

Reiki for Women: Healing Therapy For A New Age

Wednesday, March 14, 2012, 20:03

Healing, Indian Women, Psychology, Spirituality, Women's Interests

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I had the special privilege of doing Reiki with Reiki practitioner, Aarti Gupta. Mumbai based, Aarti, is a Psychologist, Counsellor and a Reiki Master. She has fused psychological therapy with Reiki to help people. In this article Aarti shares with Naaree.com how Reiki helps women.

Women have various roles to play- that of the mother, wife, daughter, sister, home-maker and career woman. Sometimes we may wonder if a multi-tasking woman is supposed to be a human robot. A robot is an electro-mechanical entity powered by electric motors, solenoids, hydraulic systems or batteries.

A woman, unlike a robot, is however a human being who cannot be powered by artificial devices. However, there is a unique way a multi-tasking woman can revitalise and rejuvenate her 'spiritual energy' or 'universal life energy'.

This healing energy can be channelled with a technique similar to the laying on of hands. This soothing energy which flows through the palms to heal oneself and others is called Reiki ('Rei' meaning 'unseen' or 'spiritual' and 'Ki' meaning 'energy' or 'life-force').

What is Reiki?

Reiki is a natural therapy and a form of secular spiritual practice used as a complementary therapy to heal a person at the physical, emotional and spiritual levels.

Reiki Healing is a process of being connected to the Reiki Energy through an attunement or

empowerment. Healing is done both by hands on and by distance work.

Reiki is not a religion nor is it a new age practice. It has been used since age-old times by practitioners of Christianity, Buddhism, Shintoism, Hinduism and Islam as a spiritual practice as a hands on healing practice.

Though Reiki has been an ancient practice, it is Japanese Tendai Buddhist, Mikao Usui, who is known to be the founder of Reiki as a recognized practice since 1922. Dr.Usui is said to have attained enlightenment when he climbed Mt. Kurama in Japan for a 21 day meditation and fasting ritual.

At the end of 21 days when Dr.Usui was just about to leave, he saw a great light approaching him from a distance. The light struck him in the third eye in the forehead. The beam of light knocked him unconscious as it struck him.

On regaining consciousness he saw millions of small glowing bubbles and spiritual symbols which later went on to be Reiki symbols. In April 1922, Usui relocated to Tokyo and founded the Usui Reiki Ryoho Gakkai (Usui Reiki Healing Society).

Women Reiki teachers:

In the lineage of Reiki, it has been seen that there have been more women Reiki teachers than men. Reiki Master Aarti Gupta explains, "This is because women are far more intuitive (since their right brain is more active than the left) than men and it is in their inherent nature to surrender with ease."

"Intrinsically, a woman is a nurturer and love is her nature. So she can wish well for, pray for and heal others effortlessly. All this is well manifested in Reiki – the hands-on healing technique and therefore Reiki comes naturally to her."

Some of the eminent women Reiki practitioners are:

Hawayo Takata: (December 24, 1900- December 11, 1980):

A Japanese American born in Hawaii, she introduced the spiritual practice of Reiki to the Western world. Well acquainted both with the culture of the U.S and Japan she could with ease blend the oriental aspects of Reiki with Western culture to better suit Reiki to the Western way of life.

Her widowhood in her 30th year marked a phase of struggle in her life. The stress of widowhood and single-handedly supporting her two daughters contributed to her suffering from lung problems, serious gastrointestinal ailments and severe depression finally leading to a nervous breakdown.

Hawayo was scheduled for a major surgery as her ailments were deemed to be life-threatening. On the operation table she heard a voice telling her that the operation was not necessary.

She asked the head surgeon if there was any non-surgical remedy. The surgeon gave her the address of a clinic run by Chujiro Hayashi (who had learnt Reiki from Dr. Mikao Usui).

Reiki cured her of all her ailments. She stayed on to learn Reiki from Hayashi and returned to Hawaii to spread Reiki in the Western world. In the next 30 years she taught both first and second degree Reiki and set up her own Reiki clinic. In the last decade of her life, Takata taught the third level of Reiki instruction and initiated twenty-two Reiki masters.

Ms. Kimiko Koyoma (1906- 1999):

Ms.Kimiko Koyoma, the sixth direct heir from the great founder Usui never met Mikao Usui even though she was alive when he was living. She learnt Reiki from her late husband who was a navy man.

When her husband turned down the offer of being the head of Dr.Usui's society- the Usui Reiki

Ryoho Gakkai (Usui Reiki Healing Method Association), she accepted the responsibility.

Ms.Koyoma was able to tell where an illness or injury was simply by watching as she entered the room. She treated her clients in a reclining chair. She received inner messages that judiciously guided her hands during a Reiki session. She resigned as the President of the Gakkai in 1998.

Paula Horan:

American Grandmaster, Paula Horan has been credited to introducing Reiki in India. Being a psychologist she has been able to blend psychological therapy and Reiki to achieve amazing results.

She is an internationally acclaimed seminar leader and the author of the bestselling books Empowerment Through Reiki, Reiki: 108 Questions and Answers and The Ultimate Reiki Touch. She has great interest in all authentic forms of vibrational medicine.

Though Paula has stopped offering a regular program of seminars she does teach First, Second and Third Degree Reiki and the Core Empowerment Training if requested. Women from Paula's spiritual family and friends include Brigitte Ziegler, Gagori Mitra and Renita.

Other women teaching Reiki:

There are many women Reiki Teachers in India and abroad. In India we often hear of Kajal Ghosh, Ela Ghosh, Shamal Durve, Aarti Gupta, Usha Thakore, Shehnaaz Sheikh, Gulrukh Bala, Meera Kotak and Dr.Alpa Parikh to name a few.

Women Reiki teachers who live abroad are Dawn Mellowship, Bethal Phaigh, Dorothy Baba, Ursula Baylow, Patricia Bowling, Barbara Brown, Beth Gray, Barbara, Mary McFadyen, Virginia Samdahl and Barbara Weber Ray to name a few.

How Reiki can benefit women:

Women reading this article who wish to be benefited by Reiki first need to understand how Reiki helps a person. Firstly, Reiki is no formulaic cure or quick fix to your daily problems.

For a person who is in the habit of running to several so-called-saints and 'miracle makers' hoping for an instant cure or amazing stroke of luck to come to them, let me say that Reiki works very differently.

According to Reiki 'removing your suffering is up to you'. Maybe this is why in Reiki we have self-healing. Aarti Gupta adds, "Reiki is universal life energy. Reiki has its own wisdom. Reiki decides who needs what and operates accordingly. We are mere channels."

So if you go to a Reiki healer with the desire of attaining target goals like just getting that visa to settle abroad or getting that guy you are pining over, you can't be more mistaken.

Reiki will decide if that guy or visa is actually beneficial for you and will work accordingly. If not, the energy of Reiki will open the doors of a different destiny for you. Reiki will bring about a holistic upliftment in you instead of fulfilling set myopic goals you are craving to attain.

Chakra Healing through Reiki:

Chakras are energy vortexes located in the spine at major branchings of the human nervous system, beginning at the base of the spinal column and moving upward to the top of the skull. Chakras are considered to be a nexus of metaphysical and/or biophysical energy of the human body.

Chakras were not a part of the Original Reiki System but were added on to the many Usui/Tibetan and Tibetan Reiki Schools that sprang up in America since the mid 1980s. Some masters teach chakras as part of the system along with Reiki.

The chakras are the gateways of the aura. The aura encompasses the spiritual body. When one or more chakra is blocked, energy doesn't flow harmoniously through them.

Or if a chakra is too wide open it will result in an imbalance which will be manifested in all areas of life. Chakra imbalance will negatively affect both our physical and mental health. This in turn will bring about difficulties in daily life and prosperity. One of the methods of chakra healing is by Reiki. When you channel Reiki to your chakras it has a healing effect.

Take the instance of Gargi (name changed) who has been under psychiatric medicines and cognitive behavioural therapy (a psychotherapy based on modifying cognitions, assumptions, beliefs and behaviors, with the aim of influencing disturbed emotions) for eight years for Borderline Personality Disorder (a personality disorder characterized by instability in mood, extreme 'black and white', chaotic and unstable interpersonal relationships and poor self-image).

Gargi's mental problems are a result of the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual abuse she had experienced from her family members ever since her early childhood.

She was told over and over again by them in the harshest way possible that she was no good at anything she did and therefore had little faith in her own positive attributes and abilities despite

being a pretty, sweet, honest, hardworking and very creative person.

Her psychologist asked her to repeatedly write down her positive qualities hoping that the process would ingrain in her that she was a unique person. However Gargi still doubted herself.

Gargi on attending the First Degree Reiki workshop of Reiki Master Aarti Gupta has gained far more confidence in herself than eight years of psychological counselling could ever do. A confidence boost made her cheerful and proactive.

As Gargi's chakras are getting balanced her moods are getting balanced too. In fact Gargi has had no down swing ever since she started Reiki with Aarti Gupta. Gargi had walked in to Aarti's workshop as a skeptic – she had tried many other forms of alternative therapy but nothing had worked for her.

She had just come to Aarti's workshop as her friend had requested her to attend this workshop and Gargi didn't want to let her friend down as he was a very dear friend. Gargi, now a believer in Reiki, asked Aarti how Reiki could help her so immensely in such a short time.

Aarti explained "You have always been questioning your own power and wisdom as you've been repeatedly told that you are no good. In cognitive counselling, we are dealing with just 12% of the human mind.

When your psychologist asked you to write down your positive qualities over and over again you still doubted yourself as you were only exercising your conscious mind. But 88% of the mind is the sub-conscious where self-doubt was still prevailing.

As you channel Reiki to yourself, you get in touch with your own power and wisdom, getting in touch with yourself, getting aware of yourself at the deeper level. Once you have the power within yourself you are centred. It doesn't matter any more what people tell you as you know who you are. Reiki and cognitive therapy go hand-in-hand"

For the best results one should do full body Reiki – that takes one and a half hour- thirty Reiki postures are done with three minutes devoted to each posture. If you are hurried for time then you may just do Reiki for three minutes on each of the seven chakras – the whole process will take twenty one minutes.

There is also a two minute Reiki in which you put your hand just below the navel where your solar plexus and hara are. These two chakras are very important because as Aarti explains: they are seat of power and wisdom, sexual energy as well

as unacknowledged and suppressed feelings respectively. Your hand will automatically be guided to the area you need Reiki the most.

Levels of Reiki:

Currently in America and Japan, Reiki is taught in levels through attunement by a Reiki master. There are three levels of Reiki that are generally used although in the Usui/ Tibetan schools the level III A has been added.

Reiki Level 1:

Reiki 1 is taught to heal on a physical level. Reiki is channelled to the chakras.

Reiki Level 2:

Three Reiki symbols are introduced to the student. With the help of these symbols the student is taught to heal on an emotional level.

Reiki Level 3:

This is the Master Level of Reiki. The student is taught to heal on a spiritual level.

Reiki is a flexible practice. Reiki can be done at any time of the day or night. You may take breaks while doing Reiki. There is no bar on a menstruating woman to do Reiki.

Reiki helps to harmoniously balance the male and female energies in a woman. The terms 'masculinity' and 'femininity' have no rigid definitions. Moreover it is highly debatable as to what the exact traits of masculinity and femininity are. Also we get to hear that there is a 'man in every woman' and a 'woman in every man'.

When a man gently cradles his baby to sleep and comfortably helps with all housework, people often say that it is the woman in him which is beautifully coming through.

On the contrary if a woman refuses to be a home-maker at all, makes sure to forever stay away from the kitchen, always prioritizes her career to the upbringing and well-being of her children, people often say that there is an inappropriate overdose of masculine energy in her.

To understand how male and female energies may be harmoniously blended in an individual we may visit the Caves of Hampi where there is a sculpture of the ArdhanariNareshwar – a divine depiction of half man and half woman, symbolizing that God combines aspects of male and female. The left side is shapelier, sports a breast, the left hand carries a lotus bud, and is accompanied by a female attendant.

As the Puranic myth goes Shiva on seeing Shakti was so very overwhelmed that they merged together and the ArdhanariNareshwar was

formed in the process. Reiki helps every woman to balance her masculine and feminine energies to mould her into a blissful ArdhanariNareshwar.

We may say that universally gentleness, patience and kindness are associated with femininity. Being logical, rational, independent, free, individualistic, strong, brave, success-oriented, ambitious and adventurous may be termed as traditional male characteristics.

In the contemporary times don't many of us want to see a woman who is gentle, patient, kind as well as an independent thinker, strong, and brave? Maybe both a home-maker and a career woman?

Channeling Reiki into the appropriate chakras will harmoniously blend the masculine and feminine aspects in you to bring about gender equilibrium within you.

Reiki enhances the 'mother' in a woman:

When you ask a little girl what she wants to be when she grows up, holding a teddy bear in one hand and clutching her mother's saaree/ skirt with the other she will often reply, "I want to be a mother when I grow up."

Some may say that she should be more career focused in her answer on her life's ambition. This is however a very sweet answer. The girl child feels that she is a mother first and then a career woman. This is not to say that every woman has to get married and bear children. It's just that every woman should nurture her motherly instincts.

Reiki helps to enhance the maternal aspects in a woman. Aarti Gupta explains how this is done, "The woman is the fulcrum in the family. She holds the family together. She looks after each and every individual be her husband, in-laws, parents, siblings or children."

"She looks after the physical, mental and spiritual well-being of the family. So Reiki plays a very important role as far the overall functioning of the family is concerned."

"A woman can do Reiki:

- on a dish she is preparing so that it tastes better and becomes more nutritious
- on her child who has returned from karate and has tired limbs
- old father-in-law who is finding it difficult to sleep
- stressed out husband who has had a long demanding day

- day to day ailments like sickness, headaches, nausea
- chronic diseases like asthma, high blood pressure etc.
- emergency issues like dizzy spells, injuries
- to soothe the anxiety of her child during examination time.”

says Aarti giving a few practical examples on how a woman can use Reiki to help her family and home. The beautiful part of being a Reiki channel is that one feels inherently confident and empowered to deal with all such situations which life offers.

In Reiki there is something called the Mother's Touch- a gentle caressing, soothing and comforting touch from the head to the toes. The Mother's Touch is given by both a man and a woman. It provides an outlet to the motherly qualities in you.

Reiki for the pregnant woman and gynaecological problems:

According to Aarti, 'Gynaecological problems are all related to the woman questioning herself on her womanhood. She is not accepting herself as a woman.'

Accepting the feminine processes, all of them, including menstruation and menopause, is important – loving herself as beautiful, magnificent and wondrous. So through Reiki a woman with gynaecological problems becomes aware of her womanhood and generates the possibility of curing her ailments in the process.

"Pregnancy is a life within the woman. Once life comes into the womb of a woman, if the expectant mother puts her hand on her tummy and channels Reiki to the unborn baby the connection between the mother and child becomes stronger. A Reiki baby is quiet and peaceful in nature," explains Aarti.

For a woman who is having repeated miscarriages, Aarti has this suggestion, "When women who are miscarriage prone get pregnant I tell them to build a rapport with the baby by channelling Reiki to him/ her and conveying to the child that she loves him/ her, wants him/her and wants to take care of him/ her." Aarti believes that the chance of miscarriage may be greatly reduced once a connection is developed between the mother and the child.

What if a woman can't seem to conceive?

"In that case I ask Guan (also known as Kwan, Kuan) Yin, the 'goddess of compassion and

mercy' to do the healing." Guan Yin carries the Divine Mother aspect of Buddhism – the Chinese bodhisattva of compassion.

The same divine energy is carried by the Virgin Mother in Christianity, in Egypt it is epitomised by Goddess Isis and in Hinduism though Goddess Shakti. Guan Yin is regarded by many as the protector of women and children and via this association she is also regarded as a fertility goddess capable of granting children.

How can Reiki help a woman going through labour pain?

"If the husband is present in the labour room he should channel Reiki to his wife, providing the support required at this crucial juncture. People can also do long-distance healing to the woman for a comfortable and smooth labour."

How can Reiki help in preventing/ treating post partum depression?

Aarti answers, "The birth of a baby can trigger a jumble of powerful emotions, from excitement and joy to fear and anxiety. Many new moms experience the baby blues — a mild, short-lived depression, known as postpartum depression (PPD). Feelings such as sadness, anxiety and restlessness can be so strong that they interfere with daily tasks."

"PPD is caused by changes in hormones. Post partum depression is when after carrying the baby for nine months the baby is suddenly available for the whole world to share after birth. The new mother therefore feels as if the baby which was previously hers has been suddenly taken away from her. That's when the depression comes in. In this case Reiki has to be done both on the self and the baby."

Reiki for a better conjugal life:

"Reiki is important for sexual relationships. When a woman is comfortable with her sexuality she will be able to build a healthy sexual relationship with her husband. That is very important in a marital relationship."

"In traditional Indian society what a woman wants in a relationship is always put on hold or the awareness is unfortunately not there. Sadly even the expectation is not there that the woman also needs to have an orgasm. The very fact that a woman needs to be loved, fondled and caressed is often not taken into consideration at all," says Aarti.

Through the smooth flowing touch of Reiki these traditional mindsets and inhibitions between husband and wife are gently eradicated. Sex becomes a fulfilling and holistic experience for the woman.

“For instance when husband or wife put their hands on the other’s heart, head or stomach there is an energy flow which brings the couple

together. In this beautiful bonding both partners feel so much loved that there is a natural positive shift in the relationship between the two.”

“Intuitively they will learn to put the hand on the body part where the partner needs Reiki the most. (e.g., partner has had a long day at office your hand may go naturally to his shoulder).”

The Reiki Principles

Mikao Usui, founder of Reiki, was an admirer of Emperor Meiji’s works and in the process of developing his Reiki system summarised some of the emperor’s works into a set of ethical principles which later became known as the Reiki Principles. Learn them – Live by them – they are the essence for a good happy life.

These principles are as follows:

1. Just for today I will be in the attitude of gratitude.
2. Just for today I will not worry.
3. Just for today I will not anger.
4. Just for today in my daily work I will be honest to myself.
5. Just for today I will be kind and respectful to all creation.

That’s all you have to vow to give back to Reiki Energy for healing you.