

# REIKI BASICS

## Understanding Traditional Reiki



Roger Warner

[www.reikiroger.com](http://www.reikiroger.com)

If you have enjoyed this ebook and would like to read more, I have written a book:

**REIKI IN TIMES OF CRISIS**

It is available from [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com)  
both as an eBook or as a paper back.

It contains 198 pages with no pictures, so not a book to be left on your coffee table. I like to think it contains a bit of meat. With the rapid expansion of Reiki some of the real meaning has been replaced by Glitter and Sparkle and aspects of Reiki have been mixed with other forms of healing and belief systems. The result, although at first sight seeming to be more, is in fact much less. Reiki is about Freedom and recognising our place and potential, not adding to the confusion we have accumulated.

In *Reiki in Times of Crisis* I have tried to clear the confusion regarding Reiki and our place within it.

Like it or hate it, hopefully it will help you to gain a clearer understanding.

I teach Reiki in Menorca, the U.K. and Europe.  
If you would like to find out about my workshops or about receiving treatments please contact me at;

[roger@reikiroger.com](mailto:roger@reikiroger.com)

[www.reikiroger.com](http://www.reikiroger.com)

Well, that's it for now. I will be adding pages to this e-book as we go along, so keep popping in to have a look and if you have any questions or anything you would like to know please let me e-mail me.

In the meantime...

Take care of yourself and enjoy Reiki. Remember, never take anyone's word for what Reiki is and if anyone tells you that you must only do *this, that or their way*, smile nicely and then go and find out for yourself...

Most of all, HAVE FUN!

This e-book is © copyrighted 2009 by R. Warner.

All Worldwide Rights Reserved.

If you have paid for this e-book you have been conned. It is distributed **FREE OF CHARGE** from [www.reikiroger.com](http://www.reikiroger.com).

Please report any website selling this e-book to the above web address.

## The Principles of Reiki

Just for today I will live  
the attitude of gratitude

Just for today I will not worry

Just for today I will not anger

Just for today I will  
do my work honestly

Just for today I will show love and  
respect to every living thing

## Gassho Meditation.

Gassho is the Japanese word for "two hands  
( are ) coming together".

Sit in what ever position you feel comfortable, either on the floor cross legged or in a chair, but try and keep the spine straight. (There is nothing wrong with lying down or leaning against something the only trouble is that it is very easy to dose off).

Take a few deep breaths to relax you and close your eyes. Take a couple more deep breaths just to settle things down a bit. Now bring your hands together in a praying position in front of you heart. Bring your attention to the point where the middle fingers of both hands touch and focus it there. The idea is to concentrate all your attention solely on the touching of these two fingers and to allow all other thoughts to cease to exist. This is jolly near impossible and almost immediately your mind will bounce off on some thought or other. Gently observe the thought; let it go and return to focusing on your two fingers. Each time your mind wanders treat it in the same way, neither judging nor criticising your success or lack of it. The point of this meditation is the doing not an end result.

## A Simple Meditation.

Much has been written about meditation and many strange ideas exist. This is a simple meditation that is easy to learn and to practice. It has helped me and I feel can benefit most of us. In the hustle and bustle of modern life it is increasingly difficult to find peace and quiet. Our minds are constantly on the go. Even when we are supposedly relaxing it is all too easy to be involved in tomorrow's work or analysing what has happened earlier.

It is important therefore to give ourselves a real break to allow our minds to "take a deep breath and relax". In this way we can see things clearly and not in the reflection of our hectic lives.

Try and give yourself ten to fifteen minutes in the morning and evening to practice this meditation.

I also like to use it to prepare myself before I treat patients. It makes for a calm and restful treatment and allows me easier access to my intuition.

## Reiki Basics

Hello and Welcome to *Reiki Basics*, a little pamphlet that I have put together for you. If you are like me you will prefer to read something in hard copy and will like to carry it around with you. So rather than clutter up the web site, here it is. It contains pages from the web site, a couple of articles I have written for magazines, some stuff I have taken from my workshop manual and a few bits from my book *Confronting Chaos*. I hope you find it useful and enjoy it.

Let's start at the beginning...

This is the Reiki story as it was told when I first went to learn Reiki. It is the official story, so to speak. This version is taken from the print-out I received so I did not write the story myself or know who the author is. But it is good and tells all, so why re-invent the wheel and thank you to the original author. If you recognise your work, may I continue to use it in this booklet? And I will give you credit for your labours.

## The History of The Usui System Of Natural Healing.

The story of Reiki to date has been an oral history; that is, passed on from teacher to student by word of mouth. This is the story as I and others have heard it.

The founder of Reiki, as natural healing, is Dr. Mikao Usui. At the turn of the century, (late 1800's) Dr. Usui was the president of a small Christian University in Kyoto, Japan, Doshisha University. He was also a Christian minister. An interchange with a student at the beginning of a Sunday service changed the focus of Dr. Usui's life. As Dr. Usui was beginning one of the last Sunday services of the school year, a senior student about to graduate raised his hand and asked Dr. Usui,

"Do you accept the contents of the Bible literally?"

Dr. Usui answered that indeed he did. The student went on,

"In the Bible it says that Jesus cured the sick, that he healed, and that he walked on water. You accept this as written, have you ever seen this happen?"

Dr. Usui agreed that he believed and answered that no, he had never seen a healing or walking on water. The student went on to say,

"For you, Dr. Usui, that kind of blind faith is enough, for you have lived your life and are secure. For us who are just beginning our adult lives and who have many questions and concerns, it is not enough. We need to see with our own eyes."

A seed had been sown. The next day Dr. Usui resigned his position as president of Doshisha University and came to the United States to the University of Chicago where he received a

that best suits you. So pat him on the head and humour him. He's harmless!

The attunements are the keys with which we bring our body's energetic system back into harmony with the rest of creation - and that's creation with a capital C. Once back and recognised, we can start to re-balance the whole body. Best of all we start to remember what that balance feels like and store that memory away like an old tuning fork. Then, when we find ourselves going out of tune, we can dig around in our "sock drawer", dust off our life's tuning fork, give it a good bang and remember how life should sound. The attunements set our personal tuning forks back to resonate with the universal one. The Reiki Master does the banging and we hum along.

For a Reiki Master, giving the attunements is a very special thing and a great privilege. Every time is different and unique. I have often wondered if the physical act of giving an attunement is needed or if the attunement happens when the commitment takes place. I don't know. Anyway, the process of the attunements is nice and, as I said before, rather special. It is the pivot point of my workshops and seems to unite people. It is funny, but the difference in a group before and after that first attunement is measurable; slightly reserved before, chatting away and laughing together after. So if it works, don't mend it!

commitment to you. The Reiki master's job is to pass on the attunements then help you avoid all the mistakes they have made and give support as and when you need it. And that's all.

An interesting thing happens between a Reiki Master and the Masters he attunes. It has a similar parallel to what happens when you first start off with Reiki. When you are first attuned to Reiki you are a little unsure and all your treatments resemble the way you learnt to give them at your workshop, blow for blow, hand position for hand position. Very simple, straight forward treatments. After a bit, as your confidence grows, you start to be more adventurous and your treatments get more complicated and involved. You develop your style. More time passes, you do more treatments and you get more experience and you find that your treatments change again; once more they become very simple! It's funny but we all seem to need to go through this progression.

A similar thing happens when you become a Reiki Master. You copy your Master like a mirror and teach simply. After a while you realise that your Master did not understand the whole picture and your teaching becomes more in-depth, more meaningful. Time passes and, blow me down, you find yourself teaching simply again. Not trying to understand the whole picture, not trying to show others what it is all about, but just doing and letting others find out for themselves the beauty of simplicity. We all do this and it seems necessary, so don't worry when you find yourself thinking, that nutty old guy didn't know what he was talking about. He probably didn't, but what was passed on to you was more important than words and you will sort it out for yourself and in the way

doctorate degree in scripture trying to uncover the secret of how Jesus and his disciples healed the sick. He had not found what he sought. Realizing that in the Buddhist tradition it is held that the Buddha had the power to heal, he decided to return to Japan to see what he could learn from Buddhism. Upon his return to Japan, Dr. Usui began to visit the Buddhist monasteries searching for someone who had an interest in and some knowledge of physical healing. He always received the same answer to his inquiries: "We are too busy with healing the spirit to worry about healing the body."

At long last he found someone who was at least interested in the problem of physical healing, an elderly Abbott of a Zen monastery. Dr. Usui requested that he be admitted to the monastery so that he could study the Buddhist scriptures, the sutras, in search of the key of healing. He was admitted and so began his study. He studied the Japanese translations of the Buddhist scriptures but did not find the explanation he sought. He learned Chinese so that a wider range of Buddhist writings were available to him, still without success. He then decided to learn Sanskrit, the ancient language, so that he could read the original Buddhist writings and have access to those writings that had never been translated into another language. Finally, he found what he had been looking for in the teachings of the Buddha that had been written down by some unknown disciple as the Buddha spoke. Dr. Usui found the formula, the symbols, the description of how Buddha healed. And so at the end of a seven-year search Dr. Usui had found what he sought—but not quite. Although he had uncovered the knowledge, he did not have the power to heal. Discussing this with his old friend, the Abbott, he decided to go to a mountain and meditate, to seek the power to heal. The

Abbott told him that it could be dangerous, that he could lose his life. Dr. Usui answered that he had come this far and would not turn back. Dr. Usui climbed one of the sacred mountains of Japan and meditated for twenty-one days. On the first day he placed twenty-one small stones in front of him and as each day passed he threw one away. On the twenty-first day Dr. Usui became aware of a beam of light from the heavens that came shooting towards him. Although he was afraid, he did not move but was struck by the light and knocked over. Then in rapid succession he saw before him, like bubbles of light, the symbols that he had discovered in his study; the key to the healing of Buddha and Jesus. The symbols burned themselves into his memory. When the trance was over Dr. Usui no longer felt exhausted, stiff or hungry as he had moments before on that last day of his meditation. He got up and began to walk down the mountain. On his way he stubbed his big toe, tearing back the toenail. He jumped with pain and grabbed his toe with his hand. In minutes the pain left, the bleeding stopped and his toe was well on the way to healing.

When he got off the mountain he stopped at an outside vendor stall and ordered breakfast. The old man at the stall, seeing the length of his facial hair and the condition of his clothes realized that he had been on a long fast and said that it would be a few minutes before he could prepare his food so that it would not upset his long empty stomach. He directed Dr. Usui to go and sit under a tree on a bench to wait. Soon the daughter of the man came with his breakfast. As he looked at her Dr. Usui saw that she had been crying and that her face was swollen and red on one side. He asked her what was wrong and she replied that she had had a toothache for three days. He asked if he could touch her face, and with her

So why would anyone want to be a Reiki master? Well, ego plays a part; I want the biggest and best, sort of thing. This comes from a misunderstanding of Reiki. There is no ladder to climb, no "more powerful" givers of Reiki. Remember we don't give the Reiki, it is received. Then there is the need to confirm that what you are doing is right by getting others to join our club. (And believe me sometimes you do need a little support, especially when you start wondering if you have lost the plot). You see this attitude not only with Reiki but with all sort of things; cars, TVs, mobile phones.

"I just bought this wonderful new thing. It's the best ever! You just must get one." And so we do, and if it's good, great, and if it's not... anyone want a Betamax video or a mini disc player?

There are many reasons why people want to become Reiki Masters but firstly you should want to pass on Reiki; to teach. If you don't you are wasting your time and money. In the dim and distant past it used to cost a lot of cash and you had to be invited to become a Reiki Master. This made you think if you really wanted to commit yourself. The cost used to be one week's wage for First Degree, 1 month's for Second Degree and a year's for Masters. Maybe too much and I feel that it was unrealistic. But it did make you stop and think. It made you consider if you really wanted to teach. Now you can get the whole package for 50 quid all in one weekend and this has flooded the market with Reiki masters with little knowledge and only one week's experience. You get the "what shall we do for the weekend? I know, lets become Reiki Masters brigade". When you choose who will attune you, bare this in mind. Like a puppy at Christmas your Reiki Master is not just for your attunements, but for life (if you want). This is his/her

that commitment to find out about Reiki, to participate (even to the degree of spending money and exchanging your energy,) then the process of attunement starts and the connection is recognised. It's the doing and being there that matters.

Often the people I have attuned to Reiki will tell me that once they had committed themselves to attending a workshop they felt different; that things started to happen almost as if they had already attended. I have been told this so many times that I must start to accept it. Certainly I know that once I have committed myself to holding a workshop people come. I can't "force" how many or who comes, no matter how hard I try and I now know that, without exception, the groups gel. Sometimes better than others, but, unlikely as it seems and as different as they might be, they get along. I used to worry when I looked at the group of people destined for the next weekend. I would try to get a good mix of like-minded people but it never worked out the way I planned. The workshops just sorted themselves out and the right people, for that workshop, booked and came, despite me, despite my efforts. Now I don't try, I just set out my stall and trust.

The Reiki Master has his place too, bless his little cotton socks, not as a conveyor of great wisdom, or some sort of high priest. Remember that the only difference between you, who has just started in Reiki, and the Reiki Master, is experience. That's all! (Well, maybe he is a bloke and you're a girl, but you know what I mean.) The ability of both of you to give Reiki is the same; he has just done it before and has made the mistakes first. Don't be fooled otherwise.

permission he cupped her cheeks in his hands. In a few minutes the pain left her and the swelling began to recede. Returning to the monastery in the evening Dr. Usui was told that his friend, the Abbott, was in bed suffering from a painful attack of arthritis. After bathing and having something to eat. Dr. Usui went to see his friend and with his healing hands relieved his pain.

For the next seven years Dr. Usui worked in a beggar camp in Japan healing the sick. Those who were young and able he sent off to find work. After seven years he began to see those whom he had helped returning to the beggar camp in the same condition that he had found them. He asked the people why they had returned to the camp and they answered that they preferred their old way of life. Dr. Usui realized that he had healed the physical body of symptoms but had not taught appreciation for life or a new way of living. He left the beggar camp and began to teach others who wished to know more. He taught them how to heal themselves and gave them the Principles of Reiki to help heal their thoughts. One of these students, Chujiro Hayashi, a retired naval officer, was seeking a way to serve others. He found Dr. Usui, was initiated by him, and became deeply involved in the practice of Reiki. When Usui's life was drawing to a close, he recognized Dr. Hayashi as the Master of Reiki and charged him with keeping the essence of his teachings intact. Dr. Hayashi, realizing the importance of a system and record keeping, founded a clinic in Tokyo where people could come for treatment and learn Reiki. From the clinic there were practitioners, who would go out and treat those who could not come to the clinic. He left records demonstrating that Reiki finds the source of the physical symptoms, fills the vibration or energy need, and restores the body to wholeness. One day in 1935, a young

woman from Hawaii was brought to the clinic by an employee of a surgical hospital in Tokyo. This woman, Hawayo Takata, had come to Japan to have an operation for a tumour. In the hospital as she prepared herself for the surgery, she had a sense that the operation was not necessary and that there was another way. She had been led to Reiki. During Mrs. Takata's experiences and treatments at the clinic, her illness lessened and her desire to learn Reiki grew. When her treatments were almost finished she asked to be admitted to a beginner's class. She was refused. She realized she must demonstrate a deep commitment to Reiki. She went to Dr. Hayashi and told him her feelings and her willingness to stay in Japan as long as was necessary. He consented to begin her training. Mrs. Takata, with her two daughters, stayed in Japan with the Hayashi family for a year, learning by practicing Reiki every day and being with Hayashi. When both felt the training was completed, Mrs. Takata returned to Hawaii with her gift of healing. In Hawaii her practice flourished and soon Hayashi and his daughter came to visit. They stayed several months, teaching, training, and being with Mrs. Takata. In February 1938, Hawayo Takata was initiated as a Master of the Usui System of Natural Healing. Soon after the initiation, Hayashi and his daughter returned to Japan. Dr. Hayashi had a sense that a war was coming between the United States and Japan. He could not reconcile being a Reiki Master and having to serve again in the Navy. He began to set the affairs of his household in order.

During this time, Mrs. Takata in Hawaii had a vivid dream that caused her concern. She knew she must go to Japan and be with Dr. Hayashi. When she arrived Dr. Hayashi told her many things: that the war was coming, who would win, what

## The Place of the Master/Teacher.

Reiki has been described as an oral tradition and as such has had many books written about it. Now there is one more! Not only books, but pages and pages have appeared on the Internet, not to mention my web site! We all do it; we seem to have a need to get things into the written word in order to give them credibility. Again we are trying to make things permanent, to make them true. I know the argument that this stops things from being altered and changed and this is true to a point, but books are often written for a reason and with a slant. This then, can pass into history as fact. We only have to look at fundamentalist thinking to see this in action.

The written word, after all, is only one man's interpretation at the time of writing. It has its place and I have had a love affair with books and the written word all my life, but the fact that it is written does not make it true. Just because it is on the telly or spoken by a learned expert doesn't make it any more true. Even less true if it comes from your Reiki Master!

The Oral Tradition is not about the words that are spoken at the workshop. These words have the same problems as the written ones and a few more of their own. It is about the process of being there, of sharing, of a commitment to listen and to stand back and accept, even if it is only for a short space of time. You should come away not with answers but with questions. But you should also possess a tool that helps you find the answers to those questions. It is the doing that matters. So it is not just a matter of e-mailing Amazon and then reading the book at your convenience. You have to make

After a while you find that you really like driving and would like to make a career of it. Maybe become a driving instructor and teach others to drive. To do this takes quite a bit of commitment; you must really want to teach others before you start, as it involves quite an outlay in terms of time, money and commitment. With a bit of luck the moment of madness passes and you go back to playing your double base and enjoying life. If it doesn't and you become a driving instructor you need yet another car. It has to do all the jobs your car did before but now it has to have dual controls so that you can teach others to drive safely. All these stages involve driving but each stage needs a different vehicle and a different approach. They are all based upon that initial driving test, this is a must. But unless you need the space to carry a double base or intend to teach others to drive you can stay with a simpler vehicle. It is not necessary to be a driving instructor to enjoy driving, or to drive well.

The Reiki Degrees just allow you to do different things. While they are all complete units they all evolve out of the First Degree. What you do after that is up to you.

It is not necessary to hold all three degrees in Reiki. It is not a ladder that must be climbed in order to gain proficiency. There are many people with First Degree Reiki who are more confident and more efficient users of Reiki than some Masters. They use that part of the Reiki training which is relevant and have gained a greater understanding and wisdom of Reiki because of this focus.

she must do and where she must go to avoid trouble for herself as she was a Japanese-American living in Hawaii. All these things he foresaw and passed on to her for her protection and for the protection of Reiki. When all of his business was taken care of and in order, he called his family together along with the Reiki Masters. Giving them his final words and recognizing Mrs. Takata as his successor in Reiki, he said good-bye. Sitting in the formal Japanese manner and dressed in his formal Japanese clothing, he closed his eyes and left his body. Following his guidance Mrs Takata finished her work in Japan and sailed to Hawaii. She returned as the Master of Reiki. She demonstrated her commitment throughout her teaching and practicing Reiki. She became a powerful healer and a great teacher, introducing the gift of Reiki to the Western World.

As a young child, Phyllis Furumoto received the first-degree initiation from her grandmother, Hawayo Takata, and would treat Takata when she visited. Phyllis' life was directed into college and then a career. Although Mrs. Takata asked periodically if she would take up the study of Reiki, Phyllis felt too busy. Then in the late seventies, when Phyllis was 27, she accepted the second-degree initiation. Takata began her training. In the spring of 1979, after a month of consideration, Phyllis decided to travel and work with her grandmother. Just before the first trip, Mrs. Takata initiated Phyllis as a Master. The teaching and training then began in earnest. During the classes in the following year, Phyllis learned that she was to succeed Takata Sensei in the Reiki lineage. Shortly after this acknowledgement of Phyllis as the Master of Reiki, Takata made her transition in December 1980. In the years since Takata's passing, Phyllis has grown into full acceptance of her role and into an understanding of the responsibility of the

position. She exemplifies what happens when one accepts the energy force of Reiki as a teacher and guide in life. Today, the Usui System of Natural Healing is practiced all over the world.

*This then, is the standard story.* Like all stories it changes from teller to teller, more so as Reiki was originally an oral tradition with nothing written. This makes it hard to verify all the facts. Recently people have started to dispute the above story and quite a few books have been written and reputations made disputing the details. The trouble in doing this is that it distracts from the essence and concentrates on the trivial. After all, does it matter who invented the electric light? It works anyway. Prompted to speak out against this trend to knock things just for the sake of doing so, I wrote an article in a Reiki magazine and in so doing joined the same club... Ho Hum! Here it is anyway.

With more than a little trepidation you go for your first drive. It may be just around the block and you find that it is different to sitting in a dual controlled car with an instructor. Now it is all down to you. Sensibly you stick closely to what you have learnt because it works and it gives you confidence.

Driving alone in the car is when you really start to understand what driving is all about. Sometimes your ego steps in and you try to do something your way. Sometimes this is fine and it works, other times you make a real pig's ear of it. It's all part of the learning process, gaining experience and confidence and trusting yourself in all situations of driving until it becomes second nature and comfortable and you can sit back and enjoy the trip.

You make friends with your little car and it gets you around the village just fine. It can take you on further journeys to other places. In fact your car can take you where ever you wish to go. Being a small car it may take time and it has its' limitations.

Time changes and you decide to take up a musical instrument; a double bass. Now fitting a double bass into a very small car is an interesting problem. What's more you have to travel all over the place to attend concerts and go to teachers, etc. You need a different type of car to do this sort of work. So you buy a Volvo Estate. The Volvo still does all the work that your other little car did but now you can also easily travel with your double bass up to Scotland and back. It can move more and go faster. It costs more to run so unless you need it it's better to stay with your small car.

## The 3 Degrees of Reiki.

Reiki, as it is taught today, is divided into three parts or degrees: First Degree, Second Degree and the Master's Degree. Although it is necessary for everybody to start with First Degree Reiki, it is not necessary to do the other two degrees. First Degree Reiki is a complete system by itself and is often all that is needed. Unfortunately in our society there seems to be a desire to acquire qualifications and certificates even if we don't need them. It is rather like my computer or my video recorder. I only use a small part of their capabilities; the rest is a waste and an expensive one at that.

In searching for a way to explain how the degrees of traditional Reiki fit into our lives I have come up with the following analogy. Like all analogies it is not exactly right but gives an idea of how to view the degrees.

Imagine that you were born in a small village. If you are completely happy with yourself within the limits of that village, there is no need for change. But usually a time comes when you want to travel and go a little beyond the distance that is sensible to walk. So you decide to learn to drive and buy a car. First you must learn to drive. This represents the time you join a First Degree Reiki workshop. Here you are shown how the car works and how to use it on the road. Passing your test and buying a little car represents completion of your First Degree.

## A View of the Usui Story

Much has been written about the life of Mikao Usui. The story that many of us were told in our First-degree classes has been challenged. Was Usui a doctor? Did he travel to the States? Was he Christian? The search for the historical Usui has been the subject of several books and the focus of much healthy debate. Now as interesting as these questions are, it is important not to become so involved with these details that vital aspects of the practice of Reiki are forgotten.

The beauty of Reiki is its simplicity; its simplicity in practice and its simplicity in teaching. Reiki teaching, up to the present, has been principally an oral tradition. The use of the word oral, although referring to the spoken word rather than the written, in the context of Reiki teaching refers to something rather more. Learning Reiki (if learning is in fact the right word) is about being and no amount of learning can bring this about. The quest for knowledge simply for its own sake is not enough. It just reinforces our reliance on the mind as a representation of who we are. This in turn maintains our sense of separateness, restricting us to its limits. All too often we judge a person (and ourselves) by what he has accumulated rather than by what he is.

Many teachers are shying away from telling the traditional Usui story through fear of ridicule in the light of the new details uncovered on Dr Usui.

In failing to explore this story an important part of the teaching of Reiki is missed. The Usui story rather than being just a factual account of his life is probably the second most important aspect of Reiki. In fact, if it were a choice of teaching the Usui story or the Reiki Principles I would rather teach the Usui story. Why? Because within the Usui story are all the principles and all the teachings of Reiki, in time-released form, (to use a current metaphor).

As we travel in the circle we refer to as our Reiki journey, we tell and retell this story. When we are ready aspects of the story become clear. Rather than know the parts of the story we start to understand their teachings. It is the difference between knowledge and wisdom.

I said above that the story, in my opinion, is the second most important aspect of learning Reiki. What is the first then? ...doing it! I start my workshops with the old double question: you are walking along a path. On each side is thick mud. Cattle have used this path and added their contributions. As you walk, there in the biggest, muddiest and most gross area of the path you see a sparkle. You stop, bend down and to your amazement you find that it is a huge diamond. The two questions are; (1) do you bother to put your hand in and pick it up? And (2) is it any less valuable because it is covered in mud and the other stuff? So I tell the Reiki story and every now and then a little glimmer of light comes on helping me to stop trying to understand Reiki and just get on with it. I ask the folk I share my workshops with to meditate on the story or to re-read it and I try to share with them some of the jewels that are hidden within this story.

## The Reiki Attunements.

The very essence of a First Degree Reiki workshop is the four attunements (also known as initiations) that you will receive. During these your physical and etheric bodies will be fine tuned to open up, and your energy system, also known as chakras, will be aligned, to receive and channel Reiki, the Universal Life Force, by the application of an ancient method as taught by Dr. Usui.

When you receive your first attunement, energy will start flowing through your hands at the thought of healing. The last attunement will seal this empowerment in so your channels will stay open for the rest of your life. Once attuned the ability to heal is not lost, even if it is not used for years.

During the Second Degree you will receive a further two attunements. The reason for these attunements we will go into at a later date.

During your Master's Degree a further attunement is given.

There is not enough space within a small volume such as this to go into the details of the attunements nor is it the right place.

These are the only attunements necessary in the practice of Reiki.

crashing about you find it and switch on the light. That simple action changes everything - you can see. You quickly find the door, switch on other lights and do what must be done. You recognize the dark shapes for what they are and when you check your clock you see it is later than you imagined and on opening the shutters you are greeted by a bright, shiny morning. All you did was push down on a small piece of plastic and things changed in an amazing way. You did not need to know how electricity was generated or how electricity works. All you needed to know was that to get light you push down on the switch. Someone had done all the hard work before you. If you feel the need then by all means research electricity but it won't make the light come on any faster or better. Simply knowing how to use the light is what counts then making the most of it. To do this there are a few things you need to know; that there is a lighting system in the first place and what to do if it seems not to be working and who to contact. If you had never seen an electric light before you would need to be shown these things but once shown it would not be long before you were switching lights on and off with the best of them. You might at first think it was all magic but as you know it is not the sort of magic that can be done any better by special people or by those who wear special clothes and sing special songs. Anyone can switch on a light if they want to. Switching on the light is easy. Then what you can do in the light is endless on the other hand you can remain as you are and sit in the dark. The choice is always yours. Think of Reiki as that switch. It allows you to see what is wrong, who you are, what you can do and how to do it. Seeing all this is just the start. What you do then, is your choice.

So let's share some of what I feel the Usui story tells us.

To start with, one of the Reiki principles that people have trouble with is the one that states: Honour your Teachers and Elders.

Usui was teaching when he was questioned by one of his students. This question was the catalyst that started him on his journey and in turn it gave us the practice we now call Reiki. The question arises therefore, who was the teacher? Which leads us on to: Who are our teachers?..... Everyone..... Even the Bin Ladens and Sadam Hussein's of this world?..... Our reaction to the present situation can teach us a great deal about ourselves! Uhg!

As for our Elders? Well, I am learning the Djembe from a guy much younger than myself. He has been playing for years. In Djembe playing he is by far my elder. On another tack, looking at my 5-year-old grandson ..... He can certainly give me a lifetime or two.....Who, therefore, are our elders?

His student's questions led Usui to realize that he did not have the answer. Admitting this and then doing something about it took courage.

Why courage? Well, most of us get to where we are through a mixture of luck and a great deal of hard work. The trouble is we work toward a goal conceived in ignorance. We create identities, gain status and credibility as we progress towards this goal. Putting into jeopardy all we have worked for takes courage. The fear of wasting all that time and energy blinds us to other possibilities. It is this fear that keeps us plodding

along the same old path. And it is often this fear, the fear of losing what we have, our status and our hard earned positions, that keeps us from escaping the bonds of myths and illusions.

The three most precious words in the English language are..... "I don't know". By uttering these words you make the space for knowledge and then wisdom to come to you. Once you decide that you know or that you understand a thing, bang! the gate slams shut and rigidity sets in.

Usui set off to where he thought he would find the most up-to-date and complete information. The more he studied the more he realised he would not find what he needed. Current wisdom does not always mean the complete picture. Current thinking often throws the baby out with the bath water but it can help us to formulate the questions needed. It is the questions rather than the answers that are important. Answers are current and static. Time changes many things. Questions on the other hand generate movement.

Returning to his native land he looked elsewhere, freeing himself of single-track thinking and at last he found what he was looking for.

But knowledge alone is not enough. How many times do we find ourselves suddenly understanding something that we have known for ages? It is as if we shift into another gear and ping on goes the light, often taking us completely by surprise. Really understanding needs something more than just facts.

## What Is Reiki?

This is the hardest question of them all. The simple answer is that..

Reiki is an ancient form of healing believed to have spread through Tibet, China and India. It was re-discovered in the late 19th century in Sanskrit teachings by Dr. Mikao Usui, a Japanese Christian minister and theology teacher. The word Reiki is Japanese, and means "Universal Life Energy", the same as the Chinese "Chi" or the Indian "Prana". Reiki is that vital life energy which flows through all living things and which can be activated for the purpose of healing to work on all levels - spiritual, physical, mental and emotional. Although it has its roots in ancient Buddhist teachings, Reiki is not a religion or a faith system. It is a healing system...

But this is just a dictionary definition. The following analogy is maybe a little more useful, though it is still limited. Imagine that you wake up in a strange room where all is darkness because heavy curtains or shutters cover the windows. Nature calls and you need to find the loo. You get out of bed and straight away you bump into a table, rattling the contents alarmingly and hurting your knee. Because of the darkness you have difficulty in finding your way around. The room seems huge and forbidding. Strange shapes loom out of the darkness as your imagination clicks in; too many late night movies and half remembered dreams. You are still in control but uncomfortable and the pressure in your bladder is making itself felt. You need to find the light switch. After a bit more

All that is written here is my “mud”. Deep down in it, I hope, is at least the glimmer of that precious diamond. Is the Usui Story true? If we continue to tell it the answer is yes. Let us tell it with love and with fun. See Usui rushing down the mountain, robes flowing, stubbing his toe, hopping around cursing, until suddenly, in wonder the pain stops. Feel his despair as he throws away that last stone. Go on to tell of Hayashi and Takata, for within their stories are also lessons if only we look into our hearts and find them.

Well having got that out of the way on we go.....

Living in his culture and being of his time, up he went onto the mountain determined to solve the problem, to sit there until all became clear. Twenty-one days was the time set. As each day passed ..... nothing. No matter how well he sat, no matter how hard he tried, no matter how much he meditated nothing came to him. The twenty-one days passed. Still nothing! All that hard work, all that studying, all that sitting and still nothing. He threw away the last stone and with it his attachment to finding the answer and at the very moment of surrender he saw a light.

By releasing the thought of being in control of the learning process he made room for true understanding to shine through. Still he hesitated, fear still holding him, fear of the unknown, of letting go, of trusting in his true self. Worrying about all of this would have made him duck or avoid the approaching ball of light. (Now, in the Principles we teach, it says “Just for today I will not worry”. I think today is too long a time. All that is needed is to replace today with *Now*. Now is where we are meant to be. Now keeps us in the only time that has any relevance. It also leads to the next Now.) But he did not move, he let go of his final attachment, even that of his own life.

Wham! The light struck him full on. Bubbles containing the symbols flooded his brain, the physical manifestation of Reiki. After a time his return to a more physical reality revealed that he understood what he had known before. This *instant* enlightenment had taken years to achieve. All we have to do is accept our place in Reiki to rid ourselves of the illusions we have worked on for so long. The moment of realisation might be instantaneous but getting there can take time. Our practice

in Reiki (or rather The Usui System of Natural Healing, for we are Reiki rather than practicing it) helps loosen the bonds that hold these illusions tight until suddenly they just fall away and we find ourselves as we always have been... perfect.

We have been given a gift so precious that most of us take it for granted. In fact many of us spend our time trying to avoid it, to escape it. It is the gift of a physical body and a physical world. These are the tools we have to work with and which we should make the most of. It is great to escape for a while to live up our mountain. But Usui's story tells us to come back down and get back in the place where we are meant to be even if it means banging your toe like Usui. Without the pain he would not have known what he could do.

This brings us neatly to the so-called Reiki miracles. When I first heard of them I was, to say the least, rather underwhelmed. They were small and hardly worth mentioning. I wanted real miracles. Sea-parting, raising-the-dead type miracles. Toe stubbing, toothache and eating food to my mind were not very impressive.

And that is one of the problems of the time in which we live. We have been so conditioned to look for the extravaganzas that our eyes are fixed on the horizon looking for the big miracle, all celestial choirs and Wurlitzers. We miss the thousands of miracles that happen all around us every day. We need to stop and look, really look. Which brings us right back to Reiki.

Usui found that he could help people on the physical level, to heal the beggars of their pains. Helping them fit into society,

to be a useful part of that society and so live happy and productive lives. He worked tirelessly. Giving of himself, never asking reward until one day he was forced to face the fact that people were returning to the beggar community. He fell down distraught. Not angry with those who were returning despite all he had done. Distraught that he had failed to see the full picture. We cannot decide what path a person should take or what their needs are. They must do this for themselves. Our definition of healing is ours alone, with all the limitations that carries with it. It is not enough to heal just the physical. We are by far much more. The emotional, the mental and the spiritual, all must come into balance. The desire to change needs to be on all these levels for real healing to take place. But more important is the realisation that there are no different levels, no one to heal and no healing needed.

Unafraid, Usui learned from this experience and off he went again, borrowing and revising a set of guidelines, setting himself up for ridicule by wandering around with his lamp. Promoting himself in the same way in order to give people a chance to share in his understanding. His love for all beings shining through the darkness.

In the darkest cave, deep down where no sun shines a single candle will push back the darkness. Two candles will do a better job. A thousand will fill the space with light. The darkness can never put out even one of those candles. The only thing that can return the darkness is letting the candles go out. Fear, hate and ignorance are the best ways of snuffing out those candles.