

# Wonderful



# Stories

Edited by **Barbara McDaniel** and **Susan Mitchell**

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# Introduction

## What is Reiki, anyway?

The best answer is to give you an experience. If we were sitting in a room together, we might say, “Let me show you. May I put my hands on your shoulders for a minute?” Then one of us would place our hands, palm down, on your upper back and simply rest them there for a little while.

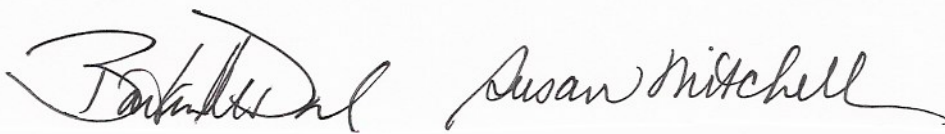
But right this minute, we’re not within arm’s reach, so the next best response is to tell you Reiki stories.

The stories collected here cover a range of Reiki experiences—receiving treatment from others, learning Reiki and treating friends and family, self-treatment, and experiences with distant treatment. In the wonderful, indirect language of story, these tales illustrate the depth and breadth of how Reiki works to heal the body, heart, mind, and spirit.

These stories first appeared in *Reiki Magazine International* and all are used with the kind permission of the authors. You’ll find more articles and stories in the Articles section of our web site, [www.reikihealingarts.com](http://www.reikihealingarts.com). You can access even more experiences in the back issues of *Reiki Magazine*, [www.reikimagazine.com](http://www.reikimagazine.com).

Feel free to share this collection with your friends and families, and send them to our website for their own copies.

It’s a pleasure to share our love of Reiki with you. May all beings everywhere benefit from healing touch through the telling of these stories.

Handwritten signatures of Barbara McDaniel and Susan Mitchell in black ink. The signature for Barbara McDaniel is on the left and Susan Mitchell is on the right. A vertical line is positioned to the right of the signatures.

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# Longing to Ease the Pain

by Barbara McDaniel

How conviction and a simple proposal led to medical research

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*They met at the Cross Cancer Institute in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada in 1993. Lisa Fontanella was passionate about Reiki. Dr. Karin Olson was committed to research. Together they study Reiki's effect on cancer and pain.*

Lisa Fontanella had already learned Reiki in 1992 when her sister was diagnosed with a recurrence of breast cancer. "I ran into an old friend at a picnic," Lisa recalls, "who told me I looked like hell and that I should try Reiki." She got a treatment, took a class, and began to treat herself and her sister, Patty.

"Patty was on the cancer drug, tamoxifen," Lisa says. "Tamoxifen goes right to the bone—like calcium does—and attacks cancer cells very specifically. But because it's a foreign substance, the drug also causes muscle spasms, called flare-ups. She only got relief from that pain when I did Reiki."

The head of the Cross Institute's Oncology Department took notice. "Patty's breast cancer had spread to the bone," says Lisa. "She was always forgetting her cane, so she was pretty mobile, and she was on the lowest doses of pain medication her doctor had ever seen."

"One day her doctor asked, 'What are you doing?' She said, 'Well, I do meditation and Lisa does Reiki.'"

"The doctor wanted to know, 'What's Reiki?'"

## Evidence

Lisa was convinced that Reiki could help the patients at the Cross, but as she tried to explain Reiki to the doctor and his staff, she realized that he would need more than her personal testimony to take Reiki seriously. Was there scientific evidence to back her up?

Lisa began her investigation, looking for the research that would support her conviction. She found studies on Therapeutic Touch, on various types of energy healing, on prayer . . . but nothing on Reiki.

"I was sitting at the Cross one day—one of the many times—with my hand on Patty's back. I looked around that waiting room. There were so many people . . . it just broke my heart. I thought, 'No one should have to go

**"She only got relief from that pain when I did Reiki."**

through this without Reiki!" Lisa remembers.

"So I went home," she continues, "and put together this little lame, page-and-a-half proposal that cited Therapeutic Touch and any other similar practice I could think of. I made an appointment with the Director of Nursing and gave her this thing and said, 'This is Reiki. You should do something.'"

## Partnership

The nurse introduced Lisa to Dr. Karin Olson, then the coordinator of Nursing Research at the Cross Cancer Institute. Their synergistic partnership has lasted over ten years and launched the first small study of Reiki's effect on pain.

Dr. Olson is the scientist; Lisa is the passionate Reiki advocate and practitioner. "Karin is very linear," comments Lisa. "She thinks in a very different way than I do. So I'll talk and she'll ask questions. We complement each other. It has to be that way in order to do research in something like the medical world that's really black and white."

"Reiki is purple, not black or white" she continues. "That was the hardest part when we wrote the first proposal—trying to articulate Reiki in words that would get medical support and funding for this research."

With no medical research to rely on, Karin, Lisa, and co-researcher John Hanson first designed a pilot study to measure Reiki's effect on pain. Among twenty patients experiencing various types of pain, eighty-five percent reported significant pain reduction after

a single Reiki treatment. The study was published in *Cancer Prevention & Control* in 1997.<sup>1</sup>

## Personal experience

The research team faced panels of doctors and several ethics committees before their study was approved, and they were careful to avoid any apparent conflicts of interest. Consequently, throughout the design and implementation of the first study, Karin never experienced a Reiki treatment.

A year and a half into their collaboration, Karin came down with pneumonia. At last, Lisa was allowed to treat her. "I went over on a Tuesday and a Thursday. Karin went to the doctor on Friday, who asked, 'What are you doing? Your pneumonia is completely gone.' That proved it to her. Until that time, she was working on blind faith. She knew nothing about Reiki other than what I had told her. Then to have Reiki get rid of double pneumonia in two treatments—it was one of the biggest gifts I could have given her."

## Second study

The second study, published in *Journal of Pain Study and Symptom Management*, compared cancer pain in two groups of patients: those receiving standard pain medication plus rest and those receiving standard pain medication plus Reiki. It also assessed quality of life for the twenty-four patients. Again, Karin was

**"No one should have to go through this without Reiki."**

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<sup>1</sup> Go to [reikihealingarts.com](http://reikihealingarts.com) and click **Articles**, Using Reiki to Manage Pain for a summary.

the scientist and Lisa the Reiki practitioner.

Over seven days, study volunteers kept a pain diary at morning, noon, night, and bedtime. "The results were better than I could have hoped for," Lisa says. "For the Reiki group, pain decreased dramatically, and their quality of life improved from day one to day seven. And these were people in severe pain who were on heavy medications."

The study was hard on the researchers. "We worked with people who were at the end stages of their lives," Lisa explains. "We were supposed to study one hundred people, but it was difficult to find suitable volunteers. They had to be cognizant, but so many were on morphine. The study took a year and a half longer than planned, and it took a huge toll on me. We lost volunteers before their part in the research even started. I never looked at obituaries until I started that study."

### Third study

Critics of the second study point out that the positive result could be attributed to the particular practitioner. Karin, now a researcher with the University of Alberta, and Lisa, now a Reiki Master, have designed a third study to counter those concerns.

Pending funding, the study will take place in three cities at the same time with a family member providing the treatments. The study will recruit patients early in their cancer diagnosis and will measure quality of life and fatigue as well as pain. "We're branching

out," Lisa explains. "Cancer and its treatment takes so much out of the patient and the caregivers. We hope to show how Reiki can support everyone in this process." This time Lisa will be training the family members, not giving the treatments.

### Results

Lisa had no idea that her "lame proposal" would have such a far-ranging effect. "I look back and I still think that ignorance is bliss," she laughs. "If I had thought this through—I'm going to the leading research hospital in North America, and I'm going to tell them, 'This is what you need to do, okay?'—I never would have done it. But you get an intuition and you go with it and everything falls into place. Had I met anyone else but Karin things might have been different. But I hit the right person at the right time to do the right thing."

Lisa is still pursuing her original aim. "I wanted to pave the way so that people all over the world could take this information and start their own Reiki research—not just for cancer patients, but spinal cord injuries, whatever. I know that the only way the medical establishment will take any heed is to prove it."

Patty died before the first study was done, but memory of her experience sustains Lisa's commitment to Reiki research. "When you have terrible things to cope with, you can't imagine not having Reiki," she muses. "The person may or may not die, but that's not the point. My sister was healed when she died. She wasn't cured; she was healed."

**"My sister was healed when she died. She wasn't cured; she was healed."**

That was the thing that she taught me. My job was to make it easier . . . and detach from the outcome. That was a tough one for me at first; I had to learn a lot."

"This has taken me in a lot of different directions since that first day sitting at the Cross, borrowing somebody's computer, and typing up that little lame proposal," Lisa concludes. "I still have it. It's all faded. You can barely read it, but I can't throw it out. I look at it now and I just smile, because it was total faith on my part. It was total faith on the part of the Director of Nursing, and total faith on

Karin's part. The connections, the research, the studies—it was all meant to happen. I feel truly blessed to be able to be a part of this. And the lessons that I've learned from all the people I've worked with. They have taught me so much. It's been an interesting ride and there's more to come."

*Reprinted from Reiki Magazine International, August 2003. © Barbara McDaniel, 2003*

**"I wanted to pave the way so that people all over the world could take this information and start their own Reiki research."**

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# Peaceful Mom, Happy Baby

by Mamta Nanda, London, England

Reiki relieves the anxiety that often comes with new motherhood—and helps your baby settle

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*Mamta Nanda runs a clinic in London, England where she offers Reiki treatments to pregnant women and new mothers and babies. Recently a new mom came to her feeling anxious and fearing she was suffering post-partum depression.*

## Mamta's Version

My client was a single mother trying to manage with a seven-week-old baby after a caesarean birth. On her first visit, she was quite unhappy, finding it difficult to cope with the baby. The baby had a very sad look—he wasn't responsive at all. The mother said that he was quite unsettled at times, had phases where he would keep crying for no apparent reason, and would keep waking up through the night. They both received Reiki for about half-an-hour each.

On the second visit, they both looked much happier. The mother said that she was feeling much better and more positive compared to the week before. She felt better able to cope with the baby. And the change in the baby was remarkable. He was smiling, he looked happy, he was responding when I talked to him; he was much more alert, looking around showing an interest in the surroundings. The mother said that he had been much more settled during the week, and he

was sleeping for at least six hours at night. When asked what she thought could have caused such a change, she could only think of Reiki.

## Her client's version

“Before I attended a Reiki session with Mamta, I was feeling very anxious and frustrated. I am a first time mum, a single mum and also an older mum (I'm in my late 30s), so having my son was a major life change. In addition to that, I delivered him by emergency caesarean

and had to deal with the physical limitations that can impose after birth. Inwardly, I was concerned that I might be suffering from mild post-natal depression, but I

didn't want to tell anyone because I felt guilty that I wasn't appreciating my new baby.

Ethan, my son, did not seem very happy either. He was a bit constipated, gassy, and cried quite a bit. I saw an ad for Mamta's Reiki sessions and thought I would give it a try. I've been three times now, and both Ethan and I are so much happier. I feel like I am much better able

**“Before my Reiki session, I was feeling very anxious and frustrated.”**

to cope, and I also feel that Ethan is feeling better. His constipation is gone, his wind has decreased, he is sleeping much better, and he smiles a lot which is such a joy.

As for me, I feel like I am bonding much better with him and that I am much more able to handle the stress of such a big transition. I feel so happy that I am enjoying everything now. I'm convinced that Mamta's Reiki sessions have made an impact on our physical and emotional well-being.

Mamta has such a caring and patient manner that I was instantly at ease with her. She's also very gentle with Ethan. I would recommend a session to anyone who is feeling difficulty in coping with a new baby or has a baby who is difficult to calm or is having troubles with digestion or sleeping. It's certainly made a world of difference for my son and I."

*Reprinted with permission from Mamta Nanda, [www.reikiwithmamta.com](http://www.reikiwithmamta.com).*

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**"Now I am bonding much better with Ethan, and I am much more able to handle the stress of such a big transition."**

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# Treating the Child

by Miep Seelbach-Scholte, Alblasterdam, the Netherlands

A drugless way to calm the overactive child

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*Sometimes a little bit of Reiki is all that's needed to make a difference.*

"Wow! It's cool here!" He looked around my Reiki room after storming up the stairs, tearing the door open, and jumping on the Reiki table like a kangaroo.

"What are you going to do?" he asked.

"I am going to give you a Reiki treatment," I said. "Shall I tell you what that is?"

"Oh no, it's all right," and his head flopped on the table. I did tell him, of course, that I was going to put my hands on his body and that his belly might start bubbling, and that he might even have to fart or burp. He found that very funny.

It is very difficult for a six-year-old, overactive boy to lie still and he didn't. He tossed and turned from one side to the other and from his belly to his back, but he let me know precisely where to put my hands. "Yes there, and there!"

## Delight

No, that's enough now, for it tickles very much." There was no question of doing a normal Reiki treatment, but what a delight! He talked a mile a minute.

In the meantime his eyes had fallen on my Tibetan singing bowls. "What dog dishes do you have there?" he asked, and I explained the purpose of the singing bowls.

"May I?" he asked. So after the treatment, I put a singing bowl on his belly. I have never heard someone roar so much with laughter.

When we came downstairs his mother asked how it had been. "Tomorrow I come again," he said, but that seemed a bit too fast to me. We made an appointment for five days later and, again, it was a delight.

## What is needed

He knows exactly what will happen and what he wants, and in his way, he lies still during the treatment. "Will you put your hands under my head?" he'll ask. "I love that!" Meanwhile he keeps an eye on the clock, because he is counting out his lying still! Longer than half an hour he really doesn't manage. After the treatment he can have the "dog dish" on his belly again and we sing songs together.

He loves to receive treatments, and his mother made a series of appointments.

After a number of treatments, he seems quieter and, according to his mother, he sleeps well.

It is beautiful to see how Reiki works with a child and how well that child is capable of indicating what he wants. Reiki just does what is needed.

In the meantime I am very much looking forward to our next

treatment—“Just four more nights to sleep,” as he would say.

*Miep Sielbach-Scholte is a Reiki Master living in Ablasterdam, the Netherlands.*

*Reprinted from Reiki Magazine International, June/July 2003. © Miep Sielbach-Scholte 2003*

**It is beautiful to see how  
Reiki works with a child and  
how well that child is capable  
of indicating what he wants.**

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# Dark to Daylight

by Margaret Yarnton, Victoria, Australia

One man's journey with severe depression, relieved by Reiki.

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*Over six months and thirty-six treatments, Thomas made the journey from serious depression and anxiety to a healthy state of body and mind.*

I was initiated into Reiki in October 1998. I was working in an employment agency for people with disabilities, assisting them to find work and then supporting them in the workplace until they were able to work independently. Fifty percent of our clients lived with a psychiatric disability. As time went on, I became increasingly convinced that my calling was to full-time healing and that natural therapies, including Reiki, had much to offer in the area of mental health. In July 1999, I resigned from disability employment to focus on studies in Aromatherapy and Reiki.

Still feeling very much a novice, I was a little unsure of my ability to help a man who came to me at the beginning of September that same year. Thomas was suffering from severe depression and had been unable to work for many months. He had a history of depression, usually during the winter months, but this was by far the longest and worst episode he had experienced.

## Changed Forever

After the first Reiki session, Thomas appeared deeply moved. He opened his eyes and said, "Something has happened that has changed me forever." He couldn't identify what had happened, but knew a real change occurred. I had experienced a profound emotional connection in giving him Reiki, at times quite overwhelming.

Three days later, Thomas returned. He had slept better since the Reiki, a friend (who knew nothing about the Reiki treatment) had commented that he was more relaxed, and his wife had noticed a difference. The weather had been miserable, and he was surprised that he had not been affected as much as usual.

During the treatment, Thomas had experienced some unpleasant sensations, but felt something was being moved, that the Reiki was bringing to the surface something that needed to be cleared.

**I became increasingly convinced that Reiki had much to offer in the area of mental health.**

Following the third treatment another three days later, Thomas said he felt the energy was more balanced, and even that *he* was becoming more balanced.

We established a pattern of twice-weekly Reiki sessions, followed by a cup of tea and time to share his experiences. By the sixth visit Thomas observed, "I feel I am coming out of the dark into the light."

During the seventh treatment, I again experienced a strong emotional connection, but quite different from the first time when the emotion was heavy and full of pain. This was lighter with a sense of joy. I had sensations of weights being lifted and floating away. Thomas felt a lot of things being drawn up and passing down his body and out through his feet. Sleep patterns had improved. He was sleeping longer and able to control any anxiety or panic attacks during the wakeful periods by saying a short prayer to calm himself while placing his hands on the front of his torso. He would then go back to sleep, whereas previously he would have gotten up and walked around for about an hour.

### Release

After the eighth session, he commented that he had experienced some painful, unpleasant sensations during earlier treatments, but that these no longer occurred. I had noted in earlier treatments that after about fifteen minutes, I was aware of a particular odor. This had diminished and was barely noticeable that day. It occurred again about a week later when we were both aware of a lot of activity during the Reiki.

**"I am coming  
out of the dark  
into the light."**

Throughout October, Thomas experienced considerable emotional release during many Reiki sessions. He experienced increasing periods of feeling stronger and began undertaking some small projects. He noticed he was clearing his throat fairly regularly for no apparent reason and wondered if it could be related to the Reiki. We were both interested to read Louise Hay's comments in her book, *You Can Heal Your Life*: "The energy center in the throat, the fifth chakra, is the place in the body where change takes place. When we are resisting change or in the middle of change or are trying to change, we often have a lot of activity in our throats."

Thomas continued to receive Reiki twice weekly during November and December. Treatments became less emotional, more peaceful. Although unable to define what occurred at each session, Thomas was conscious they were doing him good. His comments included, "The depression's still there, but the despair and psychosis are gone . . . The periods of daylight are longer and more frequent . . . The worst is now behind me."

With busy family activities following Christmas and the New Year, four weeks passed without a Reiki treatment. Thomas had been remarkably well during that time. We both perceived the next Reiki treatment as calm and peaceful and deep. His body seemed very thirsty for the energy.

Before starting the next session a few days later, I prayed that the final traces of depression be lifted from Thomas, that healing energy flow into every last dark crack and crevice of his being.

To me, that treatment was quite troubled—tremors and jerks ran through

Thomas's body many times. Yet, when Thomas opened his eyes, he said how wonderfully relaxing the treatment had been. He had been unaware of the jerks and tremors. It was the first time he had experienced such deep relaxation throughout a treatment. A week later, Thomas had a similar Reiki experience, and this time, it was also deeply relaxing for me. I sensed the energy around his body to be balanced and strong.

## Peace

He received two more treatments over the next two weeks—a total of thirty-six Reiki sessions over nearly six months. It was eighteen months before he returned for another Reiki, and I have not seen him professionally for nearly two

years. He recognizes the benefits of regular Reiki, but has continued in good health since the intensive six months that began nearly four years ago.

Since then, I have shared the healing path of many people with depression and anxiety. I will always be especially grateful, though, for that very first experience of the power and peace of Reiki in restoring health—mental, emotional and spiritual.

*You may contact Margaret Yarnton at 613 5668 1561 or myarnton@vic.australis.com.au*

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**I prayed that the  
final traces of  
depression be lifted.**

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# Can I Help?

by Barbara McDaniel

Every one of us can use Reiki in our daily lives to help people

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*With First Degree Reiki, you learn to treat yourself, family, and friends. Judy Blalack, whose life is all about service, demonstrates how to offer Reiki wherever a need arises.*

The *Silver Bulletin* newsletter carried this New Testament advice from the Apostle Peter: “Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.” Newsletter editor Judy Blalack embodies this message as she volunteers in her rural Idaho community, helping to provide housing through Habitat for Humanity and offering Reiki to anyone who hurts.

## The beginning

About twelve years ago, Judy and her husband, Verne, retired to his childhood home in Idaho’s Silver Valley. It just so happens that Reiki Master Paul Mitchell lives there too, and Judy had been looking for Reiki.

“I was taking care of my mother before she passed away from Parkinson’s disease,” Judy recalls. Her mother rarely complained, but the day Judy’s aunt visited with a friend, she mentioned having a headache. “My aunt said, ‘My friend here is a healer and she can help

you.’ So this lady—I still don’t know her name—walked around behind my mother and put her hands on her head and neck. Mother looked over at me and said, “You could do this, Judy. You just get these little heating pads for your fingers.’ I knew something was happening. My mother was very alert, but she couldn’t see what the woman was doing behind her.”

Judy wrote the name of the friend’s practice—R-E-I-K-I—on a piece of paper and stuck it in her wallet. She didn’t hear that unusual word again until she and Verne moved back to Cataldo. “That’s when I discovered that my sister-in-law was working at The Reiki Alliance

office,” she laughs. Shortly afterwards, she took a First Degree Reiki class with Paul. Since then, her three grown children, sister,

daughter-in-law, remaining sisters-in-law, and quite a few local people have taken the class as a result of Judy’s enthusiasm. “I do Reiki probably every day,” she says. “It’s just become a part of me.”

**‘You could do this, Judy. You just get these little heating pads for your fingers.’**

At about the same time she took Reiki, Judy and Verne got involved with the local chapter of Habitat for Humanity. Habitat is a nonprofit, non-denominational, Christian organization that make houses affordable to low-income people worldwide. Volunteers provide most of the labor and donors provide the money. Both Judy and Verne have served on the board. Verne works with the building crews. Judy edits the newsletter, cooks, and gives lots of Reiki. Judy's on-site treatments have led several Habitat volunteers to Reiki. "It seems about every year or two we have some people who have heard about Reiki from other people, who want to take the class," she says.

Judy's faith supports her work with Habitat and with Reiki, "Since I'm Christian," she explains, "I believe the energy comes from God, but, of course, you don't have to be any religion or faith in order for it to work. It's just like the rain; it falls on everybody."

### **I can help**

Judy is a world traveler with endless stories about offering Reiki to complete strangers in places like Hawaii, Rome, Turkey, and the Phillipines. Her confidence in Reiki makes her fearless, and people seldom refuse her offered hands.

"Once we were in Rome at St. Peter's Basilica and we had gone up into the cupola. We were coming back down and I heard this child cry above us. The stairs were extremely narrow. Finally I found a spot where you could step off and wait. The family came down. The mother had this big white, bloody tissue. The girl

had cut her finger on the railing, and so I offered. 'I can help.' I treated her hand for about five minutes, looked up, and asked if she was okay and she nodded. Her parents were extremely concerned, and so they thanked me and we went on out. We got to the bottom of the basilica with all those huge statues and all the tourists mingling. The parents found us in all that crowd and thanked me again. The father said they were from Malaysia. They didn't know anyone there who spoke English. When he'd seen how bad the cut was, he was sure he would have to take her to the doctor. He said after her treatment, he could see where the skin was already starting to heal

**"After her treatment, he could see where the skin was already starting to heal together."**

together. It was just really awesome. But he understood. It wasn't my spirit. I was just the conduit."

"I did Reiki on a friend when we went to Turkey. This gal had done

something to her back. She was really having trouble and I said, 'I can help you.' So we stayed on the bus. We went to the back of the bus where she could stretch out. 'I can't handle any massage,' she told me. So I said okay. She hadn't slept the night before, and within five minutes she was fast asleep and relaxed."

### **Good steward**

"On that same trip was a fellow who was really having trouble breathing, and he wasn't able to sleep at night either. I gave him a treatment, and he was able to sleep. He was able to get the fluids out; one lung had actually collapsed. Reiki really helped him get through the rest of the trip. You never know when people are going to have accidents."

"I got over the shyness of wondering whether anybody would look at me

rather strangely if I offered," she says. "Some of them still do. But mostly if people are hurting, they're willing to give it a try. Generally, I just ask if I can put my hands on," she advises. "I say, 'I can help if you like.' And then I may tell them it's Reiki. Most people have no idea what Reiki is. When they ask what it is and where it comes from, I tell them it's hands-on healing, that Reiki is Japanese, and it means universal life energy. I say, 'I'm just a conduit. They offer classes. Please take them.'"

"If I can convince them to come and take the class, they can treat themselves, so that's what I try to do. I just explain how I became involved and what it's done for me. I've traveled many places and generally somebody's hurting, so I offer. They can always refuse if they don't want it."

### Energy from God

What about Christians who criticize Reiki? "A lot of people are fearful of something that's unexplainable," Judy says. "Or they think maybe they're being misled away from the true faith. I can understand that, and I obviously don't push it on anybody that doesn't want it. I always ask, 'Would you like me to help you with your shoulder? Yes or no.' It depends on the person."

"I helped a doctor's wife that had brain cancer," she goes on. "He was from a

very strong Southern Baptist family and was concerned. I was in his house treating his wife, and he was looking in the Bible and came across this verse in Mark 9:38-40 where the man was healing in Jesus's name. Jesus was questioned about this and he answered, 'If he is not against us, then he is for us.' That satisfied him, and the treatments were really a benefit to his wife."

"I have friends, people at my church, who don't want me to treat them. That's okay. They're still my friends," she adds.

"Some people ask, 'Is this Jesus' energy?' I won't say that. This is energy that comes from God, but I'm not going to say this is exactly what Jesus was out there doing. I'm certainly not going to put myself in his shoes. It's extremely powerful. I find this awesome—the true meaning of awe—because I feel that I am an instrument. I give thanks every time I do it. And I've had incredible experiences with it."

Though Judy's husband, Verne, doesn't do Reiki, he supports her practice. He tells people, "It does work. I don't know what it is, but she can't keep her hands off of you." It's sort of like the Apostle Peter suggested: Judy Blalack ministers the gift of Reiki in the spirit of being a good steward of the manifold grace of God.

*Reprinted from Reiki Magazine International, June/July 2004. © Barbara McDaniel, 2004*

**"If I can convince them to come and take the class, they can treat themselves."**

# Healing the Healer

by Olivia Salazar, Heidelberg, Germany

A little girl's miraculous recovery brings healing to her physician

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*Olivia Salazar offers Reiki by request at a medical clinic in Heidelberg, Germany. She tells of treating a little girl who was badly burned and in critical condition.*

We had our own small Reiki circle around a little girl who had been badly burned and was expected to die as she had so little resistance. Both of her parents have Reiki, so we treated her constantly in turn, alternating with distant treatments. On Sunday she suddenly awakened during the doctor's examination. All of her vital signs were normal. Her arms and legs showed no signs of the third degree burns. On her body, most of the blisters were dry. She had no pain.

We thought the doctor would collapse as he continued his examination. Later, the nurse asked me to go to him in his office. He had been weeping for a long time and was quiet. He asked for a treatment and fell into a deep sleep. Soon he plans to learn Reiki.

For months this doctor had forbidden his mother-in-law, who practices Reiki, contact with his two-year old daughter. The child was born with only one heart valve. She has undergone three

operations to reroute the blood through the lungs in order to keep her alive. Her grandmother gave her a direct Reiki treatment this morning.

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. . . A few years have passed since I wrote this piece and it's now August 2006. Today, the little girl who was burned and her family still visit

occasionally and will be moving to Ireland soon. □She has learned Reiki and she and her parents have a daily hug session with their most beloved activity.

The doctor's daughter still needs further operations as she grows, probably until she is a teenager. □Her recovery time after surgery is much shorter because her parents both treat her and have convinced others involved with medicine to learn for themselves.

*Reprinted from Reiki Magazine International, October/November 2000. ©Olivia Salazar, 2006*

**All of her vital signs were normal. Her arms and legs showed no signs of the third degree burns.**

# Field Hands

by Leila Stewart, County Mayo, Ireland

Treating “others” can include plants, pets, and farm animals

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*Living in rural County Mayo, Ireland offered unusual opportunities for Leila Stewart to use Reiki.*

I know you won't be surprised by what I am about to tell you, but since my Reiki Master came to Ballinrobe, County Mayo in July of 1999 to teach our First Degree Reiki class, all sorts of very unusual but lovely things have been happening to me and mine. I thought I would use my newly learned Reiki knowledge to help my multitude of Rescued Cats, but I had no idea I would be involved in trying to help a Ram!

## The Ram's story

My husband, Kenneth, has been helping to feed a friend's horses. He came home one day and told me how sorry he was for an old Ram who had been put in one of the stables in the barn. He had been found collapsed in the field, apparently having been involved in a fight with a young ram. Ken had been making sure he could get water and a little food, but even with this help, the Ram could not stand up. I asked what the vet had said, but the vet had not been called. PJ, the farmer, was afraid the vet would say that the Ram should be put down.

The Ram had been in the stable for about five days before I went to see him on my way to do some shopping. He

was still lying down on his right side. His eyes looked at me saying, “Please, somebody help me!” He was a huge woolly creature with enormous horns, and to see him lying there, only able to move his head and his legs a little, was so sad.

Ken and I pulled him up by his horns and propped him up against a bale of straw. He just sat there quietly while I put my hands on his head, touched his ears, and pulled out the pieces of straw that had gotten stuck in his mouth. Then Ken went back to the barn, and I went on to my shopping.

Five hours later, the Ram was walking, very slowly and staggering slightly, but he was on his feet!

**PJ was afraid the vet would say that the Ram should be put down.**

The next day I went to see the Ram again, but only because we were on our way to see someone's new bar that was opening that night. This

time I took a large damp towel with me because I had read a wonderful Reiki book, *Principles of Reiki* by Kajsja Krishni Borang, that said this would help spread the Reiki on large animals. We propped him up against a straw bale again and stayed with him for nearly an hour. I

told him how pleased I was with him for being on his feet.

The Ram stayed in the barn, getting stronger each day. PJ, the farmer, even put a ewe in the barn with the Ram to keep him company. About four weeks later, he went back into the field (not with the young ram), and the last time I saw him, he was happily eating grass.

I didn't tell anyone what I had done, but Ken told PJ the farmer I had given the Ram Reiki. I am positive he had no idea what Reiki was, but nevertheless, he was very pleased that his favorite old Ram—apparently called Scrapper—was still alive.

Everyone thought it was a miracle, including me.

### **The Cow's story**

My husband, Ken, was asked by PJ, the farmer, who owned Scrapper, the Ram, if I would be able to help an old, in-calf Cow who had slipped over and apparently injured her back and could not get up. PJ said she had fallen down some time during the week, but no one had found her until Saturday when she was moved by a tractor to the field behind the barn. I asked what the vet had said, but no vet had been called. Since the Cow was old, he would probably suggest that she might need to be put down.

We went to the barn very early Sunday morning. This time I was apprehensive about what I could do as a very inexperienced First Degree Reiki student. I was not in doubt about the power of Reiki, but I was worried about myself,

because this time PJ had actually asked for my help. It was different with the Ram. I had just seen him by chance on my way to do some shopping.

We were told the Cow was in the big field behind the barn. There she was,

**To everyone's astonishment,  
Mum slowly got up and fed  
her baby calf!**

about a hundred yards from the gate, lying absolutely still, completely stretched out flat on her right side with her back facing us.

Ken and I looked at one another as we were still walking to the field, and I said, "Poor thing, she's dead. We should have come yesterday."

### **First treatment**

As we spoke, she twitched her left ear, and I rushed over to her and tried to raise her head with no success. Ken went back to the barn to feed the horse, and I was so delighted to find she wasn't dead that I put my hands on her back. Before I realized what had happened, she flicked her head backwards and knocked me on my back, in the mud, with my little legs sticking up to heaven. I quickly picked myself up and looked around to make sure that no one had seen me looking so utterly ridiculous. Then I did what I should have done originally. I went around to the front of her, said hello, and told her I had come to help her. I went behind her and covered her back with a big wet towel to spread the Reiki energy. She still wasn't happy with me though. She kept moving her head to get rid of me.

I heard someone walking towards me from behind. I shielded my eyes from the morning sun and recognized a local farmer. I said good morning and asked him if he wondered what a strange

woman was doing sitting on a cow in the middle of a field with the cow covered in a bright yellow bath towel. It must have been quite an unusual sight! He knew it was me because he had seen Ken's car. He didn't even ask what I was doing! He had come to see how the Cow was doing because he had helped move her the day before. I asked him to help me by bringing a bale of hay from the barn to put under the Cow's shoulder. With him pulling her by the head and me pushing her, we were able to prop the Cow's front end up slightly. After that, he left.

### Relief and delight

As soon as she was propped up, she managed to turn her head backwards, and she started to devour the hay. Then I realized she needed water. I fetched a bucket of water, and she siphoned it in five seconds flat. I filled her bucket three more times! After that, she seemed to be absolutely content, and she let me drape her with the towel and put my hands on her back. I stayed there for nearly an hour. I said goodbye to her and told her I wanted her to try to stand up soon. Ken went to see her and feed her daily and reported back to me.

The following Sunday we both got up very early and went to see her again. Although she hadn't managed to stand up at all throughout the week, she was able to dig her front feet into the grass and drag her back end to move around. I could see all the marks from where she had been moving. This time I remembered to say hello. I fetched her a bucket of water, and picked up various bits of hay strewn around her and

pushed them near her. I got her another three buckets of water, and she sat there enjoying her "field service." She continued to chew contentedly while I spread my damp towel over her enormous belly. I stayed there an hour, watching the calf kick frantically inside of her, and trying to keep the towel in place, as it was blowing a gale. I said goodbye to her and told her I wanted her to get up before I came to see her again. Two days later, Tuesday evening, Ken helped bring her beautiful, healthy heifer calf into the world.

Everyone, including the Cow, was delighted and relieved, and frankly, mildly surprised. The calf was not able to suckle because Mum was still lying down. PJ took some milk from Mum, bottle fed it to the calf, and put the baby safely in the barn overnight.

The next morning they brought the calf back to Mum, and to everyone's astonishment, Mum slowly got up and fed her baby calf! She had been down for nearly fourteen days! She looked a bit tatty and muddy, but she was up! She was very happy to be in the same field with her lovely calf!

That next summer, the heifer calf born to the old Cow won Best in Show in Crossmolina, County Mayo!

*Leila Stewart lived in County Mayo, Ireland. Her friends—animal and human—felt blessed by the touch of her hands. And all who heard Leila's stories delighted. Leila died October 26, 2003.*

*Reprinted from Reiki Magazine International, June/July 2004. ©Leila Stewart, 2004*

# Reiki in Recital

by Jim Frew, Bittern, Australia

Helping a piano student tickle the ivories

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*Artists often find Reiki refines their skills and performance. In Jim Frew's story, a young piano student shows remarkable technical improvement after a single Reiki treatment.*

This interesting conversation took place with a lady who called me seeking information about Reiki.

This lady is a teacher of piano with students at concert standard. She told me of a recent student of hers who had to take an exam in piano.

The teacher heard the student perform and was astounded by the dramatic improvement in her keyboard touch from the previous time she had heard her play, just days before.

She questioned the student about what was responsible for this dramatic improvement. A couple of reasons were suggested, which the teacher totally discounted. As an afterthought, the student then volunteered that she had had a Reiki treatment the previous day. My caller felt that this was the only likely reason for the improvement in the student's touch, especially in the weaker fingers which, she said, was nothing short of amazing.

My caller, who currently has Ross River fever and several other problems related to depressed immune function, is now

exploring the possibility of learning Reiki so that she can not only help herself, but also so she can offer Reiki to her piano pupils as a coaching bonus!

**Reiki was the only likely reason for the improvement in the student's touch, especially in the weaker fingers which was nothing short of amazing.**

*Jim Frew is a Reiki Master living in Bittern on the Morningstar Peninsula near Melbourne, Australia,  
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# After All These Years

by Susan Mitchell, Cataldo, ID, USA

Twenty-one days of treating chronic headaches led to finding the source of the dis-ease

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*This article was written after Susan was diagnosed with severe anemia in 1998. Distant Reiki treatments, a skill learned in Second Degree Reiki, healed the anemia and inadvertently led her to the underlying cause of her chronic headaches.*

I'd practiced Reiki for twenty-two years. I started treating myself after that first night of class in 1978 and have seldom missed a day since.<sup>2</sup> Recent events pushed me to look more closely at the healing power of Reiki in my own life.

For months I'd been puzzled by my diminishing energy. I kept thinking this was the result of aging and wondering how I'd be getting around at eighty. By early April 1999, I thought something must be really wrong. I went to the doctor for a blood test. The results indicated serious anemia. "Get better or get transfused," said my naturopath. I was relieved it wasn't leukemia, but felt like I still might die of tiredness.

## Setting the stage

At the outset of the anemia diagnosis, one of my friends started giving me thirty days of distant Reiki treatments. Another friend began almost daily distant treatments. Meanwhile, my

naturopath was pumping me full of iron from assorted sources. In seven weeks my iron count rose more than three points. I've since learned it often takes months for the blood count to rise a single point.

I felt like I had experienced a nearly miraculous recovery. I was also overwhelmed by the effectiveness of the distant treatments and the dedication and love of my friends. In hindsight, I felt like the anemia set the stage for what was to come.

No medical conditions or causes for the anemia were found, but I heard from a friend that anemia can result from overuse of aspirin. This was frightening. I'd had chronic headaches and been aspirin dependent for thirty years. Physically, my headaches came from extensive dental work and scarring following a dozen surgeries for cleft palate and a harelip. In 1990 a head-on car accident caused a whiplash injury that only exacerbated the problem.

## Taste of freedom

**I often doubted whether I would ever truly get better.**

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<sup>2</sup> Self-treatment is the foundation of the First Degree Reiki class. Every beginning student is encouraged to treat herself every day.

The mental and emotional side of my headaches stem from the same experiences. I have spent my life clenched and gripping since that first surgery two days after I was born—anxiously waiting for inevitable abandonment and loss. Even the smallest events of my days have been stamped with this subtle imprint.

Over the last few years I had taken aspirin almost daily. Aspirin enabled me to keep going. I managed my life around my pain: avoiding sun, videos, reading, hot tubs, saunas, alcohol . . . I had worked with these headaches for years and from numerous angles—more dental work, Rolfing, deep tissue massage, cranial sacral, Reichian therapy, homeopathy, and, of course, treating myself daily with Reiki.

I often doubted whether I would ever truly get better. Now I clearly heard the anemia saying, "No more aspirin." Within a few days of hearing this "voice," my hips and back went out. I literally could not go another step further.

And then, stuck in bed, I found myself with no headaches. I could read and watch videos for hours—and still be headache free. Being in bed with almost no mobility, no headaches, and no aspirin lasted for eight days. The experience felt inexplicable and miraculous. Those eight days also gave me greater faith that I could be headache and aspirin-free.

As I neared the end of the thirty days of distant treatment, I started having headaches again. I had thought I could go "cold turkey" and take no more aspirin. But I didn't have the strength to tolerate the pain. I was awed by the effects of the thirty days of distant Reiki treatments and wondered what the result of hands-on Reiki might be. I asked my friend, Bonnie, if she'd be willing to treat me daily for twenty-one days.

I'd never considered doing this many treatments before: aspirin had always covered my pain. I did my best and tried to accept the rest.

### Twenty-one days

Bonnie and I arranged our schedules so nothing interfered with the treatments. Occasionally we had to meet very early in the morning or late at night, but we never missed a day. During that period I had many days of no headache or light headache that disappeared by the end of the Reiki treatment. After so many years

of chronic pain, I cannot adequately describe how amazing and glorious this time was.

The Reiki treatments helped me to surrender more fully to my own weariness. I slept

through many of the sessions. When I was headache-y, I could feel my energy clogged up in my head. Treatment opened the congestion. I didn't have to "do" anything. In fact, I had to stop doing. That, in itself, made me better.

From April to late July, I lived in a protected, quiet world. I saw few people outside of my family, went few places, and worked only in my garden. I had

**I am slowly learning that I don't have to hold on. Love is surrounding me all of the time if only I'm able to surrender to it.**

one or two headaches a week and two ten-day stretches pain free. I thought I was nearly "cured."

As I started to re-enter "the world," that anxious internal imprint lay waiting, ready to pounce. I started having daily headaches. I was returning to my old familiar driven-ness and gripping. I had hoped that maybe, somehow, I *was* cured and if I would just be *really, really* grateful . . . I simply did not know what else to do.

### **Surround me**

Though I couldn't have said it this way at the time, I have since realized that during those twenty-one days of Reiki treatments, I was being held by love, divine love. I could feel that I didn't have to grip. When I wasn't gripping, the pain lessened or went away. Now I am slowly learning that I don't have to hold on. Love is surrounding me all of the time if only I'm able to surrender to it. In some

moments, my head, and every bit of me, is resting there. Sometimes I can fully relax into the little moments that make up me and my life—saying goodbye, facing the day, buzzing down the highway. And the pain lessens, and my relationship to everything changes.

Now, when I treat myself each day, I'm more and more able to experience that wave of surrender.

This experience is new. I don't know how I'll sustain it in the coming months. Maybe that's a part of the purpose of this little story—so I can return to it and remind myself. I do know that Reiki brings us one way to receive this infinite, all-comforting love. All, absolutely all, we have to do is place our hands on ourselves or someone else and step out of the way.

*Reprinted from Reiki Magazine International, February/March 2001. ©Susan Mitchell, 2001*

**All, absolutely all, we have to do is place our hands on ourselves or someone else and step out of the way.**

# Miracle in Seattle

by Katie Hume, Bellingham, WA, USA

Healing the mind, the spirit, and the physical trauma from cerebral hemorrhage

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*Shortly after Katie Hume's mother moved to Seattle, she experienced three cerebral hemorrhages that left her with extensive brain damage. Helped by Reiki and conventional medical treatment, mother and daughter made the journey of recovery together.*

On October 8th, 1995, I walked out of the hospital onto Madison Street. There in the newspaper box was the largest headline I'd ever seen, which said: "MIRACLE IN SEATTLE!!!" In my altered state of mind, brought about by days of little sleep and the stress of watching a life hang in the balance, I thought the headline was about my mother. Four days after emergency brain surgery, she had regained consciousness. And it was front page news! Then I realized most of the city thought the headline was about the Seattle Mariners beating the Yankees in the playoffs for the first time in baseball history.

It's hard to write a story about illness and recovery, trauma and healing without sounding sentimental or grandiose. But when I was asked to write the story of my mother's journey back from a brain injury, I jumped at the chance. It's a story I've been wanting to tell. Reiki helped heal my mother and also brought a sense of community to us for the first years of her recovery.

My mother, Elizabeth, first took a Reiki course in 1985 at the Findhorn community in Scotland where she lived for two years. She offered me my first treatment when I arrived at Findhorn, weary after my transcontinental flight. I was twenty-six and she was fifty. We traveled together for the first time, leaving our bumpy mother-daughter history behind us for a week of walking the rocky coasts.

## Days of waiting

Ten years later, Elizabeth lay in the intensive care unit in Seattle. She was hooked up to a respirator and monitors, with a tube for cerebral fluid coming out of her head like a metal halo. A Reiki Master was treating her. When she was finished, she turned to me and my sister and said, "This may sound strange, but your mother seems really strong."

My mother had never met the woman treating her, who was a friend of a friend of mine. But I knew she believed very strongly in healing arts, and I knew she had tried to contact a Reiki circle when she moved to town. I didn't know until later that she had called the Reiki Center

**She was in unbearable pain and told me to call 911.**

and left a message for the very person who was now treating her. In this way, my mother found the Reiki circle and the Reiki circle found me.

She had the cerebral hemorrhage just after her sixty-first birthday, three weeks after she had temporarily moved in with me. The first hemorrhage, which miraculously stopped itself, went undiagnosed and untreated. Even though she had a terrible headache, she was new to Seattle and afraid her health insurance wouldn't cover a doctor's visit. When the internal bleeding started a second time, she was in unbearable pain and told me to call 911. By the time my family had all arrived from the East Coast, we were taking turns waiting for her to come out of a coma. My siblings and I had a meeting to decide what to do if she didn't regain consciousness. After four days of watching and waiting, taking turns by her bed, my mother "woke up." She spoke to my sister. She squeezed our hands. We made the decision she should undergo brain surgery for what had turned out to be three ruptured brain aneurysms. After the surgery, she was unconscious again for several days and had a minor stroke. The day she woke up was the day the headlines proclaimed "Miracle in Seattle!"

We were so busy hoping and praying she would live, we had little opportunity to think about what her recovery would be like after what we were told was extensive brain damage. She knew her name. She knew her family members. But she had no idea why she was in the hospital, or even *that* it was a hospital.

The nurses woke her up every hour to check her pupils with a flashlight. They asked her what month and year it was, her name, the current president, in order to check her coherence. One time in the middle of the night, when they asked her if she knew where she was she answered "A loony bin?" Even though the environment and routines of the hospital made no sense to her, she did her best to reach out. "You look tired," she told one doctor, "would you like to lie down?"

### Rehab and recovery

With a lot of practice she learned to walk, spicing herself down the hallways with tunes from old musicals. After four weeks in rehabilitation, just before Thanksgiving, they sent her home to my house. The rehab specialists warned me that she might never recover much

coherence or short-term memory. After all, she answered the question "What month is it, Mrs. Hume?" with a sly grin and the words "Apple time." (Well, when she went

into the hospital, the ripe apples were falling on my driveway!) "She's a gardener," I said, "she follows a seasonal calendar." I didn't know if she would ever re-engage with the linear concept of time; she lived in the moment, with little sense of time passing or the need for the human constructs of hours, days, weeks.

My mother had moved from the East Coast hoping to find work in her field of horticulture. She also wanted us to have the opportunity to get to know each other better. We laugh about that now. We got to know each other, but not in the way

**We were so busy hoping and praying she would live, we had little opportunity to think about what her recovery would be like.**

either of us expected. I tell her stories from the six months she doesn't remember at all. She has seen me as fierce mama lion, telling her to grab the handrail when she teeters at the top of an escalator. At first, after she came home from the hospital, our roles were completely reversed. I brushed her hair. I listened while she cried that I had hidden her car keys. I prompted her to bathe and dress. When her friend from Maine came to visit, we looked into apartments at a nearby retirement home. During this time, in addition to scheduling Reiki sessions at home, I started taking my mother to the Reiki circle once a week.

The Reiki circle allowed me to let other people think about her for a few hours. It gave her a familiar discipline to practice. I was invited to join the circle, even though I saw myself at first as just my mother's chauffeur. They welcomed me, showed me the hand positions as we took turns on the table for treatments. They didn't look irritated when my mother forgot to take off her shoes by the door. They had a chair ready for her to sit on. They told us they were glad we came.

I think of the circle with gratitude. I remember the Thanksgiving cactus covered with bright pink blossoms and the original paintings on the walls. The way the circle held us all, our truths and our mistakes, our falling apart selves and our strongest core. The feeling of calm as we formed the circle after the rush through city traffic to get there. This circle of healers witnessed my mother's recovery over three years, as well as the realities of our mother-daughter relationship, turned for a time on its

head. Almost a year after we'd been going to the Reiki circle, Elizabeth offered to pay for First Degree Reiki training for me, which I accepted. It is a gift I will always have with me.

## Integration

After a Reiki treatment, Elizabeth was always clearer. She seemed to stand taller, her jaw more relaxed, less set against the horse bit of the respirator that had kept her alive for weeks. One time she became violently ill. I wondered what aspect of the trauma she was expelling. Another time, after a treatment, she gave me a clue about her perceptual changes. She told me the reason she had such trouble path-finding from the front room to the bathroom was

that, when she first came home from the hospital, she just floated through the walls. Learning to find the doorways seemed such a bother. Finding her own feet was hard enough.

This helped me understand how hard her body and spirit were working to integrate forces. More often than not, she emerged from a treatment with a better sense of balance in all respects: physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual.

A few months ago, my mom called me from her retirement home and told me she wanted to get the rest of her books out of my basement. "I saved all those books, the Quaker history, the family genealogy, for my retirement. And I've just realized I'm retired now! So I'd like to have them." She had just finished reading biographies of Nixon and Kennedy. She had also finished her first knitting project since the brain injury, initiating it from start to finish. She's taking piano lessons to learn to play her favorite tunes by ear. For her sixty-sixth

## After a Reiki treatment, Elizabeth was always clearer.

birthday, my siblings bought her a new computer.

We don't go to the Reiki circle anymore. Elizabeth asserted her independence and said she had other things to do on Tuesdays. I moved to Bellingham, ninety miles north. I check in with her often. She spends the weekend at my house once a month. We garden together, make dinner, tell each other stories from other times in our lives. The first time she took the train home on her own, she called me to say she saw thirty blue herons and a kingfisher.

Sometimes I'm still amazed at how far she's come. She's had a community garden patch and grown sunflowers, strawberries, catnip, and sage. Her short-term memory, the hardest-hit area of the brain, has made a remarkable come back. She's in step with calendar time now. Sometimes I miss watching her delight in every discovery. Sometimes I even miss the struggles.

### Walking miracle

Her doctors really do say she's a walking miracle. Most people don't survive one ruptured brain aneurysm, and she came back from three. She had excellent surgeons and nurses and a devoted team of rehab specialists. They

all played their part in repairing and re-establishing the synapses of an organized brain.

But it was my mother's mind and spirit that had the hardest task. Reiki helped her regenerate cells and create new pathways of learning. As she gained an awareness of her altered abilities, it helped her to grieve what she'd lost overnight and accept what she still had. Her illness brought our family closer together and her recovery showed us the depth of her strong and generous spirit.

One of these days, I'd like to make the trip to Seattle for the Reiki circle again. I remember forming the closing circle after trading treatments and feeling the energy move from hand to hand. And I remember hearing everyone whispering the names of people we love, and people we struggle with, into the center of the circle for healing. And how we send that energy out to people and places in the world that may need it most.

*Katie Humes is a poet who lives in the Northwest corner of the United States. She works as a family resource coordinator for parents of deaf infants.*

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**Most people don't survive one ruptured brain aneurysm, and she came back from three.**