

Touching the World through Reiki

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Before the beginning of great brilliance, there must be chaos. Before a brilliant person begins something great, they must look foolish to the crowd.

I-Ching

Reiki says:

Believe in your self and your abilities

Trust your intuition

Be compassionate to others

Let go of limiting beliefs

Honor the pause

Make space for healing

Give yourself permission to receive

Be prepared to be surprised

Introduction

Over 6.8 billion people inhabit this vast world, and in my travels, I have come to realize that even as many cultural differences separate us, many similarities bring us together, including a desire for love, happiness, and within that, peace.

Reiki as a means for healing and transformation offers such a means for achieving peace—world peace.

I have taught groups where each student adhered to a different faith, religion, or political party and yet could all come together to work as a healing unit without discord. Reiki, being Universal Energy, does not discriminate. It is here for all of us: human, animal, plant, planet.

By learning to work with it on ourselves and others, we become our own vehicles for compassion. Cultivating compassion allows us to spread world peace and in effect ‘touch the world through Reiki’.

There are many Reiki how-to and historical manuals, but this is not one of them. *Touching the world through Reiki* serves as inspiration to those who have already taken or are contemplating taking a Reiki class.

This is about my own personal journey on the Reiki path as I worked with and trained other Reiki practitioners and the possibility of touching the world with Reiki through one’s commitment to the path. Through the development of my training program, we have taught over a thousand students from twenty countries.

I have found five tools that work incredibly well in helping the Reiki practitioner or student succeed on his or her path, and provide insight and wisdom along the way. Each tool I present has served as a guide for my clients, students, and my own Reiki healing. By utilizing each one, an individual’s worldview can expand, thus enabling him or her to connect with fellow humans and begin to understand the work he or she has come here to do. The tools also offer practitioners and masters ways in which they can enhance their own work in the world.

In addition, I offer various mainstream applications for Reiki practitioners to explore as possible starting points for their work as well as ideas on where to apply Reiki, such as in hospitals, for animals, and integrated in various professions.

But these chapters are merely a suggestion, a place to start. If they call to you, then use them as a model.

Whether you want to practice on yourself or your family or consider Reiki as a vocational path, this book is for you—to reflect, receive, and add to your continued learning.

What is Reiki?

Reiki (pronounced RAY-kee) is a Japanese form of hands-on healing. It was rediscovered as a healing art in the nineteenth century by a man named Mikao Usui, who, through passing the tradition down through his students, enabled them to bring Reiki to the United States in the last part of the twentieth century. I refer the reader to the bibliography for some of the many books that provide more information about the origins of Reiki.

Reiki is ancient—it's always been a part of the Earth although other cultures have called it different names—and it has evolved as we have evolved. It used to be taught as part of Buddhist philosophy, but the healing applications were discarded in favor of the spiritual tenets instead.

Reiki comes from “rei,” meaning universal, and “ki,” meaning energy, and together means Universal Energy. In practicing Reiki on oneself or in receiving a Reiki treatment, one is basking in the healing light in a safe and healing manner, permitting the release of any debris or blocks (physical, mental, or emotional) that might be occurring in the body.

One becomes “attuned” to Reiki through an initiation by one's Reiki master (teacher). During the initiation, the teacher facilitates the student's re-awakening to the flow of Universal Energy through facilitating the expansion of the student's own aura or electromagnetic field. Sacred Reiki symbols are also visualized within the field, re-establishing the connection the student has to healing and to his or her own true potential.

Reiki stimulates the immune system response, similar to acupuncture in that it flows through the meridians, which are energy pathways that traverse the whole body. It soothes the nerves and calms the mind. Practicing Reiki and meditation every day gives you a focus for the day and over time can guide you in other parts of your life.

Reiki stimulates the body to return to the natural state of flow and ease. It is a gentle method, portable in its preventative action. All one needs is to learn the method.

Diving In

In my practicing and working with the Universal Energy of Reiki for over fifteen years, I've come to understand this connection to flow and ease. And in the process of recently completing my scuba diving certification, I tangibly experienced what I've come to embody as a Reiki practitioner and teacher. Let me help you understand.

Floating through the infinite expanse of the ocean, you imagine what you want to create. Think of starfish; a starfish appears. Watch your bubbles cascade upwards; you see physics in action. Sink to the bottom of the sea floor; you experience gravity that affects all the earth, everything. Watching a starfish engulfing a clam, you see the process of living and dying in front of your eyes.

Reiki is like this circle of life, ever present, permeating all of the world. We need to create the space and place to dive in and experience this phenomenon. When we—those of us practicing Reiki, regardless of our place on the experience spectrum—gather, we all create a field of potential, channeling our unified

energy into a space of intention. The intention lifts the vibration of all who are present, raising consciousness and allowing for a transcendence of physical and mental limitations.

Like the scuba diver, you become neutrally buoyant in a sea of healing energy. What does not serve you can leave, falling away effortlessly. What is true to your essence remains. That is the heart of Reiki. It leads you to the place you were meant to be. What do you want to manifest? Working with the energy of Reiki allows you to attract and be attracted to that which is of the highest good.

But it is not a manipulative energy. Like the ocean, it just is. You can't force the ocean! Universal Energy has no boundaries, only infinite potential. Likewise, we have our own inner and outer space. This vast expanse is our true realm. The physical, three-dimensional realm in which we spend our lives on Earth represents only one view. Dive deep into the oceans, cast out into the stars. These places are not just physical manifestations; they also exist within the soul of each and every one of us, all around the world. When we take this journey, we transcend our boundaries. We become aware that we are ONE—one planet, one world. We are not our ego identities. We are not our personalities ... These are colors of the rainbow each and every one of us represents at any given point in time.

You can use the wetsuit as the analogy of our ego. It allows one to travel, function, and survive through the matrix of the water environment. It's a covering, a protection, and a container. It keeps one's physical body intact. Yet, the wetsuit only works when you let some water (ki) into it. As that water coats your body, the insulating layer of the suit allows the water to heat to your body temperature. But when it comes down to it, the wetsuit/ego is only one layer on top of the layer of water on top of our physical body, which is basically a bag of water contained by a layer of skin.

When we remove all those layers, those preconceptions, we are exposed and engulfed by the sea of ki, of Reiki, of the Universe.

But unlike being in water, where if we were to remove the wetsuit we would be in peril, when we move the ego aside in the air, on the land, we merge with the ki that comes from each and every one of us, from all the plants, the grass, the trees, the flowers, the water around us.

Let yourself go, feel the force of the energy present in this world, the nature, the people, the intention. Reiki is about getting out of the way and making space for healing to occur. Healing means becoming whole. We come into attunement, at oneness with our true essence, and in effect, connecting with this world, touching all of creation. Reiki practitioners and masters (teachers) serve as guides on this path back to source. We are your scuba instructors. Take the dive, journey and return transformed.

The preceding comes from my speech at The One Gathering (www.theonegathering.com), an annual event in Seattle, Washington.

Exercise

A. Feeling the Reiki Flow

Reiki energy is all around us, and we are able to tap into it. I do recommend taking a workshop because your own ability to hold space for the healing potential is strengthened and you learn basics of working with others and yourself. You also receive attunements to the energy, which mean “becoming at one.” It is a sacred blessing meditation that connects you to the lineage of Reiki, the previous teachers, so that when you practice, you are supported in your work and “in tune” with the vibration of those teachings.

Now, let’s just see what you perceive when you hold space for this healing energy.

Come with a very curious mind. Just open your thinking, keeping a question such as, “What will happen when I do this?” in front of you while holding no expectations for the results. Let yourself get comfortable, either lying down or sitting in a relaxed position.

1. Begin to visualize your own connection to heaven and earth.
2. See, feel, and imagine a flow of energy or water from the Universe through you to the earth and vice versa.
3. This energy is greater than you. It flows through you. You act only as a humble conduit.
4. Give yourself a few moments, connecting to that idea, to that flow as you effortlessly let the energy continue through you.
5. Then, ever so lightly, place your hands a few inches apart in front of you, palms facing.
6. Remain curious, not forcing, just being.
7. Rest lightly, breathing in and out. Reiki is an offering and never forces.
8. Then move your hands about a foot apart from each other. Notice what you notice.
9. Still just being, force nothing, effortless.
10. Perhaps you notice the energy flowing through you, perhaps there is a sensation of warmth or tingling, perhaps nothing. Just treat whatever you notice curiously, without effort.
11. Now move your hands two feet apart.
12. Breathe into that space.

13. Bring the palms back together, not touching. Relax and remember to breathe. Wondrous. Inhale.

14. Shake your palms out and notice what you feel now.

Tool #3: Insight Reiki: Taking Reiki to the Next Level

When I began working in counseling centers on the East Coast in the early nineties, I noticed that clients avoided addressing many parts of a session. I got the feeling that what clients didn't say or show told you the most about them. I couldn't ignore the fact that much more was going on in the session than the dialogue we were exchanging. I began to sense problems lurking behind polite smiles. Sometimes I even saw what I later learned were energy fields around them, which would fluctuate in color, depending on the client's mood.

As I pursued Reiki studies, energy techniques began to ease their way into the environment of my sessions, and the basis for Insight Reiki was born.

As a client would talk about his or her emotional reactions after getting fired or left by a spouse or some other troubling event, I would begin to send Reiki to them. I would intuitively begin to sense what parts of their energetic body were holding on out of scarcity and fear. I "asked" Reiki to continue to flow during each session, and on several occasions, I was called to place my hands gently over a client's shoulders or forehead. I would ask them if they were OK to have me practice this stress reducing method I had learned.

I found presenting the Reiki and counseling techniques this way so simple and invigorating that I began to teach some of the methods to my clients. I witnessed incredible changes in their personal lives. Clients who were previously unable to achieve any true insight or direction were now able to connect with their own passions for career and life changes they needed to make for living more fully.

I initially called my technique Bodywork Counseling, but I always knew that name was a placeholder, since it was so generic. That initial name also was a misnomer of sorts because the practitioner did not perform counseling in the same way a traditionally trained counselor would. But I couldn't think of another name for the technique and didn't force one to emerge. So for several years, Reiki practitioners who went through my program also called the technique they did in session Bodywork Counseling.

But recently, Washington State changed the professional and academic requirements for practitioners who wished to call what they do “counseling.” For myself, with a master’s degree and years of experience in the counseling profession, I had to study and sit for a comprehensive exam to continue to offer my services.

Although I adapted, many of my practitioner students would not have such an “easy” time providing Reiki under the new constraint. I realized it was time to change the name of Bodywork Counseling because I didn’t want them to have to deal with any unnecessary conflict. Still not forcing a name, just leaving space for it to come to me, one day, while practicing the technique on myself, I realized the impressions I was receiving were like insights. And so, the name Insight Reiki was born and branded.

Insight Reiki encourages an individual to get in touch with the feelings surrounding trauma, confusion, or pain that he or she is holding within the body. Balance is initiated through Reiki, which serves as the foundation of the practice. As one gets in touch with these feelings, emotions are released, which brings additional insight and clarity to the situation/issue at hand. The method can also be used on oneself to provide additional insight on current issues or problems.

People respond to the healing power of touch. It reaffirms to them the experiences of their whole being instead of just their intellect and cognition through verbal counseling alone. The physical body holds memories, fears, hopes, and dreams. Through Insight Reiki, the bio-energetic field around the client is unblocked and released and allows the client to feel or intuit what is and what is not real. The client is able to go into a ‘void’ or ‘trance state’ and find answers to many of his or her questions.

Over the last thirty years, other professional organizations, such as the European Association of Body Psychotherapy and the United States Association of Body Psychotherapy have provided support for the integration of bodywork and counseling approaches.

There are no specific limitations or ethical restrictions of utilizing counseling approaches within the confines of a Reiki session in either the code of ethics for the Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals or the International Association of Reiki Professionals. However, I feel it should be made clear to clients that the Reiki practitioner is NOT a therapist and that Insight Reiki is NOT a substitute for therapy.

I’ve found that students having a background in which they’ve offered help to others—volunteering, professionally doing social work, nursing, or at least an equivalent amount of their own self-help work—assists the process of learning Insight Reiki because they’ve already encountered the necessity of having *bodicitta*, or loving kindness, when working to help

someone. If they've never had this opportunity, then before they go out and see clients, I recommend at least a year or more of working with people in this capacity, giving Reiki at Reiki circles, volunteering through hospice or nursing homes, and/or doing their own therapy.

Because practitioners come to the session with Reiki as their base, they already understand what it means to have faith in a Universal Energy. That is love and light, and it guides the session so much more than the practitioner.

If you approach each session with a full and open heart, surrendering over to Reiki as your guide, and follow the basic protocol for opening and closing a session, then what happens in between is divine. It is an honor for you to bear witness to it.

Insight Reiki Benefits

1. Engages the healing power of touch. This therapy alone is reaffirming.
2. Is a multi-dimensional approach and can be used with diverse populations.
3. Aids in unblocking and releasing the bio-energetic field.
4. Allows the client to experience his or her whole being instead of just the intellect/cognition.
5. Reaffirms client's presence, allowing him or her to feel/intuit what is and isn't real.
6. Presents the truth for the client to deal with. A person can argue with words and avoid facing reality. But the body doesn't lie—it holds memories, fears, hopes, and dreams.
7. Facilitates the client going into the "void," often called a "trance state" and is similar to the collective unconscious Jung spoke of. Here the person will find answers to many important and pressing questions.

Like most endeavors related to bodywork, the process is difficult to intellectualize because it involves both body and mind.

Reiki practitioners certified through the Reiki Training Program become adept in using Insight Reiki in treatment sessions if a client requests it.

Case Study: Using Insight Reiki in Reiki Practice

I used Insight Reiki with my client, Paul, who was feeling a lot of anger towards being laid off, the unfairness of the seemingly unrelated circumstances affecting his life, and the out-of-control aspect to them. I asked him how the anger felt in his body, and he said like a thick dense cloud. I asked if the cloud had a sound. He made a low grumble. I had my drum and began to gently play a drumbeat behind him and encouraged him to let out that groan a little bit more. A louder groan was heard. I played the drum louder. His groans began to turn into growls. I encouraged him to continue with his growling. He began to yell now, and over the sound of his yells, anger came out as definite releases.

After several minutes, I slowed down the drumbeat and asked Paul to take a few minutes to breathe into his body and check in with what had occurred. He had released some tears along with his yells, too, and giving him some tissues and some water helped him come back into his center. A few moments later, he told me he was ready to lie on the table and allow me to place my hands on his back and head so he could go into the “real” issue of his breathing difficulties that had plagued him all his life. I encouraged him to take this process slowly. He did and went “into” his nasal passages and felt that some of the blockages there, even while he was on his side, which often caused him to feel the breathing problems even more, were dissipating. I put my hand over the middle of his upper back, or the back of the heart chakra. He said he felt as if he was coming into a place of nurturing and acceptance, and at that point, I encouraged him to become quiet in that place while the soft music in the background played on.

I remained present within him in that place for several more minutes before we concluded, did a brief check-in, and ended the session. Paul later told me that he slept very well that evening and was able to go on a retreat where he was required to sleep in bunk beds and was able actually to sleep through the night. In the past, sleeping in this arrangement would bring on an element of claustrophobia for him and cause him great difficulty in breathing and sleeping.

With Insight Reiki, a presenting symptom often obscures other, deeper issues. In this case, Paul’s difficulty in breathing masked his anger about the lay-off and his anger related to other areas of his life. It also indicated his difficulty in breathing in life for himself. The session was profoundly moving, and I felt honored to be in the presence of such an awakening.

How to Do Insight Reiki for Yourself

As mentioned with the tool of discernment, a curious mind—one that is quite open and receptive to the body-mind wisdom that resides within—will aid you in doing Reiki. And be Feel that with your entire being. Notice how occupied your body and mind feel, perhaps how