



Taking time to heal

Louisa Booth shares her experiences of 14 consecutive Reiki treatments.



Above:
Louisa Booth

Right:
Treatment

Recently, a neurosurgeon offered to remove a chunk of my spine with a view to un-trapping a nerve, relieving the pins and needles in my fingers, and eliminating the 'electric shocks' that ping through me when I do anything as unreasonable as reaching out, or lifting a kettle. Neurosurgery? I'm not at all sure I fancy that. I rang Ian Spiers, friend, Reiki Master and Chiropractor.

"You're a Reiki Master," he said, "Use Reiki! Try twelve consecutive treatments."
"Why twelve?" I asked.

"I don't know," said Ian, "It could be fourteen".

It proved surprisingly easy to set up twelve treatments in a row. As usual with Reiki, all I had to do was be clear in intent, and the rest followed. In the space of one evening at a Reiki share, several Reiki friends had signed up to treat me, and, despite their protests, I had worked out how to pay them.

"Twelve treatments?" said David, "That's a lot of Reiki." I thought of Mrs Takata, in her 'operation not necessary' moment, willingly committing to months of Reiki in a foreign land to ensure she healed. Mrs Takata absolutely understood that treatment for some conditions takes time. Fran Brown recalls that Takata was 'much better' after three weeks of daily Reiki treatments. "All aches and pains had disappeared, no more eye trouble. Her colour was better than it had ever been and her strength was returning. Reiki was restoring her health." But that wasn't the end of it. It took four months before the asthma and the gall stones were gone and "Takata's health was restored." (from *Living Reiki: Takata's Teachings*, as told to Fran Brown). Four months! My plan involved only twelve days. We, in our more hasty age, want everything now. We want the quick fix, the instant miracle. And yes, sometimes miracles are instantaneous, and sometimes they take a little longer. But surely, in the time it takes to proceed to the head of an NHS waiting list, I could do something about my spine.

I cunningly planned the first few treatments to coincide with some time I had scheduled off work. I have a wonderful half-time job working for the NHS, which I love, and which has the added bonus of supporting my Reiki and Writing habit; but just for that week, the time off was vital. In between treatments, all I wanted to do was sleep. A massive exhaustion overtook me, along with the need to stop, look, and listen to what was going on in my life. It was a long time since I'd taken any notice of it. Meanwhile, little miracles began to happen. I tried hard not to worry (just for today, do not) about the money that was flowing out to pay for my treatments. Suddenly I had new clients, wanting Reiki treatments and offering me money to pay for them. Not many, you understand – just enough to cover the deficit. With Reiki, all you need to do is commit. The rest will follow.

“By the second week, the treatments had begun to change”

By the second week, the treatments had begun to change. As Sheena put it, "Before, I had to push the Reiki in, now it's all swirly". I could feel that Reiki was flowing in a different way around my body. For a long time it had been stuck, but now I could see ribbons of Reiki, like streams of blue fire, flickering along my limbs.

My spine began to loosen up. I flicked around on the Reiki table and my joints began to click into place. And then, on the 7th day, I went back to work. In my NHS work, I have appointments scheduled months ahead. I couldn't let anyone down. It was a curious, split place to be. I love the work, and wanted and needed to do it, but I wanted and needed to heal too. Duty prevailed, and I set off across the moor to see a patient. My body had other plans. By the end of the day, I had a streaming cold and a splitting headache. The next day, I was too ill to see any patients. I had to stay in bed. I warned my Reiki friends, and they turned up and gave me treatments anyway. "Good, good," said Ian, when I texted to say I had flu, "It's working".

I felt somewhat foolish. I have been practising Reiki for fifteen years. I should have expected a reaction. I tell my students to expect them. I have, after all, seen healing crises before. I've even had one or two. They're what happens to anyone who needs to clear their body of accumulated toxins, whether physical, mental or emotional, if they give Reiki a chance. And twelve days of Reiki is enough for some serious clearing. I was in bed for seven days, emerging once a day for a Reiki treatment. There was no way I could go to work now. I had all the symptoms of swine flu – cold, cough, fever, headache, and I felt curiously fine, and absolutely not infectious. OK, so my legs were weak and bed was definitely the place for me, but that was fine too. It gave me time. On day twelve, I still felt lousy. I added two more treatments. To my surprise, on the day of my final treatment, everything suddenly shifted. The haze of feverish cold

and sinus headache lifted, and in its place was clarity.

There's another thing I should have remembered. It's not possible to direct Reiki energy, and it decides where to go first. In my case, that wasn't my spine, it was my head. That sense of clarity has stayed with me. A particular wedge of intractable misery has rolled away. A creative project close to my heart that had been stymied for years has begun to flow again. Possibilities are opening up. I can feel changes happening, and I am grateful to my Reiki friends for their time, which made these changes possible. And as for my spine, well it's definitely different, and possibly straighter, but it's not better yet. My fingers still fizz when I lie on my side. Tiny electric shocks still catch me unawares. Ian tells me that it takes 3 months, only 3 months, to regenerate every bone in the body. So far, I've only had two. I need to give it time. I need to give it a lot more Reiki. And meanwhile, I've taken myself off the neurosurgeon's waiting list while I wait to see what happens. Surely this operation isn't necessary □

