

靈 氣 The History of 靈 氣 Usui Reiki

As there is little factual written information from Mikao Usui himself, and because Mrs Takata added story telling, mystics and ceremony in order to present a Japanese form of healing to the Americans not long after the 2nd World War, you will read many different versions of what is in essence, the same story. This is the history of Usui Reiki, as I believe it to be.

Mikao Usui was born on the 15th of August 1865 in the village of Yago, in the Gifu Prefecture where his family had lived for several generations. His family, which was reasonably wealthy, belonged to the Tendai sect of Buddhism. When he was four, he was sent to a Tendai Monastery to receive his primary education and where he learned the martial art of Kiko, a discipline designed to improve health, focusing on the use of Chi and may have included methods for healing with the hands. This is a martial art not too dis-similar to Qi Gong, and he practised the meditations and breathing techniques to strengthen his ability to build up his personal Chi. He put this knowledge to good use later in his career. Usui was a very bright student and when he pursued higher education it is thought that he may have graduated with a Doctorate in Literature. He spoke many languages, and it's thought that he travelled to America and Europe and became well-versed in medicine, theology and philosophy. He was not a doctor of medicine as some early stories had said.

In his early adulthood, Mikao Usui married his wife Sadako Suzuki and lived in Kyoto with their two children, a boy named Fuji, born 1908 and a girl named Toshiko, born 1913. Usui appears to have studied various Buddhist methods of healing, and psychic practices such as Shugendo and Shintoism. One of his students and good friend, Toshihiro Eguchi, a practitioner of Shinto greatly influenced Mikao Usui, and after the passing of Usui, Toshihiro Eguchi and students of the Reiki Gakkia, erected a memorial stone to honour their teacher and friend Mikao Usui.

Mikao Usui developed a compassionate wish that he should learn and pass on methods of healing that would benefit all mankind. He became a devout student and spent much time and money studying Buddhist healing techniques and symbols. He was however, unable to understand the meanings and use, of some of the information and he could get little help from other Buddhist monks. In order to interpret this information and possibly to find the "meaning of life" he was guided to go on a 21 day fast at on Kurama Yama. There is confusion as to exactly when Mikao Usui had his enlightening and attunement experience. According to Frank Petter it was in March 1922, and Usui formed the Reiki Gakkia a month later in April.

This is Usui Sensei with some of his early students.



The Birth of Usui Reiki Ryoho

Because of his enhanced psychic abilities, he was able to belong to a metaphysical group called the Rei Jyutsu Kai. This group had a centre at the base of the holy mountain, Kurama Yama. It seems that one of the rituals they practised was what we would call “distant healing” At one of the meetings, a student asked Usui why it was that the treatments and healings that he, and they, were giving weren’t very effective or long lasting. Hands on healing, was quite commonplace in Japan at that time and the word Reiki was used to describe the treatment, i.e. Reiki Ryoho, the Reiki method. However, like most forms of hands on healing, the healers were GIVING their chi energy to the healee, and this could make the students unwell.

Usui somehow knew that there was another way and so he returned to the Temple on Mount Kurama to work towards achieving Satori (spiritual enlightenment), and to see if the monks could explain the meanings of certain symbols, but they could not. So he decided to fast on the mountain for 21 days, to meditate and to ask for divine guidance.

The Miracles (according to Mrs Takata)

And so in March 1922, Usui went about fasting and meditating, placing 21 stones before him on the ground. The Temple and the mountain itself is the Spiritual symbol of Kurama Temple. Steps lead down to a base where one can sit and meditate, and nearby there is a man made waterfall. One of the meditations involved sitting under the waterfall, allowing the stream to fall on his head. This is still practised today, the purpose is to open and purify the Crown Chakra. I personally believe he was under the water fall when he received enlightenment.



Meditation Waterfall, Mt. Kurama

At the end of each day, he would remove one stone in order to count the days. As he removed the last stone, he became aware of a bright light approaching at great speed. As it hit him, he lost consciousness and was filled with the light of knowledge, with the gift of his own attunement, and understanding of Reiki healing. He then knew of the meanings and use of the symbols which we now call the Reiki Symbols. It is my belief that this was downloaded directly from Buddha, possibly Dainichi Nyori.

Overjoyed, but weak from fasting, he rushed down the mountain and stubbed his toes and cut his foot badly. He stopped and held his foot to give healing to it and like a miracle, it stopped bleeding and the pain left him. He carried on down the mountain, taking more care this time and arrived at an eating house. Mikao went inside and ordered a large meal. The owner told him to have a small meal as he was used to monks fasting. He knew Usui would be ill if he had too much to eat. But no, Mikao had a large meal, probably giving Reiki to the food and to his stomach, and lo and behold another miracle, he was fine! The owner was amazed at this healing power and asked if Usui would help his granddaughter with the toothache she was suffering from. He agreed and gave Reiki to the girl's teeth and lo and behold, yet another miracle, the tooth healed and the pain went away! *These are of course the stories that Mrs Takata told to impress the Americans!* (Storytelling developed into a real art form and was an essential part of the Hawaiian culture - and telling people what they would like to hear is a big part of the Japanese culture too)

The Dogo/Clinics and the Usui Reiki Gakkai

There then followed a period when Usui developed Usui Reiki Ryoho (the Usui Reiki Method), where he was practising on friends and family, just as we do at 1st Degree Level. Usui Reiki at first was very much in a Buddhist form, many of his original students were followers of Buddhism. It was a spiritual practice and he was the only teacher (Shihan). Usui's standing as a healer grew quite rapidly as he opened a dojo/clinic of healing and training. It is thought he founded the Reiki Gakkai Society in April 1922. At the weekly meetings, Usui would lead the Hasurei-ho and Gassho meditations and give Rei-ju healing empowerments to his students. These were known as The Master's Five Blessings. This would eventually attune them to Reiki itself, although for a few who were not very intuitive, he had to give them the Reiki symbols. It is believed that Usui Sensei initiated his followers in different ways, according to their backgrounds and abilities. He also produced for his Gakkai students a manual, a set of instructions that he called the Usui Reiki Hikkei. It wasn't until the turn of this century that we got to know about its existence through the diligent research of Frank Arjava Petter. Some suggest that the Reiki Gakkai was founded by his students after he passed away, however it is written on his memorial stone that he was the first president of the Gakkai in 1922 and I go along with that.

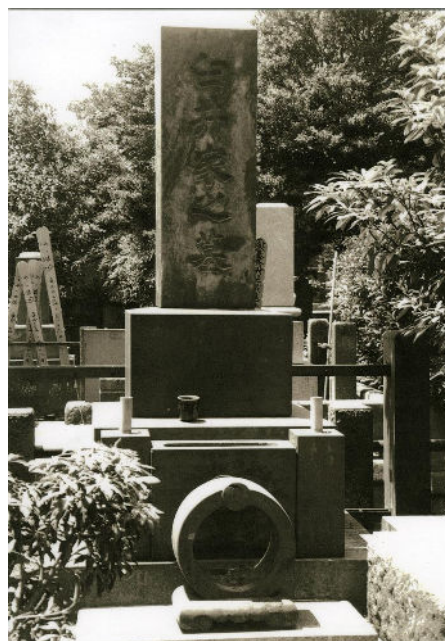
In 1923 an earthquake shattered Tokyo and many hundreds of thousands died. Many more were injured and traumatised. There was a great need of healers and this is when Mikao Usui was guided to realise that Reiki may be used for healing too, and should be available to everyone, not just to Buddhists. He began to teach Shihan level in order that others too would teach and initiate students into Reiki. He and his followers went out into the streets and gave healing to all those who needed help, and it was then that he realised that the Usui Reiki Ryoho was to help one's body, as well as the spirit and mind. This is probably where

Mrs Takata's "Beggars" story came from, perhaps in order to justify the high costs of her training. If you don't value Reiki and healing, then it doesn't work as well. This we know to be true, for if a client feels, *"hey, that was a good treatment"*, then the results will be better and last for longer.

Usui's fame spread rapidly and he was in great demand both as a healer and as a teacher, becoming known as Usui Sensei. In 1924, Usui Sensei opened a new larger clinic/dojo training centre on the outskirts of Toyko in Nakano, and began to train many students into the practice of Usui Reiki Ryoho. In 1925 Dr Chujiro Hayashi became a student and later a Reiki Teacher.

Sadly, Usui Sensei died from a stroke in Fukuyama, making the transition home on the 9th of March 1926, aged 62, having taught approximately 20 Teachers, (Shihan, ie. Those who could perform Reiju), including Dr Chujiro Hayashi and over two thousand students.

In February 1927 his students erected a monument to his honour at the Saihoji temple in the



Toyotama region of Tokyo. The inscription says the words were composed by Masayuki Okada and the calligraphy was done by Naval Rear Admiral Juzaburo Ushida,

"Reihou Chousou Usui Sensei Kudoko No Hi"
Memorial of Reiki Founder Usui Sensei's Benevolence

Dr Usui's resting place in the Siehoji
Temple graveyard in Toykyo

Usui Sensei



Dr Hayashi



Mrs Takata



Usui Sensei left us with his teachings of the 3 Pillars of Reiki and the 5 Reiki Principles.

The Reiki Principles as Translated From the Memorial Stone of Usui Sensei

The Gokai

Just for Today,	Kyo dake wa
I let go Anger	Okoru-na
I let go Worry	Sinpai suna
I am Grateful	Kansha shite
I Work hard	Gyo o hage me
I am Kind to Others	Hito ni shinsetsu ni

Repeat three times whilst in the Gassho (prayer) position

By saying “Just for Today”, it makes “IT” not such a big thing, the “target” becomes more attainable and easier to do, rather than saying “forever more”, or “as of today I will **ALWAYS do.....**”, etc.

Letting go of anger doesn't mean “I won't let “**IT**” make me angry”, rather it means that “**IT**” simply doesn't cause anger. There is no control or conflict, it just doesn't happen!

Letting go of worry again means that Reiki helps you to relax and prioritise the important things, letting go of the non-important things that **probably won't happen anyway!**

Remember too that we are given the ability to anger and worry for good reasons!

Just don't let them get out of hand.

Sometimes, the emotion of anger can be a sign of passion, a sign that you do care and it may spur you on to achieve a goal that requires extra adrenalin! I sometimes Let Go Anger Loudly, then it's gone. I let “it” go and waste no more energy on the subject.

Worry, can help you to get off your butt and get on and do something – **NOW**, not when **it's too late!**

Being Grateful can help you to be satisfied and **HAPPY** with what you have, no matter how little or how much. Being ungrateful can cause you to be forever in need and wanting more, causing and re-enforcing the negative emotions of jealousy, greed, resentment and unhappiness.

Working Hard doesn't just mean earning your living. It means that you work on yourself. By following the 3 pillars of Reiki, and practising Reiki and the 5 Reiki Principles, you will become a “better”, more considerate and happy person. This will benefit those around you, as well as yourself. That's important.

Being kind to Others. By applying the previous principles, you are likely to be kinder to others. Remember too, that what you give is what you will receive. Give out negative

vibrations and that is what will come back. Give out good, positive vibrations, and that too, is what comes back in all sorts of ways.

But, be kind to all living things because you wish too, not for the rewards you hope for!!! (That would be, being un-grateful!!!)

The 3 Pillars of Usui Reiki.

Usui Sensei instructed his students that there are 3 pillars of Reiki,

1. You must firstly treat your Temple of the Spirit, your body, with respect and look after it. He practised Kiko to keep supple and strong and to replenish his own personal Ki. We too, should practise disciplines such as Yoga, Tai-chi etc., or at least take exercise on a regular basis. It is equally important to receive Reiki yourself from others on a regular basis.
2. Then you must look after your mind, this he did by meditating every day, practising the Hatsurei-ho and Gassho meditation in the morning and evening. So, we too should make meditating part of our life style, particularly as we live in such a stressful and demanding era.
3. Then, you may give treatments to others. Remember too, that as the Reiki flows in and through you, you benefit also, so the more you do, the more you benefit.

Some important observations about one's ego.

When referring to the Three Pillars of Reiki, Usui Sensei was quoted as saying - **“so Chiryō (treatment) builds upon Reiji (devotion) and Gassho (meditation). ONLY WHEN WE DEVOTE OURSELVES WITHOUT BEING PREDJUDICED BY OUR THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS, WILL WE BECOME AN INSTRUMENT FOR THE UNIVERSAL LIFE ENERGY,”** I have seen so called “Reiki’s?” puffing and blowing, even grimacing as they experience their client’s pain, sweating, going dizzy, working “at it” etc. **That’s not doing Reiki.** That’s them over-engaging in their ego and instead of just allowing their client to connect to their own bit of the Life Force, they are using up their own Chi, by trying to heal the client instead of just letting it flow. And guess what? Even after all their hard work, the healing is no better than if they had just let the client draw Reiki in the proper way. And because they’re on an ego trip for themselves, they may also suffer disappointments if the client doesn’t heal in the way, or time that was hoped for. I have known poorly trained Reiki students, give up Reiki because in their words “it doesn’t work!”

Of course it’s okay and even desirable to meld and tune in to a client in order to be guided as to where to place your hands, or perhaps to give after care advice, but it’s wrong to waste your own Life Energy.

In a channeling from the Ascended Master, Saint Germain - June 5th 1999, Carolyn Shearer was told **“One of the most important reasons for transmuting the human ego is the learning process that is required for you to step aside with all of the human creation, and allow for your God Presence to manifest where you are. You are not giving yourself over to another lifestream. You are not giving yourself over to another Ascended Master. You are not winning your Victory through a vicarious atonement. It is, beloved hearts, your own Real God Presence.”**

This is what Dr Usui was getting at, and is also the message of my Spirit Guide Sai Chen, who told me a long time ago, **“Don’t Do Reiki, Be Reiki.”** To expand upon this meaning

consider the following: **Don't "do" Reiki thinking that YOU can "Fix" a problem, Become Reiki itself and through the use and practise of Reiki, you may eventually reach Nirvana, Satori, Enlightenment. (As well as helping some living thing to heal itself)**

Dianna Cooper writes that there are two types of "Reiki's". There are Reiki Technicians and Reiki Healers. Reiki Technicians might give treatments in a purely clinical way. Reiki Healers give treatments in a spiritual way, healing the soul as well as the body. Both ways work for the receiver, it is they who choose which method/therapist suits them best.

A good friend of mine calls his Reiki Practice "Reiki, Pure and Simple", and that's just what it should be.

What happened next – another Miracle?

Dr Chujiro Hayashi is number two in the Reiki trilogy. Chujiro was born in 1879 and in 1925 received his Shinpiden (masters) training with Usui Sensei. He was a reserve surgeon in the Japanese navy and was conversant in Oriental and Orthodox Medicine. After the passing of Usui Sensei, Dr Hayashi opened his own clinic in Tokyo (some say he took it over from Mikao Usui), and had great success. He was one of only a few that Usui Sensei had given the Reiki Symbols to, and he discovered that he could align his students somewhat more quickly than the earlier method that might take months or even years.

Dr Hayashi's clinic became very well known and even though he had left the Reiki Gakkai and changed some of his master's techniques, he was still very well respected. Dr Hayashi gave a healing manual to his students and you may want to buy the book version written by Frank Arjava Petter, Tadao Yamaguchi and Chujiro Hayashi. It's called The Hayashi Reiki Manual. Dr Hayashi taught his students a series of hand positions to treat specific complaints. His treatments were given mainly to Glands and Organs. These can be found in the book "The Hayashi Reiki Manual" and also in my 1st Degree Certification Day manual. This was a different method to the way in which Usui Sensei gave treatment to his patients.

Part Three of the Trilogy

The 3rd part in the trilogy is Mrs Hawayo Takata from Hawaii. It was this dear lady who was mainly responsible for spreading Reiki all around the world. Around about 1934/5, Mrs Takata was found to be suffering from a life threatening tumour, and so she traveled to Tokyo for an operation to remove it. While she was waiting for her operation, she "felt" that something was not right, so she asked her doctor if there was any other way to heal the problem. He suggested Dr Hayashi's clinic as he had heard good reports about it.

And so she went to see Dr Hayashi to begin a daily course of treatments, and lo and behold, another miracle, the Reiki "cured" her. (She healed herself of course)

Mrs Takata tells an amusing story about her first experience at the clinic. She was amazed at the heat coming from the hands of the young man treating her. She was sure he was heating up his hands with something, so on her next visit, as he went to place his hands on her, she shot her hand up his sleeve! He screamed, and Dr Hayashi rushed in to see what was wrong. She said "what's he got up his sleeve, it's so hot". Dr Hayashi smiled and said

“that’s Reiki, look he has nothing up his sleeve!” Where-upon they showed her that his clothing contained no heating mechanism.

The beginning of Traditional Western Reiki

Mrs Takata was so taken by this Reiki that in 1936 she begged Dr Hayashi to teach her so that she could go back to Hawaii and help her friends and relatives. In the Eastern part of the world, it wasn’t the done thing for a woman to be taught this sort of thing. However, for some reason, (perhaps it was spiritual guidance?), Dr Hayashi granted her wish and taught her Shoden (1st Degree) and Okuden (2nd Degree) Reiki. After she went home Mrs Takata implored him to teach her Shinpiden (Master level) and Shi-han (Teacher level). At first he wouldn’t agree to it, however women have a way of going on and on about things and when she asked “how much do you want for it?” In desperation he said “\$10,000 dollars!” (*this may of course be one of Mrs Takata’s stories to impress the Americans, as it is known that Usui Sensei trained several Buddhist nuns to Shinpiden level*)

Now that was a lot of money in those times, so what did she do? Well, she wanted very much to learn and to teach this Reiki, so she sold her house! This set a precedent in our practise of Reiki, which is, that for Reiki to work, you must place an honest value on it. By giving out the positive energies of spiritual value in this way, Mrs Takata ended up with several houses, and visited many countries to spread the word.

In 1938, Dr Hayashi and his wife visited Mrs Takata and according to Mrs Takata, on the 21st of February conferred the title of Reiki Master to her, subsequently introducing Reiki to Hawaii by teaching her what became known as Usui Reiki Ryoho. On her certificates however, she wrote Usui Shiki Ryoho, (The Usui System of Natural Healing.)

Strictly speaking, the method had more to do with Dr Hayashi and the “tweaks” that Mrs Takata added to make a Japanese “thing” acceptable to America at that time in history. I guess it gave the discipline an air of credibility to name the discipline after the founder Mikao Usui.

Furthermore, although Usui Sensei and Dr Hayashi gave written information to their students, Mrs Takata added ritual ceremony and secrecy to the discipline by mainly only giving verbal information, and things like the Reiki symbols were kept secret, her students were not allowed to write down and take home the sacred Reiki symbols. This perhaps explains the variations that have developed. In 1976, Mrs Takata was charging \$125 US for 1st Degree, \$400 US for 2nd Degree, and \$10,000 US dollars for Teaching Masters .

During 1941, Dr Hayashi decided it best to “return to his spiritual home” and to make the honourable transition, doing so in a traditional ceremony. It is said, to have been in the presence of his friends, students and family. This was because he was a reserve naval officer and the 2nd world war was looming. Dr Hayashi was a healer, not a murderer and he was unable to take another’s life. It is thought that he trained at least 14 Reiki Masters.

Thank you, Dr Hayashi for your love & sacrifice.

Later in 1941 after the passing of Chujiro, Mrs Takata was “self declared” as Dr Hayashi’s successor, and took on the title of “The Grand Master”, as it was thought that the Usui Reiki Gakkai had dis-banded, for to remain, the Japanese Emperor would have regarded them as

“peace activists”, and would have had them “removed”. It was only a few years ago that we discovered the Usui Reiki Gakkai does still exist!

A co-incidence or was it a Miracle?

In America in the 1970's, there was a Christian church whose parishioners were practising “hands on healing”. However, after a while, the “healers” began to become unwell as they were giving of their own life force. The minister and his wife were on the verge of stopping this practise when an airline pilot suggested contacting a woman he'd heard about on his flights to Hawaii. He'd been told that she didn't use her own energy when healing. She simply channeled it from the universe!

So Mrs Takata was invited to come over to the church and to give a talk and demonstration. Needless to say, she created a good impression and was asked to begin her teaching of students. Over a 10 year period she initiated 22 Masters. They formed the Reiki Alliance which adhered firmly to the strict way in which Mrs Takata taught and practised Reiki.

It has been assumed that Mrs Takata's passive head/body flow treatment is based mainly on treating the chakra system and for some illogical reason, the hand positions did not go down to the knees or feet! It is now known that Dr Hayashi was treating the glandular system, the body's organs, and the Hara. If you refer to the book “The Hayashi Reiki Manual”, you will see that Hayashi instructed his students to treat glands and organs, not chakras. If the brain, glands and organs are healed, and the Hara is re-energised, then the body and mind should recover also. The Hara and the area around it, is known to be a map of the body, containing many meridian points. In Usui Sensei's technique, Hesso Chiry-ho, the naval is known as the healing point for the body. (Not for the head, mind you) Followers of Dr Hayashi's system have been instructed by Tadao Yamaguchi, son of Chiyoko Yamaguchi who was one of Dr Hayashi's students.

It was Mrs Takata and her master students who simplified Reiki treatments by changing from the original intuitive and spiritual (Buddhist) methods of Usui Sensei, followed by Dr Hayashi's logical groups of hand positions based on anatomy & physiology knowledge, to just the head and 7 Chakras. That was much easier to learn!

Sadly, Mrs Takata passed away in December 1980, aged 80.

Thank you Mrs Takata for passing on the Gift of Reiki to us.

I believe that goodness will always come out of the “bad” things that happen. Just think, if Mrs Takata hadn't developed a tumour, we may well not be practising Reiki now.

This is the story of Usui Reiki Ryoho as I believe it to be at this moment in time.

At the end of the day what matters is how we use it.

Thank you Mikao Usui, my Friend and Guide for giving me the Gift of Reiki.

Thanks also for the help given freely to me from Colin Powell, Frank Arjava Petter, Bronwen & Frans Stiene, and to all those who have dedicated themselves to the search for information in the quest for true knowledge of the Healing Technique known as Usui Reiki Ryoho