

Introduction to Reiki

What is Reiki?

Reiki is a form of body/energy work that is effective for stress relief, relaxation, and for promoting the body's natural ability to heal.

The word Reiki comes from two Japanese words: *Rei*, which means “universal,” and *ki* (or *chi* in Chinese) which means “life force energy.” So, Reiki is “Universal Life Force Energy.”

History of Reiki

The story and history of Reiki is largely disputed. Reiki practice has much in common with many ancient healing techniques including those found in Tibet and China over 3,000 years ago.



Reiki, as it is currently practiced, was developed by **Mikao Usui**. Sometimes he is called Usui Sensei (*Sensei* is a Japanese title used for teachers and other professionals). Often the Reiki community refers to him simply as “Dr. Usui.” Reiki is formally referred to as “Usui Shiki Ryoho” – the Usui System of Natural Healing.

He was born August 15, 1865 in Japan. Usui had a love of learning. He traveled to Europe and China and studied medicine, psychology and theology of various religions. It is believed that he came from a wealthy family, since at that time in Japan, only children from wealthy families would be able to attend school. Usui eventually became the secretary to the head of the department of health and welfare. The head later became the Mayor of Tokyo. Using the connections he developed from these positions, Usui was able to become very successful in business.

In 1914 Usui's personal and business life was falling apart. Usui had spent much time meditating on Mt. Kurama. He traveled to the mountain, where he took a twenty-one-day spiritual training course (*Isyu Guo*). This training probably included fasting, meditation, chanting and prayer. There is a small waterfall on Mt. Kurama where people go to meditate (even today). This meditation includes standing under the waterfall and allowing the waters to strike and flow over the top of the head. Perhaps it was during this type of mediation that the Reiki energy entered his crown chakra. The Reiki energy gave him the ability to give healing to others without depleting his own energy!

After these events, Usui began to create a system of healing. Usui worked for the next seven years helping the poor of Kyoto. In 1922 he moved to Tokyo and established a healing group and opened a clinic at which he taught classes and gave treatments. In 1923 there was a great earthquake in Tokyo which killed more than 140,000 people and destroyed homes and buildings. The disaster left a great number of homeless, injured, grieving and suffering. Usui began to treat as many people as possible with Reiki. He built a bigger clinic and began to travel to teach Reiki and give Reiki treatments. It is believed that he taught more than 2,000 students and initiated sixteen teachers.

On March 9, 1926, Usui suffered a stroke and died. Much of what we know about him comes from the inscription on his grave at Saihoji Temple.



Hawayo Takata was the person responsible for bringing Reiki from Japan to the west. She was born on December 24, 1900 in Hawaii. Her parents were Japanese immigrants and her father worked in the sugar cane fields. She married Saichi Takata, who worked as the bookkeeper of the plantation where she was employed. Saichi died in 1930 at the age of thirty-four leaving Mrs. Takata to raise their two daughters. It was difficult for her to provide for her family; she had to work very hard with little rest. After five years she developed severe abdominal pain, a lung condition and had a nervous breakdown.

Soon after this, one of her sisters died and she traveled to Japan where her parents had moved to deliver the news. She also felt she could find help for her poor health in Japan. She was in a Japanese hospital scheduled for an operation when she heard a voice telling her that the operation was not necessary. She asked the surgeon if there was any other treatment for her ailments and he told her about Dr. Hayashi's clinic. She went to the clinic began receiving an extensive course of Reiki treatment. (Dr. Chujiro Hayashi was a physician who had been one of the teachers trained by Dr. Usui).

Mrs. Takata received daily treatments twice a day and made a progressive recovery. After several months, she was completely healed. Afraid that if she were to return to Hawaii and get sick again she would not have access to Reiki, she wanted to learn Reiki. In the spring of 1936, Mrs. Takata received First Degree Reiki. She worked with Dr. Hayashi for one year and then received Second Degree Reiki.

Mrs. Takata returned to Hawaii in 1937. Dr. Hayashi later came to Hawaii to help her establish Reiki there. In the winter of 1938, Dr. Hayashi initiated Hawayo Takata as a Reiki Teacher. She was the thirteenth and last Reiki Teacher Dr. Hayashi initiated.

In Japan, the description for the teacher level of Reiki used by Dr. Usui and Dr. Hayashi was called *Shinpiden* (it means “mystery teachings”). Mrs. Takata used the English word “Master” to describe this level. This is where we get the term **Reiki Master**.

Between 1970 and her death on December 11, 1980, Mrs. Takata initiated twenty-two Reiki Masters.

Philosophy of Reiki

One of the basic concepts in Asian philosophy is the concept of a basic energy force that is responsible for the health and well being of all living things. The concept of *chi* originated in China over 5,000 years ago.

In Japan this concept is called *ki*. It is the energy, which manifests itself in everything. Humans, animals, plants, water, the light from the sun, air, even the earth itself contain this energy. *Ki* is described differently depending on its type and what it does. There are many phrases in Japanese to describe the various kinds of *ki*. For example, a person in good health has *genki* whereas someone experiencing health problems has *byōki*. *Ki ga shimazu* describes disappointment and *ki no hayai* described an excitable person. Someone who is feeling depression is *ki ga omoi*. Some one with a large *ki* is a very generous person – *ki no okii*.

Our thoughts, emotions and physical conditions all manifest themselves in various types of *ki* and the types of *ki* around us also affect our thoughts, emotions and physical well-being.

Reiki is one type of *ki*. It is *ki* that is being guided by *rei*. *Rei* is the universal consciousness. It is filled with compassion, love, peace, wisdom, and everything that is good. *Reiki* knows the cause and way to healing for every illness and problem. It represents the oneness of all that exists.

A complete definition of *Reiki* would be that *Reiki* is “the primal energy of the universe being guided by the highest wisdom of the universe.” It cannot be affected by anything negative. It is always working for good.

Reiki Attunements

At each level of *Reiki* training the student receives an attunement from the *Reiki* Master Teacher. In this way, *Reiki* cannot be merely learned but is passed on from the teacher to the student through a simple ritual. The attunement is done by the *Reiki* energy and only facilitated by the Master Teacher.

At *Reiki* I, the attunement opens up the student to the ability to channel the *Reiki* energy.

At *Reiki* II a greater flow of the *Reiki* energy is given to the student. The *Reiki* Master attunement gives the student access to the fullness of *Reiki* energy.

It is important that when one receives a *Reiki* attunement it is from a Master Teacher whose lineage goes back to Dr. Mikao Usui for the student to be attuned to Usui *Reiki*. (There are other types of *Reiki* developed by others, mostly people who have made changes to the Usui method).

Reiki Symbols

In the ordinary sense, symbols are objects, pictures, or other concrete representations of ideas, concepts, or other abstractions. For example in the United States, Canada, Australia and Great Briton, a red octagon is a symbol for “STOP.”

Likewise, in *Reiki* we use symbols to help us to connect with *Reiki* energy. The *Reiki* symbols will be taught at your *Reiki* class. These are symbols that were used by Dr. Usui and passed down through *Reiki* tradition. The *Reiki* Attunement activates these symbols for the *Reiki* student.

There has been a tradition in *Reiki* to keep the symbols a secret. This was the practice of Dr. Usui, Dr. Hayashi, and Mrs. Takata.

During the *Reiki* I attunement the symbols are drawn by the *Reiki* Master teacher over the crown chakra, in front of the third eye chakra, in front of the throat chakra and in front of the heart chakra of the student. This opens the flow of *Reiki* energy into these chakra's and the whole energy system and aura of the student.

21 Day Clearing Cycle

The Attunement will activate a 21-day energy-clearing period in the seven major chakra's of the student. The clearing will begin with the root chakra and continue up the student's chakra system. This cycle happens automatically, but it can be helpful to be conscious of your chakra's during this time. You will be given a meditation can you can use, if you choose. The Reiki clearing works on all levels: physical, emotional, mental and spiritual.

Three Levels of Reiki

The levels, also called degrees, of Reiki used by most Reiki Teachers today were probably developed by Mrs. Takata.

Reiki I is an introduction to Reiki. In this level you learn the basic history and philosophy of Reiki and the basic hand positions for treating yourself and others.

In **Reiki II** you will learn special Reiki symbols use for emotional healing and distant Reiki.

Reiki III brings your formal training in Reiki to a conclusion, though one never stops learning about Reiki. You will learn an advanced Reiki breathing technique. At this level you learn how to teach Reiki to others. After completion of Reiki III you are a "Reiki Master" or as some prefer "Reiki Master Teacher." (Some teachers separate this course into two courses).

Jeff Montoya's
Master Attunement
Lineage

Dr. Mikao Usui
Dr. Chujiro Hayashi
Hawayo Takata
Iris Ishikuro
Arthur Robertson
Rick & Emma Ferguson
Margarette L. Shelton
Kathleen Ann Milner
Arline E. Rowden
Jeffrey S. Montoya

Please Note: Jeffrey Montoya was attuned to Reiki I and II from Rose Koremenos who studied with Diane Bloom. Diane was a student of Arline Rowden.

Jeffrey Montoya took the Reiki Master Teacher Course from Deb Voith and Sharon Blandino who were both students of Arline Rowden. There is no attunement in the Master Teacher course.

Activating Reiki

It is sometimes helpful to develop a way of activating your Reiki when you begin a Reiki session on yourself or others. I recommend drawing the Reiki symbols either in the air or in the palms of your hands. Sometimes people like to use a prayer, meditation or incantation to begin Reiki, while these can be useful, they are not necessary to begin the flow of Reiki energy. Some Reiki practitioners also like to think “Reiki off” when they are done with a session. Again this is unnecessary, but if you find it useful go ahead and do it.

Reiki Systematic and Intuitive Methods

There are two ways of doing Reiki sessions: a systematic method and an intuitive method. The systematic method uses the basic positions taught here, holding each position for the same amount of time usually two to five minutes each. One does the intuitive method by feeling into their body for the places that need Reiki and using the hand positions that feel appropriate for a length of time that seems right. Both methods are effective.

Remember that it is the Reiki energy that is doing the healing. Reiki is an intelligent energy. The Universal Life Force guides the Reiki energy; therefore, Reiki will go where it is needed for the highest good of the recipient.

Byosen Scanning

Byo means weakness and *sen* means line, so you are basically looking for areas of weak energy in the body. What is difficult is gauging the subtlety of what you find in the energy field. Sometimes you can feel hot or cold, tingling or other sensations, each of which may indicate something different. Ideally, with time the practitioner will be able to discern what each feeling indicates.

Here's the technique:

Formal Byosen Scanning begins with the practitioner performing *gassho* and praying /intending that the Reiki will flow freely through them for the healing and wellness of the client. You set your intention that you will sense the areas in need of Reiki (this will help you to not sense the energy of the charkas, etc.).

Starting at your client's crown, run your palm downward along the front of the client's body, keeping your hand at least two or three inches above the client. The back of the body can also be scanned.

As your hand moves, note any changes in temperature or any sensations of tingling, pain, or discomfort you might feel in your palm or in your own body corresponding with where you are scanning on the client. The changes you feel are *hibiki* (the dissonance between the positive energy in the practitioner's hand and the negative energy in the client which causes the sensations).

These areas where you feel differences are the ones that in all likelihood require special attention during a session. (You can either work on the area before continuing the scan or spend extra time on that area during a session).

Scanning does not have to occur in one smooth motion, but often proceeds in several stroking motions, pausing when *hibiki* is found. The practitioner might pause to confirm the presence of sensations, note their strength or discuss them with the client before moving on.

When you have completed the entire scanning, close by sweeping the recipient's body with your hands and flick off the energy from your hands.

The biggest thing is to listen to your intuition.

Some *hibiki* and their common significance

[Note: the intensity of the stimulus perceived can often reflect the severity/depth of the problem]:

Attraction generally signifies a need for treatment at the area of pull

Repulsion indicates a probable long-standing blockage or inhibition of energy flow - something which may take a considerable amount of treatment to alleviate

Pain often indicates an excess or buildup of energy in the given area (due to a blockage, etc). Sharp pain is sometimes considered to be a sign that the 'pressure' in the given area is causing a negative effect elsewhere in the system

Tingling frequently signifies an area of inflammation

Heat sensations in the therapist's hands are indicative of Reiki being 'drawn' by the client

Coldness signifies a deficit of energy in the area (or at least a suppression of energy) - due to blockage, etc

Flux/Flow indicates a positive, balanced state - which will nonetheless still benefit from receiving treatment

Gyoshi-ho

The method for healing with the eyes

A technique for sending healing energy with the eyes. *Gyoshi* means 'gaze, stare or fixation' and *ho* means "technique, method or way". In the Usui Hikkei it states that Reiki emanates from all body parts, but strongest from the hands, eyes and the breath; Gyoshi-ho is a technique for sending Reiki with the eyes.

There are many kinds of energy, which can be sent through the eyes; you may have experienced this for yourself. One example: someone is staring at you with judgment of one kind or another; you feel something, turn around, and see the person (usually with a look of disgust on their face) who is being meddlesome. This is not the energy to project when doing Reiki; it is not healing and is extremely intrusive.

Glaring is harsh when combined with judgment; can be destructive and injurious. Gazing with defocused eyes is soft and gentle, combined with love, compassion, and Reiki, gazing can be very healing. This is an original technique from Usui.

The technique:

Do this technique during a regular Reiki treatment or anytime you wish to send Reiki to a person, place, thing, animal, plant, etc. It is important not to stare or look aggressively while doing Gyoshi; simply gaze at the area with defocused eyes. Can be done with or without symbols.

1. Gaze at the place you wish to send Reiki, with defocused eyes. Feel loving Reiki energy pouring out through your eyes going to the recipient; "see them perfect, whole, balanced and in Divine Perfection"
2. Visualize the symbols of choice going out of your eyes imbedding in the area of your gaze. Know that the symbol will go to the cause of the condition, for the highest and best good of the recipient (whatever that may be). Just be with the recipient and the energy.
3. Notice the compassionate connection and circle of Divine Love that is created between you and the recipient.
4. Continue until you are guided to move to the next position or until you feel it is complete.

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Jeff holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Religious Studies from St. Norbert College, a Master of Arts degree in Religious Studies from Cardinal Stritch University, a Master of Divinity degree from the Anglican Divinity School and a diploma in Therapeutic Massage from Madison College. He also completed a course in Spiritual Guidance at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago in July 2007.

Jeff has over twelve years of ministry experience in Catholic and Protestant institutions working with children, youth and adults. Currently, he is an ordained priest in the Universal Anglican Church.

An important part of Jeff's life is service to others. Jeff is a past member of the Board of Directors of Hope House of Milwaukee (a transitional living facility for homeless men, women and families). He is a frequent volunteer at Core/El Centro a natural healing center in Milwaukee. He works part-time at Adonai Employment, Inc. a Christian company that assists individuals with disabilities and other barriers to employment find meaningful work.