



Aisling  
centre  
Hope Healing Growth

# ***HOPE, HEALING, GROWTH***

## ***Virtual Day of Inspiration***

**Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

**10am – 4pm**

## **SPEAKER PROFILES**



## **Adrian Dunbar Patron, Aisling Centre**

Despite a very successful career and a busy life in London with many charitable and personal commitments, Adrian has never forgotten his Fermanagh roots and is a dedicated supporter of the arts locally. Born and raised in Enniskillen, actor Adrian enjoys a very successful career in film, television and theatre.

Accepting the invitation to become Patron of Aisling Centre in 2015 Adrian spoke about the importance of hope saying “*our Society is enriched and empowered by those brave people who notice a need to somehow fill the vacuum where others might think hope is gone. The practical work they do underpins the dream of new beginnings for those who cross the door*”.

We are delighted to have Adrian back with us for our 4<sup>th</sup> annual Hope, Healing, Growth, Day of Inspiration.



## **The Green Platform - Developing Radical Resilience**

**Declan Coyle** has been with us on our journey since the beginning and is back by popular demand with even more relevance as we all need resilience and positivity in our lives, in a time of increasing anxiety and stress.

A father of three, married to Annette and devoted father of intellectually and physically disabled son Alexander, Declan draws on his own life experiences to help others transform their lives. After school he joined the Columban Fathers who worked in many of the world's poorest slums. His postgrad studies led him to Ottawa. After being awarded two Master's Degrees he was sent to work in the slums of the Philippines. His experience in burying thousands of babies who had died of malnutrition related diseases proved a powerful catalyst for his belief that even in bad situations we need to identify and work towards positive change. During this time, he set up the Philippines Human Development Fund which for the past 35 years has been supporting the poorest families in the Philippines and later in Taiwan.

As a Director of Andec Communications and one of Ireland's most internationally experienced leadership training and development consultants, his revolutionary Green Platform principles and thinking are the bedrock for all the Development Programmes and Keynote addresses he delivers to Blue Chip companies, Government Departments, Sports Teams and Individuals – empowering people personally and professionally by showing them their freedom to choose the red or green platform in life.



## **Three sides to every story**

**Hugo Duncan** singer and BBC broadcaster affectionately known to his audiences by his nicknames "the wee man from Strabane" or "Uncle Hugo" has spoken candidly about growing up with his beloved single mum Susie in the 1950s, the pressures of showbiz and life on the road, his battle with alcoholism, bankruptcy and the most challenging of all, his daughter's ill health and living with cancer.

In the early 70s, he was first spotted on a TV talent show on RTÉ. By the time he was twenty-one he had formed his own band, Hugo Duncan and the Tall Men, and had a number one hit in the Irish charts with "Dear God".

Hugo joined Radio Foyle during the 1980s and In October 1998, he was given the opportunity to present *Hugo Duncan's Country Afternoon* on Radio Ulster each weekday which he does to this day. He is a long standing supporter of BBC Children in Need and many other charities and in addition to his radio work plays regularly on the live circuit.

His greatest joy is as a family man and his role of father and grandfather. In a recent article he openly highlighted the challenges he has faced and stated "*it's like alcoholism when there is illness in the family it doesn't stop with one person - the family suffer*".

He candidly talks about life in his biography stating "*there are three sides to every story- your side, the other side and where they meet in the middle*". His Faith is very important to him as with his usual humour he extols "*get down on your knees and thank God you are still on your feet*." He will candidly and sincerely share the lessons he has learned from a life fully lived.



## Hope Healing and Growth after Suicide

**Noelle McAlinden** is from Maghera, Co Armagh, living in Fermanagh since 1983 and a founding member of Hope, Healing and Growth Day of Inspiration. She is the eldest of seven children and family are always closest to her heart. Like many families, heartbroken when bereaved by suicide, tragically losing two precious sisters she is dedicated to empowering others through arts, educational programmes and suicide prevention with her innate empathy and compassion for others and her personal commitment to inspire. This is reflected in her involvement in NI Arts and Mental Health Festival, as a volunteer with the Aisling Centre and as a member of Ohana Zero Suicide dedicated to suicide prevention across Ireland.

Her teaching career has spanned School, College, University and Prison Sectors, Joining the WELB as an Advisory Officer and supporting the professional development of Educationalists across NI until her recent decision to “re-fire” rather than retire early from her role as Advisory Officer with the Education Authority.

As a Creative Adviser, Artist and Curator of Festivals, Exhibitions, Educational and Cultural Programmes and Arts Activist she has exhibited regionally and internationally, with work in Public and Private Collections and was a Former Artist in Residence in The University of Transylvania, Lexington, Kentucky. A highlight of her career was her role in securing the inaugural UK city of Culture title for Derry/Londonderry in 2013 drawing on her extensive experience and passionate belief of the power of arts to transform communities, support cultural tourism, economic regeneration, health and wellbeing and support peace and reconciliation.

Noelle is passionate about all art forms and proactive in the promotion of visual and performing arts across all generations. She has served on many Boards and Public bodies including Arts Council NI, BBC Children in Need, The Royal Ulster Academy, the Beckett, Wilde and FLive Arts Festivals and The Centre for Contemporary Arts Derry/Londonderry.

Noelle is a cancer survivor and volunteer with Cancer Connect NI. Grateful for what she has learned through her own journey she is sharing with us the lessons she continues to learn through the challenges and opportunities embraced in the face of adversity, supporting others along the way. Insights are reflected in her art references to the “precious cargo of the past and the evolving present, from the childhood memories and life experiences that have inspired me”.



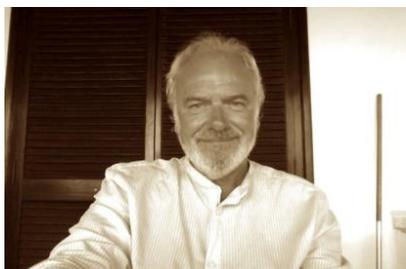
## Our voices matter

**Dara McAnulty** - Multi award winning young author Dara began, at the age of 12, to write his blog finding nature offered him a welcome escape. The Diary of a Young Naturalist, has taken the literary world by storm, chronicling his life from spring 2018 to spring 2019. As well as showcasing his love and observations of nature it also mapped his personal story of family life, the challenges of changing school, bullying and his experience of autism - in his own words the story of an “*ordinary boy who had a story to tell, in all its rage and love*”. He describes the loneliness of bullying and autism as well as the joy he found in nature and the importance of his family highlighting “*not only is our family bound together by blood we are all autistic. except dad, he’s the odd one out*”.

In June 2017 he was awarded the Springwatch Unsprung Wildlife Hero award. He has been published in numerous publications, appeared on BBC NI series The Chronicles of Erne and is on the 2020 judging panel for the BBC Countryfile Photographic Competition. He has worked with the National Trust, is an ambassador

for the RSPCA and the Jane Goodall Institute and the youngest recipient of the RSPB medal for conservation with awards from 10 Downing Street for his work on conservation.

His next book is for children, writers and young nature lovers and he is proud that this “*retells our community that our voices matter, our ideas are worthy, our stories captivating*”. We are privileged to hear his story.



## Emotional Health and the Impact of Alcohol

**Conor McCafferty** comes from a background of Youth Work, Further Education and Counselling and Psychotherapy. He is a highly experienced therapist who has been working in the field of addiction, self-harm and suicide for many years. He has first-hand experience of the impact that alcohol has on the emotional health of people of all ages in Northern Ireland and beyond.

Conor will talk about emotional health and the positive and negative ways to deal with feelings. He will explain the chemical process of drinking alcohol and why over-drinking is such a threat to our individual health, the health of others and the safety of our communities.

Conor is CEO of Zest Healing the Hurt Ltd, a charity which supports people suffering emotional pain and hurt, working with those who are self-harming or suicidal and their families and friends as well as those who have been bereaved by suicide. Conor has been with Zest for 22 years.

Zest coordinates the Self-Harm Intervention Programme (SHIP) in the Western and Northern Trust Area. SHIP is a direct referral pathway from the Community Mental Health Teams to counselling in the Voluntary Sector for those who are self-harming. Conor is also Chair of the Protect Life 2 - Suicide Strategy Implementation Body (SSIB) working to reduce suicide and the incidence of self-harm.

## The Colour of His Hair



**Richard Pierce** - Enniskillen native Richard Pierce despite leading an outwardly successful and busy life, also knew a darker side, he always felt alienated. Right from childhood; outside his home and loving parents he felt he was different and unwelcome. Even his father distanced himself. Gradually, through adolescence, he began to realise that he was gay, something that society, at that time, regarded as evil, sinful, disgusting. Homosexuality was deemed illegal and was punishable by long prison sentences.

Richard’s internalised self-disgust caused him to contemplate (though never to attempt) suicide. His repression of his real self, allowed him to marry a beautiful, unsuspecting girl. The resulting spiral of unhappiness affected all concerned, including his three wonderful children.

In this talk, Richard will tell, with self-compassion, the story of those troubled years, also the story of the gradual recovery of his happiness and sanity. He will emphasise the importance of all people being allowed to be themselves, in a tolerant and welcoming society, for the sake of the individuals but also of society itself.

Retired from his own successful architectural practice after four decades, Richard has always been involved in all the arts. He has painted watercolours, on and off, all his life. More recently he has exhibited his abstract photographs in one-man shows and is now engaged in producing a coffee-table book of his photographs of

the Erne. In his teens, taught violin by Joan Wilson, he was leader of the Portora Orchestra and on one memorable occasion led the Ulster Youth Orchestra in the Whitla Hall, Belfast. Voice-trained by James Shaw in Belfast, Richard sang for Pimlico Opera in London.

In public life, he has been on the boards of the Ulster Architectural Heritage Society, the Ormeau Baths Gallery, the Ulster Museum and the Arts Council for Northern Ireland, where he chaired the Visual Arts Committee. He now chairs Music in Fermanagh, which brings world-class classical music to the Ardhowen Theatre.



## Be Kind to Yourself

**Lisa Strutt.** Leading coach, mentor and inspirational speaker Lisa Strutt will share with us how we must be kind to ourselves to achieve what we want in life without sacrificing the things that really matter. Lisa started her career with roles in training and development, subsequently specialising in building collaborative partnerships in local government. Over the past 25 years she has lived in and worked with private public and non-profit sectors across five countries. On returning to NI she has been coaching and mentoring leaders and has designed and delivered the Leader of Tomorrow programme, with the rural programme currently running in Fermanagh and the border counties.

She is a fellow of the Institute of Coaching, a Harvard affiliate and international Coach Federation and an accredited professional coach. She is co-founder of Reboot - a company dedicated to bridging the talent gap with returners to work, enabling them to feel valued and to thrive. She is on the leadership team of Lean in Belfast which is a non-profit, volunteer led organisation which helps women fulfil their potential, co-founder of “Fun, Food and Philanthropy”, a giving circle for girls and women, a director of the “Female Investor Ready Project” - a social enterprise supporting female entrepreneurs and a Director of the NI Pancreatic Cancer Charity.

As an inspirational speaker she has given keynote speeches and produced webinars and podcasts sharing her “global meanderings on relationships, networks, resilience, legacy and leadership” in her own pragmatic, caring and inimitable style.

In a testimony to her own personal resilience what matters most to Lisa is her family having married her late husband John who was her childhood sweetheart and being there for her three teenage children.



## We Had To Say Goodbye Before We Even Met

**Irene Teague** is a clinical psychologist who tragically has the personal experience of pregnancy losses which inspired her write her first book as a legacy to her children. “*We Had to Say Goodbye Before We Even Met*’ poignantly describes the devastating experience of losing baby Caidain at 33 weeks in 2019 and is beautifully narrated through the eyes of her daughter Erin Rose who was 8 at the time of Caidain's diagnosis.

Irene also lost baby Anna at 17 weeks in 2017. Irene and her husband Andrew and 2 children, Erin Rose and Andrew had been very excited about the prospect of having a new baby brother or sister. Irene found that there were limited appropriate resources available aimed specifically at children who have experienced the loss of their sibling through pregnancy or early baby loss. This inspired her to write a book aimed at children in the hope that it would help other parents explain what had happened and to help normalise the grief related

thoughts and feelings that children may have. She gives practical advice and support to parents on how to involve their children and support them in their grief while coping with the loss themselves highlighting resources they can draw upon for support. Her inspiring story will help all of us to understand and cope with grief and loss no matter what the circumstances.



### **Dara Mc Nicholl**

Finalist, The Voice Kids UK 2020

*“He has a bright musical career ahead of him”* so said singer/songwriter Paloma Faith, Dara’s mentor on the show. 13-year-old Dara from Moneyneeny near Draperstown got great support from surprised family and friends who hadn’t realised he could sing until recently!!



### **Mindfulness Meditation**

**Siobhán Conlon** is a holistic therapist with qualifications in a number of therapies. She trained as a Mindfulness teacher with Bangor University, Wales and works as a mindfulness practitioner with the Aisling Centre. Siobhan has been practising meditation for almost a decade since doing a mindfulness course in the Aisling Centre.



### **Yoga**

**Dr Anne Monaghan** is a former Director of Stakeholder Engagement with a private sector firm having worked in the corporate and education sectors for 20 years. She cured herself of Generalised Anxiety Disorder through Yoga & Meditation and now teaches both, as well as stress management, having trained in Goa, India. Anne enjoys teaching the science behind the mental and physical benefits of yoga as well as the poses themselves (which everyone can do), breathing practice and meditation.



**Aideen McGinley**, a founding member of Hope Healing Growth, is a Director of the Aisling Centre and will facilitate the event.

Aideen has extensive experience of public service in Local and Central Government in Northern Ireland as CEO in Fermanagh and Permanent Secretary in the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure and the Department of Employment and Learning. Reflecting her interest in community and economic regeneration she took up a secondment as CEO of ILEX, the Urban regeneration company for Derry/Londonderry, securing the inaugural and transformational UK City of Culture 2013 title for the city. She was Chair of Galway European Capital of Culture 2020 and is a member of the DCMS Advisory Committee for UK City of Culture.

A former National Trustee for the BBC, she is currently a Trustee of the National Trust, Vice-Chair of The Carnegie UK Trust and Chair of Fermanagh Trust and is and has been involved, in a wide range of other charities nationally and locally.

Aideen was awarded an OBE in the Queen's Millennium Honours List, an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Ulster, Honorary membership of the Royal Society of Ulster Architects and A Heart for Habitat for Humanity Award in 2018.