

Miscellaneous Reiki Articles

- vol. 2

by

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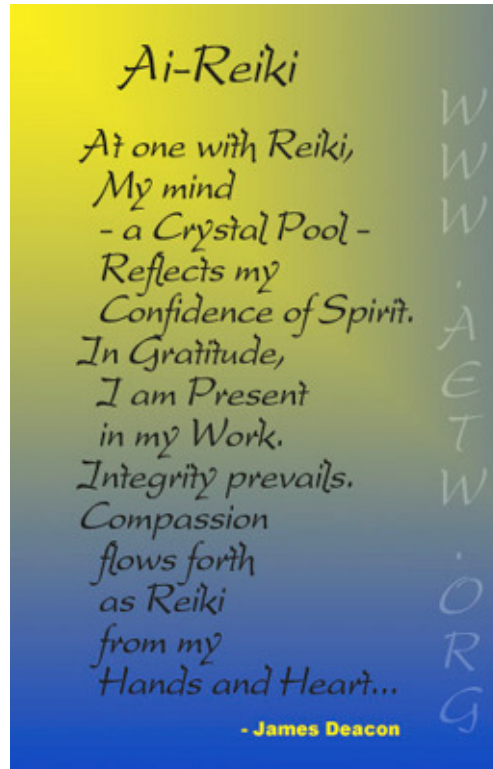
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AI-REIKI

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The 'Original' Reiki Principles:

*The secret method of inviting blessings, the spiritual medicine of many illnesses
(Shôfuku no hihô, Manbyo no rei yaku)*

Just for today (*Kyo dake wa*):

Don't get angry (*Okoru na*)

Don't worry (*Shinpai su na*)

Be grateful (*Kansha shite*)

Work hard (*Gyo wo hage me*)

Be kind to others (*Hito ni shinsetsu ni*)

*Mornings and evenings sit in the gassho position and repeat these
words out loud and in your heart
(Asa you gassho shite kokoro ni neji kuchi ni tonaeyo)*

*For the improvement of mind and body
(Shin shin kaizen)*

The poem: **AI-REIKI**, is a personal take on the Reiki Principles and what they mean to me.

To break the poem down -

[At one with Reiki]

What is 'The Secret Method of Inviting Blessings, The Spiritual Medicine of Many Illnesses' - surely it is to be at one with/in harmony with Reiki (Ai-Reiki)?

[My mind - a Crystal Pool]

When my mind is clear, there is no place for anger.

[Reflects my Confidence of Spirit]

When my spirit shines through, there is no worry

[In Gratitude.

I am Present in my Work.

Integrity prevails]

When I feel grateful for what I have,

I focus on my work -

am one with what I'm doing, and my motivations are 'pure'

[Compassion flows Forth

As Reiki from my Hands and Heart.]

Calm, confident, grateful, focussed with integrity, in the moment - in the state that is 'Reiki-consciousness' (even if it is 'just for today' or even 'just for a moment'), how can I not feel loving kindness to all that lives?

I start with holding this feeling of kindness/compassion 'just for a moment' -that's all it takes. I don't have to think about trying to hold the feeling for anything more than the moment - there IS only This Moment.

And just for the moment I am:

At one with Reiki,

My mind - a Crystal Pool

Reflects my Confidence of Spirit.

In Gratitude,

I am Present in my Work.

Integrity prevails.

Compassion flows Forth

As Reiki from my Hands and Heart.

Oh, and if you don't find this relevant to *your* journey with Reiki, remember:

"Just for Today": Kyo dake wa

"Don't get angry": Okoru-na

"Don't worry": Sinpai suna

"Be Grateful": Kansha shite

"Work hard": Gyo o hage me

"Be kind to others": Hito ni shinsetsu ni

REIKI & IT'S RISE TO POPULARITY

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Some thoughts as to why Reiki had not achieved the same level of popularity in Japan as it achieved in later years in the West...

It was only *after* Takata-sensei's passing that Reiki really began to grow in popularity.

Perhaps timing had a lot to do with this (late 70's / early 80's was a boom time for 'New Age' businesses, and, lets face it, Reiki was picked up by many business-minded folk simply because it was a new 'instantly acquired' addition to the range of therapies they could offer.)

However, Reiki might still be relatively unknown in the West if it wasn't for some shifts in thinking that occurred amongst several of Takata-sensei's students after her passing.

While Takata left us the legacy of 22 certified Reiki Teachers, initially it seems, it was understood by most of the '22' that only Takata-sensei's 'successor' [some believed this to be Barbara Webber Ray, others Phyllis Furumoto] was permitted to create new Masters.

[It is an old Japanese tradition that only the current Head of a school/style of any given initiation-based discipline can confer the highest degree of initiation/training within that school/style. Other Teachers would be only permitted to teach the earlier stages of the discipline]

However, it seems that Phyllis (considered Takata-sensei's successor by the majority of the others) told the other teachers they *all* were permitted to create new Masters.

And so, as a result of this first major shift in thinking, the potential arose for Reiki to spread more swiftly.

The more Masters there were, the greater the access to training at all levels.

The second major shift in thinking was concerning the financial accessibility of Reiki

This was down to Iris Ishikuro. Iris was the first person to greatly reduce the fees charged for the Level 3 initiation and training.

As a result, the number of Reiki Masters began to grow exponentially - particularly as several more of the '22' also began to reduce their fees for Level 3

And before anyone even thinks it - let alone voices it - contrary to the story told as part of the 'new Reiki history' (or should that be 'new Reiki *myth*'?) the introduction of high fees for Reiki Tuition was not something invented by Takata-sensei.

In the 1928 Reiki Article by the playwright and journalist Shou Matsui, it states:
"I was introduced to Mr. Hayashi by a mutual acquaintance and I paid a large sum of money to learn this treatment method..."

Matsui was speaking of Shoden (i.e. level 1) - and if he had to pay what he [a quite affluent individual] considered " a large sum of money", it makes you wonder what Hayashi-sensei's fees for Okoden (level 2) - never mind Shinpiden (level 3), might have been like.

And beyond the high costs of training in Japan, becoming a 'Reiki Master' had never been easy - often taking many years to achieve, depending on the natural talents of the individual.

Of all the students Usui-sensei taught (some estimate a figure in the region of 2,000), there were only about 20 granted Shinpiden level.

Also, Hayashi-sensei - in the 14 years after Usui-sensei's passing - created only 13 masters.

So with a limited number of masters, probable restrictions on what they could teach (level-wise), and also the time it could take to *become* a master, there was not the same opportunity for Reiki to grow in the way it would later do in the west

And just because people *came* to Reiki, didn't mean they necessarily *stayed* with Reiki.

We know that at least two of Usui-sensei's students - Toshihiro Eguchi and Kaiji Tomita in time abandoned Usui Reiki and went on to establish their own systems/schools of healing, and it is quite possible that many others did likewise.

(Even today in the West there are those who, having become Reiki masters, have 'evolved' their own approaches to healing*, and in many cases, these individuals move away from Reiki altogether to found new, independent, systems with new approaches to healing, and new names.)

It is also quite probable that yet other students would have simply moved on from Reiki to other, more enthusiastically-promoted 'up and coming' healing practices [just as today many folk move on from Reiki to various other things, e.g.: the Seichim derivatives, or Multi-dimensional healing, or Kofutu, Quantum Touch, Chios Energy Field Healing, etc., etc.]

Then of course there was the negative hype:

According to Frank Petter, Mr. Tsutomu Oishi, who had learnt Reiki from Kozo Ogawa, one of Usui-sensei's own students, had apparently declined Ogawa's request that he succeed him as head of his Reiki clinic in Shizouka.

The reason Oishi declined was because he had heard that healing others would diminish his own life energy...

*The earliest example being MariEL - created in the early 80's by one of the '22', Ethel Lombardi.

REIKI BITS & PIECES:
News, Views, and Incongruity-issues.....
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'Reiki Teddybear' meets 'Voodoo Doll' ?

A US-based Reiki practitioner (who wishes to remain nameless) related the following: Having recently done the Level II course, and wishing to do some distant treatments for a friend who lived in the next county, this lady decided to try the 'teddybear method' (i.e. using the bear as a surrogate) taught on the course by her RM.

So she borrowed one of her daughter's bears - one the child didn't play with much - and over the following week, 'treated' the bear each evening. Her friend had been suffering from a stiff back, and after speaking to her on the phone and being told that the stiffness had completely disappeared, the lady in question decided to stop the treatments.

A couple of days later, she returned the teddybear to her daughter's room.

About ten days later, she phoned her friend again, to enquire how her back was feeling.

"Great" was the reply, but I'm now experiencing a really strange ache in my left arm - it kind of feels, well, empty..."

So the lady told her friend she would 'send' her some more treatment; and after the conversation, went to her daughter's room to borrow the bear again.

To her surprise, on entering the room, she found her daughter playing 'nurse,' with the particular teddybear as her patient. The bear was now wearing a neatly tied bandage (actually a length of ribbon), so she asked her daughter why.

Seems that a couple of days earlier, the family's five-month old puppy had been playing with the bear, and managed to pull most of the filler out of the bears *left arm...*

Hayashi-sensei's training ?

It has been claimed by some that, unlike certain other students, Hayashi-sensei did not receive the higher levels of Reiki training/initiation from Usui-sensei

I've often wondered if this was simply a story invented by less-than-generous Gakkai folk in response to Hayashi-sensei decision to leave the Gakkai and set up his own school. ["Our Reiki is better than his" sort of thing?]

Or is it perhaps possible that the story could actually be a *modern* invention, by some current members of the pro-Gakkai Reiki camp? An attempt to cast doubt on the 'quality' - even the very validity, of the entire 'Western' Reiki lineage? Could it simply have been a ploy - a fiction devised in the hope of creating a level of insecurity in the minds of a great many 'Western' lineage Reiki practitioners concerning how strong/powerful/real their Reiki was, to the point, in fact, where a great many would hurry off to sign themselves up (and hand over the substantial booking fee deposit) for the very next available 'Japanese' Reiki course ?

Well, it *certainly* does seem to have worked, doesn't it?

The Mythologised Reiki Story and parallels?

Elsewhere I mention how the theme of the 21-day Meditation - resulting in revelation of healing gifts - has parallels in the 'founding' stories of other healing groups.

More recently, in my researches I discovered a further parallel:

In the 'Reiki Story' as told by Takata-sensei, we hear how Usui-sensei healed the physical ills of many beggars and arranged for them to be given employment - enabling them to find their place again in society. However, many that he had healed, in time abandoned their new lives and reverted to their old ways. This lead Usui-sensei to the realisation that in order to effect lasting change, it was not enough to simply heal the body - there must be a spiritual element to the practice...

Now, compare this with the story of one of Usui-sensei's contemporaries: Yamato Shôfû - founder of the faith-healing sect *Shôroku Shintô Yamatoyama*.

After becoming possessed by the deity, "Yamato no Ôkami," just after WW1, Yamato:

"...not only began treating the pains and ills of the people around him, but found that he had an unusual power which allowed him to effect unfailing cures.... Taking no reward for his work, he cured numerous people of their illnesses.

But many of the people who came to him for healing quickly returned to dissipate lives of heavy drinking and gambling. Seeing this, Yamato realized that healing people of illnesses was not necessarily linked to their larger salvation, and he concluded that the revitalization of one's spirit and the holding of a proper mental state were more important than the curing of physical ills...."

Quoted from: Healing in the New Religions: Charisma and 'Holy Water' by Masako Watanabe & Midori Igeta [in Contemporary Papers on Japanese Religion , Vol 2, Institute for Japanese Culture and Classics, Kokugakuin University, 1991]

The exact spot where Usui-sensei sat?

Recently some enterprising Reiki-folk have been advertising 'Reiki Pilgrimage' tour-packages to Japan, combining sightseeing in Kyoto with the opportunity to meet 'famous' Reiki people, receive training in either Jikiden, Komyo, or Gendai ho Reiki, and make trips to Mt Kurama.

Seems that the tours also include a chance to receive *denju* attunements or *reiju* at what is claimed to be the 'exact spot' on Mt Kurama where Usui-sensei undertook his 21-day *shugyo* and had the 'Reiki Experience'.

I can't help wondering if it is purely coincidental that the 'exact spot' just happens to be the very place revered as the site where the Kurama deity mao-son no kami arrived on earth?

So how did they suddenly discover that this was the legendary spot where Usui-sensei first experienced the phenomenon that is Reiki?

The fortuitous (and highly lucrative) result of a 'channeling' session, perhaps?

Reiju - and other 'higher' practices?

When the 'Reiki Community' in the western world first learned of the process called *reiju* being used by Reiki Masters in Japan, we were told that this was the original

version of what eventually became the 'Reiki Attunement' or 'Initiation' taught by Takata-sensei. But whereas Takata-style initiation/attunement process (*denju* in Japanese) was only given at the 'introduction' to each level, reiju was a practice repeated on a regular basis, and was said to have a cumulative effect - ever deepening the quality of the attunement.

It was Japanese Reiki Master Hiroshi Doi who introduced the reiju process to western reiki practitioners. However, at first there seems to have been some confusion (possibly due to language barriers) concerning the exact origin of the reiju method he was teaching. Initially many western Reiki Practitioners were under the impression that the reiju being taught by Doi-san was the original version used by Usui-sensei himself. But this was not the case. And not only was it not Usui-sensei's original reiju, it was not even a version as used by the Usui Reiki Ryoho Gakkai. Rather it turned out to be a procedure developed by Doi-san himself, to emulate the *experience* of the Gakkai version of reiju - which Doi-san had apparently *received* on many occasions, but had not actually been taught how to *give*.

Some time later, Usui Teate teacher Chris Marsh (who claims to be in contact with some of Usui Sensei's original students) also began teaching a form of reiju - which he maintained was the original version [but it is unlikely that this will ever be verified]; and over the last few years, several other versions of reiju have also appeared. Hyakuten Inamoto (of Komyo Reiki Kai), for example, utilises a variety of reiju's, including an 'open' or 'temporary' reiju which can be given to non Reiki practitioners [- this latter is, I feel, based on the 'Healing Attunement' found in some western styles of Reiki] .

As mentioned above, when we in the west first began to hear about reiju we were told it was the forerunner of the denju initiation/attunement process as taught by Takata-sensei.

In its deepest sense, Takata-sensei's denju constituted a 'transmission-ritual' by means of which the Reiki Master conferred the 'Reiki Ability' on the student - both in an actual, practical sense, and in the more spiritual/esoteric sense of passing on to the student the 'spiritual permission' to manifest this essentially sacred phenomenon. This type of 'transmission-process' is something which has a deep resonance with practices central to Japanese Mikkyo (esoteric) tradition.

Now, strangely, while it is claimed by some sources that reiju is actually derived from Tendai Mikkyo Buddhist practice, [in which 'transmission-empowerment rituals' are core to the student/disciple's 'unfolding'] these sources are also now telling us that, rather than being a form of attunement or initiation, reiju is simply a 'blessing ceremony' - that it is not a transmission-empowerment process at all.

Interestingly though, while in one breath effectively downgrading the significance of reiju in the Reiki scheme of things, these same sources in the very next breath intimate that they themselves have been made aware of other 'higher' practices that can take the student to levels of Reiki experience that reiju can not.

Could it be that, with the passing of time - the original enthusiasm about reiju having eventually died down to a level where it is widely realised that reiju (or at least the modernday, '*reinvented* reiju') is not all it was hyped up to be - the time has come for the next, new 'big secret', in the shape of one or more of these 'higher' practices to be rolled out (via an expensive seminar, no doubt) to an unsuspecting and ever-eager Reiki Public?

Te-ate and Te-no-hira

Traditionally, the collective/generic term for Japanese forms of hands-on healing is *te-ate*. [The term can also encompass the use of other manual techniques including manipulation, 'pressure points', etc.]

Reiki is in essence a form of *te-ate*.

Toshihiro Eguchi, a student of Usui-sensei developed his own form of hands-on healing which he called *te-no-hira ryoji*.

Now, while accepting that *te-ate* is indeed the generic, recently, some people are claiming that *te-no-hira* is the proper term to use when referring to an individual, structured, form of hands-on healing; and as such, are using the term to speak of the practice we generally think of as the 'Reiki treatment' - ie. the 'giving' of Reiki with the hands. (Perhaps the intent behind this is to imply that Eguchi was at least in part responsible for the development of Reiki as a hands-on healing practice, I cannot be sure)

However *te-no-hira* simply means 'palm of the hand' - in isolation does not actually refer to 'healing', nor, for that matter, does it necessarily even *imply* 'healing'. In the phrase: *te-no-hira ryoji* as used by Eguchi, it is the word *ryoji* which refers to healing/treatment, not *te-no-hira*...

Gokai or Gainen?

The gokai - the Five Principles - are, as we all know, at the very core of the Reiki system. There are several English renditions of the Five Principles, eg:

..Just for today, don't get angry
..Don't worry
..Be grateful
..Work hard
..Be kind to others"

Some renditions are quite literal, some less so, but even if its a version you haven't heard before, whatever the wording, you know there will always be FIVE principles - right?

Well, according to Usui-do's Dave King, you'd be wrong - there are only three.

As most of us are aware, Dave claims to be in contact with one of Usui-sensei's original students, a very elderly Buddhist nun known as Tenon-in.

Tenon-in apparently explained to Dave that something got 'lost in translation' and that the Principles (or rather 'Concepts' - *gainen* - as Tenon-in is said to call them) should actually be read like this:

- 1, Today only, anger not, worry not
- 2, Do your work with appreciation
- 3, Be kind to people

Now admittedly, there is not much difference here - but, what puzzles me is this: if there were technically only three 'Principles' or 'Concepts' to begin with, then surely they would have become known, not as the *gokai* (five principles) but rather as the *sankai* (three principles)?

* * * * *

靈
氣

Rei-ki

Japanese is a language which makes use of three different writing systems - *katakana*, *hiragana*, and *kanji*.

Katakana & *hiragana* are phonetic systems.

Kanji is the Japanese term for the Chinese system of characters [ideograms and pictograms] as used, for example, in writing the word *reiki* (above).

The particular pair of kanji-characters - which in Japanese reads as: *reiki*, when used in writing Mandarin Chinese reads as: *ling qi*.

While *ling qi* has at times been translated as meaning 'ectoplasm', it can - in a deeper sense - refer to a 'mysterious or spiritual influence' [this is of course also true of the term *reiki* itself]; however, in the terminology of a number of the Chinese systems of energy-cultivation and healing - collectively known as *Qi Gung* - the word *ling qi* is more commonly understood in somewhat simplistic 'energetic' terms, akin to those ascribed to its Japanese counterpart.

In some forms of *Qi Gung*, the term *ling qi* is used to refer to the most highly refined of all forms of *qi* ('subtle energy/essence') which can be accessed by/developed within, a living being's energy-system.

[Interestingly, in speaking about energy, Takata-sensei had said: "Reiki is the highest that I know of". However she also wanted it to be clearly understood that "Reiki is Reiki", that it was "brought from the prayers by Dr Usui" and had nothing to do with "Chinese exercises" (*Qi Gung*, *Tai Chi*, etc)]

Conceived of as highly-refined energy/essence/radiance, *ling qi* enhances [amongst other things] the cerebral functions, and is seen as highly conducive to the process of spiritual growth and deepening of spiritual awareness [much as is the case with Reiki].

Now, I'm sure a great many Reiki practitioners - on first having been introduced to Reiki - were told how Reiki is supposed to be far better than *Qi Gung* (or Bioenergy Healing or Magnetic Healing, etc) because, rather than using your personal energy to effect treatment, you are using energy 'channeled' from the Source/Cosmos/God or whatever, and therefore are not depleted when giving treatment.

Admittedly, at the *lower* and *intermediate* levels of *Qi Gung*, you are indeed developing and refining reserves of personal qi which can, amongst other things, be projected for healing purposes - and thus become depleted.

However, as the practitioner advances in the higher levels of the art, the nature of interaction with *qi* changes somewhat.

Ling qi is something only achieved when the practitioner has reached highly advanced levels of *Qi Gung* discipline and practice, wherein they have learned how to alchemically transmute their more 'earthly', vital, bodily energies into purer forms of spiritual *qi*, and at the same time open themselves to the Heavenly or Celestial *qi* which pervades the universe - channeling *qi* from outside themselves - just as is the case in Reiki.

In fact, it is a common view amongst many *Qi Gung* Masters that what we call Reiki [i.e. the 'energy', not the 'system'] is simply the higher level *Qi Gung* energy/essence/radiance - *ling qi* - accessed without having undergone the initial developmental training and discipline.

Thus, Reiki [i.e. the system] has often been referred to as:

Lazy Man's Celestial *Qi Gung*...!

* * * * *

MORE CONCERNING REIJU...

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A number of people have asked questions along the lines of:

"How or where did Usui-sensei get the idea for reiju, and were the symbols always a part of the process?"

Well, I think the only person who truly knows the complete answer to that is Usui-sensei himself.

However, in the course of his spiritual studies, he no doubt became aware of many forms of blessing/initiation procedures used by others (both individuals and groups), quite possibly having received several different forms himself.

If he was, as is commonly claimed, a student of the esoteric teachings *within* Tendai Buddhism, then receiving such blessings etc. would have been a central part of his training.

It has also suggested that Usui-sensei had been involved with the *Reijutsu Kai* movement, and also had links with the *Omoto Kyo* sect, both of which also utilised rituals of empowerment, blessing and healing.

We can also be pretty sure that Usui-sensei's own approach to initiation was one of experimentation - probably evolving through various forms over the four years or so he used it [prior to his death]

Current understanding is that originally (- rather than being a purely *therapeutic* modality,) Usui Sensei's system was essentially a spiritual-philosophical system - a system 'for the improvement of body and soul' - that is, a system *primarily* focussing on spiritual development, but one which *also* incorporated a self-healing element.

So, the reiju process was not simply about imparting practical 'healing ability', but also (as the term reiju implies) about imparting *spiritual* qualities or 'gifts'

Some say that originally there were *no* symbols used in the reiju process - that Usui-sensei incorporated them into the procedure at a later stage in its development.

However, there *is* of course the possibility that the symbols *were* there all along (They are, afterall, important keys to Usui-sensei's spiritual teachings, which *predate* the healing practice we generally think of as 'Reiki' today)

It is quite possible that Usui sensei (even early on) used two *different* versions of the reiju process

- one, *without* symbols: being a means of conferring blessing / empowerment / awareness of the healing ability, on *soto-deshi* (lit: 'outside students') - ie those who simply sought to develop a 'practical' remedial ability

and one, *with* symbols: a more spiritually-oriented process - being reserved for conferring blessing / empowerment / awareness of the healing ability, on *uchi-deshi* (lit: 'inside students') - i.e. those who had been accepted to study Usui-sensei's spiritual teachings.

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RANDOM THOUGHTS...

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On the concept of "Being Reiki"

The first thing is the realisation that 'You' can never 'Be Reiki'

In the moment of 'Being Reiki', there can be no perception of 'I'

'Being Reiki' is a state of *singularity* - a state of *transcendence*

When there is 'Being Reiki' there is *no* 'Being self'

In the moment of there being even fleeting *perception* of 'self', of 'I', of attachment to outcomes (even of attachment to Reiki), there is no 'Being Reiki'

On one level of interpretation, the term Reiki speaks of 'the influence of Spirit' or 'the manifest expression of Spirit in action'

'self' impedes Spirit

'Being Reiki' (in part at least,) involves "getting out of the way and letting Reiki *Be*" - getting 'I' out of the way, and letting *Spirit* act

[Of course, this is just my (i.e. 'self') opinion - realised and informed in a moment of Not-being Reiki: i.e. in a moment of being 'self'.]

In 'being Reiki', there is *only* 'Reiki'

In my experience, it is only *afterwards* - when we return to the *this-worldly* state of 'self' - to the state of 'not being Reiki', that we can attempt to make some personal sense of the experience of 'being Reiki' - and attempt to convey these perceptions via the inadequate medium of words...

(However, unlike Shakyamuni Butsu, I never quite managed the feat of transmitting direct understanding of my personal experience by merely handing someone a flower...)

When is a 'Distant Treatment' not a 'Distant Treatment'?

If you are not actually touching the client, but still working within their bio-energy field, then, while it is admittedly a 'hands-off' treatment, it is not a 'distant treatment' - as there is an already-established 'direct contact' between you and your client - via each other's energy field.

A treatment only becomes a 'distant treatment' when you are outside the extent of direct contact between your respective bio-fields and therefore have to establish contact via one of the 'distant treatment' techniques.

Now, while many people speak about giving *themselves* 'distant treatment', in treating yourself, you are *always* working *within* your own field, so technically you cannot be said to be performing a 'distant treatment' for yourself. Even if you *choose* to use 'distant treatment' techniques when treating yourself, you are already in contact with your own field - you cannot become so far removed from your own field as to *need* to use the 'distant treatment' techniques (unless, *perhaps*, if you are dead?...)

On 'sending' Reiki surreptitiously...

Whether we see our role (as Reiki practitioners) as being about 'making' someone well, or 'healing them into a state of *acceptance of their unwellness*', or simply, facilitating the 'space' in which the individual can come to 'heal' themselves (on whatever level), the individual still has a right to know *in advance* that this is our intention

and to be asked if they *want* this in the first place
-and even if they *do* want it, whether or not they want it *now*
They may prefer to participate in this self-change (with or without outside 'help') at a time more convenient to their *Lower Self*

Whether the focus is on healing, or spiritual growth and development, in *openly* informing the individual in advance - discussing our intent, and not just *seeking* but

also clearly and unequivocally *receiving* the individual's permission, we are *empowering* them to take *ownership* of the effects of that therapeutic or spiritual intervention

The notion that we can *circumvent* openness and honesty as to our intentions by "mentally asking permission of the person's *Higher Self*" is little more than an avoidance-strategy born out fear.

In 'sneaking around behind the person's back', we only serve to dishonour *their* Spiritual nature - and our *own*.

The power of Intent...

"We should never forget that 'Good Intentions' have a very limited usage: their primary purpose being to pave the road to hell"

On the issue of Re-attunement...

In Reiki, it is the *quality* of the initiation (i.e. the 'attunement' *and* the accompanying training) that counts, not the number of times you repeat it...

Reiki Initiation and the "Photocopier Principle"...

(some folk might call it the: 'Xerox Principle', but that might lead to litigation!)

It has been said that passing initiation is a bit like making photocopies...

Imagine you have a pristine-quality document. You make a copy of it, but due to dust particles, spots of 'correction fluid', smudged thumbprints, etc. on the copier glass, the copy you make picks up a few dirty marks - and depending on the paper, toner levels, and repro-quality of the copier machine, there may also be a slight deterioration in the quality of the text itself.

Then imagine that, some time later - perhaps a few months, perhaps a few years - the person you gave this less-than-perfect copy to, decides to make another copy to pass on to someone else. Not having the pristine original, they have to make the new copy from the one they have - which has now become a little crumpled, and has also picked up a few additional ink-marks and a 'coffee cup ring'... And the copier machine they use is also not in pristine condition... So, this *new* copy, in turn, picks up yet *further* obscuring marks [including the 'sign of the decaf mocha'] and suffers form *further* loss of quality...

Some time later, the person who has received *that* copy, decides to make another to pass on to someone else... and so on.

If, each time, the new copy is made from the last one produced, it won't be that long before the whole document is almost completely illegible...

So, how many 'Reiki photocopies' can we make in this way?

How many times can the initiation be passed - from master to student, to the *student's* student, then to *their* student, and so on - how many links do we need in an initiatorial lineage-chain before there is a *noticeable* deterioration in what is being passed on?

Reiki doesn't always reach...

It is generally believed (- whether rightly or wrongly), that in terms of treatment, Reiki will go wherever it is needed; also, that as a result of initiation / attunement, Reiki beneficially influences the student's energy-centres, bringing them into balance. However, truth be told, Reiki it seems, does *not* always reach the student's 'impatience centre' which drives the individual to "want it all now", nor their 'misconception centre' wherein lies the beliefs that "greater complexity equals greater power" and that "greater power equals more effective Reiki"...

'Sending Reiki'...

So, 'sending Reiki...' - its a common enough concept within Reiki, isn't it? People are constantly sending Reiki energy to other people, animals, things, places, events, situations, etc. In fact, the practice of sending Reiki energy (either simply channeling the 'raw' energy *directly* to a person, etc, or in some cases, indirectly - via a Healing List - which may contain the *names* of several individuals, situations etc) would seem to be the primary form of interaction that a great many people have with Reiki - particularly in western-lineage (Usui Shiki Ryoho) Reiki. Something every level 2 is taught - a major 'tool' in the Usui Shiki Ryoho 'therapeutic toolbox', right.?

Well, it seems that actually the very concept of '*sending* Reiki' is simply another one of those nice little Reiki 'add-ons'. (- an 'add-on' presumably adopted from one or other of the various western 'spiritual healing' traditions.)

Takata-sensei taught the practice of what she called 'Absent Healing': *the very specific* practice of performing a *Reiki treatment* for an individual with whom one was not in physical contact.

Separately, she spoke of sending a person 'good thoughts'. However, there was no concept of '*sending* Reiki energy'...

* * * * *

REIKI IS LIKE DRIVING...

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"How do you go about explaining what Reiki is to a potential client, without scaring them off with terms like 'Cosmic Energy' or 'Spiritual Energy', 'Channeling the ki', etc?"

Whenever anyone asks a question along these lines, I recall something that Jiro Kozuki - a Japanese Reiki Master friend said:

"Why is it that *Reiki-ka* (Reiki practitioners) always seem to focus in on the *ki* - the '*energy*' - when trying to explain Reiki to others for the first time?"

[Personally, what he said next also made me wonder if, perhaps, we focus too much on the ki aspect *generally*.]

"Reiki is like driving," Jiro said.

When you're driving somewhere, your 'here-and-now' focus should always be *on the driving* - on:

your driving ability

the road

what you encounter along the way

and the intended destination

- *not* on the fuel.

In Jiro's analogy:

for 'driving ability' read 'Reiki ability'

the road is the client

what you encounter - the clients dis-ease / therapeutic needs

your intended destination - to facilitate the client's relaxation and eventual return to a state of 'equilibrium'

'fuel' is Reiki 'energy' (once you're attuned, you *know* you have an adequate fuel-supply!)

So, now, when trying to explain Reiki to others for the first *time without scaring them off*, I tend to opt for something along the lines of:

Reiki is a set of 'received skills' which permit the therapist to assist individuals to relax in a very particular way, enabling their body (/mind/spirit) to access and activate its own, powerful, inherent, self healing mechanisms.

Oh yeah, and a Reiki treatment feels good too!

Also, I believe, expressing the idea that the therapist is simply *assisting* the client to *heal themselves*, is very important.

Medical studies have shown that patients (read: clients) who feel they are taking an *active* role in their own healing - and feel that they have the *support* of a competent practitioner - have *a far higher rate of recovery* than those who feel their role is purely a *passive* one.

The best way, I feel, to attempt to explain the *ki* - the Reiki 'energy' - to a client is to wait until *after* they have *experienced* it for themselves.

Then - and only then - I might begin to talk about the "vital energy that is everywhere around us" or in some other way attempt to tailor an explanation in keeping with their personal focus.

* * * * *

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE FUTURE OF REIKI ...

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Well, (as I'm sure we all do) I would like to see Reiki Ryoho continuing to 'move into the light', and hopefully gain ever greater levels of acceptance - by both the public at large and the medical professions - as a valid complementary* therapy.

However, certainly in terms of Reiki Ryoho practice in a *professional* context, I feel that issues around Regulation are going to be even more prominent in the near future.

Globally, it is definitely becoming a case of '*Self-regulate before the State Regulates*'

In the UK, for example, proposals for a move towards Voluntary Self-Regulation by mid 2008 still are being discussed. Issues under consideration include a code of safe professional practice, disciplinary and complaints procedures, and the creation of a UK Register of Professional Reiki Practitioners.

Now, while many view this primarily from a perspective of encroachment on individual freedom, personally I see self-regulation as being an important step towards gaining credibility in the eyes of the medical professions.

With there now being so many different Reiki Ryoho *styles*, and different approaches to practice, I feel it is very unlikely that we, as a Community, could ever *hope* to (many would say, ever *want* to) arrive at a situation where we have achieved some form of universal *standardisation* of training and practice (even if self-imposed).

However, while *standardisation* of training and practice may not be 'on the table', something I feel we do need to remain mindful of is the issue of *standards* of training and practice.

After all, in Reiki Ryoho we have an ethical duty of care - not just to those who come to us for *treatment*, but also, to those who come to us for *training*.

With any art or discipline (whatever its nature) moving from, as it were, 'the shadows of relative obscurity' into 'the bright light of popularity', there is always a risk that standards of training and practice may suffer.

I feel we would be naïve to think that, in the case of Reiki Ryoho, things should necessarily be any different.

Instances of poor standards of training not only dishonour those receiving that training, they also impact on the perception of the *overall* professionalism of the Reiki Community as a whole, in the eyes of the very people we need to be reassuring.

In my opinion, the implementation of systems of self-regulation and the setting of 'benchmark' or 'baseline' minimum standards, is perhaps essential in order to guard against various degrees of failure in relation to the above-mentioned duty of care; and by extension, to ensure that Reiki Ryoho receives the professional recognition it so richly deserves as a highly effective therapeutic practice.

*

I prefer the term 'complementary' to 'alternative', as I feel that use of the latter - whether in connection with Reiki Ryoho or any other 'non-mainstream' form of therapeutic practice - is often viewed as somewhat antagonistic by the Medical Community, and as such, only helps to strengthen the divisive "us versus them" perception held by so many practitioners - 'mainstream' or otherwise.

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