



# COVID-19 Motivated Me to Overcome My Fear of Technology

BY PAMELA ALLEN-LEBLANC, BSc, MBA

**D**ID ANYONE FORESEE what COVID-19 would bring to the world when countries everywhere limited travel, closed borders, and shut things down to contain the coronavirus pandemic? This past March, I was scheduled to teach a Level I & II Reiki class in London, England. Despite feeling guided to cancel, I flew to London on March 11. I soon discovered that circumstances arising from the coronavirus crisis would directly affect me, and teaching classes would involve increased use of technology. Technology TERRIFIED me! As many fears I had about possible challenges using technology began to surface, Reiki helped me resolve the situations, and I rose above them.

Before I left, I purchased a new computer and a microphone and left it to get switched over while I was away. Not much scares me, but technology often malfunctions when I am around, and I just can't figure it out. I can even blow the circuits on new cars, so I generally avoid technology. It's pretty much all I can do to get a newsletter out on Mailchimp each month, but I was encouraged to embrace technology because of the reach we can have and the people it allows us to help. Although I was reluctant, I knew it was the right step to overcome my fears.

When borders closed on Thursday, March 12, I decided to stay in England to teach a very small class Saturday and Sunday, then went to the airport at 5 am Monday to see about changing my flights. My group back home sent Reiki to help things go smoothly, and I remained calm throughout the entire experience. I surprised my husband with how calm I was as I negotiated a new flight, but because of Reiki, I knew it would all work out. And it did. Beautifully. I sent calming Reiki waves all around me in the airport to the wonderful staff and other travelers and sensed the

Reiki working. But I also recognized panic and confusion in the world around me and wondered what to do to help.

Reiki guided me to find a quiet spot in the Heathrow Airport, swallow my fear of technology, and lead a Facebook live meditation. I would reassure people who worried about me I was okay and help others realize they were okay too. So many people commented that the meditation helped them that once I got home, during my isolation, I continued offering Facebook live meditations for COVID-19. And when I realized I had to cancel riding lessons, I began doing Facebook live visits with the horses, and people loved it. It amazed me how many people were turning out for the meditations and visits.

My husband had set up my new computer when I got back on March 17, and I spent much of my isolation learning to use the Apple and Zoom platforms. When the borders closed, I realized that although I didn't want to disappoint my students, I would have to cancel my Ohio classes. Then my Reiki guidance showed me I could still offer the Animal Communication class online, so I needn't disappoint that group of students at least. The thought scared me. But my guidance was clear, so I let the students know and published it in my newsletter. Only one of the original participants didn't attend online, and in fact, the class filled. It turned out there were people from all over Canada and the US who have wanted to take this class, and now they would be able to.

"What did I get myself into?" I wondered as panic took hold. I had less than two weeks to figure this out, I had no experience with the Zoom platform, had difficulty operating my computer well, I was struggling just to get my email set up, and I wasn't sure if my slow, country Wi-Fi would hold up for the class. What was I thinking? I asked my Rei-

ki group to send Reiki to my fear of technology and the class. As they did, I felt myself calming, and people came forward to help me learn the technology and finish getting my computer set up.

Then, on March 19, William Rand scheduled a meeting with the Licensed Reiki Master Teachers. Many wondered what to do about cancelled classes, feeling that the world needed Reiki now more than ever. Several of the teachers held online Reiki shares, meditations, podcasts, or events to help spread Reiki, but we weren't sure what else was possible.

Guidelines and ideas had been sent out. As the meeting began, William announced that just two hours earlier, he had been working with his guidance to determine how best to help with the COVID-19 crisis, and very clearly heard that we were to teach online. He asked, "When?" and heard, "Now, right now."

Though he had not expected this answer, in some ways, I think he knew this moment was coming. Conversing with him a few years ago, he mentioned that the energy—through the advent of the Holy Fire® Reiki energy and the new, hands-off style of attunement—had become powerful enough to carry out over a distance. However, the technology did not exist to allow us to teach quality online classes on a stable platform, so it was a moot point.

Now that the technology had improved, the world NEEDED Reiki, and the time had come. So, on March 20, William received the ability to provide Placements and Ignitions at a distance and to teach distance Reiki classes. The distance Reiki classes will pass this ability on to others. Then changes needed to allow us all to teach quality online classes were complete along with new course outlines.

On Monday, March 30, the ICRT Licensed Reiki Master Teachers received the Experiences, Ignitions, and thorough training to allow us to teach online. With the Experiences and Ignitions, I noticed that something had changed within me. When we used the Reiki energy in distance sessions, we all noticed a difference in the energy. It had almost a buzzing feel for me where it usually feels more subtle. We also saw how quickly and efficiently it worked. We couldn't wait to use it in sessions.

Even though I was still nervous during the Ignition process, I felt an alignment with the technology that I had never felt before and an appreciation for it as it would al-

low me to remain connected to my students even during COVID-19 isolation. I realized during the training that not only would we be able to teach online, but the classes still had the potential to be fantastic.

The classes would be "in-person, real-time online classes," with a similar class size to our usual live classes, allowing sharing, questions, and the same amount of attention as live presentation classes. The content would remain the same as a usual in-person class, and students would save time and money in travel and accommodation costs, and adhere to the health guidelines by remaining at home doing something constructive with downtime.

As we learned how to teach the classes, I realized that the classes we would offer would be the same quality and contain the same magic as our in-person classes. So, I felt slightly less nervous. Still, would my country internet hold up? I wasn't even able to get through to the help desk of my internet provider. I have had difficulty in the past with the audio and video quality on our ICRT Zoom meetings, so I had nightmares about it.

I did some research and found out that my internet was only just fast enough to manage the Zoom platform. Here is the information I found:

When hosting or taking a class online:

- Check your internet bandwidth using an online speed test like nPerf, AT&T Internet Speed Test, or Comparitech.
- Close all other applications besides the ones you need for your presentation.
- Do not use a virtual background.
- Move closer to your Wi-Fi router or access point.
- Consider purchasing a signal booster or WI-FI amplifier/extender to increase the distance and strength of your Wi-Fi signal.
- Ensure no one else in your household is using Wi-Fi (my husband and kids used their hotspots and downloaded Netflix shows the evening before my class).
- If your modem or router is more than three years old, upgrade.
- Consider upgrading your home internet to business speed (not an option for me).
- Fiber optics can be faster than cable.
- An ethernet cable is more reliable and faster than Wi-Fi, so use a wired connection to your router instead of using a Wi-Fi signal.

- Turn down the resolution of your video rather than using HD (my husband did this for me).
- If necessary, turn off your video (or have your students turn off theirs) if the audio is lagging.

I felt better. I sent this information out to my students and set up a date ahead of the class where those unsure about their technology or internet connection might do a “trial run” with me, checking their equipment as I tested mine. It allowed me to show them some of the features of Zoom, which I had only recently learned myself in the Zoom tutorials.

During the training, we were encouraged to “show up with your whole heart, the same way you would for an in-person class,” because people would forgive if we made mistakes, knowing that we are doing our best. I found that to be true. At one point, during the Animal Communication class, when sharing my PowerPoint presentation, my screen froze, and I could do nothing. Everyone still heard me, so I fiddled with it for a bit, then told everyone I would log out and log back into the meeting, encouraging them to do the same. And the class went on. I experienced my worst fear, and it was not all that bad.

The class went spectacularly well! I was happy I had done the research, since of the 13 students, two had difficulty with their internet connections, but when they turned off their video, we heard them with no lag, and they heard us. I even kept my video on the entire time!

As we finished, after a long day, the students felt energized and told me they could stay longer! We had created a similar feeling to an in-person class with lots of questions and sharing. We got to know each other and had fun. And

when I conducted the Reiki Experiences, everyone felt them. In fact, they were profound for many of the students.

Now I know I can teach Reiki online. William says that Reiki always adapts in a time of need. I recalled that it started evolving with Usui Sensei when, after the great Kanto earthquake in Tokyo, he adapted his attunement style to attune more than 2000 students to Okuden (Level 2 Reiki) in a brief time. Reiki continued to adapt with Dr. Hayashi and Mrs. Takata, so I guess I am not surprised that it adapted for us again in our time of need.

I am grateful to those who worked so diligently and efficiently to put this together for us. And now, I am delighted to teach Reiki online. I can't wait. The best of luck with your classes, bring your whole heart, and ENJOY! Whether you are a student or a teacher, if you have as many fears as I had about possible challenges using technology, know that Reiki will help you resolve the situations and rise above any fears. ❄️

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