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Improving the Value of Your Reiki Practice

Part II: Reiki Classes

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TEACHING REIKI is so rewarding and fulfilling and usually goes smoothly; however, as can be the case with Reiki sessions, all of which usually go very well, challenges can arise in Reiki classes. In Part I of this article,¹ I shared information and stories about how my counseling skills have informed my Reiki sessions in regards to connecting with the client, validating the client, sharing intuitive information, handling emotional and

Creating a Comfortable Atmosphere

Creating a comfortable atmosphere for your class starts before the class begins. Send Reiki ahead to your students and to the class itself. Then clear and power up the room with the Power Symbol and any others you are guided to use. I like to give Reiki to each chair.

When students arrive, have them get to know each other by doing something interactive—for instance having them

tion of clearing the energy field. If thick or blocked energy is encountered, the giver stays in that location longer, until the hands begin to move through the block. The giver completes this part of the clearing by patting the floor three times. This exercise is repeated from head to foot on the front and back of the partner. Then the partners switch roles. Students will find themselves making friends with like-minded people, which is often very important to them.

As facilitators of Reiki sessions and classes, we have an important role to play that can help our clients' and students' healing and growth. Reiki practitioners are compassionate and we need to have or develop the skills to handle normal aspects of our practice as well as challenges that arise.

mental health issues and boundary issues. Part 2 describes how my counseling skills have informed my Reiki teaching and covers topics that include creating a comfortable atmosphere, validating the student, handling questions and sharing in class, redirecting off-topic questions and how to address emotional issues and mental health challenges within the class. With the help of Reiki and guidance, we can develop the skills that we need to be successful teachers and practitioners of Reiki.

smudge each other with sage or incense. Welcoming each of them to class and asking the students to greet each other with a hug (if that feels appropriate to the individual students) will also get the interaction going. You can ask students to pair up and ground each other. Start by having partners face each other with the giver's hands on either side of the other's head, palms horizontal to the floor. The giver then begins to slowly move the hands up and down through the energy field of the partner from head to foot with the inten-

On the other hand, it is also vitally important to honor and accept diversity in your classes, letting everyone know they are welcome by being warm and friendly to each one. I try to personally connect with each student during class by spending time on breaks and lunch with him or her or by asking the student if he or she has any questions. I remember one recent Reiki class that had the most unusual combination of very diverse students. I thought it might turn into a problem, but they formed friendships and had

a lot of fun laughing on breaks together! Trust Reiki to take care of things for you.

Validating the Student

Validating the student means to help the student feel accepted and understood without judgment while also encouraging him or her.

There are many ways to validate the student. The main fear students have about taking the beginning Reiki class is that they won't be able to do Reiki. Share that the feeling is normal and you will help them. You can ask the class how many have that fear and have them raise their hands. When a person is sharing her goals for class, I like to take a moment to talk about how she can use Reiki for her goal so that the class feels tailored to her needs. Another idea is when a student shares his experience with a meditation, Placement or Ignition, nod your head and say thank you for sharing in a positive way. Students want to feel that their experience is normal and acceptable—a thoughtful teacher has the ability to do this.

In my experience, *Byosen* scanning is the most intimidating process for students to learn. Let them know that your goal for them is to feel just one area that is different, reassuring them that with practice, they will begin to sense more. Acknowledge the students who can immediately sense energy issues in other areas with an enthusiastic "That's great." After each one scans, ask her where she felt a blockage. Scan that area and confirm that you feel a blockage there too. Say something affirming like, "You got it!" Repeat this process with any other blocks she found. Then rescan the entire body and point out any additional blocks you found. Have her scan that area. Usually she will say that she thought she sensed something there but that it felt like it might have been her imagination. Let her know again how great she is doing. We all need affirmations! In the less common situation that

the student didn't find any blocks, scan and point out the most perceptible one. Have the student feel over that area. Almost all students will be able to feel something. Remember to validate her as well with a positive comment.

The symbols quiz can cause students anxiety. Consider sending out the symbols a week or two before the class and ask students to do their best to learn them because they will be using them in class. When they hand in their symbols quiz, point out in a kind way the parts they got correct and then the incorrect parts. Give the student a chance to correct it, looking at her notes if needed. When she has drawn the symbol properly, let her know it with a positive comment like "looks great" or "good job." If a student does really well with drawing or remembers the names really quickly, show how impressed you are by the expression on your face and a "Wow!"

I asked William Rand how he validates students in his classes. He shared,

Always have an upbeat, positive, appreciative, validating attitude toward your students that expresses the feeling that you like them and that you are glad they are in class. Use name tags and memorize each student's name and use their names when you talk with them. If a student asks a question, use her name in your response, beginning with "Good question, Sarah." When students ask questions, look directly at them and carefully listen to what they are saying without assuming you know their question before they are finished asking it so that you gain a clear understanding of the question. Also show appreciation that they are asking it. In the middle of the second day, say to the whole class, "You guys are doing really well."

During a specific practice session such as *Byosen* scanning, walk around class and comment on how individuals

are doing well by saying "good job" or "you're doing it" or "looks good" and then say to the whole class, "Everyone is doing really well." When demonstrating any exercise, have a positive attitude that everyone gets it; this will be expressed to the class telepathically and through your body language.

Questions and Sharing in Class

If you have taught classes, you will have noticed that some students love to share and ask questions and others rarely speak up. I often wonder if the shy ones have questions or how they are experiencing class. If the class is small, you can go around the room and ask people to share their experience with a meditation, Ignition, etc., while also giving them permission not to respond. Occasionally you can call on the quiet student and ask him to share his experience. I have even diplomatically asked the talkative ones to hold back a little and let the quieter ones speak up when the talkative ones were dominating the class.

Redirecting Off-Topic Questions

Handling questions and conversations that are not part of the outline is probably my biggest challenge in teaching because even short answers can easily turn into longer discussions, which eats up class time. When I handle this situation well, I give a short answer and if students want more discussion say, "Let's save this discussion for the break or lunch time." Common off-topic questions that come up in class relate to meditation, use of pendulums, Reiki books and other lineages.

Handling Emotional Issues in Class

Reiki class is a time for healing as well as learning and emotional issues can rise to the surface, causing tears, fears and old issues to surface. It is the teacher's job to provide a safe environment for the student's emotions by allowing the student to

feel and express whatever is going on. If the student is crying, offer a tissue. Refrain from going over to hug or touch the student as it can interfere with processing the emotion. Activate Reiki and beam Reiki to the student and encourage the entire class to beam Reiki as well. If a student leaves the room in an emotional state, go check on the student to see how you can support him. He may need a drink of water, to go outside or to take a few minutes by himself before he returns to class.

If a student starts discussing a personal issue, it may best support the student if you listen to the issue, say something relevant about how to use Reiki to help with it or have the class stop and give Reiki to the student for a few minutes if the student seems upset.

Enrolling Students with Mental Health Issues

One in six adults in the United States has a mental health disorder.² That means in a class of six students, one of them is likely to have mental health issues whether you know it or not. I have had students with mental health issues in my Reiki classes. It is most helpful if the student discloses the mental health issue prior to class and asks for any accommodations that might need to be made. For example, one of my students with anxiety and social anxiety disorder said she might need to leave the room at any time. The mother of a young man on the autism spectrum told me that her son might want to talk a lot and need to be reined in. She also said that he could suddenly have anxieties arise and she gave me her phone number to call in case I needed to consult with her. I did end up calling her for help when her son was ready to leave about an hour before the class ended. With younger students who have mental health issues, it is often appropriate to ask that a parent attend the class with the student. Other students have reported to me after class

that prior to class they were deeply depressed and even suicidal. Reiki has helped all of them with their unique challenges and I am so glad I had them in class. If a challenge arises in class, give Reiki to the student and situation, ask the student what he needs in order to feel supported in the moment and listen for your Divine Guidance. If you offer individual classes, you could offer a one-on-one class to the student with special needs.

Conclusion

As facilitators of Reiki sessions and classes, we have an important role to play that can help our clients' and students' healing and growth. Reiki practitioners are compassionate and we need to have or develop the skills to handle normal aspects of our practice as well as challenges that arise. In Parts 1 and 2 of this article, I have shared how we can connect with clients and students so that they feel seen, heard, accepted, understood and encouraged in order for them to receive even greater benefits from sessions and classes. As the healing potential of Reiki has become more well-known, it has drawn people who face all levels of emotional and mental health issues and of course these issues will often arise in sessions and classes. Having a plan for how to handle these moments will ease your anxiety if and when they do arise. Remember that since clients and students are the ones who are the most experienced about their issues, we can ask them what they need to feel supported in the moment. Providing structure for the session and class contributes to creating a healing environment. The basic principles of being kind, offering support where needed and listening to the person and our guidance while sending Reiki to the person and situation will carry you through most any circumstance that can arise. Reiki sessions and classes are a time for everyone to learn and grow, including the practitioner and the teacher. While there are many gifts we

receive as the facilitator, one that came to my mind as I wrote these articles was the gift of learning through other people's experiences, which amplifies what we can learn in this lifetime and thus aids in our soul's growth. This is very exciting to me! I have learned so much from my students and value each one. It is a joy and privilege to facilitate Reiki sessions and classes.

For more ideas about providing sessions and teaching Reiki classes, check out Deb Karpak's book, *The Reluctant Reiki Master's Step-By-Step Guide to Creating and Sustaining a Thriving Reiki Practice*, available in bookstores and online, and read William Rand's articles entitled "Create a Thriving Reiki Practice" (Part I in the Winter 2006 edition of *Reiki News Magazine* and Part II in the Spring 2007 edition). Additional, helpful reading for these areas includes "Tips for Reiki Sessions" by Judy McCracken published in the Summer 2015 edition of *Reiki News Magazine*. For more ideas about using Reiki for emotional issues and old wounds, read "Lessons from Holy Fire" by Karen Harrison in the Spring 2016 edition of *Reiki News Magazine*. ❄️



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Endnotes

- ¹ Karen Harrison, "Improving the Value of Your Reiki Practice: Part I.: Reiki Sessions," *Reiki News Magazine*, Fall 2017, pp. 31—34.
- ² www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/prevalence/any-mental-illness-ami-among-us-adults.shtml.