



Reiki practitioner Gina Tupaczewski staffs a table at the Long Valley Green Market last Thursday.

WOMAN PRACTICES ANCIENT HEALING OF REIKI

By MARK KITCHIN
STAFF WRITER

WASHINGTON TWP. -- Gina Tupaczewski doesn't claim to be a mechanic but upon full disclosure the practitioner and teacher of the discipline of Reiki once used practice on her car with success.

"The car wouldn't start,

so my mom was like -- do Reiki on it," said Tupaczewski of Long Valley. "I sent Reiki to my car and it started. If energy is everything, then anything can benefit from Reiki."

Reiki (pronounced ray-kee) is a 100-year-old Japanese technique for stress reduction and relaxation that also promotes heal-

ing. Reiki is derived from two Japanese words: Rei -- universal and Ki -- life energy.

Reiki practitioners are firm believers that everyone contains a life-force energy that supports the body's healing abilities. They will gently put their hands on a patient or just hover their hands above in

an effort to exact an affect.

"It is an energy healing," Tupaczewski said. "It restores and promotes healing on all levels, the mind, body and spirit. It helps to relax someone, de-stress someone. It is similar to a massage."

It took a long time for

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REIKI: Eastern healing plan

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yoga, acupuncture and chiropractic programs to gain mainstream acceptance. Reiki, first introduced to Western culture in the late 1930s, seems to be on the same track.

It was reported in 2007 that 1.2 million Americans had tried Reiki. A UCLA study that same year said that Reiki education is offered at 800 hospitals.

Long Study

A former Long Valley school teacher and mother of two, Tupaczewski has been studying the discipline over the last 12 years and practicing it almost as long. Although she makes no claims that Reiki can cure someone of a serious illness, she said Reiki has healing properties and can be beneficial to the wellness of individuals.

She is a Reiki master and has spoken about Reiki at libraries and chiropractic offices and also appears monthly at the Long Valley Green Market on their wellness days. She said people are becoming a little more open-minded to different lifestyle practices that may provide some help.

"I've seen it more in hospitals," Tupaczewski said. "It helps promote healing. They are doing Reiki before surgeries and after surgeries."

Raised a Roman Catholic, Tupaczewski said she has always been a spiritual person and once she was introduced to Reiki, she believed it was something she should do. Originally from Randolph, Tupaczewski earned elementary education degrees from East Stroudsburg University and was once a substitute teacher and a reading specialist at Flocktown-Kossmann School in Long Valley and also in the Roxbury school district.

After taking time off to raise her family, she had difficulty getting back into the education field and learned Reiki from practitioner Rosemarie DeTro-

lio. She said she was on her way to a different path. She practices it on herself and her family and eventually started Bee Calm Reiki to share the practice with others.

Tupaczewski said most of her clients are skeptical at first but many have a change of heart after experiencing Reiki.

A typical Reiki session lasts about an hour long. An individual experiencing a Reiki is fully clothed and lays on a massage table for 30 minutes on their back and then 30 minutes on their stomach. Tupaczewski plays relaxing music while her hands either hover over the body or are placed gently on a person's body in places that hold energy.

She works quietly and meticulously from head to toe on one side and then head to foot on the other side. Then she tells the client to drink a glass of water to flush out the energy.

"If you've never had Reiki before, your first experience is a nice calm sensation," Tupaczewski said. "I talk to my clients the day after in case there are any different things happening. Sometimes things come forward to be healed. A person's knee may hurt them a little more than it did before."

Clients can also have a session with their pets or Tupaczewski can give a Reiki to just the pets. She has found that often the same stresses and problems an individual has can be projected onto their pets. She has held Reiki sessions from animals as small as a caged mouse to as large as a horse.

"Animals love us so much that they sometimes take on our energy," Tupaczewski said. "They love us unconditionally. It depends upon their home life. If they have a stressful home life, they are going to have more stress."

Stress and the balance of energy is at the heart of the Reiki therapy.

"Stress causes the unbalance," Tupaczewski said. "Stress, anxiety fear,

sometimes a decision that you are teetering on, is affecting you emotionally, physically and spiritually. Stress is a key component for the body to be unbalanced. What happens to a body when you are stressed depends upon how quickly you re-balance.

"Reiki isn't the only way you can re-balance. You can re-balance through exercise, yoga, any kind of way you can release that stress. If that stress is not released, then it can go into a physical form, manifesting into pain or worse," she said.

Does it work? Cynics believe that a placebo effect or the power of positive suggestion is the reason people feel it has helped them.

The National Institute of Health has reported that studies of Reiki show conflicting results. The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine concluded that there is no scientific evidence to prove that there is a life force energy.

There is no special background or credentials needed to receive Reiki training however, practitioners are trained by an experienced teacher or master.

In some circles Reiki has gained acceptance. The International Association of Reiki Professionals, of which Tupaczewski is a member, lists the television personality and physician, Mehmet Oz, as one of its supporters. Patients have included Christina Aguilera, Phil Mickelson and Angelina Jolie among others.

Reiki is safe and side-effect free. The drawbacks depend upon costs and expectations. Tupaczewski requests a client have three sessions at \$65 each to get the full benefit of Reiki.

"It can do no harm and it is so beneficial in enhancing anything you are already doing," Tupaczewski said. "It doesn't take the place of anything you are doing. It enhances it."