

Creating Reiki Circles

By Rev. Terri Ann Heiman, Reiki Master

With giving there is receiving, and with receiving there is giving. Giving and receiving is an energy cycle that goes round and round. The circle becomes complete.

With Reiki there is both a giving and receiving of energy. Energy moves in from the universe, circulates, and flows from one person to another. It is ever flowing, round and round, through time and space, from me to you and back again.

In almost every culture a circle is held as sacred. We see it most exemplified in the Native American traditions. Tribes and their leaders would sit around the fire, bringing in their Guardian Spirits, praying and asking for guidance. The Medicine Wheel is paramount to their teachings. It is drawn not only for ceremonies but also for seeking knowledge and looking to other realms for answers as well as healing.

In Sanskrit, mandala is the word for circle. The mandala is a symbol of wholeness and is held in the highest esteem, particularly in meditation. Tibetan Buddhist monks take many hours and days to create these sacred circles in sand. Each grain of sand has a place and a meaning in creating the wholeness of the mandala. Each phase of creating the mandala is through meditation and prayer with honor. Upon completion, to symbolize the impermanence of all that exists, the monks sweep up the sand and release it right back into nearby water, which carries the healing energies throughout the world.

A Reiki circle creates a space that combines the sacred with a universal healing energy. It honors all aspects of the healing system: the spiritual principles as well as the hands-on energy work. The circle works on all levels: the emotional, the physical and the spiritual. By honoring the circle and enlivening it with a spirit, with Reiki, the highest good for all comes through.

Technically, a Reiki circle is a group of people who come together to share Reiki energy. It is an excellent way to offer Reiki as well as inform and educate those who want to learn more about this ancient healing. It also helps new students to practice Reiki and gain experience. A Reiki circle usually consists of a Reiki Master, Reiki practitioners, Reiki students, and novices. It only takes a few people to create a circle.

A Reiki circle can be held in a home, office, or almost any space. Most locations with a little intention can be transformed into a sacred place. A clean and safe environment is primary, as this will create an atmosphere of peace, openness, and trust. Allow Reiki to guide you to the best possible location.

Another Reiki Master, Rev. Deirdre Breen Bernstein, and I began a local Reiki circle by holding meetings in alternating homes. By working with other Reiki people in your area, you can build on this energy and magnify it out even more greatly. As William Rand stated in his article, "Harmony in the Community," in *Reiki News Magazine*, Spring 2003, "working with mutual support for each other is a much better position for a positive effect on the local community and the world. A great need for Reiki exists in the world now, and the better we join together, the greater benefit we will be able to offer." With

this in mind and in an effort to extend Reiki into our community beyond our own homes, our circle moved to a yoga center, Om Sweet Om Yoga in Port Washington. The owner, Gail Grossman, donates the space to us, and we ask for a small donation to help cover overhead expenses. The space is a large open yoga studio, so bolsters and blankets are available. These are placed in a circle formation on the floor. There are a few chairs available, especially if someone is coming who has special needs or cannot sit on the floor. We occasionally use massage/reiki tables.

There are many ways to design a circle that creates a working foundation. For example, we use the following outline:

- The space is honored (this could occur before the actual circle begins).
- Personal introductions are made.
- A brief description of Reiki and/or topic of discussion
- Short meditation that engages the breath and helps begin the *going within* process
- Running of energy
- Closing

Honoring the space can begin at the doorway of your room. Call upon the power symbol (CKR), and draw and visualize it on each wall as well as up and down and in the center of the room. Give yourself a few moments to feel the energy begin to flow. Call upon your Masters to be present. They can and will provide you the support needed for any situation that may occur during the circle.

The next focus is in the center of the room. I start with a cloth that has been created especially for the Reiki circles (see insert for directions for making your own sacred cloth). I take time to spread the cloth and notice my hands and the energy already running through them. I call to mind those that have attended these circles and especially those that will be touched tonight. I continue by laying out crystals and stones (earth), candles and sage (fire), information (air), and water (water) to drink. I send out Reiki symbols and prayers (spirit) are added, creating a balance of elements. An altar has now been created which helps to physically define our sacred space.

Prior to everyone's arrival, I call on the Reiki principle of *Gratitude*. I offer a prayer of gratitude for this space, for Reiki in my life, and for the opportunity to share with others. I send out the HSZSN symbol throughout the entire community to attract all those that need to be here in the circle, embracing not only those in the physical form but also in spirit as well.

As people arrive, I greet and welcome each. Music plays in the background, the lights are low, and indigo blue light shines through my crystals. Music is helpful, especially music that complements the energy. It is especially supportive in the beginning, as sometimes there are awkward silent moments for those new to the circle. I allow time for the circle to fill up, and then we begin with burning sage. Smudging helps everyone to become present and connect within. I like to go around to each person and allow a moment of their own silence as I burn the sage around them, clearing their aura.

I continue around the circle in a clockwise manner, having each person introduce themselves. Sometimes I ask what brought them to the circle. Sometimes I ask whether they have an intention for coming. I always ask whether they have ever experienced

Reiki. This introduction helps to lessen any tension, creates a group feeling, and allows the energies to unite. At this point I invoke the support of the Reiki Masters to guide me through the rest of the evening.

Now that the energy is set, we move into discussing Reiki. Sometimes this is just general information about Reiki. At times it is based on questions that people come to the circle with. Every so often I like to prepare a topic and create a circle around that topic with the meditation echoing the theme. Some of the themes I have used are Reiki for Moms, Reiki in the Work Force, Reiki and Cancer, and Reiki with Crystals, Color, and Light.

If the circle draws more students and practitioners than newcomers, it can be more of a Reiki Share. This is when you give and receive energy. We pair off, run energy, and then switch. Another way to share the energy is to have one person in the middle with everyone working together. This allows for a shorter amount of time on each person, as there are so many hands at once. This can be very powerful and is especially encouraged if there is someone in the group who is going through a lot of issues or problems. There is no right or wrong way to work with a group to offer energy. Use your intuition, and let Reiki be your guide.

If you work with students, it is good to guide them at the start. I will softly lead them through the invocation, the Gassho meditation, suggest the Yui Hin, and then start them off together at the head. Each student is allowed the opportunity to use their own Reiki intuition as they continue through the circle. This gives them the opportunity to learn and gain experience. Many have only worked on themselves or family members, so working with someone else is a beautiful and rewarding way to learn.

Once everyone has received energy, we gather once again in our circle. Back together, we notice the peaceful energy not only within but also all around us that has been created. We hold this space and this light for all those unable to attend. We offer this as a time to speak of those that might need extra healing and energy. I send out the Tibetan Healing symbol (DKM) to help all in their healing. We send out energy to our community, especially our children and our schools that they remain a safe place for learning. We honor our town and acknowledge our gratitude for this community. We honor all sentient beings and send out peace for all mankind. For those who like to chant, we send out this beautiful ray of light with the sound of OM. The energy is then sealed with a CKR.

Water is offered and passed around the circle. It is often advised to drink water after a Reiki session because it is an excellent aid in moving accumulated toxins out of the body. Comments are suggested as there may be questions or those that like to talk about their experiences. I always find it interesting to hear these comments and like to encourage all to share.

Sometimes I am asked from newcomers about the concern of only receiving Reiki energy and not being able to offer back. My response is that the receiving of energy is equally as important as the giving. There is purpose and place for both in being a part of creating a Reiki circle. Just showing up is giving of oneself and is equally important in creating the wholeness for the circle. A Reiki circle needs both in order to continue in its natural flow of energy.

I encourage Reiki circles of all kinds. Whether it is to reach out to a community or within one's support group, Reiki serves each and every one. Combining the sacred circle with the flow of universal life force energy creates a mystical and healing experience for all.