

2013 Report: "Herding Cats"

As our association continues to grow in size and expand its activities, it's worthwhile to take a moment to reflect on our stated aims: "A West Australian Association of practitioners dedicated to Promote, Educate, Inspire and Empower people to live holistic lives by applying the Usui System of Reiki Healing". In retrospect, the development of Reiki practice in Australia was both organic and rebellious, it was the 1980's, and like so many other eastern practices, Reiki was eagerly embraced; unfortunately some Australians resented and rebelled against the apparent need for conformity and established their own view of how Reiki should be taught and practiced. This led to the development of diverse groups who, in some instances, proceeded to add and subtract whatever they thought appropriate, and that by adding the word 'Reiki' into their newly birthed practice, it somehow had legitimacy. Well, the 80's are over, and with the almost doubling of our membership over the past two years and the increasing subtleties and complexities of working within a complementary practice, the need for consistent, disciplined practitioners has never been greater. We do not have to wonder about who has or hasn't got the 'right' form of Reiki practice; Phyllis Furumoto has provided clear teaching on the western form – all that is required is that we all apply that.

Over this past year, much of the committee's time has been focussed on preparing for a rapidly approaching future; it was realised that now was the time to develop those procedures and protocols that would allow Reiki to be embraced into a more holistic health service. Fortunately, we don't have to re-invent the wheel, there are already many established groups working with and within the health system, we can just duplicate their procedures and practices. This is not to subjugate nor diminish Reiki but to facilitate its incorporation into mainstream practices. We've re-structured the association, with each committee member responsible for specific areas; in addition to our chairman, secretary and treasurer, we now have a membership officer, volunteer co-ordinator and an IT department. With the progressive incorporation of practitioners from the International Institute of Reiki Training, we will provide a vice-chair position; the chair can then alternate between the two forms, Japanese and Western, working together – perhaps for the first time in Australia.

Two significant matters discussed and resolved at meetings related to the importance of training; in particular, the need for our referral teachers to be the best possible representatives of the Usui system, and how to respond to instances of inadequate training. In the first instance, we resolved that our referral teachers should attend specific continuing development programs, in part to build and strengthen our teacher community, but also to ensure that – in essence – we are all teaching the same material. To facilitate this, this year's program will be to prepare a level 2 booklet; this will allow us to examine the content of a level 2 class and how to present that.

Regarding inadequate training; we were greatly challenged to discover that one of the two supposedly significant national Reiki organizations, that had four teaching members in WA, does not have nor asks their teachers to apply any standards of training. As a consequence, we found that one teacher provides only 1 day, level 1 courses, another offers on-line training, and a third provides 2 day teacher training programs. We provided their president with a copy of our training standards but were advised that they will not ask their WA teachers to apply them; subsequently we have informed them that we will not accept their students as appropriately trained. We are generally an inclusive organization, but we will not condone this situation. I find that one of the most difficult aspects of teaching is fielding enquiries from people who have – in good faith – completed inadequate or inappropriate training, only to be told they are required to review/refresh or even start again; often their faith in Reiki and its teachers is shattered!

In many respects, we are a very progressive organization working hard to provide the best of Reiki to the greatest number of people and this year we continue to have four areas of special interest:

1. Practitioners

They are the core of our practice and we will continue to extend our support to them. Our efforts to provide a number of local sharing groups still struggles; teachers and practitioners who are willing to host a regular get-together are asked to advise us. We will guide and support you.

2. Public practitioners

Are the public face of our practice and the front line of our efforts to present Reiki in a consistent and professional manner. One of the hardest aspects of our simple practice is to blend our desire to assist with the understanding that everything we do should be for the benefit of our clients. This means that a Usui style practitioner provides a Usui style practice; other people may do other things but they shouldn't call it Usui Reiki.

Volunteering is a major vehicle for our endeavours. To cultivate additional volunteers, all level 1 students will be encouraged to participate in some volunteer programs; as required, they will be offered free

membership for their first year, and provided with mentoring support. Information regarding any need for police clearance, indemnity insurance and particular orientation programs will be provided.

3. Teachers and their teaching.

Healthcare facilities demand the greatest amount of predictability, they will not allow undisciplined individuals to have access to their clients. It is clear, that the only way we will ever achieve consistent public practitioners is from consistent teaching. As mentioned above, our referral teachers must attend an annual 8 hour CPD program, developing a level 2 teaching booklet. When completed, this booklet can be used in conjunction with our existing level 1 book to provide a clear outline for class content and presentations. These booklets can then be used like a syllabus, outlining the course but still allowing each teacher to present the class from their own experiences. This program may also be offered at Geraldton. In addition, teachers will also be encouraged to use our standard form of certificates.

Two other significant challenge yet to be addressed are the selection of teacher candidates and how to promote our training standards. Teaching is the vocational level of practice, teacher candidates should be advised that the only benefit comes from teaching classes and performing the initiations; to proceed to this level requires at least a year of training and a life-long intention to teach. Getting our training standards widely publicised would alleviate some of the problems associated with inadequate training. Members are asked consider how we could proceed with this promotion.

4 Local, National and international events:

This year our community celebrates the 20th Annual Reiki Day, (June 22nd) I'm not aware of anywhere else in Australia that has managed to bring so many practitioners together over this period of years. There will also be another Annual Teachers' Gathering in July, providing teachers with the opportunity to meet and work together on WA issues. In addition, there are two residential retreats; one at Shoalwater in April and the other at Lesmurdie in October. These events will be promoted later. Members should note that we use 'Mailchimp' for all electronic notifications, please ensure you allow that.

The Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council will be conducting forums to review the current 'Unregistered Health Practitioners', codes of conduct. These codes regulate public practice for all complementary practitioners and have already been adopted by NSW and SA, Qu is in that process; perhaps one day, they will be adopted by the WA government.

Unfortunately, Phyllis Furumoto has a recurrence of cancer; there is no mention on her website that she is teaching, running courses nor attending any events. Members are asked to send her their support.

Some years ago, we requested Phyllis come to Perth to provide her unique insight into the Usui System, she replied that she was curtailing her travelling so we discussed the possibility of her providing an on-line program. That now seems unreasonable and unlikely. Subsequently, we have been negotiating with Paul Mitchell (head of discipline of the Usui System) and we expect he will come to Perth in Oct 2015. We are asking him to present two, one day general events, perhaps teach some demonstration classes and if possible, to run a residential intensive. This may be one of the last opportunities we have in Perth, to be, and train with, one of Takata's masters; please mark you calendars now.

Members are reminded that we are a membership organization, you are welcome to attend our events and to contribute to our efforts to promote and provide the very best of Reiki practice.

These are our 2014 meeting dates:

Mar 9 – AGM, including a welcome to new members and thanking of volunteers.

June 8, Aug 31 and Nov 30 – General meetings

Until renovations at the Cancer Wellness Centre (Cottesloe) are completed, we'll continue to meet at 1pm at Drabble House, 8 Webster St. Nedlands.

It is possible that meetings will revert to the earlier format of treatments, refreshments and general business, this should be decided at a committee meeting on Feb 1st and members will be informed.

Finally, let me finish with this piece taken from Phyllis' webpages:

"The following description of Reiki is taken from Hawayo Takata's journal when she was a beginning student of Chujiro Hayashi, circa 1935".

"The power is unfathomable, immeasurable, and being a universal life force, it is incomprehensible to man."

Best wishes,

Roger Weston

Jan 2014