

CONVERSATIONS IN THE FIELD

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 2, 2010

Reiki and Jung: An Introduction

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Those familiar with Jung's essay "On Psychic Energy" may consider the linkage of Jung and Reiki to be specious: Reiki, or universal life force energy, clearly fell outside the realm of his interests. Here is Jung's full statement:

The concept of life-energy has nothing to do with a so-called life-force, for this, qua force, would be nothing more than a specific form of universal energy. To regard life-energy thus, and so bridge over the still yawning gulf between physical processes and life-processes, would be to do away with the special claims of bio-energetics as opposed to physical energetics. I have therefore suggested that, in view of the psychological use we intend to make of it, we call our hypothetical life-energy "libido." To this extent I have differentiated it from a concept of universal energy, so maintaining the right of biology and psychology to form their own concepts. In adopting this usage I do not in any way wish to forestall workers in the field of bioenergetics, but freely admit that I have adopted the term libido with the intention of using it for our purposes: for theirs, some such term as "bio-energy" or "vital energy" may be preferred. (Jung, 1928, p. 17)

Jung did not deny the possibility of universal energy, but he deliberately sidestepped the issue by drawing a line between psychology and bioenergetics. The passage thus signaled an enormous omission at the heart of Jung's energy theory. The present essay will address it by providing persons in a variety of fields with a basic introduction to Reiki (in essence, a review of the relevant literature) and by suggesting some themes that Reiki shares with Jungian psychology in spite of Jung's stated disinterest. The paper will conclude with some personal reflections on the art of Reiki, especially as it relates to physical and emotional healing.

The Etymology and Definition of "Reiki"

The word "Reiki" refers both to the "universal life force energy" itself and to the practice of using it to help others. First, what is the word's etymology, and does anything get lost in translation? "Reiki" is composed of two Japanese words: *rei* and *ki*. *Rei* means "universal," with the connotation of universal intelligence (Miles, 2006, p. xiv). Similarly, it can be defined as "Higher Intelligence" or as an all-pervasive "subtle wisdom" (Rand, 1998, p. 4). The word *rei* also translates as "spirit in English, and [it] has the same ambiguity of referring to ghosts or the most sublime awareness" (Miles, p. 193n). *Ki* means nonphysical energy but with a sacred connotation (Miles, p. xiv), and it is the *ki* that leaves the physical body at the moment of death (Rand, p. 4). So the translation of Reiki as "universal life force energy" fails to capture not only its indwelling nature but also important connotations of sacredness, spirit, and intelligence. It is



incorrect, however, to suggest that Reiki is intelligent. Reiki is intelligence itself (Miles, p. 187). It is “primordial consciousness” or what physicists call the unified field (Miles, 2006, p. 49, 65). That is why one source calls it “undifferentiated” or “‘nonpolarized’ subatomic energy” (Veltheim & Veltheim, 1995, p. 44, 29). Others call it “God-consciousness” (Rand, 1991, p. 31) and “Universal Love” (Stein, 1995, p. 1).

If this Reiki energy has been around since the origin of the universe, it makes sense that different traditions would have different names for it. But therein lies a controversy. On the one hand, Reiki may be the same as the Indian *prana*, the Chinese *chi*, or “light” in the Christian tradition. Reiki may also equate with the Polynesian word *mana*, the Iroquois *orenda*, the Hebrew *ruach*, the word *barraka* in Islamic countries, as well as orgone energy, animal magnetism, and archaeus (Stein, 1995, p. 16). Orgone energy is “the creative force in nature,” sometimes also called “animal magnetism” and “vital force” (Kelly, 1962, para. 2). Archaeus is “the luminous, radiating healing energy that surrounds and permeates human beings, as described by the 16th-century alchemist Paracelsus” (“Archaeus,” 2005). Moreover, the similarity between Reiki and other traditions gains strength because Native American healers made Hawayo Takata, who had brought Reiki to the United States, a Medicine Woman based on the conclusion that she used the same energy that they did (Haberly, 2000, p. 97). On the other hand, Reiki is not precisely equivalent to words in these other traditions. For example, if Reiki were really identical to *prana*, it would be primarily about breath; and if it were identical to *chi*, it would have applications in the martial arts. Neither is the whole truth, though deep breathing does facilitate the flow of the energy: “the bridge between the body and consciousness is the breath” (Usui & Petter, 2002, p. 22). Therefore, the following statement about Reiki by Miles (2006) makes more sense: “It is primordial consciousness, which is identical to respective source states of chi and prana, called *yuan chi* and *mahaprana*. The chi manipulated in acupuncture and the prana moved by yogic practices are grosser bioenergies” (p. 10). That is, Reiki, as primordial consciousness, is the more fundamental source energy of All That Is: a Reiki treatment provides a client with an infusion of the underlying fabric of the universe.

As stated earlier, Reiki is not only universal life force energy but also the practice of using it to help others. Here is a good definition of the latter with some implications. Reiki is

a spiritual healing practice that can help return us to balanced functioning on every level—physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, even social—regardless of our age or state of health. . . . [Reiki] brings rapid stress reduction and relief from pain and anxiety. Recipients commonly report improved sleep and digestion, and a greater sense of well-being. Other benefits, such as feeling more motivated, less depressed, or experiencing relief from side effects of medication, radiation, or chemotherapy, vary from person to person. Unlike conventional medicine, Reiki does not attack disease. Rather Reiki supports our well-being and strengthens our natural ability to heal by encouraging balance. (Miles, 2006, p. 8)

Takata made a statement that amplifies the point about disease: “Remove the cause and there shall be no effect” (Miles, 2006, p. 183). Reiki theory holds that, if the imbalance is removed, the disease that arises from it will go away.

It may also help to underscore what Reiki is not. First, it is not a transfer of the practitioner’s bio-energy to the client; instead Reiki flows from an inexhaustible source *through* the practitioner and into the client’s body, where it seeks to repair imbalance that arises from injury or negative thinking and to strengthen

the body's own healing capacity. Therefore, as Stein (1995) put it, "A healer . . . does not do healing *to* [other persons], but only *with* them" (p. 22). Second, Reiki is not a religion; in fact, neither practitioner nor client has to believe in Reiki for it to work. Doing Reiki does not even require concentration, though the energy often produces a meditative state for both individuals. Third, Reiki cannot be forced: if practitioners do so, if the ego is engaged, they tend to pick up symptoms from their clients. Instead, one simply allows the client's body to draw whatever amount of energy it needs. The energy then goes wherever it is needed: "the Reiki power naturally finds its own paths, precisely where it is needed" (Usui & Petter, 2002, p. 8).

Veltheim and Veltheim's (1995) book, *Reiki: The Science, Metaphysics and Philosophy*, provided a helpful way to cap off this section on what Reiki is. Their idea that Reiki is "'nonpolarized' subatomic energy" helps explain how Reiki reacts to imbalances. The authors pointed out that when Reiki moves from the nonphysical into time-space during a Reiki treatment, it becomes polarized and forms "a mirror image of the disharmony (disease) . . . in the energy field" (p. 44; see pp. 29–30). If one imagined a hole and then imagined water flowing into it in order to create a smooth surface, one would have a metaphor for how Reiki works.

That is how it affects the client, but what about the practitioner, and what about Reiki more generally? As Veltheim and Veltheim (1995) maintained, Reiki manifests as heat and as tingling in the hands, is the same in both hands, switches on automatically, flows according to demand, never runs out, is not affected by the health of the practitioner, works on animals and plants, can be used to treat oneself, can be practiced by anyone who is initiated, is not a belief system, has no harmful side effects, is complementary to all other systems, always treats at the root cause level (that is, "always tend[s] to **go to the area of greatest disharmony**"), needs no diagnosis, and reduces stress (pp. 31–42; emphasis in the original).

We might fruitfully end this section on Reiki energy and Reiki practice by invoking Miles's (2006) statement that Reiki "sits at the intersection of science and spirit" (p. 12). This privileged position may be why Dr. Mikao Usui gave Reiki the following titles: "The Miracle Medicine for all Diseases" (medicine and miracle—that is, science and spirit) and "The Secret Method of Inviting Happiness" (spirit again) (Rowland, 2008, p. 209). Let us now double back and consider some information about Dr. Usui and the history of Reiki. That history is a tale of two controversies.

Reiki's Origins

The standard story holds that Mikao Usui was the dean of a small Christian school in Japan named Doshisha University; his honor was violated when he was unable to respond to a student's question about how Jesus had healed people and why such healing was impossible in the present day. So he quit his job and went to the University of Chicago, studied for seven years, received a doctorate in theology, then returned to Japan to study the Buddhist sutras (Lambert, 2000). He received the Reiki symbols in a vision on his twenty-first and final day of fasting on Mt. Kuriyama. Usui passed Reiki on to Chujiro Hayashi, who was a medical doctor and a Navy captain. Hayashi in turn passed it on to his patient Hawayo Takata, who then brought it to the United States. Usui's quest for Reiki took place in the late 1800s; Takata was born in 1900; Hayashi became a Reiki master in 1925; and Takata went to Japan in 1935, became a Reiki master in 1938, and died in 1980 (Stein, 1995, p. 11). These dates are accurate, but Usui never worked at Doshisha University or studied at the University of Chicago. William Lee Rand (1991), the editor of *Reiki News Magazine*, discovered that neither place has any record of Usui whatsoever, which suggested that Takata had made up parts of the history of Reiki's discovery to make it more palatable to the Christian West. However, though not factual, Takata's story was true in the sense that it

pointed toward Reiki's compatibility with the New Testament's emphasis on healing touch. Reiki, as primordial consciousness, is certainly in the same energetic neighborhood as prayer, especially since prayer is often incorporated into a Reiki healing session.

So the first controversy is whether Usui was a Christian and studied in the United States. Apparently, he did not. More likely, he was some combination of Buddhist, spiritualist, and psychic (Usui & Petter, 2002, p. 10; Rand, 1998, p. 116). The second controversy is whether he discovered or rediscovered Reiki. It is possible that Reiki practice is 2,500 years old. Rand (1998) speculated that Jesus traveled to India, Tibet, and China (p. 88); and noting biblical passages about the laying on of hands, Rand also speculated that "Reiki may have come from a combination of Buddhist and early Christian teachings" and that Jesus may have been a Reiki master (pp. 90-91). Stein (1995) claimed, more extensively, that Reiki's background includes the Buddha and Jesus and that Jesus was "a reincarnated Bodhisattva," survived the crucifixion, and went to live in India afterwards (p. 10). This theory further held that Reiki teachings made their way to Japan and eventually to Usui.

Anything further regarding these dual controversies is beyond the scope of this essay. The important thing is what happened after Takata brought Reiki to the United States. Thousands of people in the West now practice Reiki, but Reiki practice has undergone some changes. As Miles (2006) pointed out, whereas the emphasis was originally "on spiritual development with healing as a by-product," today Reiki "tends to focus on healing with spiritual development as a by-product" (p. 41). In addition, the price has come down. Takata used to charge \$175 for introductory Reiki, \$500 for level two, and \$10,000 for Reiki master training. In contrast, fees of \$50, \$100, and \$500 are not uncommon today. And whereas the three levels used to be spaced out over years, some irresponsible Reiki Masters now initiate students to all three levels in a single weekend.

Levels, Attunements, Symbols

What, then, are the three "levels" or "degrees" of Reiki? Reiki I includes the history of Reiki (often the mythological version promulgated by Takata), the hand positions for oneself and others, and a first-level attunement. The hand positions correspond to the chakra points, which, from lowest to highest, are as follows: root, sacral, solar plexus, heart, throat, third eye, and crown. As Veltheim and Veltheim (1995) have suggested, the first three chakras are considered masculine, the last three feminine, and the heart is the hinge between the two categories. As with Jung's concepts of anima, animus, and individuation, Reiki is thought to combine masculine and feminine elements and to be moving humanity from a masculine, power-centered emphasis to a more loving, heart- and spirit-centered way of being. In any case, the Reiki hand positions are as follows: various positions on the head (front, temples, back of head, crown, throat and jaw); then shoulders, heart, upper abdomen, middle abdomen, and groin; then the shoulder blades, middle of the back, small of the back, and lower back.

The Reiki II course introduces three of the four Reiki symbols. The first is commonly called the power symbol; its purpose is to start the flow of Reiki, to increase the flow of the energy, and to effect physical healing. The second is usually called the mental/emotional symbol, though some call it the "harmony symbol" (Ellyard, 2006, p. 161); its purpose is to bring about healing of the mind and emotions. Reiki tradition holds that the actual names of the Reiki symbols must not be shared with the uninitiated lest the names become associated with something other than physical, mental/emotional, and spiritual healing. What can be revealed is that the symbols combine figures from Sanskrit and Japanese (Rand, 1991, p. 30). Moreover, it is not just, as Paul Tillich (1957) has stated in a theological context, that a symbol "participates in that to which it

points” and “opens up levels of reality which otherwise are closed for us” (p. 42). The Reiki symbols are energetic in themselves, have power of their own; and then “it is a combination of both faith and the inherent power of Reiki energy which activate [*sic*] the symbols [*sic*] power” (Ellyard, 2006, p. 167). The symbols even have consciousness (Rand, 1991, p. 32). Of course, their energetic power does not mean that Reiki is not an infinite and universal source. An alternative view is that Reiki imbues the symbols, but its power is not limited to them. Nor does the fact that Reiki is accessed through the symbols obviate other energetic frequencies or healing modalities. In any case, we are a long way from Jungian psychology, which holds that symbols have significance when humans imbue them with it but no inherent power of their own.

The third Reiki symbol is the distance or connection symbol, and this is where Reiki gets really interesting. The distance symbol, which relates most directly to the energetic/spiritual body, enables one to send energy to a situation, object, or person (including oneself) across space and time. One of the most interesting applications involves sending energy to one’s future self: the energy can be stored as if in a battery at a future place and time (like a presentation or a job interview): it is there when one needs it (Rand, 1991, pp. 35-36). Stein (1995) maintains that the third symbol provides a connection to the Akashic Record and thus to one’s past and future lifetimes (p. 61) and that the overall attunement process provides a karmic boost as a reward for becoming a healer (p. 105). One can also use the distance symbol to send energy to avatars like Jesus and the Buddha or to angels, the dead, extraterrestrials, or to whomever or whatever one wishes no matter where or when, including temporary pain, chronic illness, first aid issues, situations of global conflict, plants, animals, and mechanical or electrical devices. Although this statement may sound exaggerated and far-fetched like science fiction, it is nevertheless true that second degree Reiki can become a type of psychic functioning.

The final symbol, the Reiki master symbol, is taught in Reiki III, which is a course for those who want to teach Reiki to others and give attunements. It is the shortest and simplest of the three courses; but just as it is advisable to wait at least a couple of months between the first and second attunements, it is a good idea to mature in Reiki practice and to deepen one’s knowledge of the subject before becoming a level-three practitioner.

A few additional details will complete this section on attunements. During an attunement, the Reiki symbols are impressed on a student’s hands and in the student’s biofield (the Reiki master traces those symbols in the air, thinks them in his or her mind, and uses a finger to trace them on the student’s palms. As Reiki energy is transferred through a practitioner to a client (a process referred to as “channeling”), so an attunement is passed from the master to the student. That is, “the ability to use Reiki is not taught in the usual sense, but is transferred to the student” (Rand, 1998, p. 3; see Miles, 2006). Before the attunement, one cannot transfer the energy, at least not to any significant degree; afterwards, one can do so because the attunement has aligned the biofield so that the student becomes a conduit for life force energy (Miles, 2006, p. 65). In addition, even a first-degree practitioner can use the hands to direct the flow of energy across a room (“beaming”) and use the hands to check a body for imbalances (“scanning”). The attunement for Reiki II enables a student to use the symbols like keys or activation buttons (Rand, 1991, p. 31) because the attunement anchors the symbols in the student’s mind, and each activates a particular type of Reiki energy. Here are a couple of analogies. An attunement is like upgrading from a wireless set to a radio that can pick up international stations (Veltheim & Veltheim, 1995, p. 66). And in an attunement, a Reiki master adjusts a student’s radio antenna (Ellyard, 2006, p. 5) or adjusts the dials so that the student can pick up Reiki Radio.

What follows the initial attunement is supposedly a twenty-one day cleansing period: three days per chakra. It may be, however, that someone arbitrarily selected the number twenty-one because of Usui's twenty-one days on Mt. Kuriyama.

If the initial attunement is done properly, one then has Reiki for life. It can grow stronger, or it can be ignored, but one cannot lose it unless the attunement was not done properly, in which case the energy fades out over two to three months. But when one has been attuned to Reiki, the energy enters at the crown chakra, is transferred to the client's body or one's own through the hands, finds its own way to the place of imbalance, and stimulates the body's own healing ability by rebalancing the chakra or energy system. Sometimes, a healing crisis will result from the release of toxins—the client will seem to get worse before getting better. That too is a sign that the energy is doing its job.

Some have argued that Reiki should not be given to those who are anaesthetized because it increases awareness, to those on anti-coagulants or cardiac stimulants, or to those who have epileptic seizures. But Reiki is an all-inclusive healing modality, and there can be no mistakes if the client's body takes the energy that it needs and distributes it appropriately. Reiki does not harm. Therefore, Parkes and Parkes (1998) incorrectly stated that "Reiki should not be given after a pre-operative anaesthetic has been administered or during an operation. Reiki increases awareness and it would not be helpful in this instance" (p. 61). It is unlikely that primordial-level consciousness would increase an anaesthetized person's awareness sufficiently to interfere with surgery. In fact, as recently stated in an article entitled "Reiki Myths and Misconceptions," Reiki will not wake a patient up but instead induces the relaxation response, which helps a patient receive anaesthesia more easily (Lipinski, 2010, pp. 53-54). As if to confirm her argument, the same issue of *Reiki News Magazine* also included an article entitled "Reiki and Medicine" that recommended Reiki before, during, and after surgery (Rand, 2010); and another entitled "Reiki in the Operating Room" about the use of Reiki during open-heart surgery (Keyes, 2010).

Besides being a healing modality, Reiki is also a spiritual path because it comes with five principles for good living: Just for today, do not worry. Just for today, do not get angry. Earn your living honestly. Show gratitude to all living things. Honor your parents and elders (adapted from Lambert, 2000, pp. 14-15). In other words, practicing or receiving Reiki and observing the five principles ought to be mutually reinforcing. As Ellyard (2006) wrote, "The more we practice [Reiki] the more we become like the energy. Reiki is love, Reiki is harmony, and Reiki brings balance" (p. 141).

Reiki and Jungian Psychology

Thus far, Reiki energy and Reiki practice would not seem to have much, if anything, to do with psychology, Jungian or otherwise; but let us now consider some similarities. First, if Reiki can be sent at a distance, it clearly transcends "our Newtonian time-space models" (Miles, 2006, p. xv), much like the collective unconscious, as Jung (1952) pointed out in his treatise on synchronicity. For Jung as for his friend Albert Einstein, time-space is relative.

Second, Reiki boosts intuition. As Miles (2006) stated, "your hands have a direct relationship with Reiki that doesn't go through your mind, as if your hands have become Reiki" (p. 135). Again, Reiki is consciousness; and hands that are alight with energy seem to know where they need to go, which sounds very similar to Jung's sense that intuition comes from the unconscious or from the archetypes. The muscular memory that a musician experiences, though it involves a type of intuition, is not a perfect analogy: music must first be

consciously practiced; a Reiki practitioner becomes subtly aware of where energy needs to be applied. Muscular memory develops from conscious repetition, whereas, in Reiki, a linear process of thoughtful practice is bypassed. This is intuition not as developed ability but as a subtle knowing. To the extent that the rational faculty is bypassed, Reiki intuition illustrates Jung's sense that intuition is "irrational" (Jung, 1961, p. 219; Jung, 1921, p. 453).

Third, some of Reiki's effects—especially relaxation, focus, and calmness—register in the mental/emotional and spiritual bodies and can assist traditional psychotherapy, though the touch taboo probably means that it would be best not to receive psychotherapy and Reiki from the same person (LaTorre, 2005; Miles, 2006; Durana, 1998; Nield-Anderson & Ameling, 2001). An interesting possibility, however, is that a psychotherapist might bypass the touch taboo by sending Reiki remotely rather than providing it in person.

Fourth, since Reiki works on the mental/emotional and energetic/spiritual bodies, it affects the unconscious, which means that it promotes individuation, especially the integration of masculine and feminine. As others have noted, "Identification with a deeply healed self is the goal of your journey" (Rand, 1998, p. 95); and "Reiki is all about . . . learning to become whole from within" (Veltheim & Veltheim, 1995, p. 99). Haberly (2000), Takata's biographer and friend, wrote: "Mrs. Takata often spoke of becoming a 'complete whole,' for we must have not only physical well-being but mental and spiritual balance, as well. Only then can we say we are whole—this is what we receive from Reiki . . ." (p. 57).

Reiki may be particularly helpful with shadow integration, as a dream that I had after my first attunement nicely illustrates: "I encountered a monk in a cowl; but where his face should have been, there was only blackness. When he touched my hand, it started to wither and shrivel, but I channeled Reiki through it and brought it back to health." This dream, which is about the necessity of encountering a lost part of myself and of bringing it into the wholeness of the Self, suggested that Reiki facilitates shadow integration and thus individuation. To the extent that Reiki is the life force that Jung relegated to the field of bioenergetics, he must stand corrected because there *is* a complementary relationship between Reiki and psychology. More needs to be written to enhance and complement Jung's energy theory, and this paper's introduction to Reiki healing has provided a beginning.

Reiki Stories

One of Hawayo Takata's Reiki healing experiences conveys the seemingly miraculous potential of this healing art. A friend, whose mother had just died, asked Takata to come to the home to sit with the corpse. Takata held the woman's cold, lifeless hand and began channeling Reiki, which she did for over an hour. She began to notice that the woman felt warmer and had regained some color in her cheeks. Here is how Rowland (2008) finished the story:

Then several things happened at once. The door opened. Takata looked up to see who had come in. The woman on the bed opened her eyes and said, "Oh, I am so hungry! Get me some noodles, please!"

Takata, who still held the woman's hand, saw that her student, who stood just inside the door, was stunned with shock. "You heard your mother!" she ordered. "She is hungry! Please get her some noodles." (p. 221)



There are two possibilities here. The less likely is that the woman was really dead, which means that Reiki acted like a defibrillator. It is more likely that the woman must have been alive, albeit on death's doorstep. But either way, what Reiki accomplished is impressive. Stories of this sort proliferate in the Reiki community, attesting to the energy's ability to help persons cope with otherwise intractable pain and incurable illness. Reiki practice does have a mystical side, but it is not magic, witchcraft, or occult mumbo jumbo. It is physics. Paired with human intention, Reiki illustrates what Jung and Pauli knew well—that mind and matter are entangled phenomena.

This entanglement of Reiki's physical and emotional healing properties, how each intimately facilitates and reinforces the other, makes isolating Reiki's emotional component problematic at best. The energy's sometimes miraculous effects, the presence of factors other than Reiki in the healing process, and the anecdotal nature of the evidence make it even harder to pin down the role of universal life force energy in the individuation process. Although I always ask for feedback because it strengthens my confidence, a small residue of doubt remains. Yet Reiki does these things and does them well. Therefore, I will conclude by mentioning some of my own experiences in response to two remaining questions.

How do I know that Reiki works on the physical body? The answer is that over the past seven years a vast array of evidence has piled up. To begin with, when my palms and fingers heat up and tingle, those I work on say that my hands feel like "heating pads," and some feel the tingling as well. One man's jaw and hip vibrated. As the result of a thirty-second demonstration with my hands on a woman's shoulder, she felt her heart slow down and a sense of peace descend on her. Another woman whose head I was working on said, "What are you *doing* to me?" and then fell into a sound asleep. A man with a whiplash injury whose pain kept him from sleeping more than two to three hours at a time was able to sleep through the night after only one session. For over half a year until he found the right chiropractor, our weekly treatments were so successful that he later credited me with saving his life (I give all the credit to Reiki). The energy helped a woman go from horrible migraines, for which she had been taking daily pain medication for months, to no headache at all in twenty minutes; the headaches never returned. After two years' worth of weekly Reiki treatments had helped a woman go from osteoporosis to osteopenia, "the precursor to osteoporosis," she published an account of our experience in *Reiki News Magazine* (Higgins, 2008, p. 66). And thirty minutes of Reiki helped a friend's dog make a dramatic shift from feeling hip pain to acting much younger than her advanced years.

These are some of the highlights of my in-person experiences, and my work with remote sending has been even more interesting. For instance, a woman who desperately needed a good night's sleep asked me to send her energy at 9:00 p.m. the next night. She nearly missed our appointment and was agitated and wide awake when she got to bed. The next thing she knew she was waking up in the morning, having slept through the entire night. Another woman who was not sleeping well because of sciatica pain lay face down at 7:00 p.m. to receive Reiki (face down because it helped me to imagine myself there doing hands-on Reiki). She felt the energy heat up her hip, and she awoke feeling refreshed and pain-free around 3:00 a.m. The next day she said, "What kind of *mojo* did you work on me?" and went on to explain that she can ordinarily not sleep on her stomach. A woman called me to ask for Reiki to help her finish an academic assignment at her computer; she felt the air around her head heat up, and the energy diminished her migraine so that she was able to finish her work. Someone else who was also working at a computer reported that it felt as if her head was in a vise as I worked on her. In another case, remote Reiki helped a man dial back an oncoming migraine to zero in less than an hour, whereas the pain usually lasted for twenty-four hours. A friend who was driving cross-country called

me from the southwest and said that she was stopping for Advil because of a bad headache. I said, “Let me send you some energy. You can stop in half an hour if you still have a headache.” She felt the heat in her neck and lower skull; the headache disappeared, and her car stopped leaking oil. A neighbor’s relative in Brazil asked for Reiki to help with post-surgical pain. At the appointed time, she felt heat in the affected region, saw golden light around her, and experienced significant pain relief. In addition, her headache, which I did not even know about, diminished in intensity—Reiki goes where it is needed. Friends who were summering in France requested energy for a woman who was trying to quit smoking. The woman slept extremely soundly from approximately the time I sent the energy until the next morning when she needed help waking up. She was surprised and delighted when my friends told her that I had already sent energy to her; we all credited Reiki with her sound sleep.

The most dramatic example of remote Reiki that I have experienced involved a woman with severe pain following surgery for colon cancer. She was anticipating an uncomfortable procedure the next week to eliminate a remaining abscess. This was a rescue mission, and I was ready for it. Not only was my body deeply relaxed from three hours of lifting and hauling the previous evening, but my heart was open, which resulted in what might be described as Reiki on afterburners. When we began, she in her chair and I in mine, she immediately felt heat around the upper part of her body. Not long afterward, she said to her husband, “The pain is gone.” My own experience, however, was more involved. I talked to the pain: “Your role in her healing process is much appreciated but no longer necessary. You are free to go.” I visualized holding the abscess between my hands and burning it out of existence. Then I consciously bathed her colon in intense silver light and conveyed a sense of health and well-being. Ordinarily, one is merely a conduit because universal life force energy cannot be forced—the recipient’s body draws only what it needs. Heart energy is a different story, and on this occasion I had a definite impression of wielding enormous power. As a result of our remote Reiki session, not only did her pain, which had been doubling her over multiple times a day, disappear and never return, but the flow of energy at least temporarily fixed their toaster and jump started a dead wrist watch.

My in-person and remote sessions with dozens of persons constitute a preponderance of evidence that supports the idea that Reiki has real physical healing properties. Still the question remains: *What experiences support the idea that Reiki promotes inner work/emotional healing/individuation?* The timing of my Reiki training is a big part of the answer. Jung believed that the first half of a man’s life is devoted to exploring his masculine side, while in the second half he explores his feminine side and gets in greater touch with the anima (Fike, 2009, p. 118). I began doing Reiki in my mid-forties, about halfway through my life’s journey, and it has indeed fostered connections with my feminine side and helped me to achieve greater psychic balance. Healing has even become a metaphor I use to describe my teaching. In addition, Reiki promotes a meditative state in which the unconscious becomes more accessible to consciousness. I experience this state when I send energy remotely; and when I set out to meditate, my hands automatically tingle. Apparently the frequency of Reiki and the frequency of meditation are so similar that one activates the other. Those whom I have worked on have also experienced Reiki’s ability to promote inner work. The woman whose migraines disappeared went on to have a major psychic awakening that involves ongoing engagement with her shadow. Another woman is able to have visionary experiences when I apply energy to her head, as if dreaming while awake, which has led to significant problem solving. Finally, another person had a major insight about herself minutes after I started sending her energy, which she had no idea I was doing. *Reiki News Magazine* features many similar stories of how Reiki helps elevate the quality of people’s inner lives.

Admittedly, the above evidence for physical healing is greater than the evidence for emotional healing, and I have reported nothing at all about Reiki's spiritual dimension. This ratio is natural because persons seek me out largely for help with physical discomfort and because it is easier to gauge Reiki's effect on a short-term physical symptom than on a long-term psychological process. Nevertheless, it is clear to me and to those whom I have worked with that Reiki is real and that it helps in various ways that more traditional disciplines have previously overlooked. There is a role for Reiki in a wide variety of therapeutic contexts, and I hope that this essay will help move it further into the mainstream.

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