



Illustration by Gaia Orion

Reiki Clarifies Opinions

BY COLLEEN BENELLI

REIKI PROMOTES healthy life skills. It empowers our life force and our higher mind, which gives us a greater ability to think and act more clearly. Reiki practices help highlight the best choices for our lives. It strengthens our internal power to live and think consciously in all of our life circumstances.

One of the agreements I made when I became a Licensed Teacher for the International Center for Reiki Training is that I would continue to use Reiki to help me grow as a person. In my Reiki training with William Rand, I was taught that personal development toward the goal of living a centered, balanced, and healthy, loving life is an important value of a Reiki Master. In his *Reiki Master Manual* William states, "With humility, be willing to look at, feel, and release all impurity, negativity, and darkness that is within you so that your true light will shine more brightly."

I actively invite Reiki to assist me in my personal growth and it answers me in a variety of ways. One way is that I am often shown new life skills to consider developing. I use self-Reiki, meditation, and my daily life situations to listen for information about the life skills I need to develop and ways to develop them.

IONS. They were everywhere, about every possible subject, from the significant, (war, global warming) to the small everyday issues, (should my granddaughter still be using a pacifier at age two) to the philosophical, (will 2012 bring the destruction of the planet or a complete shift to a higher consciousness for a better world).

In retrospect, I have loved this opportunity to increase my awareness and clarity around opinions. I have learned valuable lessons about having, giving, and receiving them. How they guide me or contribute to my stress and how the negative opinions affect the level of effort it takes to manage my life circumstances in a positive way. It has not always been a fun subject, and I know that I am still learning. However, now that I know more about it, I am grateful to have engaged in personal growth around this very powerful energy. Opinions can be constructive or destructive, and they deserve conscious attention.

Reiki is an excellent tool for gaining better insight into our opinions. It awakens our conscious mind so we can determine which opinions are true for us, which ones are helpful, and which

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The need for these skills is sometimes revealed to me in subtle ways and sometimes in very obvious ways. In either case, the messages and the lessons often come from my own life experiences. I also notice that my clients' Reiki treatments contribute information that increases my understanding. This gives me the opportunity to learn about the skill from a different perspective. It often takes several years for me to understand the benefit of the skill I am learning, but I usually find that I gain personal freedom when I listen and respond to the necessary growth.

One of the latest life skills I have been developing is about opinions. It came to my attention several years ago that opinions are a very powerful force. As it often works, the need to understand and develop skills in the arena of opinions came from my daily life during a particularly stressful time. I noticed the effects they were having. I had opinions about others, others had them about me, some were helpful, and some hurt. At the same time, I observed how opinions broadcast through all the media sources grew, and how they influenced the opinions of people all over the world. It was as if opinions became OPIN-

need to be released and healed. Reiki reduces the stress of the moment, so we can think clearly. It invites the Divine and heightens our awareness of higher thought. It offers us more perspectives and helps us find answers from our own hearts.

In my own experience, and through my Reiki treatments with clients, I have found that not all of the opinions we have belong to us. They can be handed down to us from our parents, ancestors, and our culture. They can be generational or even come from past lives. Sometimes they come from friends or teachers, or we are influenced by the opinions of the media. When the opinions we hold do not come from our own beliefs, they can cause us discomfort and even harm when we repeat them as our own.

One of my recent Reiki treatments for a client taught me about the effects of opinions that are not from our own true beliefs. My client came to his Reiki treatment with a different intention than the one we ended up with. While we were clarifying his intention, he began to express how disappointed he was with his 25-year-old daughter. He told me all of the ways she was

not succeeding and how when he was her age, he was married with a baby, and already had a good start on his career. He was responsible and ambitious. As we talked, I could hear inner conflict reflected in his voice. It became clear to both of us that he really didn't want to see his daughter the way he was describing her to me and that he needed healing around his opinions of her. We added another intention to his treatment, one that would release his unwanted opinions of this young girl.

In my invocation as I began his treatment, I invited Reiki and all of our enlightened healers. I invited the Distant Healing symbol and asked that the healing go to the original cause of this issue, that all opinions that did not serve my client or his daughter be released and healed. I asked there to be a Bridge of Light to the Light, so the unwanted opinions would rise to the light where they would be healed as well. I asked the Power symbol to lift the opinions that no longer served these people into the light, and I asked the Mental/Emotional symbol to empower the Divine Mind within my client, to heighten his perceptions to his highest self. I invited the Master symbols to shine the light of his Divine Heart within him, so he knew his own truth. I asked to be a clear and open channel on behalf of his spirit and Reiki for his highest healing.

It was a beautiful Reiki treatment. My Reiki guides came to us both, and we saw how his opinions of his daughter really came from his generation. In his belief, people had their act together and were already successful in a career by age 30. I asked for the opinions that did not belong to him to lift up and go into light where they would be healed. Next, his heart began to shine, and he was taken back to his true self when he was that age, and he realized that his memory of himself at that age was different than the truth. He remembered being impractical according to his father, when he moved his wife and daughter across the country to pursue a new career.

He began to laugh and the laughter filled his heart and his belly. He began to describe his daughter from his laughter, and he laughed even harder when he saw that she was perfectly impractical and naïve, and that she was pursuing her dreams her way, and that she was beginning a new life with adventures. He was able to see the light in her heart, her successes, and her fears. He realized that her communication style with him was not disrespectful but was just her way of talking. He even began to write a dictionary just for her. "Cool," means "THANK YOU PAPA, YOU ARE THE BEST FATHER IN THE WORLD! Instead of seeing some of her ways as annoying, he saw how funny and awkward they were, just as a 25-year-old young woman emerging into the world can be. His entire perception of his daughter changed. He connected with her heart-to-heart, and his opinions changed in an instant.

Then my Reiki Guides showed us the most powerful effect of this change in his opinions.

We saw that his daughter saw herself reflected in his eyes. She created her opinion of herself by looking at herself through

his eyes. We saw the healing that would happen for her as he looked at her from his own true beliefs about her. They would both be released from the beliefs he was holding from his generation, and from his father to him. As he looked with trust and belief in her to live her life in her own way, she would trust and believe in herself.

This example taught me how important it is to be conscious of our opinions and pay attention when an opinion we have makes us incredibly uncomfortable. It is a symptom that something is not right and that it would be good to investigate the truth. Our opinions are not always clear to us, especially when we are emotional about them. It can be difficult to determine which opinions have value or how accurate they are. A destructive opinion can appear to be kind, and a constructive opinion can appear to be unkind. For example, if my client's daughter was truly ruining her life, kindness might enable her, and tough love might help her.

Naturally, opinions have a positive side to them too; they help us discern the world around us. Opinions guide us to our passions and to causes that make the world a better place. They can provide much needed discernment and clarity about the current situations in our lives. Sometimes they are our inner guidance speaking to us. Sometimes opinions can lead to conclusions that assist us in taking necessary actions. The difference is whether our opinions are helpful or harmful, and whether we are paying attention to determine which opinions have constructive value.

Invite Reiki to help you determine whether your opinion is helpful to you or others. Invite it to help you reach into your heart and higher mind, and ask questions about your opinions. Does this opinion belong to you? Is it true? Do you really believe it? Does it help you or anyone else? Does it create solutions? What is the result of expressing your opinion? Is it positive or negative? Does your opinion cause conflict; is the conflict necessary or important in the grand scheme of life? Does your opinion make you right and the other person wrong? Does it really matter? Are you just repeating someone else's opinion without thinking about it? Most of all, ask yourself if there is anything you can do about your opinion. Do you have the ability to affect positive change? Then ask what would happen if you did not express your opinion. What would be the result? How would it feel to have fewer opinions? What if you let go of the ones you can't do anything about? Is the amount of time you spend thinking about your opinions in proportion with your ability to be effective?

When I find myself confused about my opinions, or when I can't determine whether it is time to be still and quiet with my opinion, or whether it is time to take action because of it, I often use Self-Reiki and meditate. I invoke all the Reiki symbols I am attuned to, invite my enlightened spiritual teachers, and I ask the question I learned from Neale Donald Walsh's *Conversations with God*, "What does love do now?" Reiki and this question

align me with love, and love answers. I am often surprised by what I hear and have learned not to jump to conclusions, but to wait and listen.

Developing this life skill has brought unexpected freedom. I find that I don't engage with my opinions in the same way now that I am paying attention. My mind and ego are quieter and I am less anxious. I can really listen to others and to myself, and I am more thoughtful before I speak. I have less mind chatter and circling thoughts, and a lot less criticism of others and myself. I don't feel compelled to "fix things" that I used to have opinions about. I can simply allow some of the simple things to be the way they are without engaging in the issues around them, especially the ones I can't do anything about. I listen more carefully to the opinions of others to discern whether they are true for me before I repeat them, and I find I don't have the need to repeat them as often. Because I spend less time and energy on my opinions, I am more creative and my positive mind is easily available to me. I use my Self-Reiki treatments to empower my goals and projects, and I spend my time in contemplation of more enjoyable subjects. When I am with others, I am focused on them and the moment.

Another benefit is that I seem to receive fewer unsolicited opinions from others, and I am better at not giving them. I have learned that I need to wait for people to ask for my opinion before giving it. It is important to listen when they tell me their stories to determine whether they are just telling me their stuff, or if they really want me to say what I think. It is nice to listen without an opinion or an agenda to say it. It is nice to free my mind of the chatter.

Over time, I have found that I receive less unsolicited opinions. People are more peaceful around me, because I am peaceful. When I do receive them, I am more skilled at recognizing and healing them. I don't engage with them; instead I let them go when they don't belong to me. I use the same Reiki symbols I used in the treatment I gave my client, and I send any unwanted opinions to the light for healing. I look into the Divine Light in my heart and see the situation more clearly with higher perceptions. I ask Reiki to empower my mind with my own truth.


Another great life skill I have learned during this time is when to keep my opinions to myself. I was given the very good advice to hold my opinions in challenging conversations. Then when the other person plays the conversation back to themselves, their voice will be the only one they hear. I have loved developing this skill. It is a relief not to say what I think about everything. My choice to stay still has empowered me and released me from having to contribute my opinion. It causes so much less worry and anxiety about what I might have said or how I said it, how my words will be conveyed to others, or ways they may show up in the future. One of the greatest gifts is that when I am still, others become quieter too, and the conversation has the opportunity to become more authentic. Then if asked for my opinion, I listen for advice from my heart, and I

speak thoughtfully. During these situations, I call Reiki in for help, asking for clarity and ease.

I also began to really pay attention to all the opinions we are bombarded with from outside sources. Opinions circle the globe with greater speed and in greater numbers than has occurred in the history of humanity. Television and the Internet broadcast constant opinions throughout the globe. Opinion writers with huge agendas seem to report about everything from politics to celebrities, presenting their opinions as news. They don't always have facts to substantiate their opinions. In *Writing Opinion for Impact*, Conrad C. Fink says, "It is not only informing readers, but guiding them - recommending, persuading, advocating, cajoling, that distinguishes opinion writing, from news writing." I found that if I wasn't paying attention, I might repeat the opinion of the broadcast as if it were my own without really listening to whether I agreed with it.

Reiki has recently been affected by misinformation published on the Internet. In 2009 eight Catholic Bishops issued a statement advising Catholic hospitals, healthcare facilities, and Catholic chaplains not to support the use of Reiki sessions. They based their opinion on information about Reiki from the Internet. In response to the Bishops' statement, William Rand said this, "When considering the value of the bishops' statement, it's important to note the sources they accessed. Much of their research came from information published on Internet Web sites. Overall, the Internet isn't a good source of factual information because there is no requirement that information published there be checked or approved for accuracy."

At the same time, I recognize that the broadcast of information benefits us all in amazing ways. I love watching and reading the broadcasts by the media. People endlessly fascinate me, and I love life in all its peculiarities. Instead of turning it all off, I learned to be more discerning as to what and whom I listened to or read. I decided which opinions I was interested in, and which ones I would disregard. I learned not to engage in the opinions unless I really cared. At other times, I got tired of it all and tuned it out completely. The difference was in my conscious awareness about the broadcast.

Reiki assisted me in every way in my personal growth around the cause and effects of opinions. The intensity of the lessons I am learning from has lessened as I have come to understand more about my opinions. I am grateful for that! I have to say that it has been a blessing and a gift to awaken to my own mind without constant opinions trying to have their say. I love the healing I have received and that my thoughts are much quieter. The freedom has been well worth the journey! 

"I know but one freedom and that is the freedom of the mind."

—ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPERY

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