

## CATHERINE O'CONNELL BIOGRAPHY



Catherine O'Connell is a practicing mediator and trainer, accredited with the Mediators Institute of Ireland (MII). She is an accredited conflict management coach and trainer in [CINERGY® Conflict Management Coaching](#). With a former background in Sales, Marketing and Office Management, Catherine has a diploma in HR Management, a B.Sc. in Psychology and an M.A in Mediation & Conflict Resolution. She is a lecturer and programme coordinator at Edward M Kennedy Institute for Conflict Intervention at Maynooth University specialising in mediation, restorative practice and conflict dynamics.

Catherine has been engaged in various collaborative conflict intervention projects run by the Edward Kennedy Institute. These include facilitating dialogue between the Garda Síochána leadership (250 people), developing a community of practice with community leaders on both sides of the divide in Northern Ireland and collaborating with the Traveller Mediation Service and other agencies (ETB's) to develop professional mediation training programmes for Traveller community leaders. Catherine and Barbara Walshe are approved to deliver specialist training in Restorative Justice to Mediators by the Mediators Institute of Ireland. She adopts a 'trauma sensitive and a restorative lens' to her work and training.

Mediation skills are essential to have when working with individuals, families, communities and groups in conflict. Catherine works as a conflict coach, mediator and restorative justice facilitator in organisations, communities and families. In 2018, Catherine and Barbara Walshe facilitated a restoratively led consultation process with stakeholders on the options and appropriate courses of action available to government in relation to the site of the former mother and baby home in Tuam County Galway [available here](#). They are currently facilitating consultations with survivors of institutional abuse in a survivor led process documenting survivors experiences of State interventions and necessary next steps to be agreed between the Irish government and the Consultation group. This group was formed as a result of Phase 1 of this consultation process along with [this report](#).

Catherine is a volunteer with and is on the management committee of Facing Forward, an organisation which promotes the use and need for Restorative Justice in our society. She was a researcher in the seminal collaborative research project between Facing Forward and Dr Marie Keenan entitled "[Sexual Trauma and Abuse: Restorative and Transformative Possibilities](#)". She has written "[Building Bridges](#)", an article about a Restorative Justice Initiative in Green Bay Maximum Security Prison Wisconsin for the 'Journal of Mediation and Applied Conflict Analysis' published online by Maynooth University.

Catherine is a member of The Association for Conflict Resolution (US), the Restorative Justice Council (UK), Mediation Beyond Borders (EU) and is an approved trainer on the panel of the European Forum for Restorative Justice.