

Gail Woods Biography

Yoga Instructor

Born and raised in the picturesque west of Ireland, Gail grew up surrounded by the beautiful and Inspiring mountains and lakes. From a young age she was immersed in Irish culture, music and folklore with her family active musicians and promoters of the Joe Mooney Summer School of Traditional Music, Song and Dance.

Her love of the Irish culture and language was further cultivated by attending a boarding school in Co. Galway with a reputation for nurturing music and culture. She spent many summers immersed in Gaelic traditions in the Aran Islands in Galway. The monastic sites and holy wells of the islands aroused in her a special interest in Celtic spirituality and traditions.

Gail moved to the US in 1998 with her job in the pharmaceutical industry. In 2000, during a vacation in Ireland, she read John O Donoghue's book, "Anam Cara". *Anam* is the Gaelic word for soul and *cara* is the word for friend. The concept of the *anam cara* or *soul friend*, and the idea that the Celts found divinity in nature and landscape resonated with Gail's love of nature and Celtic traditions.

Around the same time while living in New Jersey, Gail discovered yoga and immediately felt a compelling connection between the ancient cultures of yoga and the Celtic world. This inspired Gail to develop ways to use her love of landscape, Celtic imagination and yoga as a means to explore the "inner" landscape. In 2002, Gail became a certified yoga instructor from the Bright Spirit Yoga Teacher Training in Hoboken New Jersey and began teaching yoga.

In 2006, while travelling in India Gail had the opportunity to study yoga with an elderly yoga guru. His emphasis on the importance of breathing techniques and meditation introduced a new dimension to Gail's practice of yoga.

Inspired by "Anam Cara", Gail's teaching focuses on bringing the practice of yoga, breathing and meditation into everyday life through the use of nature and Celtic traditions

In 2008, Gail decided to leave the corporate world and focus on her family and passion for yoga. She currently lives in Atlantic Highlands New Jersey with her husband from Tipperary and three children.