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Become an Approved Continuing Education Provider

BY DAWN FLEMING

I BEGAN TEACHING REIKI in 1996, soon after completing my Master training. I really had no plans to teach Reiki, but a coworker announced that I was going to be her Reiki teacher and so I taught a class. After that first class, I began letting people know that I was a Reiki teacher. Many of my first students were either massage therapists or nurses, and they would always ask if I could provide them continuing education hours. Since I had never needed CE hours, I really did not understand how the system worked, whom I needed to contact, or what

the requirements were for becoming an approved provider. One of my students gave me the number for the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodyworkers (NCBTMB) and my journey into the world of CE began.

After talking to one of NCBTMB's representatives, I received a very thick package in the mail. It was filled with forms to fill out about my credentials, my business, and information about each class for which I was seeking approval. I copied the package for a friend who was co-teaching with me at the time. The information sat on our desks for over six months because it looked so intimidating. We finally put aside some time and completed the process in three days. We reviewed each other's work, made our copies and mailed them. About two months later we received our certificate of approval in the mail. The process has changed since 1997 when we received our first approval; however, the benefits of being a CE provider are the same.

Benefits of Being a CE Provider

There are several benefits to becoming a CE provider. Your enrollment will mostly likely increase when the professionals you are approved to give CE hours for find out about your classes. If

need CE hours can be found online. There is no one place that you can go online to get information about all of the boards; however, my book, *Navigating the Continuing Education Approval Process*, has been recently updated and it provides a wealth of information for locating the resources that you need.

Before you begin to fill out all of the paperwork to become a provider, read the organization's requirements. Make sure that you meet the criteria and that you are willing to fulfill the follow-up requirements of record keeping and to maintain the required ethical standards.

Each career field has a separate board, either at the national or state level. A good place to start is to ask what professions are represented in your classes. Do you have massage therapists, social workers, acupuncturists or physical therapists? Start with one group and find the proper approval authority. You can find them online or ask one of your students for the Web site of their board. Find out if it is a national or state board. In some cases the answer might be both a national and state approval authority. If this is the case, I suggest starting at the state level. From my experience I find that state boards request less documentation for approval. When you visit a board's Web site look for any buttons or links for continuing

As a CE provider you have the opportunity to empower others to heal and to help others offer a non-invasive modality. When medical professionals offer Reiki as part of their services, Reiki gains further acceptance and credibility in medical circles.

the professionals taking your classes enjoy their experience, they will spread the word throughout their network. Imagine free marketing! Many professionals are looking for holistic health classes that give CE hours because they can use these skills to increase their personal well-being as well as for their professional benefit. Approval from a national or state board gives you and your classes added credibility, and it gives you the opportunity to get your name out into the professional circles. This could mean opportunities for you to teach or speak in hospitals, massage schools, community colleges, and at professional conferences as well as in other arenas. I have spoken at a state nursing conference, to social work groups and various networking groups. I have been invited to teach at massage conferences and on cruise ships. All of were due to my ability to provide CE hours. The possibilities are endless.

Investigate the Requirements

There are many national and state boards that require their licensed or certified professionals to acquire CE hours. Most massage therapists need 24 CE hours every two years. Many acupuncturists, nurses, social workers, occupational and physical therapists need CE hours. Most information regarding the boards that

education. This will be your pathway to their requirements and forms. Download the forms onto your computer and fill them out.

Find out if your state has a requirement for the professionals for whom you want to provide CE hours. Some states do not require massage therapists, nurses, or acupuncturists to acquire continuing education credits. After receiving provider status for nurses, I found out that in my state nurses generally did not need CE hours. By seeking further information, I learned that nurses who had specialized skills such as oncology, pediatrics, etc., did need CE hours. So I had to gear my marketing to the nurses who needed the CE hours.

Tips for Embracing the Process

Although this process may sound like a lot of work, there is a lot that you can do to make it go smoothly.

Support the Process With Reiki

Give yourself a Reiki treatment before you start filling out the forms. Set the intention of successfully completing the package to become a CE provider. The Reiki energy will help to clear your mind so that you can focus on this task. It also gives you energy

to complete the process. If you get tired while filling out the forms, take a break. Come back to it when you feel refreshed. Set aside time each day until you complete the process. Place your hands on the final approval package and send Reiki to the forms and to the board members conducting the evaluation.

Have These Documents on Hand Before You Begin:

Each board is going to ask you for copies of your certificates to show that you are qualified to teach your subjects.

You will also need to provide learning outcomes, teaching strategies, and time frames for each component of each your classes. If you have a good outline that you use in teaching, this will prove to be invaluable for filling out this portion of the form.

You will need to create an evaluation for each of your classes. Most boards provide an example. If you model your evaluations after theirs they are likely to be accepted.

Good clear writing is important.

You want to look professional to the board that is going to approve you, so do not send poor writing or unreadable copies of your supporting materials to the boards. When you are describing your Reiki classes use concrete words to describe how and what you are going to teach. Do not make it sound mysterious or “woo-woo.” The boards are not looking to unravel a mystery or approving something that cannot be described adequately.

Undertake one board’s approval paperwork at a time.

The work that you do for the first one will make all others a bit easier because you will have all the information already written up. You will just have to tweak it a little for the board that you are applying to. Keep paper copies of the material you send to the boards. You never know when your computer is going to fail. If something seems unclear ask questions by sending the board an e-mail or giving them a call. It is better to ask than to send them the wrong documentation and be denied or have to redo sections of your submissions.

Fortunately for you at this time, Reiki has been approved by most of the boards that I have mentioned. When I sought to have my Reiki classes approved I was in a groundbreaking process

because a lot of the boards had not even heard of Reiki. Even though Reiki is a class that the boards approve, you are seeking approval for how *you* teach *your* Reiki program. Most boards require that you get approval for each level class separately so you would apply for approval for Reiki I, II, Advanced Reiki Training and Master as well as for any other style or level of Reiki that you teach.

You can also seek approval for the other workshops that you teach if they are relevant to the professionals. I have had all of my Reiki classes approved as well as my workshops on meditation, medical intuition, chakras, and creating a successful holistic practice. I have seen classes such as yoga, shiatsu, and energy medicine approved by the boards also.

After Approval

After approval you will need to consider how you are going to market your classes. Ask the professionals you want to teach for advice regarding the best place to advertise. You will also need to provide a certificate to those getting CE hours that is separate from your Reiki certificate. This certificate must include your name and approval number, participant’s name, the amount of CE hours earned and the date completed. You will need to keep records of who has taken your course and keep those records for up to five or more years. Most boards require that you renew every two to three years. Make sure you mark on your calendar when it is time for you to renew because some boards will not notify you.

I am amazed at how many medical professionals are seeking Reiki classes mainly for their own personal healing. After working years in such demanding careers their bodies are tired, run-down, and in need of Reiki. It is an honor to teach Reiki to these professionals who can take Reiki a step further into the mainstream. As a CE provider you have the opportunity to empower others to heal and to help others offer a non-invasive modality. When medical professionals offer Reiki as part of their services, Reiki gains further acceptance and credibility in medical circles. As a result, interest in Reiki and enrollment in classes increases. Becoming a CE provider can be an arduous task, but the rewards are worth the effort. 

—Dawn Fleming can be reached at reikidawn@yahoo.com.