

Reiki – The Japanese Healing System

By Cheryl Hinde

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What is Reiki

Reiki (pronounced 'Rey' – 'Kee') is a safe, gentle yet powerful form of healing that is performed by the 'laying on of hands' by a Reiki practitioner. The word Reiki originates from the Japanese words of 'Rei', meaning the Universe and 'Ki' meaning Life-force. It uses spiritual energy to treat physical ailments, however, it is also a holistic system for balancing, healing and harmonising all aspects of the person – body, mind, emotions and spirit and can also be used to encourage personal awareness, spiritual growth and awareness.

Reiki can be given to ANYTHING. That is people, pets, plants, machines or even stressful situations such as interviews or driving tests.

A brief history of Reiki

The power of Reiki was discovered and developed by a Japanese Buddhist Priest' called Dr Mikao Usui (b.1865 – d.1926) who, during the latter years of his life, founded Usui Reiki Ryoho which means the Usui Spiritual Energy Healing Method. This has now become widely known throughout the world simply as 'Reiki'.

In 1922, whilst teaching some students, Dr Usui was challenged by one of them as to whether he believed that Christ really did heal the sick. Because he could not answer this question, he decided he would try and seek the answer for himself. He joined a Buddhist Monastery where he befriended the Abbot and taught himself Sanskrit (Buddhist Scriptures). Although the Sanskrit taught him how to heal, it did not give him the actual power to heal so he set about a journey into the wilderness to meditate on Mount Kuramo (one of the sacred mountains of Japan) near Kyoto. On the 21st day he was struck by a powerful golden light and when he looked up he saw the 4 sacred symbols which gave him the power to heal.

He no longer felt hungry, tired and weak as he had done throughout his meditation and on his way back down from the mountain, in his haste, he stubbed and cut his toe. He held his toe until the pain had ceased, the wound had healed and the bleeding had stopped. He was healed.

He then spent many years healing the sick of Japan and passed his knowledge and teachings. It is a trait of Japanese culture that knowledge and important information is normally kept secret or sacred within family groups. It is this deep seated belief that has prolonged any widespread and accurate information about Reiki to be transferred to Western civilisation and initially, Dr Usui only performed Reiki on himself and his family (indeed, he is reported to have cured his wife of a serious illness). However, he soon realised the power of his knowledge and decided to teach others on how to access this healing energy and made the first level of Reiki training freely available to everyone.

The five principles of Reiki

- Just for today: Kyo dake wa
- Do not be angry: Okuru-na
- Do not worry: Shinpi suna
- Show appreciation: Kansha shite
- Work hard (on yourself): Goo hage me
- Be kind to others: Hito ni shinsetsu ni

How does Reiki work?

The use of Reiki works to help to clear blockages in a person's energy field.

Your body's messages

Our physical body has its own conscious energy system or body wisdom, which is always working for our greatest and highest good. Because of this, it tries to tell us when something is not right, either with our thinking or with our lives in general. Its messages take the form of symptoms, illness or disease, so when we have a headache, catch a cold or flu, have toothache, or become more seriously ill, our body is trying to tell us something or trying to get us to understand the signal and do something about it. But here lies the difficulty, because we don't always understand this kind of language (and some people are completely unaware of it) its significance is lost.

Most people react to illness or disease by trying to get rid of the symptoms very quickly, usually by seeking medical advice and medical intervention. If you really want your body to be healed, you need to understand the illness at a causative level. 'Masking' persistent headaches with medication then carrying on as normal is not a long term solution. Although the symptoms may abate for a while, they may well return because you are not listening to what your body is telling you.

Physical healing

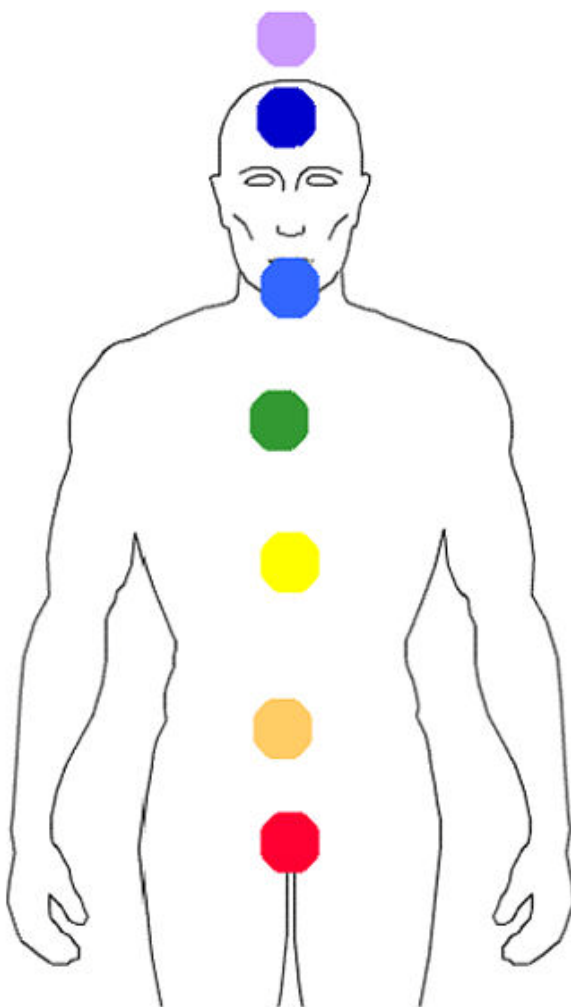
Our bodies have a highly sophisticated and intelligent set of healing process to repair and maintain themselves. Internally, cells are continuously lost through wear and tear and replaced by cell growth and division. During each year, 98% of the cells in your body are replaced, so in effect, you virtually have a new body each birthday. Your bone cells take around three months to generate your skeleton, your skin is renewed every month and your stomach lining every month etc.








This constant repair is what enables all physical healing to take place. However, many things can impact on this repair process; whether you eat a healthy balanced diet, drink plenty of water to keep yourself hydrated, your age and general state of health etc. Psychological stress also has a delaying effect on the body's healing process.

Holistic healing

Holistic is really 'holistic' in that the whole person is treated. A person's state of mind, living conditions and stress levels can all contribute to ill health. For example, those facing redundancy or suffering from grief have a depleted immune system which can leave them more susceptible to viruses and infections. From a holistic viewpoint, unless the underlying causes of illness or disease are healed, the person may become ill again. The symptoms may go away temporarily but may return in a more serious guise. This is the general viewpoint of complementary and alternative medicine to which more medical professionals are becoming sympathetic.

Reiki energy is transported around the body via the use of the 7 chakras. Chakra is Sanskrit meaning wheel or vortex. Chakras are an essential part of our body's energy system as they are connected with our physical health. Each is linked with specific body parts and body systems. Reiki energy is absorbed and distributed via the chakras. When a particular chakra is healthy, open and balanced, so are the connected body parts. If a chakra is blocked, damaged or closed then the connected body parts will not function correctly and may result in ill health.



	Crown Chakra Represents enlightenment, intuition and spiritual vision.
	3rd Eye Chakra Represents psychic perception, telepathy and ESP. Spine, nose ears and central nervous system.
	Throat Chakra Represents self expression, emotions and communication. Throat, thyroid arms and digestive tract.
	Heart Chakra Represents emotions, love, devotion, spiritual growth and compassion. Heart, liver, lungs and circulation system.
	Solar Plexus The most powerful chakra. Represents the centre of the body. Emotions, stomach, gall bladder and pancreas.
	Sacral Chakra Represents sexual energy, perceptions and first impressions of people. Reproductive organs and legs.
	Root Chakra Represents life, physical vitality, birth and recreation. Kidneys and bladder.

The Three Reiki Degrees

Reiki 1st Degree – ‘Sho-den’ (‘The Entrance’)

Like all Reiki Attunements, the Reiki I Attunement is given from a Reiki Master. The ceremony is sacred/secret. This Attunement opens up the Reiki channel in the individual to allow the energy to flow freely. The individual must then practice self-healing to refine their skills and then progress to give healing to others.

Reiki 2nd Degree – ‘Oku-den’ (‘The Deep Inside’)

Again, the sacred/secret Reiki II Attunement is given from a Reiki Master. This Attunement opens up the Reiki channel further to enable even deeper healing. Healing from a distance is also enabled (that is the healer and patient do not have to be in the same room, house, street or even country). This Attunement also facilitates healing of situations in the past, present or future. The concept is that there are no boundaries (time or distance) involved with healing energy. Three of Dr Usui’s sacred symbols are taught at this level.

Reiki 3rd Degree – ‘Shinpi-den’ (‘The Mystery/Secret Teachings’)

This Attunement is only given to those that wish to become a Reiki Master. Becoming a Reiki Master is quite an accomplishment as it can take several years to achieve. By agreeing to become a Reiki Master, you must agree to make Reiki a substantial attribute of your life which is quite a huge responsibility. This can only be done after developing and enhancing your own spiritual growth. You must agree to teach and to attune others in the way of Reiki. The fourth and final of Dr Usui’s sacred symbols (the Master’s symbol) is taught at this level.

A Reiki Treatment

The method of receiving a Reiki treatment from a practitioner is a very simple process. The recipient simply lies on a couch and relaxes. If they are unable to lie down the treatment can be given in a sitting position, the most important factor is for the recipient to be as comfortable as possible. There is no need to remove any clothing as Reiki will pass through anything, even plaster casts. The practitioner gently places their hands non-intrusively in a sequence of positions which cover the whole body. The whole person is treated rather than specific symptoms. A full treatment usually takes around 1 hour with each position held for several minutes.

What conditions can Reiki help?

It is possible to heal at any level of being: physical, mental, emotional or spiritual. Acute injuries can be helped to heal very quickly but more chronic illness takes longer. In some cases such as terminal illness, there is not enough time for the progress of the disease to be reversed. However, in such cases there is usually great benefit and enhancement of the quality of life, giving a sense of peace and acceptance during the time remaining.

Reiki healing can be given anywhere at any time as no special equipment is needed. The practitioner is a channel which the energy is drawn through by the need or imbalance in the recipient. Neither person has to use any effort of will or concentration during this process. However, Reiki is not recommended for people who are cynical to the idea of energetic

healing, as resistance does create a 'barrier' that will not let the energy flow correctly. There has to be a certain amount of acceptance from the patient that Reiki will benefit them.

Reiki can be used to treat a whole host of complaints including headaches, aches and pains as well as for stress and can be used as a form of deep relaxation. Reiki flows to the areas of need, soothing pain and supporting the body's natural ability to heal itself. Reiki restores balance in one's life.

Reiki enhances and supports all forms of treatment, both orthodox and complementary.

What happens during treatment?

Reiki is a totally non-invasive treatment. You won't have to take your clothes off, there are no side effects, and it's totally safe to have a Reiki treatment alongside any other medication or treatment you are having. Do not stop your usual medication.

What does the practitioner do?

They will place their hands lightly in positions on your body, usually starting with your head and working down your body. Sometimes the practitioner will work with their hands above your body, especially in any 'awkward' places that people might dislike being touched. The practitioner doesn't usually speak, but if you have any questions or feel that you want to talk during the treatment, then this is up to you.

How does it feel?

It varies from person to person. You will probably find that above all, you feel deeply relaxed, and it's perfectly fine if you find yourself drifting off to sleep. Some people feel unusual sensations such as heat, cold, tingling, or pulsing. You could feel as though you are floating, and you might see 'colours' or feel emotional. All these things are totally normal. At the beginning and end of a session, it's best to drink lots of water.

One or two treatments will help you if you're feeling stressed or just need to relax.

The following conditions will typically require three or four treatments, and the exact number will be agreed between you and your practitioner.

- Stress
- Back pain/ injury
- Soft tissue damage

Want to experience it for yourself?

If you would like to experience the power and effectiveness of this treatment for any aspect of your life whether it be for physical pain/injury, an emotional or relationship problem or just for some deep relaxation, then please pass your contact details to the E.S.K.K. As a qualified Reiki Practitioner, I can help you with any or all of the above issues.