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"Knowing the way is easy,  
walking the path is the  
hard part"

in search of  
our objective  
truth

PHILLIP HAWKINS

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## The Five Reiki Principles

The Reiki principles are a fundamental part of our Reiki training, yet many see them, as no more than a set of ideals that don't directly affect our practice. It's true we would get the same results even if we weren't aware of these principles but to merely use them as a mantra overlooks their power to heal on a personal level. These principles stand alone and any one applying them in their lives whether Reiki trained or not will effect healing in themselves for the principles contain the power to heal the mind, body, and spirit. Although the wording may vary the essence never changes. It asks us to give up and release an attitude or action that has the potential to create illness, disease, and eventually death if sustained for a considerable period of time. If we take each one and look at the benefits of their implementation in our lives we will begin to understand why Dr Usui says "Just for today".

### **1. I will not anger.**

We are raised to believe the expression of anger is wrong, dangerous, and unacceptable so from an early age we learn to suppress our anger and disguise our true feelings in order to survive as individuals, gain favor, and avoid punishment. Many see it as simply a negative emotion yet we are designed to react in a positive way to danger and this instinctive 'fight or flight' response has enabled us to survive as a species. Not only is this positive energy necessary for our survival it also provides us with the means to protect the weak and right all manner of wrongs that may offend our sense of truth and justice. However, if we don't use this energy in an appropriate way, dealing openly with situations and problems it can become contaminated with guilt, frustration, and resentment and become destructive anger. This anger is dangerous, and if sustained for an extended period of time can lead to illness and disease.

If this repressed anger continues into adulthood as it nearly always does, it can lead to chronic illness and disease. Our thoughts trigger emotions, which then show up as physical symptoms in every part of our body. There is always a connection, we can lie to others and we can even lie to our selves, but our bodies never lie. Is it any wonder that Dr Usui asks us just for today don't get angry.

## **2. I will not worry.**

To be able to foresee danger is necessary for our survival and anticipation is a positive and valuable ability but worrying is both negative and debilitating and uses up a great deal of time and energy. Worry and its best friend fear create a loop that becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, we worry about the future and our worry and fear through the power of our intent help create the thing we fear the most. We focus on the problem but we fail to shift our perspective on to the possible solutions and in the process use up all of our energy needed to face and deal with the problem. The costs of worrying far outweigh the possible benefits and we should never confuse worry with concern, worrying keeps us focused on the problem while healthy concern helps us think about possible solutions. Dwelling only on the problem becomes a rehearsal for failure. There are many ways to reduce the effects of worrying and what all of them have in common is that they recognise the cost of worrying on a physical, mental, and emotional level. They all require a shift in consciousness that takes our focus away from our problems and out of our selves. This requires a balanced outlook that keeps both the problem and solution in perspective and redirecting the energy we have available towards a solution-based outcome to events.



## **3. Be grateful for your many blessings.**

For some of us something awful has to happen before we can begin to appreciate and feel grateful for what we have. We become wrapped up in our own little world of fears and anxieties and in doing so we become isolated and disconnected from the rest of the world. Taking things for granted can affect

us in many subtle ways, when we expect to receive more than life or those around us can provide we begin to feel angry and resentful at this perceived short fall in what we feel we deserve. The most dangerous part of this mind set is that without an element of gratitude when we receive what we expect we are rarely if ever satisfied with the results. To enjoy and appreciate more we must first be grateful for what we have no matter how little that may be, if we can't more will never be enough.

Gratitude reflects quality not quantity and it's our own values that are reflected back to us that create this sense of lack or abundance in our lives. Lack or abundance is relative and how we view these extremes can affect the quality of our lives; two people looking at the same set of circumstances can see something totally different. Our glass is either half empty or half full, one says poor me I have so little, the other says aren't I lucky to have all of this, and whatever you think you are right.

Whatever you believe you are right; and that attitude will be reflected in every aspect of your life. If we want more in our lives then we must give up the restrictions that create deprivation and recognise that abundance is an option we can choose. If you want more of anything the first step is to simply and meaningfully give thanks for everything you have already received in your life for gratitude is a key that opens that particular door. The law of abundance requires that we look at what we have, value all of the lessons it provides us with and then give thanks, in this way more can be released to us in the knowledge that we will use and appreciate everything that is given.

#### **4. Work honestly.**

This principle requires you to be as honest with yourself as you are with other people, honesty requires openness and the ability for you to know and respect yourself, the things we find most attractive in others are the values and strengths we see in ourselves. Honesty also requires self-confidence and self esteem, with these we are able to make judgments and take action based on our own belief system and not through peer pressure, intimidation, or guilt.

The best definition I know of character is 'doing what's right when no-one is watching'. Set yourself goals and assess your progress but accept that mistakes are part of your personal development and that they don't indicate a bad person. Pay attention to what lifts you to greater achievement and what brings you down. Accept yourself, faults and all; while you are busy disowning parts

of you that don't measure up to some unrealistic standard that only exists in your head remember you are a good person, who sometimes makes mistakes. Denial of any kind requires a great deal of sustained energy and the first step of any change is to accept the situation for what it is.



Take personal responsibility for your life, everything in it, and the attainment of your own goals and ambitions, there is nothing more debilitating than waiting for others including spirit/universe to act on your behalf and there is nothing more empowering than realising that no one is going to do it for you.

Assertiveness is having respect for your own needs when dealing with others. Be prepared to stand up for what you believe to be right and never sacrifice your principles for the sake of someone liking you, they may like you for a while but you will dislike yourself for a much longer period of time. Practice personal integrity, be truthful with yourself and with others, never make promises lightly and when you make them ensure you keep them. Honour your commitments and through your actions put your word beyond price, don't boast or brag and let your actions speak for you in a simple unassuming way. Do what is required and then let go and try not to be attached to the results of your actions.

Honesty requires us to accept full responsibility for our own actions; if we allow others to dictate how we feel and act we are giving away our power to them, our actions are then determined by their values and beliefs no matter how negative or corrupt they may be. If we respond to them in kind instead of how our own values dictate we have given up the right to be offended by them for we have become worse than they are because we know better but are no longer true to ourselves.

## **5. Be kind to all living things.**

In some ways this is the hardest principle to live by. Yes it's easy to be kind to people you like and who like you, and it's easy to be kind when it doesn't cost us anything. The test comes when we are asked to be kind to those people we don't like and who make us feel angry, frightened, threatened and insecure. We are not asked to like, love, or condone the actions of others, all we are asked to do is to be kind to all living things when the opportunity presents itself. The greatest barrier to kindness is our ability to judge everyone from the standpoint of our own values and beliefs. It's this I that creates judgment and separation, and fear always walks hand in hand with judgment. We fear anything that challenges our belief system and we take great comfort from the thought that we are in some way different or better than those people we dislike. We can't bring ourselves to believe that given the right conditions and personal circumstances we could be the kind of person we find it so easy to dislike and hate.

If asked to identify the things in others that make it easy for us to respond with kindness we invariably list the qualities we see in ourselves, the hard part comes when we are asked to be kind to those who may not be grateful or even deserving of our kindness. We are asked to give without judgement or attachment to the outcome of our actions, and when we give freely in this way we open ourselves to the kindness of others. We are asked to separate the person from the action and try to replace feelings of anger, hatred, and dislike with kindness. This is for our sake as well as theirs.

The only real point of power is the here and now and prefixing each principle with Just for today our attention and effort are focused in a way we can understand and the past and future are left where they belong. By employing these principles in a meaningful way we see the truth demonstrated that the only person we heal is ourselves.

## Reiki: Attention and Intention

There have been numerous books and articles written about the origins of Reiki how it works, the symbolism involved and techniques used to gain the optimum effect, all of which are interesting and informative and provide the reader with a wealth of information, if not necessarily a greater level of knowledge and understanding.

At the risk of alienating oneself from mainstream Reiki ideology it has to be said that Reiki is universal and as such is first and foremost a subjective personal experience and in the 'great out there' beyond the limitations of our physical senses we can't really know for sure, or say with any degree of certainty what Reiki is. We think that if we put a name or label on something it automatically conforms to our definition but this isn't always the case. This was pointed out to me by a friend and Reiki student who was a research scientist at Newcastle University at the time. He went on to explain that what we perceive as Reiki sensations and effects be they heat, cold tingling, elation or euphoria are simply expressions of our physical senses in response to an 'external' stimulation whatever that may be.



Image by [AlicePopkorn](#)

The above comments are in no way meant to dismisses or devalue the origins and purpose of Reiki, it simply refers to the working relationship between our brain and its physical senses that define and determine the nature of our perceived reality, and Reiki may be nothing like we think it is beyond the accepted limitations of our five physical senses. Given our limited knowledge understanding may be prudent to acknowledge how little we do know and proceed from this point with an open mind.



Leaving generic definitions aside for a moment and accepting the above premise for the sake of a healthy discussion and debate, let us turn our attention to the often overlooked but ‘very real’ power that helps create and unify what we may describe as a Reiki experience, whatever you believe the source of that experience to be. In the process we may get answers to some of our questions and in the process be sign posted to some the knowledge and understanding we may have been searching for. So what is this mysterious and magical ingredient that makes things possible? You; or more precisely your *attention* and *intention* are the catalytic power that makes change possible in your physical world, without it nothing happens and on an energy level the creative force that some describe as Reiki remains undisturbed.

There are three things in life that determine the depth and breadth of our experiences; what we focus on (attention) what it means to us, and what we choose to do about it (intention). In short how much time we invest in thinking about something, the value we place on it and the action this stimulates. The outcome of this simple three-step equation is an experience; the quality of that experience is defined by the quality of the inspiration and processes involved, if the components are faulty (negative) then ultimately the end product or the experience will be flawed. Some may call this Karma, but Karma is the chain reaction of cause and effect by another name.

Put simply energy follows intent; thought is the architect of creation and attention and intention are building blocks it uses. If you don’t believe me put it to the test and prove to yourself the power of truth demonstrated. Look around the room you are sitting in reading this article, now focus on an object you would like to physically move from its present location if only for the duration of this little exercise. If you focus on it, get up and move it before sitting back down you have completed the above three-step process and created a new experience/result/outcome. If on reading this you make a comparison between this and say the complexities of Reiki or using symbols to send distant healing and feel the above example is too simplistic, you may not yet fully understand the principle of energy following our intent.

Firstly let me state very clearly that Reiki whatever it may be does not require our approval or acknowledgement for it to exist; our failure or inability to embrace it merely restricts its effects in our life and our belief or disbelief has no real bearing on its existence. As such it requires neither symbols techniques nor mantras for it to work, our attention and intention merely

works with what already exists in this case Reiki energy and our physical reality (the present moment) to create a new outcome/result/experience. Hopefully one free from the limitation of our own expectation and conditions as to what we want to happen. One of the greatest handicaps we place upon ourselves is the belief in the 'Reiki must do's' and that their use in some way improves the quality of the Reiki a person receives. If we accept for the sake of this discussion that Reiki is a creative consciousness expressed in our minds and our actions as unconditional love then we must also accept that it's infinite in its presence, power and jurisdiction and its quality can't be strained or enhanced by our actions. This last comment will be much to the disgust of the negative ego that would have us believe that it alone is the center of our personal universe.

You may say that distance healing requires the use of the Reiki distance-healing symbol because that's what we have been taught, but in reality this precept couldn't be further from the truth. Through our knowledge and understanding of Quantum Physics it is now an accepted fact that we are energy beings inseparable from the energetic fabric of the universe we are a part of. Most of that fabric is invisible to the naked eye and any idea of separation is an illusion again created through the limitation of our physical senses that provides our brain with neurological data that it requires to define what it perceives as real in a 'physical' world. Even the most solid of objects is in reality 98% 'empty space', what we call physical matter is nothing more than solidified energy defined and designed by its vibrational frequency, increase that frequency and the visible will become invisible as its molecular structure changes. 'Solid matter' is infinitesimal compared to this invisible energy that makes up who and what we are and the universe we are a part of. What we see as distance or empty space between solid objects is the fabric or matrix that provides the backdrop against which all solid objects are both illuminated and animated.

Once we are able to grasp this concept the sending Reiki to another person is as simple as giving it to ourselves because we are one and the same and coincidentally this is one of the reasons why when we give Reiki to others we automatically treat ourselves in the process. All we require to send Reiki to another person no matter how far away they are is our attention and intention. Attention provides the focus and our intention provides the impetus. In thinking it it's done, as energy of our attention is directed by the power of our intention. Again this may be far too simple for those who believe

that something as complex as sending Reiki to the other side of the world navigating all manner of barriers and time zones requires complex strategies to achieve the desired outcome. If we look at this problem from a purely physical perspective I would have to agree but once we let go of this limiting viewpoint and begin to see things as an energy continuum without breaks, barriers or limitations we literally come full circle and return to the point of attention and intention.

One of the major precepts of Reiki is that it goes where it's needed and not where we or the recipient may want it to go to; this shows an infinite consciousness beyond our limited understanding of the cause and effect of illness and disease, so we must ask the question which came first the precept or the teaching practice because they appear to be at odds with one another. Symbols, hand positions and Reiki techniques all work; they do so because they are underwritten by the use of our attention and intention within the energy matrix we call the universe, it's impossible to separate attention and intention from the Reiki experience or any creative process. Everything man made exists because it was initially instigated by the creative duo of attention and intention. As a Reiki teacher I believe its part of my responsibility to help my students learn how to think, but not what to think so I teach all of the above in addition to both the Western and Eastern version of the Reiki story. From that point on I encourage the students to think for themselves as they put what they have learned to the test and develop their own Reiki practice based on the theory and their own experiences. It all works but each student must find their own path and if necessary break new ground and old beliefs in equal measure.



Hand positions generate much interest and discussion. When I was taught first degree Reiki I was shown hand positions for the head and body but only down to the waist, my teacher hadn't been taught full body hand positions so she chose to teach her students only what she had been taught no matter how

illogical it appeared from a teaching perspective. From my own personal experience the most powerful hand position I have ever used on a regular basis isn't to be found in a Reiki manual, it's simply holding the persons hand. Even if the person knows nothing of Reiki ask any parent, lover or care giver the power of gently getting hold someone's hand, its simplicity belies its power to calm, comfort and reassure, all of which are elements in the healing process. Holding another person's hand is one of the most natural and instinctive actions we can take, it's unobtrusive and can be far more appropriate in an everyday real life situation that calls for a Reiki treatment away from a treatment room with its treatment table, candles and soothing music.

All of these are cosmetic; they work but we should remember that it's we that need them and not Reiki. Being universal means that it must be applicable in all situations and as Reiki practitioners we must be able to adapt to any situation life presents us with. Imagine if you will you are sitting having a coffee in a busy shopping mall when you notice someone distressed and in your opinion in need of some Reiki. Using discretion, discernment, caution and common sense in equal measure you have to assess how to achieve that without being obtrusive, insensitive or getting arrested for being a public nuisance. Even if the person appears to be approachable they still may not appreciate any kind of physical contact from a total stranger and even holding their hand may not be an option, so we require a plan B in order to help them and that's where your attention and intention comes into its own. Attention and intention without exception are our plan B in every situation.



Reiki through touch is a beautiful thing, but it's only one option and should never be considered the be all and end all, the greatest tool in our Reiki

toolbox is our imagination and the way we use it. Reiki can be given in any way we choose and the only limits are those formed by the boundaries of our imagination. If we return to the above shopping mall with its noisy music, confusion and claustrophobic throng of busy shoppers rushing by, you may be able to approach the person to ask if they are ok and offer some assistance but not everyone is comfortable with physical contact or being approached by a total stranger and they could find it intimidating and threatening. If it's a sweet old lady we may be overcome by compassion and the desire to help, but what if it's someone who is dirty and unkempt and appears to be living on the streets and under the influence of drink or drugs. Maybe they are the ones who look threatening and intimidating and trigger some of our own deep-seated negative beliefs, values and fears. With the best will in the world we can be faced with a multitude of obstacles that could get in the way of our desire to help another person so we must be able to call on other means to achieve our goal.

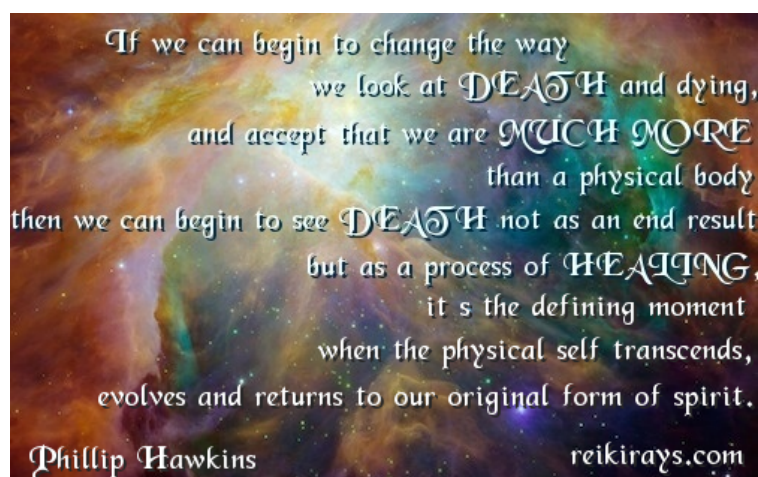
We can give Reiki with our eyes as our attention and intention will automatically follow our line of sight and our train of thought, simply by looking at the person we can direct Reiki to them. Our breath in the form of spoken words as we express our desire (another term for attention and intention) silently to ourselves or quietly out loud for that person to receive the help they need. However caution is required in any situation for if we stipulate how we want that person to be helped we are trying to restrict the infinite by setting limitations on what's available to the person. We are also inadvertently taking responsibility for that person's current state and saying that we with our very limited knowledge and understanding know what's best for them. Better that we simply ask that they receive the help they need if they are willing to accept it. This then presents us with another apparent contradiction in as much as we are told that we must always ask the person for permission to give them Reiki. I would never dream of getting hold of anyone to give them Reiki without first discussing it with them and only if it was appropriate to do so, but we have to be able to differentiate between clients receiving Reiki treatments with the accepted protocols and what I define as a real life scenario that calls for emergency Reiki first aid intervention.

I was taught that I must always get the persons permission before giving Reiki; while at the same time we should always send Reiki to the people who are victims of natural disasters. Again this felt like a contradiction to me that

required applied common sense to resolve the apparent confusion. If it's ok to give Reiki to 2,000 victims of a natural disaster without their individual or collective permission then it must be ok to give it to one person who is in need of it, and our inability to gain permission won't negate its effects or call for divine retribution on our part. What we must be able to do is think on our feet and where appropriate let go of the 'must do's' and use our imagination and common sense in equal measure to achieve our goal which is to help those in need, if they are willing to accept the help that's available to them.

Reiki is neither intrusive nor dictatorial; it never forces itself upon us or overrides our free will and freedom of choice. For those who say 'Reiki changed my life' no it didn't, if your life has changed for the better it's because you changed. In many ways Reiki is like the help we get from spirit in the form of requested advice and guidance, it is given freely but the choice is always ours as to whether we take the advice and guidance or not. If we want it in our lives we must be willing to actively invite it in or at least be receptive to it on one level or another. Even if we send Reiki to someone who doesn't want it, it isn't wasted for it will either go to someone close by who is open to it or it will simply return to the source (not us) from which it originally came thus completing a full circle.

Going back to Quantum Physics for a moment; all of the energy that has existed or will ever exist does so in the here and now it's neither created or destroyed by our actions, in birth as in life and death it simply changes from one state of being or form, to another. When we send Reiki to someone we wish to help it may be accepted with gratitude or it may not, but it's never wasted for as we use our attention and intention for the benefit of others we help heal ourselves in the process for we are simply a part of the whole of creation.



The secret of Reiki empowerments or Reiki treatments lies within the attention and intention of the Reiki teacher or practitioner, it can be as complex as you want it to be, or it can be as simple as it is meant to be. All forms of elaboration comes from the self; and it's the self that looks for the three "R's" of **result, reaction, and response**, the greater the response the greater the satisfaction and sense of personal achievement and a job well done. The power of Reiki comes directly from the source whatever we believe that to be, the I come's from the self that believes it is separated from the source, the teacher knows that the thought of separation is an illusion created by an illusion of me, myself, or I. We can never be separated from the source or the power it creates, and the teacher's empowerment is a demonstration of their knowledge and understanding of this fact. We do what we know, if we say we know but don't do, we neither know nor understand.

The created can never be separated from the creator; nor can the created be greater than its creator, even the most complex and wondrous creation is no more than a reflection of the power that created it, it comes from the source but it's not the source itself. In the same way the teacher knows that the words and thoughts they use are not the power of their intent, they are merely a projection of that power made physical. The goal is to move beyond the simplest of empowerments and go directly to the source, to move beyond the words, beyond the thoughts, and even beyond the need for conscious intent. The secret of empowerments lies in not just doing less, but also understanding more of our connection to the power that created us. In the moment we realise that it's not about making something happen, it's about being one with that power and allowing what needs to happen to come about. The more we understand the less we need to consciously do; until we reach the point where we stop trying, stop doing, and simply connect with the power that created us. We become still and from that stillness all that needs to be, will be.

A teacher uses their attention and intention via the empowerments as a means of awakening the student to their own connection with the source, the connection already exists but the student must be made aware of it in order for them to be able to develop and grow. This energy continuously flows through the teacher, through the student before returning to the source, thus completing a continuing circuit of creation and recreation. In this way the teacher demonstrates a way; firstly through the spoken word, then through the application of techniques, that lead to the attention/intention based empowerments and beyond, where knowledge and understanding raise us

above the need to do, and allow us to just be and relax into that symbiotic relationship between the creator and the created an expression of the source whatever it may be It's in this state of being, this stillness of acceptance that we discover the true nature and secret of attention and intent.



## Even with Reiki, Just Having Ability Is not Always Enough

It's said in some spiritual teachings that 'if we had the faith the size of a mustard seed we would be able to command mountains to move, and they would move'. I know from personal experience that when coming to Reiki some people spend a great deal of time and effort trying to move mountains of one description or another. Not all mountains look the same and often come in all shapes and sizes, how big they appear is usually in relation to how close we are to them, distance like time brings definition and perspective to many things. Our mountain may be an illness we have to come to terms with, a difficult relationship that has to be resolved, or personal beliefs that have to be re-evaluated, either way we are faced with a series of choices to be made. We can choose not to choose, to do nothing and leave the situation alone, we can decide to take a detour and go around the problem and save ourselves a lot of time and hard work, or we can climb this personal mountain and overcome this challenge that's looming up in front of us. The choice is always ours; to choose to do nothing is a choice in itself.

Part of the process is to understand the value of the choices we make and the consequences of the actions we take, for the hard path is not necessarily the right path, hardships don't automatically lead to enlightenment and suffering does not presuppose understanding. Surely the avoidance of unnecessary pain and suffering through choice rather than fear is the beginning of true enlightenment. As a great teacher once said 'If it isn't broke, don't fix it'. But let us consider for a moment; what if we had the faith or the ability to literally move mountains, what would it prove and more importantly what would be the consequences of our actions. Without doubt it would be a most powerful demonstration of our new found ability, but we would be wrong to assume that our actions even the most righteous are taken in isolation and in some way detached from those around us, and it's no big deal to rearrange the landscape by moving a mountain or two.

On a mission to prove our ability we sometimes forget that even faith and good intention are governed by the laws of cause and effect, whenever we talk about I, me or my, we are without realising it trying to separate our ourselves from the the source from which we all come, and the cause from the effect. In demonstrating our new found ability it's not enough to assume that God or the universe is taking care of the minor details while we are busying ourselves moving everything in sight. Nothing happens in isolation, the idea of

separation is an illusion, for every cause good or bad has an effect, and every action no matter how small brings forth a reaction. The chaos theory states that when a butterfly flaps its wings on one continent it creates a storm in another part of the world due to the laws of cause and effect, if a butterfly can create this effect what price is paid through the movement of a mountain as a demonstration of our ability. If we accept that our thoughts and actions no matter how small create effects we must realise that as ability increases so does the consequences of our actions, and with it the responsibility to think before we act, for with great power comes great responsibility, and we must learn to carry that responsibility lightly.



Even if we discount the chaos theory, let's consider for a moment the 'practical' implications of having the ability and desire to move mountains through faith and intent. The disruption caused by the relocation of the mountain; people forced to move, livelihoods destroyed and families broken up in the process, the impact on the environment as a mountain is brought into being in someone else's life. Moving a mountain weighing millions of tons would instantly impact on the earth itself and its finely balanced ecological system, a release in pressure would set up shock waves, trigger tremors and earth quakes. Weather systems would be disrupted leading to the destruction of animal and plant life due to the sudden climate change, all because we developed the ability to move mountains and had the need to prove we could do it.

Obviously this article isn't just about having the ability to move a mountain or deal with issues in our lives; it's about understanding the consequences of our actions, even those carried out with the most spiritual and loving intentions. Since we share time and space with all of creation our thoughts and actions

impact on everything around us. Developing ability be it practical, or spiritual; becoming a Reiki practitioner or even a Reiki teacher is not enough; ability isn't a bench mark for enlightenment, it's not necessarily a case of the more we can do the better we are, if we think this way we may struggle to keep pace with our ego. Like a little knowledge, ability on its own can be a dangerous thing; we must ensure that we also develop a greater understanding and an even greater sense of responsibility to go with the ability that we possess. It's not enough to assume that everything will be ok, we have to grasp the reality that change no matter how small is never isolated, its effects like shock waves radiate out indefinitely from its point of impact. A chain reaction is set in motion; a chain reaction of cause and effect, where every action becomes the creator of even more effects.

If we are the creators of our own universe and the world we live in is a projection of our minds then it would be irresponsible of us to use our ability without due consideration of our actions and the effect they will have on others. As our ability grows we should always try to work within the limits of our own experience while progressively pushing back the boundaries of our development, ability should never be acquired at the expense of knowledge and understanding. Working for the higher good does not negate our personal responsibility for our actions even if they are carried out with the best of intentions, spirit will not pick up the pieces nor carry out damage limitation on our behalf. We each have a responsibility to understand that we are a player in the game called 'life' and like any game; it's up to us to learn the rules in order that we can progress to another level.

Ability on its own is never enough; the greater the ability the greater the need for self-control and self-discipline in its use. You may be able to develop the ability to move mountains; real, spiritual or otherwise, but before you do ask yourself why you wish to do so, and is it absolutely necessary, if it isn't broken why are you trying to fix it, if it's not hurting anyone leave it alone, remember that choosing to avoid unnecessary pain and discomfort is the beginning of enlightenment. No one should suffer needlessly nor should we cause suffering to others or ourselves just because we have the ability to do so. Having just dropped a mountain onto someone's doorstep, saying 'Ooop's sorry' just doesn't quite cut it or make it right.

## Reiki Before it Was Reiki

Reiki as we know and understand it was introduced to the world in the late 1800's and is by definition a '*universal energy*', so we can safely say that for over a hundred years this particular expression of energy has been known as Reiki.

Since the universe didn't just appear at the end of the 19th century it's also reasonable to assume that this energy source has been around for much longer and expressed in many ways before **Dr Usui** rediscovered it and gave it a name that had meaning and relevance to his language and culture. If for example Dr Usui had been a North American Shaman or medicine man then the name, the values and its teachings would have reflected that particular culture and belief system with all of the spiritualism and symbolism that goes with it. We can see from this that in many ways Reiki is a 'brand name' for what is a very generic universal product, a label that's been attached to something much bigger, more dynamic and more powerful. Something that's infinite in size, duration and meaning.

When we attach labels to people the wearer tends to either live up to or down to the value conveyed, as if the label takes on an identity all of its own. We look at the label and say 'this is who or what it is' and we no longer look beyond the limitations that measurement imposes to see or seek out its true nature or meaning. If as the story says Dr Usui '*rediscovered*' Reiki then we should ask the question was this infinite energy lost, misplaced or were we simply overlooking what had always been there.

To put the hundred and thirty odd year Reiki history into context it may help to consider some scientific and biblical numbers available to us. Science informs us that the universe is approximately fourteen billion years old, the earth four and a half million years in the making populated by '*modern*' homo sapiens in their many forms for the last two hundred thousand years as part of the universe's and mankind's ongoing evolutionary process. A process they add that's free from divine purpose or intervention.

The biblical timeline is much shorter but no less confusing. We are told that a creator who existed before time had either meaning or substance, through his infinite power and wisdom created the universe and everything in it over a period of six days. On the seventh day he rested to admire his handy work, and was we are told, impressed with what he had created. Obviously there is a

real conflict between these two versions of events but we must remember that nothing is set in stone and both science and religion are defined and directed by their own evolutionary processes.

There was a time in mankind's history when the church ruled supreme and was too powerful to be challenged. The biblical records available at the time were presented literally as gospel to be accepted without question as the factual and truthful word of God the creator, those who couldn't or wouldn't accept the official version of events risked punishment, torture or death at the hands of the religious establishment.

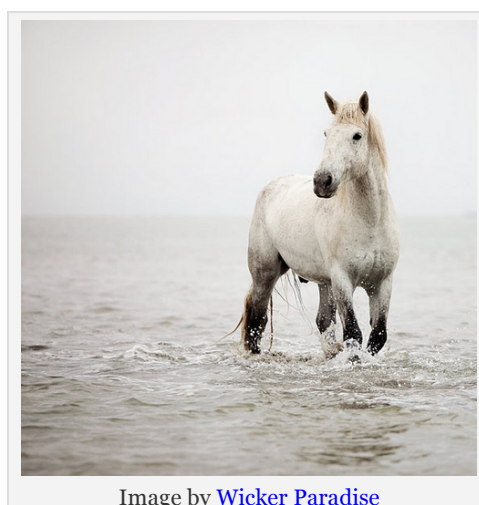


Image by [Wicker Paradise](#)

The ascent of science provided both the evidence and power to challenge the might of the church and the validity of its written word, and what was once viewed as sacrosanct is now accepted by many clergy and most theologians as a spiritual story that shouldn't be taken literally as the obvious flaws and inaccuracies undermine the spiritual values it promotes.

Science has fared no better as one scientific model after another has been promoted only to be replaced as contemporary knowledge and understanding changes the way we think the universe works. The technological advances provided by science comes at a heavy price with mother earth having to suffer the consequences and pick up the bill like a dutiful parent for the actions of her wayward children. Both science and religion are the self-proclaimed saviours of mankind yet both have failed. Science extols its own virtues writing off pollution and toxic waste as an acceptable price for progress, whilst religion takes up its usual position on the moral high ground blaming anything that can't be explained through common sense, logic or reasoning on God's will, thus ensuring the buck never stops with them.

So if Reiki is neither science nor religion what was before it was defined as Reiki? It was, it is and always will be knowledge and understanding in the form of spiritual awareness.

Religion isn't the same as spirituality and it has to be said that God however you wish define him/her/it/them isn't the same as spirituality. For thousands of years, in diverse cultures around the world, inspired spiritual teachers such as the Buddha, Jesus, and Lao- Tzu proposed life changing views that were based on the attainment of consciousness, or in laymen's terms the acquisition and application of knowledge and understanding in their everyday life. They taught that there is a reality that lies beyond the limitations of our physical senses, although we can see rocks, mountains, trees, and sky, beyond the reach of the five senses lays an invisible realm of infinite possibility that responds to our thoughts, beliefs and actions, the key to unlocking its potential is consciousness, or knowledge and understanding. Go within, the teachers said and you will find the true source of everything: including your own greatness through the realisation of your true self. Today the teachers of quantum physics are repeating a similar message, the language is different but the message remains the same.

These ancient teachers offered something far more radical than a disempowering belief in a detached higher power. They offered an alternative way of viewing reality that begins not with external facts and physical constraints, but with inner wisdom and access to unbounded knowledge and understanding. The great irony is that these teachers of old were in their own way scientists too, their way of uncovering knowledge bears a striking resemblance to the approach adopted by modern science.

First there was the idea or hypothesis, the spiritual truth that needed to be tested. Then the experimentation to see if the hypothesis was valid through truth demonstrated. Finally offering this new way of achieving knowledge and understanding to those who would listen, asking them to take the responsibility of applying it to their own lives in order to raise their level of awareness and the life changing benefits this would bring.... Reiki anyone?

The spiritual hypothesis that was presented to the world thousands of years ago contains three spiritual truths that will resonate within every modern day Reiki practitioner. Firstly there is an unseen or invisible energy force or reality that is the source of all matter or things visible. This invisible force can be known and understood to us through the raising of our own awareness. And

finally there is intelligence, a creative power embedded in the cosmos that links, illuminates and animates everything within it.... healing anyone?

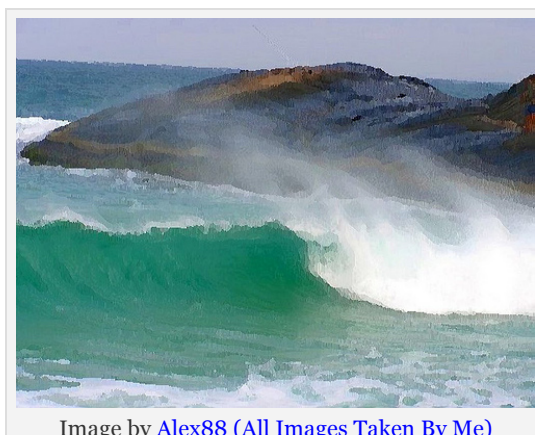


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***The term Reiki is just a momentary note on an infinite timeline whose origins can't be explained by either science or religion in isolation.*** The answer to this question is to be found in the middle ground of spirituality at a time when science can finally accept that it doesn't own the monopoly on man's development. In a time when we are willing and able to look beyond the labels of Gods regardless of denomination with the restriction of measurement those labels impose and religion surrenders the belief that it alone holds the power and responsibility for mankind's salvation.

Knowledge and understanding is the basis of all healing for without it healing in the truest sense of the word would be impossible. A process of truth demonstrated where a change in perception is a prerequisite to the healing of the physical condition for without knowledge and the understanding it brings we will remain ignorant to the underlying causes of all manner of illnesses and diseases that are to be found hiding in the darkness of ignorance and fear. This invisible force that we have come to know and work with through the raising of our own awareness, and with it the intelligence and creative power that links, illuminates and animates everything within it.... knowledge and understanding anyone?

## Are We Sure That's What Dr. Usui Said?

There are many gifted Reiki practitioners who through no fault of their own get drawn into discussions about which Reiki tradition or lineage is the true one. Believing that their Reiki is the right one, they then conclude that all the other forms are misguided and misleading. There is passion behind the respective opinions; each believes that they have a duty to defend what they perceive as Dr. Usui's Reiki and their tradition becomes a bench mark against which they judge all others and usually find them lacking. Unfortunately, once judgement enters into a discussion, people can quickly become polarised and entrenched in their beliefs with the need to defend their position usually at the cost of the other person's point of view. Once committed to this course of action it becomes very easy to lose sight of the spiritual concepts that were the reason for our attraction to Reiki in the first place.

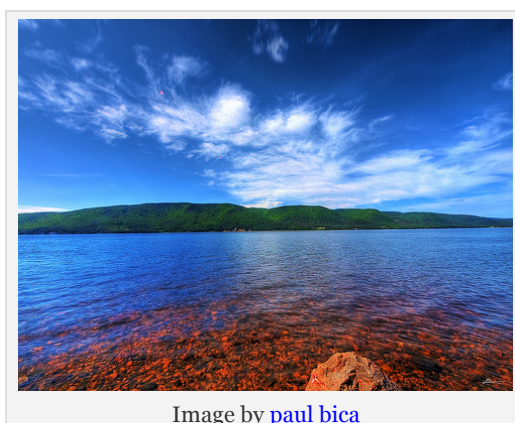
I think all styles of Reiki have value and merit and I have found from personal experience that many are identical with the only difference being the name or title that's placed before the Reiki, but the moment I put my own view forward it becomes just one more opinion on what Reiki should or shouldn't be. More importantly the moment we move away from an open community of enquiry and move into the realms of rigid opinions, and heated arguments over which style of Reiki or Reiki organisation truly reflects Dr. Usui's teachings we have missed the point and are in direct opposition to the fundamental principles of Reiki that are carved in stone on Usui's memorial.

We have two versions of the Reiki story that are diametrically opposed to one another, but if we accept that all Reiki works, we must then ask ourselves does it matter if the story doesn't quite fit the experiential evidence that Reiki practitioners are creating on a daily basis worldwide. History of any description is a story and as any historian will tell you, history is written by those with the power to do so and owes as much to the storytellers and authors as it does to the events themselves. Events throughout history have been edited and manipulated to meet the political needs of those who had the power to determine how events would be portrayed for posterity. Nothing is ever what it seems; whether it's a perceived historical fact or the present moment. Since we weren't there, all we have is written accounts or stories passed down like a giant Japanese whisper. Even if you the reader could have witnessed personally the whole of Dr. Usui's life, your account of events would still only be your interpretation of what you witnessed based on *your* values,



beliefs, and prejudices. Objective reality is an illusion; the observer affects everything s/he observes, what you believe helps create your reality; your reality colours what you see, and what you see, reinforces your beliefs.

Does it matter who called it Reiki, or how it was taught, or even if it was called Reiki in the first place. What we perceive as Reiki at this moment in time has had many names for thousands of years, experienced and expressed in many ways by different civilisations. There is only one source, but it expresses itself in many different ways, and there is more than one way to teach and learn Reiki, and each has value and merit in its own right. There has to be as many ways as there are people who come to it, we are all different, and the ways in which we learn need to be as individual as we are. Reiki is alive and free flowing and all living things must change and develop. Reiki is no different. Once this process has begun its origins are nowhere near as important as its destiny. Reiki is the journey of a lifetime; if we want to move forward we must look forward and create the future we desire, that way we won't have to spend time re-writing the past.



Structure, in whatever form, be it the written word, hand positions, symbols or meditations are no more than a means to an end; an assist until you are able to walk and stand unaided. Each one is a teaching aid designed to take us step by step to the point on our journey when we discover and trust our own intuition and the power of intention for the structure was never meant to become a dependency or impede our progress. Through the use of our directed intent, we are able to do less and less, thus reducing the number of dependencies, to the point where we appear to do nothing and yet everything is done. Intent should never be confused with effort; effort is the energy of the ego while intent comes from the stillness of creation. The world is in dire need of every Reiki practitioner no matter what creed, colour, denomination, or belief, every time we think, talk, or act out of the desire to heal through Reiki;

we heal ourselves, and help heal the world that gives us life. Indifference kills just as easily as starvation does; the ill, hungry and destitute don't care how the parcel is wrapped as long as the content gives them life.

In truth there are no boundaries, only those which we set ourselves, the only rule that should apply is that we put the higher good of mankind above our own differences and always put a higher value on experience than we do on theory and dogma tell us we must do. As Confucius once said 'what I hear I forget, what I see I remember, what I do I know'. We learn from experience and become our own best teacher and in doing so we then begin to teach others what we wish to learn from life. The history of Reiki is nowhere near as important as its future and all history begins in the present moment, re-writing the history books won't add a single minute to another's life or make the sun shine any brighter.

We should not look to Dr. Usui or anyone else to tell us what to do, or how to live our lives for that is paying him the greatest disservice; we should start where he left off, which is the here and now, and move beyond the barriers we have set ourselves, and move out into the unknown. Development is always on the other side of established boundaries; growth always asks us to break the mould and while we argue over who is right, we can convince ourselves of the necessity to stay within the comfort of what we know. Reiki is a living, breathing, life giving energy that cannot be found in dusty words; it's found in the free flowing action of intent that goes beyond structure, beyond form, and beyond boundaries we set ourselves. Looking at the first step we see that the journey is incomplete and imperfect; we find it lacking; in need of planning, we reorganise and restructure to give ourselves a sense of purpose and achievement; we do everything but make the journey, everything but take that first dangerous step into the unknown.

## Reiki: Looking Beyond What You Can See

Sight is our primary physical sense with 80% of all the information our brain receives coming to us through our eyes. Because of this we can be forgiven for making the mistake of looking no further than we can see. We can sometimes fail to look beyond the physical symptom and realise that the pain, illness, and dis-ease are symptomatic of an underlying cause that first needs to be understood and addressed before it can be healed through knowledge and understanding.

What we perceive as a physical body is in reality a complex self contained energy system; and like all things within the known universe governed by the law of cause and effect. This means that all illness and dis-ease must begin at a vibrational level as a vibrational imbalance, this leads to a change in our biochemical structure and if prolonged for a sufficient period of time will ultimately express itself as a physical illness or dis-ease. What begins as an electrical impulse manifests itself in the body as a physical symptom as our physiology becomes our biology. External causes that create internal effects will also be experienced at cellular level within the physical body. Healing is never just about taking the pain and discomfort away for good health is much more than the absence of illness and disease, it's about dealing with the cause that triggers an effect. True healing is always holistic in its approach and implementation; working with the whole person, tackling the whole problem both cause and effect, thus helping the person to arrive at their own holistic solution.

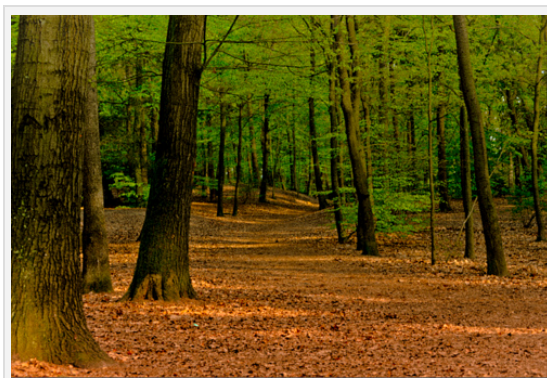


Image by ([www.debabrata.info](http://www.debabrata.info)) debabrata

When faced with any problem first and foremost there is something for us to know; something to learn before we can understand what needs to be done. First comes the knowledge and understanding then the remedial action. Knowing what must be done then putting into practice what we have learnt so

that the recovery process can begin and healing can take place. The only person we can heal is ourselves; the only lessons to learn are our own.

If we just help heal the effect we are denying the person the opportunity to learn the necessary lessons that created the situation in the first place. True healing requires us to educate ourselves first so that we can facilitate in the education process of others, not all educators are healers but all true healers whatever their background or field of expertise are first and foremost educators. As Reiki teachers and practitioners we have to educate those who come to us for help so that they can understand the nature of illness and disease, the connection between cause and effect, and the role they play in the process. When we heal ourselves or help others in the healing process we arrive at this point through knowledge and understanding with our free will intact to choose whether the lesson learnt becomes a permanent part of our physical, mental and emotional make up, or whether the universe being the ultimate teacher, must present those lessons again and again in different ways to draw our attention to an underlying cause that needs to be acknowledged and addressed.

The universe will never heal us against our will or do for us what we must do for ourselves, nor will it rob us of the opportunity to develop and grow both physically and spiritually by removing us from the consequences of our actions.

Reiki is not a miracle cure all that overrides our freedom of choice; we retain our free will and have choices to make either consciously, sub-consciously, or by the default mechanism of deciding not to make a decision. We are the common denominator in all of our experiences good or bad, we choose how we will experience life for we are the author of our own life story be it happy or sad, we choose to learn the lessons life offers us, or suffer the consequences of our actions. As Reiki teachers and practitioners we have the added responsibility to educate others in order that they can free themselves from fear and ignorance, empowering them to take control over their own lives, learn their own lessons and in doing so restore both balance and harmony in their lives which is one of the first steps to achieving an holistic solution to a healing challenge.

## Reiki Can Sow the Seeds of Knowledge and Understanding

Healing requires that something must change rather than just taken away. Lessons must be learnt through knowledge and understanding and not negated by default or elimination, and if the lesson doesn't challenge us it is unlikely to change us. We need to move from the state of illness or disease along the road to recovery, till we arrive at a point of health and wellbeing.

That which exists must adhere to the laws that were instrumental in its creation, health and illness are both governed by the law of cause and effect, with every action creating an opposite and equal reaction, and every cause brings forth its own set of consequences.

If we require change then we must first introduce something that will act as a catalyst and bring about more than just the mere thought of change. ***This can happen when we introduce Reiki into our lives.*** If we want something different then we must do something different; but before we can we must first have the desire for change and the realisation that ***choice is an option.***



We must then engage the power of choice and disengage the negative default mode that governs those set responses we do without thought or question because it's what we have always done. Until choice becomes a reality we only do what we know how to, and only what we believe is possible.

***Change requires choice, improvement requires movement and development is born out of new ideas, knowledge and understanding.***

We must first understand that change is possible and then accept that we have the power to make those changes in our lives; hope makes life bearable but it's

dreams that make all things possible. Reiki is a key than can open a door that allows the light of knowledge and understanding into our lives.

If we only know one way we can only go one way, which becomes our reality framed by our thoughts and made real by our actions and beliefs, Reiki helps us recognise the limitations set by the closed mind that is unaware of its own ignorance (lacking in knowledge and understanding).

Before choice can become a reality it must first begin life as a thought, the *ideal* begins with the *idea* in word and deed, and the seeds of knowledge and understanding are sown in the fertile mind. From this grows the need to question and learn, and awareness becomes the fruit of our labors, and we let go of that which we have out grown. The seeds of knowledge come in many forms and contain the ability to produce many surprises and in doing so the student becomes their own teacher; from our preconceived ideas come new truths and the realisation that the seeds of knowledge have the power to create change in many ways.

They can be found in the softly spoken word or the healing sound of silence. They are to be found in the judgment of the wise, the virtue of the brave and in the wisdom of the fool, look carefully and you will find them in a kindness and a knowing smile. They are in the love that requires us to sometimes say no, and in the strength to stand-alone. To those who don't feel they have a choice change may not appear possible, yet even within them there will be a feeling that something is missing, a distant echo in the recesses of their minds that asks them to follow and find the truth within themselves. The moment we begin to listen the seeds of knowledge and understanding have been sown and the journey begins.

## Reiki - the Same Principles, just a Different Perspective

With our limited knowledge and understanding, we assume that what we do now has always been done and what we accept as truth has always been so. We take comfort from this fact yet this concept is unsound and untrue, the only certainty in life is uncertainty, and the only constant is change. Sometimes our development is gauged not by knowledge and understanding but by technological advances and it can be difficult for some young people today to understand that something as basic and fundamental as mobile phones, iPod's, and MP3 players haven't been around forever.

We set great store by the institutions that provide structure and comfort to our lives. Science and religion provide the perimeters of fact and faith and we assume these pillars of society are definitive and absolute. Scientific advances are never readily accepted; anything that challenges the status quo runs the gauntlet of rejection and ridicule until the evidence is so overwhelming the dissidents accept the new truths and then claim it as their own.

Science is not a science with its principles chiseled in stone; it is fluid and ever changing as history records the price people paid with their lives for holding the beliefs we accept and take for granted today.

Religion fares no better, the Bible we read today bears little resemblance to the scriptures prior to and from the time of Christ. It is said that 'God has no religion' and it is evident that throughout history Kings, Popes and politicians and not God decided what we would read today and what our religious beliefs should be. The scriptures that form the basis of our faith have been doctored, edited and in some cases destroyed in order that those in a position to do so could determine what would be in our best interest to read and believe.

In reality there are no new truths, only old ones that have been rediscovered. All knowledge and understanding already exists and is a continuum, it is ever changing and developing, all wisdom and truth are already complete and absolute, and it's our awareness of these principles that is slowly evolving. We once believed that the earth was flat, but just sailing into the sunset didn't have the power to create the earth in its true form, that already existed, but those who had the courage to challenge the accepted belief broke new ground and old beliefs in equal measure, and in doing so raised mankind's level of awareness. New knowledge is not at the expense of what has gone before; instead it builds on the foundations already laid be it fact or fiction.

So it is with Reiki; its history and legend are well documented, its credentials established by its own success, all those who practice Reiki know its value and worth and are respectful of its heritage and traditions. As more and more students and masters are trained, increased knowledge and greater understanding become available, information and expertise that was once considered secret in the East is now readily available in the West and with this sharing comes a better understanding of our heritage and the true potential that Reiki has to heal.



In the process we are asked to change our perspective of Reiki and expand what we already know, for we stop learning the moment we believe we know all there is to know. We accept its history, its principles, aims and objectives and in doing so we develop as individuals and as Reiki practitioners. With time, practice and experience we may even become aware of levels of expertise that challenge our beliefs even further and lead us to a point in time where our understanding and practice change in order for us to move forward.

In music we are taught the scales before moving onto more complex structures that form the basis of music. In martial arts we learn the basic techniques in order for them to become instinctive, free flowing and formless. In Reiki we are taught the three levels of Reiki, the symbols, and the principle of detachment from the cause and its effect that's presented to us in the form of illness and disease, working as a channel for the Universal energy from source to recipient for their highest good.

If Reiki is universal then it must conform to the universal laws that were instrumental in its creation and be applicable in all situations.



If Reiki has any limitations they are defined not by circumstances, but through our lack of inventiveness and imagination in how we use the skills at our disposal.

Hand positions and symbols have merit and value in their own right and are relevant to given situations, Reiki is both formless and free flowing so as practitioners we must be open to new ways of using this universal energy be that through the spoken or written word, using our eyes, our breath or an appropriate proxy. Our minds provide us with the greatest tool and it can be used in many ways, energy follows intent so we can pre-programme when a person will receive Reiki. Every time they go to sleep or wake up in the morning, when they look at themselves in the mirror, every time they leave or enter their home, the possibilities are endless and don't require either symbols or hand positions to make it happen.

Using the power of our intent we put it in place and then detach knowing that it's done and the outcome will be for that person's greater good. These ideas don't in any way detract from the original principles, they are merely an extension to them, rather than contradict, they elaborate on what is already known and take the theory and practice to a different higher level.

Dr Usui would sometimes empower his students when they were nowhere near him using nothing more than his intent, he thought it and knew that it was so. We move from mechanics to mind, from actions to intent, by thinking it we know it is so, we no longer require symbols to send healing because we have reached the point where we accept that the mind is capable of sending healing at will and can never be limited by physical conditions. To be able to look at a person and know instinctively where treatment required, to be sensitive enough to read the body's energy field and going directly to the places that need to be brought back to a point of balance and equilibrium. This is not a radical change in direction; it's no more than another chapter in the Reiki book of life that is continually written by every new experience. We can never learn all there is to know, the best we can hope for is an open mind and the willingness to apply the knowledge we gain in the way we live our lives.

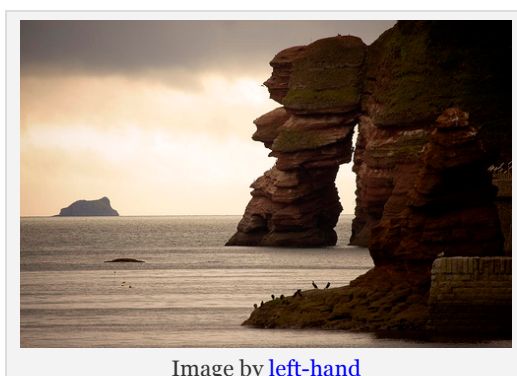
Knowing the principles is only the first step; we must then ensure that Reiki is formless and free flowing in order to demonstrate its infinite power. When we close a book we do so to reflect on what we have learnt, when we close our hearts and minds we close the door to all learning and become unaware of our ignorance, lacking knowledge and understanding.

Knowing the way is easy, walking the path is the hard part; it takes courage and commitment, and the realisation that having reached a given point, our journey as a person and as a Reiki practitioner is nothing more than a work in progress.

## To Master or Not to Master That Is the Question

As I have stated elsewhere in various articles I don't refer to myself as a Reiki Master even though I have completed the necessary training and gained the certification that would allow me to do so. I have also gone on record as saying that different isn't just ok its vital for our development and growth as individuals and society as a whole, so to those who have completed all of their Reiki training and want to refer to themselves as a Reiki Master that's your prerogative and I will always support any ones right to do so. In effect what I'm doing is exercising my right not to use that particular title and give my reasons as to why I feel the title of Reiki teacher is far more appropriate to the job we do. If we look at a definition of Mastery we will see that it can be described as the 'possession or display of great skill, technique or knowledge that makes one master of a subject' and there's the rub since Reiki by our own definition is universal life energy can we in all honesty say that we have mastery over the infinite, I think not.

The problem we face is that what we consider as Reiki in the form of training manuals, hand positions and various techniques isn't Reiki at all; they are simply a means of communication that tries to describe ways in which we may access and use the power of Reiki. Esoteric teachings tell us that 'the way that can be named is not the way' and using the same analogy we could say the 'Reiki that can be written is not Reiki'.



The study and production of Reiki training manuals and articles like this one only allows us to lay claim to a certain level of academic knowledge and articulation. Reiki energy is just that; infinite energy in both name and nature. There are those who will say that the title of Master is merely tradition and in some ways an honorary title but if we study both the eastern and westernised versions of Reiki story we find Dr Usui didn't use the title or refer to himself as a Master of Reiki. This title along with other changes such as the use of

symbols, hand positions and in some cases excessive training fees appears to be later additions to the Reiki timeline that started with Dr Usui and continues through to the present day.

Dr Usui taught Reiki plain and simple. It wasn't as far as I'm aware prefixed with names of Angel, Crystal, Rainbow, Starchild or any other creative title; these are just further examples of contemporary re-branding. The argument that these are stand alone Reiki disciplines loses a certain amount of credibility when on reading the various training manuals you discover that there are striking similarities in both content and layout, and in some cases are identical with only the front cover showing any kind of creative individuality. If we wish to hold up the title of Reiki Master as some form of benchmark to personal commitment and achievement then we need to ensure that our credibility isn't undermined by services and product quality that falls far below levels implied by grandiose titles.

Once I had completed my first and second-degree Reiki training courses I waited until I felt ready to take the next step on my Reiki journey, which would eventually include Reiki, advanced practitioner and ultimately my Reiki Master Teacher qualification. This step required a great deal of thought and research on my part to ensure I was comfortable with the Reiki teacher I was going to entrust this very important training to. That research provided a great deal of food for thought and it has to be said some doubts as to the value personal and financial of the qualification to be achieved. The options made available to me included a yearlong home study course that included two weekends with the Reiki teacher, I was offered a weekend Reiki Master Course at £750 with the proviso that I forget and discount any and all teachings received from my previous teachers. The most surprising was a one-day Master Course for the princely sum of £5000 to which I said thank you, but no thank you. I eventually found a Reiki Teacher just outside of London living in a cottage literally a stone's throw away from the river Thames, her training fees were fair and I loved her sensitive but down to earth no nonsense approach.

I completed my advanced practitioner and Reiki Masters and some of my teachers last words to me were that I had shown promise and sensitivity and would one day go on to teach Reiki. When I asked when that would be she said that only I could answer that question because only I will know when the time is right. Six months later I taught my first Reiki students. I feel sure that the examples given above are in no way indicative of the north east of England

and a straw poll nationally and worldwide would provide similar variations in both standards, duration and costs, with some Reiki organisations providing structure and conformity whilst others claim the moral high ground due in no short measure to their lineage and the self imposed Reiki titles.

When you come down to it you do your research, you consider your options then you pay your money and make your choice and in doing so you become a part of the Reiki history and storyline. People come to Reiki for various and diverse reasons some learn it but never use it, while others use it in their own way and have no desire to progress beyond the initial stages of their training, and of those who have the desire and ambition to progress through the advanced levels of training only a small proportion become teachers themselves and that's ok, each to their own, in their own time and in their own place. Difference is more than just ok, it's vital to our health and wellbeing for knowledge and understanding of oneself is the first part of the healing process and the first step on the road to our recovery.

To Master or not to Master that is the question... and only you can provide the answer. I am a Reiki teacher and practitioner and the title of Master is one piece of baggage I have no need or desire to own. I have taken the time to gain both academic qualifications and teaching practice in mainstream education specialising in challenging behaviour and complex educational needs to give both depth and breadth to my ongoing Reiki development, but I am still only a work in progress, a Reiki student by any other name. Reiki is a wonderful thing, its many things to many people but one thing it's not is rocket science and it's inappropriate and misleading to make it out to be more complex than it is. There may be a time in my spiritual and personal development when the title of Master may become appropriate but based on my progress so far it certainly won't be in this life or the next. When my time comes to return home to spirit and review my progress I'm sure I will see the comment somewhere on my report card that reads 'has potential but must try harder'. I will be ok with that because it shows I'm heading in the right direction and that one day I may just get there, wherever there may be.

## Misconceptions of the Attunement Process

Science has a habit of supporting spiritual teachings even though they may first appear to be at odds with one another. For years science and spiritual teachings were thought by many to be antagonistic yet as ignorance and fear has given way to knowledge and understanding that apparent gap has closed as we have come to realise that both science and spiritual teachings are discussing the same realities albeit in languages alien to one another. That is until quantum physics became the universal language that both the scientist and the teacher could relate to and identify with in relation to their own particular school of thought.

Spiritual teachings that were once considered no more than woolly abstract concepts are now being validated by the sciences that provide both the mathematical equations and the necessary evidence to be considered as scientific proof of spiritual truths. Teachers tell us that we are ***'beings of light'*** and quantum physics now confirm that all matter, including matter that makes up the human body, is itself made up of waves and particles of light.

Physicists such as Max Planck, David Bohm and J. S. Bell were able to prove that matter including the physical body doesn't exist in the way we think it does, and the concept of an ***'empty space'*** is an illusion, that at the heart of our universe, there are no separate parts to anything, and that everything is connected to everything else. ***This means that we do not exist 'in' a universe; we were created as part of a universe that illuminates and animates all things.***

This has far reaching implications to Reiki students and teachers alike as we must accept that given such evidence Reiki, which by our own definition is a universal energy, can't exist separate from the rest of the universe. Reiki is part of creation and as such common sense and logic must lead us to the conclusion that we are already connected to the universe and Reiki even if we are unaware of the fact. If this is so, and quantum physics and spiritual teachings appear support one another in this conclusion you can't connect through an attunement, empowerment or otherwise what is already connected.

### ***So what is an attunement and what purpose does it serve?***

Before I offer an answer for your consideration let us take a moment to consider that there are reported 300 Reiki derivatives worldwide and I think it's reasonable to accept that the majority if not all of them will have some variations on the teaching and attunement theme as part of their training. With all of these variations there has to be a common denominator that links them all together. There is; if we accept for a moment that they are all Reiki regardless of their brand name or individual identity, then that common denominator is our attention and intention which allows us to work with the energetic connection that already exists to bring about a desired outcome in the form of raised awareness in the student. ***Not to connect but to educate.***

If we further accept that attunement's 'work' to educate with all of their variations then we must also accept that structure the attunement process isn't as important as our attention and intention which underpins the whole procedure no matter what form it takes.

It's recorded that Dr Usui would at times empower/attune his students when he was nowhere near them simply by using his attention and intention. Now we can dis-empower ourselves by saying this was Dr Usui and he was able to do things we can't do because of who he was. Or we can adopt a more pragmatic approach and simply accept that he was able to do what he did because he understood, accepted and worked with the realities discussed at the beginning of this article. Not as we may have first thought to connect his students to Reiki, but to simply make his students aware of the connection that already existed. He did this by raising their level of awareness through increased knowledge and understanding, the basis of all healing, education and awareness. As Dr Usui himself said the only person we can heal is ourselves and we do this by taking ownership for the life we lead and investing time and energy in our health and wellbeing. This we can only do when there is a shift in our level of awareness to such an extent that we are willing and able to consider new ideas and apply that knowledge and understanding in the way we live life.

If you believe we are spiritual beings developing through a physical expression of life, then you must also accept that this connection is infinite regardless of how many transformations it may go through. If however, you believe we are mortal with an indeterminate time between our first and last breath then our

physical connection to the universe begins at the moment of our conception and is reinforced at birth. Either way the connection exists; what is missing is the awareness.



***So what purpose does the attunement serve?***

The attunement is guided learning and a teaching aid; we all learn in different ways and to do this we need to be able to absorb information in a way that resonates with us and makes sense. Attunement's work on several levels and provides a physical experience that gives the student a point of reference; a date in their diary to refer back to and say that's when I was connected to the universe. ***The only thing it can't do is initiate a connection that already exists.***

If we can accept this train of thought then it must lead us to a natural conclusion that whatever educates the student to the connection they already have with the universe can be defined as an attunement. If on reading this you feel it is a step too far, I would ask you to consider that Dr Usui wasn't attuned or empowered by anyone. His moment of enlightenment came not in the form of an attunement but through the dawning of his own spiritual awareness. Sitting in meditation he realised it was through the existing connection that his journey of spiritual development had gained a new direction, purpose and meaning. ***It was not to connect but to understand the nature of our relationship to a universe that sustains us.***

This does not in any way dis-empower the Reiki teacher, if anything it places a greater responsibility on their shoulders to provide ongoing support, to educate and empower their students to gain a greater knowledge and



understanding of their relationship with universe and the role we have chosen to play.

Healing in relation to Reiki is a by-product and was never meant to be the defining principle of what Reiki is all about. ***Reiki is and always has been a discipline of personal spiritual development.*** It's through this that we educate and then heal ourselves. The only person we can heal is ourselves and we have neither the responsibility nor the authority to arbitrarily heal others. Educate and empower yes; so that they can take ownership and live their lives in such a way that promotes their own health and well being.

As a teacher I have a duty of care to educate and to challenge my students to think for themselves to ask questions and seek out the truth wherever that may be. To do so is not to dishonour or disrespect what has gone before but to use the established as a solid foundation from which we can gain a new perspective and raise our level of awareness, which is the basis of all personal development. The word Reiki is a label; the problem with labels is that once attached they take on a life of their own and we can then begin to identify more with the packaging instead of the content, and buy into the belief that tradition, manuals, hand positions, symbols and attunements are Reiki. ***They are not; they are a man made physical interpretations of a spiritual truth. Reiki when stripped back is a distillation of knowledge and understanding, a prerequisite for all education and healing, for without knowledge and understanding neither one would be possible.***

Attunements have their place in Reiki; they along with the rest of the students training provide a point of reference to which the student can relate to and identify as the start of their Reiki journey. As teachers we need to be able to put this timeline into context. Their Reiki journey may just be beginning but it comes not as a starting point in life but simply as a continuation of a spiritual journey that began long ago when we became a part of creation.

Are we immortal spirit or mere mortal that is for each of us to decide for knowledge and understanding never comes to us complete? ***No matter when we believe our journey began or where we think our chosen path may lead us, our destination is that of spiritual enlightenment.*** It is our home, and like the prodigal son of old it is a place that we will all return to one day.

## Reiki; Keeping it Simple

It seems inherent in human nature to make things complicated; we take the simple things in life and make them unduly complex and more difficult than they need to be, it's almost as if we distrust simplicity and automatically presume that there must be more to 'it' than meets the eye. Maybe it's because we are born with love as our default mechanism but as we grow we learn to fear and mistrust to such an extent it becomes second nature.

Our approach to spirituality is no different; the more important we perceive a thing to be the more serious we become in its pursuit and in doing so we can lose perspective and objectivity and adopt the rigid mindset that something so profound must be complex and esoteric. There are some who actively feed this myth by taking something simple, making it appear complex and complicated only to charge considerable amounts of money for the pleasure of making it 'easy to understand'. This is also the basic principle of 'rebranding' where a product goes full circle usually with a new name; new packaging in order to attract new customers to what is an old tried/tired and tested product. We see this in all things spiritual with people coming forward with a new spin on a very old idea, and it doesn't come much older than creation itself.



Reiki provides us with an excellent example of how a basic practice can give birth to countless derivatives, which on close inspection are separated only by the front cover of the manual that carries its name and the obligatory symbols that try to create a sense of uniqueness, which on closer inspection is superficial or nonexistent.

Even if you factor in the differences between the Eastern and Western versions of the Reiki story and strip away the 'packaging' that is used in some cases to add volume and make it look more than it is, you are left with three

very simple principles upon which everything else hangs. Unconditional love is the spiritual energy that forms the basis of all creation; our free will is the means of all physical and spiritual growth; and this creative spiritual energy follows our intent to literally form our reality.

In Reiki as in many things in life 'less is more;' which when you think about it is the simplification of our actions, we do less until we reach the point where nothing appears to be happening yet everything that needs to be done is done through the power of our intent. Dr Usui's memorial stone carries the inscription that his desire is for our Reiki to be 'formless and free flowing' this can only happen when we let go of the many physical trappings that can restrict its flow and impede our Reiki practice to such an extent that we become bogged down by techniques and procedures that provide rigidity and structure, and comfort in the knowledge, that which is seen to be done provides visual 'proof' that something is happening.

All of the techniques, hand positions and symbols used in Reiki work for no other reason than they are all underwritten by the principle that energy must follow our intent, read any book on the use of Reiki symbols and techniques and you will invariably find the link between the symbols and the catalytic power of our intent. Dr Usui would regularly empower/attune his students when they were nowhere near him, he was able to do this because he understood and accepted the spiritual law of intent. He also had no need or desire to do anymore than was necessary to achieve the desired outcome. If we need proof we need look no further than science to validate this principle. Quantum physics provide both the mathematical equations, which are a prerequisite to scientific study, and research-based proof that all energy, spiritual and physical is responsive to the conscious mind and instrumental to the creative process.

There is nothing wrong with using symbols, hand positions or well-documented techniques in our Reiki practice; they all work by nature of our intent. The level of their success will be defined by the quality and quantity of our intent, the recipient's receptivity to Reiki and the effect of the above principles. Reiki as we know it is 'energy' pure and simple; all else are nothing more than add-on's to try and give form to the formless. The danger comes when we begin to believe that the hand positions, symbols and techniques 'are' Reiki and must be used 'religiously' in a pre-determined way in order for it to work. If the ultimate goal is for Reiki to be formless and free flowing; the

acceptance and application of unconditional love as the energy of creation and the use of our free will and intent, should be the only prerequisite to our practice, formless and free flowing in effect, simplicity itself.

## The Way of Reiki

Without understanding why or even knowing your name I searched for you, and invited you into my life. Softly you entered and helped bring about changes that left me in awe of your power and breathless by the beauty to unfold. Never against my will; you led me to discover new paths and remember truths learnt many lifetimes ago, with each new road the opportunity to break new ground and old beliefs in equal measure, to walk a path less traveled and leave a marker for those who would follow.

Though my destiny is already secure, I must still take each step on my journey of discovery that will one day lead me back to my spiritual home. Where my foot falls matters not, for the lessons learned and the truths to be discovered are forever within, my journey merely provides the experiences necessary to discover them. My destination is not a place; it's a state of mind that helps me discover my true self, and to be in harmony with all things.



The way of Reiki is a journey we all can take; a journey during which time we are both student and teacher, a seeker of truth and the giver of wisdom and each step taken gifts us the opportunity to find the knowledge and understanding we search for. Weary of this journey we will inevitably stumble and fall and question our beliefs, in those times of fear and uncertainty the voice we hear may echo the doubts of fellow travelers seeking guidance on their own journey of discovery. Solitude can provide us with a place of rest and contemplation, and gift us the opportunity to help others find their own way of Reiki.

## The Limitations of Reiki?

### Are there limitations to Reiki?

If Reiki has limitations it's not through the lack of power but by the lack of imagination on the part of the practitioners who use it.

Imagination or the faculty to create mind maps is the ability to create new images and their associated sensations in the mind that are not induced through our physical senses. Imagination helps us to use acquired knowledge to solve problems and integrate our experiences into the learning process. Imagination is both creative and experimental; a part of the mind that we use used to develop theories and ideas which are vital to our development in the way we accomplish what we already know whilst developing new ways of doing things. These ideas can be safely considered, tried and theoretically tested by the mind before being implemented to become reality.

Imagination is the key to unlocking the developing mind and is a vital component of our freewill that allows us to choose and create our future. Theory without action no matter how worthy and well meaning remains abstract lacking form or substance for we are defined by the choices we make and it's the actions we take that break new ground old beliefs in equal measure and establishing new truths in the process.

We look at the Reiki story with its hand positions, symbols and the theory and say '**this is Reiki**' but it's **not** and never can be. The word Reiki is a label that we have applied to what is by our own admission a '**universal or infinite energy source**', and although the name Reiki has meaning and value in its own right it's a '*brand name*' for what is a very generic universal product, a label that's been attached to something much bigger, more dynamic and more powerful. Something that's infinite in size, duration and meaning that can never be defined by any label we chose to place upon it.

Our freewill is considered to be sacrosanct but our 'wellbeing' is the result of both choice and action. Wellbeing is the dynamic process that gives us a sense of value of who we are and the direction our lives are taking, achieved through the interaction between our circumstances, life choices and personal awareness. Freewill in the truest sense of the word donates a freedom and power of choice but more importantly an awareness of the options available to move us forward to that state of wellbeing. Freewill is meaningless without

knowledge and understanding that provides meaning, perspective and purpose. All healing comes from a place of knowledge and understanding be it advice and guidance from others or when we make the kind of informed choices that are in line with Reiki precepts, current medical advice and ancient spiritual teachings that ask us to take responsibility first and foremost to heal oneself.

Good health is more than the absence of pain, illness and disease. Good health is a state of mind body and spirit that we come to through the acquisition, acceptance and application of knowledge and understanding that comes from and by a raised awareness.



Reiki as we currently define it comes with a responsibility, the duty of care to educate ourselves and others so that they are empowered heal themselves, in expanding its application through the use of our imagination and a desire to learn more we expand our own level of awareness. We move beyond the limitations we have accepted or set for ourselves and in the process the unknown becomes known, data and information transcends to become knowledge and understanding.

This universal energy source that we describe as Reiki is infinite, but its infinity based on a structure of visible and invisible patterns and processes without which nothing would be created. Healing, as we understand it doesn't just happen as if by magic it's a pattern or blueprint for change, a process that requires development born of knowledge and understanding that is both empowering and liberating. When we accept what is without question be it good or bad, the status quo remains unchanged and unchallenged. The established belief that ***'this is the way and this is what it is'*** forms an ideology or structure to which we are asked or in some cases forced to

conform. It's only when we are inspired, motivated or forced by circumstances to think outside this box is change and development possible.

If we think of Reiki as a discipline made up of stories, techniques hand positions and symbols then yes it is limited by the fact that it's manmade in its design and application with currently 300 or so derivatives worldwide with all of their brand names, do's and don'ts, and interpretations on the Reiki theme.

If however we are able to look beyond the labels, look beyond the traditions ideologies and structure that establishments of all denominations require to view 'Reiki' as a freeform consciousness, that's fluid and responsive to us that uses knowledge and understanding as a tool to raise our individual and collective awareness, then it's limited only by the limitations we impose on ourselves. The change process always begins with a question, which sooner or later takes the form of who did it. Why did they do it? Where and when did they do it and most importantly what would happen if I did this? Our imagination is a gift from this infinite consciousness that is the link to raising our collective and individual awareness and ultimately the parent to those questions when asked and answered will take us beyond all barriers real or imagined.



## Some Urban Myths of Reiki

The dictionary defines an urban myth as ‘a story told as if it actually happened’, a story told in such a way that the listener accepts it as a matter of fact, and as we all know repeat something often enough and people will begin to accept it as if it were true, even a lie told often enough can assume the appearance of fact. Social myths can be amusing but those associated with Reiki if allowed to go unchecked have the potential to create fear and confusion, damage credibility and even dissuade people from experiencing its life enhancing effects, yet urban myths are nothing new, throughout history myths and mankind have always walked hand in hand.



There are several myths established as part of Reiki folklore and when they become part of our Reiki teaching practice they can achieve almost legendary status gaining credibility by means of association. One of the most well established Reiki myths is that **you should never give Reiki either directly or indirectly through distant healing to anyone who has broken a bone**. It's said that Reiki can speed up the healing process to such an extent that the bone can begin to heal before a doctor has chance to set it properly. To the inexperienced Reiki practitioner this may sound plausible but there are two very good reasons why this myth is fantasy rather than fact. Firstly a break can take anywhere between six to twelve weeks before the bone completely knits together, healing takes time and although Reiki can assist the healing process, there is no known medical or experiential evidence to support the idea that Reiki can or ever has healed a broken bone in such a way as to lead to abnormality or deformity.

Secondly, and most importantly to me, we are taught that Reiki works only for the person's higher good and it will only go where it's needed so we must ask

ourselves why would an energy of unconditional love create deformity and pain. Either the principle is wrong or the myth is, and as Reiki practitioners and teachers we must decide which is true and then act accordingly.

Another common myth closely associated to the first example is that **you should never send distant healing to anyone who is under an anaesthetic going through any form of surgery** as it may counter act the effect of the anaesthetic. Again there is no evidence to support this or any of these myths but that is the very nature of a myth, they require neither evidence nor proof to exist and the more fanciful they appear the more credence they achieve. I was taught that you should never give Reiki to anyone with a pacemaker fitted as Reiki can stop the pacemaker working properly and possibly trigger a heart attack. The first pacemaker wasn't fitted in the UK until 1958 and as such it is impossible for that particular myth to have existed before that date, so we must ask ourselves when was this piece of Reiki lore introduced, by whom, and more importantly why?

Early in my Reiki career I was told in no uncertain terms by a Reiki Teacher that I **should never give Reiki to anyone who was sitting with their legs crossed**, as this will stop the energy flowing. Really! To me Reiki is an expression of unconditional love and a part of the creative energy that at the last count included a million or so galaxies so I can't quite get my head around the 'fact' that simply crossing our legs renders this creative force powerless.

I've been told by teachers and practitioners alike that **you shouldn't give Reiki to anyone who is diabetic** as it could disrupt their blood sugar levels; again this instruction was given as gospel yet never once supported by research based evidence, I was simply expected to accept it without questioning its validity. My own experience as a Reiki teacher has proven this particular myth along with many others to be unfounded and unsubstantiated. Of all the Reiki myths the most misleading is that **Reiki is a miracle cure all that heals everyone it touches**. It isn't and it won't because it doesn't have the authority to do so. If it was able to do so it would go against the spiritual laws of unconditional love and free will, which along with other spiritual laws provide the structure and framework to creation. By the nature of its existence it must adhere to the universal laws that were instrumental in its creation; the created can never be greater than its creator, exist beyond its grace and control or act arbitrarily outside of its laws.

A fundamental precept of Reiki is ‘the only person we can heal is ourselves’ and with these eight simple words comes the implication and confirmation that the healing process can’t take place in our absence or be forced upon us. As hard as it may seem not everyone who is ill knowingly wants to be made well; some have claimed their illness as their own because it gives a sense purpose and identity, and as such Reiki cannot and will not heal that person against their will. What Reiki can do is help provide them with the opportunity to learn and grow, to become receptive to the physical and spiritual help available to them and in doing so they can if they so wish, develop in mind body and spirit, eventually reaching the point where they begin to play an active part in their own healing process.

This is truth demonstrated and the true purpose of Reiki, working to the persons higher good and ultimately their realisation that all healing ultimately comes through knowledge and understanding. What is perceived as a miracle is nothing more than an event that exists outside the limits of our current knowledge and understanding. Once we expand that knowledge and understanding what we once perceived as a miracle becomes a skill, a spirit based technology to be used time and time again to improve the quality of life, and heal illness and disease.

We have numerous myths in the form of rules regulations and rituals about **not wearing jewellery or watches when giving Reiki, keeping ourselves pure by not drinking tea, coffee, or alcohol and only giving Reiki to those who can afford it or those who we judge to be deserving of it.** Every time we come across any of these instructions we should hold them up to the light of scrutiny and test their substance, credibility, and truth, for we must be careful not to confuse the spiritual integrity of Reiki and its principles with the man made dogma that evolves over time with any discipline. We should always ask ourselves if these stories are based on a human belief or a spiritual truth. If they resonate with you then be true to yourself whatever that may be, if not let them go and continue on your personal journey of discovery. **The myth may remain constant but the same can’t be said about our knowledge and understanding.**

There was once a global myth that the earth was flat and if you sailed into the horizon you would fall off the edge of the world and into oblivion. Every time this myth was repeated it gained credibility until only those who were brave enough dared to challenge those beliefs and fears, and in doing so expanded

our physical and spiritual horizons and helped bring us out of the dark ages of superstition and mythology and into the dawning light of knowledge and understanding.

## Reiki Your Spiritual Sat-Nav

Ok, we all know about Reiki; it's well documented and in some cases has been talked to death. On the other hand the subject of 'stuff' by comparison is virgin territory that can, on closer inspection turn up a few new insights to the relationship between Reiki and stuff in general.

Reiki in our life is a personal choice whereas stuff is a given; we are born into it, and start to collect it from the moment we enter into this big wide world, and if that wasn't enough If you believe in reincarnation and karma we come with our baggage all ready packed from one life to the next. Which if you think about it makes some sense, as one experience can never be totally separated from its neighbor. What we experience in one moment inevitably affects how we view and respond to the next, so even if we don't have total recall we may well re-enter the world as a weary if not wise spirit, and far less pristine than we first imagine. How many of us have looked into the eyes of a baby and seen something that made us think or even say ***'this child has been here before.'***

So what is this stuff that appears at times almost magnetic in its ability to be drawn to us and cling to us like glue. Put simply stuff is baggage we collect and carry around with us throughout our lives; it can take the form of beliefs, fears phobia's, misguided responsibility misconceptions, anger, frustration and guilt, in short it's anything that impacts on the way we live our lives and affects the decisions we make. Children may be old spirits but when they enter this world they are governed by all of the laws of creation, and so from the first moment of life they become aware of, listen to, accept and take responsibility for all manner of stuff without question. With their 'limited' knowledge and understanding they automatically assume they are the creators of their universe and take personal responsibility for many things, if mammy and daddy are upset, angry, sad or unhappy, fighting and hurting each other, or worse still hurting the child, in their mind they, and not the adults must be at fault and have done something wrong to create the situation. The child automatically accepts its role in life's creative process albeit for the wrong reason, and as we grow older we relinquish the idea possibly because of negative experiences that have 'proven' to our inexperienced minds that as children we have no control over life.

It's a lesson later in life that we must re-learn as we come to understand that through the very laws of creation we are the creator of our life experiences.

Our thoughts are the architects and our beliefs good or bad (stuff) are the builders that create the reality we come experience in our lives.

Some if not all of the stuff we take on board isn't even our own, it belongs to those who decided to bring us into the world and became our parents, teachers mentors and in some cases tormentors, but our parents, teachers and those who exert control over our development can only teach us what they themselves have learnt. Potentially some of the stuff we accept as our own can be nothing more than an established family heirloom going back generations, but because we know no better and we trust and love those who gave us this belief or value we accept it as gospel and take it as our own, and it becomes part of the foundation that we build our experiences on.

There is an old and some would say wise saying; ***'when you meet the parents you can forgive the child anything'***. However there comes a time in everyone's life when they begin to exercise their own free will, and if we then suffer because of the consequences of our own actions we must begin to let go of the victim mentality and start to take responsibility for our actions. We can use our upbringing as an excuse for our actions, or motivation to break the chain of events. I am because of this, or I am in spite of this. Taken to the extreme some negative stuff can lead us into some very dark and desolate places of intolerance, abuse and suffering but unfortunately a closed dark mind is unaware of its own ignorance, ignorance in the truest sense of the word lacking in knowledge and understanding and the lightness of mind body and spirit this can bring into our lives.

So having touch on stuff where does Reiki come into the equation and what's its relationship to our own stuff, and trust me if you are alive and reading this (the first is a pre-requisite for the second) you will have stuff in your life, and I can guarantee that some of it you won't even be aware of yet, and it's the unknown stuff that exerts the greatest influence over all of us. Your belief in Reiki may even be part of the stuff you will need to revisit to see if you want to continue carrying this particular piece of luggage. Reiki baggage? It can be depending on what you believe and the expectations you may have about it.

There is a popular mis-conception that Reiki is a miracle cure all that comes into your life, takes over and does all the hard work for you based on what is defined as your 'higher good'. It can't, it never has and never will purely and simply because it has neither the power nor the authority to do so, by the very

fact that Reiki exists within the realms of creation it can't operate arbitrarily outside of the laws that were instrumental in its creation.



What it can and does do is work with us; education is the only means to establish sustainable change in anyone's life and Reiki educates us through the raising of our knowledge and understanding to the true nature of our own stuff and the ways in which we can accept it, acknowledge it, learn from it and then move on lighter in mind body and spirit because of the baggage we have chosen to put down either because we have outgrown it, or it no longer represents the person we have become. Often quoted but not necessarily understood is the precept that the 'only person we can heal is ourselves' and spiritual teachings speak of the physician being commanded to 'heal thy self', the emphasis is on the pivotal word of 'we' and not Reiki. If we are lacking in the knowledge and understanding to do so Reiki will help us to recognise, accept deal with and learn from our stuff in order that healing can take place.

We can't even hide behind the 'higher good stuff' because we mistakenly come to believe that higher good equates to all things nice and wonderful wherein the reality is totally different. The things we don't want to face about ourselves, the actions that may be at odds with the spiritual ideals we wish others to associate us with, our relationships that may be abusive and self destructive and all manner of issues we would prefer to lock away and pretend they don't exist are all in our highest good to accept and deal with. Anyone who has experienced these kinds of issues in their lives' will know how painful, frightening and debilitating it can be to face up to and address them. We can lie to others, we can even lie to ourselves but our body is always listening, it knows where all the stuff is hidden and our body never lies, it is the physical frame that holds the mirror that shows us our true reflection of what's held within.

Think of Reiki as a very powerful guide, friend and mentor who never judges or imposes their will or their knowledge and understanding upon you. They will walk with you and when its appropriate help you carry your load, but they will never rob you of your power to choose or the ability to stand on your own feet, deal with your own stuff no matter how painful or frightening it may at first appear. Strength comes through the exercising of our physical, mental emotional and spiritual muscles dealing with adversity not hiding in another's shadow no matter how spiritual it may be, and knowledge and understanding is nothing more than an internal realisation to an external stimulation. Another more contemporary analogy would be to consider Reiki as your spiritual sat-nav; it will advise and guide you, it will show you the shortest route and even give you the head's up on possible problems ahead on your journey, but you are always in control and can at any time you choose ignore its advice, or switch it off all together.

Reiki has helped me transform my life beyond all recognition; it has educated and empowered *me* to make the necessary changes that allowed love, healing knowledge and understanding to come in my life. It's said that God/Universe can only give us bigger and better things if our hands are free to take hold of them and we have created the space and the mindset to receive them.

Part of my baggage is that I carry the historical title of Reiki Master but I can honestly say I haven't mastered anything nor will I this side of life. I'm simply a work in progress carrying the same baggage as you on my personal journey. On good days I may get to put stuff down that I don't need anymore, but even after all this time in my rush to get where I'm going wherever that may be, I still occasionally make the mistake of picking up other peoples stuff thinking it's my own. I guess I'm still just a student by another name but you know what that's just my stuff and its ok.



## Please Dial 1 for your Reiki Wakeup Call

When we think about improving our lives and changing things for the better, we invariably think of an increase in the 'good stuff' what ever we perceive that good stuff to be, and a reduction in the 'bad' stuff as it's taken away by someone (a healer) or something (in this case Reiki) or it just magically disappears. But if we take a moment to think about the reality of 'changing things for the better' we may come to realise there is more to it than we first thought. For things to change for the better we have to make the connection between our life and the person who lives it; we are the common denominator in every experience we have ever had. We are the sole tenant living in our body, we are the only thinker in our mind, the center of our internal universe, our life doesn't just happen it's created and we are the creator. If we're not happy with the way things are then it's we who need to make some changes, if we want something different the first step is to start by doing something different and this pivotal catalyst can be Reiki coming into our lives.

Change requires choice, it also requires the belief that you are capable of change, and you have the desire or intent to bring about that change in your life. Change is not about sitting back moaning and waiting for someone else to sort out your problems for you, you are your problem and within every problem are the seeds to their solution. Albert Einstein once said 'a problem can never be solved by the same mindset that created it' if you want to find a solution to any problem you must first raise your level of awareness to gain a perspective that lies outside of the problem. You are the only one that can create the choice, through the belief and intent to bring about this change for the better, you have to either do something new, or let go of the old stuff. Reiki can be the catalyst that creates the ripple of dissatisfaction in your current state, either way development requires change and all development creates movement, you can't change and stay the same, something will eventually have to give.

Our negative ego would have us believe that it knows best; it's much safer to stay the way you are, no matter how bad you think things are they will only get worse if you begin to interfere and try to change. It will try to make you believe that no good deed goes unpunished and that self-improvement comes from arrogance and not knowledge and understanding. If our higher self is the wise and knowledgeable teacher that wants only the best for us, our ego by comparison is the harsh selfish authoritative figure that has to be in control and

obeyed at all times, self centered very judgmental of you and of everyone else. From the negative ego's point of view, a change for the better would be no change at all, things staying the way they are with lots of self imposed limitations to hide behind, and the belief that nothing is ever our fault.

Through the study of Reiki and other spiritual teachings we can begin to realise that our higher self doesn't look at things in the same way; it doesn't see fault or blame, it merely sees adverse effects brought about by inappropriate choices that we make out of ignorance and fear instead of knowledge and understanding. Blame and guilt don't exist for the higher self, they are illusions created by the ego as a means of maintaining control over us, the higher self wants us to take responsibility for our own actions and beliefs and enjoy the rewards that come through knowledge and understanding.



From the higher self's point of view a change for the better would be the realisation that you are never isolated or alone, that you have access to a higher knowledge than the ego could ever imagine, and that you have the power to create the kind of life you wish to live. Reiki can provide the initial insight and the tools to bring about this change, but it won't do it for you because that's your responsibility.

Our higher self wants us to become aware of the harmful patterns that we keep repeating in our lives and the way we hurt ourselves through ignorance and fear. We need to let go of the past and the stuff we hang on to out of fear or desperation, unfortunately this won't just disappear, it has to be acknowledged resolved and then released more often than not with professional help that lies outside the remit of Reiki, and this change for better may not appear so when we are faced with issues we would prefer to ignore or pretend didn't exist. Change can be traumatic, but this is due in part to our attitude to change in general, change takes us out of our comfort zone

and into the unknown and we can view change as losing something we value, something to be taken away from us. It's because of this negative attitude that we would much prefer to stay with the tried and tested no matter how unhealthy that may be and in the process try to maintain the status quo hanging on to stuff that is harmful and self destructive. In this instance pain and suffering are always in relation to our resistance to change, the more we resist change the more traumatic the situation may appear to become. This is why the Reiki principles provide truth demonstrated of our capacity and ability to heal ourselves.

That which exists must be governed by the laws that were instrumental in its creation, we are governed by amongst others the law of cause and effect, nothing happens by accident and nothing changes arbitrarily of its own accord, if we wish a situation to improve then we must play our part in bringing about the change we desire for even miracles must adhere to the laws of creation. There are no spectators in life only those who are asleep and those who are awake to this fact, a change for the better requires an understanding and appreciation of what we already have, it's this awakening sometimes through a Reiki induced wakeup call that can determine what we perceive to be better and it's this awareness, this knowledge and understanding that motivates us to bring about a change for the better in our lives, and in doing so the healing begins.

## Reiki; Scanning the Body's Energy Field

To understand the practice of 'scanning' we must first try to understand the principles that make it possible. Firstly, the physical body is in fact a complete energy system that creates a bio-electromagnetic energy field that surrounds the physical body in the same way that an energy field surrounds a simple magnet; it's this energy we tune into when we scan the body. In the same way that a magnetic field has a core, the body's core runs from the crown to the perineum along which are situated seven major energy centers known as Chakra's. This bio-electromagnetic field is commonly known as the 'aura', and the aura is a tangible extension of those energy centers and the system as a whole.

Many philosophers and teachers believe that the aura has seven levels of refinement that directly responds to each of the Chakra's, and while there may be differences in opinions as to the number of energetic layers, they all agree that disruptions in the aura can have a direct and adverse effect on the bodies energy systems and through time can manifest in the physical body as discomfort, illness or disease. Many ancient civilisations acknowledge the aura as an antenna that connects man with the subtle energies of the Universe and resonate with the Earth's own magnetic field.

To help us further understand we need to change the way we think of matter and what we perceive as solid objects such as the human body. Science has long known that matter, be it plant, animal or mineral, reduced to its sub-atomic level reaches the point where matter and energy become indistinguishable and interchangeable. In countless tests they also discovered that the energies being examined and observed were being affected and directed by the thought processes of those carrying out the research, 'the energy was following their intent'. Their thought processes were creating its own powerful energy field that affected how the matter/energy reacted when observed.

Through your Reiki attunements/empowerments you are given the means and knowledge to be able with practice, to scan the body's energy field or aura. The word attunement means 'to be in harmony with' and we have the potential to harmonise our energy with that of others to create an '**energy picture**' of them. Primarily our palms provide the means by which we can achieve this, powerful energy centres in our palms act as transmitters and receivers providing us with the information we need to achieve this. Once again science

provides the proof. Researchers in China were able to measure and quantify that the palms of people involved with energy work such as healers and Chi Gung practitioners emit a combination of infrasonic, electromagnetic, microwave and infrared energy waves.



What we perceive as the physical body is one of the many layers of energy that forms the subtle bodies that we call human beings. These bodies extend out from the physical body with the layer farthest away having the highest energetic frequency. The layers closest to the body have a lower frequency and denser composition, the closer to the body the denser the energy becomes until the energy condenses to take on the form of the physical body. The physical body, matter, is the densest form of energy in all of the subtle bodies, and it's the varying energetic fields of the subtle bodies that provide us with the information we receive during the process of scanning.

Having looked at the principles of scanning we must turn our attention to the practice, and the differing ways of developing the intuitive skills necessary to understand the information we received during the scanning process. Development of any intuitive skill requires patience, perseverance and practice in equal measure. It also requires an acceptance from you that the answers you require from the 'information' you've received will come with experience. For your intuitive skills to grow and develop, you must acknowledge their existence and trust in them.

We each have within us a wealth of cellular memory, wisdom, knowledge and understanding that is part of our genetic inheritance, your intuitive skills is a legacy to you. Your attunement awakened them but it's up to you to cultivate them and use them, for the more they are used the stronger they become. In using your intuitive ability for the good of others you show respect to those

gifts, and respect to those who have gone before you, that you may gain knowledge and understanding.

Many books and teachers will advise you to follow a set procedure when you start to scan the energy body. There is nothing wrong with looking at different ways of carrying out the scanning exercise, but you should remember that books and the information they provide are merely signposts to show the way. Signposts by their very nature are a fixed point of reference, a fixed position on a never-ending journey of development, but only you can make that journey. Only you can walk the path to knowledge and understanding and that will begin when you start to use the gifts that you have been given. Intuition by definition means 'Immediate understanding by the mind without reasoning', and by this definition we face a paradox of not being able to use reasoning, rationalisation or logic to define it for you. Words either written or spoken can't describe the process or that moment of intuitive insight, words by their very nature are finite symbols and sounds trying to define the infinite, the limited trying to encompass the limitless.

There is only one-way of experiencing your intuitive abilities and that is to experience them, understanding not with the mind but with the heart, the centre from which all intuition comes. Listen to your teachers, learn how they developed their intuitive skills and then practice the principles they have taught you. Then put away the books, put down the notes and put into practice that which you have been taught building your own catalogue of experiences and their relevant 'meaning' to you, in the process. Your perception is unique to you for there is no such thing as objective reality and even our intuition is subjective until we learn to define and refine our interpretation of the intuitive information we receive. All knowledge and understanding is an internal realisation to an external stimulation. The answers are within; they always have been and always will be.

Intuition; the immediate understanding without the need or desire to reason, all you have to do is accept that which is given freely and unconditionally. Take time to find that inner place of peace and tranquility, and then become aware of the universe around us, and within us, in truth they are one and the same. Be still in mind, body and spirit and know that you are at one with all things. In this moment when we experience a '**stillness of spirit**' we can begin to experience our intuition in the truest sense of the word.

## What's on the Other Side of Your Fear?

Fear like any emotion becomes an experience the moment we become aware of it, and like any story, be it history, legend or in this case Reiki, there are always two sides to every emotion and every experience. Until we personally experienced something it remains no more than an intellectual concept, it's only when we become aware of it and experience it firsthand does it become 'real' and we make it our own. In the same way that we can pick up a book and read the story of Reiki and the Usui legend, it's only when we come to Reiki and embrace both the spirit and the letter does it become a 'real' life changing experience.

We can sympathise and empathise with another's predicament but until we have experienced a similar circumstance ourselves we have no real understanding of how that person may be feeling or what they have gone through. Only when we speak from a place of personal experience can the words "I know what you are going through" begin to take on real value and meaning, yet even then, emotions and feelings are subjective and unique to the person experiencing them. How one person reacts or responds to a given emotional stimulus can be totally different to another faced with the same set of circumstances. Life is full of examples of people overcoming life-threatening challenges whilst others seemed unable to effectively deal the everyday obstacles that life places before them.



Fear by definition is always focused on the future; in much the same way that regret can only ever be rooted in the past, yet both have the power to debilitate us here and now. Fear is a feeling of apprehension, a fear of the future, a dread of some event that has not happened, and as such, no matter how real the fear may feel, it is only our personal interpretation of '*one possible outcome*' that owes more to the quality of our mindset and thought processes,

than a past experience or certainty of the future. To fully understand and control our fears we must first be aware of them and experience them to the point that we can exorcise them; if we try to run away we simply strengthen their existence, fear is a parasite fed by ignorance and resistance, and what we resist will most definitely persist. We must be able to work through our fear, to understand it, and then disempower it through knowledge, and understanding of its true nature.

One of the cardinal principles of Reiki is that ‘the only person we can truly heal is ourselves’, and the healing of oneself only becomes possible through raising our knowledge and understanding. Fear is like an elusive shadow; we feel its effects without being able to physically get hold of it, and unless we understand the nature of fear we will always feel powerless to overcome it, that’s why the physical reality is always easier to deal with, how many times have we heard the words, or even said it ourselves as we emerge from the far side of a fearful situation “it’ wasn't as bad as I thought it would be”. This is because fear not only fills us with dread it also undermines our confidence and gets us to doubt ourselves and our ability to deal with life effectively.

The fact that you are reading this means you have survived countless stressful situations where you had little or no experience and your fear of the unknown made you question whether you would be able to get through the challenges ahead. We are survivors born of survivors and no matter how weak or afraid we may feel in the midst of fear, we are far stronger than we can ever imagine, and once we have found the strength to work through our fears and experience them from both sides the process will become easier as knowledge and understanding allows us to regain control over our thoughts, feelings and emotions.

Nature has gifted us a built in fight or flight response and our natural reaction is to run from anything that frightens us, be it real or imaginary. Unfortunately our brain can’t differentiate between a real danger and an emotionally charged (fearful) mental image of a perceived threat, but both will create the same adverse effect on our physical, emotional and psychological wellbeing. This fight or flight response is right and appropriate when there is a real and present danger, but we must learn to distinguish between the perception and the reality. If we are not careful the old acronym of a fear; ‘False Expectation Appearing Real’ can immobilise us as we can become paralysed by our own thoughts, and jailors to our own confinement.



Reiki may not provide us with a '***get out of jail free card***' but it will provide us with the key to understanding the true nature of our fears and the illusionary power they hold over us. Unfortunately that key is to be found on the other side of our fears.

## Personal Awareness

Most people don't know who they really are, and some of us go through our whole lives without taking the time to get to know the stranger that lives our life. Sometimes it takes a traumatic event or a life changing Reiki wake up call, to get us to stop and re-evaluate our lives and to look at what's important, in the process asking ourselves why we believe what we do.

We come into this world unbiased, uncluttered, and free from any preconceived ideas about ourselves or those around us. To use a contemporary analogy we enter the world a pristine system ready to accept all of the down loads that's available; unfortunately, we don't have a virus protection so we pick up everything that's going. The vast majority of our beliefs, values, fears, and ideas have been given to us by others, and we accepted them as our own simply because we knew no better. Those around us automatically become our teachers whether they are qualified or suitable for the task and during our formative years everyone we come in contact with becomes an influential force in our lives. The closer the relationship the stronger the bond, and the greater the influence and control they have over us.

The problem we have is that teachers can only teach us what they themselves have learnt and although we eventually create our own experiences these are still influenced by what we were taught to believe and the way we think. Many experts believe that by the age of three we have a clear sense of identity of who we are, and how we fit in with those around us. In this sense our knowledge is more traditional and conditional, than educational, and it's only when we take time to evaluate our beliefs and values can we begin to gain some understanding of who we are, and what personal awareness means to us. It's about discovering the truth about who we are; who and what contributed to making us the way we are, and its only when we begin to understand can we be sure which beliefs, values, and fears we can truly call our own.

This process can be very liberating, as we reclaim our personal power through the letting go of other peoples stuff, and stop taking responsibility for other people's actions. It's also very empowering as we ask the question; is what I believe about myself supporting my idea of who I am, and what I want to be? Liberating to budding free thinkers who want to understand and know themselves, but very frightening to those who don't like change and would rather things stay the way they are no matter how bad they appear to be. Hanging onto what they perceive as theirs, illness is an excellent example of

what people claim ownership for, it gives some a sense of identity, it's theirs, and some would rather die than change the way they think and believe about themselves.

We should never assume that what we think is the norm; just because we think and are sure in our own mind, others may not share our views or think the same way that we do, from their perspective, they are right and it's us who are wrong, and we must be blind not to see something so obvious. In one sense they are right, we can all be blind to the obvious and to a certain extent this is created by the way our brain works in its effort to make sense of the world we live in.



What we believe determines our reality; our beliefs create structure and conformity, a platform that forms a foundation of our very existence and to a great extent determines what we believe to be true, real, and acceptable. We see what we expect to see, and sometimes we see only what we believe to be possible. They say to see is to believe, but in reality, it's as much about believing before we can see.

In 1903, just sixty years before the popular TV soap Coronation Street came into our lives the Wright brothers flew for the first time. For the following two years they flew on a regular basis, sometimes beside passenger trains that ran along side their make shift airfield. Even though these flights were witnessed by countless people the local newspapers refused to publish all stories relating to these life changing historic events because these hardened newsmen knew beyond any shadow of doubt that it was physically impossible for man to fly. It took a presidential enquiry to decide that man could fly, and that the Wright brothers had indeed flown their plane in Kitty Hawk.

Our thoughts can be very powerful and persuasive, but when it comes to a fight between our thoughts and our beliefs there's no contest, our beliefs will

win every time. To use the analogy of a computer system again, our thoughts are like the cursor that moves from place to place, but our beliefs are the programs that create the work. The quality of that work is determined by the quality of the programmes, our ability to understand and work with them. Personal awareness is about understanding the programme we are running here and now, and how to upgrade in order to improve the quality of the most important piece of work; ourselves.

Reiki can be a catalyst for change but like any catalyst it requires the other components to be in place before the process can begin. Dr Usui knew through his own experience, for Reiki to be effective and have lasting results, the recipient had to play their part in their own healing process. If they didn't, couldn't or wouldn't their established thoughts, beliefs and actions would simply neutralized any benefits and old patterns would re-established themselves. Development of any kind requires change, we can't stay the way we are and develop at the same time, to accept new ideas and beliefs we have to create space for them in our lives, and this requires us to let go of old or outdated beliefs and values. Development requires change, change requires choices to be made, and choices require alternatives to be made available to us, we then have to believe that we can change, and have the desire to implement those changes in our lives. If we want something different we need to do something different, if not we will simply keep creating the tried and tested no matter how painful or self-destructive it may be.

Everything that exists must comply with the laws that were instrumental in its creation and it's impossible for anything, including Reiki to act arbitrarily outside of those laws. Nothing just happens; we are all governed by the law of cause and effect. Everything we do down to the most fleeting of thoughts is governed by this law; what ever we think, feel, believe, or do is subject to the law of cause and effect. Our ignorance of this law does not negate its consequences, or annul its effects; it's our responsibility to educate ourselves to these laws and then work with them in order to improve the quality of our lives.

If we can say 'it's just the way I am' we can also ask the question 'who am I and what is it that makes me the way I am'. In every situation we have experienced we are the common denominator; the factor that remains constant, we stand at the centre of our universe surrounded by the consequences of our thoughts, beliefs, and actions, we are the cause and they are the effect. Everything in life

is a reflection, or a projection of oneself, a statement of our intent, past, present and future. You are the cause and they are the effect and if you want to make lasting changes in your life you must start with the cause, not with the effect, failure to do so will result in nothing more than momentary improvement until the next negative experience materializes.

Reiki inspired personal development helps us to realise that it's no good trying to change if we continue to do the same old things, repeating the same harmful self-fulfilling patterns over and over again. Lasting change comes about through personal development, when knowledge and understanding of who we really are helps us make the necessary changes to the way we live our lives, this way we control the quality of the effects before they appear. New principles become practice and life mirrors the changes you have made in your thoughts, beliefs, and actions, which allows healing to manifest itself.

## In Search of Our Objective Truth

As a qualified trainer and Reiki teacher part of my educational and vocational remit is to train students who wish to become Reiki practitioners or teachers themselves. This requires an understanding of accepted academic principles and teaching practices, coupled with the ability and experience to deliver sometimes complex esoteric subjects in a way that makes them easy for the student to understand. These subjects by their very nature can be very difficult to comprehend, hard to accept and even harder to substantiate.

An open community of enquiry that works on the premise that ***there are no definitive right or wrong answers*** just differing points of view is an excellent teaching model that often leads to a discussion on a wide range of related subjects such as spirit and spirituality, the aura, reincarnation life after death and their relevance to the study of Reiki. If we are serious about our desire to gain knowledge and understanding then Reiki and its healing properties can't be discussed in isolation and we must when necessary be willing and able to discuss the physical and spiritual framework wherein life death, healing and dis-ease coexist, and their implications and the questions raised in the minds of the Reiki student. ***So we must, as educators be willing to examine all avenues of thought until we reach a place of objectivity.***

To be objective it's vital that we move away from hearsay, supposition and folklore, and provide where possible research based data, as well as experiential evidence to back up what we teach. Students must trust the knowledge they acquire, they must trust their teachers and mentors, and as a teacher I have a responsibility to ensure reliability, validity and authenticity in all that I do. This doesn't mean that as teachers we must spoon feed the student and provide all of the answers, we have a duty to teach the student how to think but not necessarily what to think this requires that we be facilitators to learning and stimulate the students desire to seek out knowledge and understanding for themselves and take ownership for their personal development. To ensure this we must where necessary, authenticate the subject matter in order to validate our teachings, be prepared to analyse and critically evaluate the findings, and be willing to change our views, beliefs and teaching practice if the evidence and facts demand it. No matter how well intentioned tradition should never be used to justify the perpetuation of ideas or ideals that lack substance or credibility. Learning requires that where ever

possible we deal in factual based knowledge; to do so we must look beyond the myths and legends to find the truth, no matter how strange it may first appear or how uncomfortable it makes us feel, as we move out of our comfort zone and into the realms of the unknown.

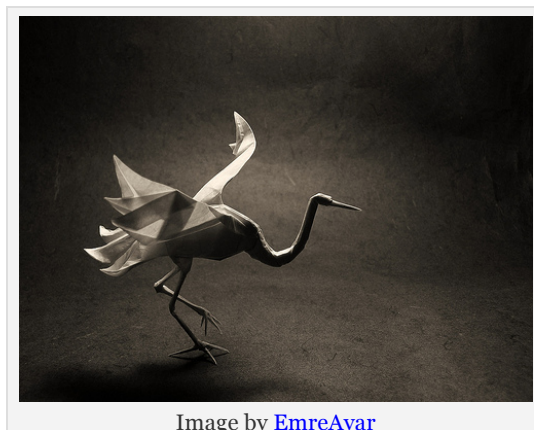


Image by [EmreAyar](#)

Knowledge and understanding are intrinsic to our personal development and growth, and this always lies beyond what we already know and accept as fact. As Anthony Robbins the motivational speaker once said; ***The miraculous are events that lie outside the limits of our knowledge and understanding; when we expand the sum total of our knowledge and understanding what was once seen as esoteric based miracles becomes a technology that can be reproduced to enhance our development and quality of life.*** As a species we sometimes struggle to come to grips with our world and to understand the nature of the phenomena it presents to our senses. The means by which we set out to raise our awareness can be classified into three broad categories of experience, reasoning and research either proactively or retrospectively as we move from one experience to another, one level of understanding to another.

Part of this process looks to make sense of anything that doesn't appear to fit the norm or challenges our beliefs, intellectual assumptions or social values. To allay our fears and ensuing confusion, we look for ways to reinforce our existing beliefs, for patterns of thought or experiences that make sense of the events in our lives. In numerous ways each and every one of us attempts to discern patterns or shapes in seemingly unconnected events in order to better grasp their significance in our lives. An example of this is when we say that 'Reiki has changed my life' when in reality it is we that have change our lives, yes what we subjectively perceive to be ***Reiki may have provided inspiration and direction but we have ultimate responsibility to***

***live our lives in the way we choose.*** Reiki is neither intrusive nor dictatorial with the power or the desire to override our free will and freedom of choice. Unfortunately a belief once established filters out all incoming information and will reject anything that challenges its existence and we will do everything in our power to justify our beliefs even if they fly in the face of all common sense, logic and reasoning.

A problem teachers can face is their own objectivity or lack of it in their chosen field of study, and this can be compounded when their personal experiences impact on their research in either a positive or negative way. Some would go so far as to deny the possibility of objective study, and argue that all research is inescapably subjective; others maintain that the proper quest of social scientific research is objective truth in itself.

In light of the esoteric nature of the subject matter, my own search for objective truth demands that I ask the question: ***If our beliefs are a matter of choice and experiences are a matter of fact, how can we reconcile our Reiki experiences no matter how factual they may be, when they appear to contradict existing scientific thinking.***

Reiki teachers and practitioners alike are adamant that Reiki works yet medical science says there is no scientific proof to substantiate this and perceived results are merely due to mind over matter and the placebo effect. This is the same placebo effect that helps medication work in the form of a belief in the doctor and the medication to make us well again. The mind is over matter logistically figuratively and intellectually, for the mind sets the parameters and the body conforms to the directives it receives.

To be able to answer this question I need to examine the aspects of experience, reasoning and research identified above, analyse the nature of our belief system and critically evaluate the source and validity of those beliefs, how they underpin our experiences, and to understand what beliefs and experiences are. The dictionary defines a belief as a feeling of certainty and when we examine the origins of these feelings of certainty we discover that they can be learned in the same way we acquire any other form of information. They can come from re-enforced peer group or social pressure that determines what is 'right' or socially acceptable, or be hereditary in as much as it almost becomes a family or social tradition passed down from generation to generation.



Experience is direct personal participation or observation in or of an event and so we begin to realise that a sustained or firmly held belief may well be supported or underpinned by experiences that validate the belief. If, as in the original question we have no personal experience of Reiki or any other related esoteric phenomena we will find it difficult if not impossible to believe in the existence of anything that is beyond the limits of the physical senses. ***If however an element of doubt is introduced into the belief/experience loop we may begin to question the established belief, which is fundamental to personal development and a greater level of knowledge and understanding.*** A simple example was our belief in Santa Clause; as children we believed that Santa Clause was real because of the experiences and references that supported that belief. Our parents told us he was real, and on Xmas morning the presents we received provided in our mind absolute proof that he existed. It was only when we began to question our parents and the existence of a Santa Clause did we eventually accept that he didn't actually exist in the way we thought he did.

This particular belief is sustained be it for 'all the right reasons' by misinformation or lies on the part of parents and the lack of knowledge and understanding on the part of children.

Those who teach us can only do so based on what they themselves have learnt. The beliefs and values given to us by our parents and/or society are usually to control us, keep us safe and to stop us being disappointed in life, what we believe in usually determines both attitude and behaviour towards oneself and towards others. We come into the world pristine but very quickly pick up and accept the views, beliefs and expectations of society and the authority figures around us, ***a lot of baggage we carry in the form of attitudes, beliefs and values are inherited or accepted initially without a great deal of thought for their origins or authenticity.*** How many of us during our Reiki training accepted what our Reiki Master told us without question, Reiki being such a 'spiritual' discipline what we are told must be true. ***Yet a search for objectivity asks that we question the old and the new in equal measure in order to search out the truth.***

Reason is the faculty of rational argument, deduction and judgement and our ability to reason is defined by our intellectual capacity and to a greater degree our collective knowledge and understanding. Cicero defines it as *'the power*

*which enables the mind to grasp reality'* but as we are beginning to realise what we think and believe effects our perception of that reality.

Rational argument, deduction and judgement demand the prerequisite of consideration and evaluation of all evidence new and old, rather than rejection or dismissal based on personal dogma, social conditioning or even a negative subjective experience. The ability to reason requires us to understand the concept of reasoning and be willing to open our minds enough to accept new truths, which is the basis of all personal, educational and social development and eventually healing through the acquisition of knowledge and understanding. You may say that our ability to think is an integral part of the reasoning process, but thinking alone won't necessarily bring about a quantum leap in understanding or acceptance of a new idea or belief. Thinking is a matter of consciously considering what already exists in our minds, which is the sum total of what we have experienced in the past. So the act of thinking appears to be a mental exercise that brings our memories or established beliefs to bear upon the present moment, situation or new information we are being asked to consider. Objectivity requires an open mind free from the filter of preconceived ideas and beliefs.

To answer my original question we also need to examine the development of the science that says Reiki can't work, the science that defines our world, its strengths, and its limitations in dealing with anything that falls outside the parameters of our physical senses. Our world is defined by our five senses; our sense of sight, touch, hearing, smell and taste informs us what is real in our physical environment, it's the physiological and neurological antenna that enables us to navigate the hazards of everyday life.

Our senses are hard wired to our brain; disconnect them and they are unable to provide us with the neurological and electrical impulses (information) it needs. We see, feel, hear, smell and taste more with our *Brain*, as we do with the external organs that act as a conduit, and as Morpheus explained to Neo in the film the Matrix '*what you believe to be real Neo is nothing more than electrical impulses to and from your brain*'.

Science no matter how well established is still only a work in progress no more than a few hundred years old, its credibility no greater than its best results and its reputation no better than its worse mistake. All new discoveries go through the same evolutionary process of indifference, scepticism, hostility and resistance, before finally being accepted as the norm by its peers. History

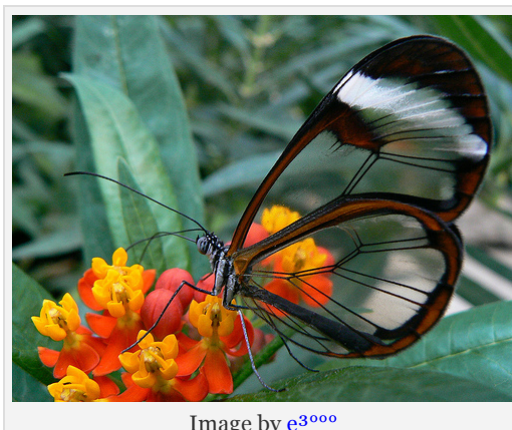
is littered with references to visionaries such as Tesla, Bell, Edison, Newton and Einstein, being ridiculed and derided because they dared to challenge the accepted beliefs with new truths. Historically our knowledge and understanding of the world come from the sciences and the church. The maxim of science is: *Accept no one's word for it*, and the church's word is *gospel* yet we take science and the church's word on reality and morality without question. It is said that science and religion are mighty because they are right, but in our search for objectivity should we not ask ourselves; is science and religion right because they are mighty?

The responsibility for our education rests solely with us and we shouldn't negate or relinquish that responsibility to others no matter how authoritative they may appear. Before we blindly accept social and religious dogma as our own we should first carefully consider the words of the German philosopher Johann Most. *'The more man clings to religious dogma, the more he believes. The more he believes, the less he knows. The less he knows the more stupid he is. The more stupid, the easier he can be governed (controlled)'*.

Sir Isaac Newton's eighteenth century scientific model of the world is still the basis for some of our existing beliefs of who we are and what is possible, and even though we have now entered the twenty first century of quantum physics and super string theories that mathematically prove we live in a multi dimensional world that can include a spirit dimension, some still hold the belief that if a thing can't be seen, if it can't be scientifically measured and duplicated in a laboratory then it can't exist. There are parts of the religious and political establishment that invest heavily in the perpetuation of the doctrine that healing of the body and spirit are the sole jurisdiction of the medical profession and the church and that disciplines such as Reiki are at best misguided and at worst dangerous or evil in the guise of good intentions.

Yet thanks to the emergence of quantum physics and quantum mechanics over the last hundred and fifty years, some scientists have begun to accept a universe made up solely of energy, the majority of which lies beyond the range of our physical senses. A universe as Greg Braden puts it *'We are a part of what is energy in nature, defined by and through vibration, a non local energy that exists everywhere all of the time that is referred to by some scientists as the Quantum Hologram, and the Mind of God by others'*. Thus recognising and accepting that the scientist and Nobel Prize winner Max Planck was right when he said during his acceptance speech that *'Matter in*

*the form of solid objects as we understand it doesn't exist in the way we think it does'.*



Through the study of quantum physics and quantum mechanics, physicist's such as Niels Bohr's and John von Neumann have proven mathematically, which is a prerequisite for scientific validation that quantum wave and particles allows for separate dimensions or realities to exist here and now sharing our space separated only by the shape and vibration of their energetic blueprint. Could it be possible that the source of Reiki energy owes more to quantum physics than it does to eastern mythology and spirituality in the way we have been led to believe. If Reiki exist, and I believe that it does surely it's more important to discover its true point of origin than to simply accept without question and pay lip service to tradition. If we required further proof of the collaboration between science and religion to influence and control what we think and believe we need look no further than a conversation between eminent physicist Professor Stephen Hawking and Pope John Paul the second.

When Hawking appeared on television following his audience with the Pope, Hawking reported that the Pope had said to him '*I do not care what you do with your scientific research just so long as you do not encroach on my subject of the spirit world and life after death*'. If true this is a clear indication of religion and science collaborating to suppress investigation and validation of realities that lie outside of the accepted religious domain. When challenged on this matter, the Royal Society stated that its policy which dates back to the 17th century, agreed with the church never to trespass into the subject of life after death. If quantum physics is correct and other dimensions exist then is it possible that there exists a spirit dimension that is by definition nondenominational, that is neither heaven nor hell and free from all religious

dogma, a spirit dimension that we all automatically transcend to at the end of this physical life. Is it also possible that the church has known of this fact for many years? In his critically acclaimed television series on astronomy 'Cosmos' historian and presenter Carl Sagan stated that: *'The suppression of uncomfortable ideas may be common in religion and politics, but it is not the path to knowledge and understanding, it has no place in the endeavour of science'*.

One thing is certain those who have experienced Reiki believe no further proof is required and through it their understanding of the healing process through knowledge and understanding has changed the way they think about life in general and the lessons to be learnt. Those who haven't, remain steadfastly sceptical and dismissive.

The volume of evidence supporting disciplines such as Reiki will grow steadily as the boundaries of science as we know it are pushed further aside to uncover the truth hidden by a lack of knowledge and understanding on our part, and a desire to control what we think and believe by elements of the church, scientific and political establishment. Knowledge is power and those who control and disseminate that knowledge ultimately control the direction of society's development and growth. Legitimate and sustainable scientific research has historically been discredited along with the character and reputations of those who would challenge the status quo, and introduce new truths into the public domain. We must ask ourselves what could generate such fear and a desire to suppress the truth. The answer is that those who suppress truth do so in order to suppress their own fear and maintain the elusion of authority and authenticity of their own power. Science and religion have long held a position of supremacy in the realms of morality and the truth, and neither will relinquish it or acknowledge a higher or more enlightened power without a fight, no matter how spiritual it may be.

We are fortunate that a new breed of science is ready to challenge the establishment in a way that the general public would find impossible to do, this coupled with a change in peoples belief in the God given authority of the church, and the right of science and politicians to decide what we must believe in, is leading to a 'new age' of openness and the questioning of established 'truths'. Education is about empowering the *learner* to ask questions and to challenge the new as well as the old in order to seek out truth no matter where it's hidden or how strange or uncomfortable it may first appear. If our beliefs

and experiences challenge the established 'wisdom' of the day then as educators we must be prepared to examine vigorously all aspects of our knowledge in order to discover our objective truth in what we teach and believe. If Reiki is not what we think it is then we must have the courage and the desire to find out its true nature and the creative source of what we define as a wonderful Reiki experience.

Development requires us to change and grow; and part of that growth means that we will have to sooner or later let go of things that that are proven no longer to be true, or beliefs that no longer support who we have become. Albert Einstein arguably one of the greatest scientists of our time questioned the validity of his own scientific achievements when he said *'Now you think I am looking at my life's work with calm satisfaction. But there is not a single concept of which I am convinced that it will stand firm I am not sure if I was on the right track after all'*. As an individual I am sure of my own experiences, but as a teacher I must be sure to the best of my ability, knowledge and understanding the authenticity and validity of what I teach, and be willing to hold up my beliefs and experiences to the cold light of critical enquiry, analysis and evaluation, and not just perpetuate myths and legends in search of my objective truth.

## Reiki and the Realities of Psychic Development

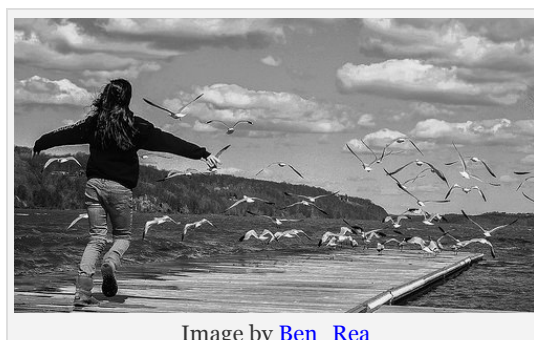
Back in 1999 when I started my Reiki training the subject of psychic ability came up in a conversation with a group of students who were on the same two-day course. It was during this general discussion on all things Reiki that I was informed that studying Reiki can also help develop any latent psychic ability the person may have, and although I didn't give a great deal of thought at the time I can now say without fear of contradiction in my case this was certainly true. A few childhood experiences with the paranormal were dismissed out of hand by my mother, who when asked for an explanation told me that I was 'thinking too much' and the subject was closed.

I believe my mother's less than satisfactory answer was out of fear and ignorance; fear of the unknown and ignorance in the lack of knowledge and understanding of anything to do with spirit or the spirit world which I have to say based on what I now know is as real if not more so than the one we occupy at the present time.

At the time I found the comment about Reiki and psychic development nothing more than an interesting aside but it wasn't long before my intuition began to work overtime, but human nature being what it is I put this down to an over active imagination brought on as my mother had assured me by thinking too much, so I just tried to concentrate on my Reiki studies and get on with everyday life the best way that I could. It's fair to say that this development during the early days of my Reiki training was slow and low key, what I didn't realise was that was all about to change in a big way when I took a major step forward by deciding to teach Reiki and set up my own Reiki training programme. It was if by making the commitment to teach I was saying in some way 'I'm ready to receive more whatever that more is', whatever the catalyst was my intuition and psychic development stepped up a gear. Some of it was subtle if no less intense while other experiences were clear for everyone to see. Over the years this development has continued unabated to such an extent that I now accept it as second nature, and only question it if a new experience falls outside of the established pattern or norm, if there is such a thing.

To a certain extent psychic ability can be said to be subjective and there are those who dismiss it out of hand as they say it flies in the face of common sense and logic and accepted scientific laws of how the universe works and our place within it. One of the most often quoted arguments against it is that we

live within a universe that is governed by the law of cause and effect. First comes the cause which then creates an effect and so the argument goes that it's impossible for the effect to be known before the cause can exist so the ability to foretell the future before it has happened is scientifically impossible. Instead of dismissing it out of hand maybe we should adopt the mindset chosen by those who have challenged the status quo in order to move mankind forward kicking and screaming out of the dark ages and into the light.



‘What if’ is far more liberating than ‘it’s not possible’ and if my experiences can’t be attributed to psychic ability then I am open minded enough to want to find out what yet unknown law scientific or otherwise, exists that allows me to do what I do. Validation comes from the integrity of the experience and not by the name or reputation it carries. It is said that science and religion are powerful because they are right, but just for a moment let us ask ‘what if’ they are accepted as right only because they are so powerful. The technological advances we readily take for granted today had to fight for their existence and run the gauntlet of those who said it couldn’t or shouldn’t be done before eventually being accepted by even its harshest critics. All progress is fashioned out of resistance, resentment rejection and finally begrudging acceptance. Challenge the person’s deep-seated beliefs whatever they may be and you undermine the foundations upon which they and their beliefs sit. Beliefs provide us with structure, meaning and purpose and in some cases power and control, which is addictive and corruptive and very difficult, to give up once we have acquired a taste for it.

With a catalogue of experiences gained over a period of years it’s easier and far less tedious to detail the ones that stand out in my mind as the most interesting for your consideration and discussion that can be validated by those present at the time. My grandmother used to say ‘self praise is no recommendation and just because it’s true doesn’t mean you have to tell the



world about it' and normally I would agree but I have to provide you the reader with some hopefully interesting examples to give meaning and purpose to this particular article. The psychic experiences that I want to relate to you are training room based psychic phenomena that can be defined as transformation that were witnessed on numerous by my students, secondly something I call picture profiling which could come under the heading of psychometry, and finally what can be described as generalised clairvoyance, all of which come under the general heading of psychic ability.

I was asked to deliver the classes as part of the Durham County Council Adult Education in the Community and achieve Reiki accreditation status with the Open College Network, which I was more than happy to do. This meant that each of the Reiki first and second-degree classes were ten week courses, as was the Reiki level three course. Initially the Master classes were over thirty six weeks but were eventually reduced to thirty for the sake of uniformity and funding requirements. This meant that a student entering the programme would achieve their Master certificate after fourteen months of continuous study during which they may be attending two or even three classes a week as they progressed through the programme. Part of the level three and the Masters class syllabus was to assist in the teaching and mentoring the first and second-degree students. Once the training programme had become established with the first and second degree classes feeding into the level three and Master classes spirit made a habit of popping in and out on a regular basis, sometimes to help me with the classes and sometimes to make a connection with a student in the class.

Before we get into the details of these visits I should explain that I don't see spirit with my eyes as in normal vision, I sense them to such an extent that I am able to describe what they look like and give details as to who they are, why they are there and any messages they may have for someone in the group.

On one such occasion the energy of a tall rugged man came through and stood next to a student in one of the Master classes. The reason for his visit was one of interest and that one of the class was related to him in some way. He had dark wavy hair with a ruddy complexion from spending time outside in the sunshine and fresh air, he wore an open necked white shirt underneath a dark waistcoat and dark trousers were held in place with a thick leather belt. The thing that confused me was that his right hand appeared to be distorted and covered in some way that I couldn't make sense of. After I had relayed all of

this information the student explained that the person was an uncle who had passed into spirit, many years previous. He was a traveller who dressed exactly as I had described him, the distortion of his right hand was due to an accident he had when he was younger. His hand had been badly damaged and he wore a glove on that hand to cover the scars.

This kind experience would be repeated time and time again, sometimes students would ask who the spirit figures were that they could see or sense standing beside me as I delivered the class, if I asked them to describe what they could see they were able to do so, and on more than one occasion several of the students were able to verify the information being provided as they had obviously witnessed the same thing from their position in the room.

Sometimes the effects of their presence were strange to say the least. On one occasion I was taking a senior group through a guided meditation, which went off without a hitch, and it was only after the session some of the students asked for an explanation to what they had heard and seen during the meditation. They described how at one point during the meditation my voice had changed completely and when they had opened their eyes to see who had taken over the class they were surprised to see that it wasn't only my voice that was different, my features had changed completely from the crown of my head and down to my shoulders. Instead of my normal features there was the face of a much older person with white shoulder length hair and a beard. This was later verified by other students who had witnessed the same transformation. To me what is interesting is not that it happened, for I had reached a point where I accepted their involvement as a part of my own development, the really interesting thing to me is that I was totally unaware of any changes taking place, either in my voice or my features which returned to normal once the meditation practice came to an end.

If one experience stands out in my mind above all others it was the day spirit let me know just how close they were and that one of them at least had a well developed sense of humour. I was leading the group through a guided meditation/visualisation, which required the student to come to a door, which represented a place or point of transition on their visualised journey. The exercise completed we had a discussion on any problems that may have arisen with the visualisation process. We are all different and some students find it much easier to think in pictures than others do and it's important to me as a teacher that the student recognises and values their own development rather

than make comparisons with another person's progress. One student asked about the nature or design of the door they were asked to visualise, did it have to be a certain size or design, could it be anywhere they wanted it to be. They wanted me to provide the details that they could then use to construct their own mental images.

I explained that it was their visualisation and that they should take ownership of it and create it in a way that has meaning and value to them. The doorway was symbolic and as such could be whatever they wanted it to be in shape size or construction, it could follow accepted rules of where you would normally find a door or if they wanted to they could allow their imagination free rein and place it in the most unexpected of places. The examples I gave were on the ground like a trapdoor, in the base of a tree, floating on the water or in mid air, it was theirs to design in whichever way they wished and it was more about the process than the end result. To underline this point I stood in the centre of the group and using my hand described a large oval shape in midair and explained that if it was my intention that this was my doorway then that was my reality in the visualisation and I would then be able to move through it, at which point I moved my hand forward to represent movement through the space I had created for the purpose of the teaching point being discussed.

What happened next was totally unexpected. There was a distinct temperature difference between one side and the other of the invisible 'doorway' I had described in mid air. On one side you had the warm but comfortable air temperature of the training room we were working in, and on the other side it was cooler and had a much lighter feel to it. Even though I'm a psychic I'm also a dyed in the wool sceptic and to make sure I wasn't imagining it I slowly moved my hand backwards and forward time and again, but the temperature difference was real and clearly defined in what felt like an invisible link between the two worlds. If that was surprise enough what happened next literally lifted me off my feet. As I have already said for my own peace of mind I needed to make absolutely sure that this wasn't just my imagination working overtime so while I continued to talk to the class explaining what I was experiencing I was making a mental note of the physical sensations I was feeling as I moved my hand slowly to and fro.

As if to answer my own doubts, it was at that point that someone in spirit gently but firmly took hold of my hand. To say I was shocked would be the mother of all understatement, I was told later that my face was an absolute

picture of surprise and disbelief and I jumped so much that both of my feet left the ground. As a teacher I'm normally not lost for words but the best I could manage to say at that moment in time was 'Holy Shit'.

Away from the classes the way in which my psychic ability continued to express itself was no less interesting and on many occasion challenged my own perceptions of what it was and how it worked.

Joe and Lin are two lovely people; they are friends, Reiki students and are Goths who visit the seaside town of Whitby in North Yorkshire every year during Goth week, they love the place so much they bought a static caravan not far from the ruins of Whitby Abbey so that they could spend as much time there as possible. During a telephone conversation when we were just taking the time to catch up with one another Lin mentioned that they were going to spend time at their caravan and almost as a throw away remark she said ***'I'm drawn to the place but I can't explain why'*** at which point spirit decided to butt in on the conversation and help me provide the answer to her rhetorical question. I explained that she was drawn to Whitby because she had been born and died there in a previous life. I gave her full name with her exact date of birth and the date she died and I was able to describe in detail the graveyard where 'she' was buried and the style and location of the headstone that would if found, verify all of the information I had just provided her with.

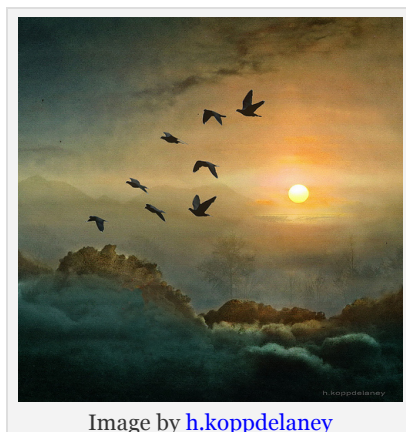


Image by [h.koppdelaney](https://www.h.koppdelaney.com)

Being a sceptic I later asked my wife if she thought I might have drawn the information from my own over active imagination. Her answer was a definite no, but I still needed to satisfy my own curiosity so I researched various census data and was able to verify all of the information as correct. Lin and Joe knowing Whitby well were able to locate the graveyard and following the directions I provided them with were able to find the headstone and read the inscription that linked Lin to a past life hundreds of years ago.

Reading Tarot cards became more of an interest and it was Joe and Lin who gave me the Tarot cards I still use today, but years later I still haven't mastered the ability to condense the information into the standardised card reading session. I averaged about two hours per reading with one noted session lasting three hours and this is one reason I rarely agree to group sittings, the other reason being that card readings to me are a shared personal experience and I feel that if I adopted a conveyer belt approach with a 'times up' mentality I would be devaluing the gift I have been given in order to help people through the sharing knowledge and understanding with them.

I discovered what I call picture profiling by accident; my wife Denise handed me a photograph one day of a married couple expecting me to look at it and say something along the lines of 'that's nice' or 'what a lovely couple', as you do. Instead what she got was me looking at the photograph for several minutes in silence before providing a detailed character analysis of one of them based on nothing more than the look in their eyes. I had never met either of them and I didn't know who they were until after I had provided Denise with what I would come to call the persons picture profile. As the ability developed I was able to not only provide information on the persons character but also pick up on details from their past, and of things yet to happen. When I think I have finally got a handle on a particular ability something usually comes along to let me know that psychic development like personal development of any kind is neither pre-determined nor predictable.

All I require is a photograph where I can clearly see the person's eyes which are the focal point of my attention but on one occasion my psychic ability left me feeling totally confused and more than a little deflated. I was provided with a photograph and I set about typing up the reading which I felt was both detailed and precise, what I didn't know at the time was the person in the photograph had a son who was literally his double. The reading I typed up was correct but not for the person I was looking at, it was correct for the son who wasn't in the photograph. On one hand the reading was completely wrong because it wasn't for the person identified, but on the other hand I had been able to somehow connect to the son's personality and energy through his father's likeness.

A failure and a success all rolled into one experience. At the time I was totally confused and more than a little dejected. Later I would come to understand what happened if not necessarily how it happened and it provided me with a

very important lesson. It taught me that psychic ability is part of who we are as a species and as an innate skill it can be developed like any other with dedication commitment and a down to earth common sense approach. Psychic ability in its many forms is never one dimensional or rigid in its approach to the task at hand, it's fluid and responsive and If I am to grow as a teacher and as an individual who has embraced the skills and abilities I was born with I must let go of the limiting beliefs of what is and what's possible, how it works and most importantly what the outcome should be.

## Take time to be silly; it could be the most spiritual thing you do!

Life is about balance and harmony; put simply it's about fulfilling our duty of care to ourselves and to others. If we aspire to be a spiritual person, someone who tries to live out their highest beliefs in a practical down to earth way, while dealing with the rigors of everyday life, we should also take time out from our meditation sessions, our crystals, Reiki and the self-development workshops to be *silly*. If spirituality is one point of balance then childlike 'silliness' is the other. The word 'silly' carries with it some negative connotations but if we look closely we see that the word also denotes being: '*carefree and lacking in serious purpose*'. But what greater purpose can there be than a carefree approach to our physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing?

This need and desire is not childish, irresponsible, immature or foolish. It fulfills a childlike sense of wonder and sees the miracles in the mundane, it has a maturity that comes from the wisdom of innocence, and it recognises without judging how silly and self-important we can sometimes be without realising it. It accepts responsibility and duty of care for our own health and happiness, it realises that you can't have one without the other for one is the counter balance to the other. It isn't afraid to laugh at itself, and recognises the wisdom of the fool.



There is a time for all things, being silly in a childlike way is just as important as understanding the language of prayer or the finer points of spirituality, each has its time and place and neither one stands higher than the other before God. A child sees the wonder in all things through eyes that haven't yet been clouded by ignorance and fear; for a child time stands still as it holds court with 'imaginary' friends as they discuss a magic kingdom we can no longer see. They see treasure in precious stones when all we see are pebbles; a puddle provides the opportunity to sail to distant shores and battle pirates

and mythical monsters. We look into the same puddle and see the potential for dirty footprints on a kitchen floor.

There is a time to be grown up and do the things that grownups do; a time to face the challenges of everyday life, but there is also a time to allow the child within us to rediscover the magic kingdom that we once knew. There is a time for our physical and spiritual journey, but there is also a time to rest and play, a time to remember where we hid those golden shafts of sunlight that filtered through the trees on warm summer days; we instinctively knew they were precious and contained magical powers. Now is the time to rest for a short while, to play and rediscover those treasures you buried so long ago; you stand before the door to that lost kingdom, and silliness is the key.



## Reiki Helps Us Begin from a Point of Gratitude

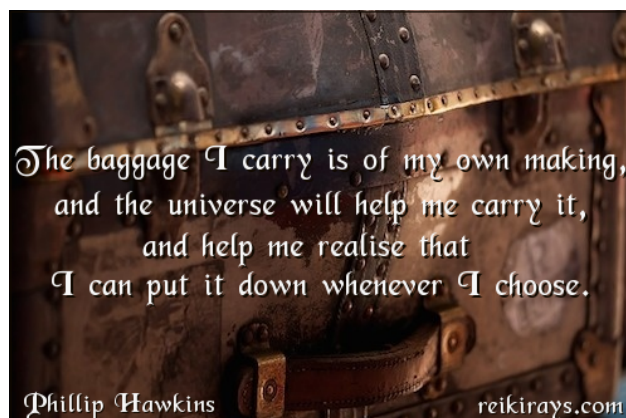
***When asking the universe for anything we should first take a moment to begin from a point of gratitude; before we ask for more we should first say thank you for what we already have.*** Even if we feel we have little or nothing to be thankful for, the very act of asking shows a belief in a higher power that has the ability to give what we ask for; the capacity to communicate with that power, and the need or desire for change our life.

Even if you feel destitute, you have these three things to build upon and you should then begin from a point of gratitude. Gratitude is the key to receiving more, but before we can receive more we must first appreciate what we have, if we don't more will never be enough. When we pray and ask for something, it is usually in response to a situation we find ourselves in; our prayers are usually "time specific" and not development orientated. If we were to look at our lives as a film, our prayers are usually focused to one incident in one frame and not in context with the story of the film from start to finish. What we ask for today, may not be in our best interest tomorrow.

The universe sees our lives from start to finish and listens to the feeling behind our prayers (not the words) and answers those prayers in response to our progress and not our request. It may not give us what we want, but he will always give us what we need when we need it. What it will never do is take away our ability as creators in our own lives and will not give us what we are capable of giving ourselves. To do so would reinforce our belief that we are powerless victim's dependant on the whims of an unseen God. We are given the power to create our own reality through our thoughts and beliefs and part of that unconditional love that created us in the desire to educate us to our own greatness.

If we had this knowledge from the day we were born, the structure of our lives would reflect this wisdom. When this enlightenment comes to us later in life we can find ourselves living a life that begins to feel less and less our own as we struggle to conform to a life formed in the past by thoughts and beliefs we can no longer identify with. The secret is to leave the outside alone and travel inwards and change our beliefs and thought processes, then sit back and watch our external existence restructure to fall in line with our new internal reality.

The outer is a reflection and projection of our inner world, one is created through the other, change the cause, and you alter the effect. Our thoughts and beliefs are the cause, our life is the effect, and we are creators of our world as individuals and collectively as a species. The individual consciousness is a part of the collective consciousness and as such, we are all responsible for the state of the world we live in.



When we ask for anything, we automatically set limitations for we have already determined what we want and what it should look like when we get it, for whatever we ask for has form and structure which are boundaries in themselves. Since we can't see further than the moment we live in our horizons are set by time instead of distance, and this can limit our perception, reality, and what we think we need (desire) in the here and now. Our lives (if you believe in reincarnation) are a continuum and our prayers are answered in response to our development and not in response to our specific request, what we ask for today may not be healthy or appropriate to our spiritual needs.

Seeing the future is not the same as living it, the future is no more than a set of possibilities waiting to be defined into our reality. The here and now are the seeds of the future and we are creators in that process. In making the moment we write history and lay the foundations to our future, our thoughts and beliefs draw up the plans and our actions give definition to the time and place when the present becomes the future. Once we begin to live in the moment, we can begin to see the past, present, and future more clearly, for we realise they are one and the same.

Until we reach this point of spiritual evolution, we need support and guidance to ensure our continued development. Until we realise the connection between our thoughts and our future and begin to understand that our life is a

projection of our mind we need to ask for help and guidance. That help and guidance is always available, but it can only be given if we ask for it but it will still only be given in a way that strengthens us, and awakes us to our own greatness.

The baggage I carry is of my own making, and the universe will help me carry it, and help me realise that I can put it down whenever I choose. It will even support me when I think I can't go on any more, but it will never carry me to the point where I have lost the ability or desire to stand on my own two feet. When we have the sense to say "Your will not mine", we are in effect saying, I'm making the journey on a road that you have laid before me, I will take the steps necessary if you provide the direction. All journeys begin from a point of departure, all knowledge from a point of understanding, and all prayer from a point of gratitude.



## Healing through Forgiveness

Reiki helps us to realise that the definition forgiveness is very precise; we are asked to stop blaming someone for their actions or attitudes, or for the hurt and damage they have caused us in the past. Forgiveness never asks us to like or love the person or their actions only to forgive them and in doing so, we free ourselves from the situation and the people we wish forgive. As long as we hold on to hate, blame, and resentment we remain trapped in time by the incident, no matter how long ago it took place. It also means that the healing of oneself can't take place. Forgiveness requires us to break and detach from the cycle of blame and to let go of the negatives that form the attachment to the pain and fear we feel. Yes fear as well; because whenever we experience negative feelings and emotions we can be certain that fear is present in some form even if we are unaware of its presence. Before we can do this, we must forgive others and more importantly ourselves; and to be able to accomplish this we must begin by trying to understand the process of forgiveness.

Forgiveness like love is never about condoning or accepting excuses for what has happened, forgiveness is about retaking control and power over the situation, detaching from the past and moving on with your life. It's not about denial, whitewashing events or rewriting history, it about acceptance the love of oneself, the desire and determination to draw a line in the sand and say 'so far but no further, it's time for me to let go and move on'.

It has to be said before we go any further that some will find it easier to forgive than others, and because of traumatic events in their lives some may never feel able to forgive and move on without professional help and guidance. If you are one of those people who need that level of support and guidance it's imperative that you get all the help you need. Reiki, complementary therapies of any description should never be seen as a substitute to professional medical assistance. If you need it make sure you get it. All personal development requires a solid foundation to build upon and Reiki is no different.

Blame and resentment are indicative of more dangerous emotions such as anger and guilt. We can feel anger at being a victim, and guilt through misplaced responsibility for whatever happened, a vicious circle is set in motion that is both debilitating and self-perpetuating. Forgiveness for things that took place in adulthood is easier to give than situations that happened in childhood. Forgiveness for childhood experiences can be far more complex; firstly the people involved may not be alive and without realising it we may

still be try to live up to some unrealistic standard set by someone who is no longer there to acknowledge our attempts or take great comfort from our perceived failings. We also need to remember that our perception of those people and the events that took place were from a child's perspective, this doesn't mean they are any less valid or just but time, distance and maturity change perspective, and what is remembered may not exactly reflect the reality of that moment in time.

How many times have we had the opportunity to revisit our childhood haunts only to be slightly disappointed because it's not how we remembered it? The teachers we met later in life that bore no resemblance to the giant ogres that looked down on us in our formative years, those cathedrals of learning that were in reality just dusty old buildings full of dead animals in glass cases whose eyes seemed to follow us every time we had to walk past them. A child's perspective has value and worth but problems can arise when we try to judge others and ourselves based on blurred or out of focus 'mental snapshots' taken as a child.

It's often said that we can't change the past but we should also remember that it's also said that we never deal with reality only our subjective perception of what that reality is so while we may not be able to change the events themselves every time we revisit the past we leave a little of ourselves and bring a piece of the past into the present time thus re-establishing contact that can literally span a lifetime. We may feel completely justified feeling the way we do and we may have every right to blame and resent those involved yet we must ask ourselves how much time energy and emotion are we sacrificing to those people and events and the price we are paying and its negative effect on our health and well being.

If they are no longer with us we have simply taken on their role in their absence are in effect doing the job for them by becoming the harsh authoritative figure and helpless victim all rolled into one. If the damage was done intentionally with malice and forethought what greater pleasure could that person achieve than to know years down the line they still had the power to hurt and inflict pain even if it is by proxy and the power of your own mind. To those people even your anger and hatred are wasted because they simply wouldn't care what you felt towards them or anyone else because of who they were and the mental and emotional dark place they were in.

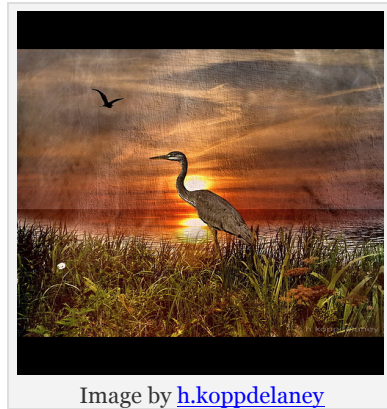


Image by [h.koppdelaney](https://www.h.koppdelaney.com/)

Our minds are complex organs that we don't yet fully understand and research continually provides us with new and fascinating insights into how our brains work and what separates our minds from the physical organ of the brain. One thing that is certain is that our memory is not foolproof and is at times suspect and unreliable. Because of the way it works, our brain can't handle confusion and it will try to make sense of the situation it finds itself in. If we remember certain things that are charged with emotion, our brain will take those images and make a picture of them, if something doesn't quite fit, it will modify it until it does. Part of our picture may be totally unrelated to the experience or the memory, but our brain will use anything it can find as a point of reference to fill in the blank spaces. Certain of what we were going to find how many times we have said 'Oh it's not exactly how I remembered it?'

We never remember everything or every detail, our memories are selected in many ways by the emotional charge that's created in association with the memory, and the boring everyday stuff is 'forgotten' and filed away into our subconsciouses. Because we are selective in the memories we retain this may create gaps in the story of our lives, these gaps can be no more than a word or a sentence on the pages of our memory, but in some cases, whole chapters disappear from our 'memoirs' and our brain will fill in these gaps in such a way as to ensure they provide a sequence of events.

Further problems arise because we think that what we see is real and that our eyes can't deceive us, unfortunately they do, and this adds to the confusion. Our eyes aren't very good at seeing, but our brain is and because of their relationship a paradox is created, we believe what we see and we also see what we believe. Our brain takes the information provided by our eyes and then interprets it in order to make sense of it based on our beliefs, past experiences and memories.

Personal experience is subjective and relevant to our belief system as much as it is to reality and actual events. Memory is a two Way Street that allows us to re-connect to the past, but it also enables us to re-evaluate and modify those memories every time we connect to them. Each time we handle a memory we leave a piece of the present on it and in doing so we change its shape in some small way and re-establish a bond that may need to be broken in order for healing to take place. As the Bible says, “When I was a child, I thought as a child, when I become an adult I shall put away childish things”. If only we could, unfortunately as far as forgiveness and memories are concerned we continue to think as children and with some of us, the older we get the more childish we become.

As a child, everything we experienced, everything we saw and thought about was with the mind and brain of a child, we tried to rationalise with a child’s intellect and view point that required us to look up to everyone and everything around us. As we grow, we begin to develop and understand, rationalise, evaluate and consider our actions and of those around us. Unfortunately, our child like perceptions forms the basis of our formative development, which is the foundation of our adult expectation. The child sees, the adolescent assumes and the adult remembers, if only we could have viewed those moments in our past through the eyes of the person we have now become, how much pain and suffering could have been avoided before it became established in our hearts and minds and requiring of our forgiveness.



Knowledge and understanding is the key to all forgiveness for it is the key to all healing and once we have found a place for forgiveness in our hearts healing can also move in and start to do its work. It’s difficult if not impossible to hate and hold onto negative feelings and emotions and have true knowledge and understanding at the same time. Forgiveness is a paradox in many ways; it is both selfish and selfless at the same time, selfish in as much as we put ourselves first in order to understand our own feelings and why it’s important

to forgive ourselves and others in order to gain the release necessary that will allow us to move on. Selfless in the release we bring to others in a non-judgemental way that detaches us from the mental and emotional pain that may be attached to certain people, events and memories. Forgiveness does not condone or justify actions or events, but it does release the part of us that is trapped in time and connected via our memories and emotions to the past. Forgiveness allows us to be released from the past and move into the here and now and create the kind of future we desire free from the baggage that has dragged us down for so long; it also allows the healing process to begin.

Some people see forgiveness as giving up the right to feel angry and the right to punish others for their actions. People do what they do because it works for them; we are all a product of our own experiences, memories and dreams, a self-perpetuating circle that can only be broken through understanding and forgiveness. What we can't understand we tend to fear and what we fear we eventually try to destroy and in doing so we take one step closer to becoming the thing that we fear the most. Before we can forgive others, we must first understand and forgive ourselves. With this understanding comes the realisation that if we look closely we can begin to recognise ourselves in others and the common ground we share, it is this very connection that allows us to shape and influence each others lives and once we realise this we can truly say, there but for the grace of God go I.

Failure to forgive others can be based on ignorance, refusing to forgive ourselves can be arrogance of the worst kind, we see ourselves as special and to which the normal rules of forgiveness don't apply. We know what happens when we don't forgive, the pain and anger, guilt and frustration, a vicious circle without end. What would happen if we dared to begin to bring forgiveness into our lives, what effects could that healing process bring about? More often than not we feel that we have a responsibility to punish ourselves by withholding our forgiveness and that if we begin to forgive we will in some way be punished for daring to replace anger and fear with love and compassion.

Fear can only exist in the shadows of our mind, it has no substance in itself and gets all of its power through association, and it whispers to you that if you dare to stop punishing yourself and have the nerve to forgive, then something awful will happen. This awful thing can only exist when we create it through our own fear, and in doing so we give fear the illusion of power and control.



Understanding this allows us to recognise fear for what it is; a False Expectation Appearing Real, a shadow cast by our own thoughts and given substance by our belief and actions. Shine the light of forgiveness and understanding directly on to fear and it will disappear, because it has no substance, it is only the absence of the light of knowledge and understanding that creates the illusion of darkness.

Forgiveness comes in many ways and each has merit in its own right. Whatever form it takes forgiveness is about self preservation and the belief that we deserve to be healed which is the basis of the Reiki precept that we must begin by healing ourselves. Whatever form it takes, if it works for you then its right for you for forgiveness comes in many ways but healing will always be the ultimate outcome. When someone does something to hurt us and we can bring ourselves to forgive and let go, we bring love and healing to one level of our existence. When someone hurts us and we realise that they are working through their own pain and fears, our forgiveness creates a release and healing on an even higher level. Forgiveness born out of knowledge and understanding also helps us realise that while we are unable to forgive and let go we are also punishing ourselves, which is one of the reasons why like charity and Reiki, forgiveness should always begin at home.

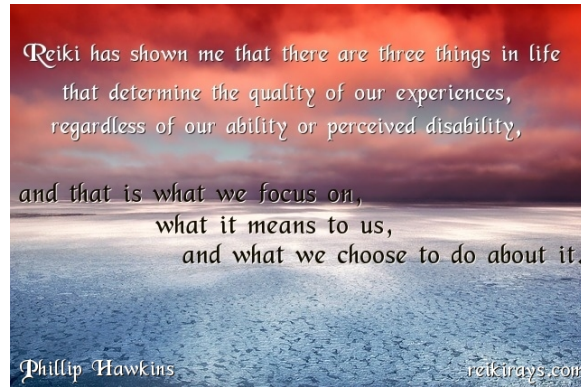
## A Degree in Disabilities

Having looked at the dictionary to find a true definition of the word 'disability' I can safely say that every person I've ever known and I include myself in this statement, everyone I have ever taught or worked with has had a disability to one degree or another. A considerable length of time working in the field of training and development has provided me with the opportunity to work with people who had raised their disability to an 'ology'; some went on to gain a Masters while others were content to simply achieve a distinction within their chosen affliction. One of the greatest gifts Reiki brings is the ability to look beyond the obvious and to get to the root cause of the underlying problem, but in our haste and desire to help others we can sometimes forget the Reiki precept that the only person we can truly heal is ourselves and the desire to heal others may be a part of our own disability and mask our unwillingness to recognise, accept and deal with our own stuff first. When spiritual teachings command the physician to first heal themselves they do so in recognition that knowledge and understanding is the basis of all healing and self-knowledge is a prerequisite in all personal development.

If we think about it for a moment we all have our own definition what a disability may be, and being subjective these can cover a multitude of physical, mental and emotional conditions and our perceptions will be determined by and large, by our pre-conceived ideas, personal experience and beliefs. Collins gives a definition of a disability as 'when our ability is reduced or impaired' and if we take this literally then we must accept that we all have a disability of one description or another. Some disabilities are more obvious than others and generally the easier they are to see the easier they are to deal with, while others may be less obvious, their effects on our lives can be no less debilitating for it's the unknown barriers that can exert the greatest control over our lives.

If asked to define a disability how many of us would identify a thought process or a belief as a major impairment, yet it's my experience that a person's belief system can be the most debilitating part of their lives for no other reason that their belief determines their expectations, forms their pre-conceived ideas, and ultimately creates their experiences. It has been said many times that we never deal directly with reality only what we believe that reality to be. This being true; a negative belief will ultimately create a negative experience, which will impact on those who share that experience with us, a negative belief about ourselves or another will influence what we expect and experience.

Alternatively, a positive belief creates a completely different perspective, a different framework by which we view the expectation and the outcome. In short our belief creates our reality and we see what we expect to see, even if it doesn't exist.



Reiki has shown me that there are three things in life that determine the quality of our experiences, regardless of our ability or perceived disability, and that is what we focus on, what it means to us, and what we choose to do about it. Our experiences are created by these three choices that we either make consciously or suffer the consequences by default, for the lack of knowledge and understanding of these choices or an unwillingness to accept their influences will not negate their effects on our lives.

Life isn't static; it can't be because change is fundamental to all creation, to all progress, personal development and most importantly healing of oneself. Movement is life in motion, knowledge and understanding is movement with purpose and meaning. No matter how permanent we think a situation or belief may be life determines that change is the only constant and how we view this transitional process will determine whether those changes are positive or negative. We can't do anything about the hand fate has dealt us but we do have control over the cards we choose for ourselves, and once chosen we have no choice but to live out the experiences that we have created, but we can always increase the quality of our lives by changing our focus from the negative to the positive, re-evaluating what is important, and then deciding to take action that supports our new outlook on life. If we want something different we simply must do something different.

Medical science has made great in roads in treating and eradicating illnesses and dis-eases yet they have failed miserably to come up with a cure or even a preventative medication that can fight against ignorance and fear, a remedy that can overcome prejudice's, or a transdermal patch that when applied will

ease the pain and suffering caused by a misguided belief. This unfortunately is left to the individual who is faced with these disabilities to come up with their own coping strategies. Healing is education by another name; the only force that can work against ignorance and fear is knowledge and understanding, education is the key that can unlock the strongest door, and break down barriers that are impenetrable to brute force. Unfortunately when we are forced to accept views that appose our deep seated beliefs it's no more than begrudging compliance and we will revert back to type or our established negative default setting at the earliest opportunity. Before we try to educate others we must first educate ourselves (physician heal yourself) in order to recognise the stranger that lives our lives. In coming to know ourselves we can begin to understand others more clearly by seeing our own fears, failings, and insecurities reflected back to us by those around us. We may not be able to change the physical, mental, and emotional disabilities that we encounter but we can always cure the effects of a crippling belief we have about ourselves, or we hold as true of others.

Our beliefs aren't real; a belief is nothing more than a feeling of certainty and the purpose of a belief whatever it is, is to affect the way we behave and our attitude to one another, change the belief and you automatically change the effect. Most of our defining beliefs were given to us by others during our formative years and we automatically accepted them as our own, our parents were our first and most important of teachers but they could only teach what they had learnt, and in doing so they perpetuated another person's truth. Some of those beliefs are good and true based on a solid foundation of knowledge and understanding, but some like the belief that we will never be good enough or that we fall short of some perfect ideal need to be let go of and replaced by beliefs that will release rather than restrict, and fully support the person we are and more importantly the person we desire to become.

Whether we like it or not we all have a disability to one degree or another; a blind spot where all manner of debris has collected out of sight and out of mind, a belief held onto for so long it has become second nature and no longer requires a second thought. What greater disability than to search for something that doesn't exist, to find fault where none exists, if so we must then claim ownership of it for we will have created it if only in our own mind. Before we strive to heal others of their ailing's and failings we must be willing to first put our own house in order and self prescribe a dose of truth and

honesty, knowledge and understanding which may be a bitter pill to swallow, but will none the less take us ever closer to healing ourselves.

We all have the potential for greatness regardless of our condition real or imagined; conditioning can only control us by default, the moment we become aware of it we can if we wish to, reclaim control over our lives and begin to live life with purpose instead of by default. Potential is our reservoir of creativity that seeks to express itself in the positive way we live our lives and is limited only by our imagination, education or knowing oneself brings knowledge and understanding which is a prerequisite for healing of mind body and spirit, it also provides us with a window of opportunity to be true to ourselves self and all that we can become.

## Healing the Mind, Body and Spirit

Healing like Reiki begins in the mind

The mind is a beautiful thing if we use it wisely but can be a harsh taskmaster if left to its own devices. The mind is the wellspring from which all things are cultivated; it is our inner sanctum and the birthplace of our reality. Our thoughts are the parents to our experiences and our hopes, dreams and fears are the fruits of their labours, the quality of which are defined by the quality of our thought processes for thought is the cause and life is the effect. If this is so then it must also be true that healing must begin in the mind so that the body may experience a state of health and wellbeing, what the mind defines the physical body will conform to so it's vital that we use the mind to formulate a healthy life enhancing template for the body to follow.

It's now widely accepted that nearly all physical illnesses have corresponding mental factors that determine their onset, presentation, maintenance, susceptibility to treatment, and resolution but even if we choose to disregard the importance of the psychosomatic connection we can't fail to acknowledge the illness, diseases and deaths caused in their tens of thousands as a direct result of the negative life choices we make on a daily basis as we exercise our freewill. If only we would exercise our bodies as much as we do our negative minds set? Alcohol, smoking, obesity lack of exercise and stress related conditions are the accepted causes of a number of forms of cancer, heart disease, strokes and diabetes, these are the true horsemen of the apocalypse of the twenty first century.

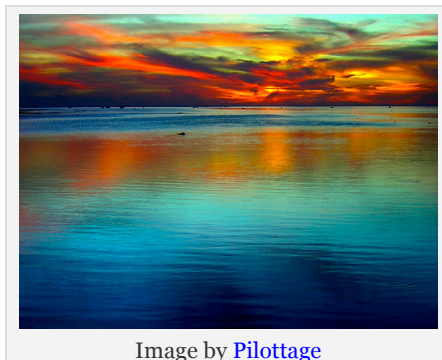


Image by [Pilottage](#)

We live in an age where time and distance are measured by internet access, a time of unprecedented access to information and technology yet when it comes to our own health and well being common sense along with knowledge and understanding appear to be in very short supply. We are constantly

bombarded with information and guidance as to the dangers of the above lifestyles yet we continue to choose a course of action that has only one conclusion, and as the clock counts down it's not if, but when that conclusion will become a reality. Ignorance appears to be no longer about the lack of knowledge and understanding but more our chosen 'default mode' as we choose to ignore the consequences of our actions in the pursuit of momentary relief from the less than satisfying life we have chosen to live.

As a Reiki teacher I have been asked many times where does Reiki come in, physically and metaphorically in order that we may channel this energy. To fully answer this question we must first understand what Reiki is, its purpose and the way it works when the external stimulus of Reiki energy creates an internal experience within oneself. Reiki is a conscious energy and we are drawn to it when our own energy begins to resonate with it through either a subconscious desire or direct intent. We have no real way of knowing what Reiki is other than the labels we place upon it in the hope that it will then conform to those labels and our limited perception of what it is. If as we say it goes where it's needed and not where we or the recipient would like it to go, we have to accept that however Reiki manifests itself it has a power and an innate wisdom far beyond our present level of knowledge and understanding.

In its original form Reiki was a process of personal spiritual development through which students gained the knowledge and understanding necessary to heal ourselves in the way they lived their lives and the life affirming choices they made on a daily basis, and it's this philosophy that forms the basis of the Reiki tenet that the only person we can heal is ourselves. From this we can see that Reiki whatever its form is education by another name and personal enlightenment and our freewill are a vital part in the healing process, for when we know better we can then choose to do better and make necessary life changes that encompass a healthy mindset and lifestyle.

As education is initially a process of the mind being receptive to and accepting change we can see that Reiki must first enter the mind before its effects can be experienced by the body. If as we have said knowledge and understanding or enlightenment is a prerequisite to the healing process this must lead us to the realisation that Reiki can't and won't simply intervene and remove the offending condition as if by magic or the miraculous depending on your religious persuasion. If life is about physical and spiritual development then we must at least consider the real possibility that Reiki has neither the desire

nor the authority to override or remove our freewill for the ability to choose is pivotal in all physical and spiritual development. Negatives don't exist by accident they serve a purpose and provide an alternative to their positive counterpart and it's through choices we make, the reality we create and the consequences we must then deal with those lessons are presented to us. How we deal with those lessons is entirely up to us, we can learn and move forward, or simply experience the same lesson in different forms until we experience a set of circumstances that creates a 'Ah ha' moment and the penny finally drops. This is a basic principle of education in all schools of learning; if the student can't grasp the new idea or concept in its initial form then the teacher has a responsibility and duty of care to deliver the lesson in whatever way necessary until the student is able to gain the required knowledge and understanding. We must all accept responsibility for our health and wellbeing and take an active part in the healing process, part of which is letting go of the victim mentality that keeps us locked into the belief that we are merely victims of circumstances and powerless to effect real change in our lives.

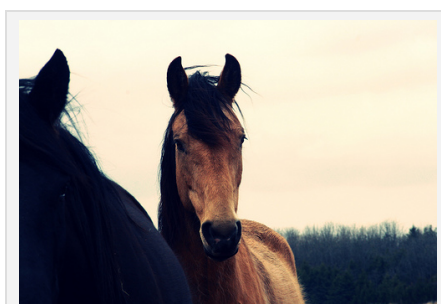


Image by [ClickFlashPhotos / Nicki Varkevisser](#)

Good health is more than the absence of illness and disease and healing is much more than the removal of the symptom that manifests itself as pain and suffering. If Reiki were to miraculously remove the condition the person would still be left with the residue of ignorance and fear, fear of the unknown and ignorance of their part in the illness/healing process, which would allow the condition to return and no lesson would have been learnt. If Reiki in its infinite wisdom could remove the illness as well as the corresponding lesson and at the same time ensure our physical and spiritual development, what it would also do is remove our personal responsibility to deal with the consequences of our actions thus giving us carte blanche to do whatever we want free from limitations or restrictions and secure in the knowledge that regardless of the outcome of our actions good or bad, Reiki is picking up the tab for us. This isn't any kind of healing that I'm aware of and if we were to



apply these same principles to raising and educating our own children what kind of adults could we expect them to be as a result of our intervention. Well balanced hardly, caring and considerate, highly unlikely, independent and self sufficient, sadly no, for no other reason than they had been denied the opportunity and the ability to stand on their own two feet, make their own decisions, learn by their mistakes and gain confidence by having to deal with life's challenges and the consequences of their own actions.

The more we try to impose our limited personal values on to what is by our own definition an infinite universal energy the further we move away from the fundamental principles of freewill, personal development, and our responsibility to exercise it in such a way that our thoughts, beliefs and actions become life affirming. If we believe that there is nothing beyond this life and its purpose is for us to simply exist for its duration then an overtly mothering form of Reiki would be a viable option as it would allow us the luxury of a life free from personal responsibility. If however we believe that this life is only a small part of an ongoing process that requires us to live it to the full in order to develop and grow both physically and spiritually then our freewill must be seen as sacrosanct and Reiki honouring this fact must first enter our hearts and minds as a guest, before it can assume the role of a mentor and teacher and in doing so help us to heal our mind so that our thoughts become dutiful and loving parents to our beliefs, and our actions bear testimony to the healing that has taken place firstly in our mind, our body and ultimately our spirit.

## Knowledge and Understanding Is the True Miracle of Healing

Miracles of any description including the *miracle of healing* are according to mainstream scientific thinking impossible, yet the scientific premise 'that nothing can exist that can't be explained by science' is neither factual nor scientific. Everything that lies beyond of our current limit of knowledge and understanding including what Reiki is and the way it works could be defined as a miracle waiting to happen, and all of the medical, technological and scientific advances that we take so easily for granted today would in a different time and place be considered impossible, miraculous or the work of some supernatural force. Part of the problem we have is that the bench mark, the stereotypical miracle is of biblical proportions, eye witnesses are no longer available and all we are left with is documented evidence that has to be taken at face value and in good faith. It's against this literary yard stick that contemporary miracles are viewed and any modern day miracle may appear lacking in substance by comparison.

Miracle is often an overused term when describing an event such as surviving a natural disaster or simply a wonderful occurrence such as birth and the miracle of life. Others could be the survival of an illness diagnosed as terminal or escaping a life-threatening situation. When faced with a series of coincidences they are unable to explain some may describe the situation as miraculous which often happens when Reiki is being discussed. So when we casually talk of the miracle of Reiki healing maybe we need to redefine our definition of what a true miracle is.

For most it would be impossible to discuss the miraculous without putting it into a religious context as religion recognises miracles as being works of their God, either directly, or someone claiming to be acting on its behalf. In this context miracles are rarely a random act and there is usually a specific purpose connected to the miracle, the conversion of a person or persons to that particular belief system or as a demonstration of power to reinforce authority. Some faiths believe they own the monopoly on the miraculous and that a miracle isn't actually a miracle unless it happens under their jurisdiction and has their stamp on it or their seal of approval, some go so far as to state that theirs are the only true miracles and all others are merely apparitions created by fakes, charlatans or those sent to lead the faithful into darkness and away from what they define as the one true faith.



Image by [archer10 \(Dennis\)](#)

***But religion doesn't own the rights to the miraculous nor science the monopoly on knowledge and understanding***, if science has the ability to provide us with the knowledge of how a thing works, then it's the responsibility of all spiritual teachings including Reiki, to provide us with the understanding as to why that knowledge should be used for the good of mankind. Yet history provides chilling proof of the dangers when either is allowed to go unchecked. Religion has in the past assumed the role of dark inquisitor and self proclaimed custodians of mans soul, and science has unleashed powers so great it has the potential to become the destroyer of worlds.

Every age brings with it its own level of understanding that defines the lessons to be learnt and the sometimes '*miraculous*' event that may emerge to first and foremost educate and re-direct our thought processes and in doing so raise our level of knowledge and understanding. As the student must eventually take personal responsibility for their own learning so mankind must ultimately take responsibility for its own development through the exercise of its free will, which is sacrosanct. If the aim of a miracle is to educate people to the power of attention and intention then it makes sense that the age and the environment provide the backdrop necessary against which the miracle will appear both relevant and meaningful to those who witness the event.

Feeding the multitude with loaves and fishes was both relevant and appropriate, as well as being spiritually symbolic to those present. The staple food of the day was used to feed the physical body, coupled with the lesson that mans soul can only be fed and sustained by spiritual energy. When expressed through the acquisition and application of knowledge and understanding their thoughts and beliefs (attention and intention) can become manifest in the physical world. The teacher Jesus pulling loaves and

fishes from a basket was in context to the time, place and needs of those present yet the infinite and timeless higher power that created this particular miracle could just as easily have produced the equivalent number of pre-packed frozen ready meals that we in this day and age know so well. Whilst the miracle in its self would have been just as impressive the content would have been meaningless and served no purpose other than to confuse those present and detract from the underlying message and the reason for the lesson in the first place.

We are told that miracles in the accepted sense contradict the accepted laws of physics. Quantum physics also tells us that our thoughts and beliefs define our reality and that the observer affects the way in which the observed behaves and reacts, so is it possible that the laws of physics as we understand them are simply responding to our limited level of awareness, knowledge and understanding, the way we express those laws through our attention and intention and the perceived 'reality' this creates. If we can suspend our disbelief for a moment in the stereotypical miracle and think outside the box and in doing so consider the possibility that miracles whatever their presentation, are nothing more than another interpretation and demonstration of the laws of physics, a lesson to be taught in order to correct our misplaced thought processes. An event designed to re-direct our attention and intention, an expression in real time of a reality that stems from a higher level of awareness, a much higher level of knowledge and understanding, that if and when understood can become a technology to aid the further development of mankind.

Change is inevitable but development is always optional and as such requires a shift in our awareness, knowledge and understanding. Healing was once the sole jurisdiction of the church until the emergence of the medical professions, which then began to replace religion, myths and superstition as to the causes and cures of illnesses and disease. The medical breakthroughs of the last hundred years are no less miraculous when put into context and we consider what has been achieved with our limited knowledge and understanding, and the quantum leap that has brought us this point in our development as a species.

Yet in many ways medical science has turned full circle; where once the medical profession were the sole guardians of healing we are now told that as individuals it's we who must take responsibility for our health and wellbeing,

that our duty of care must take precedent over prescriptive care, and to paraphrase the old saying we are now advised 'individual heal thy self'. This as we know is one of the major precepts of Reiki. The only person we can ever heal is ourselves and this happens when we raise our level of awareness and achieve a greater knowledge and understanding to what action is required on our part in order that the 'new reality' of health and wellbeing can manifest itself in our lives. This is the miracle of truth demonstrated.

Contrary to popular belief miracles are non-denominational; they do not require religion or a religious belief to exist or manifest, their purpose is to educate and enlighten and not to convert to any ideology other than that of knowledge and understanding which stands outside of all faiths and belief systems. They are simply an expression of a higher consciousness, a higher level of knowledge and understanding, a new truth demonstrated free from the religious dogma that is always man made, weighted towards control and at odds with spiritual freedom. Miracles are time and age specific; the loaves and fishes relevant to their time have given way to the development of vaccines and the creation of stem cell technology that are no less miraculous and much more relevant to present day living. Those who say this is man trying to play God are usually those who claim authority to speak on God's behalf, and it could be said trying to claw back and reclaim control and authority over man's progress and development. Evidence if ever it was needed that the conflict between religion and science continues unabated, albeit now as a war of attrition.

***Reiki holds the ground between religion and science***; religion has neither time nor place for it or the spiritual freethinking that it promotes, and science sees no evidence that it exists beyond a misplaced belief and a placebo effect that it creates. Reiki practitioners know it exists and works; what started out as a desire to learn was transformed from a belief to experienced based knowledge. The hard part, the understanding of the Reiki process is a work in progress for us all, for even the most gifted Reiki teacher or practitioner can't in all honesty provide the definitive explanation as to how Reiki works or the source of the infinite consciousness that we have labeled Reiki and others have called their Gods. What is certain is that knowledge and understanding, the stuff of miracles is intrinsic to all healing and what greater miracle than the expansion of our awareness through truth demonstrated.

A 'miracle' that does not educate or provided us with the key to the knowledge and understanding that will raise our awareness and aid personal spiritual development is nothing more than a demonstration of power that does not acknowledge the sanctity of our freewill. Any power that would remove an illness without first educating us to its underlying cause and action required on our part to ensure our health and well being was maintained does us the greatest disservice and simply perpetuates the myth that we are powerless with no personal responsibility for our health and wellbeing and our fate lies in the lap of the Gods be they religious or of our own making, or worse still in the hands of those who would have us believe speak on their behalf.

Knowledge and understanding brings with it the realisation that we don't need anyone to speak on our behalf, as part of creation we can never be separated from the life force that created us. We are because it is; It can't be earned through prayers, supplication, tithing or good deeds, it is our birthright and we simply have to accept it into our lives or at least be willing to be guided towards the light that is knowledge and understanding. Intelligence that knows no barriers or boundaries, it is formless and free flowing and as such can't be owned or controlled, nor does it conform to any race creed, colour faith or belief system. It is universal in both name and nature and in many ways the labels we place upon it be it religious or Reiki are our limited response to its power and supremacy.

***The greatest power combines both knowledge and understanding;*** it's measured and considerate in all that it does, it's educational yet exerts the greatest self control over its own use. As Reiki practitioners we are educators first and foremost; in helping to heal ourselves through the acquisition and application of knowledge and understanding we are provided with the opportunity to learn the lessons necessary to help others heal themselves and with the realisation that our role is one of facilitator another tiny miracle is created.

## The Healing Power of Happiness

A major precept of Reiki is that the only person we can heal is ourselves. This is achieved through a change in perception and through the acquisition and application of knowledge and understanding. Without it there can be no healing, be it of mind, body or spirit. In healing oneself we are given the opportunity to learn the lessons necessary that enable us to help others heal themselves. In truth every Reiki practitioner is a facilitator of knowledge and understanding regardless of the degree of expertise they have achieved, for self-healing is much more about changing our perception than changing a physical condition, for one is a prerequisite for the other. As co-creators we give meaning to the experiences we live through this is why there is no standard response to any given situation or experience, people feel and deal with things differently and a change in perception leads to a change of values and a growing understanding of what's happening and why.

The healing process may still be physically or emotionally painful but it becomes a pain with purpose and meaning as through this change in perspective we recognise it for what it is, working through it in order that it can be released and let go. On this personal journey fear and regret are often our travelling companions. Regret is the one who is always lagging behind; it tries to get us to turn back, to turn around and focus on the past. It constantly reminds us of whom and what we once were, regret like a scornful parent is ever dismissive of what we have achieved, how far we have travelled, the changes we have made and the person we have become. Regret tells us that the success and happiness we seek have to be earned and we do not deserve it because of who we are and the mistakes we have made. Fear unrestrained runs ahead of us, it lays in wait ready to jump out and sabotage our progress when we least expect it. Fear creates the illusion of barriers where none exist and leads us to believe that our path is fraught with hazards and pitfalls, with every shadow concealing dangers ready to bring any progress to a premature end.

Happiness can only be experienced in the moment; the present moment, for this is all the time we have, but if we continually focus on the past or the future we deny ourselves the opportunity to create the happiness we desire in the here and now. Problems arise when we link our happiness to the achievement of goals instead of focusing on the creation of happiness itself. In doing so we convince ourselves that happiness is the result or by-product of an

external experience instead of an internal creative process. Happiness is a state of mind; a thought process that elicits an emotional response which then creates a physical sensation and ultimately an external experience. Through the power of our thoughts our psychology becomes our biology and directly affects our health and well being. Every thought will find a way to express itself; thoughts that if sustained will go on to create our beliefs and eventually the reality we must experience.

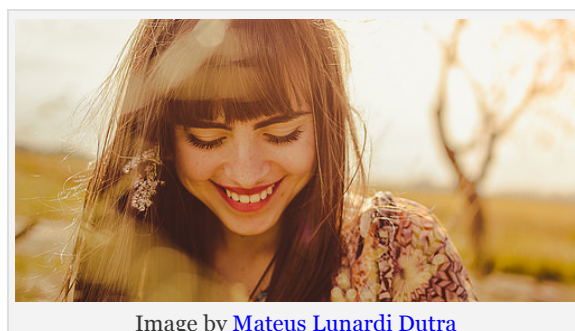


Image by [Mateus Lunardi Dutra](#)

When happiness is linked to attainment we are sending out the message that we can't be happy in the here and now, in the present moment because our happiness has to be earned and will only be achievable if we are talented, able gifted or worthy enough to receive it. All of these thoughts are negative based self-judgements that promote the idea that happiness is '*out there*' somewhere waiting to be discovered, instead of an internal experience waiting to be created. By attaching happiness to the acquisition of things or the achievement of goals we are saying that our happiness has to be put on hold until the achievement of those goals brings about the happiness and sense of achievement we desire. Any delay or even failure to achieve those goals can result in disappointment and a sense of failure which can then trigger feelings of inadequacy low self esteem and in some extreme cases the onset of depression, and over time illness and disease through the suppression of our immune system.

Many people already know from personal experience that getting upset or angry can raise their blood pressure and some have found to their cost that if anger or aggression has become their 'default response' their immune system is suppressed to such an extent it can over time, result in the onset of ill health, heart disease and strokes. If negative thoughts and emotions have an adverse affect on our health and wellbeing then positive thoughts and emotions such as joy and happiness can provide a measurable antidote that effectively boosts our immune system, lowers our blood pressure and drastically reduces the risk for cardiovascular disease. Our thoughts and the



emotions they create have far reaching consequences; our gene pool, our DNA the very fabric of our being is influenced, enhanced or adversely affected when our psychology becomes our biology through the quality of our thoughts and the attitudes and beliefs they create.

While the adverse effects of negative thoughts and emotions are well documented there are a growing number of studies that now confirm that **success doesn't lead to happiness, happiness actually leads to success** and has measurable benefits to our health and wellbeing. Pioneering work in this field of medicine provides growing evidence that when people who are in a distressed state of mind are able to create or induce a feeling of, contentment, joy or happiness it has a positive and measurable effect to their health and wellbeing and leads to amongst other things a quicker recovery of normal heart function. It is also noted that the simple act of smiling also has the power to lower blood pressure and induce a more rapid heart rate recovery.

So while some say there is no evidence to show that Reiki works other studies have shown that something as simple as a compassionate or loving touch has a measureable positive life affirming effect, so maybe it's now time to re-evaluate the evidence available to us or simply change our perception of what Reiki is and the way it works.

When we say that Reiki helps us to heal ourselves we are using a very broad brushstroke generalisation that does little to explain the 'healing' processes involved. Knowledge and understanding of the benefits of happiness and other positive based thoughts can change our perceptions and take healing out the realms of the mystical and miraculous and help make it a technology that can be understood and then used by everyone to enhance their health and wellbeing. Happiness and positive induced emotions not only boost our immune system but also *undo* the effects of stress and anxiety, therefore not only improving quality of life but also protecting our health and wellbeing, they enhance nearly every facet of our being, including work performance, health, marriage, friendship, creativity, confidence and energy.

It has to be said that happiness is no magic bullet, but it's clear that it lengthens the odds of getting disease or dying young and while happiness might not by itself prevent or cure disease there is no doubt that positive emotions and enjoyment of life contribute to better health and a longer lifespan. Current health advice and guidance focuses on avoiding obesity,

eating a balanced healthy diet, not smoking and getting plenty of exercise. With the change in our perception of what contributes to a healthy lifestyle may be its time to add being happy and avoiding chronic anger to this list.

Martin Seligman, the father of Positive Psychology wrote in his book Authentic Happiness ***‘The best therapists do not merely heal damage; they help people identify and build their strengths and their virtues, the strengths and virtues which function to buffer against misfortune and against the psychological disorders, that may be the key to building resilience’*** and ultimately maintaining long term health and wellbeing.

As Reiki practitioners we have a responsibility and a duty of care to empower people to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing when it's right and appropriate for them to do so and healing should never be shrouded in mystery or hidden by rituals and tradition. Healing is more about education than it is about changing a physical condition for without knowledge and understanding there is nothing to stop illness manifesting as fear and ignorance provides the ideal conditions for all manner of ailments, illnesses and diseases to take root and grow. Healing like any concept spiritual or otherwise must transcend theoretical discussion and become a real life experience to be lived and learnt from. Positive thoughts and the emotions they create have the power to transform, happiness as part of that process has the ability to improve our quality of life, protect our health and wellbeing and enhance many aspects of our lives including work, health, relationships, creativity, and self confidence, whilst generally raising our energy levels. All of which is available to us without prescription, and it falls squarely within the realms of healing one self, which is after all what Reiki is asking us to do.



*Phillip Hawkins is a practicing psychic medium. He has been practicing Reiki since 1999 and, and he's been a Reiki teacher since 2000. In addition to teaching, when time allows he gives talks and leads discussion groups on the above topics. Applying Reiki on a daily basis has transformed his life and continues to do so as each day brings with it a new and deeper understanding of Reiki and of life. Phillip would like the opportunity to share that knowledge experience with others in an open minded and non-judgemental way in a Reiki Rays 'community of enquiry'.*