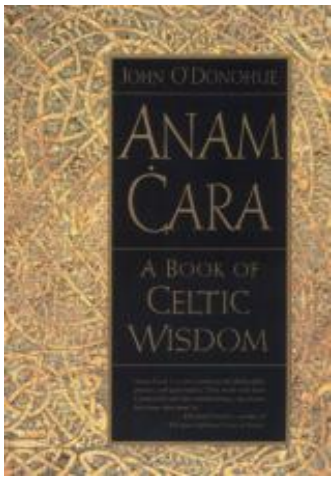
Anam Cara

by John O'Donohue



About the Book

With the publication of **Anam Cara**, John O¹Donohue introduced the world to the inspiring ancient wisdom of Celtic mysticism, a world that brings us closer to the magical and unobtrusive realm of our own divinity ? where the soul and the eternal are one. O¹Donohue guides readers through the enlivening and lyrical spiritual landscape of the Irish imagination, offering a treasure trove of Celtic insights, stories, and teachings on the universal themes of friendship, solitude, love, and death.

The Celts had a refined and passionate sense of the divine. The Celtic imagination articulates an inner friendship that embraces nature, divinity, the underworld, and the human world as one. The Celts never separated the visible from the invisible, time from eternity, or the human from the divine. Surviving to this day, the Celtic reverence for the soul in all things is a vibrant spiritual heritage unique in the Western world, one that is capturing the imagination of people throughout the world as they rediscover the wisdom of the past and their own Celtic roots. Exploring such themes as the mystery of friendship, the spirituality of the senses, the brightness within solitude, work as the poetics of growth, aging as the art of inner harvesting, and death as eternal homecoming, this book will envelop your heart with Celtic benediction.

Discussion Guide

1. Why is Celtic Spirituality achieving such a resonance in our world today? How can it contribute to our way of living now? What is the Celtic Circle of belonging? What kind of friendship is the *Anam Cara*? What is the difference between acquaintance and friendship? What does true friendship bring us?

2. How have the senses been treated in the Western Tradition? Why has there been such a separation of body and soul in Western Spirituality? What new dimension would the unity of soul and senses bring to a life? In your own life, which of the senses are dominate and which are inevitably always neglected?

3. Why do we fear solitude? Must true individuality always be solitary? What are the fruits of solitude? How does the closeness of the eternal alter our view of spirituality? How can familiarity be alienation?

4. What difference could an awakened imagination make to your work? What are the forces that paralyze us and prevent us from changing? Why is the need for expression so intense and necessary in the human person? What forms of deep expression do you feel would better manifest who you really are?

5. How do you view time? What kinds of time do you inhabit (chronological, stressed, rhythmic, and eternal)? Which season of the heart are you living in now? Do you practice the ³religion of rush²? Why and how does passion keep us young? Why is the wisdom and prescience of the Elders so neglected in contemporary society? How would you like to grow old? What is meant by ³second innocence²?

6. Describe fully what understanding of death you have worked out for yourself. How do fear and death relate in your life? Has postmodern culture lost all sense of ritual in relation to dying and bereavement? Could death be birth in another guise? What is your concept of Eternal Life?

Author Bio

John O'Donohue is the author of the award-winning and international bestseller **Anam Cara: A Book of Celtic Wisdom** and **Eternal Echoes: Exploring Our Yearning to Belong**. He also is the author of a book on Hegel¹s philosophy, **Person als Vermittlung**, published in Germany in 1993, and a collection of poetry **Echoes of Memory** published in 1994.

He is an Irish poet and Catholic scholar whose acclaimed writings reveal an original thinker rooted in an unorthodox blend of Irish heritage, German philosophy, and an intimate relationship with the wild, luminous landscape of his Connamara home. A gifted and delightful speaker, John O¹Donohue lectures and leads seminars throughout the U.S. and Europe, encouraging audiences to become artists of their own deepest possibility.

His other works include a series of monographs on the four elements: **Stone as Tabernacle of Memory**; **Water: The Tears of the Earth**; **Fire: At Home at the Hearth of Spirit**; and **Air: Breath of God**.

Critical Praise

" A lively spiritual companion to all Celts--or to those who are Celtic in their hearts. "-***Publishers Weekly*** **(starred review)**

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