

Presentation to Council of Elders
Monthly General Meeting, 06 October 2011

Honour your parents, teachers and elders – Precept No 3

We are always talking about “living the Reiki Precepts”, that is, making them a part of our daily lives, so in keeping with this third Precept, the Board decided to publicly express our appreciation and the appreciation of the entire Reiki community to some members of our Association who have been particularly instrumental in one way or another in bringing Reiki to Barbados or to the attention of Barbadians or who have been of great service to the Association. We came up with the idea of establishing a “Council of Elders”. Let me stress that the name has nothing to do with the age of the members and is really about their experience and commitment.

On this occasion, our honorees are Janice Chin-Worme, Eugene Daniel, Verity Dawson, Hartley Forde, Sheila Leslie-John, Ina Pickering and Cynthia Wilson. This is not to say that there aren’t others – several others, even, who are worthy of this honour. However, the idea is to begin with a core group and possibly to honour an additional person every so often.

Before I present the tokens of appreciation which we have selected, let me share with you a little bit of what I know about each of our honorees.

Janice Chin-Worme and I were in the first class held in Barbados in March 1995 by Lynn Armor. From the beginning Janice was extremely keen on Reiki. She talked about Reiki to her friends, her acquaintances, her neighbours, strangers – in fact, anyone who would listen. At the time Janice owned and operated a hairdressing salon and I don’t believe that a single one of her clients left the salon without hearing about Reiki - and many of them were persuaded to have treatments. Janice and I often worked together in those early days and almost every day Janice would call me at work and say “I have another client this evening. Are you coming over?”

Janice credits Reiki with helping her to overcome a life-threatening illness. She says that Reiki has been the prime focus in her life from day one to now and will continue to be for the rest of her life. Janice has served on the Board of the Association in several capacities, including that of President.

Eugene Daniel came to Reiki in 1998, and from the outset has shown tremendous commitment. At the time she was very involved with the St John Ambulance Brigade and together with Dr Ronald Wilson arranged for the Association to hold information sessions and some classes at their headquarters in Bay Street. Eugene joined the Association in 2000 and was elected Treasurer in 2005. She remained in this post until January of this year. Eugene was an excellent Treasurer. But that was not all she did; she was capable of doing and willing to do many jobs that didn't normally fall under the portfolio of the Treasurer. From the time of joining, Eugene has faithfully attended meetings and has been very active in planning and participating in healing sessions and all the outreach activities of the Association.

Verity Dawson was initiated into Reiki in 1988, making her the first person we know of to bring Reiki to Barbados. By her own admission, she kept a low profile for some time. However, around 1991 she opened a store in Worthing called "The Turning Point" where spiritual books, tapes and CDs, crystals and other esoteric materials could be purchased. Verity has attuned many people to Reiki since she started teaching in 1995 and she is responsible for initiating several of the Reiki Masters on the island. Verity's dream of an Association which would honour Reiki practitioners regardless of lineage came true when the Barbados Reiki Association, originally formed by and for Lynn's students only, decided to open its doors to all Reiki initiates. Verity has given outstanding service to the Association over the years, serving as Secretary, Board Member, Vice President and President.

Sheila Leslie-John was initiated into Reiki in 1996. She gives Reiki the credit for helping her to overcome a serious health challenge that had plagued her for a long time.

From the outset, Sheila became involved with the Association and faithfully gave of her time and energy to participate in meetings, to help with healing sessions and to support our outreach activities. A valuable member of the Association, Sheila has served on the Executive and been actively involved in every aspect of its work. With her beautiful handwriting, Sheila took on the task of making all the signs and posters for the Complementary Health Day for several years. Sheila has also introduced Reiki to the many overseas guests who stay at her “home away from home”.

Hartley Forde was initiated into Reiki in 1997 and very soon joined the Association. Together with his wife Yvonne who did Reiki training a little later, he was a faithful attendee at meetings and a regular participant in group treatments offered for ailing members. Hartley and Yvonne often took part in the public outreach activities of the Association. Hartley is a massage therapist and so is constantly in touch with people who need healing. He attributes the success of his practice to Reiki. Hartley taught massage courses at Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic from 1996 to 2006 and following his initiation in 1997 he habitually recommended Reiki to all his students. Several of them took his advice and were initiated into Reiki in their turn.

Ina Pickering was one the first group of students to be initiated by Lynn Armor. From the outset she regularly attended the early weekly group healing sessions and is a founding member of the Barbados Reiki Association. A faithful member of the Association from then until now, Ina never fails to attend meetings and other Association activities, and has put in a great deal of time and effort to be a part of group healing sessions for people in need and to assist with our public outreach activities. Ina has also served on the Board of the Association.

Cynthia Wilson travelled to Trinidad in the 1990's to learn Reiki. She and her husband Ronald became very active in the Association. In fact, Ronald was one of the early Presidents and for some years our monthly meetings were held at their home in Hindsbury Road. Cynthia and Ronald opened their home not only for meetings, but also for social events on several occasions. Cynthia has remained a member of the Association and has continued to attend meetings whenever she

can. Cynthia says that she practices her Reiki skills on herself, her family members, friends and the odd stranger in need of healing that the universe places along her way! I can add that she has often organised and taken part in group healing sessions for those in need.

That's just a brief background on our seven honorees tonight.

I must let you know that we also invited **Michael Rudder** to be a part of this new body, but for personal reasons he felt himself unable to accept the honour at this time. However, I would still like to acknowledge Michael in his absence for his contribution to Reiki in Barbados. Michael was one of two people who, after learning Reiki in Trinidad in late 1994, invited the Reiki Master, Lynn Armor, to come and teach classes here. Lynn returned to Barbados twice a year from 1995 to 2004 and has initiated many people into Reiki. From the beginning Michael organized weekly get-togethers for Lynn's students to do group treatments and share experiences. This developed into an organisation called "Barbados Reiki" and eventually into the Barbados Reiki Association. Michael was also the person who kept the vision of having a Reiki Gathering in Barbados and that happened in 2009. He has been extremely active in the Association, holding the posts of President, Vice President and Secretary at different times. Many thanks to Michael.

As of now, no specific plan of action has been devised for the Council of Elders. They have already done a great deal of work and that is why they are being honoured tonight. However, we will keep the Council informed of any challenges facing the Board and/or the Association. The members of the Council can decide, individually or as a group, how they will support us – whether they will be an Advisory body or whether they will be willing to work on specific projects as needed.

Tonight it falls to my happy lot to thank our seven honorees again for their contribution to the Reiki movement in Barbados and to present them with a small token of our appreciation.