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**Reiki and animal communication**

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## **Receiving Is Also A Gift**

When I was in China recently I was fortunate enough to visit some Taoist temples. The Taoists believe that there is a natural force that flows through everything, keeping the universe in balance. You are probably familiar with the image of yin and yang (the tai chi symbol), which represents this balance. It describes a moving process of change, hard and soft, male and female, dark (as in moonlight) and light (as in sunlight) etc. It makes a lot of sense to me and I see that the practice of Reiki puts us in touch with this flow. We are encouraged, for example, to receive something in return for giving a treatment – something that many people struggle with.

I have to confess that I am one of life's Givers: my personality means that I tend to feel more rewarded by helping others than doing something to help myself. One of my greatest challenges in my personal and spiritual growth has been to love myself enough to be willing to receive the care I need to be a happy and healthy person. Reiki, particularly in the form of Usui Shiki Ryoho, has been a great teacher for me in this and I now understand more about the importance of taking care of myself. I also understand that this helps me to take better care of others, because I'm a stronger person to support them.

And yet I still have a resistance to receiving Reiki for myself, which I felt I needed to explore further. So this month I went to receive a Reiki treatment. I put all thoughts of 'this will benefit others/make me a better helper for others' out of my head and made it clear to myself that I was simply going to receive something good for me. Part of this clarity was that I have particular difficulty in spending money on receiving treatments, so it was important that this was a paid treatment. I was supported in making my decision by the fact that the practitioner I chose for my treatment had an unexpected space in her diary at exactly the time I was able to go.

And something quite amazing happened: I discovered how much of a gift my willingness to receive was. I really enjoyed the treatment and it reminded me why Reiki is so good for people (and animals)! I loved *not* having to undress (as I've had to do for other treatments like massage or osteopathy), I enjoyed the comfort and being taken care of.

Then it came to the payment and it felt so good to give the money in exchange for what I'd received. I felt how I was honouring the lovely treatment, supporting another Reiki practitioner in living with this practice, acknowledging the help she had given me and demonstrating my trust in the universe that I could afford to spend this money on myself. Allowing myself to receive had brought another way of giving.

So I saw the lovely balance in the transaction and felt the truth of what I'm always telling my students: "If there is no one to receive, who will all the Givers give to?" So if you struggle with receiving, let me remind you that receiving can be as sweet as giving. Be willing to receive: you will find it is also a gift!