

靈氣

Reiki Practices

A guide for self-practice — gassho, hatsurei-ho, kenkyoku and more.

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Self-Practice

The simplest and most common way to keep Reiki in daily life — a short session given to yourself, with your own hands.

Self-practice (自己療法) is Reiki given to yourself. It asks for no partner, no equipment, and no special place — only a few quiet minutes and your own two hands — which is why it is the most common way people keep a daily rhythm.

Reiki for yourself

The idea is the same as treating another person: the hands rest lightly, moving slowly through a set of positions, while you breathe and relax. Many people practice in bed, morning or night, and some drift toward sleep — that is perfectly fine.

A simple routine

A short self-session might move like this:

1 Settle

Sit or lie down comfortably and take a few slow breaths in gassho.

2 Head & face

Rest the hands gently over the eyes, then the back of the head.

3 Heart & belly

Move to the chest, then the stomach, staying a few minutes at each.

4 Close

Return the hands to the heart, thank yourself, and rest a moment.

Keeping it steady

Consistency matters more than length. Even ten minutes a day, anchored to a fixed time and often paired with the five principles, does more to deepen the practice than an occasional long session. Let it be easy, and let it be yours.

The heart of the practice

It is easy to think of Reiki as something done to other people, but for most practitioners the daily centre of it is self-practice. It asks for no partner, no appointment, and no particular occasion — only the willingness to give yourself a little quiet attention.

Paired with the five principles, a short self-session becomes a small daily ritual: a few minutes to settle, to set down the day's worries, and to return to something steady. Kept up over months, this ordinary habit tends to matter far more than any single dramatic experience.

A Daily Practice Routine

A simple daily rhythm to keep Reiki a living, everyday part of life.

Reiki tends to give the most when it becomes ordinary – a small, steady thread running through the day rather than a special event. A simple routine is how that happens.

Why a routine

A regular rhythm keeps the practice alive between sessions and classes. It need not be long or elaborate; even a few minutes, returned to each day, builds a quiet familiarity that a single long session never quite matches. The value is in the repetition.

A sample day

One gentle rhythm might look like this – adapt it freely to your own life:

1 On waking

Sit for a moment in gassho and quietly recall the five principles: just for today.

2 Morning

A few rounds of Joshin Kokyu-ho breathing, or a short Hatsurei-ho, to centre the day.

3 A pause

At some point, rest your hands on yourself for a few minutes – heart, belly, wherever feels needed.

4 Evening

A short self-treatment in bed to unwind, letting the day's worries settle.

5 Before sleep

Close with gratitude, offering thanks for the day as it was.

Keeping it light

The aim is ease, not discipline for its own sake. Some days you will do all of this; many days you will do one small part, and that is entirely enough. A routine held gently lasts far longer than one held strictly.

JUST FOR TODAY

If the whole routine feels like too much, keep only the first step. A single quiet minute each morning is a practice worth having.

Gassho

The posture of the palms held together at the heart – used to open and close practice, and as a simple meditation in its own right.

Gassho (合掌) means "palms together." The two hands are joined lightly in front of the chest, fingers pointing upward – a gesture of respect and gathering found throughout Japanese practice.

The posture

Sit comfortably with a straight but relaxed back. Bring the palms together at the level of the heart, with the fingertips at about the height of the nose and the elbows softly away from the body. Let the shoulders drop and the breath settle. The touch between the hands is gentle – enough to feel, not to press.

Gassho meditation

Held on its own, gassho becomes a short meditation. Rest your attention on the point where the two middle fingers meet and follow the breath. When the mind wanders, simply return to that point. A few minutes morning and evening is a traditional way to steady the practice.

"Focus the mind at the point where the two middle fingers meet, and breathe."

In a session

Gassho marks the beginning and end of most Reiki sessions. Practitioners pause in the posture to settle and set an intention before placing the hands, and return to it at the close as a small gesture of gratitude. It is also the posture in which the five principles are traditionally recited.

A posture of humility

Beyond its practical use, gassho carries a quiet meaning. Bringing the palms together is, across much of Asia, a gesture of respect and of setting the self aside – an acknowledgement that the practitioner is not the source of anything, only a willing pair of hands.

Held for even a few breaths, it marks a shift out of ordinary busyness and into attention. Many practitioners find that this small act of composure, repeated daily, does as much to shape their practice as any technique.

Hatsurei-ho

A traditional Japanese routine for cleansing and strengthening one's own energy – a sequence of breathing and hand movements done as daily self-practice.

Hatsurei-ho (発靈法) is a self-practice for cultivating and clearing one's own energy. It gathers several small techniques – gassho, dry bathing, and focused breathing – into a single daily routine taught in many Japanese lineages.

What it is

Rather than treating another person, Hatsurei-ho is turned inward. The aim is to settle the mind, clear away what the tradition calls stale energy, and strengthen the practitioner's own sensitivity and calm. It is often done once a day, and takes only ten or fifteen minutes.

The sequence

The order varies a little between teachers, but a common form runs like this:

1 Gassho

Sit and bring the palms together at the chest to settle and focus.

2 Kenyoku

"Dry bathing" – brushing the hands across the torso and arms to clear.

3 Connect

Raise the hands and let the sense of energy build, breathing gently.

4 Joshin kokyu-ho

Breathing meditation: breathe in through the hands to the belly, out through the body.

5 Gassho again

Return the palms to the chest and close with a moment of gratitude.

Making it a habit

Because it needs no partner and little time, Hatsurei-ho is the routine many practitioners use to keep their practice alive between sessions. Morning is a common choice, as a way of setting the tone for the day.

Why it is valued

Where treating another person depends on having someone to treat, Hatsurei-ho asks for nothing but yourself and a few quiet minutes. This is much of its value: it keeps the practice alive on ordinary days, and it is turned toward the practitioner's own steadiness rather than toward anyone else.

In the Japanese lineages it is regarded not as a warm-up but as core training. The clearer and calmer the practitioner, the tradition holds, the more naturally everything else follows — so time spent on one's own cultivation is never considered time taken from "real" practice.

Kenyoku

The “dry bathing” technique — a series of light brushing strokes used to clear and reset one’s energy at the start or end of practice.

Kenyoku (乾浴) means “dry bathing.” It is a short cleansing technique of brushing strokes across the body, used to clear the energy field and mark a clean beginning or ending to practice.

Dry bathing

The name compares the movement to washing without water. With light, deliberate strokes of the hand, the practitioner is said to sweep away lingering or stale energy — both to reset themselves and to create a clear space before working.

How it is done

A simple version uses three strokes:

1 Left diagonal

Place the right hand at the top of the left shoulder and draw it down across the chest to the right hip.

2 Right diagonal

Repeat with the left hand from the right shoulder down to the left hip.

3 The arms

Brush down each outstretched arm from the shoulder to the fingertips, exhaling as you go.

When to use it

Kenyoku sits near the start of Hatsurei-ho, but it can also be used on its own — before a session to prepare, afterward to clear, or any time you want to feel reset. It takes only a few seconds and needs no special setting.

A small, useful reset

Part of what makes kenkyoku endure is its plainness. It takes only seconds, needs no props, and can be done almost anywhere — before sitting down to practise, after a difficult encounter, or simply when you want to feel that a page has been turned.

Whether one takes the "clearing of energy" literally or reads it as a gesture that helps the mind let go, the effect is much the same: a deliberate, physical way of marking a boundary between one thing and the next.

Joshin Kokyu-ho

The "breathing method for cleansing the spirit" — a core meditation of Japanese Reiki.

Joshin Kokyu-ho (浄心呼吸法) means the "technique for cleansing and focusing the spirit through breath." It is one of the central meditations of Japanese-style Reiki.

A breathing meditation

The practice uses slow, mindful breathing to gather and circulate energy, quieten the mind, and strengthen one's sensitivity to Reiki. It forms part of the daily routine known as Hatsurei-ho, and is often practised on its own as a simple, steadying meditation.

How it is done

A typical round moves gently through these steps:

1 Settle in gassho

Sit comfortably, hands together at the heart, and take a few slow breaths to relax.

2 Breathe in

Inhale slowly through the nose, imagining energy flowing in and gathering in the lower abdomen (the hara).

3 Rest

Pause for a moment, letting the energy settle and spread through the whole body.

4 Breathe out

Exhale gently through the mouth, imagining the energy flowing out through the body and hands.

5 Continue

Repeat at an unhurried pace for a few minutes, keeping the attention soft.

Its place in practice

Practised daily, Joshin Kokyu-ho becomes a small anchor – a few minutes of calm that also builds the quiet awareness many practitioners rely on in a session. It asks for nothing but breath and attention, which is part of its enduring appeal.

JUST FOR TODAY

Even one minute of this slow, belly-centred breathing is a gentle way to reset in the middle of a busy day.

Byosen

The practice of sensing with the hands — noticing subtle sensations that guide where, and how long, to let them rest.

Byosen (病腺) refers to the subtle sensations a practitioner may notice in the hands while working — warmth, tingling, or a pull — and to the skill of reading them to guide the session.

Sensing with the hands

As the hands move over the body, practitioners are taught to pay quiet attention to what they feel. In the tradition, certain sensations are taken as a sign that a place would benefit from resting the hands there a little longer. This listening is called byosen scanning.

What is felt

Descriptions vary from person to person: a gentle heat, a coolness, a faint tingling, a sense of drawing or pulsing. None of this is measured or clinical — it is a subjective cue within the practice, and beginners are simply encouraged to notice without forcing anything.

"Let the hands stay where they are drawn, and move on when the sensation eases."

Following the sensation

Where a sensation is strong, the hand rests until it softens; where nothing is felt, the practitioner moves on. Over time, byosen is said to make a session less mechanical and more responsive — the standard hand positions become a starting point rather than a fixed script.

A skill that grows

Byosen is not something learned all at once. Beginners are often told simply to notice, without deciding in advance what they ought to feel; with practice, the vague impressions of early sessions tend to become steadier and easier to trust.

Because it is subjective, teachers usually caution against making too much of any single sensation. It is best held as one guide among several — a way of listening that keeps a session responsive, rather than a diagnosis of anything in particular.

Reiji-ho

The “indication of the spirit” — letting an intuitive sense, rather than a fixed sequence, guide the hands to where they settle.

Reiji-ho (靈示法) can be translated as “indication of the spirit.” It is the practice of setting aside the fixed hand positions and letting an intuitive sense move the hands to where they are needed.

Indication of the spirit

Where the standard positions offer a reliable map, Reiji-ho trusts a quieter guidance. The practitioner asks, in effect, to be shown where to work, and then follows whatever gentle prompting arises — a pull of the hand, a settling of attention — rather than a memorized order.

How it is practiced

It is usually approached in three simple movements:

1 Gassho

Settle in the palms-together posture and quiet the mind.

2 Ask

Hold a gentle intention for the person’s well-being.

3 Follow

Let the hands move to where they feel drawn, and rest them there.

Trusting intuition

Reiji-ho is often introduced once the basics feel natural, since it asks the practitioner to let go of the script. In Japanese lineages it is closely tied to byosen: intuition suggests where to go, and the sensation in the hands confirms how long to stay.

Method and intuition together

Reiji-ho is rarely used in isolation. In practice it works alongside the fixed hand positions and byosen: the standard sequence offers a reliable map, intuition suggests where to depart from it, and the sensation in the hands confirms how long to stay. None of the three has to win.

For many practitioners this is the quiet aim of the whole practice – to hold structure and openness at the same time, trusting a learned method enough to be able, now and then, to set it gently aside.

Enkaku Reiho

The traditional distance technique – offering Reiki beyond the reach of the hands.

Enkaku Reiho (遠隔靈法), the "distant Reiki method," is the traditional technique for sending Reiki to someone who is not present. It is taught at the second degree, Okuden.

The distance method

The method rests on the idea that the connection in Reiki is not limited by space. Using the distant symbol (Hon Sha Ze Sho Nen) and a clear, focused intention, a practitioner sets out to offer a full session to a person elsewhere – much as they would with their hands.

How it is done

The shape of the practice is simple and unhurried:

1 Prepare

Settle into a quiet space, often at a time agreed with the receiver, and centre yourself in gassho.

2 Draw the symbol

Use the distant symbol to make the connection, holding the person clearly in mind.

3 Use a stand-in

Many practitioners rest their hands on a proxy – a cushion, a photo, or their own knee – to represent the receiver.

4 Give the session

Hold the connection for around twenty to thirty minutes, as in an ordinary treatment.

5 Close

Gently release the connection and return to gassho with a moment of gratitude.

When it is used

Enkaku Reiho is used whenever hands-on Reiki is not possible — for someone far away, unwell in hospital, or simply unable to be there. Some teachers also describe offering it across time, toward a past or future event, though practice here varies from school to school.

A GENTLE NOTE

Like any Reiki, distance work is offered as support for relaxation and balance, alongside ordinary care rather than in place of it.

Reiki Meditations

Simple, guided-style meditations that deepen a Reiki practice, steady the mind and bring you back to stillness.

Meditation and Reiki have always gone hand in hand. A few simple practices can quiet the mind, deepen your sensitivity, and turn Reiki from a technique into a way of being.

Meditation and Reiki

In its Japanese roots, Reiki was as much a path of self-cultivation as a way of treating others. The meditations below are gentle and undemanding – small daily practices that help settle the mind and open a little more space for calm.

A few practices

You might begin with any one of these:

1 Gassho meditation

Sit with the palms together at the heart and rest your attention where the middle fingers meet. When the mind wanders, return gently.

2 Breathing the principles

On each slow breath, silently offer one of the five precepts – "just for today, do not worry" – letting it settle.

3 Hands on the heart

Rest both hands over the heart, feel their warmth, and simply breathe, giving yourself a few unhurried minutes of Reiki.

Making it a habit

These meditations reward gentle repetition rather than effort. A few minutes each morning or evening, kept up over weeks, tends to matter far more than any single long sitting. Choose one, keep it simple, and let it grow.

KEEP IT LIGHT

There is no wrong way to do these, and no need to force stillness. The practice is simply to return, kindly, whenever you notice the mind has wandered.