

ENERGISE YOURSELF



Reiki – pronounced ray-key, from the Japanese word for “universal life force energy” – is an ancient healing art that originated in Tibet and was introduced to Japan in the mid-19th century. Practitioners use their hands to channel your life energy through your body, and it is said to help relieve headaches, backache, most stress-

related complaints like lethargy and tiredness, even arthritis and asthma. Richard Gere (above) and Jennifer Aniston are huge fans; Michael Flatley swears he wouldn't be dancing without its healing powers; Rory Bremner uses it to combat stress; Uri Geller has trained in Reiki; and Geri Halliwell (main photo), Caprice (bottom right) and Julia Sawalha (below) are regular Reiki attendees, according to those in the know.

“The great thing about Reiki is that you don't need to make a real physical effort to benefit from it,” explains Samantha Beaumont-Collins, a Reiki master who treats people with headaches and migraines to those with cancer and MS. “Reiki uses the same energy as Tai Chi or Yoga, but you don't have to exercise to benefit from that energy,” she adds. The energy that Samantha is talking about is the life energy, or “ki” – the same energy that the Chinese call “Chi”, the Indian Hindus “Prana” and Christians “Light”. “I have treated people of all ages, cynical people who don't even believe that Reiki works, and the results are still phenomenal,” Samantha Todd, a Reiki therapist at Holme Lacy hotel enthuses. “It really is for everyone.”

FEEL THE FORCE

Reiki is fast becoming the most sought-after fast-track therapy around, with classes and therapists springing up everywhere. If you want to try Reiki you will first need to track down a qualified Reiki master – someone trained to all three levels of Reiki. You will be asked to lie, fully clothed, on a couch and the Reiki master will place his or her hands on you so that they can channel the energy through your body. “I know it sounds strange, but we are all aware of positive and negative energy in people,” says Samantha. “If you take a walk in a forest you feel energised, then walk down a busy street in the rush hour you feel drained. Well, that is your body experiencing negative and positive energy.”



What Reiki does is encourage the positive energy to flow through your body. How this happens remains a mystery, but it is thought to vibrate the body at a molecular level. Even hardened cynics have been known to physically feel the energy as a type of heat or electricity when they undergo Reiki healing.

What differentiates Reiki from lots of other complementary therapies is that after just one Reiki attunement, in which you are taught to identify and channel energy, you can go away and heal yourself, rather than relying on regular and expensive trips to a therapist. “We firmly believe in empowering people to channel their own energy,” says Samantha.



THE SEVEN WONDERS

Like crystal- and colour-healing and most other types of energy therapies, Reiki works on the seven points in your body called Chakras. These Chakras are believed to be the gateways through which life energy enters your body, but in many people they are blocked, giving rise to illness and emotional distress. “People often come to me for Reiki with a bad back or stress and end up with a new job and a new boyfriend,” says Samantha.

Each Chakra controls a set of emotional, spiritual and physical aspects of your body. All seven need to be clear and balanced for health, but you can concentrate on one to help you deal with a particular problem.

The Chakra points are:

- **Base Chakra** Located in your tailbone, this controls physical health and issues concerning your house and your wealth.
- **Sacral Chakra** Found just below your navel, this controls your emotional life and is cleared to help sexual problems and trauma.
- **Solar Plexus Chakra** This is in the hollow of your ribcage where the two sets of ribs meet and it controls your power relationships with others.
- **Heart Chakra** Found level with the heart but in the centre of the body, this is the centre of all relationships, particularly those involving love.
- **Throat Chakra** Based in the throat, this is the centre for communications and is also where anger is stored.
- **Third Eye Chakra** Located between your eyes, this is the centre of inspiration, ideas and ideals and higher thinking.

● **Crown Chakra** Located on the top of the head, this is associated with spiritual well being.

If this sounds far-fetched consider how we instinctively protect our Chakras when they are inundated with negative energy. For instance you might put your hands to your chest when frightened or place them on your stomach when you are suffering from shock or nerves.

Further information

● *The Encyclopedia Of Energy Healing* by Andy Baggott (Godsfield Press, £17.99) and *An Introduction To Reiki* by Mary Lambert (Collins & Brown, £10.99).

● To contact Samantha Beaumont-Collins for Reiki therapy and a list of practitioners, tel: 020-8274 2594 or e-mail: teramai@aol.com. She also runs an introductory one-day Reiki attunement to level one for £180 through the Tera-Mai Reiki & Seichem Healers Association.

● Contact Samantha Todd at Holme Lacy on 01432-870870. Prices start at £10 for half hour. You can book a healthy break at Holme Lacy through Warners on 0870-601 6011 or visit www.warnerholidays.co.uk.

● To find your nearest qualified Reiki instructor contact the Reiki School on 0161-980 6453, or log on to www.thereiki school.co.uk.

