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Reiki 101-The Essentials of Reiki

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Introduction

Reiki has become an increasingly popular complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) as more and more studies, and now-healthy people, have shown its healing effects upon the body. There are many forms of CAM now used in the West that came from the East or traditional forms of medication, such as Ayurvedic medicine in India and Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) from China.

If you've always wondered what reiki is, how to pronounce it, and how it can be a useful CAM to enhance your health, this guide will teach you the basics about reiki and its power to heal. Let's get started with how to pronounce it, and the basic principles behind its effectiveness.

Chapter 1 - What is Reiki?

Reiki, pronounced RAY-key, is a form of healing using the energy within the body. It has its origins in Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), which has been practiced for more than 5,000 years and is well-documented. Reiki is a relatively new form of TCM, which was developed in the late 1800s in Japan.

Reiki is a form of qi (chi or ki, all pronounced CHEE) work, or energy work. Rei means soul or spirit. Qi means vital force or life energy. Therefore, the goal of reiki is to enhance spirit and energy, and through these means, heal body, mind and spirit.

The main point of reiki is similar to 'hands on healing', though you don't have to touch in order to heal. The theory is that a person's palms can emit positive healing energy. The energy from the hands can boost energy, move it, or free trapped energy. The palms can also restore a person's aura or energy field, improving the health of mind, body and spirit.

There are several levels to reiki. Let's look at this in the next chapter.

Chapter 2 - The Levels Of Reiki

There are 3 levels of reiki, 1, 2 and Master. There are levels of Master in certain forms of reiki, but each level will give you a general idea of the amount of study and skill involved.

Reiki was founded by Japanese Buddhist Mikao Usui, who transmitted his teachings to more than 2,000 students in his lifetime. These teachings are supposed to be passed down to other students through a qualified reiki master through a ceremony known as attunement, similar to Buddhist empowerments.

As the word empowerment suggests, a person can develop certain powers or skills through receiving teachings, practicing them, and deepening one's own study over time. The empowerment or attunement is not the end of the journey, but the start of one.

Therefore, starting a reiki practice requires some knowledge and an attunement. Level 1 is more than enough to start with if you wish to heal yourself. Level 2 practitioners are able to start doing energy work with others. Some are said to have the ability to heal others from a distance. This is commonly referred to as distance healing.

The level of Master signals that the practitioner is now thoroughly trained and possesses the necessary knowledge and skill to teach reiki and offer attunements for the practice of reiki. All practitioners should be able to trace back what is termed their lineage, the line of teachers back to Usui.

That is, they should be able to list their teacher, their teacher's teacher and so on, from whom their knowledge was acquired. Tracing the lineage for reiki, as with other forms of Buddhist teachings, shows that they have received authentic instruction directly from someone who has studied the subject deeply.

But in case you're worried about reiki being a religious practice of some sort, and therefore unChristian, it might be helpful to think of Buddhism not as a religion, but the science of the mind.

The goal of Buddhism is to achieve nirvana. Nirvana is not a physical place like heaven. Rather, it is a state of mind that is always calm and peaceful no matter what circumstances you encounter. It is a state of mind in which you are completely free of suffering. If this sounds like a great way to live your life, reiki can help.

A healthy body can create a healthy mind, and vice versa. Understanding the qi, the life force within your body, can help you harness it in order to benefit yourself and others.

To start doing reiki yourself, you need to find a reiki master. Once you've received the attunement, you can work on your own health and healing. We will discuss how to find a reiki master a bit later in this guide. For now, let's move on to what's involved in the practice of reiki.

Chapter 3 - How To Get Started With Reiki

Once you've received an attunement from a reiki master, that's when the real learning begins. What can you expect from a reiki session? The reiki practitioner typically places his or her hands above the individual needing the healing, or on their body if they need more intense healing. The healing energy is then passed into the patient's body to boost or unblock energy and thus to enhance the natural healing processes with the body.

All of the energy transferred by the practitioner to the patient needs to be positive, so there are certain requirements when it comes to practicing reiki. The first is that the body must be clean and free of jewelry. The patient should practice the same.

Living a pure life free from bad foods, drugs, alcohol and tobacco will obviously also enhance health and healing energy.

In addition, a positive and peaceful state of mind helps both the practitioner and the recipient. A meditative state can help channel the energy in a more focused way. A simple meditation to try is a breathing one.

Take long deep breaths. Feel your whole abdomen and rib cage expand as you do so. After 3 breaths in and out, start with the in breath, breathe out, and count that as a round of 1. Try to count all the way up to 10 without thinking about anything other than the breath. This can be more difficult than you imagine, but even getting to 2 can be a great victory over your noisy mind.

Some people believe the Japanese reiki is more focused and powerful, and able to target specific areas that need healing. The more Western reiki style generally treats the whole body. The Japanese style generally favors more meditation and focuses on deeper healing through the use of the meridians, the 14 energy centers of the body explained in TCM. Some reiki practitioners will count 12 meridians, not 14.

Others will use the chakras, 7 special energy centers in the body. Learning where the meridians and the chakras are will be two of your first steps to self-healing.

The meridians are important in Japanese style reiki because they are also believed to correspond with the major organs of the body. Reiki has the general goal of increasing, balancing and unblocking energy, but it can also go deeper to bring the organs back into balance.

For example, if your liver isn't function properly, this can cause a range of health issues which will manifest in various ways, both physically and emotionally. A slow liver can make you very cranky and short-tempered. By contrast, an over-active liver can make you sad and prone to unexplained crying spells. Concentrating on the meridians that balance organs like the liver can restore health to body, mind and spirit.



The chakras

The chakras are thought to house certain forms of energy. If we picture white light, we know that it is made of the seven colors of the rainbow. If we then image our qi as a powerful, healing white light, we can see that it too would be made up of 7 different kinds of energy.

The 7 chakras, their type of energy, and their colors are as follows, starting from the bottom and working your way up to the top of the head:

The Root Chakra-red

It is located around the area of your anus and its energy is the desire for safety, stability, and all important needs being met, such as food, water and shelter.

The Sex Chakra-orange

This is the seat of procreative and reproductive energy.

The Solar Plexus Chakra-yellow

Think of solar, like the sun. The word plexus means network. It is in the middle of your body, at the area where your ribs separate. This is the seat of willpower and a great deal of energy. The secret is to move the energy from the lower chakras to here, and then from here to the upper chakras, to stay balanced and fulfilled.

Heart Chakra-green

The heart chakra is in the center of your chest and is associated with love and compassion. A balanced chakra helps with a harmonious life and connects your body, mind and spirit.

Throat Chakra-blue

This is located at your throat and controls communication and connection with others. It allows you to speak your deepest truths and be understood by others, and well as giving you the ability to understand them.

Third Eye-indigo (purplish blue)

Located between your eyebrows, this is the center of your intuition and helps you perceive the world around you with greater clarity.

The Crown Chakra-purple and sometimes white

This is located at the top of your head and is an energy center that connects with all your chakras within, and connects with the universe outside.

If you have trouble remembering the colors, think of a rainbow. You can also recall the colors of the rainbow with the help of a memory aid, the imaginary name of Roy G. Biv:

- Red

- Orange
- Yellow
- Green
- Blue
- Indigo
- Violet

These colors are also important in relation to the auras. The colors of the auras are similar to the colors of the chakras in terms of what they mean. In addition, there can be gold, silver, black, white, brown and pink. The auras can also be bright in tone, or dark. A reiki practitioner can generally strengthen, balance and heal auras, especially if they are dark, or if they have holes in them.

Our aura is affected by all the people around us. If you've ever met someone who just seems to drain the energy from a room, or makes you feel exhausted every time you have to deal with them, you will have an idea of how your aura can be affected. In some cases, it can even get holes in it, which means you're not able to stay healthy, well and in balance.

Western reiki tends to do a lot of aura and chakra work, but a truly integrated practice will work on both the meridians and organs, and on the aura and chakras.

The chakras are also important in relation to reiki because some practitioners report an increase in their third eye activity, that is, the seat of their intuition. We could describe this loosely as psychic sensitivity or abilities. If you prefer a less supernatural-sounding explanation, you could describe it as going with their gut or listening with their heart. That is, they feel better able to trust their instincts as a result of them feeling more balanced and grounded in relation to their energy.

It's like the difference between a light bulb and a laser. They both give off light. It is just a question of focus and concentration. A light bulb can illuminate an entire room. A laser can actually cut through solid materials.

The ability to harness one's positive energy translates to the ability to heal and be healed. People who don't want to go through Western style medical treatments that may have side effects sometimes report amazing results when they try reiki. Once you learn the basics, you can do it to yourself almost anywhere.

There are a range of hand movements that can help smooth out the aura and target trouble spots. A second set of hand movements is used to help heal others. Learning the hand movements will be key to treating yourself.

As with all CAM, there can be positive and negative effects. Let's look at the pros and cons of reiki in the next chapter.

Chapter 4 - The Pros And Cons Of Reiki

Many people who have tried reiki report good results, but like everything in life, there can be pros and cons.

The advantages of reiki include:

Greater health and healing

You will notice a wide range of health benefits, which we will list in the next chapter.

Greater peace of mind

If the body is in balance, the mind will be too. A meditative state is the best frame of mind to be in when trying to induce effective health and healing.

Feeling more refreshed and rejuvenated

Some people report feeling a great deal more energetic once they add reiki to their life.

Medicine-free

Many people report relief from a range of symptoms without having to take lots of medication. Those with arthritis, for example, report relief from their pain without the need for aspirin or other drugs.

Few side effects

Because reiki is non-invasive and does not involve taking medicines or herbs, there are few risks of side effects.

A great complementary therapy

Because no drugs are involved and there are few side effects, reiki can be used along with many other healing methods, including mainstream Western ones.

Great for the entire family

Both people and pets have been shown to gain relief through reiki. If you have an elderly animal, for example, you might be amazed at how well they will start to feel with just a little reiki healing.

Encourages clean living

The best results are gained through positive energy, which can be generated through clean and healthy living. Reiki can transform your life from the inside out, and vice versa.

Fun and interesting

Reiki is a serious healing modality, but it can be fascinating and fun to study.

A great way to help yourself and others

You can use reiki on yourself, and on others. If you're looking for ways to help others more, for example, to add to your abilities as a caregiver, reiki could be perfect for you.

The disadvantages of reiki include:

Needing to find a qualified reiki master

There may not be one if you live in a rural area or small town.

It takes time and effort to learn

There won't be any overnight cures. Reiki can take some time to learn. In fact, it is a lifetime process for people who wish to master it. However, you should gain enough knowledge from your Level 1 studies to heal yourself any time you wish.

It requires some changes in lifestyle

The best way to describe the lifestyle for the most effective reiki healing is clean living. That is, no foods and other products like toiletries that are full of chemicals. It means no smoking, drinking alcohol, taking drugs, including caffeine, and so on. Becoming vegetarian or vegan can also help. It also tends to mean avoiding jewelry and wearing natural fabrics.

A regular meditation practice

A regular meditation practice can balance body, mind and spirit, for better energy work, but it does take time and commitment.

A healthy body

Being a couch potato will mean sluggish energy. You need to get up and moving. Exercises like yoga, Kundalini yoga, or tai chi, can help get energy flowing so you can channel it for health and healing in yourself and others.

Steering clear of sweets

Too many carbs tend to throw off your energy and make you dehydrated.

Getting rid of toxins internally and externally

Staying hydrated is one of the best ways to free yourself from toxins. A juice fast before a big healing session can help increase the power of the positive energy. However, those with health issues such as diabetes may find this difficult.

A high standard of cleanliness

Keeping a high standard of personal hygiene that does not involve a lot of chemicals can also be a bit tricky if you tend to favor a lot of perfumes, hair color, make-up and so on. If you do have to use these items, try brands that are natural, organic and not tested on animals, such as items from the Body Shop, Sephora, Lush or Sabon. You can also find a range of them at a good health food store. Avoid anything with very heavy scent, unless you are aiming for certain aromatherapy effects as well, in which case, be sure the fragrance is natural, not chemical.

A high standard of cleanliness in the area where you practice

The location where you will do your own treatments should be neat and uncluttered, and kept very clean. If you're not a tidy person, this might be tough. Consider creating a sacred space for your treatments and meditation.

The expense

Learning reiki and adopting what we can term an organic lifestyle can be more expensive than your current lifestyle. On the other hand, what you save by not smoking cigarettes or drinking alcohol and indulging in other unhealthy pursuits can be invested in your healthier lifestyle and reiki studies.

Going into retreat

Some practitioners find the best way to manage balance and healing is to withdraw from all their regular activities and go into a self-imposed retreat. They steer clear of the TV, people who agitate them, and so on, in order to maintain a strong aura and positivity.

Meditation can help induce calm, peaceful states of mind to ensure the flow of energy, but the people in your life might not understand what you are spending your time doing, and why. They might also be upset that you seem to be avoiding them.

The good news is there's no need to wear weird clothes, bend yourself into a pretzel with yoga, or change yourself beyond all recognition. "Remain natural, while changing your aspiration." In other words, continue to do healthy things and don't act in any extreme way. The main changes you want to make in your life will be internal ones, so there's really no need to go live in a cave or starve yourself.

Reiki can be a wonderful healing modality if you're prepared to put in the time and effort. So, what medical conditions and health issues can it help with? Let's look at this in the next chapter.

Chapter 5 - The Health Benefits Of Reiki

There are a number of health benefits of reiki that are worth keeping in mind if you are looking for CAM that are will work well for your health issues, or those of a loved one. The main benefits that are well documented include:

- Promotes health and well-being
- Helps with pain management, such as the pain of arthritis, fibromyalgia and other rheumatic conditions
- Encourages mental clarity
- Releases stress and tension
- Relieves depression
- Reduces anxiety
- Aids in relaxation
- Improves sleep and the quality of sleep
- Soothes digestion
- Strengthens self-esteem and self-confidence
- Heightens self-awareness
- Gives a greater sense of intuition
- Offers support for substance abuse recovery
- Helps relieve symptoms during pregnancy
- Boosts the immune system
- Improves energy levels
- Increases mental clarity and focus
- Promotes a more positive outlook
- Improves relationships with others
- Promotes more harmonious life
- Encourages cleaner, healthier living
- Supports weight loss/weight control
- Relieve headaches/migraines
- Improves the sex life due to increased energy and well-being
- Improved circulation
- Promotes faster recovery after surgery

- Encourages more balanced life
- Relieves typical menopausal symptoms such as hot flashes and night sweats

New benefits are being revealed all the time as more research is done on the positive health effects of reiki, but this is a pretty impressive list to be getting on with if you are on the fence about trying reiki.

Now that you know about the benefits of reiki, you're probably eager to get started, but there are a few more important aspects of the practice it's useful to know in order to get the best results. One is the structure of each session and certain practices that can help prepare you for energy work and healing. Let's look at a typical reiki session in the next chapter.

Chapter 6 - A Typical Reiki Session

Reiki sessions usually last from 45 minutes to an hour. It will depend on your preference, what needs to be healed, how much time you have, and how much concentration you're able to maintain. As with most journeys, there is a beginning, middle and end.

The sessions should be given 3 days in a row at roughly the same time of the day if possible. The three sessions should be the start of a 21-day period, so you would not do another session for 18 days after the last one. You can meditate and do energy work if you wish, but not a full reiki session.

Let's look at how to prepare for and structure a session.

Starting the Treatment Session

There are a number of physical and mental preparations required before you start the healing process.

Physical preparations

Be sure the area you will be working in is neat, clean and comfortable. Avoid tight clothing. Remove shoes, glasses and jewelry. Wash your hands well. Lie down in a comfortable position.

Starting the Session

Mental Preparations

There are a number of mental practices that can create a good atmosphere for healing.

The Light Invocation

The first is to recite aloud or mentally the reiki Light Invocation:

I invoke the Light of life within;
I am a clear and perfect channel;
Light is my Guide;
I am what I say I am, and
I experience what I say I experience.

In this way, you are paying attention to your energy and creating positive energy.

Reciting this is also a great way to strengthen your aura.

In terms of understanding the practice of reiki and a life of what is termed mindfulness, you can also read or recite the 5 reiki principles.

The Reiki Principles

1. Just for today, I will let go of worry.
2. Just for today, I will let go of anger.
3. Just for today, I will give thanks for my many blessings.
4. Just for today, I will do my work honestly.
5. Just for today, I will be kind to my neighbors and all living beings.

Just for today helps you to be mindful, focusing on the here and now rather than events from the past or things you wish to happen in the future. (We will discuss mindfulness in more detail below.)

These 5 principles were derived from the poetry of the Japanese Emperor Meiji (1818-1912), and are seen as a way of inviting positivity and happiness into your life.

When doing the light invocation and/or principles, you can lie down, or do them sitting up in order to awaken the heart chakra. In this case, sit with your hands together in front of your chest as if praying, but press the knuckles of your thumbs into the center of the chest to activate the heart chakra.

Meditation

A third mental preparation to use is meditation. We have already outlined how to do a simple breathing meditation in a previous chapter. Depending on how much time you have, you can try to count to 3, 5, or 5. Remember, the whole point of the meditation is to not allow any thoughts to distract you.

Another useful meditation if you have been under a lot of stress or emotional upset is the clouds in the sky meditation. If you are experiencing any strong emotions, just think of them as fluffy white clouds floating past. A cloud does not have the power to destroy the sky. It also isn't permanent. It's here one moment and gone the next, just like our thoughts and emotions if we don't dwell on them and let them take up our attention.

Setting an Intention

Before you start the healing practice, you could set an intention, such as to get relief from your migraines, or dedicate your practice to a loved one going through a bad time, so that you will be sending out positive energy to them as well.

The Healing Part of the Session

There are 3 parts to this.

1. Smoothing out the aura
2. Enhancing well-being
3. Focusing on trouble spots

Let's discuss each of these briefly.

Smoothing out the aura

Starting from the top of the head, without touching, smooth the palms over the outline of the body from head to foot and then back up again. You can repeat this a couple of times until you feel things start to shift. If you are doing it to yourself, do the best you can to reach everything and make a complete outline.

Enhancing well-being

After the aura work, do each of the hand positions. Refer to the hand position charts when you are doing it on yourself. You may wish to display them on a nearby wall to remind yourself so you don't interrupt your session checking back and forth.

Focusing on trouble spots

If you have specific health goals, do each of the hand positions, but focus for longer periods of time on the trouble spots. If you are doing chakra work, take the time to balance each one and then move the energy where you seem to be stuck in your life, such as the throat chakra for better communication with others.

If someone is giving you the treatment, be sure to tell them your intention.

The Concluding Part of the Session

This is up to you. The main point is to feel calm and grounded at the end of the session. You can recite the reiki principles if you wish, especially if you did not do so at the start of the session.

You can also conclude with a meditation.

Once you have finished the session, relax a few moments, journal about your experiences, and then, when you feel ready, wash your hands again.

Cultivating mindfulness

Throughout your day, remember the reiki principles and be mindful of your actions. If you catch yourself worrying or getting angry, picture your energy flowing, not getting blocked or disrupted by strong emotion.

Mindfulness meditation can also be a moving meditation. When you are doing a task, concentrate on it like it is the most important thing in the world. Taste the food you eat, observe every movement and sensation involved in washing the dishes, and so on.

Mindfulness can also be described as 'living in the now'. Living in the now may sound like a New Age concept for hippies, but it can be one of the most powerful tools for living your best life once you start to practice it. We are human beings, not human 'doings', and yet most of us, especially in the West, are constantly chasing after what we believe to be 'success'.

Yet success is not a fixed concept. It is in the eye of the beholder. In the West, being a veterinarian, doctor or lawyer might be considered a sign of success, yet we know that there are many unhappy doctors. In fact, they have one of the highest suicide rates of any profession.

The drive to constantly do something makes us distracted and keeps us so focused on the daily grind that we have little time for relaxation, de-stressing, or self-development. We actually make ourselves ill in the drive for success, and yet, as most people with chronic illness or disability will tell you, being healthy is one of life's greatest gifts.

By being mindful throughout the day, you will bring a more positive healing energy to your reiki practice. You can meditate any time of the day or night to add to your calm, peaceful mind. Those who practice meditation regularly between their healing sessions report much greater results than those who don't meditate.

A healing schedule

Practitioners who want to make the most out of their sessions will practice 'clean eating' and perhaps even fast for 3 days prior to their calendared 3 days of session in order to gain more positive energy, and 3 days afterwards. Mark your dates down on a calendar to help keep track of the 21-day cycle.

Reiki as a practice is immensely rewarding. It is up to you to come up with a routine you will enjoy and gain benefit from. There is also enough variety in the start and end of the sessions for you to keep things interesting as you travel along this healing path.

The most important part of reiki is mastering the healing hand positions. Let's look at these in the next chapter.

Chapter 7 - The Reiki Hand Positions For Healing Yourself

Level 1 reiki practitioners who receive an energy attunement will then be able to learn the hand positions to use if they wish to treat themselves.

The positions are categorized as being related to:

- Head (H)
- Body (B)
- Back, (Ba) and
- Legs and feet (L)

Each of the positions has a code and treats a certain area or illness. When doing the hand positions, just hover with your palms, or rest your hands in each position. NEVER press down hard, especially in relation to eyes and ears.

Head positions

H1

Put your hands together covering the eyes.

Treats cold, flu, sinus issues, hormone imbalances and the immune system. Also tunes the Third Eye chakra of intuition that sits between your brows.

H2

Wrists together with the right and left palms over the temples.

Treats: Stress, tiredness, headache, nerves, mental and emotional problems, concentration.

H3

Hands at the side of the head, slightly cupped over the ears.

Treats: Ear, nose and throat problems, colds, balance, hearing.

H4

Put your hands together like a bowl to cup the back of your head and neck.

Treats: Stress, worry, headache, colds, neck and back problems.

Body positions

B1

Hold the hands and fingers so they form a "tent" above the throat. Don't touch the throat, as this gives a very unpleasant choking sensation.

Treats: The throat chakra, seat of communication and truth. Helps with throat and thyroid gland issues and the ability to express yourself clearly.

B2

Hold the hands over the collarbone and breastbone, hands resting on shoulders, fingers pointing to the back.

Treats: Lungs, immune system, throat. Good for those with asthma and allergies.

B3

Place your hands over you breasts/pecs.

Treats the heart chakra, so opens you up to love and compassion. Also good for, lungs, asthma, allergies, circulation problems, heart issues, and emotional problems.

B4

Solar plexus position, center of the rib cage, on the abdomen.

Treats third chakra of willpower and boosts lungs, pancreas, liver, spleen, and gallbladder. Aids with digestive problems, stress, worry, nervousness and problems with self-control.

B5

Place the hands in the middle of the stomach area, approximately around the navel.

Treats: Second chakra, the sex chakra. Also helps with digestion, liver, spleen, gallbladder, kidneys, and adrenal glands above the kidneys. Boosts happiness.

B6

Hands by the pubic bone, with the hands angled to follow the seam of your legs.

Treats chakras 1 and 2, and helps with sex and urinary problems, energy and weight problems.

Back

BA3

Hands approximately at the middle of the back above the kidneys.
Treats: Stress, allergies, relationship problems.

BA4

Place hands on the lower back, below the waist.
Treats: Chakra 1, pelvic area, reproductive system, and relationship and emotional problems.

Legs and feet

L1

Kneecaps, place one hand above the kneecap and one hand under the knee. Treat each knee separately for 3 to 10 seconds.

Treats: Knee injuries, headache, stiffness in the neck and energy blockage in the lower body. Pay attention to them if you are overweight.

L2

Ankles, do each one separately. Hold your hands in the position most comfortable for you. Pay special attention to this area if you are prone to sprains or balance issues.

Treats ankles, energy blockages, problems with neck, throat, thyroid gland, lymphatic system, and problems in the pelvic area.

L3

Feet. Treat each one separately. One hand should cover the sole of the foot, while the other should hold it in the most comfortable position for you, such as the tops of the feet or toes.

Treats: A wide range of ailments. This is because the feet contain reflex zones for all the organs in the body. All 7 chakras and 14 primary meridians will be treated. Pay attention to the heels, the backs of the heels, and the Achilles tendons as well as soles, tops and toes. Touching the feet in this way will also grounds and calm you, leading to a great deal less stress and more relaxation.

There are a number of charts available that show you which to use to relieve certain conditions. They will usually show the condition and then the hand position to use. You might see notations such as H1 for the head, B4 at the body, BA3, L3 and so on. Post the chart and your hand position diagrams in a prominent place near where you will be practicing, for ease in healing yourself using reiki.

Another aspect of reiki that can be very beneficial and is also easy to incorporate into your reiki work is the reiki symbols. Let's look at this topic in the next chapter.

Chapter 8 - The Reiki Symbols

In traditional reiki, there are 3 reiki symbols that are supposed to contain healing benefits. The symbols are based on Japanese kanji writing. Traditionally, they were secret, and passed down from teacher to student in a lineage when the person received their attunement. Now, with the wonders of the Internet, very little is secret these days. Many people are therefore aware of the symbols, but they probably don't know the meaning behind them or their uses.

The 3 reiki symbols are given during a Level 2 Attunement. They are:

1. The Power symbol (Choku Rei)
2. The Mental/Emotional symbol (Sei He Ki) and
3. The Distance symbol (Hon Sha Ze Sho Nen).

We will discuss each of these in turn.



The Power symbol (Choku Rei, pronounced cho-koo-RAY)

It can be roughly translated as "Place the power of the universe here." Think of it as the on-off switch for the start and end of each reiki session. It is also a symbol of protection. It also boosts the power of the other symbols.



The Mental/Emotional symbol (Sei He Ki, pronounced say-hey-KEY)

It can be roughly translated as "The divine and man become one." This is a union of body, mind and spirit. It helps to harmonize all three as well and free one from subconscious issues that might be holding them back from the life they long for. It is handy for sessions that focus on gaining inner peace and harmony, and relief from stress, anxiety and depression.



The Distance symbol (Hon Sha Ze Sho Nen, pronounced hon-SHAH-zee-show-NEN)

This is the most difficult to draw, for obvious reasons, but printing out a copy and tracing it is a great moving meditation.

It has 2 meanings. The first is "No past, no present, no future." The second is "The divine within me connects to the divine within you."

It is called the distance symbol because it is used to send healing energies to people who are not in the same location as the healer. It is thought to tap into powerful universal energies and harness them for healing. It is also useful for freeing yourself from negative past experiences. When using this symbol, don't try to cure things like a headache. Instead, use it for aura and chakra work.

Set a good intention before sending out healing energy to another person from a distance, and see if they report any positive changes in their life.

People draw the reiki symbols to get energy flowing, and as a moving meditation. Don't worry about trying to make them perfect, just about the energy they provide. Some people enjoy making them in pretty colors and so forth. The important thing is to feel inspired and uplifted as you work with them. Post the symbols you wish at the start or end of each session. Meditate on their appearance and meaning for a short while as well if you wish, and then end your session. Don't forget to wash your hands afterwards to ground your energy.

Now that you have learned the reiki symbols, it's time to learn how to find a reiki master to help you get started on your healing journey.

Chapter 9 - What To Look For In A Reiki Master

If after all your research, you decide that reiki is the right choice to help you heal, it will be time to look for a reiki master in order to study and receive an attunement. As we have said, there is the Japanese style versus the Western style of reiki. It's important that you choose the style you're interested in, and one you will enjoy learning about.

It's also important to have conviction that your practice is working and you are seeing real results. In particular, if you have any specific health issues you wish to tackle, such as heart disease, the Japanese style might be a better choice than just generally enhancing your life through the Western style of reiki.

- Their lineage - Who did they study with?
- How long have they been studying?
- What qualifications and certifications do they have?
- What is their style, Japanese or Western?
- What testimonials can they offer?
- What will be covered in the course?
- What supporting materials do they offer?
- What are the costs involved in studying with them? What is the breakdown of those fees?
- Why did they become a reiki master?
- If they are going to give you treatments, do they prefer hands off, hands on, in person, or distance?

- How much does it cost per session?
- Do they hold the sessions in a certain place, or come to your home?

One other thing to consider is your own feelings about your practice. You might just be interested in reiki for your own personal health and healing. But if you are learning it in order to help loved ones, friends and family, you might wish to look for someone with deep experience and many years of practice versus someone who has recently qualified or does not do it full time.

Once you've assessed each reiki master with the answers to these questions in mind, you should be able to find the right master to give you your attunement and treatments, and open the door to your own reiki studies.

Conclusion

If you're feeling blocked or stuck in your life, or as if your energy is constantly low, it might be time to consider reiki for health and healing. You should be able to find a reiki master in your area through clinics, hospitals, spas and centers. Also check at your local yoga studio and community colleges. You might find practitioners working out of their own home, or ones who do house calls. You might also ask your friends. Many people are enjoying the benefits of reiki these days and you can usually get good word of mouth recommendations.

There are a lot of different types of Reiki systems, some more traditional than others, so make sure to ask any questions you might have about a practitioner's services before you book a session.

If you do wish to try reiki yourself, keep a journal of your practice and your results. You should soon start to see results and notice a difference in the health of your body, mind and spirit.

As you grow in confidence, you may wish to use reiki on other people, or your pets. If you do, it's important to go slowly and not try to push too hard or be driven by ego, wanting to 'cure' someone. Think of yourself as supporting someone with your energy rather than exchanging energy and you should be able to help others without feeling drained yourself.

Reiki is a journey, not a destination. Take the time to study and work with your energy and see what a difference it can make in terms of your energy levels, ability to heal, and overall feeling of well-being.

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