

Aesthetic Emotion: Abby's Story

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[Putative energy](#)ⁱ (NCCAM), involves energy fields that in early 2009 are not measurable, and the term “biofields” has been added to the current list of acceptable terminology. [Reiki](#)ⁱⁱ (NCCAM) is one of many healing therapies described by various names and cultures for centuries, all involving biofields and [energy centers](#).ⁱⁱⁱ

I am a student of Reiki, and would like to give the reader an example of an event directly related to positive emotion and energy. This event occurred during an interaction between another nurse and me while we were on duty in the Emergency Department. To build your frames of reference, Abby has graciously given me permission to re-tell the story to give you, the reader, a snapshot of “what it feels like / what it looks like.”

It was a normal day in the Emergency Department where we work. Typical of ER's, as the day builds so does the patient volume. We were very, very busy, and no, we don't wear roller skates. We just walk faster.

We work in a very big ED, and I had taken a team of patients on one of the several stations. Abby was holding down the Triage 1 (T1) assignment, meaning she greeted each walk-in patient as they arrived and using our electronic system, registered them and the reason they came for treatment. T1 is an extremely busy and critical assignment. This experienced nurse 1) uses critical thinking and intuitive skills to evaluate the newly-arrived patient and 2) in the five-level triage process assigns an acuity level for the next phase of the triage history and assessment to be obtained by the Triage 2 (T2) nurse. As a chief facilitator of throughput, or flow throughout the entire department, T1 also handles the role of prioritizing appropriate bed assignments after the T2 nurse completes the secondary history phase.

Working as a team, monitoring throughput and length of stay is also a key responsibility of each staff member. I had been watching the tracking system, and the flow of walk-in patients had been more than brisk. Abby was more than busy, she was getting hammered out there. The incoming patients were steady, one after another with no let-up but she was on top of it and her shift assigned shift there would be over soon. Patients were being assessed and moved into available beds like clockwork. She was “one with the department.” She was in the zone, and what I hated most was that I was going to have to interrupt her. I was busy and she was busy, but I needed to give her a message.... and I had delayed as long as I could.

This may not seem like a big deal to you, but being in the zone has an etheric quality to it. Best I can describe it, your concentration is maximized, your senses are heightened and your radar is on. Your subconscious, intuitive mind is automatically pulling information in from the surrounding environment, anticipating and troubleshooting. Only after you have “been there, done that, got all the T-shirts” over and over again for years will you have a feel, or understanding of what I am trying to explain. You aren’t separate anymore, you’re part of the whole and any interruption is like sticking a pin into a balloon, startling you. God forbid somebody questions a decision you’ve made when the place is rocking and you’ve just gotten off the phone with three people trying to facilitate a piece of flow. I was about to interrupt Abby and bring her out of the zone. She would have to recapture the ambience and flow and I knew just how difficult that could be.

I saw her as soon as I came through the triage door and caught a scene straight from Norman Rockwell. She would have done Nightingale proud. It was *that* palpable.

She was the epitome of what a nurse should be. The team of T2’s and techs buzzing behind her, she was sitting at the T1 desk working with a patient to find out why he had come to the ED. Corny as it sounds; she was the model of “earnest, intent, and bent to her task.” Similar to a controlled remote viewing session, it was question, answer, regroup and rephrase to clarify. She focused on him, honed it in and wrote it down.

It only took me a few steps to cover the distance between us. I’ve been doing this for a long, long time, much longer than Abby and in that moment I felt like the older Sister watching a Novice nurse grow into herself and her profession. I was so proud of her!

She had what it took. Compassion, intelligence, and grace under fire. She had it all, and right then I was overwhelmed with love for this little Sister. I paused, still not wanting to interrupt her as she worked, and in the pause it happened. Hesitant, I reached out and put my palm between her shoulder blades to get her attention and I felt it. Completely spontaneous, my emotional response had triggered a flow of energy from my palm directly over her heart chakra, or energy center. I felt it leave me. Sometimes it’s from my thorax and my biofield changes, but this time it was focused directly from the energy center in my palm.

Abby looked up and to her left, acknowledging me. I delivered my message and quickly went back to my station. End of story, or so I hoped. Nobody else in the department was into studying “unconventional” and “unproven” complementary medicine except a couple of nurse-massage therapists and one who had practiced polarity. I already had a rep and this wasn’t going to help.

No such luck. First opportunity she had, Abby came looking for me. Eyes big as saucers, words in a rush she said “What did you do to me?!?!?! When you touched me, you *really* touched me!!!”

Great. I was busted.... again. I couldn’t explain these phenomena. Not to myself or anybody else, and it had gotten to the point that I couldn’t hide it anymore. I took a deep breath and tried to formulate a synopsis of energy medicine / biofields / Reiki and quantum physics in my head.... for somebody who had never heard of any of those terms except possibly one.

Abby was almost dancing in front of me in her excitement. Face a mirror of changing emotion, mind racing, she pelted me with rapid fire questions. “What did you do? How did you do it? Can you teach me that?!?!?!?”

Stalling while I searched my head for the right words to explain, something she might be able to associate, I tried to be low-key, nonchalantly asking “What did it feel like?”

Her face was a study of intense excitement and I could almost see her mind shuffling through its database of words and experiences. She had none. No language, no vocabulary for what she had just felt. This was a new experience and she had no words to describe it, let alone let her formulate or frame her question.

Still vague, she came up with “warm.....!” “tingly.....!” and then the ball was back in my court. I never quite know how these impromptu teaching sessions are going to go. I just wing it, one sentence at a time, trying to connect with each person and where they are in that moment. Right then we didn’t have any time. We were working and it was busy.

I took a deep breath and asked her if she remembered learning about Therapeutic Touch in nursing school, or maybe Healing Touch. Excited, she said she did, but not much was actually “taught,” that they were only mentioned in passing. I smiled and told her that I had been instructed in Reiki, then proceeded to explain a bit about it and the energy body and energy medicine. All smiles and excitement, back to work she went.

Abby and I still talk about it from time to time, and she tells people that I have the “healing touch!” Our conversations teach a few more nurses about this part of our human selves that is still not understood, or measurable. After the initial excitement wore off she was able to describe her experience a little better. It lasted about six hours and it was like being lit up from the inside... all warm and glowing and [tingly](#).^{iv}

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ⁱ Energy Medicine: An Overview (NCCAM Backgrounder), *National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine*, National Institute of Health. 5 Feb. 2009
<<http://nccam.nih.gov/health/whatiscam/energy/energymed.htm>>

ⁱⁱ Ibid.

ⁱⁱⁱ Hoover-Kramer D, Mentgen J, Geddes N., Contributor Norma Geddes. "Healing Touch: A Guidebook for Practitioners." Edition: 2, illustrated. Delmar Thompson Learning, Inc. Albany: NY, 2002, 84. 5 Feb. 2009
<<http://books.google.com/books?id=jKgNF1eYRfsC&pg=PA84&lpg=PA83&ots=jmNXKIYr5S&dq=negative+emotion+passed+biofield&ie=ISO-8859-1&output=html>>

^{iv} "What is Reiki?" *International Association for Reiki Professionals*. 5 Feb. 2009
<http://iarp.org/articles/What_is_Reiki.htm?phpMyAdmin=7b168f241789c9bd44d16479d7fdf2d0>