

Notes from meeting of the Reiki Association Council at Oak Barn Shropshire on 18 - 20 July 2009

Who was there: Kristin Bonney, Paul Dennis, Kate Jones, Jan Robinson, Harry Thompson

Apologies from: Julia Hathaway

Intention

On our first evening we discussed our intentions for the time together and made a list of things we felt we needed to discuss before the end of the weekend.

Visioning

The second day was devoted to getting some clarity about the future of the Association: what is being called for now, what issues may still be around, our vision for the future.

We sent distant Reiki treatment to the following focus: "How do we find the community expression Reiki is asking of us now" which was drawn from an article in the last issue of Touch by Phyllis Furumoto. We then shared and discussed the results. We agreed that Kristin and Kate should write up their insights gained through the distant treatment for publication in Touch.

Following on from this we agreed that the Association carries a particular quality and the following words were found to describe this:

Communication  Community  Communion

Honesty, Tolerance, Reiki, Change, Nurturing, Listening, Trust, Responsibility, Inspiration, Clarity, Honour, Stillness, Connection, Innovation, Will, Love, Courage, Consciousness, Resonance

There was also recognition that there are things that are past and this is now, a chance for a new way of being for the Association (That was Then, This is Now).

We also did a meditation from Heart of Business inviting us to bow to the heart of the Association. This gave some insight into the Association as a being in its own right that not only requires our support, but can also support us. Some of the group had a sense of all being well and solidity in the Association.

The feedback received from members via the survey helped to inform the discussion and helped to confirm or otherwise some of the assumptions made previously.

One response from members seemed to be that they value the Association as a place that holds Usui Shiki Ryoho at its core. We therefore agreed that to hold this focus clearly in what the Association is and does, not in a defensive way, as was perhaps the case in the past, but quietly and clearly.

Towards the end of the day the Council looked through some old document archives and decided what did not need to be kept any more. The day closed with a big bonfire of old papers. Around this fire each Council member spoke of something to release for the Association and also a wish for the future.

On the final day there was a clear feeling that it was time to get down to business, so an agenda was set and the items discussed. When discussion became heated or confused, Reiki was used to bring back the focus.

The Basket

During the 'visioning' day the image of the Association being like a basket arose. There was a large and beautiful basket hanging on the wall of the Oak Barn and constant reference was made to this. The basket was seen as a thing that is open, so things can move in and out of it. It is something that can hold many distinct things, like apples. It can support and gives definition, but does not restrain. It is made up of many strands. There is a centre to it but unlike the hub of a wheel the strands pass through it.

There was also resonance with the idea that Council channels Reiki for the Association, just as we as individuals channel Reiki for those we treat.

Weavers

Progress has been made towards setting up facilities for an online community and connection via e-mail. There was a strong feeling that it was important to set up some similar community building projects for those not wishing to use computers. There was therefore discussion of setting up regional groups where information available to those using the online facilities could also be shared. This grew into a bigger picture of ways of facilitating connection in person and via phone with key people in local areas helping others to make connections. We agreed that these local groups would need to be self funding (anticipated expenses would be for phone, stamps etc). It was felt they could raise any funds needed by holding an event (e.g. Reiki tea party). Some concerns were raised about the appropriate use of funds, but in the spirit of trust we agreed that there would not be a problem. There was a proposal to have 9 regions and a person or persons to help the different areas to connect with each other. There was then a 'heart-storming' session to find a word for the people representing the different areas and the word 'weavers' was found. This also suggested that there is no need for regions, simply people who can actively foster community and connection in their area and connect areas with each other. We agreed that there needs to be a person or small group to help these 'weavers' connect with each other and to pass information out, such as who is in the local area or who has just joined. Some specific suggestions of people who could do this were made and we agreed to contact them. We also agreed to put an invitation in Touch for people to come forwards as Weavers.

We also agreed that Kristin and Jan would draw up the vision for the Weavers in more detail, so that it will be clear what is needed in issuing the invitation to take up this role. It was noted that the online facilities will also help to foster this community. There was concern about people making use of the connections to 'sell' and we agreed that the expectation will be that it is about sharing not selling.

In Person Initiation

It had been pointed out that there was a lack of consistency between some documents about the requirement that members of the Reiki Association have received an in person initiation. This led to a discussion about this issue as one member of Council feels that the Association should be open to those not initiated in person as well. After some discussion we agreed that in person initiation is at present the boundary of the Association. It was acknowledged that this may change at some future time, but is what feels appropriate at present. We therefore agreed to ensure all documents and any statements on the website are congruent.

Council Expenses

We agreed that Council members could receive up to £10 per day in expenses towards food.

Mileage was agreed at the rate of 30p per mile up to 200 miles, 15p per mile over this - to apply to all volunteers.

We agree that the principle is that the cost of fuel is covered, so should it be more than this it should be paid for, providing a receipt is produced.

We also agreed that reasonable out of pocket expenses for phone calls, printer ink, paper etc could also be claimed for.

There was a common commitment to costing TRA as little as possible without compromise on quality.

Next Meetings

We agreed that the next meetings would be:

London 16th and 17th September

Cornwall 13 - 16 November

Jan kindly offered her homes as venues for these meetings.

Survey

Kate was thanked and congratulated for the survey, which had given reassurance of member's interest and support. We felt that it had been a good response (around 18%). We agreed that a report should be written for Touch.

Touch allocation of membership fee

We agreed that £15 of the membership fee should be allocated for Touch. The subscription of non-members was discussed and we agreed this should be dropped to £20. The balance of the £15 to go to TRA to cover admin costs, unless the Touch team wish to keep the database of subscribers up to date themselves, in which case they should received the whole amount. We agreed that all monies from the Association would need to be accounted for.

The relationship between Touch and the Association was discussed. The idea of having a separate insert from Council came up and was agreed if this seems necessary in future. This would leave Lucinda free to develop Touch as a magazine along the lines of RMI and avoid conflict about how many pages need to be allocated to Council business. We suggested the insert would go to members only.

Social Engine

This is a new piece of software that has recently been purchased by the Association which will enable us to build a members area on the website. This will enable us to offer members their own profiles, forums and other ways of connecting with each other. There is also the possibility of having public profiles for which members would pay extra and which could perhaps be a solution to the question of masters and practitioner lists. Members could include information about teaching and treatments in their profiles, leaving the public to make a choice based on the information given.

Brian is doing well getting this into action it was reported. Gratitude was expressed for the fact that he had done so much research to find this solution and we agreed to give him a small gift in addition to the £500 fee that had been agreed.

Public Documents/Sonia

Sonia had pointed out several changes that needed to be made to TRA documents she is sending out to the public. We agreed that these would be made with Kristin's help.

The question of only having a mobile contact number was raised: it was felt this might put some people off. We therefore agreed that if Sonia is in agreement she should have a landline installed on a low cost tariff.

We agreed that Sonia has a great talent for taking minutes and that she should be asked to take them for the AGM again.

We agreed that Sonia's great dedication and commitment needs to be acknowledged so we agreed to find a way of thanking her.

Merchandising

Harry said he is willing to continue and other recordings that could be added to the list of those sold already were discussed. Thanks were expressed to Harry for his willingness to hold this.

Administration

There was discussion about John's recent health problems and how we can support him. We thought that it may be helpful for him to be able to delegate most of the e-mail communication to someone else, so agreed that another person should be found who could handle routine e-mail enquiries, allowing John to get on with the things that are his particular area of expertise. We agreed to continue to support and enable John as far as is possible, while also keeping the needs for flow in the Association in mind.

Practitioner List

There had been clear support from the survey for a practitioner list. The idea of including this as part of the members profile on the public area was discussed. However given the limits of time we agreed that this needs to be discussed in greater depth at another time. It was, however, seen as a high priority for discussion. The possibility of asking DPN to take on the project was suggested. Paul expressed his support for whatever form the practitioner support might take (having previously been strongly opposed to some suggestions).

Scanning of RMI

Paul had found a firm who would scan pages at 10p per copy colour, 5p a copy black & white, minimum order £1,000. As agreement for scanning of RMI had been received from Rolf and Li-Li (subject to author's agreement), Paul had proposed that all the RMI magazines be scanned. After discussion we agreed not to go ahead with this at the moment, but to let Rolf and Li-Li know of the possibility. Paul was thanked for his research.

AGM Weekend

We agreed that this would be a 'visioning and retreat' weekend around the AGM. It was seen as offering groups the opportunity to share and a deepening of community. We agreed to use fresh language and include Reiki treatments. We agreed that the AGM would not be squashed, but would be as brief as possible. We agreed that there would be plenty of opportunity to discuss any new proposals regarding the documents/legal status.

We agreed it would be an opportunity for the Weavers to have meetings to 'heart-storm'.

We agreed to have a travel fund included in the fee to enable those travelling from further away to attend. We also agreed to keep costs low and that Council members would not have to pay.

We agreed (after some discussion) that there would be no bazaar, but that there could be a table for information leaflets.

We agreed that if Narinder agrees to do bookings, Milly should still be asked to be on the team.

We agreed that Council will meet in Birmingham (at Harborne Hall if possible) the day before the weekend.

Charitable Status

We agreed that we are in favour of the Association becoming a charity if this is possible. We agreed to ask Ian Jarvis and John Nye to help Kate explore this in more detail. Ian's carefully researched report into various legal structures was appreciated and we agreed to thank him.

Next stop: the world?

To the amusement of the rest of Council Kate revealed that she was wearing an Obamah t-shirt saying: 'We can change this country, we can change the world'. Paul shared his vision that in the future members of Council will visit other countries to talk about how we have made changes to the Reiki Association. We noted that the Association is often pioneering in the international Reiki community.

KJ.17.8.09 v2