



# Teaching Reiki

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Not everyone is a born teacher; however, teaching is a skill that can be developed. I believe that all Reiki practitioners have the potential to teach. Much like the acorn that grows into the mighty oak tree, the seed of the teacher is within. The decision to water and nourish that seed is the journey of the Reiki Master Teacher.

We often say that teaching Reiki is the Reiki Master's classroom, but let us go back further to see where it essentially begins.

We actually begin teaching about Reiki after attending our first Reiki class. We are so excited about this new skill, the new energy, and our own personal growth, that we want to share it with the world. We give Reiki to as many people as we can so they can experience it. We talk about it to anyone who will listen, and we explain what it is and how it works. In essence, we have begun teaching! Later on, when people begin to notice the changes in us, we teach by example a different way of living through Reiki—a way based on compassion, higher wisdom and knowing.

energy, the more I trusted where to place my hands next. The hand positions became a framework for my sessions but not the focus. Following the energy led me to the places where Reiki was most needed and could most benefit the person.

Then I came to believe that Reiki is an energy source in and of itself. It is by definition, spiritually guided life force energy, which is different than the life force energy that is found in food, plants, etc. It is a healing energy that connects with the spirit of the recipient and higher wisdom, thus guiding it to where it is most needed.

I later realized that Reiki is also a personal empowerment tool. The practice of Reiki strengthened my personal chi or life force, and the Reiki Ideals helped me to become the person I was meant to be. The Reiki Ideals became my guide for everyday life as well as a personal philosophy. Taking one ideal at a time and reflecting on it on a daily basis helped me to heal issues in my life and to deepen my spiritual understanding. As the years passed and my Reiki evolved, I came to understand Reiki as a spiritual path. What started out as a simple healing tech-

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The decision to teach in a more formal way is most often a joyous one. Friends, family and potential students come to us asking, "When are you going to teach me Reiki?" That is a nudge from the Universe that it is time.

## Laying the foundation

Before you begin to teach, it is important to explore what one believes about Reiki. This lays the foundation for who, what and how one will teach. It is important to take the time to develop this understanding because it then becomes a basic belief system, a personal philosophy of Reiki and healing and teaching.

When I first studied Reiki, I believed that Reiki was simply a gentle hands-on (or off) technique that brought about deep relaxation and an enhancement of the body's innate ability to heal itself. I gave Reiki whenever I could and was always astounded by the deep relaxation, the deep sense of peace, and the powerful healings that occurred. The more I practiced the hand positions the more I felt the energy. The more I felt the

unique led me to a stronger faith, more connection to my higher power, and a belief system that focused on compassion and connection with higher intelligence.

One of my favorite quotes that describes what I believe about Reiki comes from Kahlil Gibran's, *The Prophet*: "And think not that you can direct the course of love, for love, if it finds you worthy, directs your course..."<sup>1</sup> I like to substitute the word "Reiki" for love and it becomes..."And think not that you can direct the course of Reiki, for Reiki, if it finds you worthy, directs your course."

I believe that Reiki finds us. Once we answer the call, it evokes in us a sense of self or a knowing of something more that has lain dormant within us until then. Those of us who have truly embraced it know that Reiki directs our journey and our life. It puts us where we are supposed to be. That is how we find our bliss, our joy, and our passion.

This is what I have come to know about the nature of Reiki. I hope my thoughts will be helpful to you in forming your own philosophy.

## Why teach?

### Sharing what we have learned

During the 15 years that I have been practicing Reiki, I have seen many wondrous things. I have seen people grow personally and professionally; I have seen many healings; and I have come to know how protected and blessed my life has been since I began my Reiki journey. I wish that for all my students, friends, and family as well.

I once had a head nurse of a critical care unit take my Reiki classes. She was under so much stress professionally and personally that she sought Reiki as a way to change her life. She opened to the energy beautifully and her perceptions about life and stress shifted immediately. Within a few weeks, several nurses on her unit called me to ask if I could teach them Reiki. They wanted what she had! The change in her was so dramatic that they wanted it for themselves as well.

I have shared Reiki with several family members, not teaching them in the way we do in a “formal” class setting but giving them the attunement and teaching them how to do some basic hands-on. They have seen me do Reiki over the years and have often received it as well, so they have a good idea of how it feels and what it is about.

I gave my Aunt Marge a Reiki I attunement in spring of 2000. She was in her 70's at the time. Little did I know what a gift it would be! In April 2001, her daughter Lynn was diagnosed with lung cancer. She was 47 years of age at the time with a young daughter and devoted husband. When she was diagnosed, Aunt Marge would go upstate and stay at Lynn's as much as she could. Every night she gave her a back rub. This became their nightly ritual and Lynne only let her mom give her those special back rubs, which often helped her fall into sleep. When Lynn passed in September, Aunt Marge was beside herself with grief. She had wanted to do more but felt helpless. About a year after Lynn died, Aunt Marge and I were talking. To help ease her pain, I said, “Why do you suppose she only let you rub her back?” I then reminded her that she was giving Lynn Reiki all that time! There is no greater love than a parent for a child and to have Reiki flowing at the same time enhanced that mother's loving touch!

If you ask any Reiki Master, they will probably tell you that the most important reason they teach is because they want others to know and experience the joy and the healings that they have experienced in their use of Reiki.

### Empowering others to be all that they can be

People often feel helpless against life's many challenges. They do not have the tools to help them or guide them through life in a compassionate and mindful way. Reiki is a tool that helps those who embrace it claim their power, realize their potential, and learn to trust in the Divine Mind and Divine Plan. Reiki helps one to feel connected to Source energy and in that connection, know that they are guided and protected. Through the strength of that belief, they begin to become who they were always meant to be.

Masters want to teach Reiki because they want to “light the fire” that already exists within each individual. In *The Courage to Teach*, Parker Palmer states, “to educate is to guide students on an inner journey toward more truthful ways of seeing and being in the world.”

I often tell my students after a Reiki I class that once you go through that door (opening to Reiki energy), there is so much more to life. Everyday events, things that we take for granted, often become more meaningful because we are more aware and present. Reiki opens you to the world of healing, the world of energy, and the world of consciousness or awareness. Those that embrace the Reiki Ideals find that they are a tool for everyday living. The Reiki Ideals help one to live the aware life, to be present in the moment, and to let go of attachments to how things should be. They help one open to the rhythm and flow of life. They are a guide for living with compassion.

### Decreasing suffering in the world

Reiki is all about healing and decreasing the suffering of the world. Suffering is not limited to physical pain, and often includes mental, emotional or spiritual suffering. I often tell my students that Reiki may not be their full time job; the plan may be for them to bring Reiki to their workplace, to “bloom where they are planted.” We live in a hectic and stressful world and the use of Reiki in the workplace has changed many work settings. One of my students in New Jersey works at a professional ballet company and gives many of the dancers Reiki before a performance or after an injury.

I know of many hospitals that have incorporated Reiki into patient care. (See [www.reikiinhospitals.org](http://www.reikiinhospitals.org)). It is not uncommon to find Reiki being offered to those undergoing cancer treatments, surgery, or pain management. You may also find Health care professionals giving their peers Reiki before meetings, at times of stress and on many other occasions.

Many practitioners participate in Reiki outreach programs in which they talk about Reiki and provide hands-on time for participants. These programs are offered at health fairs, for cancer survivors' groups, people with diabetes or chronic illnesses, nurse's day observances, and psychiatric hospitals, to name a few. The intent is to spread the word about Reiki and to bring relaxation and healing to those who attend.

Hospice programs incorporate Reiki to ease pain and assist a person's transition. Mothers with special needs children give themselves as well as their children Reiki. Occupational therapists, physical therapists, massage therapists and many others who work through touch use Reiki to enhance their sessions.

Studying Reiki opens the heart to compassion and fosters the desire to ease the challenges of everyday life for others.

## As you begin your teaching journey ask yourself:

### 1) What do I believe about Reiki?

Take what feels valuable and true from your teachers, and through your own practice and experiences decide what feels

true for you. Read, think, meditate and experience what you can about Reiki to help you come to your own conclusions and formulate your own personal philosophy.

It is important to teach what you believe because that is your truth. Moreover, to be an authentic teacher, you need to know what you believe. If you have no idea what Reiki really is, or what it is not, then you are not ready to teach. For this reason, as a general guideline, I recommend waiting one year after taking Reiki I and II before taking a Master Level class, so that you have time to gain experience giving treatments before reaching the teaching level.

Note: Those that have been working with energy or have experience with other healing modalities may not need to practice as long. It is advisable to speak with your Master teacher before you decide.

## 2) Why do I want to teach?

This is a personal question and another important one on your journey. This question demands an honest answer and will shape your future as well as your practice.

## Developing your teaching skills

Now that you have begun to develop your own personal philosophy and foundation for teaching Reiki, here are a few ways to continue to develop your teaching skills.

1. Practice, practice, practice. Reiki energy is the best teacher. Get as much experience as you can giving Reiki so you come to understand the energy. See how it is different for each person. Keep notes about your sessions and the client's reaction.
2. Start a Reiki share/circle. This will give you the experience of guiding others. Then talk about the experiences with the other participants. Learn from each other.
3. Attend other Reiki Teacher's circles/shares. Observe how they are run. Listen to what they share with their students. Ask questions.
4. Read books about Reiki. Ask other practitioners for their favorite books/authors. Decide what information feels right to you and fits with your beliefs about Reiki.
5. Keep a journal of your Reiki experiences. This will help you develop Reiki "stories" that you can share with your students.
6. Develop a mentorship with your Reiki teacher. Ask for guidance and support.
7. Review Reiki I and II with your teacher or another teacher if you wish to see how other schools of Reiki teach. Review the class from a teaching perspective.
8. Find other Reiki Masters to share with. Attend their circles. Ask questions.
9. Give talks to groups about Reiki. Have a Reiki day or night. Talk about Reiki and invite other practitioners to give hands-on mini-sessions. This will help you overcome

your anxiety about talking in front of a group. There are many self-help or health related support groups that are always looking for speakers. Contact them and arrange for a Reiki talk and demo night. People are always happy to receive Reiki and it gets you out in the public eye.

## One last note to consider:

### Teach what you love about Reiki

When you teach, what people really get from you is your passion. Anyone can read a book about Reiki, watch a DVD, or listen to a CD about Reiki. That might spark their interest or get them excited about it. However, when they hear you talk about Reiki, they feel your joy and your passion and that is what really attracts them to the subject.

Think about a favorite subject or class that you took in the past. Think about the teacher? Did he or she love the subject and convey or demonstrate that love to you? Did you enjoy being in their presence and get excited about the material because of who they were and what they shared with you about it? Now answer the question, "Did you enjoy it because of the material or the teacher? Or both?"

Decide what you love about Reiki and then focus on that when you teach. If you do not feel enthusiasm and passion when you talk about or give Reiki, then the way of the teacher may not be for you. You need to love and enjoy your subject to be an authentic and effective teacher.

This process of self-exploration is an important step as you begin the journey of the Reiki Master Teacher. Take your time to explore these issues. Come to understand what you believe about Reiki. Embrace what you love about Reiki. Read and learn whatever you can. All of this will help you to explore what type of teacher you want to be and what material you will include. Then you are ready for the next step—putting the class together.



Next issue: Part II: developing your class.

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## References

- <sup>1</sup> Kahlil Gibran, *The Prophet* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1923), p. 13.
- <sup>2</sup> Parker J. Palmer, *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life* (California: Jossey-Bass, A Wiley Company, 1998), p. 6.