



# Reiki for Empaths and Highly Sensitive People

## Part I

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**A**RE YOU AN EMPATH or a highly sensitive person? These are people who can more readily sense and feel other peoples' physical or emotional states and pain. When a person's mood is upbeat, being an empath can be especially pleasant. However, when empaths are around people who are feeling physically unwell or emotionally distraught, they will also pick up on that and perhaps begin to experience these same challenging feelings. For example, an empath might go into a crowded store and quickly feel overwhelmed, even unwell, from all the different energy there. While this ability to be deeply sensitive to others is a gift in so many ways, it can also turn into a problem for an empath if he or she doesn't know how to clear away the unwanted energy.

A number of years back, I began to notice that many of my Reiki students considered themselves to be empaths. Since I began teaching Reiki in 2000, I have often asked my students how many of them felt that they might be an empath. Normally, one-third to two-thirds of them acknowledge this and have come to a Reiki class in part seeking tools to help themselves deal with the challenging side of being highly sensitive. Following this realization, I began teaching my Reiki II students how to use the many tools that Reiki has to offer for empathic issues. In this article I will share information about these tools and others to empower empaths in their daily lives and in Reiki sessions.

### Gifts and Challenges

British poet David Jones puts it quite succinctly: "It is both a blessing and a curse to feel everything so very deeply."<sup>1</sup> This will have a very familiar ring to most highly sensitive people. Along with the challenges are the many brilliant gifts that empaths bring to the world. "There are gifts in being an empath, like being more compassionate for others' situations and an increased ability to understand another's feelings, which makes them appreciated as friends."<sup>2</sup> There are many more.

### Empaths:

- Are deeply moved by the arts, music and spiritual experiences
- Want to help others and put them first
- Are often highly creative
- Are very strong due to their vulnerability
- Are more in touch with their emotions, their inner guide
- Only want to do what they love for work
- Have a sense of knowing that goes beyond intuition
- Love nature and animals

Here is my favorite quote about the gifts of highly sensitive people:

*Like most sensitive souls, you already know you're sensitive. You soak up other's moods and desires like a sponge. You absorb sensation like a paintbrush grasps each color on a palette. The*

*ethereal beauty of a dandelion, the shift of a season, the climax of a song, or a certain stirring scent can awaken such wonder they'll become your very breath itself—moving through you as fuel does to fire and wind does to waves.*<sup>3</sup>

Highly sensitive people can regard their gift of empathy as their greatest strength, as their superpower!

And yet, like the wind, an empath may feel the highs and lows of life as if riding a gigantic ocean wave—and as high as you can feel with the joy is as low as you can feel with the pain. Both extremes are letting you know that you are fully alive and present, but it is not easy to ride the wave when it's the pain that you are experiencing. Many empaths are familiar with the more painful lows.

### Empaths often:

- Feel their own and other people's feelings and pains intensely
- Avoid watching violent movies and TV shows
- Are sensitive to loud noises and startle easily
- Are easily overstimulated or overwhelmed by too much intense stimuli or chaotic situations

<sup>1</sup> [www.storydj.com/p/where-to.html](http://www.storydj.com/p/where-to.html).

<sup>2</sup> Grace Lindsay, personal communication, December 8, 2016.

<sup>3</sup> Victoria Erickson, retrieved from [www.pinterest.com/pin/18788523419858107/](http://www.pinterest.com/pin/18788523419858107/).

- Are bothered by bright lights, strong smells or coarse fabrics
- Dislike conflict
- May feel overwhelmed in public places
- Tend to be ungrounded

Although it is tempting to want to hold onto the highs and so easy to get caught in the lows, the best course is simply to learn to allow the emotions to flow through you like a river and hold on to nothing. In her *Reiki News Magazine* article, “Reiki is the Solution: Healing Empathic Issues,” Maryellen Nardomarino offers an explanation as to why this flow is important. She asserts that in many empaths, emotional information from others flows into their sacral chakra and is funneled up into higher chakras to be assessed and processed. She says that if the major chakras are not balanced, the constant stream of information will not flow freely but instead get stuck in the sacral chakra, and this higher chakra processing will not take place. The empath is then left confused about what is coming from within as opposed to what is coming from without. Maryellen maintains that the ultimate protection isn’t protection at all but rather a deep healing and balancing of one’s energy system through Reiki.<sup>4</sup>

It was Reiki that helped me reclaim my own abilities as an empath. Before I began my Reiki journey in 1993, I was energetically shut down for five years in an abusive relationship. It took a year of working with the Reiki energy before I could feel the energy. Reiki continued to clear my body to the point where I reclaimed my abilities as an empath, and then developed the gift further. Now I can feel the power of Reiki running

through me, creating a gentle back and forth wave of my body at times that feels very pleasurable.

As a Professional Counselor and Marriage and Family Therapist, my job is to listen to others’ heartaches and struggles in life. And as a marriage therapist, the struggles often unfold right in my office, creating extra drama and tension. I also provide Reiki sessions professionally. Being an empath has been challenging when I feel clients’ pain and anxiety in my body. I am so fortunate to have had Reiki since the beginning of my counseling career to help keep me from getting burned out.

### Reiki Tools for Empaths

Reiki has so many gifts and tools for the highly sensitive person. Here are Reiki techniques to help you.

Empaths are particularly prone to getting out of balance. Balance your chakras by giving yourself Reiki or by receiving a Reiki session from someone else. This is the core of your self-help as a sensitive person. Give yourself Reiki daily for 10 minutes to one hour and receive a Reiki session from another at least every two weeks.

Before you leave home for the day, begin a Reiki session, or go someplace where the energy might be uncomfortable, draw or visualize the Power or Holy Fire symbol in front of your trunk and then each chakra, starting with the root and moving to the crown. Then say this affirmation, “I strengthen my light with Reiki. Anything less than love and light will transform or leave.” Create the intention that Reiki is continuously transmuting lower vibrational energy. Then check in and see how you are feeling physically and emotionally. Doing so will make it easier to notice if and when you pick up someone else’s issues. In the case of a Reiki session, if you start feeling pain or having

emotions that you didn’t have before you began the session, you are likely feeling your client’s issues. Note them and work on those areas of the body or those feelings in the client. Tell yourself that these sensations are not yours and you can let them go. In a session, it is also very helpful to set your ego aside and let go of any attachment to the outcome. Having an attachment to the results makes it more likely to pick up others’ issues.

Create a Power symbol or Holy Fire symbol box around you by drawing the Power or Holy Fire symbol on all four sides of you, over your head, and under your feet. Visualize the symbol moving through your box from Heaven to Earth and back several times. Intend to take your box with you as you move. You can create this box around your work area at your office, around your bed as you sleep, on a plane or anywhere.

Create a net of Power symbols much like a fish net with your intention. Intend to pull one net from under your feet to your head. Then create another one and pull it from over your head to your feet. Intend that only positive, loving energy will enter.

Imagine a shield of the Power or Holy Fire symbol in front and behind you. Say “Shields Up” whenever you want to activate it.

In a conflictual or highly emotional situation with another, imagine the Mental/Emotional or Holy Fire symbol between you and the other person, intending it to transmute and heal.

Whenever you feel another person pulling on your energy or cording to you, it is because the person wants energy and is attracted to your field. Imagine yourself connected to Heaven and Earth with a Reiki symbol running through you between Heaven and Earth. If the other person is open to changing the situation, you could offer to do the same Reiki tech-

<sup>4</sup> Maryellen Nardomarino, “Reiki is the Solution: Healing Empathic Issues,” *Reiki News Magazine*, Summer 2012.

nique for him or her. If not, you might consider that you can trust that the other person can handle his or her issues and realize that you don't have to help everyone who comes your way.

Clear your body with the Reiki dry bathing technique *Kenyoku* at the end of Reiki sessions, at the end of your work day and before getting in bed. After going somewhere where you feel you have picked up another's energy, clear yourself.

Holy Fire Reiki and Holy Fire Karuna contain the best and most powerful tools for empaths that I have encountered. The soft, white mist of the Holy Fire energy continuously clears and transforms energy around you. The rewards of being an empath with Holy Fire Reiki are heavenly! At times I feel myself merge with God consciousness with such power and gentleness that I am lost in bliss and even temporarily stop breathing. Tears often flow down my cheeks. In that moment, I become one with the Infinite. With Holy Fire Reiki, these experiences are repeatable and often able to be called up at will. Just now

while I was writing this, I was asking Jesus to give me the words to describe this experience and just had another experience of the Divine! Holy Cow! I mean Holy Fire!

Whenever you need an extra burst of healing energy, strengthen the Holy Fire energy around you by thinking about it, visualizing it around or inside your body, by drawing the symbol on your hands or over your body or by calling its energy to activate more strongly.

Love is a powerful healing energy. With the Reiki Master level of Holy Fire Reiki, you have the ability to fill yourself up by practicing the Oceans of Holy Love or the Holy Love Experience. It is like a love gas station that is always available to us to fill us with the power of Divine Love. Sensitive people are givers; they get depleted and need to be filled up.

Call on Jesus, the master healer, or Holy Spirit or God for help with clearing energies. If you feel you have picked up spirit attachments, do the Healing Spirit Attachments exercise found in your *Usui/Holy Fire II Reiki Master Manual*.

Although Reiki offers empaths so many ways to clear the build-up of the disruptive energy that empaths sometimes accumulate, I have also used additional techniques with great success. In Part 2 of this article, I will describe these as well as present some valuable insights from a number of my Reiki students. Look for Part 2 of "Reiki for Empaths and Highly Sensitive People" in an upcoming issue of the *Reiki News Magazine*. 🌸



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