

Milwaukee

Reiki Circles Model

For

Special Needs Children

2009

Excerpt from *Live Autism With Soaring Spirits: Reiki Healing for the Family*, E-book by Sally K. O'Brien to be published in 2009, pp. 48-52

POWER OF REIKI CIRCLES

Bonnie Hassan, Reiki Master who lives in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, in her article titled "Reiki for Children with Special Needs" in Reiki News Magazine, Volume 4, Issue 3, and fall 2005. discussed the Reiki circles she created for special needs children and their families. For further information go to her website at www.the-place-for-reiki.com .You will discover The Place of Reiki isn't just a website. It's the name of her healing center.

In her article about Reiki healing circles, she said she did not limit it to children with autism. Any child, with any type of special need whether it was medical, physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual was invited to participate.

Each monthly healing circle was a two hour time frame for the entire event. Each circle would last for approximately fifteen minutes, long enough for the Reiki energy to have enough time to work, but a short enough period that the children would not get too impatient and try to leave the circle.

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Each child and parent would receive fifteen minutes of Reiki from the group of Reiki practitioners sitting around the perimeter of the room.

In the article she said, “I asked the parents to arrive about fifteen minutes early to fill out a simple consent form for their children and to allow both the children and the parents to acclimate the space. In addition, to the parents, she also included siblings, grandparents, and aunts and uncles in the circle. She did telephone interviews prior to the day of the circle, which allowed her to get some basic information about the children and to have a clearer understanding of the issues that the children had.

In the first Reiki healing circle which she began in 2005, there were twelve practitioners and four children. The next month, eight children, and the third month, ten children.

Some of the effects on the children have been dramatic. Children with autism often have difficulty with imaginary play. Cory, five-year old son of one of the Reiki practitioners, had this difficulty and would get frustrated when his peers were busy playing imaginary games, and he just didn't get it. He would pound on the floor, hit himself, or in some other way show his frustration.

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But after his participation in the first circle, his mother said it was “like something clicked in his head” and he began talking to an imaginary playmate he called Antarctica. He also began having his stuffed animals talk to one another. And his ability to converse with peers and adults also improved.

Cory was able to self-regulate his energy level, had a better week in school than he’d ever had before, and was able to handle his morning routine with fewer prompts and less defiance. His mother was extremely pleased.

Zack, a nine and-a-half year old autistic child showed some regressive behaviors after his first time in the circle. He had difficulty controlling his bowels, a problem that he previously had gotten under control, and he began to gnaw on his arm. The gnawing behavior was also a problem that he had in the past, but it was no longer an issue prior to his coming to the circle.

When his dad called to tell me about this, she said, “I explained that Reiki helps to break up poison and toxins in our bodies, and that Zack’s body was reacting to this by flushing them out.” She went on to say she was confident this was only a temporary setback until his body flushed out everything that needs to be flushed.

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The founder continued by telling the father she believed the reason that Zack had resumed the gnawing behavior was because although the Reiki was making a positive change in Zack's energy system, it felt uncomfortable to Zack. He had resumed this behavior as a means of self-soothing his discomfort, a discomfort he really had no way to verbally articulate.

Hassan said, "Once again I assured his dad that once Zack acclimated to the changes in his energy system, this behavior would also disappear." Within a couple of weeks, Zack's dad did call to confirm that the problems had stopped and that Zack seemed more comfortable with himself.

Zack, like Rory, also participated in the second circle. The change in him after this circle was positive and very dramatic. Zack's dad reported that most of Zack's conversation prior to the second circle consisted of "TV talk". When asked a question, Zack would usually respond with a phrase he mimicked or copied from television. His conversational efforts were not original in thought.

However, after the second circle, dad and mom both agreed

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Zack's "TV talk" was now less than a quarter of his conversation, and that to top it off, "he's really quite funny." Their son had a sense of humor, and until the circle they never knew it.

In the article, David, a fifteen-year-old who is diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome and who participated in the second circle, was able to finish up a major school project without any difficulty and ended up getting a 97 out of 100 points on the assignment. His mother was amazed at his willingness to do the work and his ability to get it done so well.

Two other boys, who participated in the second circle, a thirteen-year-old and a four year-old both with more severe autistic tendencies, seemed to be calmer and happier the day of the circle and for a day or two after. There were some children who did not show any obvious signs of change. But even in those circumstances, the parents felt that they (the parents) received benefit and were eager to bring the children back again.

I interviewed Bonnie Hassan on Tuesday afternoon, April 15, 2008, by phone. She said, "We've never had a month when kids did not show up. We've only once cancelled the circle due to the weather in three years."

When I asked how they were supporting the event, she said, "On a table off to the side, we have a basket for Love Offerings."

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For how many Reiki practitioners still participate after three years, she said, "As many as sixteen, and as few as eight." Hassan went on to say "inclusion is a key concept for the monthly Reiki circle now, any issue that is causing a child to be limited, to be less than he or she can be." Each child is welcome along with his parents, siblings, aunts and uncles, and grandparents to stand, sit, or lay down in the circle and have Reiki practitioners send Reiki distant healing to them for fifteen minutes.

Epilogue:

I spoke to Bonnie Hassan a second time on June 11, 2009. During our conversation, she said Pittsburg's Reiki circles for special needs children is now four years old. and there have been only two months when it was not held. The first month was weather related, and the second month was November 2008 when her mother died.

She was pleased another city was modeling what she had started. After we talked I e-mailed her this document, and she confirmed I had quoted her accurately. The only change is the love offering is now given to charities instead of support of the monthly Reiki circles.