

Understanding Reiki

The Art of Compassionate Healing

by Ann Bentzen

On the weekend of November 12-14, Holmes Camp and Retreat Center will host the second Jikiden Reiki Shoden Retreat class for those interested in learning how to offer support to others through the healing art of Reiki. I am a certified Shihankaku teacher with the Jikiden Reiki Institute of Kyoto, Japan. **Holmes is the ideal setting for learning Reiki because it affords participants the opportunity to let go of the world and all its distractions, quiet the mind and enter into stillness where they can learn to discern the subtle energies of Reiki.** Everyone has the ability to access this healing method which can bring great comfort and upliftment to others.

In March 2022, the original healing art of Reiki will be 100 years old. Its founder, Mikao Usui, developed the Reiki healing method following a transformative experience of oneness in 1922. Reiki is a light touch healing method supporting the recipient's ability to return to health and well-being following trauma or exposure to prolonged stress caused by physical, emotional mental or spiritual distress. Reiki has spread worldwide over the last 50 years. Now accepted in



many major hospitals today as a holistic support for patients and caregivers alike, Reiki is acknowledged as a drug-free, natural healing method that is complementary to traditional medicine. It is not a replacement for primary medical care but can support improved outcomes as noted through available research.

What connects Reiki with Christianity and our faith? I would respond that Reiki and major religions share a common ground of core values that honor our Divine nature. Reiki is taught as not having a connection to any religion as it has no dogma attached to it. However, the principles of Reiki parallel the essence of what Jesus taught to love and serve others. Jesus was a healer and there are many references in the New Testament to his healing. Healing was given freely to whoever needed it regardless of whether they were an outcast or physically handicapped. Reiki was offered to the world as a tool that can be learned by anyone. Rather than keep this healing method secret within his own family or a private circle of followers, Mikao Usui broke Japanese tradition stating that no one would ever be allowed to 'own it'. Reiki belongs to anyone with a desire to learn it. There is no intermediary with Reiki. You learn to connect directly to the energy.

The principles of Reiki encourage mindfulness and to be fully present in every moment of your day. Do your best to let go of preoccupation with the past or the future. Letting go of anger, of worry, and learning to cultivate gratitude in our hearts provides an antidote to the mind's preoccupation with issues outside of our present moment. By offering our best effort in all we do, we can stay focused on today without any regrets. Love and compassion follow naturally as we show kindness and compassion for ourselves and others.

Jesus taught us to love our neighbors as ourselves. Rather than being angry at others or who we consider our enemies, we can hold compassion and be love. “Love” to a Reiki practitioner is the greatest power in the Universe dissolving all manner of stresses of this world. Jesus reminded us that we live in this world but are not of this world. The Reiki principles support our ability to transcend the often chaotic nature of our everyday world. As biblical stories recount the washing of feet to clean off the dust of this world, Reiki relieves the stress of living in this world allowing the beauty of our Divine expression to shine through us. Reiki uplifts all aspects of our being not just the physical body.



Where does Reiki come from? The answer is found in the word “Reiki”. When you break the word into two parts, you have “Rei” and “Ki”. “Rei” refers to a source beyond the clouds, the cosmos. When we study Japanese culture we can appreciate their reverence of Nature and the Divinity (Kami) in all things. Living on a group of volcanic islands on the Ring of Fire in the Pacific Ocean, the Japanese have learned through thousands of years of earthquakes, floods, volcanic eruptions

and tsunamis to strive to live in harmony with Nature. “Ki” refers to the energy itself. “Reiki” is therefore understood as an energy coming from the cosmos. Reiki practitioners only serve as humble conduits for this energy. With a quieting of the mind, Reiki practitioners allow Reiki to flow through them to serve the highest needs of the recipient.

Finally, Reiki is a service. It is something we can provide for each other with love and generosity of spirit. With Reiki we can literally “lend a hand” to uplift those who are grieving, those who are in pain, those who are suffering with mental anguish or physical trauma. Reiki offers a way to rise above the lower “ki” of everyday life and to live with gratitude and compassion for ourselves and others.

Reiki truly is compassion in action.



Anne Bentzen is a long time member of the Bedford Presbyterian Church serving through choir, bell choir, and as an elder. More information on Reiki and recent research articles are available at www.balancing4life.com. Contact Anne Bentzen directly at 914-588-4079 or send an email to balancing4lifeusa@gmail.com