



Teaching Reiki

Part III, Conducting the class

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In my previous articles, “Teaching Reiki,” and “Developing Your Teaching Style,” (*Reiki News Magazine*, Summer and Fall 2007), I explained how to prepare for teaching a Reiki class. This article is about conducting the class and the things that you need to consider when you teach.

Choosing a Location

New Reiki Master Teachers will often start out by teaching at their homes or in someone else's home. If you are teaching in a home, the location should be within reasonable commuting distance for your students, and ideally, an easy location to find. If one or more of your students needs handicap access, make sure the home can accommodate them. If someone else is hosting your class in their home, be clear about what you will provide and what you expect them to provide. Here are additional things to consider when teaching in a home setting.

1. Pets

It is important to know whether or not the home you will be conducting the class in has pets. If there are pets, you need to let those attending the class know beforehand. Some people are highly allergic to animal dander and sitting for eight or more hours in a home where there are animals can be very uncomfortable and even unhealthy for them.

Years ago, when I first began teaching and people would host me in their homes, I forgot to ask about pets prior to one of my classes. Two students who had come from out-of-town were allergic, and the 3-day class was very challenging for them. They could not get the full benefit since they were sneezing and their eyes were running the entire time. Obviously, I felt very bad and since that time, I have always made sure to find out if there are pets and notify those attending ahead of time.

If pets are present, it is also important to know if they may become disruptive. A dog that barks at every strange sound will be a detriment to the harmony of the class even if it is confined somewhere else in the home. Any pets present should be kept in a separate room unless it is okay with the participants to let them roam around the house during class.

2. Smoking

You must also find out ahead of time if anyone in the home smokes. I personally will not teach in a home or location where

there is smoke because I am allergic, and I would not want anyone else to be subjected to second-hand smoke. Thankfully, in today's society, fewer people are smoking, or if they do smoke, are smoking outside so it is less of a concern.

3. Size

It is important that the room where the class is to be held is large enough to set up chairs for the attunements and treatment tables for table work. If the location is small, then you need to limit your class size. During a Reiki class, students' energy fields expand, so they need enough room to feel comfortable.

4. Comfort

Sitting for long periods can be uncomfortable, especially if a student has a back problem or other health issue. Providing brief breaks can alleviate this to some degree, although occasionally a student may need a particular seating arrangement to accommodate a health condition. A home usually has furniture that provides comfortable seating for most students; some students may even want to sit on pillows or on the floor. Folding chairs or other straight-back chairs are recommended for attunements.

5. Privacy

When conducting a class in a home, nothing else should be going on in the home. One hundred percent of the energy should be about the class. Students who attend your classes are paying you a fee and it is important to honor their learning process. If you or a person hosting the class has young children, they may need to be sent to a baby sitter or relatives' house for the day.

6. Noise

It is important to keep noise at a minimum and to respect students' learning process. I shut my phones off as soon as the last person arrives. You can simply put your ringers off and let the answering machine pick up any calls. Also, lower the volume on your answering machine to the lowest point, or contact the telephone company and sign up for their answering service. A lot easier and quieter. There is nothing more annoying than an answering machine picking up and having to listen to someone's message during an attunement or meditation. In addition, ask all students to shut off their cell phones or put them on mute or vibrate if they need to. Messages can be checked during breaks.

7. Temperature

Temperature of the room should be comfortable. Cool in the summer and warm in the winter. It is important to let the class know ahead of time to dress in layers. This way those that like it cooler or warmer will have the option to remove or add layers to keep themselves comfortable. And remember that once the energy starts to flow, the room and the students both tend to get warmer. Fans or additional heaters can be used for extremes in temperature.

8. Food

It is important that liquids, snacks, and, for an all day class, lunch be available. When working with energy, it is important to stay hydrated and maintain energy levels. Many students fast or modify their eating before class, and they may find themselves hungrier than usual or lightheaded if they go too long without food.

I provide snacks and lunch when I teach at my home. When teaching in another location, I also bring snacks like granola mixes, fruit or nuts, as well as water and teas when possible. If you are providing food, be aware of potential food allergies like nuts or shrimp. Wash your hands after preparing dishes with those ingredients to reduce chance of exposure. I once had a student break out in a rash just sitting near a shrimp salad that I had made. I serve mostly vegetarian or light dishes like soups, hummus or light salads like tuna or shrimp. Healthy, lighter foods resonate better with Reiki energies. (You also have the option of letting students bring their own food.)

In summary, when teaching at home, you want to minimize all distractions. You want the place to be a comfortable, nurturing and quiet environment so that the student can have an optimal environment for learning.

Hotels, Healing Centers and Health Care Facilities

If you decide to teach in a hotel or center, I would advise you to check the room out beforehand. If you aren't able to do this, at least have an idea of the minimum size you need the room to be. Thanks to the Internet, you can now do hotel searches on line. Many hotels even provide pictures so you can see what the location is like. Best Western Hotels, Holiday Inn and LaQuinta often have reasonable rates. Ask the hotel what their cancellation policy is so you know ahead of time, and if you have to cancel the class you can do so in a timely fashion and not have to pay penalty fees. If possible, visit the hotel beforehand to see it and find out what facilities are nearby for lunch.

Some chiropractors or spas have rooms available to rent. They may charge by the hour or do a split (of total fees collected) such as 70% for you and 30% to them. You can also contact local massage schools to rent a room. The benefit of having a class at a massage school is that they have tables readily available. Massage schools may also let you advertise to attract their students. Healing centers are ideal because they are already focused on quiet, relaxation, and providing a supportive environment. Sometimes

if you are teaching nurses or health care professionals, there may be a room at the hospital that you can use.

Although it is desirable to have a quiet and supportive environment, you do not have to have optimal conditions to have a great class! Several Reiki Masters have told me that they have taught the staff at a doctor's office or a veterinarian's office. They planned the training during lunch or immediately after work to accommodate the employees. They would conduct the classes in short sessions in a separate room or the waiting room. Even with everything going on, the class still went smoothly because of the intent of the teacher and the students to open to this gift! And they had willing subjects to practice on right away!

With all these factors to consider, remember that the most important thing you can do is to send Reiki to the class ahead of time. You can use the Distant Healing symbol as the "bridge" to the class and connect with the energy of the class. You can then ask Reiki to make you aware of anything you need to do for this particular class. When I do this, I am sometimes guided to bring a certain book or a special candle to that class.

After you send Reiki, simply step out of the way, and let Reiki take care of the details. I like to send Reiki to all of the students signed up for a class, especially the week before class. This way all are receiving the energy ahead of time, preparing them for this important and often life-changing event.

How do you decide what to charge?

This is an area of much debate. Fees depend on your location (city, state), how much experience you have, and what you will be including in your teaching. Some teachers charge as little as \$50 for a Reiki I class while others may charge up to \$250. A lot of it depends on where you teach and what is included in class.

A solid foundation to begin a practice of Reiki should always be a part of Reiki I, and because of this, a reasonable minimum for Reiki I could be \$150. Some teachers do not wish to charge for teaching because they consider it part of their "service." It is important to remember that the energy is indeed free....what the student is paying for is the training, the teacher's experience, their time and investment, as well as their fees for location, food, etc. Plus the Universe wants to support you in your work and by charging, your basic needs are provided for as well.

If you think of Reiki as a life enhancement skill, then you can remember that you are enriching their lives and giving them tools that will benefit them for the rest of their lives. Just as if they were attending school, there would be a fee.

(If the owner of the center or business wants to take a Reiki class, you can also barter the training fee for renting the room or hosting you.)

Planning a date

One of the most important factors for a successful Reiki class is the date. Most people prefer the weekends because they usual-

ly work during the week. Some prefer evenings or a day during the week. I have classes at my home during the week, some evenings and weekends as well. There are many options. (See “Teaching Reiki, Part II,” *Reiki News Magazine*, Fall 2007.)

Here are some general guidelines for planning dates:

- 1) Do not plan your class on a holiday such as Mother’s day or Father’s day or a day of religious observation. You want to honor all religious practices as well as family celebrations.

Some other holidays to be aware of are: Halloween, Oct. 31; the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas or New Years; Boxing Day, Dec. 26 (Canada); Easter Sunday; April 15th (income tax deadline); The Oaks or the Kentucky Derby (1st Friday and Saturday in May); Victoria Day, May 24 (Canada), and July 4th. Also of note, graduations from school usually occur on weekends in late May and early June. This does not mean that you cannot have classes on these dates; just that you might not have as many attend as you would on other weekends.

- 2) Be mindful of summer vacations or winter breaks and spring school breaks. Many parents plan vacations and go away with their children during these times.
- 3) Be aware of local events. For example, I never teach in New York City the first weekend of November because of the New York City Marathon. Events may interfere with students’ travel or hotel arrangements. Sports, such as Superbowl Sunday, March Madness (college basketball), or regional sports events or championships are also very important to some.
- 4) Plan far enough in advance for advertising.
- 5) Be mindful of potential weather conditions. Planning a winter class in the Northeast is very different than planning it in Arizona or California. Always allow for the weather.

I like to plan Reiki I and II classes during the two weeks of the new moon cycle. I like the idea that a person is starting something new, and I try to work with the cycles of the moon.

These are just some things to be aware of for planning a date. All the planning in the world may not deliver as you might hope. Sometimes dates happen spontaneously, and a class just seems to come together. It’s always about the energy. And if a class does not happen, just trust the energy. Usually something else was more important at that time. Give it over to the Divine Mind and the Divine Plan. They always know what the highest good is. Sometimes it may be for you....you may just need the rest!!

Materials

After you have the location and the date, you need to make a list of materials and supplies you will need for the class. These are general guidelines for all classes.

- 1) Class manual and handouts (this includes your personal manual and notes). *Reiki The Healing Touch*, by William Lee Rand is available for use as a class manual, and you receive a discount if you buy five or more copies. See www.reikiwebstore.com. Handouts may include:

- Pictures of auras and chakras
- Information about the aura and chakras
- Your Reiki lineage
- Suggested books and Web sites
- The Reiki symbols and an explanation what they can be used for
- How to do distant healing

Plus anything that reinforces what you teach in class.

Remember to use as many senses as possible; visual, auditory and kinesthetic.

- 2) Sign in book or some way to record attendance and name tags (if more than five people attending)
- 3) Pictures of Dr. Usui, Dr. Hayashi and Mrs. Takata
- 4) Music CDs and a player. With advanced technology, many are now downloading CDs onto their iPods and bringing them (with speakers) to class.
- 5) Candles (if location allows); incense, sandalwood or lavender oils for placing on your hands for the attunement (optional).
- 6) Chart of the hand positions
- 7) Treatment tables (if available. If not, chairs)
- 8) Water/Snacks

These are basic needs for each class. What you cover in class will determine what else you need. If you have access to a DVD player and a TV, you can use the DVD from the Reiki Tool Kit to demonstrate scanning, giving a treatment, and so much more.

Class outline

What to cover in class was described in my previous article, “Teaching Reiki, Part II.” Outlines for Reiki I, II, Advanced Reiki Training, and Master Teacher are provided on www.reiki.org under “Free Downloads.”

Reiki classes are all about energy. Pay attention to the energy of the class. Take a break if it feels right. Use your outline and do not be afraid to change it. Always pay attention to the energy; it is the best teacher.

Meditations

Meditations add an important dimension to the teaching of Reiki. The teacher’s meditations are often cited as one of a student’s favorite parts of the class. Meditations can be done as a class opening and/or before the attunement.

New teachers are often intimidated by the thought of developing or leading a meditation. They are much easier than you think! A meditation is simply a journey that you take the student on, or one that they go on themselves. A meditation can be as simple as the Gassho meditation in

which students place their hands in prayer position, with their thumbs touching their hearts. They close their eyes and bring their awareness to the tips of the fire (middle) fingers. Remind them to gently press the fire fingers together and refocus if their minds wander. (This technique is detailed in *Reiki the Healing Touch* by William Rand.) Gassho means “two hands coming together,” and it teaches one to quiet the mind and create a single pointed focus in meditation. You can have the students sit in Gassho for five to ten minutes to help them prepare to receive the attunement.

Many teachers like to use guided imagery for meditation. Guided imagery is simply a journey that you take your students on to enhance their learning experience. You may use a general relaxation meditation or a theme meditation. The intent is to have the student relax enough to receive the attunement or connect with the energy. You can develop your own script and record it onto your iPod or CD to practice or play. Or you can use one that is already recorded. And it is okay to read the script while they have their eyes closed. One way for you to develop your meditations is to experience them as much as you can. Listen to the meditations of others and get some guided imagery books or CDs. You are simply creating a story or a journey for the students to go on. You can also use the breath as a meditation. Or you can have them breathe through the chakras.

Some popular guided imagery/meditation resources are:

- Reiki Tool Kit — www.reiki.org
- Belleruth Naparstek — www.healthjourneys.com
- Sanaya Roman — www.orindaben.com
- Shakti Gawain — www.shaktigawain.com

You can develop a simple meditation by having students:

- Bring their awareness to each part of their body from their head to their feet and have them focus on relaxing that part.
- Bring earth energy up through each chakra (or Universal energy down through).
- Go to their favorite place in nature. Incorporate all their senses to heighten their awareness.
- Imagine themselves in a shower. Have the color of the water change to reflect the colors of the chakras (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet).
- Imagine themselves standing in a rainbow. Bring in all the colors (as above).
- Imagine themselves walking on a beach, or into the woods.

These are just a few ideas to help you get started on developing your own meditations. Just think of some of your favorite meditations and you can go from there. If you are also a hypno-

tist, there are unlimited scripts available that you can incorporate into your meditations.

To help students visualize, describe it as using their imagination. You can have them picture their house, be in one of their favorite rooms or places in nature. Or you can have them imagine they are looking at a blank screen, watching a movie or reading a book.

Attunements

The attunement is often the highlight of a Reiki class. Do all you can to make it a spiritual and memorable experience for the student. An attunement is a sacred spiritual experience that connects the person with higher levels of consciousness and the unlimited source of healing energy. And most of all, remember that the most important factor in an attunement is the **intent** of both the Reiki Master and the person, not the ritual itself. Have soft music in the background. Use sandalwood oil (or lavender) on your hands. Make sure you have comfortable seats for the students. And have them do a meditation to help them better prepare for the attunement. Then give them quiet time after the attunement so they can process.

I usually do my attunements before lunch. Many have fasted or prepared and want their channel to be as clear as possible. You can then break for lunch after the attunement and have students share when everyone reconvenes after the meal. This also gives students time to ground and process. I also encourage them to take time to write about what they experienced so it can be remembered later.

Reiki symbols

The Reiki symbols are a gift that one receives when one studies Reiki. They are tools that allow one to focus the energy of Reiki for specific purposes. They are considered sacred and not shared with those that do not have Reiki.

When teaching Reiki, it is important to have the students learn how to draw the symbols correctly. Even though we know that it is the attunement and our intent that makes them work, it is still important for them to learn the correct way. This way, when they become teachers, they can pass the correct drawing on to their students.

I usually give my students the symbols to study ahead of time. If they are taking a Reiki I and II class, I give them the symbols to study at the end of Reiki I. This way they have time to study. I do not ever want students to stress over learning the symbols. I want them to enjoy the symbols and connect with their energy. I also emphasize that they really learn the symbols after class to take the pressure off.

It is important that the student draw the symbol for you correctly before class is over. This way you can correct any mistakes on the spot. You need to emphasize that this is not a test; otherwise, whenever a student receives a new symbol, they will

be anxious, which may interfere with the learning process. To help decrease anxiety, you can have the student draw the symbols in pencil. Any mistakes can be erased and corrected on the spot.

Evaluation forms

After the class is finished, it is always a good idea to have your students fill out an evaluation form. This way you learn what you did well and where you need to improve. It also helps you to understand what the students need. You become a teacher when you begin to teach. Evaluation as feedback is a learning tool for teacher and student.

Questions on the evaluation form can include:

- (Please rate on a scale from 1 to 5; 1 being unsatisfactory and 5 being excellent.)
- The instructor was knowledgeable about the material presented.
- The instructor answered questions effectively.
- The class provided sufficient hands-on experience and practice.
- How would you describe your experience in class to a friend?
- What was the most positive experience you had in class?
- What improvements would you recommend in the class or the teacher's presentation?
- Comments:

Certificates

Certificates are an important part of Reiki training. They validate the teaching that the students receive and are often required as proof of training.

It is very easy to develop your own certificates. All you need is your computer, some certificate paper (or a program), an embosser, some gold seals and the text of what your certificate will say.

Many office supply stores like Staples, Office Depot, etc. carry 8 1/2 x 11 certificate paper. Or you can go to Paper Direct at www.PaperDirect.com to order your own. Office supply stores can also make your embosser. This metal device decorates or marks a surface with a slightly raised design or lettering. When you have something notarized, an embosser is what the notary uses to make a seal. Embossers are inexpensive and you can have anything you want written on them.

For example: You can have your initials in the center of the Gold seal. Around it, you can have "Reiki Master Teacher." Some teachers have the Japanese kanji for Reiki in the center. You then take your embosser and place it on the gold seal and press firmly. You will have a wonderful seal for your student's certificate.

A sample of what you might have on the certificate would be:

FIRST DEGREE REIKI (or Reiki I) THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT

Has received the necessary attunement and knowledge of the Reiki natural system of healing and has demonstrated proficiency in administering hands-on healing through the Transmission of spiritually guided life force energy for First Degree Reiki.

Given on this ____ day of ____
(Your signature)
Reiki Master/Teacher

The International Association of Reiki Professionals (www.iarp.org) has a certificate program. All certificates are printed individually and if you are an IARP member they have the IARP official "International Association of Reiki Professionals—Registered Master Teacher" gold seal. Cost is approximately \$3.00 per certificate.

Problem solving

These are some of the questions that I am asked most often by new teachers.

What do I do if someone monopolizes the conversation in class?

It is important to remember that Reiki will always give you the answers to any question or issue that may come up. If you go to your heart and ask Reiki to guide you, you will always get an answer. And if you speak in a loving way, you can still be kind without making the person wrong.

You could say something like, "Thanks for sharing. You have a lot of good questions or comments. I would like to hear from some of the other people in the class now," or "Let's give someone else a turn now and hear what they have to say."

If it continues to be a problem, you can simply take the person aside during a break and say, "I know you have a lot of questions or comments but I'd like everyone to have an equal time to talk."

Some people can be needy and class is one of the few times that someone will actually listen to them and pay attention to them. Just point it out to them in a loving way that class is for everyone and as the teacher, it is your responsibility to make sure that all students get their needs met. This way you do not make the person "wrong" and you honor the needs of all, including yourself.

What do I do if someone cries a lot during class or is always talking about their issues?

This goes back to the above question. Reiki classes are often healing and it is common for tears to flow or things to open up for people. It is important to honor and respect each student's process. However, as the teacher, you must remember that the needs of the class are the primary focus. Students are usually respectful of others' process until it dominates class time. As the

teacher, you need to keep the energy of the class flowing while meeting the needs of all. You can take a break and talk to the student privately. You may suggest they take a break and have some alone time; they could see you privately for a session or take the issue to their therapist. Reiki class is not about therapy unless you have the training to do so or your class focus is on processing. People that come to Reiki classes are there to learn and want you to honor their learning needs.

What to do if someone argues every point with you or you just don't connect?

Every once in a while you may find that there is someone that you just do not connect with or who challenges you on everything you say. That is normal and can happen in everyday life. If a person constantly challenges you, there is usually an underlying issue. Again, it is important to address the issue in the beginning by saying something like, "I see that you and I are not connecting. Perhaps I am not the right teacher for you. It might be better if you find a different teacher." And you offer to refund their money as well. This has only happened to me once in all the years I have been teaching and the student quieted down and apologized later. They were going through a difficult time in their lives, and Reiki was bringing up a lot of their "stuff."

If you come from your heart and identify the problem early on, and you do not make the other person wrong, then most problems can be handled easily. Sometimes your students will present you with *your* issues and once you realize that, you can say to yourself, "Here is my issue again. Thank you for the lesson. I know what to do," and then come from your heart. Realize it is simply about the energy.

After class


The end of class is not the end of the student-teacher relationship. It is important to be available and to provide resources for the new Reiki practitioner. New Reiki students have many questions and often need guidance as they begin their journeys. (See my previous articles in the Summer and Fall 2007 issues of *Reiki News Magazine*.)

Here are some ways to provide guidance after class:

- **Have monthly Reiki circles or shares where students can practice and learn.** Encourage students to stay in contact with and get together with their classmates to practice. If students are not local, you can give them names of local Reiki Masters or practitioners in their area. Whenever I teach in a different state, I give my students names of other students I have trained or Masters I know that are good resources.
- **Outreach/Community service.** Invite students to outreach events. Whenever someone is giving a talk on Reiki, find out if they need practitioners to do hands on. This is a great way for students to practice. Outreach programs have practitioners give short hands-on sessions. Our organization on Long Island; www.reikiconnection.org, has many outreach programs, and I invite my students to participate to gain experience.
- **Be available.** I have days set aside when I answer students' emails or speak with them on the phone. I also invite them to review my classes when I am in their area. Reviewing a class is often beneficial as you sometimes miss things the first time you take a class. Reviewing students are also a great resource for those taking the class for the first time. I encourage them to share their Reiki experiences with the class. I usually have the student pay a review fee the first time they review the class. After that, they can just pop in for a few hours or the full day at no cost.

Summary

You become a teacher when you begin to teach. Prepare for each class. Send Reiki to yourself and the students before class begins. Review each class after you teach and make adjustments when necessary. Pay attention to the energy and ask it to guide you. Always come from your heart. Attend other teachers' classes. Continue your education and learning.

This concludes the series. Read each article over before and after you teach. Make adjustments when necessary. Enjoy the journey. Being a Reiki Master Teacher is not a destination....it is a journey. I wish you blessings on your way! 

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