

LEARNING MADE EASY



2nd Edition

Reiki

^{for}
dummies[®]
A Wiley Brand



Open yourself to Reiki's
healing energy

Embrace Reiki's benefits
to bring peace to your life

Reduce stress and
ease pain

Nina L. Paul, PhD

Reiki Master Teacher

Reiki

**for
dummies®**
A Wiley Brand



Reiki

2nd Edition

by Nina L. Paul, PhD

**for
dummies®**
A Wiley Brand

Reiki For Dummies®, 2nd Edition

Published by: **John Wiley & Sons, Inc.**, 111 River Street, Hoboken, NJ 07030-5774, www.wiley.com

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Published simultaneously in Canada

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2022937979

ISBN 978-1-119-89450-6 (pbk); ISBN 978-1-119-89451-3 (ebk); ISBN 978-1-119-89452-0 (ebk)

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Introduction

The touch of a hand is increasingly recognized as being important, but it's also absent in much of modern medicine. Reiki as a complementary therapy provides the soothing comfort of human touch. This can make a world of difference to someone in pain. Reiki is the energy of love that never ends. You can experience the bliss of Reiki as a recipient and receive healing that's transmitted through another person. Or you can learn Reiki yourself to boost your personal growth and enlightenment.

Reiki has grown in popularity as more people seek solutions to personal and global problems. The person to thank for the Reiki healing system is a Japanese man named Mikao Usui (1865–1926). He developed the original Reiki system that has blossomed into a multitude of worldwide branches. What unites the Reiki systems is the essence of the Reiki life-force energy.

Reiki connects you with the ultimate source of healing at all levels. If you desire peace, consciousness, healing, or enlightenment, Reiki is for you.

About This Book

Reiki may not seem like a down-to-earth subject, but this is a down-to-earth book about Reiki. The open-access style of the *For Dummies* series makes this comprehensive book on Reiki pleasant to navigate and use.

Reading this book doesn't make you a Reiki practitioner, but you can use this book as a reference and guide when studying and as you use Reiki in your own life and to help others.

In this second edition, information on the essence of Reiki energy and how to practice and teach it are unchanged. Here's what's new or updated:

- » Finding Reiki organizations and resources
- » Updating Reiki history
- » Healing mind, body, and spirit with Reiki

- » Using Reiki in medical settings and viewing Reiki research studies
- » Practicing Reiki professionally
- » Studying and practicing Reiki online

A quick note: Sidebars (shaded boxes of text) dig into the details of a given topic, but they aren't crucial to understanding it. Feel free to read them or skip them. You can pass over the text accompanied by the Technical Stuff icon, too. The text marked with this icon gives some interesting but nonessential information about Reiki.

One last thing: Within this book, you may note that some web addresses break across two lines of text. If you're reading this book in print and want to visit one of these web pages, simply key in the web address exactly as it's noted in the text, pretending as though the line break doesn't exist. If you're reading this as an e-book, you've got it easy — just click the web address to be taken directly to the web page.

Foolish Assumptions

I assume that you, the reader of this book, fall into at least one of the following categories:

- » You're curious to find out more about Reiki.
- » You're considering trying Reiki for yourself or a family member.
- » You're looking into taking Reiki classes.
- » You want a book to guide you through classes and the beginning of your Reiki practice.

You might be one of the following:

- » **A skeptic who's open minded:** "I'll reserve final judgment until I've read the book or tried it out."
- » **A newbie to Reiki:** "I want to know more about Reiki. Bring it on."
- » **A complementary health care practitioner:** "I'm open to just about anything. I want to add Reiki to the techniques I already use."

For you to get the most from this book, I'd like to assume that you're doing the following:

- » Keeping an open mind to the possibility that Reiki can help you
- » Seeing whatever concept you have of God, a higher power, universal energy, or spirit as the source of Reiki energy
- » Using Reiki to build upon and supplement your own personal growth and healing practices
- » Feeling ready to make some changes in your life and let Reiki help you do that
- » Taking what you like from the book (and Reiki) and leaving the rest

Don't worry if you don't really believe in Reiki — Reiki can work for everyone, even someone who doesn't believe in it.

Icons Used in This Book

Like all *For Dummies* books, this book features icons to help you navigate the information. Here's what they mean.



REMEMBER

This icon accentuates information that's most important to Reiki. It highlights the take-home information.



TECHNICAL
STUFF

This icon flags information that delves a little deeper than usual into Reiki.



TIP

This icon highlights especially helpful advice about Reiki.



WARNING

This icon points out situations and actions to avoid as you study, receive, and practice Reiki.

Beyond the Book

In addition to the material in the print or e-book you're reading right now, this product comes with some access-anywhere goodies on the web. Check out the free Cheat Sheet for info on the Reiki healing system, Reiki training levels, and more. To get this Cheat Sheet, simply go to www.dummies.com and search for "Reiki For Dummies Cheat Sheet" in the Search box.

Where to Go from Here

The beauty of this book, like all *For Dummies* books, is that you can start reading anyplace you like. You can flip through the book and see what page opens up first, or you can scan the Table of Contents for chapters of interest.

You can always read from Chapter 1 and continue onward, though I don't assume that you'll read every single chapter or that you'll read the chapters in order. If you're totally new to Reiki, I suggest starting with Chapter 1 for an overview. Then you may want to jump to Chapters 5 and 6 to see what Reiki can do for you. I wish you peace and well-being with your Reiki journey.

1

Getting Started with Reiki

IN THIS PART . . .

Check out basic information on what Reiki is and what it's not. Reiki is a natural and simple way to achieve healing at all levels: physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual. *Reiki* is a Japanese word for "spiritual energy."

Find out about the founders of Reiki. The system of Reiki has spread throughout the world since it was founded by Mikao Usui in Japan. As Reiki has evolved through changes made by different Reiki masters, it still retains its essence: to provide healing to all who seek it.

Discover the five underlying principles of Reiki and how this energy system compares and contrasts with other types of energy healing.

IN THIS CHAPTER

- » Getting a basic idea of what Reiki is — and isn't
- » Finding out about the Reiki system
- » Discovering the energy and origins of Reiki
- » Seeing ways to experience Reiki
- » Selecting a practitioner or teacher
- » Listing the benefits of Reiki and revealing the symbols

Chapter **1**

Reiki: Connecting with Life-Force Energy

You're deeply relaxed while lying on the Reiki table as the practitioner lays hands on different parts of your body. Impressed that this gentle laying on of hands can bring you such peace and joy, you want to know more about it. You've come to the right place. This book is a guide to the basic practice of Reiki.

This book describes how to use Reiki to heal yourself and your family members and even treat people who are far away. Reiki techniques can also be used for your pets, your food, and the earth. The more you use Reiki, the more uses you'll find for it. In this chapter, you find out how Reiki works, where Reiki comes from, and what help Reiki can give you. You can even discover how to channel the Reiki energy yourself so that you have a lifelong tool to use for yourself and others. You get a taste of what Reiki is all about in these next several pages.

Discovering What Reiki Is and Isn't

Reiki is both of the following:

- » **A healing system that channels universal life-force energy:** Mikao Usui originally developed this system in the early 1900s in Japan. For more on Reiki's beginning, see the later section "Exploring the History of Reiki" as well as Chapter 3.
- » **The name of the energy itself:** *Rei* means spiritual wisdom, and *ki* means energy, so *Reiki* means spiritual energy. See Figure 1-1, which illustrates the word *Reiki* in Japanese characters.



TIP

Because Reiki originated in Japan, you can understand many of its concepts and terms more deeply when you consider the language and culture in Japan in the early 1900s. If you're interested in studying more about the language or culture of Japan, start by looking at some of the resources in Appendix A.



REMEMBER

Reiki is available to everyone. Anyone of any age or level of health can receive Reiki. Even newborn babies or people at the end of life can benefit from the relaxation that it provides. See Chapter 6 to find out how every member of your family, including your pets, can use and benefit from Reiki.

What Reiki is



REMEMBER

As an intelligent energy, Reiki gives you what you need, whether it's a release of tension, an energy boost, or both. To help you more fully understand what Reiki gives you, here are some terms used to describe Reiki:

- » **Gentle:** Reiki's touch is soft and light.
- » **Harmless:** Reiki can have only positive results.
- » **Natural:** You don't need any equipment or tools.
- » **Healing:** Reiki's goal is to bring forth the highest level of healing.
- » **Balancing:** Reiki balances your energy levels.
- » **Relaxing:** The top reason to try Reiki is to feel the bliss of deep relaxation.
- » **Energizing:** If you're drained of energy, Reiki can revive you.



FIGURE 1-1:
The Japanese
characters for
Reiki.

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What Reiki isn't

Knowing what Reiki isn't is as important as knowing what it is:

» **Reiki isn't religious.** Reiki is nondenominational. You can practice any religion (or none) and still use and benefit from Reiki. Mikao Usui was influenced by the religions of his country, Shintoism and Buddhism. But Reiki isn't associated with any religion, and people of all faiths and beliefs are Reiki practitioners. Reiki isn't New Age either, though Reiki can be used alongside any spiritual belief or religious system.

» **Reiki isn't massage or reflexology.** Reiki is an energy-healing system and not a manipulative system (hands manipulating the body). Reiki is distinct from reflexology and massage, but it can be used alongside these and other healing arts.



REMEMBER

Reiki isn't the personal energy of the practitioner but the energy from the universe transmitted through the practitioner.

Describing the System of Reiki

Reiki is a system of connecting to, transmitting, and receiving the Reiki energy.

Connection to Reiki energy is made through

- » Reiki Principles (see Chapter 4)
- » Reiki symbols (see Chapter 8)
- » Prayer and meditation (see Chapter 9)

Reiki is transmitted through

- » The hands
- » The eyes
- » The breath

The energy can be transmitted through gentle touch, be beamed across the room, or be sent by distance through techniques for distance healing (see Chapters 11 and 15). The ability to be a conduit for Reiki energy is taught through Reiki classes. (See the later section "Taking Reiki classes" as well as Chapter 7.)



REMEMBER

For receiving, all one needs to do is relax and be open. You probably know how to receive the energy from the sun, from a friend or family member or a pet, or from a forest or body of water. Reiki is the same.

Examining the Energy of Reiki

Reiki is a system of energy healing. You don't actually need to understand *how* the energy of the body works to use or benefit from Reiki, but it helps to know the basis for the way that Reiki works, which the following sections examine.

Defining universal energy

As a child, did you ever gaze at the stars with wonder and awe? The sun, the moon, the stars, and all the different life forms on our planet radiate a universal energy. Because this is the energy that animates humans and other living beings, it's called the *universal life-force energy*. This energy is known by different names. You can call it universal life-force energy, love, God, or spirit.



REMEMBER

Reiki is a system that allows you to tap into and benefit from this universal energy.

Detecting subtle energy

The term *subtle energy* refers to the energy of Reiki and the energy fields that are associated with your body. When something is subtle, you must get quiet to feel its presence. (Chapter 2 describes other types of subtle energy systems.)

Meditation is frequently used before giving Reiki treatment so you can get quiet enough to sense the presence of the Reiki energy. (See Chapter 9.)

The energy field surrounding the human body is also called an *aura*, and it can be sensed with the hands as well as visualized with the eyes (with some practice).

When you receive a Reiki treatment, the energy may not feel subtle as you experience the heat from the practitioner's hands and perhaps the waves rushing through your body. Each person senses the Reiki energy differently, and with time, your sensations will change. After you're attuned (initiated) into Reiki energy, you may feel Reiki more keenly. And the practitioner might sense the emanations of life-force energy from the recipient. Certain Reiki techniques utilize the ability to sense energy. (See Chapter 11.) But don't worry; you can still practice Reiki with the standard hand positions even if you don't sense anything.



REMEMBER

Reiki still works even if you don't feel its energy.

Understanding how Reiki works

As an energy-healing system, Reiki works to heal you at the level of your energy to the root of any disease, imbalance, or disharmony. Reiki works at the level of the whole person, including mind, body, emotions, and spirit.



Healing at the holistic energetic level with other forms of energy is actually quite ancient. Traditional Chinese medicine, Ayurvedic medicine, and other cultures have identified and classified aspects of this energy that runs throughout the body. (See Chapter 2 for a discussion of chakras and meridians.)

As a healing energy, Reiki is considered to be positive (no harm can come from it) and intelligent (the energy heals what is needed even if you don't consciously know what you need). The recipient draws the right amount of energy to just where it's needed. Frequently a practitioner feels their hands "drawn" like a magnet to a certain place. In this way, the practitioner is the conduit of the universal life-force energy.

Distinguishing Reiki from other forms of energy healing

Energy healing is part of many different cultures. Whether it's acupuncture or the laying on of hands, the use of energy to treat illness is part of human history. (See the nearby sidebar "Universal Reiki — with humor and humanity.")

Reiki offers a way to achieve spiritual and personal growth and to heal others. But Reiki isn't the only system with these goals. Two systems with similarities to Reiki are

- » **Johrei:** The founder of Johrei, Mokichi Okada, was a contemporary of Mikao Usui (a founder of Reiki) in Japan. The Johrei spiritual movement encompasses more than hands-on spiritual healing and advocates individual spiritual development so that everyone can reach "paradise on earth." Visit www.johrei.com for more information.
- » **Therapeutic touch:** In 1972, Dr. Dolores Krieger, RN, and Dora Kunz developed the healing system called therapeutic touch. This energy-healing system involves similar features to Reiki and is taught as a 12-hour workshop. Therapeutic touch requires compassion and a desire to develop experience through practice and focus. Therapeutic touch is commonly practiced within the nursing profession. See <https://therapeutictouch.org> for more information.