



Photo courtesy of Marsha R. Drozdoff

A Heeler's 11 Year Journey with Reiki

BY MARSHA R. DROZDOFF

I FIRST MET DASHER, an Australian Heeler, nearly six months before September 11, 2001. My younger daughter, who had a rocky recovery from neurosurgery some years before, had been volunteering with an animal rescue organization. She asked if I would consider becoming a foster home for some of the animals. Although I was physically and emotionally exhausted from the prior five years, I agreed to do this with hopes that it would support my daughter's healing. Usually one fosters the animal until a 'forever' family adopts their new family member. I knew nothing about caring for a dog; I had always loved dogs but never had one. When the call came about them having my foster ready for pick up after getting 'fixed' by the Humane Society, I quickly went online to try to learn what I needed to do the next day. Needless to say, I was surprised when I picked him up; I had never seen his breed before, and here was this strange looking little guy with a speckled coat and large black markings as if there was a mask over one eye (and one side of his butt). He had a plastic collar on to avoid harming himself and with three minutes of instruction we were on our way. I had been told that older dogs like Dasher usually had a harder time with anesthesia and that he might be grumpy or very sleepy for the next day or two.

Once inside the car, Dasher cried and cried while I was trying to get us safely home. Since I practice a Buddhist teaching, I did chant, which seemed to quiet him down a bit. At home I had no idea what to do next, and so I did what came natural, Reiki! I had taken Reiki Level I training a year and a half before and had been working on myself daily. Dasher immediately quieted down and began settling in as if he had lived with us for years. Once he was healed from his surgery, I brought him to the pet store for him to be adopted. This was the day of my Advanced Reiki training and while my classmates connected with lovely spiritual guides, Dasher's face and energy kept coming into my consciousness. I tried to deny this but my Reiki Master teacher who had 'gift of sight' kept telling me that this was "my dog." I kept repeating that he wasn't but by the end of the class I knew that he was. The only problem was that a colleague was going to the store to adopt him or there was the possibility that some other customer might have fallen in love with him and taken him home. When I arrived at the store following the Reiki training I learned that the staff had discovered a lump or tumor and had to put his adoption on hold; my colleague, who had stated a strong intention to adopt him, had car

difficulty and could not come as anticipated. I took my little guy home and was referred to a vet, who prescribed antibiotics in case this was infection-related. By the time the course of medication was completed and the vet was assured that this was only a fatty tumor that was stable, Dasher and I were inseparable; there was no question that he was my dog, and on March 1, I went in to complete his adoption papers. During those early years I generally laid on the couch to do Reiki during the evenings. As soon as I activated my hands, no matter where he was in the household, he came running to lick them. Then he would jump on the couch in between my legs and feel the Reiki flowing from me as I was working on myself. Over time, he became bolder, and when he truly wanted more direct Reiki, he would go along the side of the couch and take my hands off myself with his nose and make certain that I put my hands on him. I may not have mentioned that this breed of dog is highly intelligent and quite assertive. His clarity of requests for Reiki increased as he would show me exactly where he wanted me to place my hands, whether on his head, neck, hind area and lots by his heart chakra.

As a Reiki Master teacher and practitioner, Dasher soon became my 'assistant.' He loved using his energy and behavior to get clients into a relaxed state even prior to getting on the table. He also loved waiting outside the healing room even after I had completed the session but the client was still integrating on the table. Although I did not permit him in the healing room out of respect for my clients, one time he ran into the room and jumped on the table expecting that it was his turn.

A year and a half ago, Dasher needed surgery for a tumor that had grown quite large and was quite slushy in nature. This was not supposed to be a very extensive surgery but he returned to us very debilitated and unable to walk, eat or drink. I gave him a lot of Reiki and he slowly improved. However, a family friend wanted to take him and my husband to the park in a truck that was unfamiliar to Dasher; he jumped out in our yard and injured himself—again, much Reiki. However, this time he had trouble rallying, and I thought that he had reached the end of his life. He was barely eating or walking. He sat looking at the wall as if he was communicating with spirit, and his beautiful smile was missing from his face. I brought him to the vet for suggestions related to 'end of life care' and learned that his heart was strong. He was given pain medication and some supplements. Reiki, however,

was the main intervention. He began improving and slowly returned to his active role in the household and family despite a loss of vision, which this breed is accustomed to experiencing after a certain age. I always felt that when Dasher put his paw on me or we lay together on the floor, he too was giving me Reiki. It was as if he was responding with gratitude for all the support.

It was like an energy exchange, especially when my own heart was grieving watching my elderly Mom decline with aging issues and then when she passed. Right after New Year 2012, Dasher again showed major decline. I used the Byosen scanning to offer him Reiki where he might need it most. It also allowed me to work on him without direct touch at times. When he went to the vet, the results from his lab tests were distressing, and I knew that Dasher's time with us was limited. If possible, my hope was for him to die at home surrounded by the family and to receive Reiki until the last moment. Reiki did support his system to be as well as possible, even enjoying a final visit to the park a day and a half prior to passing. When he began to vomit, Reiki helped him to stay calm, safe and loved.

On January 30 both Dasher and my daughter, who had been the impetus for us becoming Dasher's parents, slept next to each other for three hours; they were both so peaceful and the energy was perfect. She woke us up at 1:00a.m., telling my husband and me that his breathing had changed. We ran in to be with him and to support him with his transition. I had, only nine months

before, done this with my Mom in a hospice residence and knew some of what to expect. I continued to stay centered in my heart chakra and to use Karuna Reiki® to support his passing. My husband, who is an Advanced Reiki Practitioner, and I had our hands on Dasher for over an hour. During the short period when he seemed to have strong movements in his head, the Reiki helped with the release of those symptoms until he appeared totally comfortable and at ease. At 2:15 a.m., he passed in our arms with Reiki supporting and surrounding him. We had the opportunity to kiss him, share stories about him and send him additional blessings.

I don't know how long I will continue to feel his presence in the household but I do now. I, therefore, do the Power symbol over the areas where he often sat or walked. He used to love it when I would draw it over him after doing my own energy clearing in the morning. Since this little guy loved Reiki from day one in our lives, there is no reason for me to stop giving him Reiki now; whenever I send Reiki to my children, I also invite Dasher in, and he gladly accepts distant Reiki. By the way, remember when I mentioned how much trauma was in our family when we adopted Dasher? As it turned out, not only was he a 'heeler' but also an excellent 'healer' in his own way. 

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