Liquid Immersions: Swimming as Healthy Blue Space Practice

~ Dr Ronan Foley ~

Outdoor swimming in cold water climates can be a challenging task. For many swimmers the value of regular immersions in cold water is part of a wider personal engagement with health and wellbeing. Drawing from oral history interviews with swimmers at different locations on three Irish coasts, the presentation discuss how a phenomenological place-engagement is deepened by the physical experience of swimming. That experiential engagement with a therapeutic landscape is framed by narratives that reflect a life-course relationship with place, a reflexive personal history and a series of embodied engagements in and with space. In all of these narratives, the place of health and well-being emerge in multiple forms and reflect emerging literatures on healthy blue space.

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