

REIKI MASTER BRINGS UNIQUE TREATMENT TO ANIMALS

If you were to see a woman standing beside a horse, holding her hands a few inches from the horse's head, or perhaps gently touching the horse, you could be watching an animal Reiki practitioner. "Reiki is the Japanese art of hands-on healing in which the practitioner acts as a conduit for healing energy to flow to a person or animal to facilitate their physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being," says Nancy O'Donohue.

Nancy O'Donohue is just such a practitioner. She received her Reiki Level III Master/Teacher certificate last March in Southfield, Michigan from the International Center for Reiki Training. William Rand was her Level III Master instructor. Rand is renowned all over the world as a Reiki teacher and practitioner. She received Level I and II Reiki training in California from Master Teacher Francesca De Picciotto, M.D.

O'Donohue started her practice in Los Angeles on people. She moved to Michigan in 2005, and is spending her time developing her healing practice here.

This past summer several injured and dying animals came across her path and she wanted to pursue working on them with the Reiki practice, in addition to working with people. O'Donohue had read the book *Animal Reiki*, by Kathleen Prasad and Elizabeth Fulton, and took an online 5 week course with Prasad to learn this method. Then O'Donohue began practicing on her friend's sick animals and getting Prasad's feedback via the internet. The results were very gratifying. O'Donohue helped a horse with a bad attitude, named Tina, back to manageability, and facilitated a dying dog into its transition. (See the stories on O'Donohue's website – www.LakeshoreHealing.com).

"Energy is not limited by time or space," says O'Donohue. "Reiki works long distance also. I have a dog client in California as well as a man in Kalamazoo who's recovering from knee surgery. I prearrange a time with him for a ½ hour session and he lies down in a quiet room at the designated time. He tells me he can feel the energy moving in his knee and lower leg during the session. He usually falls asleep during the session and wakes up at the same time I finish."

O'Donohue finds horses particularly interesting to work with because, while dogs and cats invariably fall asleep during a treatment, she has to read the body language of the horse to see how they're receiving the treatment. In addition to smelling her hands, they exhibit classic equine signs of relaxation such as sighing, chewing, licking and sometimes falling asleep. Most animals will smell her hands during a treatment, as this is where the healing energy emanates from. The practice of Reiki can be a hands-on treatment or the practitioner can offer the energy from a few inches or feet away from the subject.

"I always ask permission of the animal before I begin by telling them I'm here to offer healing and it's their choice whether they want to accept it or not. They may not understand my words, but they understand the intention behind them. With dogs and cats, I sit down in a room, ask permission of the animal, and often the animal will come over to me and rub against me or just lay at my feet. Even if the animal stays across the room, they receive the benefit of the healing energy. I offer a prayer and invite the energy in

and I can feel it in my hands. From there it goes out to the subject. Cats are very receptive if they want a treatment; but they're very independent and if they are not receptive it can be because they don't need it. I've yet to meet a dog or horse who wasn't receptive to a treatment."

O'Donohue goes on to say, "Hospitals all over the country offer Reiki to patients and numerous studies have established that Reiki brings about deep relaxation, reduces the side effects of medication, reduces pain and speeds recovery time after surgery or injury."

The Japanese use Reiki as a form of stress reduction and healing. Reiki is believed to have been an ancient Tibetan Buddhist practice which was rediscovered in the late 1800's by a Japanese Buddhist, Dr. Mikao Usui.

The University of Michigan's Integrative Medicine Clinic offers Reiki, as well as The Wege Institute in St. Mary's Hospital in Grand Rapids and South Haven Community Hospital's Shoreline Center for Women. Reiki has achieved enough credibility in the medical field that nurses receive continuing education credits for taking Reiki classes. Nearly one hundred members of the American Holistic Veterinary Medicine Association have incorporated Reiki into their practices.

"Horses with arthritis, or recovering from injury, can benefit from Reiki," says O'Donohue. "And it also helps relieve stress. One client, a retired racehorse recently purchased as a brood mare, arrived underweight, with an unhealthy coat and had just had surgery to remove a bone chip from her knee. She'll certainly get well in her new stress-free home with veterinary care, but Reiki can help the process along. To me, a horse who is underweight and has a poor coat must have had a stressful life and Reiki can help relieve that stress. Reiki is a complementary holistic practice that works in conjunction with standard medical treatment," O'Donohue points out.

O'Donohue is also a volunteer with Hospice of Holland and is working with them to establish a Reiki program for patients at Hospice House.

She grew up on the east coast, went to California to attend UCLA and stayed after finishing school. She left the Los Angeles area last year because of "a high stress job and the terrible traffic," says O'Donohue. Her brother and family live here in Michigan so she moved to Fennville.

She has 3 cats: Star, Cloud, and Paddy. "Star and Cloud are always receptive to a Reiki treatment, and Cloud sometimes asks for it by banging on the door when I am in a Reiki session, begging to come in. I found Paddy as a two-month old kitten abandoned on a nearby country road; he had fleas, worms and a bad head cold. I took him to the vet, and also used Reiki to bring him back to health. Now that he is healthy," says O'Donohue, "he shows little interest in treatments."

If you have a sick or high strung animal, or need some attention to some part of your body that could use some healing, give Nancy O'Donohue a call for an appointment. Her phone is: 269-929-6796.

Writer's note: O'Donohue performed Reiki on my cat, Samantha, who had a sore spot on her hip. Samantha is also somewhat temperamental at times. However, she went right over to O'Donohue, smelled her hands, and sat down at her feet. Watching O'Donohue in action made me a believer.