

Wow!

# Passionate about yoga

Every day begins and ends with yoga for Clodagh Kiely, who left the high powered world of corporate finance to set up her own practice, writes MARY ROSE MCCARTHY

THOSE who know Clodagh Kiely will tell you yoga has always been her passion.

When the opportunity came to study it and become a full time practitioner, Kiely left the high powered world of corporate finance to set up her own yoga business. At this stage of life, she says it is about passing on what she's learnt to others. People relate to helping others, she says.

One of a family of five, Clodagh comes from Mitchelstown where her mother ran a business and her father was the local school headmaster.

After her Leaving Cert, Clodagh followed a conventional route of moving to Cork city to do a secretarial course, which in turn led to accountancy, and subsequently, a degree in English from UCC.

She then worked in advertising and tourism and spent a number of years working in corporate finance, first in Cork, then London, and eventually Australia where she lived for seven years.

Her first taste of yoga was

taking a class to get back into shape after the birth of her daughter. She learned the tools to manage stress, and work to enhance health and well-being from her teacher, Anandaprakash, who she describes as a wonderful inspiring teacher.

This prompted her to study at the Satyananda Yoga Academy in Australia.

Kiely says the course, which ran for three years, was comprehensive, and covered both theory and practice.

She continued to work in Finance but says Australia is where she got to realise her dream which, since attending her first Satyananda, class had been to teach yoga. While her daughter was young, she wasn't in a financial position to do so. During her training, she taught beginners yoga for two years in New South Wales' Hunter Valley.

Her life took another turn when, just after qualifying, Clodagh injured her knees. She says this was a period of big learning for her and something she now imparts to her

students. At the time of her injury, she faced the challenges and adapted her own personal yoga practice. This means she is now in a position to help others modify and adapt yoga practices to enhance health and well-being.

This prompts the question what is her daily practise. Kiely says that from her experience, awareness is the key to health and wellbeing. Every day begins and ends with yoga. She knows that first thing in the morning yoga will ease her into the day in a positive way, physically, mentally and emotionally. She practises postures to ease out stiff joints and muscles, breathing exercises to expand and balance the body's vital energies, and short meditation to prepare for the day ahead. She closes the day at evening time with postures, breathing, and meditation to clear the stresses of the day.

Kiely is passionate about yoga and believes that bringing yoga into everyday life is life changing. She uses two words to sum up yoga: balance and awareness. For example, she says: "if the body is out of balance we become aware of it through stiffness or pain. Very often there is corresponding tension in the mind; by releasing the physical through postures there is also a sense of mentally letting go."

This can be especially true for women during the time of menopause. Clodagh laughs as she describes not understanding why her mother used to throw open the windows while the rest of the family were freezing. She says menopause is not something that was really talked about in her mother's day and was often referred to obliquely as 'the change'. And, as Kiely says, it is a time of great change.

For her it was a change in more ways than one as it also coincided with her move to another country. So she had to deal with all that entails, as well as the physical and hormonal changes in her body. Doctors did offer her HRT but as she was already on her a parallel path, she decided to opt for homeopathy. Underactive thyroid can also mimic the symptoms of menopause, but she says there is also more testing to identify that. Homeopathy she says is tailored to finding a remedy particular to you, not a one size fits all.

The symptoms she experienced such as joint stiffness, night sweats and interrupted sleep she managed through yoga.

Meditation, she says, is wonderful for managing stress. In times of stress, she finds a quiet place and focuses on abdominal breathing which helps defuse a situation and clears her head. Meditation develops a greater sense of awareness and helps the ability to remain centred in challenging conditions and times of change.

She smiles as she recounts that she would tell her daughter she wasn't to be disturbed, go upstairs to meditate and fall into a deep sleep. Mean-



ENHANCING HER HEALTH: Clodagh Kiely, who took her first yoga class after the birth of her daughter.

while, her daughter waited downstairs for dinner. As a result, she says her daughter became a great cook.

Having left the world of finance, Clodagh now finds herself back in the corporate environment, offering stress management through Yoga and Seated Relaxation classes. These provide benefit to employees, giving them techniques to remain centred in challenging conditions and times of change.

Yoga has been a constant in Kiely's life; she says 'it's been the anchor that kept her grounded throughout much personal and professional change'.

Classes with Clodagh run in Ballincollig on Tuesdays and in Wilton on Wednesdays.

She also works with individuals and with companies.

See [www.satyanandayoga-cork.ie](http://www.satyanandayoga-cork.ie) or email [clodaghkielyogacork@clodaghkiely@hotmail.com](mailto:clodaghkielyogacork@clodaghkiely@hotmail.com).



DAILY PRACTICE: Clodagh begins and ends every day with yoga.



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