

USUI SHIKI RYOHO

NEWSLETTER

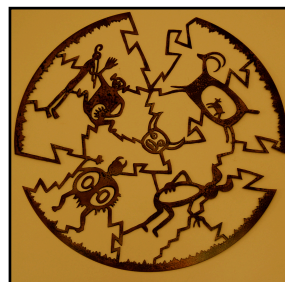
<p>New Venue in Arizona for Seminars and Retreats near Phyllis' new home!</p>	<p>Articles about the OGM Retreat held in August, 2008, as well as yearly messages from Phyllis and Paul</p>	<p>4 page calendar insert for you to keep track of event you want to attend and to network with others!</p>	<p>Paul shares his musings about Money, Money, Money! Phyllis recounts her journey with Uluru.</p>
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POCKET SANCTUARY, TUBAC AZ



Built up above the Valley floor, Pocket Sanctuary at Kenyon Ranch, is the setting for the STAR Foundations quarterly workshops a therapy founded by Barbara Findeisen. Five years ago the ranch was rescued from tumbling back into the red earth. The restoration, a work of passion, has restored the ranch to its past beauty and it now serves as a retreat center. Luckily for us, it is available for our events. The ranch is an answer to many dreams for us...a place to work which meets both our physical and spiritual needs. The weather is inviting throughout the year. The winters are sunny and cool with the heat of the summer tempered by warm nights and the monsoons. The landscape bursts into bloom in April and continues to thrill the eyes throughout the summer.

Vistas that draw the eye to the horizon and feed the soul's need for vision appear in every direction. Stone buildings embrace informal courtyards which provide security and serve to moderate the temperatures with a bit of help from heaters/air conditioners. The "dangerously tasty" food and the accommodating management make this a truly welcoming environment. Experience the magic of the southern Arizona desert which is full of mystical plant and animal life that creates an awareness of each moment.



Timothy Cunningham
(in the center) displays his enjoyment of his work (and possibly relief at the end of the Retreat!). The group that gathered for the OGM Retreat in Seattle, WA at the end of August, 2008, came from 16 countries. Of the 51 participants, 8 were second degree students and the rest, masters. Adding up the years of Reiki practice gave us a total of 872.5 years of experience in practice! (more on the next page)

THE OGM RETREAT



Reiki has a place in the Heart of Life

*Each morning at Reiki circle
The silence in the room
Was bigger than the noise of the world
Was softer than the pain
The silence in the room was Reiki*

To all of my friends in the Usui Shiki Ryoho system and to all initiates in Reiki, wherever you are. Greetings!

What I witnessed in Seattle is simple:
Reiki has a place in the heart of life- at the center of this group.
Constellations are all about place- about placing your ancestors-
placing your feelings at the center.
Constellations see in the dark and make truths easier to bear.
Talk shoots arrows into the air- constellations take arrows into the heart.
Pain illuminates the strongest bonds. You can feel when they are tested.
Standing and acknowledging the roots of pain reveals our strengths, releases our fears and allows for new growth.
Touching this place together opens the door to what is possible- to what wants to happen.
When all members of a system are acknowledged, be they family or spiritual, students, masters or clients- and given a place; the system grows deeper roots, opens up and breathes easier.
You can feel this truth in your body.
To acknowledge. To listen until the last voice has spoken and to wait. In silence. In Reiki. This is the gift that keeps on giving whenever I re-member all of us together. Reiki has a place in the heart of life. What wants to happen?
Leave the door to your heart open and we will go there together.

Timothy Cunningham Spokane Washington

MORE ON THE OGM RETREAT...

Fifty-two students of Usui Shiki Ryoho gathered in Seattle this August with facilitator, Timothy Cunningham, at the invitation of the OGM. Our intention was to use the tool of Family Constellation work coupled with our clear intention to find the hidden “natural order” of structures and organizations we have created over the years in Reiki and to apply what we learned to move into the future. The Lineage Bearer, Head of the Discipline, (the OGM), The Reiki Alliance, the Reiki Foundation International, Rioharts and the Master Education Program—all of these organizations and roles have worked to find their place and to come to harmonious relationship. What has been hidden and eludes us that might make our efforts and good intentions flow more easily? How do we insure longevity of the practice we hold dear? These were some of the pressing questions that drew us together, and the sense of being “drawn together” was powerful and palpable.

We had a rough beginning—it is tough for a group of strong and independent Reiki students to trust and surrender to the leadership and guidance of an outside facilitator. It is hard to trust a tool many were unfamiliar with. Adding to the struggle was the presence of those who usually take leadership in our groups.

After a day and a half it was clear to Timothy that he needed a day with the group without the presence of Phyllis and Paul. During that day, the community explored deep issues of betrayal, abandonment, not feeling seen or heard, the sense of not having a voice.

They opened to exploring the place of community, the practice of Usui Shiki Ryoho, the Lineage Bearer, the OGM, and Reiki. The group reported how the very best and the very worst of who we are was revealed along with the joy and pain of that revelation.

What became clear from that day of intense work was that people found their voices, found the strength and courage to speak what had been unspeakable—to feel the truth at a much deeper level. We saw how we can polarize as a community and judge harshly and treat one another badly and the same time seeing how we can hold one another in our pain with great compassion and presence. Liberation came by walking through fire.

Here are more lessons learned and re-learned:

- Facing our pain and fear brings greater strength, clarity, and humility.
- Our individual unacknowledged and unresolved woundedness plays itself out in our community relationships.
- There is a huge sea of students of Usui Shiki Ryoho and many feel unseen and even betrayed: students by masters, non-members of TRA by members of TRA, masters by the Lineage Bearer and Head of the Discipline.
- When we acknowledge and ask for the guidance of Reiki in what we do together, order and balance is easier to find.
- Not honoring and being connected to our personal physical lineage limits our capacity to live, honor, and support our Reiki lineage and community.

From Paul

Elaine Andres (USA)

“It reaffirms my participation as a member of the Reiki community and invites me to seelfeel my importance as “one drop of water in the bucket” very empowering and freeing. “

Paul Dugsin (Canada)

“All I know at the moment, is that the awakening of this deeper holding capacity, which is beyond what is required for my students and clients, and even my own process, is now active and available.”

Aleema Fontaine (Mexico)

“My wish is for the ripples of our journeys in our wondrous practice and community of Reiki to continue to curl and curve the waters, the foliage, the rustling, the singing of our Beings.”

The OGM Retreat from Phyllis's eyes...

At the end of the Retreat, I released my dreams and ideas of how I thought we could work together in organizations and with a kind of corporate structure. It is a difficult process for me as I have many years of work and focus to leave unrealized. It is time, for I do not have the energy to hold these any longer. It seemed in the constellation work we did in the retreat, that there was little energy for these organizations.

I often see the potential in people, in communities, and in myself. This way of looking and being with others and myself can be a service and a way of teaching. It can also be an impediment to what really wants to happen. Sometimes potential is not realized as there are different paths of potential for all of us. In releasing my dreams, I release the Reiki Foundation from my ideas of their purpose. I release The Reiki Alliance from my dream of a master community that would function in a certain way. I release the OGM and my expectations.

In the early days of teaching...and now, I respond to students when they ask, "What can I do for the earth? For World Peace?" I say to them, "Do your self treatment every day. Create peace in your family, in your neighborhood. This is the beginning of change."

I have been focused lately on my desire to stay at home and create the space to go deeper into my practice of Reiki, to find the new level of understanding and being that is waiting for me when I can settle in one place for a time. I do not need organizations or partnerships to do this. In fact, they hinder this process. Perhaps it is time for me to do what I have advised all these years. Create peace in my life. Create the community I wish in my own neighborhood. Create the way of living Reiki within my personal way of being.

I need to find a place of releasing my desire to fill in the blanks such as wondering if there are things I need to do to prepare the community for the successor of the lineage (if there will be one) or a place to store and share the archives of my grandmother and her masters, or a way to support each student of the system through layers of teaching and passing on of knowledge.

I remember the line of my grandmother, of my Master: "Let Reiki Teach You!" Perhaps I have been too busy trying to create and without enough time left for Reiki to simply show the way.

In my own life, if something does not seem to be "working" then I let it go. Somehow in the community process, I have a difficult time letting go. One of the factors is probably a human tendency to believe that "if they would just do it this way, it would work!" And, of course, my way is always the best...or at least one that would take the next step towards my own goals. I have seen so many beautiful capable people give themselves and their strategies to "make" the Alliance work. And it seems only to destroy these people. I wonder what the message is for the Alliance and for all of us? Are we listening to the messages?

I have my own relationship with each of you. Each relationship is a process in itself and over years, maturing and growing. I love the process and have no issues with any of our relationships. Some are easier than others. This is the way of being human.

However, when bundled together as The Reiki Alliance and I as the OGM, we seem to have so many complications and confusion. I am letting go of trying to figure out why and releasing my attachment to "making this work." In the rest of my life, what works stays and what does not dissolves. I am staying with my work in the Alliance and being mindful. I will try to let the attachments go and see what is wanting to happen and surrender to this, even if it is to dissolve the Alliance or the OGM.

There is much more happening but I have no words for these processes. I await the ripples and will see what Reiki brings to my shores, my life, and my consciousness. I thank those who came to the Retreat, their families and friends who supported them, and the effort of many people in the Seattle community.

With a grateful heart, Phyllis

P.S. I invite you to participate in this moving and challenging process that will guide the system that we love and cherish to another paradigm and perhaps to another level of understanding this simple, elegant teaching for us as human beings being human.

WHAT DO WE ASPIRE TO. . .

FROM PAUL

In 2005 at The Reiki Alliance conference in Denmark, I began a presentation by singing a few lines of the song: "What's It All About, Alfie?" I wonder how each of us would answer this question. How different or similar might our responses be? I've heard about a popular book in Christian circles, "The Purpose Driven Life". I love the message of the title: Let your understanding of your life's purpose drive your life, your moment-to-moment choices.

Purpose in life can have many aspects. It can be to provide for family, to "bring light and healing into the world," to build a successful business to pass on to children, to make the world a better place—it can be anything and many things. I am interested in the question's ultimate meaning: what is my life's purpose in the context of what human life is about?

All the great faith traditions, philosophies, communal cosmologies (for example in indigenous cultures) offer their people this context of ultimate meaning. Often I hear these traditions referred to as "belief systems." Perhaps they are, but it is my observation and experience that one of the qualities of "soul" is faith. I would like to define faith as a soul's inner knowing about the purpose and meaning of its being. At the center of the major religious traditions there seem to be great similarities. Why are people attracted to a specific faith tradition? Why do some people chart their own path or come up with some composite? Why is it that some people never seem to consciously address the question and then find life's meaning in the context of their cultural milieu?

I can only speak from my experience and say that the faith tradition I follow "resonates" with this quality of soul I call faith.

What does this question of ultimate meaning have to do with our practice of Reiki? Simple. Since most of us experience the spiritual quality of Reiki, how we hold the question of ultimate purpose is the context in which we hold Reiki. Our deepest motivations, what we aspire to, how we understand and explain our experiences in Reiki, how we live a "purpose driven life," all come out of what we ultimately have faith in.

Who can learn and practice Reiki? Any human being who is willing. This creates an amazingly pluralistic community—young/old, male/female, multi-ethnic, crossing all socioeconomic and educational boundaries, all faith traditions and the absence thereof, all political affiliations, sexual orientations, and so on. What is our common language? Touch, healing touch. What is our common motivation? The desire to heal—self and others. What are our common beliefs? The dignity of each human being, a respect for all life, and the faith that healing is real and possible. What is our common practice? 1-2-3-4, 1-2-3-4...and the Principles.

Ah, the Principles. Do we have a common understanding of their importance, what they really mean, whether they are to be taken literally or whether we can interpret them, whether they are meant to be at the center of our practice or peripheral? I don't think we have a common understanding of their place in our personal lives and in our practice. It would be great if we did. I imagine if we all aspired to practice them with the same commitment, it would make an amazing difference in how we live together in our Reiki community.

I recently attended some teachings with the Dalai Lama. At one point, he talked about spiritual growth in general. He said that desire and prayer are not enough to change oneself. We

need to have clear aspirations every morning about how we want to live, and then take time in the evening before sleep to evaluate our progress that day. He suggests rejoicing in our successes and, where we failed, cultivating remorse and renewed determination. Determination is a big thing for him, to have determination.

In my own practice, I'm aware that this kind of personal reflection is essential to my living of the Principles. It was good to hear it again. Although I aspire to live the Principles, I have not yet developed the discipline he speaks of. I aspire to greater determination.

My hope is that we could all share this aspiration and determination to live the Principles every moment. I want us to be able to hold one another in our process and, at the same time, not support one another in worry, anger, lack of honor, dishonesty, and the absence of gratitude.

When we focus on personal development, we support the individual in feeling whatever they are feeling. We do not serve when we become interested in the stories that justify anger. Can we stop doing that? We can acknowledge anger and be uninterested in the reasons which are simply the individual's process. Let's be interested in the person not being angry as a community aspiration. If practicing contentment and gratitude were our aspirations we would work with our worries and dissatisfactions in our community in a new and exciting way.

I don't presume to have the answers here. I just feel with a strong communal aspiration and determination to live the Principles, we will be doing a beautiful thing in the world and in our own pluralistic community, which is only a reflection of our wider world.

Paul

A CALL TO PARTICIPATE FROM PHYLLIS

This letter was written to a childhood friend of mine who has just taken another degree from the John F Kennedy School of Government at Harvard in order to prepare herself for participating in the changes that she wished to see in the world. I visited her this last June. An important turning point for me in light of my knowing I was going to be in Australia during the election. I asked her about voting and if she had hope. She said that she had heard good things about Barack Obama and was hopeful that he would be elected. I then opened my mind to at least find out for myself how I felt and what I would do in the next weeks before the election.

Dear Ann,

In the wake of the presidential elections, I remember my question to you..."Should I vote?" As you know, this came from a feeling of "Will it make a difference?" and many other feelings buried in a kind of apathy that were bound to break open after our conversation. Thank you for this time in Boston! You made it possible for me to vote with heart and hope.

I have been in Australia since the beginning of September. Watching the campaign from overseas is always an interesting endeavor and this was certainly more than interesting. I read the papers everyday for the three weeks leading up to November 4. The Australians have a blunt way of writing about the politics of the United States and a wiry tongue-in-cheek kind of humor about politics in general. They themselves have just overturned a long standing government here with one that seems more in touch with being human.

When the election results came in, my first thought was "Well, now it is our turn to roll up our sleeves and work for the vision." The next thought was a question, "Could we/will we do it?" I saw Barack Obama had given us a vision that came from a completely different cosmology that has been worked through in the last decades in America. This place is the one that I hold and the one (unknowingly) I had began to question. Not only in the sense of America's political outlook but this questioning had permeated every facet of my life.

I have just read the Time Magazine's commemorative issue for the election. I had tears streaming down my face as I read my own opinions, thoughts, and beliefs about the last years written in this magazine. I know that these tears are not only of relief, but of assurance that my eyesight and my way of thinking are shared by others. I am touched that it may be possible to give it our best and to have faith that with this effort will come change so that all of us will be working with a vision that has our children's children in mind, that the earth's dignity may be restored, and our separatist stance in all aspects of our lives (many we are not aware of) will be brought to natural order of inter-dependence.

Your knowing that there must be people who are prepared to spearhead this change and your commitment to do your part is inspiring and puts substance behind the hope. Please know that I appreciate all you do. I hope that all of your classmates have support to do this work of regeneration, or perhaps it is generation....the generation of energy to steer the daily decisions towards supporting each other, supporting the planet's longevity, and supporting the people who feed us on all levels....not the corporations but the people!

Another chance, another change, another possibility. May we have the courage to step up with Barack Obama, whatever our political views are, and give it a go! Asking the question, "What is it I need to do?" I see this question pertinent in all aspects of life and certainly within my spiritual practice as well. This seems like an opportunity to apply what I have learned in these 30 years of practice with Reiki.

with gratitude for your being out there!

Phyllis

MORE NEWS. . .

WebSite 2008

Unfortunately, although great progress had been made on the website before the printing of the newsletter last year, this abruptly ended and the website has not been completed. We hope to resume work on it this year.

DataBase

Our dream was to have an updated database that would be on our new website. This has not happened because of the delay with the website. We have used the old database adding addresses and contacts that are recent through class membership lists and event participant lists. If your address has changed, please notify us in the "old way" by email or regular mail. Thank you. We appreciate Lori Sato-Edmunds for her work in making our database viable this year.

Phyllis and Paul

Phyllis has moved to Green Valley, AZ and Paul is still living in his home in Idaho. Their office, the OGM, is still located in Cataldo, Idaho and the address is still good. The phone number in the office is not answered regularly. The fax number is still operable and checked. (1-208-682-0567)

Internet Radio Show



www.7thwavenetwork.com Thursday at 1:00 pm PST in USA

This web site is an internet radio station. This show is the beginning for a larger vision of broadcasting live one day and two day events and filmed video shows as a way for our International community to connect through voice and perhaps one day through sight! Contact Renate Heimann for downloaded shows from the last 18 months of broadcast archives on CDs or MP3 format. (mail@rheimann.de)

Live Internet Video Broadcast: A One Day Event!

March, 2009

This one day event is being organized to the Reiki Community in South America. There will be Live Spanish interpretation. If your community needs interpretation, that during the Spanish interpretation time, a local interpreter can mute the sound and provide whatever language is appropriate. For more information contact Carlos Sanchez in Spanish or English.

carlos@usuishikiryoho.com.ar or Phyllis at theogm@earthlink.net.

EVENT DESCRIPTIONS

from Paul Mitchell

Living Our Spirituality in Reiki: A Retreat

How often do you step back from the demands of daily life to reconnect with your deepest sense of what life is really about for you? In this retreat, we intend to touch deeply the roots of our spirituality. How do we choose to work with the spirit that is ours, what is the call of our soul's journey? Using the healing, strengthening, and clarifying gifts we have in Reiki, the Principles, our early spiritual formation, the practice of Remembrance, and theme-guided silence, we will touch again the "ground of our being" and enter our lives renewed.

Much of this retreat will be in silence as it is often in the silence of the heart that God speaks. In silence we also come to see the working of our own mind and how it creates and impacts what we know as reality. If you have a fear of silence, this retreat may not be for you or, you may feel a call to walk through the fear. Each evening we have a "wisdom circle," a time to share what we have learned from the deepest part of our knowing.

The Four Aspects

Fifteen years ago, the four aspects of Usui Shiki Ryoho: Healing Practice, Personal Development, Spiritual Discipline, Mystic Order were articulated by Phyllis. We have reflected on these aspects, asked questions, looked at our own experience, and wondered what more there was to learn.

As often happens in our pluralistic community, things are said and then some time later we get around to defining our terms. We often just go with "getting the energy," living with

that, and then coming to a place of exploring how the words we use match or do not match our experience—and then our sharing, discussion, and understanding deepens.

The word "aspect" has a meaning that reflects both "to look at" and "the appearance, what shows to be seen". Interesting word in the light of modern physics which asserts that seeing and being seen is actually a process of exchanging subatomic particles. Both the one looking and what is seen walk away having exchanged pieces of one another.

Hawayo Takata told us that Reiki would teach us. We have all experienced this. What is Reiki teaching us in each of the aspects? How do they relate and interact, how do they affect me as a person, where are they leading me? If I become more conscious, does this support the process of my healing, growing, developing, understanding life and my place in it?

I am drawn to these questions and the exploration of the aspects. This year I am offering several workshops and retreats focused on the four aspects. We will practice together and clarify our shared experience. Our group intention to deepen, to learn more, to be taught by Reiki, and by one another, will bring us to a more integrated and dynamic living with the aspects. Using constellation work when appropriate we will explore some of the hidden principles of the aspects.

The "Four Aspect Workshop" in the Netherlands will be co-facilitated with Dr. Rainer Stephan. Rainer is a long time friend, mentor, Reiki student, and translator for my Reiki classes in his area. I look forward to our working together in this event. I know that each of us will come away

more deeply connected to ourselves, Reiki, and the mystery of the practice we share.

The retreat, "Healing through the Four Aspects and Family Constellation" will be co-facilitated with Timothy Cunningham. Timothy has worked extensively with Family Constellation both in personal work and in exploring natural order in the broader elements of our lives. Being held by our practice of Reiki in its Four Aspects will lead us to deeper healing and understanding of our place in the world.

Way of Harmony

I first started studying Aikido in 1979, the year after I learned Reiki. In the early 1980's, Phyllis asked me to share Aikido with the Reiki community, first at a Reiki Alliance conference and then in the Self-Assessment workshops. It is now over twenty years that I have been teaching Aikido in the Reiki community.

How do I understand the integration of Reiki and Aikido? I will have to speak personally. I first began the study of Aikido to satisfy a life-long yearning to learn a self-defense art. I see now that the motivation came from fear. I never wanted to hurt anyone, but I also didn't want to be hurt and I felt incapable of defending myself. I wanted to fix that, and so I began my study. What Aikido has given me has gone way beyond the issue of fear.

When I am feeling confused or in conflict about something, when I am feeling unsafe in some way and I get a Reiki treatment, I am often transported to a place of calm and safety, to a place of knowing that everything is okay.

MONEY MONEY MONEY! FROM PAUL

The substance and nature of money itself and the element of money in Usui Shiki Ryoho has been bubbling for years within the community and is boiling over at the moment. It's a perfect time for more exploration. Phyllis is doing a great job in challenging the community to engage in some open and serious dialogue. I would like to do the same by sharing some of my reflections.

In any discussion of money in the community, I often hear two statements: money is energy, and we need to get over our poverty consciousness. I have to say that, at this point, these two statements drive me a bit nuts. They seem to have taken on the energy of sound bites. I honestly don't know what they mean, or what the intended meaning is. What I am sure of is that there are critical assumptions that stand behind them, and we don't know what those critical assumptions are. It's time to look at those assumptions and see how varied our understanding of money is and what that understanding is based on.

Money is energy. True, but how are we defining energy? Do we mean like fossil fuel is energy or like solar energy or like Reiki energy? Fossil fuel is limited and needs to be used judiciously and fairly, solar energy is finite too, but will go on much longer, can cause great harm, stimulates abundant life, and has an amazing mythical power for mankind. Reiki energy is limitless, as far as we know, and yet has it's own way of manifesting, bringing comfort, peace, upset, reaction, change in condition in one person and no change in the same condition in another person. So what is it we mean when we say money is energy, or perhaps more importantly, what are we not saying?

What about this idea of poverty consciousness? People say The Reiki Alliance needs to get over its poverty consciousness. I think we need to explore the concept of "relative poverty." Is a person poor by comparison to what others have or is one truly poor when one doesn't have enough to eat to sustain human life? Does one have poverty consciousness when one *feels* restricted in some way because the bank account is limited?

Over the years my standard of living has improved. Was I poor before or was I fine before? Will I feel poor if my standard of living drops to what it was before? Does someone have poverty consciousness if they live within a budget and make choices about what they can and cannot do for financial reasons? Is there a poverty gauge so I can see if I have that consciousness? Do we have an expectation that if we don't have poverty consciousness, we can manifest anything we want? Is that seen as a measure of spiritual development?

For myself, I need to have the discussion in a larger context, not just from the viewpoint of the little world I see but from the perspective of the wider world I live in. Several years ago, I heard someone say that every day forty thousand children die of starvation or starvation-related illness. Recently, I came across that statistic again. This time it was thirty-eight thousand children dying each day. If my arithmetic is correct, that means a child dies of starvation every 2.2 seconds. I think about this every day. I can't explore the question of money in any context that excludes this second-by-second reality of our world.

If poverty consciousness is the idea that we do not have enough, that I can understand. In that case, it would be useful to change that perception, decide that what we have is enough, and work within that frame. If it means instead that we should have anything we want, I don't know that I agree.

I am confused by the fact that we often seem to feel we don't have enough, and we keep trying to figure out how we can have more. What if we focus on practicing contentment with what we have and graciously moving within those boundaries?

One of the points of discussion at the moment is the cost of Reiki training—First Degree, Second Degree, and Master level. Some people feel the prices are too low, which is a shift from the old feeling that they were too high. The discussion is sometimes framed as a concern that we are changing the system. We need to look at this and some of our perceptions. We may have the archival material to trace the prices Hawayo Takata asked for Reiki between 1937 and 1980. Was it the same the whole time? If not, did changing the price change the system in some essential way?

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ULURU, A TEACHING AND TEACHER. . . FROM PHYLLIS



I arrived in Yulara, the Resort area near Uluru, the place that was referred to as Ayers Rock by non-aboriginal people, on a beautiful Monday morning. The arrival at the hotel was anti-climatic as my room was not ready and so I needed to wait for three hours. I spent this time wandering around the Resort. Finally the room was ready, I was exhausted, and basically slept for the rest of the day and night.

Awaking at 4 in the morning, I gathered myself to go to the Rock. I had all my camera gear and was bundled up against the chilly air of the early morning desert. On the bus with 50 some people, I rode out to the viewing area which seemed much like viewing something that was in a cage; all of us milling around waiting for the perfect photo. I think I took about 60 photos in an hour! Afterwards, I did not have one worth saving! I was a tourist!

After another 3 hours of touring with a few people on the bus, I realized that I needed to rent a car and be on my own. I wanted to drive out into the landscape. As luck would have it, I found the last rental car in the area and went touring on my own to the nearby "Olgas" or Kata Tjuta for the Arnangu (the word for the Western Desert People in their own language). This was better but still there was a big missing piece. Was I not getting the spirit of the place? What was my next step? Why had I not had a magical experience?

The next day I decided to drive for three hours each way to King's Canyon. The drive was superb and the landscape was magnificent! Such color and texture! No telephone lines, only three towers for something (not for cell phones!), no houses, and little rubbish on the side of the road. What a relief! Arriving at King's Canyon, I picked out my walk down along the river bed with fabulous white gum trees and amazingly huge boulders that split off from the edges of the canyon rim. I was able to sit on a rock, feel the earth, and rest with the nature spirits there.

As I drove back towards the Uluru, I first saw the Kata Tjuta peeking their heads above the sand hills and desert oaks. Then Uluru appeared in front of me! For the next 70 kilometers I had glimpses of Uluru first to the left, then in front, and then to the right. My perception was that the road was straight....so how could such a magnificent rock, a monolith deeply embedded in the earth, seem to move from side to side and disappear into the earth, reappearing in a different place on the horizon?

Immediately, I had the image of a great magnificent living being that moved and was illusive while at the same time visible, much like the great whales in the ocean. The red-orange sand hills contrasted with the florescent deep pink of the surface coating of Uluru, each earth color became more vibrant in contrast with another. The grey-green of the desert oaks, the sandy yellow of the dried grasses, the rich green of the low bush, and the deep endless blue of the unbroken sky created this pulsating palate of life. How could I have thought that the center of Australia would be flat, lifeless, and still? What a misconception!

Then I realized that the morning before, the rock was a rock....standing there perhaps patient and willing to be a photographic study. Now it was a being known as Uluru, with its teachings etched on its surface like the deep contours of an elder's face. In their cosmology, the Arnangu believe that the earth was made formless, without texture. The formations, cracks, discoloration, and characteristic shapes within the Uluru were made through the actions of the spirits of the earth that left the marks to teach the Arnangu how to live with each other.

The contrast of my feelings on the first day and then two days later were like night and day. I left the center of Australia full of impressions and unfinished insights that are still working within me. I would like to share what I have now with you as they pertain to our practice and understanding of what we are holding as human beings.

Humans can objectify someone or something. This means treating something that is living and developing as an object which is still and unmoving. This has happened with the teaching and practice of Reiki among other things/beings. My experience with Uluru gave me a clear experience of how this happens easily. Tourism is usually an objectifying way to be in relationship to anything. I remember when I used to talk about spiritual tourism, a way that people wander through different spiritual practices without commitment to the actual practice, making the practice an object to enjoy rather than to take into oneself as a part of life.

I see how stultifying it can be and how easily it can happen if one is not conscious. I fell into this place of objectifying Uluru and realized this while I was still there! I was lucky! I was able to make my amends to Uluru. How many times have I objectified a person? A practice? A teaching? The exploration of these questions was insightful.

The teachings can become the goal, the object of our desire. Perhaps one of the goals or objects is being a master. Who really is the teacher? It is the elusive Reiki, the energy that can be a thing or that can be a living entity that shows itself to those who look. I am looking at my own practice to see the places where I might be objectifying and the places in which I live the practice.

This a part of my teaching from this living being, Uluru, and its magic of being. I have received enormous energy and impetus from my time in central Australia. May I keep the aliveness going for our next generations of students and for myself!

from a grateful heart, Phyllis



Kata Tjura early morning.



Money Money Money. . . continued from page 11

When I met Takata Sensei, she was traveling and teaching and charging \$125 for First Degree. Phyllis has said that sometimes her grandmother charged \$150 when she traveled. In the 1980s, I followed Phyllis' lead and began consistently charging \$150. My experience is that we increased the price for First Degree. Did we change anything essential to the system? I feel we remained committed to honoring the importance of exchange.

Reflecting on the current financial situation in the world, I see that we are at a point of great challenge and great opportunity. We each make decisions almost daily about money. How do we find our balance in relationship to this human creation we call money that so impacts our lives? I feel our Reiki practice invites us to a whole other level of challenge and gift as money is an element of our practice, bridging the absolute and the relative worlds.

At a recent board meeting, we took time to share what we each thought we knew about money, and how we believed it worked based on our experience. It was an open and non-judgmental conversation and our experience and views were varied. It was lovely. This quality of sharing feels essential to me if we are to be led to a deeper understanding on which to base our decisions about money in our community.