The Effect of Reiki on Work-Related Stress of the Registered Nurse

Reference

Purpose of Study
The purpose was to assess the impact of Reiki education, training, and practice on work-related stress of the Registered Nurse.

Objective/goals/hypotheses
It was hypothesized that Reiki education, training, and practice would reduce work-related stress in the RN.

Methods
Twenty-six RNs enrolled in a Reiki I class and completed a Cohen’s Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) assessment. The study participants then received standardized Reiki I instruction and attunement from a Reiki Master Teacher. After the class, participants were asked to perform 10-15 minutes of self-Reiki daily for a 21-day period and to keep a diary of their Reiki self-practice. At the end of the 21-day period, the RNs were given another PSS and a three-question questionnaire about whether they had experienced major life stressors or received any additional integrative therapies during the 21-day period. The study group appeared to represent an experienced nursing population exposed to typical nursing stressors on a regular basis.

Results
Seventeen of the 26 participants completed the follow-up PSS. There was a statistically significant decrease in the PSS score from baseline to follow-up. Fourteen of 17 reported a decreased PSS. Changes in the PSS ranged from a decrease of 18 points to an increase of 10 points. The RN with the 18-point decrease reported a major life stressor in the previous 6 months; the RN with the 10-point increase did not report any self-Reiki during the follow-up period. Most comments from the diaries supported beneficial effects of Reiki.

Strengths
This study lends some support to using self-Reiki as a possible method for reducing work-related stress.

Weaknesses
Small sample size, no control group, no blinding of participants or data collectors, no assurance of compliance by participants, exclusion criteria ignored by some participants and high attrition from initial study group.

Additional comments
While the reported results were statistically significant and did give an indication of work-related stress relief through self-Reiki practice, the limitations of the study design greatly weakens the results.