

Reiki and Nursing

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As an Usui and Karuna Reiki® Master-Teacher and Holistic Nurse in Private Practice, it has been my experience that Reiki enhances all nursing skills. Whether it is in a hospital setting, home care, private practice, administration or managed care, Reiki can be used to enhance nursing care as well as nursing judgment.

Nurses have always been known to have a sixth sense-what many refer to as "Nurses' Intuition." It is that ability to "know" when to go back into a room to check on a patient; to call a family when a patient is not doing well; to have a doctor recheck a patient; to call or visit a home care client when a visit wasn't planned "just because" you had a feeling, or recheck some paperwork that you completed. Reiki training enhances this ability to "know" or to "sense" and to make one more aware of subtle signs. Working with energy is another way of knowing, of gathering information on a deeper level. It gives one "subtle clues" as to what is really going on with a person. It helps one to become more aware of the emotional or spiritual component of dis-ease that the nurse can share with the client to gain understanding or insight. This fits in with the nurses' role of patient teaching-helping a person to understand and learn more about their health or illness and providing guidance and education for changing behavior or increasing awareness. Reiki training makes a nurse more aware of subtle energies-physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. The Nursing Diagnosis of "Energy Field Depletion" is recognition of this subtle energy phenomenon. It has been my experience that Reiki enhances Therapeutic and Healing Touch techniques because it is an energy source in itself. It helps the nurse to protect herself/himself from picking up negative energies or vibrations from the person she is working with. Because Reiki comes from the source, the nurse never has to worry about depleting their own energy. Reiki treats both the practitioner and the client.

The most important benefit of Reiki is that it is a technique for self-care. With all the energies that a nurse has to expand in caring for others, a nurse often suffers "burn out." Reiki is an excellent way for nurses to take care of themselves and restore their energy, keep them healthy, and avoid depletion. In my private practice as a Holistic Nurse and Master Teacher, Reiki has enhanced all my skills. It has helped me to fine tune and develop my clairvoyance so that I can "see" the emotional component behind the dis-ease or emotional turmoil; it has enhanced my touch so that my hands are more sensitive to the muscle state; and when I use guided imagery or regression with a client, it helps me to see the traumatic event and dialogue with the people involved. Reiki has taken me from traditional nursing to a more holistic model where deeper healing is addressed through the use of subtle energies.

Many of my Reiki students and friends are nurses and they often tell me about the ways that they use Reiki. Some use the power symbol over the area when trying to locate a vein for insertion of an intravenous line (IV) or for an arterial stick, inserting a tracheotomy, chest tube, etc. Others give their patients Reiki while they are taking their blood pressure or pulse. The patient's often reply that they feel "something special" or more relaxed when the nurse does this. It is amazing what just a few minutes of Reiki can do.

Home care nurses use Reiki during visits when doing physical and psychological assessments, changing dressings, paper work, doing health care teaching, or encouraging or working with a family member. Recovery Room nurses have reported that they use Reiki over the incision site or painful areas and have found that the patients have an easier time waking up or recovering from the anesthesia and surgical trauma. Nurse Anesthetists fill the room with Reiki, and allow it to flow as they give anesthesia. They have found that the use of Reiki relaxes the person quicker thus allowing them to give less anesthesia. Nurses that work in endoscopy units have found that by filling the room with Reiki prior to the procedure, and giving Reiki to all the instruments, the patients tolerate the procedure well and have fewer problems. Many doctors have asked that "that nurse" (the one using Reiki) always work with them because their patients do so well.

Emergency room nurses bring Reiki to the ER as well as the patients and have found them calming down more quickly and being more open to treatment. They find that Reiki also calms family members down as well. Dr. Nancy Eos in her book "Reiki and Medicine" (now out of print) explained how she used Reiki to help her do triage-deciding which person needs to be seen first. She would hold all the patient's charts in her hand, and which ever one felt the "hottest" (as an indication of energy flow), would be the patient she saw first. She has a record in the New England area as one of the most accurate (and successful) triage physicians.

I often tell nurses that when they can't "do" Reiki, BE Reiki. Be compassion, be kindness, be caring and unconditional regard. I tell them to imagine Reiki energy coming in, filling them up, and expanding through all the layers of their aura. They can then radiate it out, calming and healing the energy fields of all those around them.

Nurses that hold administrative positions or management positions have told me how they bring Reiki in when they have to do stressful tasks such as staffing, payroll, or counseling an employee. Reiki brings a calming to the situation, a more receptive state and clearer thinking as well. Some managers (and staff) give themselves Reiki before and during a staff meeting and find that the meeting goes smoother. When they have to have a "heart to heart" talk with an employee, the nurse manager gives herself Reiki first-one

hand over their heart (or solar plexus) and the other over their throat-ensuring that they come from their heart (or power center) when they speak.

Nurses in Private Practice have told me how Reiki enhances their hypnotherapy skills, guided imagery exercises, acupressure, counseling skills, their work as a dula in Labor and Delivery, as well as massage sessions, etc. These are just some of the many, many ways that Reiki can enhance Nursing Practice whether it is in the hospital setting, in home care, private practice, or on the management or administration level.

As nurses' roles continue to change and expand in the ever changing health care system, Reiki can be there to assist nurses in their professional development. Nurses that practice Reiki are in the unique position to bring the healing energy of Reiki as well as their strong medical knowledge base to their clients and health care system. They can use Reiki to take care of themselves and restore their energies so that they can continue to be patient and health care advocates.

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