Hands-on therapy for all creatures great and small

by Karen Steel
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Brenda Oakley-Carter, of Haverhill, and Caroline Thomas, of Essex, led the world's first SARA class, teaching reiki to animal workers.

A REIKI practitioner from Haverhill has helped to create a world first by being the co-organiser of an attunement at an Essex animal sanctuary.

Brenda Oakley-Carter, of [redacted], along with Caroline Thomas, of Essex, held SARA (Shelter Animal Reiki Association) classes for the workers and volunteers at Remus Horse Sanctuary, in Essex, teaching them to give the energy therapy to animals in their care.

Reiki is a practice developed in Japan in 1922 where practitioners place their hands either on or above a client to send healing energy.

Those on the receiving end can often feel an intense heat coming from the hands and a sense of relaxation.

Brenda said she first became passionate about the power of reiki for animals when she treated her cat Champers, who had a serious facial tumour.

Although reiki practitioners are not allowed to claim they can 'heal', treatment can provide relief for humans and animals.

Brenda said: "Since starting doing reiki for animals, I've always been on a mission of getting all people working with animals attuned to reiki."

People taking reiki level one learn about movement of energy, meditation and undergo an 'attunement' where the energy channels in the body are opened up to allow the reiki energy to flow.

Brenda gives reiki to a donkey.

SARA is an American organisation founded to provide guidelines for reiki practitioners to work to when treating animals.

Brenda said: "The SARA group has almost taken that big step forward, so I am closer to my dream."

The attunement at Remus was the first in the world to be held along the SARA guidelines.

She believes reiki will become more important to animal workers, including vets, in the future, and it is already becoming more widespread within the NHS.

At the end of the class, Brenda and Caroline (both reiki masters) and the group gave reiki to the animals at the shelter.

Brenda said: "When we went to see all the animals at the end it was really lovely and what was really amazing was one that totally zonked out and was snoring. He was really relaxed."

For more information about reiki for animals or people, visit Brenda's website www.theresalwaysreiki.com

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