



Bringing it all back home
A
Restorative & Mediation Approach
in the community

Brehon laws

A body of ancient native Irish law which was operational through out Ireland until the completion of the English conquest of Ireland in the early 17th century.

They were first set down on parchment in the 7th century and were named after the wandering lawyers, the Brehons.

Brehon laws

LEGAL

- ❖ 3rd Party facilitator
- ❖ Harm was discussed and resolution agreed
- ❖ Reparation was legally binding
- ❖ Kinship responsibility was conditional
- ❖ Community came together to discuss wider issues

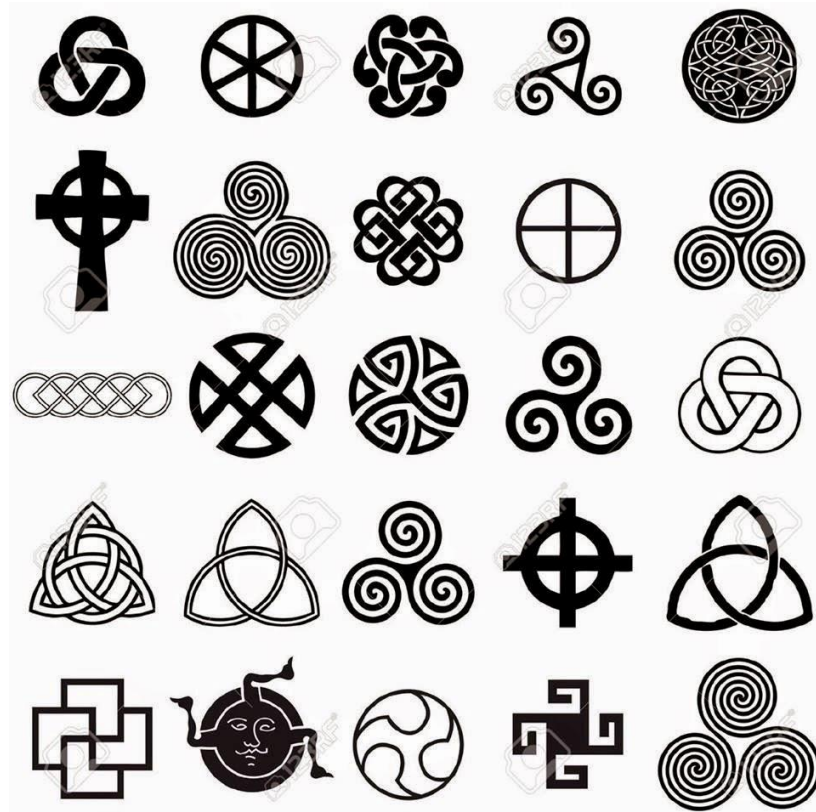
Brehon laws

SOCIAL

- ❖ People were never turned away
- ❖ Food, drink, a seat or bed were offered
- ❖ Refused 3 times before accepting
- ❖ Bring a gift of food, drink, information
- ❖ Cared for the vulnerable



Celtic Symbols



Tree of Life

- ❖ *Balance and Harmony*
- ❖ *Birth, Death and Rebirth*



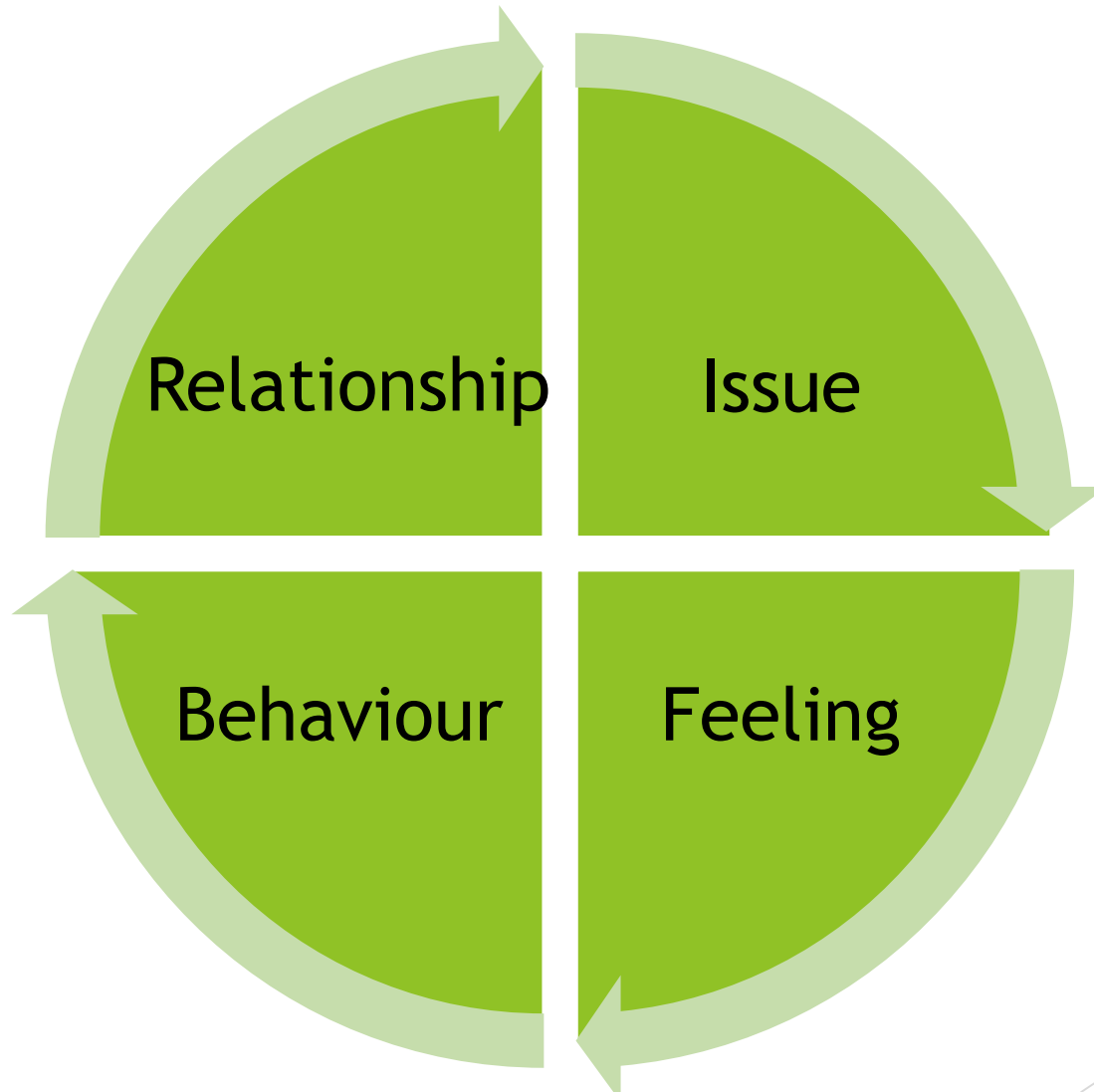
The Troubles

- ▶ *1968 - 1998*
- ▶ *3,720 people killed*
- ▶ *107,000 Injured*
- ▶ *500,000 Victims*

The Troubles

- ▶ *Mediation was used from late 70's*
- ▶ *Combatants - Republican/Loyalists*
- ▶ *Politicians - Nationalist/Unionist*
- ▶ *Communities - Interface*

Transformative Conflict



An uneasy Peace!

- ▶ *Ceasefires began 1994 - 1996*
- ▶ *Renewed ceasefire 1997*
- ▶ *Good Friday Agreement - April 1998*
- ▶ *St Andrew's Agreement - October 2006*

The Shift

Mediation to Restorative

Restorative Community forum

- ▶ 2005 - Legacy issues impacting on Good Relations and community cohesion
- ▶ Community met monthly for five years
- ▶ Community, Civic, statutory and political leaders
- ▶ Commissioned by Local Councils

Aim

To create a space for relationships to flourish, where people and groups could come together to explore and challenge each other's version of the truth in safety and with the knowledge that their views would be heard and respected

Themes

- ▶ Community Relations
- ▶ Experiences of the 'Troubles'
- ▶ Culture
- ▶ Understanding 'Others'
- ▶ Ongoing tensions

Outcomes

- ▶ Improved relationships
- ▶ Collective agreement on many contentious issues
- ▶ Better understanding and respect for the 'Other'
- ▶ Acknowledgement of past hurts

Outcomes

- ▶ Less resistance to cultural and personal differences
- ▶ Relationships continued outside the Forum
- ▶ Seeped into the community

Learning

- ▶ Mediation allowed people/groups to process their issues/feelings and behaviour
- ▶ Restorative approaches allowed for healing and relationship building
- ▶ One without the other was not possible

Learning

- ▶ We must be relationship led
- ▶ Creative facilitation connects the unconnected
- ▶ It is important to keep sight of the human side to the human being



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