

Reiki

**you may not have heard of it, but
it sure feels good!**

BY MAUREEN SCOTT

When baby boomers sit down for a dinner party or Euchre game the conversation inevitably turns to health and wellness. So don't be surprised if the chatter touches on the new kid in town in terms of relaxation techniques: Reiki. It's an ancient Japanese technique that, according to the national website, "re-establishes a normal energy flow of ki (life force energy) throughout the system, which in turn can enhance and accelerate the body's innate healing ability." After just one session I learned that I had knee problems and a blocked or stressed upper respiratory system. So much information, without an Xray and barely a touch!

Reiki practitioners "let their fingers do the walking" so to speak, through a series of hand positions about six inches above the body and "butterfly-kiss touches" in key areas like the top of the head, the base of the neck, stomach, the knees and the feet. It all relates to the seven Chakras in the body.

I first heard of Reiki at a business lunch with Linda Thomas, Executive Director of the Mississauga Arts Council when she mentioned her interesting part time job; she is a Reiki Master.

"A what?" I asked. The vivacious 50-something blonde excitedly explained the concept of life-force energy. "We are all energy; we have life force energy flowing through us. When energy is flowing, free of blockage, you have a feeling of wellness, contentment. It's when the energy is low, or blocked that you are more likely to be susceptible to illness."

Linda enjoys helping people. "I've always been spiritual and I knew I had a bigger purpose," says Linda. "For me, Reiki is a way of connecting to the bigger picture, so it's almost selfish." After two years of prep, she is now a Reiki Master.

It was difficult to even find places that offer Reiki. A spokesperson at Credit Valley Hospital had never heard of it and said she was not aware of it being used by the hospital. Two Oakville clinics list Reiki on their websites; www.wellnessforthebody.ca and www.dundaschiropractic.com. Linda offers Reiki through the Sunshine Day Spa on Burnhamthorpe, across from Square One. She also takes her Reiki treatment on the road, offering sessions at client's homes or offices. She practices part time and has about 8 to 10 clients at any given time. With skepticism, yet curiosity, I decided to sign up for a session. Linda asked me to lie on the massage-type bed, face up, fully clothed. "My intention is to let the energy flow where it is most needed unless there's something specific you would like me to work on," she explains.

With the calming sound of ocean waves in the background, Linda whispers, "Close your eyes and just relax. Find a safe, happy place". No words are spoken during the session. It's almost impossible not to fall asleep. It's heaven after a frantic day. I feel the heat from her hands as they waft over my head, neck, arms. She lightly touches the back of my knees. Softly Linda instructs me to roll over to lie on my stomach. With my face snugly placed in the comfy "donut hole" pillow, I'm back to my "happy place": Italy... on the beach in Positano, sitting on the shore happily slapping my feet in the turquoise blue sea as the whoosh of the tide washes over my legs. I feel the heat of the sun, no, it's Linda's hands, as they gently brush

the bottom of my feet with her hands. Next, I feel the sweeping motion of Linda's warm hands, down from my shoulder to my finger tips. She performs the same motion down my legs. Then with a zig zag motion she sweeps her hands back and forth across my entire body, ending at my feet. Each motion is performed three times to remove any lingering negativit, stress or toxins. Linda gently whispers "I'm finished. Slowly sit up when you are ready." I'm pulled back from life on the beach in Italy way too soon.

Linda begins the post-Reiki assessment.

"Do you have a problem with your knees?" she asks. "I felt something when my hands went to your knees so I spent a lot of time on them. I also sensed something when I came to your upper chest area, particularly in the upper back." How could Linda possibly know that I play tennis and have had a knee injury and most winters I seem to get bronchitis. I've also had a cough on and off for awhile.

"My fingers tingle as I go over certain parts of the body and the tingling stops or lessens when I sense a blockage," says Linda. "Each Reiki practitioner has his/her own way of sensing the client's energy".

After the session I felt refreshed and renewed in a similar way to that feeling you have after a dental cleaning (without the pain). For \$75, the Reiki session filled me with well being which lasted for about a week. (Linda's sessions run about 1 1/2 hours including the initial talk, the session and the debrief.)

Reiki treatments can become addictive, in a good sort of way. Cheryl Dineley of Mississauga signed up for Reiki sessions (in conjunction with physiotherapy) to help reduce the neck, back and ankle pain she was experiencing, as a result of an auto accident. "After just 3 or 4 Reiki treatments the pain was substantially reduced," says Cheryl. "I'd recommend it in a minute." Cheryl first heard about Reiki from her Yoga instructor, Abigail (Aby) Van Clieaf of Mississauga. Both Abigail and her husband Joe are Reiki Masters. Cheryl says she often asks Joe to send her Long Distance Reiki!

"I call Joe to ask him to send me Reiki and tell him about a particular problem," says Cheryl. They decide on an approximate time. "I know when I'm receiving it; I can feel the heat and energy where the injury is. It feels a little like fingers moving on the area. It's a slow energy process but it does really work. After a session you just feel like mush. And that night you sleep like a baby."

Joe Van Clieaf says he enjoys practicing Reiki so much that he often offers his long distance Reiki service free of charge! And get this, he doesn't need to know you; all he needs is a name, a description of your ailment or area of concern. He also likes to know the city where you live.

"I don't need a phone or a fax, I just need a name," says Joe. "You can be in Vancouver or in India, it doesn't matter." Joe says he wants to have permission to send the Reiki and the person should be open and willing to accept it. "If you don't think it will work, don't even bother trying. Light and energy are not bound by space or time; that's why I can deliver long distance Reiki to anywhere," says Joe. "However I don't want to be up at 4 a.m. sending Reiki messages."

What does Linda say to the skeptics; "Give me 20 minutes and let's see if it makes a difference." Reiki did seem to make a difference for me. Whether it's mind



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Sunshine Day Spa

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The Canadian Re

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The World Reiki

www.reiki.org



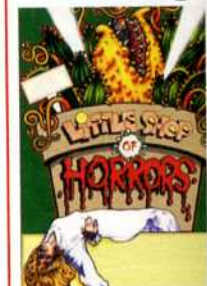
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