

Reiki Self Healing

Emily Anderson attends a reiki attunement workshop for beginners

The ancient healing technique of Reiki, which means 'spiritual energy', has been something I've sought to learn for a long time. So when I met Reiki Master Claire McCarthy at a friend's house and she mentioned a Reiki Attunement day she was holding soon, I eagerly signed up.

In a light and airy studio room in Brighton's Lanes area, four of us listen to Claire explain the history of Reiki, the lineage of teachers and the Reiki principles to live by. Reiki, a method of spiritual development, healing yourself and others, was re-discovered in Sanskrit texts by Japanese Buddhist Mikao Usui at the beginning of the 20th century. He set up a Reiki clinic in Japan to practice and teach what he'd learned in his long quest, which is what is being shared today.

An initiation into Reiki opens up your energy channels and connects you to universal spiritual energy, so that you can transmit it through your hands to work for the highest good. This practice, plus regular meditation, using mantras and spiritual symbols, and living life by the five Reiki principles, including not worrying, not being angry, and feeling gratitude, will help develop spiritual awareness and live a happier life.

Claire helps us feel this universal energy for ourselves. Sitting on mats, breathing deeply, she talks us through a guided meditation to see and sense white, sparkly or golden light filling our bodies from our crown chakra. Feeling this light as energy swirling inside us, we are told to make a ball of it with our hands close together, palms facing. Incredibly, I really can feel a force between my hands, albeit briefly.

After lunch it is time for my attunement. While incense burns and soft music plays in the background, I lie on a massage table as Claire opens up my energy channels by making the Reiki symbols with her hands, conversing with the angelic realm, ascended masters and



• CLAIRE MCCARTHY

connecting to source. Sometimes she holds parts of my body, other times sweeps my aura, and at the end, she spritzes me with an Aura-Soma Pomander healing essence in the colour, magenta, that she saw in her mind while doing the initiation. Each one has a meaning, and this one says it's time to focus on loving myself and be in the present moment. That sounds about right. This attunement is a massive part of that. I feel so grateful for this moment, this teacher, and this opportunity.

Experiencing Energy

Sitting on chairs now, Claire teaches us about the different elements of water, air, fire and earth, which we will feel coming through us differently, or maybe see as colours, the more that we practise channeling Reiki. As soon as I connect to Reiki, my hands start to tingle and heat up, and as I work on my partner (we take it in turns) different feelings come and go, including coolness, pulsing and wavy sensations, all subtle but tangible.


Next, in pairs, taking it in turns to lie

down on a massage table, we hover our hands over each other's bodies, scanning to see if any areas need special attention. From head to toes, we give each other a full-body Reiki treatment, which feels so blissful and relaxing to receive, and nourishing and powerful to give.

Crucially, Claire explains how to shut down the energy and ground ourselves after each treatment, either by touching the floor, connecting with Mother Earth, or even imagining ourselves as a tree with our roots growing deep into the soil.

She also guides us through the Violet Flame healing technique and shows us the symbols we can use to amplify the Reiki, and to work on different issues such as past life karma or mental healing. I can't wait to try them at home.

Getting through everything in one day seemed daunting initially, but with a small, relaxed group, and a packed manual to take home, we definitely cover all we need to know, and it's now about practising it ourselves. Over the next 21 days we are to treat ourselves with Reiki by laying our hands on our eyes, ears, heart centre, stomach and so on, sending the Reiki into us to work its magic. It may bring up old pain to heal, but I'm ready for that.

That evening, I feel crystal clear, energised, yet calm, and sleep so deeply. From day one of the self-healing, I feel my hands tingle and get hot as soon as I ask the Reiki to flow through me. Placing my hands on my body each time, I feel so warm, happy and nourished. This Reiki healing is much needed time for me to love myself more, and in turn love others more too. It's with me for life now, thankfully. 

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