

What's in a Word...or Tracking Our Recent Reiki History through Key Words

I restate the obvious, the world of Reiki teaching and practice has expanded and changed amazingly over the past several years. A significant number of Masters have had as a value the faithful practice and teaching of what they received. Notably, Phyllis Furumoto as Mrs. Takata's successor, and the greater number of Mrs. Takata's other masters.

The value of preservation, faithful practice is shared by many. When I think of Mrs. Takata's teaching, two things come first to mind: Do it this way, and Reiki will teach you. She was saying loud and clear, "**Do it this way!**" She demanded that you did. She corrected you when you didn't. There was some flexibility and she defined the limits. She also taught that "Reiki will teach you". We all experience the truth of this, Reiki teaches us about us, life, healing. The faithful practice of "Doing it this way" is the predictable, reliable form through which Reiki teaches us in this discipline. This is also clear, the practice is a discipline.

In 1992 the call was heard in the master community: **Define, delineate the Usui System.** Powerful words: define, delineate, verbalize. The call came as a natural and predictable response to confusion, to looking out in the world and seeing the word Reiki and seeing so many variations carrying the same name. Are they the same? Do they do the same thing? There was a system, is there still? What defines the system?

The response is natural. When Mrs. Takata taught there were few words, few questions, lots of embodiment. She brought over 40 years of practice to her teaching. When you are in the presence of that kind of discipline, dedication, experience, embodiment, then you

understand. If you haven't had that experience, then all you have is description, explanation, words. She not only said, "Do it this way.", she exuded it from her being. Most of her masters lived faithful practice and teaching of the form without even consciously thinking, "I must do it this way", it was automatic.

After her death, her masters were left with their personal experience, the sense they carried of their master, and her words. Everyone does their best, the embodiment that comes with time only comes with time. As masters were initiated by masters with less and less experience in an environment of greater and greater personal freedom, things began to change more and more. At a certain point the call to **define** the system is inevitable, necessary.

Arguing about who has the right and authority to define the Usui System is also inevitable. All the feelings, struggles, fears, paradox that we carry as humans surfaces and we have lots of fun, often in the form of very serious, heart wrenching debate.

Mrs. Takata had the authority to define the system. I am clear that her successor, Phyllis Furumoto inherited that authority. We can use the term successor, Grandmaster, Lineage Bearer, we can talk in terms of Spiritual Lineage. We are doing our best to put a name to a very common phenomena in healing and spiritual practices, especially those that come out of the East, succession. Succession is about "passing on something", a legacy, a responsibility, role, duties, connection. It is a part of an inbuilt structure to insure the carrying on of the essential integrity and spirit of a practice. The role is a part of the form. It is historical practice.

At the time the call for definition came from the community, another event was in process. I recognized my role of holding a part of, contributing to this role of caring for the system. What was essential for me for the validity of my "knowing" was that it be seen and

recognized by Phyllis, it had to be, and it was. At the time that the call for definition came, I was there to respond with Phyllis to do the needed work.

Once the definition is there, the next step is relationship to that definition. The word **alignment** becomes part of our history. Our own unique and individual relationship to Mrs. Takata's teaching "Do it this way", ...but, but...I learned this! Why are you changing the system? How could my master have betrayed me? This works. My master was trained by _____! Who does Phyllis/Paul think she/they is/are? Natural, predictable responses.

The call to alignment with the form of the Usui System as defined is a process that each of us is in. For some, the process is to reject it, to go their own way. For others, the value of faithful practice to the system as it was carried from Japan to the western world and taught by Mrs. Takata is the value. We come to understand that each of us received this practice from our teacher as **the** practice, and because of human communication the practices look different. At some point we are just able to accept this and then our heart opens to the process of alignment.

The process involves education, information, exploration, letting go, time, timing. It is a sacred process because we have a sacred practice. It must be done with mindfulness, respect, tolerance, love.

What is it that we value here, what is it that we hope to come to? **Common practice.** Phyllis has said many times and it was true for me also that when Mrs. Takata's masters came together for the first time we sat in a group that had common practice. That is no longer true of circles of Reiki Masters. Common practice is a value to many of us. That is why we are in this process. It is for us personally and it is for the system we treasure. Common practice is a value because we understand that in our system, the discipline of "do it this way" is

an essential and necessary part of our practice. It doesn't mean that we lose our freedom, that we don't have choice, that we won't need to do our own exploration and learning, it means that there is a place to come back to, a center, a core, a still-point. From history and from our hearts, many of us know this is true. It is also true that some part of us will always struggle against the discipline of it, the letting go called for, the surrender. Any good student will struggle with these things, it is the sand that polishes our spirits.

Licensing is about acknowledgment and permission. When one is licensed in something, there is the implied acknowledgment of preparation, knowledge, power. There is the permission to use something, a trademark, a distinguishing sign, a symbol of belonging.

Phyllis could choose to license masters to use a specific trademarked logo that would acknowledge those masters as having come to a certain level of alignment with the defined system. It could mean that they have reached and are committed to a form of common practice. It could be a distinguishing mark. At the moment it will not happen. It has been put to rest. It was one possible way of manifestation of what we are trying to do in the world. It is one that will not be tried at this time.

Licensing is a powerful word. All these words that are in bold type are powerful. They have been a part of and have shaped a bit of our history these past years. I see the emergence of these words of power as a natural and inevitable progression in our lives in this practice. Natural because of our humanness, inevitable because of history. I do not feel belittled by this, I do not feel that we (I) have not evolved enough. I want to hold myself, you, all who use the word and do some practice called Reiki with great compassion. We all do our best with as much wisdom, understanding, insight, and good intention as we can.

I see my best at times doesn't have the desired or intended outcome. Looking back I can often see how with a little more understanding and insight I might have acted differently. I can have judgments about my actions and intentions and those of others (especially those of others).

When I am quiet and have gone beyond or through my emotions, when I am mindful of the principles, then I see that I must just trust the process. It is just the process of life and that is all there is. I wish to learn. I wish to learn greater compassion. I wish always to do my best, for me, for others, for my precious system of healing. I know the same is true for you.

I invite us to move together toward a common practice. Phyllis and I and many others will do our best to make this process as clear as we can. We will not be perfect, we will be ourselves. That you can always trust as I can trust in you. There is definite movement in these words: definition, alignment, common practice. It is the only direction I can move from my heart, and so it is what I choose.