

Why I Love Reiki

In today's fast paced world, where stress and anxiety often seem like constants, the search for holistic healing practices has intensified. Reiki stands out as a gentle, yet powerful technique that offers profound benefits for physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing.

Having always had a strong interest in complementary therapies, I became a reiki practitioner over 25 years ago, unaware of what a key role it would have in my life. I have run my own practice for over 20 years as an executive coach, trainer and facilitator; I especially love my work using reiki and supporting the whole person.

The word "reiki" is derived from two Japanese words: "rei" meaning universal and "ki" meaning life energy or vital force. Together reiki can be interpreted as "universal life energy". Originating from Japan in the 20th century, reiki operates on the principle that an unseen life force energy flows through all living beings. When this energy becomes disrupted or depleted, it can lead to imbalances and dis-ease.

Reiki practitioners learn how to channel this energy effectively, adhering to a code of ethics and principles promoting compassion, integrity and non-judgment in their practice.

David R. Hamilton PhD says in his book *Why Woo Woo Works*, (2021) "Contrary to popular belief, a reiki practitioner doesn't 'heal' a patient in the sense that they fix something that is wrong with them. According to the US National Centre for Complementary and Integrative Health, the goal of the practitioner is to direct energy to help facilitate the person's own healing response. In this way, a reiki healer assists the patient to heal themselves."

At its core, reiki involves the transfer of energy from practitioner to recipient to promote balance and harmony within the body, mind and spirit. During a reiki session, the practitioner acts as a conduit for this universal energy, channeling it through their hands through either gentle touch or hovering actions above different parts of the body.

Benefits of reiki may include:

- **Stress reduction:** A common benefit is reiki's ability to induce deep relaxation and alleviate stress. By calming the nervous system and promoting a sense of tranquility, reiki can help individuals manage stress more effectively and improve their overall wellbeing.
- **Pain management:** Many people turn to reiki for relief from chronic pain conditions such as arthritis or back pain. While reiki does not directly target the underlying cause of pain, it can reduce pain perception and promote a greater sense of comfort and ease.
- **Emotional healing:** Reiki is beneficial for emotional and mental health also. By releasing energetic blockages and promoting emotional release, reiki can help individuals process difficult emotions such as grief, anxiety or trauma, and foster a greater sense of emotional wellbeing.
- **Enhanced immune function:** Some studies suggest that reiki may have positive effects on the immune system, helping to strengthen the body's natural defenses against illness and disease. By promoting balance and harmony within the body, reiki may support overall immune function and vitality.
- **Spiritual growth:** Reiki is not tied to any specific belief system, but many practitioners and recipients report experiencing profound spiritual insights and growth through reiki practice.
- **Improved sleep:** Research has shown that sleep plays a fundamental role in maintaining good health; with lack of sleep linked to various health issues such as obesity and impaired cognitive function. Many people report better sleep quality and increased feelings of restfulness after a reiki session.
- **Applications within workplaces:** With wellbeing becoming key within organisations, reiki sessions are being recognised as an intervention to support and retain staff at all levels. Two recent examples were when I had the joy of providing short individual sessions as part of an organisation's health and wellness exposition, and at an International Women's Day Retreat. It was a delight to experience the recipient responses to these sessions, especially as it was a totally new experience for many.
- **Can be delivered remotely:** A significant benefit is that reiki can be delivered without in-person contact. An example of this is when COVID hit and sessions could no longer be in person, I was able to provide sessions over the phone; delivering over 100 sessions this way, including internationally.

- Many hospitals and healthcare facilities around the world, including in the US, Canada, Japan and the UK, now offer reiki as part of their integrative medicine programs - recognising its potential to enhance patient care and wellbeing.

As David R. Hamilton PhD writes, “There are a growing number of scientific studies that show reiki can be very effective. Several have demonstrated that reiki reduces pain, anxiety, depression and even blood pressure in patients suffering from a range of medical conditions or who have experienced various interventions including cancer, knee replacement, back pain and many others”.

What sets reiki apart from conventional medicine is its holistic approach to healing, addressing not only the physical symptoms of illness but also the underlying energetic imbalance and emotional or spiritual factors contributing to disease. By treating the whole person – body, mind and spirit, reiki seeks to restore harmony and balance on all levels, promoting a sense of wholeness and wellbeing.

It is a profound privilege to work with people in this way and a real joy to support people to deepen their connection with themselves and enhance their wellbeing.

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