



Left: Glacier in the mountains. **Right:** Coming in for a landing.

What Was I Thinking?

Or...How Reiki Helped Me to Trust!

BY CHELLIE KAMMERMEYER

AS A YOUNG GIRL, I grew up listening to country music. Then as a typical teenager, I broke away, listening to rock (it was the 70s after all). However, a few years ago, I drifted back to country. Recently, I found the title of a song sung by Dierks Bentley looping through my brain. It's called, "What Was I Thinkin'?"

So what was I thinking? I was getting into a small single-engine airplane—One of those two seater airplanes, where the pilot sits in front and you finagle your way into the back seat by stepping on a strut, then sliding your left leg over and pulling yourself up on some bars above the pilot's head. Graceful?—not even a little bit.

Here's the back story. Last December, at a Soul Coaching® Course, my husband Mike and I were in an exercise, talking about what our hopes and dreams and plans were for the following year. When we go to classes, we separate and work with other students. Apparently, Mike started talking about leading a Reiki retreat in Alaska. His dream was to show people the Alaska he lived in growing up. He talked about a specific place out in the wilderness on a riverbank to go camping, hiking into areas that are rarely, if ever, seen by other humans and to teach Reiki in this magical place. Mike grew up on a 150 acre homestead, 100 miles northeast of Anchorage, and from that remote location, his family went further out for hunting, camping or riding. Homesteading in Alaska in the 1950s meant living in a remote area and improving it by growing crops for several years. People

in Mike's Soul Coaching® group encouraged him to make a plan and go for it. And they would come on the trip too.

As his wife, I wanted to be encouraging. After all, it was his dream. And honestly, I have heard this dream for years. So what was the harm in encouraging him? What was I thinking? In April I started to realize, OH MY GOD! This is going to happen! People were sending their deposits; Mike was getting the airplane checked out by the certified mechanic; he was booking flights for us to go up early to have everything set up. We needed four people to break even cost-wise, and then the fourth person sent a deposit.

It sounded like an amazing adventure to a lot of people. "How fun!" people would say to me. And that song kept looping—What was I thinkin'? I'm not an outdoors, adventurous kind of gal. Hike, nope. Sleep outside, nope. Cook for a group, nope. Go to the bathroom outside, oh heck no! I started to come up with reasons why I shouldn't go. I should stay home and be available for clients. This first trip with the start-up expenses probably wouldn't be profitable, so why pay for me to go? And yet, I realized, I was the hostess and half of the Reiki teaching staff. Most importantly, Mike wanted me to go so he could show me his world. We have lived in the "Lower 48" for all of our married (23) years, and I had never been to the mountains with him.

As Albert Einstein said, "Look deep into nature; you will understand everything better." That is certainly true for my understanding of Mike. We have a relationship that many people envy.



Left: Chellie and Mike by the airplane. **Right:** Our group with Chellie on the tundra where we found crystals.

If I were to describe Mike in one sentence it would be: Mike loves his wife, his family, his airplane, his Alaska and Reiki; not necessarily in that order. We were going, no matter what I thought.

By June, I was doing Reiki on myself daily regarding this upcoming disaster (as I was beginning to think of it). I began to be calmer, more peaceful. I started with SHK, HSZSN and Holy Fire, several times a day. It's interesting when you are personally stressed how easy it is to forget what you suggest to people as a Reiki teacher/practitioner. And it was a great reminder about how effective Reiki is on personal fears and stresses.

Yet, when Mike left a week before I did, I went backwards. I couldn't even fake how I felt with my friends. For some reason I was terrified. What was I thinking? In no particular order, here was a partial list of my concerns: I'd embarrass myself. I would get hurt trying to walk around in those new boots. I would hold everyone up because I'm not in as good of shape as they are. I would have trouble actually getting into the airplane. And if I did, I would hurt my husband's feelings because I was freaked to be in that tiny airplane. I did NOT want to go to the bathroom outside. I'd get lost and eaten by a bear or kicked by a moose or, or, or.

Too quickly, the day arrived. I flew up to Anchorage, working myself up into a snit that only I could do. Mike wasn't at the airport to meet me; he was still flying supplies into the camp. That was the icing on the cake; I was seriously annoyed. We were picking up the group the following morning, four brave souls who were going on our maiden adventure. I longed to be as excited as they were in their emails and texts. They knew that they were the Beta Test group and felt honored to be part of this first Alaska Adventure.

In the morning, when we picked everyone up, I was doing Holy Fire Reiki including HSZSN and Karuna Reiki® on myself continuously and sending it out to the camp and to the future and to the group and to Mike and again to myself. The Distant Symbol is a beautiful choice in that situation. It was starting to help. Gradually, subtly, I was feeling better, calmer—kind of. Our

participants' enthusiasm and joy were also a huge help. By the time we got to the landing strip that was our official starting point, I was able to at least be happy that they were happy.

One at a time, each member of our group crawled into the airplane, smiled and waved, and then Mike would take off, flying the 20 miles out into the wilderness. He would land on a gravel bar by a river that he had cleared the brush and large rocks from years ago. This was our base camp. Mike's childhood friend, Fay, was already there to cook for us. Patrick, our oldest son, was also part of the welcoming committee. I was the last one to get into the airplane. Suddenly, we were really on our way. That song started going full blast in my head. "What was I thinking?"

About then it hit me—I was afraid. But what was I afraid of, really? I was in an airplane with my very best friend, my life partner. He is the safest, most conscientious pilot I have ever known. His friends in Alaska want to be able to fly as naturally as he does. He has been flying for 40 years, without incident—in this very rugged part of the world. He knew I was really nervous, and he was very careful to explain exactly what was happening the entire way to our camp. I saw him use Reiki symbols HSN, SHK and HF to anchor us into a safe landing. The fear started to dissipate, slowly, gradually. We landed at the camp, and it was amazingly beautiful—the trees, the river, the flowers, the sky. It was breathtaking.

Suddenly, I could almost hear just for today, "do not worry and be filled with gratitude." Those are part of the words from the Reiki Precepts. Usui Sensei had written them regarding how to live life. And here I was, pushed out of my comfort zone and living life!

Patrick was quite excited to show me the new outhouse they had built for us. It looked like a Better Homes & Gardens (camper edition) bathroom. How many outhouses, or bathrooms for that matter, have you seen with a wild rose growing inside? Fay had prepared a delicious dinner, complete with cornbread and pie. On a camp stove! Who does that? Okay, this was starting to be better and better. We sat around the campfire, getting to know one another and talk about our hopes and plans for the week. I thought, "Gosh, all this energy being worried must



Left: Faces in the mountains. **Right:** Caribou circling after attunement.



have taken a toll on me.” I was exhausted. I tracked down a clock only to realize that it was 2:00 a.m., and it was still daylight. “I could walk to the outhouse in the middle of the night and see any animals that were around—maybe not outrun them, but I could yell for help!” As that thought popped into my mind, the last of my worries completely disappeared. Somehow, being able to see gave way to an inner vision that I could trust the Universe and all would be just fine—better than fine. As my Reiki teacher, Colleen Benelli says, “It’s already all right!” And so I started to breathe and be in the moment.

The days that followed were experiences that I had no previous idea how to anticipate. We hiked out in the wilderness. Yes indeed, me hiking. In hiking boots. It was breathtakingly beautiful. The green, especially after being in drought-ridden California, was a balm to my soul. Really. The trees were so tall and the grass was so green and the mountains were so majestic. The flowers were blooming everywhere—wild roses and lupine and forget-me-not’s and other nameless white flowers that were adorable. Wondrously, on the 4th of July, a bald eagle flew over us and reminded us that it is the symbol for our country. No fireworks (no dark sky!), but what a celebration of freedom.

We could see big horned sheep and caribou across the river and up the mountain. We saw footprints of moose, but they avoided our camp. However, we saw several from the airplane.

We flew into areas that have been seen by animals but few people. The rock formations on the mountains looked like faces that had seen centuries of life below them. In our training with the International Center for Reiki Training, there are meditations that lead you to a crystal clear river flowing down from the mountains. It felt as if we were right there. And the experiences our students had while sitting there doing the meditation were life changing. One of our group members told me that if she won the lottery, she would send me a million dollars, her value of the trip!

One day, Mike flew down into the end of a canyon, surrounded by mountains with thousands of years of glaciers receding. As

we landed on the tundra at an elevation of 5000’, we saw natural rocks and stones that glittered and had crystals forming in them. All we had to do was start looking, and we each had several pounds of crystals to bring home with us. With the sun shining down on the sparkling, glittering rocks all around us, we performed the Level I attunement. An attunement is the Reiki connection of a person with spirit, and while it is a life-changing experience, this one went beyond that. Mike facilitated these attunements, and I had the joy of being a witness. The clouds drifted and the sun was directly on our students and Mike. I could feel the energy all around us as it entered each student.

And then a caribou ran around us. When I got home, I looked up the totem meaning of caribou: “represents the interconnectedness of life.” Really? I couldn’t make this up! As we were arriving home, something important occurred to me. I wasn’t really thinking anything. I was trusting. It has been a huge lesson for me to remember the Universe and Reiki have a much better plan than I could come up with, even if I don’t always agree with the twists and turns at the time. And saying “Yes!” to something new, well that could become a habit of mine. I heartily recommend getting out of your own way and doing something new.

Mike and I learned a lot about leading a group and have some ideas for next year. The basics will remain the same: Fay is cooking, we will be camping and friendships to last a lifetime will be made. In retrospect, when I think about the song, “What Was I Thinkin’?” I realize, I need a new song! I will never look at life the same way again. 🌸



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