



## We Are What We Think

Article August 2009

"We are what we think. All that we are arises from our thoughts" - this is a quote from Buddhist teachings I learned a few years ago. It reminded me of a quote from Shakespeare that goes: "There is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so." Both express, for me, a profound truth. Over the years I have come to recognise the importance of what I am thinking and how I respond to those thoughts. Anything can be experienced as a good or bad thing, it depends how we think about it. The Chinese have a concept of the Heart-mind as distinct from the Intellect-mind. The Intellect mind is always judging, comparing, its language is full of 'shoulds' and 'oughts'. It is often fearful. The Heart-mind is compassionate, seeks connection and joyfully exists in the present moment. It is centred in love.

So what does this have to do with Reiki? Well my experience has shown me that to let go of negative thoughts and have a more positive attitude to life makes me happier. This also seems to rub off on those around me. I have found that Reiki has helped me to achieve this.

I used to be quite negative in my thinking, seeing the glass as half empty, focusing on lack instead of appreciating what I had. The Reiki Principles reminded me to be grateful and honouring. This immediately brings a shift in focus, away from 'poor me' towards the abundant gifts of the universe that surround me. It encouraged me to

think from my Heart-mind instead of the comparative Intellect-mind.

Reiki also gave my mind a rest, I mean literally: when giving a treatment, the incessant chattering from my Intellect-mind would sometimes just stop. For a few moments there was peace! Gradually these few moments grew to be longer times, until I found myself not thinking of anything except what was right there in the present moment for minutes at a time while giving Reiki to someone or myself. It was amazing!

I know this is also the experience of other Reiki people: indeed some of my newest students commented on it recently. What a wonderful gift! I found meditation hard work to begin with: sit stilling and upright, trying hard to not think of anything! With simple Reiki practice I found I could achieve the same result much more easily. I have found that although the practice is simple it soon encourages us to make other changes in life that support this new way of being - of no longer being a slave to the Intellect-mind, but being in service to the Heart-mind.

Over time I have developed a new habitual way of thinking, seeing the glass more half full (or even brimming over full!) and as a result experiencing more joy and peace in my life. People sometimes accuse me of being a Pollyanna, but I don't care. For me the happiness is real, not an illusion. The suffering I used to experience due to my negative thinking: that was the illusion!