

REIKI: A WORKING DEFINITION

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Our research indicates that there are at least fifty different kinds of healing now being practiced that use the word Reiki as part of their name, with more being developed all the time. This has caused confusion for some, and other have wondered just what qualified as healing system to be Reiki. On the other hand, many think that the only kind of healing that the word Reiki should refer to is the Usui healing system. However, it must be kept in mind that the word Reiki had been part of the Japanese language for hundreds or even thousands of years before Dr. Usui used it to describe his healing system. In fact, in Japan, the word Reiki is not commonly associated with Dr. Usui's healing system at all, but is simply a generic word that refers to the occult, to healing, or to things relating to the spirit. Perhaps this is why he did not refer to his healing system as Reiki, but referred to it as Usui Reiki Ryoho to make sure people understood that his was a unique kind of Reiki.

With this in mind, how can one tell what qualifies as a Reiki healing system; and since we state that we honor all Reiki lineages and schools, what is our working definition? When thinking about Usui Reiki and its unique qualities, it is possible to not a number of features that one can use in defining Reiki healing. Below is a list of four that we use as our working definition. We consider any healing system that has these four qualities to be a Reiki healing method.

- 1. The Attunement. The ability to give Reiki treatments is acquired by receiving an attunement, rather than one developing the ability over time through the use of meditation or other exercises.**
- 2. The Lineage. All Reiki healing methods are part of a lineage leading back to the founder of the healing system, meaning that the method has been passed on from teacher to student over and over.**
- 3. Spiritually Guided. Reiki does not require that the practitioner guide the energy with the mind as it is automatically guided by the intelligence of the Higher Power.**
- 4. Harmless. Since Reiki is a simple technique applied with light pressure or without touching, and since the energy is guided by the Higher Power, it can do no harm.**