

The 10,000 Foot View

I once held a pilots' licence, literally experienced the world from a 10,000ft viewpoint. One can see a long distance, know that going from point A to point B can be a straight line. When looking down the details often are a blur; only the significant features remain visible. From the perspective of looking down from a great height, many of the questions and talking points of the world of Reiki practice blur into the background with one point prominent in all forms. The practice began with one man on a mountain who had an enlightenment experience.

We can only imagine what 'enlightenment' is, as it is most likely not in our experience. We are told he felt 'a great Reiki over his head'. The rest is left to our interpretation. My interpretation is that he used a Japanese word to give a name to a very real presence, a consciousness that is present in every aspect of the universe. It has been given different names through the ages. IT (uppercase is intentional) doesn't care what we name it, and I don't actually know what IT IS, but I have the awareness that IT has been part of my experience every moment of my life. This practice that we call Reiki has been a mechanism to bring into consciousness, a moment-to-moment awareness of IT. My further interpretation is that the experience is a very normal human one.

All of the constructs of the system of practice evolved from this one man's experience. His enlightened eyes saw the world differently to our own eyes, and he drew on forms of practice with which he was familiar - ones that had the capacity to create the environment for this process we call enlightenment to emerge. My understanding is that the enlightened mind already exists within each one of us; the enlightenment process is a 'mind shift' (healing the heart-mind) to allow its expression in our lives. Many of the common questions about the practice disappear when it is viewed through 'enlightened eyes'.

As in many spiritual practices, there are different levels of understanding and focus. At one level there is the ordinary, every day personal practice on self and on others. Some have identified and structured this practice in terms of a modality, and even that focus also serves a purpose. My experience is that

every aspect of the system of which I am aware has another invisible overlay, what I call 'the system thread' which appears to also apply to other Usui Reiki forms.

The clear thread of the NOW is woven into the Reiki precepts: each one an instruction for being 'in the now'. It appears again in the hands-on treatments when the energy healing connotations are let go, and instead, treatments become a practice of meditative stillness and presence, of being present with oneself and the presence that is the receiver of the treatment. This embodied presence is key: nothing to do, nowhere to go. In short, the simple practice that Hawayo Takata is renowned for.



The thread of the NOW is woven through the symbol practice. Hawayo Takata used the words 'secret and sacred', which are generally greatly misunderstood. The symbols absolutely carry secrets, and the nature of what they have to reveal is in the realm of what may be considered sacred - something one holds close to one's heart. The symbol practice is initially a minded relationship with the symbol itself, and at some later point connecting with the nature of what the symbol actually represents. Treating them as tools or training wheels is 'fatal' in this process.

This system thread also points to an as yet unrealised vision and direction for the future of Reiki practice. Phyllis Furumoto first expressed her description of the 'Aspects and Elements of the Form' in 1993. The one aspect Phyllis spoke of as little known, but that would find expression in time, was Mystic Order. She wrote of it in terms of a community 'awakening to the experience of a much greater reality beyond what is commonly known'.

For some years, my relationship with what the symbols represent has been unwaveringly pointing toward this greater reality. This is a vision of the practice that is calling from a deeper place, beyond 'modality', and 'energy healing'. Perhaps we will arrive there some NOW moment. There is a choice to make, a path to take.