

# The Journey

Sometimes we have the privilege of giving Reiki to someone who is on the way out. Not just out to the shops or to the cinema, but out to that other world.

When I was a young and green Reiki practitioner, my goal was always prevention. I didn't want them going on, or going out. I wanted them to hang around a while longer, with me. My understanding of Reiki was that it could provide miracle cures, and that was what I wanted.

I remember with profound gratitude my unknown teacher on the Reiki Helpline. She took my call for help for my uncle, gently but incredibly firmly, insisting first that he had to consent to receive Reiki ("He does! He does!"), and second that healing in its real sense doesn't necessarily mean that the person is restored to life as we know it. She pointed out that healing can mean moving on, easing into the next world with comfort and dignity. She asked whether I was ready for that. Absolutely not. I raged, not on the phone – I was far too polite – but inwardly. What I wanted for my beloved uncle was a return to health. He'd been misdiagnosed and mistreated, and now, it seemed, we didn't have long. Weeks. I spent those weeks sending Reiki, trying to avert the course of fate.

On the third Friday after diagnosis he was in terrible pain, thrashing around. My sister, who was with him, called me. "He's in agony" she said, "it's hard." I sat and sent. I do not know where I went but I was away, linked in somewhere light and clear, unconscious of time and of my surroundings. I was wrenched back to this world, to the reality of southeast London, by a midnight phone call. My uncle had died. My sister described how the room had filled with light, how he began to breathe rather than gasp and how his pain ceased. At the end he was tranquil. As the helpline teacher said, healing comes in different ways.

So now when I am asked to heal someone whose life trembles in the balance, I have a different understanding of the power of Reiki. Sometimes, when the person on the table is someone I love deeply, that can be challenging, but I no longer try to bend Reiki to my will, I let it do its thing. And sometimes that thing is a miraculous healing, with the person restored to life and health and happiness, and sometimes that thing is a miraculous death, where the journey is made gentle. I remember the words of Kahlil Gibran:

*For what is it to die but to stand naked in the wind and to melt into the sun?*

*And what is it to cease breathing but to free the breath from its restless tides, that it may rise and expand and seek God unencumbered?*

*Only when you drink from the river of silence shall you indeed sing.*

*And when you have reached the mountain top, then you shall begin to climb.*

*And when the earth shall claim your limbs, then shall you truly dance. □*

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