

## **Reiki, Medicine and Science**

By

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Science can be considered to be a framework, involving observation and experimentation, within which humans strive to understand the workings of the Universe and all that it contains. In the past two hundred years dramatic developments have been made in science, but it must not be overlooked that various phenomena occur long before science can find a rational explanation. Empirical reality usually precedes scientific validation. Bacteria existed many thousand years before the discovery of the microscope and ultra-microscope which enabled scientists to observe them, and oxygen was around from the beginning of life forms millions of years before Joseph Priestly discovered this vital substance in 1774.

Although it may be comforting to have a scientific explanation for a given phenomenon, to make the assumption that a particular phenomenon is not real or valid until there is a plausible scientific explanation for such an occurrence is clearly ridiculous.

Reiki is a well established natural healing phenomenon that is practiced worldwide. This hand-on healing technique was rediscovered in Japan in the early twentieth century and brought to the West in 1936. In a Reiki treatment the hands of the Reiki practitioner are placed on the client but, unlike a massage, the practitioner's hands remain stationary in one position for several minutes before being moved to another position. Anyone can learn this precious healing art in a very short time by being attuned by a Reiki Master.

The translation of the Japanese term, Reiki, actually is Universal Life Energy, the energy that infuses all living things, humans, plants and animals which are in fact all energy entities – electrons and other sub-atomic particles in constant vibration. Whenever we speak of energy we are implicitly referring to frequency of vibration which is measured in Hertz or cycles per second. When we are in balance, that is energy balance, we experience wellness, but when we go out of energy balance we manifest dis-ease [disease] or illness.

The energies involved with Reiki are very small and are sometimes referred to as subtle energies. It is only within relatively recent times that scientific instruments have been developed to measure the very small energy fields associated with Reiki.

Reiki accelerates the process of restoring energy balance and, hence, wellness for someone with a health issue. Reiki works by itself or in conjunction with western medicine. Dr Mehmet Oz, a well known US heart surgeon indicates that he usually has a Reiki practitioner at hand when he is performing surgery. Dr Oz says ‘Reiki has become a sought-after healing art among patients and mainstream medical professionals’. The Manhattan Eye and Throat hospital and the Memorial Sloane Kettering Hospital, both in New York, have also embraced Reiki. Marilyn Vega, a nurse who has given Reiki treatments to patients in both hospitals says the following, ‘Reiki sessions cause patients to heal faster with less pain’.

Medical practitioner and Reiki Master, Dr Nancy Eos makes the following introductory comments in her book, *Reiki and Medicine*: ‘Reiki has not always produced predictable results but it has produced consistent, marvelous results for the highest healing good. Lungs expand in spite of major chest trauma; heart arrhythmias revert to normal rhythm, strokes in progressive reverse; bleeding stops. I would not have believed any of this unless I had seen it for myself. My life and my medical practice have all dramatically changed and I can’t imagine practicing medicine without Reiki.’

Dr Eos, an emergency room physician, in a Michigan, USA hospital as well as a Reiki Master, vividly describes the dramatic healing results she has had by applying Reiki to emergency trauma patients.

I myself have found that Reiki is a powerful healing tool in health emergencies, and on more than one occasion on aeroplane flights, responding to the desperate calls for assistance from flight attendants, I have administered Reiki to passengers in serious distress with dramatic positive results.

Important scientific research is currently being done on the healing effects of Reiki. A recent study carried out by Yale University researchers and published in the prestigious *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*, [2010; 56, 995-996] was entitled ‘Effects of Reiki on Autonomic Activity Early after Acute Coronary Syndrome’ and co-authored by Rachel Friedman, Mathew Burg, Pamela Miles and Rachel Lampert. These researchers found that when 20 minutes of Reiki is administered within three days to patients who have suffered from a heart attack both the objective heart rate variability [HRV] and their subjective emotional state, particularly in relation to stress levels, are positively impacted.

One of the co-authors, Pamela Miles, elaborates this way: A heart attack is a stressful event which like any other stressful event also causes a stress response. A stressed body is less resilient, and less capable of coping with more stress. This means that a patient who has just had a heart attack has a higher risk of having another heart attack. Physicians are well aware of this dangerous cycle and helping the body recover its resilience is a primary goal with patients who have recently suffered a heart attack.

This is why standard hospital care after a heart attack includes *beta blockers*, drugs that help the body recover its resilience. But beta blockers work slowly and some patients cannot tolerate them.

The randomized controlled study looked at non-invasive, non-drug interventions to help patients recover faster from a heart attack. The study had three components:

The patients were divided into three groups:

In Group One 12 patients rested quietly without interruption;

In Group Two 13 patients listened to slow tempo meditative classical music;

In Group Three 12 patients received 20 minutes of Reiki from Reiki trained staff nurses.

Patients were measured initially for baseline data, and again after intervention, and the two sets of measurement were compared. The measurements from all groups were then compared with the others. The impact of the intervention (rest, music or Reiki) was measured in two ways – Emotional State and Heart Rate Variability [HRV]. HRV is a physiological measure that indicates if the patient's body is recovering from the stress response.

The patients rated themselves on both positive states (happy, relaxed, calm) and negative states (stressed, angry, sad, frustrated, worried, scared, anxious).

The researchers found that Reiki treatments improved ALL POSITIVE EMOTIONAL STATES and reduced ALL NEGATIVE STATES.

Comparing the three groups The Reiki group had the most positive changes in emotional states, and the resting control group had the least. The Reiki treatment also improved HRV. The researchers point out that the benefit showed in heart rate variability was comparable to that seen in a study on beta blockers.

The effectiveness of Reiki as an aid to healing is beyond question.

Reiki is a form of electromagnetic energy. It has been well known in medical scientific circles that placing an electric coil around a fracture that refuses to mend will stimulate bone growth and repair. This is because according to the laws of physics when an electric current passes through a conductor an electromagnetic field is created, and it is well known that the body is a weak electrical conductor.

Some years ago while I was attending a conference in the United States one of the participants had an arm fracture that was giving difficulty to heal after several months. She was extremely despondent, having just returned from having the arm X-rayed and seeing no signs of progress. She readily agreed to my suggestion that she sit next to me in the conference sessions over the following days to receive Reiki on the affected right arm. For the last three days of the conference with my left hand I gently supported her

right arm in the cast in the palm of my hand. I experienced considerable heat as evidence of the Reiki doing its work. She was overjoyed when the day after the conference ended she had another X-ray and discovered that the arm had completely healed!

It may well be found that Reiki has a link to quantum physics. During the 20<sup>th</sup> Century through what became known as Quantum Physics it was discovered that the smallest identifiable units of matter, force and light are actually made up of energy which always come in distinct packets known as quanta. These energy packets are not material, although they can have matter-like properties such as mass, gravitation and inertia and they function like both particles and waves. When one of their properties such as position is measured the others become unavailable to measurement and observation.

More surprisingly, it was discovered that when any two of these entities have been together they remain 'entangled' or in contact no matter how far apart they become, consistent with the concepts known as non-locality and coherence.

The reality of this phenomenon was demonstrated experimentally by a French team led by Alain Aspect in 1983. One experiment demonstrating quantum non-locality involves atoms of calcium that are put into an unstable energy state so that they emit a pair of identical photons traveling in opposite directions at the speed of light. They therefore are separating at twice the speed of light. As one of the photons passes through a polarizer that changes a property called spin, the spin of the other photon, far away, instantaneously changes to a complementary state.

Since Einstein's relativity theory does not allow for any kind of message that travels faster than the speed of light it can be concluded that there is some means of communication between these two photons that were once together in the original calcium atom.

Professor Ervin Laszlo in his book 'Science and the Akashic Field' points out that in a complex organism the challenge of order is huge. The human body consists of some million billion cells, 600 billion of which are dying and the same number are regenerating every day at the rate of 10 million cells per second. [There is no substance in the body that is constant].

The level of coherence exhibited by living organisms suggests that quantum type processes take place in them. Laszlo points out that living organisms respond to extremely low frequency electromagnetic radiation, and to magnetic fields so weak that only the most sophisticated instruments, such as the Superconducting Quantum Interference Device Magnetometer (SQUID) can register them. He argues that radiation below molecular dimensions could not affect molecular assemblies unless a large number of molecules were super-coherently linked among themselves. He concludes that such linkages could come about only if quantum processes complement the organism's

biochemical processes, and he infers that in some respects the living organism is a 'macroscopic quantum system'.

All of this has implications for the mechanisms involved in how Reiki works. Distant treatments, for example, which enable advanced Reiki practitioners to connect with and treat others at remote distances without any physical aids, can readily be explained in relation to the concept of non-locality and coherence.

There is a long way to go before science has a plausible explanation for the various aspects of Reiki beginning with the ease with which any Reiki Master can pass on this phenomenal healing gift to a student. But what is certain is the empirical reality that Reiki treatments have dramatic and quick results in treating acute conditions, and is often effective over time in even reversing chronic conditions. In my sixteen years of experience as a Reiki Master I have found Reiki to be a most effective tool in dealing with chronic pain. Many medical schools routinely expose their students to complementary therapies such as Reiki.

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