From: Whittaker-Brown, Tracy

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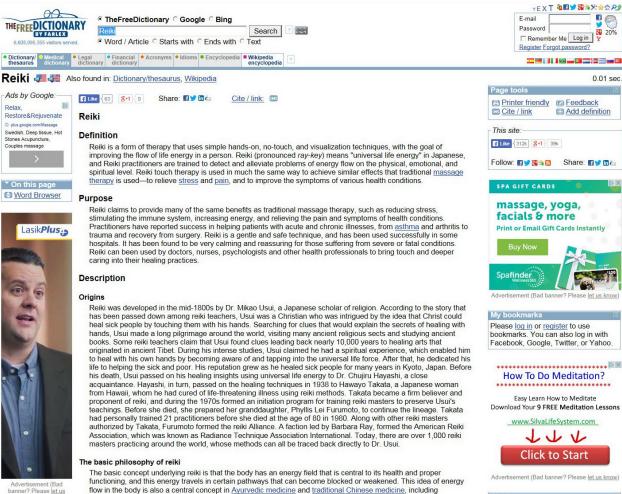
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acupuncture

Relax.

Reiki practitioners believe that everyone has the potential to access the universal life energy, but that over time most

Charity Feed your brain, feed a people's systems become blocked and the energy becomes weakened in them. A reiki practitioner is trained to be able to detect these blockages, and practitioners will use their hands, thoughts, and own energy fields to improve the energy flow in a patient. Reiki is one of the more esoteric alternative medical practices, because no one is sure exactly how it works on the physiological level. Practitioners claim that it works on very subtle energy levels, or possibly works on the *chakra* system. The chakras are the system of seven energy centers along the middle of the body believed to be connected with the nervous and endocrine systems, as defined by <u>youg</u> and Ayurvedic medicine. Reiki masters claim that healing energy can even be sent to a person from far away, noting that reiki works on the same principles that enables praying to work for some patients, although a practitioner needs advanced training to be able to send energy from afar.

According to the original principles of Usui, patients must also have a proper attitude for reiki to work most effectively. Patients must take responsibility for their own health, and must want to be healed. Furthermore, when energy is received from a reiki healer, patients must be willing to give back energy to others, and to compensate the healer in some way, as well. Finally, Usui claimed that a healing attitude was free from worry and fear, was filled with gratitude for life and for others, and placed emphasis on each person finding honest and meaningful work in their lives—all this, in order to complete the picture of overall health.

A reiki session

Reiki sessions can take various forms, but most commonly resemble typical bodywork appointments, where the receiver lies clothed on his or her back on a flat surface or massage table. A session generally lasts from an hour to an hour and a half. Reiki is a simple procedure, consisting of calm and concentrated touching, with the practitioner focusing on healing and giving energy to specific areas on the receiver's body. Practitioners place their hands over positions on the body where the organs and endocrine glands reside, and the areas that correspond to the chakra centers. Practitioners also use mental visualization to send healing energy to areas of the receiver's body that need it. In special cases or with injuries, a no-touch technique is used, where the practitioner's hands are sometimes held just above the body without touching it. Advanced practitioners rely on intuition and experience to determine which areas a body need the most energy healing.

The practitioner's hands are held flat against the receiver's body, with the fingertips touching. There can be over 20 positions on both sides of the body where the hands are placed. The positions begin at the crown of the head and move towards the feet. The receiver usually turns over once during the session. The practitioner's hands are held in each position for a usually five minutes, to allow the transfer of energy and the healing process to take place. In each position, the hands are kept stationary, unlike typical massage where the hands move, and both the giver and receiver attempt to maintain an attitude of awareness, openness, and caring.

Reiki practitioners recommend that those receiving reiki for the first time go through a series of three to four initial treatments over the course of about a week, to allow for cleansing and the initial readjustment of energy. Reiki sessions can cost from \$30-100 per session. Insurance coverage is rare, and consumers should consult their individual policies as to whether or not such therapies are included.

Self-treatment with reiki

Although reiki practitioners believe that formal training is necessary to learn the proper methods of energy channeling and healing, individuals can still use some of the basic positions of reiki to relieve stress and to stimulate healing on themselves or another. The positions can be performed anywhere and for however long they are needed. Positions generally move from the top of the body down, but positions can be used wherever there is pain or stress. Mental attitude is important during reiki; the mind should be cleared of all stressful thoughts and concentrated on compassion, love, and peace as forms of energy that are surrounding, entering, and healing the body. The following positions are illustrated in *Reiki: Energy Medicine:*

- Position one: Hands are placed on the top of the head, with the wrists near the ears and the fingertips touching
 on the crown of the head. Eyes should be closed. Hold for five minutes or more, until the mind feels clear and
 calm.
- Position two: Cup the hands slightly and place the palms over the closed eyes, with the fingers resting on the forehead.
- Position three: Place the hands on the sides of the head, with the thumbs behind the ear and the palms over the lower jaws, with the fingers covering the temples.
 Position four: Place one hand on the back of the neck, at the base of the skull, and put the other hand on the
- Position four parallel to it.
 Position five: Wrap the hands around the front of the throat, and rest them there gently with the heels of the
- hands touching in front. • Position six: Place each hand on top of a shoulder, close to the side of neck, on top of the trapezius muscle.
- Position seven: Form a T-shape with the hands over the chest, with the left hand covering the heart and the

