

The Science of Reiki: Understanding the Energetic Principles



The use of Reiki as a complementary or alternative treatment for a wide range of health issues has been on the rise. As interest in this form of healing grows, taking a look at the science behind it can help you understand it better. You might wonder how energy healing takes place in Reiki or what this type of healing even means. Certain energetic principles play important roles in Reiki, which has given scientists a way to study this energy healing technique. Find out more about Reiki and the energy that powers it.

An Overview of How Reiki Works

Reiki has been in use since the early 1900s. This energy healing technique originated in Japan and has been used in many other parts of the world over the years. Reiki techniques involve placing hands lightly on an individual's clothed body or holding them just above the body and moving them around while channeling energy. This helps life energy within the body flow through pathways called meridians in order to ease pain and stress and support the body's natural ability to heal. Reiki involves working with the biofield, which refers to energy fields surrounding living organisms.

From quantum physics to magnetic fields, different areas of science have studied Reiki in an attempt to understand how it works and how effective it is. Learning more about the energetic principles and terms associated with Reiki provides a better understanding of this energy healing technique.

Exploring the Biofield and Beyond

The use of biofield therapies has increased in recent years as part of treatment approaches for cancer and other illnesses. Reiki is among these biofield therapies, since it involves working with these fields. Biofields are interacting energy fields that are found around living beings. This energy also permeates living organisms as it moves around. Biofields are thought to have effects on the body, which has led to their therapeutic use in Reiki and other therapies. Interactions between the magnetic fields or biofields of Reiki practitioners and those undergoing this kind of treatment offer a possible explanation of how this technique works.

A 2015 review published in *Global Advances in Health and Medicine* found that biofield therapies, including Reiki, were effective at easing pain. This review also found that biofield therapies helped reduce certain symptoms in cancer patients, such as fatigue, pain, and anxiety. Other findings include potential efficacy for easing symptoms of other conditions, such as osteoarthritis, cardiovascular disease, and dementia.

A 2013 study published in the *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* theorized that becoming attuned to an external environmental radiation source, such as the Schumann resonance, might stimulate Reiki's energy healing process. More research is needed to explore this theory into the healing effects of Reiki.

Understanding Energy Meridians

Energy meridians are a key part of Traditional Chinese Medicine, but they're also part of Reiki. What exactly are they? Meridians are pathways or channels in the body that allow energy to flow through. Reiki techniques involve helping energy move through these channels to promote healing and provide other benefits. There are a dozen main meridians, including six that move energy down through the body and six that move energy up. Several other meridians store energy in the body. The 12 main energy meridians include the liver, lungs, spleen, heart, kidneys, pericardium, gall bladder, large intestine, stomach, small intestine, urinary bladder, and triple heater or thyroid.

What does science have to say about the existence of energy meridians? A 2019 study published in the *Journal of Evidence-Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine (eCAM)* found some evidence of meridians existing in the extracellular matrix and connective tissue of the body. The extracellular matrix includes minerals and macromolecules found outside cells in organs and tissues. A 2013 review published in *Medical Acupuncture* also found evidence that connective tissue might play a role in the existence of energy meridians. This review found evidence of a primo vascular system with a possible connection to the existence of meridians as well.

Examining the Placebo Effect in Reiki Research

You might have heard about the placebo effect in research. This refers to the belief that a fake treatment is really working the way you expect it to, although it's not real. For example, participants in medication studies are often given a sugar pill or another type of "fake" medication. These participants sometimes claim that the treatment they were given had the expected results, even though it wasn't the actual medication. It's important to keep in mind that placebo doesn't actually treat or cure illnesses, but they can have a powerful effect on the mind.

How does this connect to Reiki? Research has shown that Reiki has better results than placebos when used as complementary therapy. Consider the findings of a 2017 review published in *eCAM*. This review found that the majority of studies done on Reiki support the claim that it offers an effective form of treatment compared to placebo. Reiki was found to perform better than placebo, giving it a strong potential for use in complementary health therapy for chronic health conditions. This energy healing technique was linked to parasympathetic nervous system activation that promotes mind and body healing.

The 2015 review of biofield therapies cited earlier also found that these therapies improve outcomes in a way that goes beyond the placebo effect. In fact, the review shows support that biofield therapy, such as Reiki, might make use of the unconscious and conscious mind's desired and expected outcomes to produce enhanced results. These results are stronger than those achieved with the placebo effect.

While more studies are needed to gain a deeper scientific understanding of Reiki, current research has shown its efficacy. From easing depression and anxiety to managing chronic pain, this energy healing practice has been linked to improved physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Using Reiki in your own life can provide a way for you to ensure healthy energy flow to enhance wellness.

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