed. Rest In Peace, Francis.

- Neighbours in Hawthorn Close -





Kilkenny - May 2017



Testing the couches out, Hodson Bay - March 2019



Tralee learning set - September 2018



September 2018



Tralee learning set - September 2018



Tralee learning set - September 2018



Train the Trainer, Maynooth - December 2017



Dublin Castle - May 2018



Clayton, Liffey Valley - June 2019



Wexford Learning Set Nov 2019



Athlone - March 2019



Nurse Managers Conference - 2019



Handover from Catherine - May 2018



Galway - February 2018



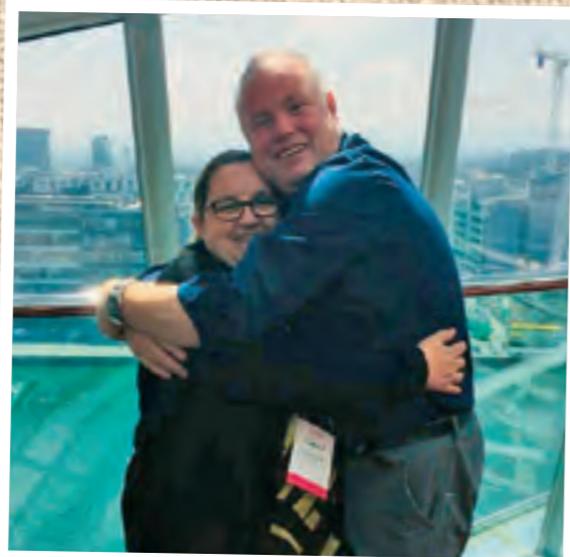
Carlow - June 2017



Carlow - June 2018



Dancing - Sept 2019



Jackie and Francis, Convention Centre - June 2018



Francis, Galway - July 2017



Francis, Galway - July 2017



Convention Centre - June 2018



Wexford - November 2019



Portlaoise - September 2019



Convention Centre - June 2018



Ari Team, Carlow - June 2018



At a colleagues wedding July 2015



Loughrea Community Mental Health team



Catching up with friends at Francis's house



At a colleagues wedding July 2015



Celebrating with friends October 2005



Just like Francis



'We hope that in reading this book you will have been given a real insight into who Francis was. It shows how he impacted the lives of all the people who made this book a possibility. He lived CHIME through everything he did and every interaction he had with people. There was no 'Them and Us' when it came to how Francis lived & worked. There was equality, integrity, respect, trust and passion. These qualities live on with all of us who were fortunate to be a part of Francis' world. We have been privileged to call him a friend and colleague and we now have the legacy he left to build on and strengthen. We want to grow Recovery capacity across all our services and we hope you feel inspired to be 'Just like Francis'.





Come to the Edge

~

Come to the edge.
We might fall.
Come to the edge.
It's too high!
COME TO THE EDGE!
And they came,
And he pushed,
And they flew.

Christopher Logue

~



Sheep grazing near Derrylissane Bog close to where Francis grew up

