



Three Reasons Animal Reiki Rocks!

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There are so many reasons to love Reiki for animals! Those of us who have been practicing for a long time (or even a short time) know this well. But next time you find yourself talking to someone about why you love it, keep in mind some of these mainstream reasons why it's the go-to method for supporting yourself, animals, people, and the planet!

In a nutshell, animal Reiki rocks because

1. It's about healing touch

According to the University of Minnesota, research indicates that touch has the power to relieve pain, reduce stress, fatigue, depression, and anxiety, as well as manage the symptoms of cancer treatments and post-operative pain and recovery.

2. It's about animal connections

According to Duke Cancer Institute, animal-assisted therapy is a highly effective form of intervention which improves moods, energy, decreases pain and anxiety, and "has not only been shown to aid stress and depression but [also] provides a sense of companionship that can combat feelings of isolation. It is a cheap yet effective way to maximize health outcomes for hospital patients."

3. It's about meditation, and meditation works—even science agrees!

According to the Mayo Clinic, meditation is a "simple, fast way to reduce stress." Research suggests that mediation helps people to manage health conditions such as anxiety, cancer, depression, heart disease, pain, and more.

Reiki as a healing touch practice

Two parts of the system of Reiki incorporate touch: self-treatment and treatment of others. Reiki practitioners are taught formal hand positions to use when doing Reiki on themselves, as well as hand positions for offering Reiki to humans. When offering to animals, touch is optional and animal-initiated. Because we are very tactile creatures, we humans feel support and compassion in a very direct way through touch. Clients often describe feelings of relaxation, harmony, and well-being after a Reiki treatment. Sometimes this is also the case for animals, although some animals may be too sensitive for touch therapy in Reiki. Thus touch is an important part of the system of Reiki. However, as Reiki is also effective off the body, this can be adapted to the comfort level of each individual.

Reiki as an animal therapy practice

When offering Reiki to animals, practitioners find an amazing result. Often they see that animals are healing us even though we may initially think we are there to help them heal. This is a result of the beautiful gift of animal presence. Just being in the presence of animals is healing. Connecting with them through petting, speaking, or even just gentle presence has an immediate healing effect on us. This is because animals are fully present, without expectation, judgment, and agenda. They accept us unconditionally as we are, and this causes our hearts to open without us even trying (and sometimes without us even being aware of it). It is when our hearts are open that healing can truly begin.

Reiki as a meditative practice

Reiki is a system of spiritual practice that utilizes five elements (according to the International House of Reiki):

The Reiki precepts

Traditional breathing practices

Healing treatments

Symbols and mantras

Initiations

If we take a deeper look at each of these five elements, we can see the heart is to create a meditative state of mind. When working with the precepts, the key is to contemplate them in a meditative way so that we can go deeper into their meaning and purpose in our everyday lives, bringing change and healing to all that we do. When working with the breathing practices, the key is to follow the breath into a meditative space where healing can happen. As a practitioner, when we offer a healing treatment to a person or animal, the key is that we go deeper into a meditative state of mind so that we can support the healing process. When practicing the symbols and mantras, either through contemplation or chanting, we learn that they are tools to help us to release our busy mind and find our inner “still point” or inner meditative space to facilitate healing. And finally, as a teacher, when offering initiations to our students, the key is to create a meditative space within ourselves and within the ritual to support the student’s healing process. Both teachers and practitioners of the system of Reiki often describe how their meditation practice has changed their lives—from the inside out—and made their world a better and more peaceful place.

Thus we can see that every part of the system of Reiki is ultimately about meditation as a doorway to healing. While some people may not have heard of Reiki, everyone longs for a peaceful, harmonious, and stress-free life. So why not rock your world and the world of those around you by sharing with others how animal Reiki practice helps you?