



Illustration by Gaia Orion



Coming Back to Reiki

BY ANITTA JENSEN

I DIDN'T KNOW what to expect when I took my first Reiki class in 2015. My life was in transition. My husband and I had both left our jobs to chase what we thought was our dream—managing a lodge where we could live a simpler, more nature-immersed lifestyle, homeschooling our boys, and slowing down. But it didn't work out, and we were both without work and a plan. My mind was spinning. *Oh no, what now?* I kept thinking—*How do we make this work? How do I get through this?*

Years in the corporate grind had left me feeling exhausted and stretched thin. I was working nonstop, barely seeing my kids, and running on empty in every sense of the word. My body was crying out for attention because I was not eating right or caring for myself. I now understand that it's not that I didn't choose to pay attention to what was happening in my life—it's that I didn't know *how* to pay attention. My knees were in so much pain that sometimes, just bending them to get out of bed or into the car would bring me to tears. I'd wake up thinking, *Okay, here we go again*, and honestly, I didn't know how much longer I could keep pushing.

I wasn't necessarily thinking, "Oh, Reiki is going to cure this." But Reiki kept appearing in my life. I'd experienced it before, nestled within another modality called Body Talk, and

something about it had stuck with me. Trying to figure out what came next, Reiki came to mind more than once. It wasn't something I'd been yearning to try, but I knew it was the right time. So, I threw it out there to the Universe: *Okay, Universe, if I'm meant to take Reiki training, this is my one free weekend, and here's my budget.* Sure enough, one spot was left, and I went for it.

My message for anyone feeling disconnected from their practice is this: You don't have to have it all figured out. Reiki will be there, waiting, ready to support you, even in the smallest moments.

Reiki was more like a slow, quiet presence that made me feel more at ease with each step. I didn't always know if it was helping, but I kept showing up. Something calming about it made me feel connected to myself in a way I hadn't felt before.

Over time, I found a rhythm, a steady practice that I relied on. It wasn't perfect—I didn't even practice every

day, which I was so hard on myself for. But it kept me grounded. Reiki became part of my life, something I could lean on, and by 2017, I felt steady enough in my practice to share it with others. And wow—this is where I found my calling. There's just something about sharing the things that have helped me in my life with others; it lights me up in a way that's hard to describe. When I'm part of a group and teaching, my whole being shows up enthusiastically. I am so grateful to be a teacher. It's really where my passion lies. Helping others discover their path with Reiki is the heart of it for me.

Then It Felt Like Life Took Me Away from Reiki

My son started going through some intense struggles, brain health struggles, hospital stays, sleepless nights, manic days, and a diagnosis of "schizoaffective disorder, bipolar type." This is a mental health condition that combines symptoms of schizophrenia, such as hallucinations and delusions, with mood disorder symptoms, including episodes of mania and depression. Treatment typically involves a combination of medications and therapy to manage symptoms effectively.¹

I plunged into a world I knew very little about, filled with complexities, unknowns, and a constant feeling of holding my breath. I kept thinking, *Wow, he's having a spiritual awakening!*

We can get through this. Little did I know. My complete attention turned to helping my son with everyday tasks and learning to cope with the challenges of his anosognosia—a condition where the brain fails to recognize other health problems—and the daily stress it causes.² My Reiki practice, this grounding force I'd so proudly built up, started to slip away. I was so exhausted, stretched to my limit, and the last thing on my mind was keeping up with any routines. I let it go because getting through each day was my only priority.

As Reiki slipped away, I felt everything I'd once worked through flooding back. The physical pain returned, especially in my knees. Old self-doubt and low self-esteem crept back in, hitting me hard. And the strangest part? It's like I didn't know what was happening. I didn't even realize I'd let go of my self-care routines—Reiki, meditation, walks, the little things that had become so essential. It was like they'd just vanished, *poof*, without me even noticing. One day, they were there, and the next, they were gone.

As our family worked through this new way of living with my son's illness, small moments peeked through—more opportunities to let go and not stress out. That's when the tiny glimpse of Reiki reappeared. Sometimes, I'd pause momentarily, recite the precepts, place my hand over my heart, and take a deep breath. In those moments, I'd feel a flicker of warmth. Oh, how I needed this reminder that Reiki was still there! It was quietly waiting for me. It felt like a whisper saying, *I'm here whenever you're ready.*

These brief moments taught me that Reiki demands nothing from me. It isn't about control or making

everything magically better. Instead, it reminded me how much I valued even the slightest relief—a smidge, a pinch, just enough to feel a little lighter. In those hard times, I was deeply grateful for even that. Of course, I wanted everything to be okay for my son to heal. But I was also learning to surrender to my emotions, and in doing so, I noticed small moments of wholeness. They showed up all over again and, in a sense, in a brand-new way, guiding me through, one breath at a time.

Surrender Became My Mantra

And so, I continue to walk this path, invisibly holding my son's hand, our family's hand, with love and compassion—not only for him but for myself, my emotions, my feelings, and my reactions. We're taking the ups and downs as they come—but also celebrating the good times, and yes, there are good times. I'm getting better at not overly identifying with the intensity of his illness or the intensity of this experience. Instead, I'm finding a steadier rhythm, allowing myself to take each day as it comes.

Reiki has become a quiet companion, not something with a strict routine or structure, but a presence I can lean into whenever needed. It reminds me I don't have to control everything; I need to keep showing up and holding space for whatever each day brings.

Since then, my relationship with Reiki has changed somewhat, although many parts remain the same. It reminds me to be kind to myself and find peace in everyday moments. Some days, that means a few seconds of stillness; other days, it means letting go of expectations entirely. Reiki isn't a perfect solution, but it's a path

that grows with me, even when the way isn't clear.

Looking back, I'm grateful for how Reiki has helped me stay connected to myself, even when life felt unraveling. It's shown me that healing isn't a straight line or a single destination. It's a journey that keeps unfolding, teaching, and holding space for life's beautiful as well as the messy parts.

My message for anyone feeling disconnected from their practice is this: You don't have to have it all figured out. Reiki will be there, waiting, ready to support you, even in the smallest moments. Life doesn't have to be perfect, and neither does healing. Reiki has helped me find a home within myself that stays with me through every up, down, and in-between. And for me, that's enough. ■



Anitta began teaching Reiki in 2017 and became a Holy Fire® III Reiki Master in 2023. She also teaches meditation. A crystal enthusiast, Anitta

shares her passion and knowledge with warmth and compassion, offering creative jewelry-making workshops that explore mind-body practices and end with a guided meditation infused with Reiki and the blessing of singing bowls. You can learn more about Anitta's offerings through her website, www.serendipitywellness.org.

Endnotes

¹ "Schizoaffective Disorder," *Wikipedia*, December 27, 2024, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schizoaffective_disorder.

² "Anosognosia: What It Is, Causes, Symptoms and Treatment," *Cleveland Clinic*, December 19, 2024, <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/22832-anosognosia>.