

**Reiki on Tiktok: Experiences and Interpretations of the Spiritual
Dimension of Digital Healing Content**

by

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Light Beyond Distance

*There is a current beneath language,
a breath between worlds,
where intention moves like electricity
not bound by skin or screen,
but guided by the soul's signature.*

*Energy healing does not require touch
to touch.*

*It listens through the invisible
through heart fields, waveforms, and willing stillness.
It rides the breath, the pulse, the prayer
behind the words we speak
through glowing glass and satellite signals.*

*When one offers presence across a screen,
it is not the technology that heals
but the truth carried through it.
Light responds to light.
Coherence responds to coherence.
And consciousness, when invited,
knows no separation.*

*Across oceans, across bandwidths,
we remember:
We are not healing through machines.
We are healing through miracles
disguised as connection.*

- Beth¹

¹ Pseudonym for interviewee who wrote the poem, will be introduced in introduction.

Abstract

This thesis analyses how TikTok users understand the spiritual dimension of their engagement with digital Reiki healing. Through combining Lived Religion Theory, Contemporary Religion Theory, Digital Religion Studies, and the concepts of embodiment, narrative, and emotion, it investigates the intersection of “spirituality”, “healing”, and “belief” on Tiktok. Using digital ethnography in the form of participant observation, four semi-structured interviews, and discourse analysis, this thesis investigates how the digital realm of TikTok enables embodied engagement with Reiki content and creates grounds for varying individually interpreted spiritual dimensions. It argues that TikTok-Reiki constitutes a “digital sacred space”, where spirituality is not inherently based on belief but is achieved through embodied practices and narrative meaning-making. Perceived efficacy of Tiktok-Reiki is conditioned by individual openness, sensory experience, and different forms of belief, demonstrating the nuanced relationships between healing, spirituality, and belief. By centering the complexity of individual experience, this research shows that belief and embodiment combined can influence how a spiritual dimension is recognized, and suggests a way to bridge binary understandings of science and religion in a contemporary digital context.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Problem statement, Knowledge Objective & Research Questions

“Religion” and “science”, or “spirituality” and “science”, are often seen as mutually exclusive dimensions, in daily life as well as in academics. However, within religious studies many scholars have made attempts of bringing these together, which is also the overarching theme of this thesis research, with a specific focus on the topic of healing, in order to gain more insight into the interrelatedness of healing, spirituality, and belief. There has been research on “spiritual healing”, but often the theological and religious complexity of healing has not been understood within the scientific field which has resulted in rudimentary explanations or secular reductions of healing (Coakley, 2020. p. 21). The reason for this is a lack of understanding of the diversity in people’s experiences with healing; a gap that a lived religion approach is perfectly fitting for. With deep contextual understanding of people's lived realities, a bridge can be formed between the two binary modes of understanding; "religion" and “science”(Coakley, 2020. p. 25).

In a modern society that knows increasing secularization, new forms of religion and spirituality are emerging and shaped by modern forces such as digital media; a new field that is still in need of more academic research. Emergent or newly blended forms of spirituality are often labeled “New Age” by scholars, however I deem this term problematic as it tends to lump together a wide variety of practices and therefore dismisses cultural or historical differences. To break from this pattern I focus on the distinct healing practice of Reiki, more specifically digital Reiki content on the social media platform Tiktok, where currently many religious and spiritual ideas and practices are flourishing.

Then what is it I aim to learn about Tiktok-Reiki? In general, Reiki is known as a form of “spiritual healing”². Does this also hold for Tiktok-Reiki, existing in a digital context? In other words, does Tiktok-reiki have a “spiritual dimension”³? Standing alone, this last question is prone to leading to earlier mentioned secular or theological reductions. Therefore with this thesis, I will aim to understand better the interaction and interrelatedness of healing, spirituality and belief through a Lived

² “Spiritual healing”: will be defined in 1.2

³ “Spiritual dimension”: will be defined in 1.2

Religion approach by taking into account individual experiences and narratives to understand divergent experiences and interpretations of Tiktok users with digital Reiki-healing content. I will accomplish this using qualitative methods; digital ethnographic fieldwork on Tiktok and semi-structured interviews with users. My main research question is as follows;

How do Tiktok users experience and interpret the spiritual dimension of their engagement with digital Reiki-based energy-healing content?

In order to answer this question, I can divide it into two substantiating questions, both contributing to providing answers for different dimensions of the main question;

1. To what extent can “Tiktok-Reiki”⁴ be regarded as a digital “sacred space”⁵ and how does this shape the way in which users experience and interpret digital reiki-healing content?
2. How do users’ interpretations and experiences of Tiktok-Reiki influence its perceived healing efficacy, and how does this shape users’ interpretations of Tiktok-Reiki’s spiritual dimension?

The first question serves to gain insight on how Tiktok’s affordances shape how people perceive digital Reiki healings, in order to determine how this influences experiences and interpretations of the spiritual dimension of it. The second question helps see how people's perceptions of efficacy of Tiktok-Reiki interrelate with their earlier determined interpretations of the spiritual dimension, by looking at whether certain experiences may in- or decrease perceived efficacy, and consequently influence meaning-making processes that influence the interpretation of the spiritual dimension of Tiktok-Reiki. Using this format, this thesis will argue that Tiktok creates a condition that allows for the emergence of a new form of spiritual healing; Tiktok-Reiki, which is a form of Reiki that allows for embodied experiences and different interpretations of a spiritual dimension but does not inherently depend on

⁴ “Tiktok-Reiki”: concept will be defined in chapter 4

⁵ “Sacred Space”: concept will be defined in chapter 3.3

“belief”. However, belief can influence perceived efficacy of Tiktok-Reiki, which can influence users’ perceptions of a spiritual dimension to it.

Every chapter of this thesis serves a specific purpose for building the argument. This introduction serves as a basis for understanding the objectives, concepts used, and research scope, and to introduce informants. In chapter 2 I will explain the research methods, after which chapter 3 focuses on the academic background of the topic through a theoretical literature review. Chapter 4 serves for answering the first subquestion by explaining Reiki and how it differs from Tiktok-reiki focusing on embodied experiences, and chapter 5 nuances the relationships between healing, spirituality and belief with a focus on the varieties of spiritual interpretations of Tiktok-Reiki and how this influences the perceived efficacy of Tiktok-Reiki, and vice versa. In the concluding chapter, the results and conclusions will be summarized in order to answer the initial research question and see how it contributes to the broader academic field.

1.2. Defining Concepts

A struggle for many researchers in the field of studying religion is the use of concepts and their definitions. Often used concepts such as religion or spirituality know no universal definition and vary across historical contexts, cultures, and individuals. Therefore, for a better understanding of the analysis and conclusions, it is crucial to account for their use and explain their interpretation in this case.

“Spirituality” is the first term that will be used frequently. It is an umbrella term shaped by social practices, evolving dynamically. As Courtney Bender argues in *The New Metaphysicals*, spirituality is neither purely personal nor separate from historical and institutional contexts (Bender, 2010). Paul Heelas & Linda Woodhead distinguish between “religion” and “spirituality” in terms of institutional authority as opposed to personal experience (Heelas & Woodhead, 2005). Their definition is more of an umbrella-term, which is how informants prefer to use it discussing their spirituality, but which is not how I apply it, as this is too vague for my research purpose of nuancing spirituality and healing. Therefore, I adhere to Ammerman’s definition of spirituality as an analytical dimension; the distinctive element that makes a certain practice - in this case Tiktok-Reiki - religious (Ammerman, 2014).

p.23-55). This definition's different dimensions will be further explained in the theoretical discussion. I will argue that spirituality can be embodied, and can exist independently from "belief". Then what entails and determines the "spiritual dimension"? To be consistent I refer to Ammerman again who argues that something is a religious social practice because it has a spiritual dimension. That means that it incorporates the presence of a reality beyond the ordinary, either directly or indirectly. (Ammerman, 2021).

Then for "healing", in general, It refers to the general process of physical, emotional, mental or spiritual restoration of well-being or health, and is not inherently spiritual. Spiritual healing, however, refers to the use of this concept in *Spiritual Healing*, edited by Sarah Coakley; healing that is not strictly physical with a spiritual aim and a primary focus on psychic or spiritual healing in the self, therefore, the spiritual component influences the meaning and narrative of the healing (Coakley, 2020. p. 15).

The last significant analytical concept is "belief". Important to note here is that belief in my case is not necessarily connected to divinity or transcendent beliefs. Rather, I refer to it as a state of mind; a sense of cognitive *certainty*. This term is applied when analysing the interpretations of users of the spiritual dimension. Do they believe the Reiki to be effective, and if so, in a spiritual sense or merely physical?

1.3. Research Scope

On Tiktok, there is loads of energy-healing content, but I focus specifically on Reiki. Research into the spiritual dimensions of any sort of energy-healing would have been equally interesting, however the focus on Reiki allows for the richest dataset and specific analysis. With Reiki, users seem to have many sensory experiences, and the variation in videos (e.g. specifically aimed healings) allows for variety in users' interpretations.

Furthermore, all informants are English-speaking. This is the dominant and shared language on Tiktok for users all over the world, even if it's not their first language, thus transcending local and national boundaries. This corresponds with

Reiki's global nature and independence from time or space (Lipinski, n.d.). The globally oriented language allows for a richer set of data than a national focus. Lastly, language is an important factor as it could influence community-creation. On Tiktok, it is seen blending terminology from psychology, popular culture, and spiritual traditions.

1.4. Introducing Informants

Lastly, introducing my informants will increase understanding of the results. The 4 interviewees are Esther, Beth, Michelle, and Lara (all pseudonyms). These young women have told me about their personal experiences with and interpretations of Tiktok-Reiki. Esther is a 30 year old woman from Germany who frequently engages with Reiki-master Rachel (pseudonym) through Tiktok livestreams⁶, for which she moderates viewer chats. She was recruited when her engagement with this creator was noticed during digital fieldwork. Rachel is a Japanese Reiki-master based in Scotland, who frequently hosts Reiki livestreams on Tiktok, healing viewers by channeling Japanese Dragon's energy⁷. Interviewee Beth, 28, from Canada, describes herself as animistically spiritual. Spirituality is engrained in her daily activities, she engages with reiki-healing content when it appears on her foryou-page⁸, and practices Reiki herself as well. She was recruited through Tiktok similarly to Esther, as I saw her comment in a livestream of Celeste (pseudonym); A Reiki-master teacher from the USA hosting Tiktok-Reiki livestreams, calling her community "soul tribe"⁹ and worshipping Mother Gaia¹⁰. My other 2 informants are Dutch and found through a personal Instagram post requesting informants; Michelle and Lara. Michelle is 21, studying Sociology in Groningen, and Lara is 19, doing a bachelor in music education. Their occasional engagement with Tiktok-Reiki is similar; out of curiosity and a quest for relaxation. All informants have an open attitude towards spirituality and healing, though levels of this "openness" vary, as will be demonstrated later on. The last two names that will appear in the analysis are Rob and Mark; both pseudonyms for Reiki-masters that create Reiki-healing Tiktok

⁶ Glossary (Appendix A): "Live-streaming"

⁷ Glossary (Appendix A): "Japanese Dragon's Energy"

⁸ Glossary (Appendix A): "Foryoupage"

⁹ Glossary (Appendix A): "Soul Tribe"

¹⁰ Glossary (Appendix A): "Mother Gaia"

videos. Rob is an Australian creator with 1.6 million followers, with content centered on vibrational healing, energy balancing and connecting with spirit guides, and Mark (282,4K followers) specializes in Reiki and Reiki-ASMR for emotional regulation.

2. Methodology

2.1. Qualitative Research Methods

This research is based on qualitative empirical data derived through digital ethnography in the form of participant observation on Tiktok for 4 months, and semi-structured interviews with 4 informants. The data has been analysed through discourse analysis, analysing recurring themes through inductive and deductive coding of data in themes that correspond with the research questions.¹¹ The primary sources used are digital Reiki-healing videos, livestreamed Reiki-healing sessions with an interactive communication style between creator and viewers in real time, and users' comments on both categories. The data will be presented in the form of small cases in order to gain detailed understanding of experiences, increasing insight on narrative connections, and allowing for insightful interaction with theory. The purpose is to map individual experience rather than make transferable conclusions. For the analysis I have drawn from the methodological approaches of Lived Religion, Contemporary Religion, and Digital Religion, using tools from scholars from various academic fields including sociology, anthropology, and religious studies.

2.2. Digital Ethnography

I deem digital ethnography a fitting approach for studying lived experiences of people navigating the digital environment of Tiktok, as it knows no strict distinction between everyday life and the virtual (Hine, 2015. p. 163). Generally, it is not a single approach, but rather a set of adaptive methods to study on- and offline-world entanglements, while using the same digital affordances (Grasseni et al., 2021). Sarah Pink specifically discusses researching experiences in a digital environment, arguing that entanglements of daily life with digital media cause the need for paying attention to the digital technologies that are part of our sensory embodied experiences (Pink et al., 2016). I used this methodology by attending 9 different Reiki-healing livestreams of 7 different tiktok-creators (among which

¹¹ Appendix F: Interview Guide, Questions & Codes

Rachel and Celeste, others remain anonymous), analysing 22 different videos of Reiki-healings of Rob and Mark, and documenting a total of 168 interesting user comments on this content over a span of 4 months. I created a new Tiktok account specifically meant for digital participant observation, for which it took around three weeks of manipulating the algorithm to surface the desired Reiki-content. From there I started following relevant creators and messaging users. I also attended a digital Reiki session in private with Rachel, as I was not familiarized with the practice and felt the need for this to get closer to the ethnographic field. I kept a logbook¹² in which I documented my experiences of the process, as well as a diary of the digital ethnographic fieldwork¹³.

2.3. Interviews

Recruiting interviewees was difficult, as for my direct social environment Tiktok-Reiki was a niche and unknown subject. Therefore I sent +/- 40 direct messages to Tiktok users that were seen engaging with reiki-healing content by Rachel, Celeste, Rob or Matt, from which two responded; Esther and Beth. Interviewees Michelle and Lara were recruited later through a personal instagram story request for participants. Interviews took 50 minutes to two hours, in the form of semi-structured conversations, using an interview guide with prepared questions that interviewees could read beforehand, leaving room for other topics/follow-up questions. I deliberately made use of terms that were “open” for interpretation, as to gain insight into how interviewees interpreted such concepts subconsciously, reading in between the lines of their answers and drawing conclusions from what was *not* said, to see what they understand as “spirituality” for example. I was able to keep the conversation open by encouraging interviewees to talk, showing understanding and personal similarities (when they occurred), while remaining impartial about my own beliefs as I was aware of the chance that this might influence narratives of interviewees (unknowingly). Last thing worthy to mention is the difference in conversation-style between the Dutch and English interviews; in Dutch there was more ease in understanding and quickness in replying from both sides, allowing for less static conversations.

¹² Appendix D: Research Logbook

¹³ Appendix E: Digital Ethnography (Fieldnotes)

2.4. Ethical Decisions

I have conducted this research with respect for confidentiality, informed consent, and the well-being of participants. Recruiting was done through personal messages introducing myself and my research purpose, allowing users to choose their participation. During fieldwork I made sure that identities of users of which only comments are used remain anonymous, and video- and livestream-creators have been asked for consent to use their data for research purposes, which has been given. If there was no reply or no consent given, the data was discarded.

Doing the interviews, a safe and relaxed environment for myself and others was established, letting the participant feel reassured to talk truthfully about their opinions and feelings. Prior to interviews, consent for recording and usage of data was asked, and interviewees were informed that they should feel free to read the data before it is published, so necessary adjustments could be made for correct reproduction of answers and statements. A potential ethical risk was causing emotional distress discussing personal beliefs, which I was aware of. For this reason I informed interviewees that they could skip questions or withdraw from the conversation at any time, and that if they would change their mind on something they could contact me so I could make necessary adjustments. I made sure to be aware of sensitive topics and handled them with care and attention.

Finally, the data gathered from interviews and digital fieldwork has immediately been anonymized (where possible), and pseudonymised (where more fitting). Data has not and will not be shared with any external parties, and is stored in my personal Google Drive of the RUG. Specifications of these ethical decisions can be found in Appendices B and C¹⁴.

2.5. Positionality

My positionality as a researcher in this field is interesting. Positional awareness is important as it determines how participants are viewed by the researcher and vice versa, and whether the researcher is in- or outside of the studied

¹⁴ Appendix B: “S-R-D-M-P”, & Appendix C: “T-H-S-R”

group, as it both can affect study results and interpretations. Influencing the research field is inevitable in ethnography, however, awareness of positionality increases strength and reliability of a study (Hennink et al., 2010. p. 47).

As an active Tiktok user with a personal interest in spirituality that occasionally engages with reiki-healing content out of curiosity as well as a researcher of the same subject I have an interesting position that can both be an advantage and disadvantage. Being familiar with the cultural landscape I can have deep access to and understanding of the topic, however I might also take certain things for granted that unfamiliar researchers might have noticed more clearly. Language demonstrates this; I could grasp deeper meanings within comments because I speak the same “cultural language”, however I might struggle translating meanings into academics. My position creates a blurred line between being a researcher and a participant. I am aware that I am, in fact, “studying myself” by aiming to investigate how active users (like me) view spirituality in relation to Reiki-healing in a modern digital environment. My last note here is that my academic research position can unconsciously influence my “open mind”; it becomes a new interpretative lens.

3. Theoretical Framework/Literature Review

Many scholars offer compelling theories on modern religion and spirituality, but for this study on experience and interpretations, I focus on approaches that emphasize lived experience. While studies on religion and spirituality traditionally centered around doctrinal texts and literate elites (Riis & Woodhead, 2010. p. 3), recent shifts highlight individualized, unofficial practices. I built a theoretical framework combining perspectives on lived religion, platform-mediated experience, and spiritual healing. This chapter introduces these theories and their interplay, which will inform the analysis of Tiktok-Reiki in later chapters.

3.1. Lived Religion Theory

From the field of Lived Religion, influenced by anthropology, sociology, and feminist studies, viewing religion as the lived, everyday practices and feelings of individual people instead of focusing on the institutional, doctrinal or other formal aspects (Knibbe & Kupari, 2020. p. 165), I will be looking at TikTok-users' experiences and interpretations with digital Reiki. The two pioneers Nancy Ammerman and Meredith B. McGuire provide me with useful theoretical tools to interpret the data and meaningfully add to the debate.

Nancy Ammerman, an influential sociologist in the study of lived religion, argues that individuals integrate spirituality into their daily lives, blending beliefs, and going beyond institutional frameworks. She emphasises that lived religion is dynamic and creative, focusing on what individuals do and say. As mentioned in the introduction, I use Ammerman's definition of spirituality. In *Sacred Stories, Spiritual Tribes: Finding Religion in Everyday Life*, she distinguishes three dimensions of which I will use two; the theistic- and the extra-theistic landscape. The third (ethical) landscape is irrelevant in this context of energy-healing due to its focus on morality. The theistic landscape is linked to divine beings and spiritual practices to develop relationships with them. This dimension helps analyse whether TikTok-users engage with Tiktok-Reiki in this sense. The extra-theistic landscape represents indications of interpretations of tiktok-reiki representing something more in daily life, a sense of transcendence without inherent divination. Think of cosmic connections, self-enhancement, or a sense of purpose (Ammerman, 2014. p. 23-55). In *Studying*

Lived Religion: Contexts and Practices, Ammerman distinguishes seven dimensions functioning as a lens for studying social practices. To remain within the scope of a bachelor's thesis I will only use the most relevant dimensions; the “embodied”, “emotional”, “narrative”, and “spiritual” dimensions, which will be interrelated with theories that I will introduce next. The narrative dimension helps to pay attention to how users’ storytelling on their personal experiences with Tiktok-Reiki influences meaning-making and interpretation. The emotional dimension helps to see how users’ emotional experiences with Tiktok-Reiki influence their interpretations of the spiritual dimension, which according to Ammerman exists when theistic- or extra-theistic landscapes can be recognised (Ammerman, 2021).

Meredith McGuire is a pioneer in lived religion studies as well, whose ideas contribute to my analysis. In *Lived Religion: Faith and Practice in Everyday Life*, she argues that people construct meaning through everyday spiritual practices. A well known scholar she agrees with is Robert Orsi (Orsi, 1997) who focuses on the aspect of embodied practices that highlight the presence of the sacred in everyday life. McGuire complements his argument by saying that people, next to simply believing in or thinking about, also have the ability to experience the reality of their religious or spiritual worlds. This divide in “believing and thinking about” and “experience” is to be found back in my own research question, thus in my analysis later as well, as I distinguish between interpretation and experience of the spiritual dimension by TikTok users.

Especially interesting in the context of my research on the experiences of users is McGuire’s concept of “sensory experiences”; a topic dealt with in her article “Individual experiences, socialized senses, and everyday religion in practice”. A great extent of how spiritual meaning is enacted and embodied takes place through the senses. In this case that means understanding the spiritual dimension not just through narrated beliefs, but also through users’ narrations of bodily sensations and interpretations of them. McGuire emphasises that by attending to the sensory experiences of people who engage in practices, we can gain insight on how spirituality is lived in everyday life, as sensory experience is central to spiritual practice, thus for interpreting a potential spiritual dimension of Tiktok-Reiki. This corresponds with Ammerman’s dimensions of embodiment, which is used by McGuire as well, explaining embodied activities as activities in which spiritual

interpretations or meaning is embedded as well as accomplished through the body, think of for example movements, gestures, or senses (McGuire, 2016. p. 152-162). Ammerman supplements this meaning by explaining that this means that the body is not only a site where “the sacred” appears, but in itself a tool for *knowing* the sacred. “to not ignore the mind or the spirit, but [...] to recognise that they can’t be separated from the experiences of the bodies at work” (Ammerman, 2021. p. 57). These tools from lived religion theory will help me show how embodiment and belief both can influence spiritual interpretations of healing.

3.3. Digital Religion Studies

Another relevant theoretical framework is Digital Religion Studies, founded by Heidi Campbell, serving as a critical framework for understanding how spiritual and religious practices are performed in and shaped through digital media environments, and the other way around. It is a relevant theory to my research as it views online spaces as extensions and transformations of spiritual life instead of something separate from “real religion”, and allows me to situate TikTok as a “sacred” or spiritually meaningful space, which aligns with the lived religion approach that also puts emphasis on recognizing non-institutional forms as religion.

A useful work by Campbell is *Digital Religion: Understanding Religious Practice in Digital Media* (2021), which demonstrates how Digital Religion impacts understandings of how religion is defined and lived out, highlighting that religion on digital media cannot only change practices but also meaning-making processes. The main argument is that spiritual or religious engagement is not merely performative online, but that it can be deeply felt through embodiment, creating “sacred digital spaces”. The chapters discuss key areas of the field; community, ritual, embodiment, defining religion, identity, and authority. This is a very broad exploration of digital religion using relevant and suitable themes, but again regarding the thesis scope I adhere to my specific focus on users' individual experiences and interpretations, applying the focal point of embodiment that highlights parallels with Ammerman’s “embodied” dimension of spirituality and McGuire's concept of sensory experiences.

In “Digital Religion” chapter 7, Kerstin Radde-Antweiler examines the distinctions between “real” and “virtual”, and “online” and “offline” bodies, in the

context of digital space. Embodiment is here defined as “A way of inhabiting the world as well as the source of personhood, self, and subjectivity, and the precondition of intersubjectivity” (Campbell, 2021. p. 105). Three dimensions of embodiment are mentioned; the physical, the social and the spiritual, arguing that the physical body is involved in online spiritual activities. This raises questions about how the relationship between the “online” and “offline” body can be defined, but these distinctions are criticized and instead argued to be interwoven.

Radde-Antweiler states that it depends on people’s own experience what is regarded as “real” and “virtual” spirituality. So, the digital space in itself is not sacred per definition, only through embodied experiences or ritual action it becomes “sacred”, as experienced by participants (Campbell, 2021. p. 106). Within my case study this would imply analysing what level of embodiment is involved with Tiktok-users, and how this shapes the digital Tiktok environment around Reiki-healing as a “sacred space” that influences interpretations of healing, rather than merely an environment for communication or sharing information.

3.2. Contemporary Spirituality

A last relevant academic field is contemporary religion and spirituality studies. This field’s scholars examine how religious practices, beliefs, and institutions function, and interact with each other in contemporary society, with a specific focus on the dynamic relationships between religion and secularisation, religion and scientific thought, and the rise of new spiritual and religious movements (Journal of Contemporary Religion, 2008). My research fits within this debate as I will be investigating how Tiktok users navigate within a modern digital environment where new spiritual ideas can rise or mix with other cultural aspects, and helps frame Tiktok-Reiki as part of the broader Western spiritual marketplace. Generally, this field mixes disciplines to examine the shift from institutionalised religion to personalised belief systems.

A key source is *Spiritual Healing: Science, Meaning and Discernment*, edited by Sarah Coakley. Its main quest is to find out how interpretations of and meanings attached to healings play an essential role for the efficacy of healing. It argues that despite biomedical reductionism, many seek healing as a path to the soul and a

certain “wholeness,” revealing how spiritual narratives persist and intersect with science in a cultural context that lacks the tools to fully grasp healing’s truth claims (Coakley, 2020. p.17).

I will be using some tools provided in this book as guidelines to understand more about Tiktok-users experiences and interpretations. Not to broaden the scope of the original question, but precisely to understand better the narratives of people’s experiences with Tiktok-Reiki healings and what they tell me - implicitly - about how they interpret the spiritual dimension of it. *Spiritual Healing* criticises rudimentary religious explanations as well as secular reductions of healing, and argues that the theological and religious complexity of healing is not properly understood, and that there is a lack in understanding of the diversity in experiences of patients, however with deep contextual understanding within anthropological research a bridge between the two binary modes of understanding can be formed, which is exactly my aim for this thesis (Coakley, 2020. p. 18).

A key takeaway for analysing users' experiences that is connected to Ammerman’s definition of spirituality, is the defining of “spiritual healing” in two ways. On the one hand through the lens of the “locus”; spiritual healing being not solely physically aimed but relative to “psychic, somatic, or spiritual elements of the self”, connecting to the extra-theistic landscape and being able to exist on its own, and the second is the “focus” on the source of healing; effected by divine forces, which can be tied to Ammerman’s theistic landscape, and is almost always accompanied by the first (Coakley, 2020. p.15). *Spiritual Healing* emphasises the importance of this distinction, but particularly the interest in bringing these together, which I will be doing for my data analysis to gain insight on where “healing” ends, and “spiritual healing” begins, in order to clarify how the concepts relate.

In chapter 6 of this book, “Prayer and Placebo in Scientific Research” by Anne Harrington, the notion of placebo is discussed in the light of prayer studies. Placebo is described as the tendency of patients to believe in the efficacy of a medication to increase well-being, which is currently believed to be capable of “producing real physiologically measurable effects” (Coakley, 2020. p. 154). Regarding placebo effects in relation to spiritual healing, it is often asked whether belief in a God who heals can also produce similar change in healing effects. The

chapter argues that currently the vision of spiritual healing is grounded in “eliminative logic”; If results of healing are not placebo or any other accepted psychobiological category, then it must be explained theologically, and that there must be more research into bridging this gap (Coakley, 2020. p. 163). This discussion on placebo will help me gain understanding on what role “belief” plays for healing and spiritual healing such as Tiktok-Reiki, and how it influences its perceived efficacy, while taking into account the complexity of individual experiences.

4. Tiktok, Reiki, and TikTok-Reiki

To understand how Tiktok-users experience the spiritual dimension of Tiktok-Reiki, it is important to gain insight on the factors that could influence this experience, and with that how these experiences are interpreted. In this case, Tiktok as a platform is an influential factor for how Reiki-healing is experienced, as generally, experiences in digital environments differ from real-life, physical experiences. Before diving into this analysis, some background knowledge on Reiki and how it relates to “Tiktok-Reiki” is crucial.

4.1. What is Reiki?

Reiki is a healing practice that originated in early 20th century Japan, developed by Mikao Usui. It is a natural system of holistic healing technique, aimed at emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being, involving touch-channeling of universal life force energy believed to move through all living beings. The name is derived from Japanese; “rei” meaning universal and “ki” life energy. A reiki-healer channels this energy into a recipient's body during a session, clearing blockages in the energy field, promoting deep relaxation and restoring balance in body, mind, and spirit (*Reiki Healing Foundation*, n.d.). In addition to being a healing method, Usui outlined five reiki-principles to live by for personal growth:

“The Secret of Inviting Happiness through Many Blessings. The Spiritual Medicine for all Illness. For Today Only, Do not Anger. Do not worry, Be Humble, Be Honest in your Work, Be Compassionate to Yourself and Others” (*Reiki Precepts*, 2010).

Reiki is often described today as “a bridge between medicine, spirituality, and holistic wellness.” Although Reiki is spiritual in nature, it is not a religion; it involves no dogma, and its effects are not dependent on belief. Many report feeling connected to something “beyond the self,” even without an intellectual concept of it. This interplay between belief, healing, and spirituality is underresearched. A form where this interplay is even more pronounced is distance Reiki, where the practitioner is not in direct physical contact with the receiver, so a distant healing symbol is used to send Reiki-energy towards the receiving person, with intention.

This is possible as the Reiki-energy is known to work independently from time or space (Lipinski, n.d.).

4.2. Reiki & Tiktok

Tiktok-Reiki is a form of distant Reiki, as the practitioner is not in physical contact with the receiver, but channeling the energy through a smartphone-screen, towards viewers. Tiktok has grown in popularity since the COVID-19 pandemic, distinguishing itself from other social media with its emphasis on aesthetics and brief and short-formed videos that engage with the senses. Particularly striking is the powerful algorithmic structure that produces certain forms of acting in and knowing about the world for users (Bucher, 2018). Since the past few years, the group that uses Tiktok as a platform to share and create knowledge has increased, creating a new social condition; a digital society changing personal lives. Many scholars have attempted to understand the new social conditions created by this platform (Soyudogan & Abdalli, 2023).

Since a few years, spirituality and religion have become popular Tiktok-video topics. Reiki content does not necessarily and inherently fall within this realm of spiritual discourse. Some creators that post Reiki-healings label themselves as “spiritual”, others practice Reiki under the veil of “relaxation-content” or ASMR¹⁵. What is clear, however, is that Reiki-creators reshape the notions of who or what constitutes religious or spiritual authority, by adapting (spiritual) messages to fit digital formats (Campbell, 2020). Reiki-healing content often appears as one to five-minute long pre-recorded videos, in which a practitioner sits in front of the camera, making hand gestures towards the camera, channeling energies towards viewers with intention, surpassing time and space. This is occasionally accompanied by aesthetic aspects such as ethereal or relaxing music, relaxing visuals, or certain sounds intended to enhance the experience. But also livestreaming¹⁶ is an often-used method of getting a step closer to “direct” contact with viewers, as they are viewing the content in real-time and can directly interact through comments or likes. Here the

¹⁵ Appendix A:Glossary; “ASMR”

¹⁶ Appendix A: Glossary; “Livestreaming”

role of creators in shifting spiritual authority becomes even more clear, as I will demonstrate with an ethnographic fieldwork example:

I scroll through the foryou-page and stumble upon a livestream by Celeste. She is talking to viewers about “setting intentions” and “releasing negative energy”, while she is waving with her hands and a white crystal. It seems the livestream just started; people are greeting Celeste and each other in the comments. A user comments; “Hello soul fam”¹⁷, and someone else says; “My only mama” (referring to Celeste). Immediately I get the sense that this might not be the first time these people attend this creator’s livestream.

Comments such as the viewer referring to Celeste as “mama”, signals to a special role that this creator has for her followers. After this livestream, I have been present during many more where this sense of community and admiration for the creators has become clear, which let me suspect that Tiktok might function as more than an information-sharing place, but as a space where social interactions can steer experience and create meaning. Because of this I argue that “Tiktok-Reiki” is more than merely a modern form of distance-reiki on a digital platform. As I will demonstrate through analysing users engagement through embodiment, sensory experiences, and the concept of algorithmic divination, Tiktok can function as a “sacred digital space”, allowing for new experiences and interpretations of the spiritual dimension of reiki-healing, nuancing the relationship between spirituality and healing.

4.3. Engagement

According to Ammerman, “sacredness” is not inherent in a place, but created when people engage in that space (Ammerman, 2014. p.212-249). Interpreting comments and interactions of users under videos and livestreams with the three levels of embodiment of Digital Religion, I will determine to what extent Tiktok-Reiki serves as a “sacred space”.

Campbell states that the physical body is involved in online activities, and that the embodiment has three dimensions. The first dimension that is visible during

¹⁷ Appendix A: Glossary; “Soul fam”

the livestream is social embodiment, and recognisable by multiple indicators of a community. When entering the livestream, users greet and encourage each other, express their gratitude or love to the creator. Examples from the field are greetings such as; “*Namaste*”, “*I feel safe here, also, hello!*”, sending emoji-hearts or stickers, and sending likes. My interviewee Esther tells me; “*It’s always the same people who are there. [...] I know our people, our community doesn’t post rude stuff. They are a safe community*”. Moreover, users make clear that they refer to a shared understanding of the topic by using certain language. One example of this is people commenting “claiming with positive energy¹⁸” when receiving energy or entering the live, signaling users’ understanding of the context and what words to use. Next to livestreams, this happens with reiki-healing videos as well, reflecting interpersonal bonding and shared meaning-making; signs of community-feeling, showing that users embody themselves socially (Campbell, 2021). There are signs of physical embodiment too, in people commenting on sensory experiences they get through the healing; “*Oh my, I just felt release!*” (referring to releasing negative energy), “*I’m feeling heavy*”, or “*I felt tightness in my throat*”.

Doing participant observation, there were many instances where spiritual embodiment became visible as well. For example in Celeste’s livestreams, where she mentions “Mother Gaia”¹⁹, and one of her viewers comments; “*I just made a post about mother Gaia being the interconnected web and spider.*” This interaction shows connection to a “higher” or divine being, in this case the earth as an interconnecting force, and is in line with Ammerman’s theistic landscape of spirituality (Ammerman, 2014). In the livestreams of Celeste her followers have mentioned feeling Mother Gaia’s presence, highlighting the existence of an embodied spiritual dimension of the engagement of users with this content, when feelings of connection to something higher are described.

4.4 Tiktok-Reiki

It has become clear what reiki consist of, and how Tiktok’s platform features shape it into a unique form of reiki-healing that I identify as “Tiktok-Reiki”,

¹⁸ Appendix A: Glossary: “Receiving with positive energy”

¹⁹ Appendix A: Glossary: “Mother Gaia”

corresponding with Campbell's theory of how digital media logics can reshape (spiritual) traditions. All three forms of embodiment in the engagement and interactions with Reiki-content can be recognised in my data, contributing to the fact that Tiktok-Reiki can be regarded as more than just a form of distance-Reiki, but as a "digital space". In particular through observing a theistic dimension it can be argued that in this case study, Tiktok-Reiki is not merely a "digital space" but a "sacred digital space" as well. Spiritual embodiment challenges the distinctions between the "real" and the "virtual", contributing to this same critique within Digital Religion studies (Campbell, 2021). Looking at users' engagement, I can conclude for embodiment that the form of bodily participation is different, however it still exists, but within a new digitally mediated context. Through a strong algorithm, a feeling of community, and content engaging with the senses, the digital environment of Tiktok becomes a sacred space, causing a new situation in which I, as a researcher, cannot assume that the experience and interpretations of Tiktok Reiki-healings will equal to "normal" Reiki-healings. Does this embodied sense of transcendence without necessity for (divine) belief hold for Tiktok-Reiki? I will examine if Tiktok-Reiki can be regarded as "spiritual healing" in the next chapter by focusing on individual narratives on experiences and interpretations of its spiritual dimension.

5. Interpretation, Experience, & Efficacy

This chapter is driven by my second research question; How do users' interpretations and experiences of Tiktok-Reiki influence its perceived healing efficacy, and how does this shape users' interpretations of Tiktok-Reiki's spiritual dimension? This will be examined with a lived religion focus on whether users' individual experiences and interpretations of Tiktok-Reiki are connected to divinity and transcendent belief, or a form of physical or physiological self-help. Investigating this would mean finding out for whom Tiktok-Reiki is merely "healing" and for whom it is "spiritual healing" and how this can be determined. I will demonstrate how perceived forms of spiritual dimensions for each individual in turn influence attached meanings and interpretations of Tiktok-Reiki, and how these then influence users' perceived efficacy of healing, basing this argument on analysis of different levels of "belief" seen in the ethnographic field; theistic beliefs, scientific beliefs, and belief in placebo. Because of McGuire's argument that sensory experience is central to spiritual practice, the focal points for this analysis will be sensory and embodied experiences and how these are interpreted (McGuire, 2016).

5.1. Motivations

First it is interesting to examine users' given explanations for their engagement with Tiktok-Reiki content. Are they driven by spiritual intentions, or curiosity perhaps, or a quest for relaxation? In this last case, why do they look for Reiki-content, and not ASMR for instance? Can curiosity or seeking relaxation still indicate a spiritual dimension? I asked my interviewees about their motivations for looking up Reiki-content. Striking is that none of them mentioned specific spiritual intentions for engagement, but they all expressed a quest for comfort, aid with mental or physical recovery, or relaxation. However, as the interviews proceeded, it became clear that intentions were layered. Esther told me about her breakup from the year before, and how she was engaging with Reiki-livestreams to cope with her grieving. *"Then I found Rachel's page, and she helped me so much with finding myself again, seeing my self worth, and working through trauma. [...] It helps a lot to receive her energy, that's why I always try to watch every live"*. Through Ammerman's

extra-theistic landscape, this reasoning can be argued to be defined spiritually; “The extra-theistic landscape [...] echoes with talk about seeking, [...] seeking meaning to guide life’s journey, and seeking the mystical truth that lies within” (Ammerman, 2014. p. 41). Also curious engagement appeared to have a “spiritual” connection. Lara told me that she occasionally watches Reiki-Tiktok’s because of their relaxing nature but also out of curiosity for messages behind it that she wants to familiarize with. Later on she expresses a desire to live Buddhistically, enjoying the present moment. This curiosity towards wellness and inner peace demonstrates the extra-theistic landscape, signaling that looking deeper, many motivations still can be regarded to have a spiritual dimension, Aligning with Coakley’s statements about the predominating reductionist mind/body divide in contemporary society; people still search for the soul and a sense of “wholeness”, which leads them to healing practices (Coakley, 2020. P. 17). However, people seem to have different interpretations of the spiritual dimension, which I will further demonstrate now.

5.2. Embodiment

Continuing the embodied dimension discussion of the previous chapter, I will investigate the sensory experiences of users with Tiktok-Reiki, by analysing users comments on the livestream of Rachel, and later with an in depth analysis of my respondents narratives on sensations and feelings, and interpretations of these. Emphasis is on the interrelatedness of embodied experiences and the cognitive realm of beliefs or theological ideas.

5.2.1. Interpretations of Digital Reiki: Digital Ethnography

According to McGuire, sensory experience is at the heart of spiritual practices, as explained in the literature review chapter. Ammerman added to this knowledge that spiritual meanings can be interpreted through the body; be embodied (Ammerman, 2021. p.75-97). Therefore I will here introduce a video case analysis of Reiki-master Rob, and comments of various anonymous Tiktok users, showing how users' narratives on their experiences and feelings influence understanding of meanings attached.

Rob is standing in front of the camera, his face, shoulders, and hands visible. In one hand he carries a big blue crystal. He sighs out and moves his hands towards the screen. He speaks calmly to the viewers; “If this video has reached you right now, then this is no coincidence, because the universe has sent me to you during this time to help remove bad luck, curses, hexes, and evil eyes, and I’ll be further protecting you against toxic people and bad energies. If you accept this energy protection today, then all you need to do is simply nod or say I accept. [...] I would like to call in Archangel Michael to come on through you, to help shield and protect your energy. [...] I can guarantee that if you believe in this healing with an open mind and heart, that anything that does not belong in your energy will simply slip away.”

The video is very popular; it has 62,2 thousand comments. I have selected some of them that are interesting to analyse;

“As I was watching I felt pulls from my stomach and I felt nauseous and even sore in some spots around my stomach, until the end. (shocked emoji)”

“I accept. I felt tingling all around my body so I think it’s real ngl²⁰.”

“I suddenly felt my head getting lighter and making me calmer so I think this worked!”

“Does it mean anything if my left ear started ringing while you were doing this?”

“Thank you, I felt like this giant weight flew off my body and my mind feels at ease.”

In another video with a similar format, Rob practices a Reiki-healing meant for the removal of black magic, hexes, curses, and evil eyes. Text in the screen states; *“Divine intervention is here. Angelic protection has arrived to protect you right at this moment.”* Also here people comment on their bodily sensations and personal feelings;

²⁰ Appendix A: Glossary: “ngl”

“This made me feel light and sleepy. I believe the curse is connected to my sleep schedule because I’m having a hard time getting a good night’s sleep. Thank you.”

And;

“I accept the light and golden energy, and I let go all the ghosts of my past and the evil eye’s energy. My soul is feeling it, I ended up crying during the Reiki. Thank you so much. (heart emoji)”

These comments were selected because all users had sensory experiences with the healing, and socially embodied these into the digital space of Tiktok. At first hand no direct references towards spiritual cognition or mental states are visible, even though Rob is involving divine entities (Archangel Michael). However, in light of McGuire's argument, I argue that all of these experiences are ways of focusing attention, able to evoke meaningful spiritual experiences (McGuire, 2016).

McGuire states; “Through [ritual] practice, social meanings become physically embodied” (McGuire, 2016). Examples of this from the case are the emotional states that are described such as crying. Also interesting are the physical states that lead users to attach meanings, for instance the user mentioning feeling sleepy and concluding there might be a curse connected to their sleep schedule, or a user connecting calming sensations to the idea that the video must be “working”. These are examples of interpretations of a spiritual dimension through embodied experiences, of which the last mentioned interpretation influences perceived efficacy of the Reiki. Important to note here as well, however, is that many other users in the comments don’t express embodied sensations, and some appear to be sceptical of the healing. This demonstrates differences in how users interpret Tiktok-Reiki, but also that participant observation only does not fully uncover interpretations of it. Therefore I will now be analysing narratives of interviewees.

5.2.2. Interpretations of Digital Reiki: Interviews

When asking my respondents about their beliefs in connection to the Reiki content they engaged with, I got multiple indications of beliefs they had. For

example, Esther, the moderator in Rachel's livestreams, told me about the Dragon Gods used by Rachel to channel energies;

"I think that there is really something going on with Japanese goddesses or something, but I don't know any more about it, or think that there's a specific Reiki god or something. But I think Rachel has a connection to it and uses this to help us, heal us."

During the interview, I tried to get answers on how she can be so certain, if she did not have cognitive knowledge, but afterwards I still felt I missed information. However, reading the transcript, I realised it contained the answer;

"That's why I think these ghosts are real. Do you know the feeling when you are somewhere, and you feel somebody's watching you? [...] Sometimes it's like an instinct, [...] when I [...] felt that my crownchakra²¹ was opening. And I really felt like this imaginary thing on my head is turning more open [...], and you know it's there. Same with the dragons."

Here I found a parallel with the other interviews; most participants directly told me that they connect the spiritual dimension to "feeling". For example Lara's narrative;

"I feel something is there. I don't know how it works, but I know that we are all connected. To nature, to each other. [...] In order to believe in the Reiki, I have to get the feeling from it. I look at it and think that it feels nice, and this helps me with believing that it works. I think that is half of 'believing'"

Or Beth; *"I've never been a skeptic because it feels more right than anything else"*. Interesting is how she explains to me how she performs her personal Reiki practices; *"I work more shamanically, that means to me that I take divine love and energy and push it through people's hands with intention"*, showing how she has developed her own meanings around Reiki-healing. Esther states; *"I don't care if it is 'real' or not."* According to her, it is imaginary, and it helps her to feel better about herself, her body and her soul, and that counts for her. This connects directly to how "spiritual healing" is defined by Sara Coakley, especially the dimension with "locus"

²¹ Appendix A: Glossary: 'Crownchakra'

as lens; where the healing is not only physically aimed, but relative to spiritual, psychic, or somatic elements of the self. This is able to exist on its own, as for example in the case of Michelle, who simply engages because it makes her feel nice, but it can exist together with a connection to something transcendent or divine, also in alignment with Ammerman's theistic landscape. A good example of this is Beth's channeling of divine love and energy.

Out of the narratives from all the respondents it became clear that spiritual interpretations differ greatly, but that many emerge through embodied experience, and can exist independently of belief, just as for "normal" Reiki. The data shows an interplay between embodiment and belief, as well as it gives insight into the distinction of healing and spiritual healing. For the spiritual dimension it appears there should be at least a relation to psychic, somatic or spiritual elements of the self, in the form of embodiment. For healing, only physical embodiment seems to be necessary, however one needs to be receptive and open to the healing. Esther confirms; "It's just like; *I want to receive, and that's all you need.*"

5.3. Belief and Efficacy

In order to be able to answer the subquestion leading this chapter, I can now dive into how these different interpretations and experiences of Tiktok-Reiki influence its perceived healing efficacy. This will shine light on the role that belief plays for interpreting Tiktok-Reiki, what belief can consist of, and how it relates to spirituality and healing. Clear is that belief is not inherently necessary for the interpretation of a spiritual dimension, however I argue that belief can play a role in reinforcing or decreasing spiritual interpretations.

Theistic beliefs, in the form of references to divinity as were exemplified in this and the previous chapter, are a first kind that influence attached meanings and interpretations of Tiktok-Reiki, by for example feeling "the presence of Archangel Michael" in one's body, therefore concluding that the healing is working; a personally perceived efficacy. Another personal form of belief; belief in science, can have the opposite results. This can be seen in sceptical comments of users that narrate their disbelief in Reiki being able to work digitally. I agree with Ammerman

that narration in itself is a tool for forming beliefs and creating meaning (Ammerman 2021. p.177-206). Therefore, a user saying they think the video “is nonsense”, influences the way in which they perceive the effectiveness of the healing. This can be demonstrated by Michelle stating her beliefs; “*something needs to be true in every context, and be proven over and over. This means that I can never fully believe in anything.*”, and her perceived inability to be healed by Tiktok-Reiki content. A belief that bridges these two extremes is belief in placebo, discussed in the chapter of Anne Harrington in *Spiritual Healing*, where it becomes clear that in existing placebo research, results are always explained in these two extremes, never somewhere in between; “God’s power begins only where the power of the mind leaves off” (Coakley, 2020. p.164). Many of my interviewees have mentioned placebo as possible explanations for their embodied experiences. Esther; “*I think Reiki is energy. [...] even if it would be a placebo, it still helps for me, so I don’t care if I just imagine it’s helping or it’s actually helping.*”. With this argument, my aim is not to uncover whether certain spiritual beliefs actually influence efficacy of healing, as this could not result in generalisable conclusions that account for the complexity of human experiences and interpretation (Coakley, 2020. p.164), but rather to centralise individual experience and interpretation to see how they can influence *perceived* efficacy, and argue that this perceived efficacy in turn influences people's interpretations of a spiritual dimension, influencing their views on spirituality subconsciously through their own narratives. When I asked Lara at the end of the interview if there was anything she wanted to share, she told me; “*Yes, For me it was funny to think that spirituality for me means ‘believing’. Believing that something works, which makes it work.*”

7. Conclusion

7.1. Drawing Conclusions

In the introduction I explained my goal to form a bridge between two binary modes of understanding; “spirituality” and “science”, by focusing on Reiki-healing on Tiktok, in order to see if Tiktok-Reiki has the same spiritual dimension as normal Reiki. The research question of how Tiktok users experience and interpret the spiritual dimension of their engagement with digital Reiki-based energy-healing content serves as a case that uncovers the interrelatedness of healing, spirituality and belief, through a lived religion approach that takes into account individual experiences and narratives. The research was done using qualitative methods; digital ethnography in the form of participant observation on Tiktok and semi-structured interviews with 4 informants. The first subquestion of to what extent Tiktok-Reiki can be regarded as a digital sacred space and how this shapes users’ experiences and interpretations of the content was approached through the lens of Digital Religion theory, and concluded that spiritual engagement online is not just performative but deeply felt, and that through embodied actions Tiktok can function as a “sacred digital space”, allowing for new experiences and interpretations of the spiritual dimension of Reiki-healing, nuancing the relationship between spirituality and healing. The second subquestion; “How do users’ interpretations and experiences of Tiktok-Reiki influence its perceived healing efficacy, and how does this shape users’ interpretations of Tiktok-Reiki’s spiritual dimension?”, further nuanced the relationship between the concepts, and was discussed in chapter 5 using theories of Ammerman (theistic and extra-theistic landscapes) and McGuire (sensory experiences), in relation to discussions on spiritual healing from the field of contemporary religion. Data shows that people have varying interpretations of the spiritual dimension of Tiktok-Reiki, an interplay between embodiment and belief, and insight into the distinction of healing and spiritual healing; for spiritual healing, a relation to psychic, somatic or spiritual elements of the self is needed, but for healing physical embodiment and receptiveness is necessary. I did not aim to argue for or against the efficacy of Tiktok-Reiki, but for centralising experience and interpretation to gain perspective on how perceived efficacy was influenced and in turn influenced people's interpretation of the spiritual dimension of Tiktok-Reiki through narrative. All in all, this thesis proposed that Tiktok enables the emergence of a distinct form of

spiritual healing; Tiktok-Reiki, that invites embodied experiences and a diversity in interpretations of a spiritual dimension. Tiktok-Reiki does not inherently rely on belief, but belief can shape users' perceptions of efficacy, influencing the interpretation of the spiritual dimension. With this research, I have contributed to a broader academic debate that aims to uncover relations and bridge gaps between binary realms of understanding, in this case bringing together "science" and "religion" through a research into people's lived realities in a contemporary digital context.

7.4. Limitations and Further Research Recommendations

I am aware of some limitations of research that can problematize the transferability of my study results. One of these is the size of the dataset; doing participant observation for an extended period of time could uncover new factors that I can't foresee now, just as doing more interviews could. Concerning my interview informants; I am aware that only women were selected (not purposely), and that including male participants into the discourse could have led to different results. As I cannot make predictions of these possible different outcomes, I plead for further qualitative research within the field of lived religion that investigates the intersections of spirituality, healing and belief, as this thesis is just one drop in the big ocean. Be that as it may, I hope this small drop could cause a rippling effect.

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TikTok has become the home of modern witchcraft (yes, really) | WIRED. (n.d.). Retrieved May 8, 2025, from <https://www.wired.com/story/witchcraft-tiktok>

Thesis Appendix A: Glossary

A list of popular words and sayings used by TikTok creators of users derived from the ethnographic fields, and their meanings and explanations. This list is made with the purpose of gaining a better understanding of the empirical data for the thesis.

ASMR: short for Autonomous Sensory meridian Response, referring to a calming, pleasant tingling feeling/sensation, caused by specific visual or auditory triggers, in this case through videos of people purposely creating such noises or visuals to promote relaxation, enjoyment, or stress relief.

Crown Chakra: This refers to one of seven energy points in the human body, this particular one situated above the head of a person receiving reiki-healing. The crown chakra symbolizes divine connection, universal consciousness, and wisdom.

Foryou-page (or in short: fyp): The FYP is Tiktok's main feed, where content is algorithmically tailored to the specific users interests, based on their previous activity on the platform (liking and following). It is the first thing you see when you open the app, and where most activity takes place. This space can allow for videos to go viral, anyone's post can be seen here. It is a continuous stream with videos without an end, where new content can be discovered.

Japanese Dragon's Energy: Referring to a specific source of energy used by Reiki-master Rachel, who connects to dragon goddess Seoritsu-hime during healing sessions. Also sometimes referred to as Dragon Gods. Does dragon energy cleanse during sessions. It is a powerful, wise and balanced energy source inspired by mythological Japanese dragons.

Live-streaming (or in short: Live): A Tiktok feature that allows for broadcasting of real-time live videos of creators to other Tiktok users. Users can comment, like, or even join in a call during livestreams. Also gifts can be sent to the creator that he or she can convert into real money. Inappropriate behavior can be removed by moderators who can block certain users or comments in the livestream.

Mother Gaia (or in short: Gaia): Mother Gaia stems from greek mythology, being one of the primordial deities, the personification of the earth. In this context, it is used to refer to the earth as a sentient being that deserves great respect and gratitude. the usage of this term signals the user's connection to nature on a divine level.

Ngl: Short for “not gonna lie”, meaning as a reinforcer for messages, meaning that you are serious in what you are saying.

Receiving with positive energy: This refers to a user accepting a reiki-healing with an open heart and a positive mindset. Alignment plays a role here, the user believes he or she is worthy of receiving the good energy of this healing/message. This is often commented in tiktok's where some message/healing needs to be claimed/consented in order to work.

Soul fam/Soul tribe: Soul tribe refers to a term specifically used by this creator and her community, to refer to members of the community that align with the shared energy and purpose of the group. This word signals that this group of people feel like they resonate with each other on soul-level, and share similar goals and energy.

#Wichtok: This refers to a community on tiktok that shares magic, Wicca, and Paganism related content, or videos connected to metaphysical ideas. Examples are tutorials for spells, certain rituals, astrological information, and tarot card readings.

Appendix B: Template Data Management Plan

This template is based on the Faculty's Research Data Protocol and the [Dutch Code of Conduct for Scientific Integrity](#)

1. General	
1.1 Name & supervisor State your name, the name of your supervisor and the date this form was discussed with him or her.	Elske Bos (me), Aditya Kakati (1st supervisor), discussed on 16-05-2025 2nd reader is Kim Knibbe
1.2 Organisation (if applicable) Provide details on the organisation where the research takes place if this applies (in case of an internship).	-
1.2 Description of the research project Provide a short description of the project and the central research question.	Ethnography in digital social media environment of TikTok, focusing on the lived experiences and narratives of users (through interviews and digital ethnography) who engage with digital reiki-healings through video's and livestreams on TikTok. Research question: "How do TikTok users interpret and experience the spiritual dimension of their engagement with digital Reiki-based energy-healing content?"
2 Data collection – the creation of data	
Which data formats or which sources are used in the project? For example: - theoretical research, using literature and publicly available resources - Survey Data - Field Data - Interviews	Using literature and public/through own institution accessible academic resources, Ethnographic field data (TikTok videos, livestream fieldnotes, comment sections) Interview data of 4 informants.
3.3 Methods of data collection What method(s) do you use for the collection of data. (Tick all boxes that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Public sources (e.g. University Library) <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-structured individual interviews <input type="checkbox"/> Observations
3. Human subjects and research ethics	
3.1 How intrusive is your research? Can your research potentially have any harmful effects or consequences? For example, some resources, such as manuscripts can be fragile and brittle. Some	Yes, A potential harmful effect of doing the semi-structured interviews is that discussing personal beliefs or issues can cause distress to informants. Therefore I aim to create a safe environment, ask consent for using data, and

materials may therefore become damaged in the process. Can your research activities also possibly lead to sacrilege, or contribute to social tensions within a community? Will your research deal with things that might be considered sacred to some people, and that should not be profaned? Is there a significant environmental impact?	remind informants of their right to refrain from or change answers.
<p>3.2</p> <p>Does your research involve the participation of human subjects?</p> <p>IF YES: Please fill in the questions found in the appendix 3 on human subject research.</p>	Yes
<p>3.3 – Collecting personal data</p> <p>Will you be collecting personal data? (See appendix 4)</p> <p>If you are conducting research with personal data you have to comply to the General Data Privacy Regulation (GDPR).</p> <p><i>What is personal data?</i></p> <p>Personal Data is any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person ('data subject'); an identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person (art. 4 GDPR)</p> <p>https://www.gdpreu.org/the-regulation/key-concepts/personal-data/</p>	Yes
Storage, Sharing and Archiving	
<p>3.4 Where will the (raw) data be stored <i>during</i> research?</p> <p>If you want to store research data, it is good practice to ask yourself some questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How big is my dataset at the end of my research? • Do i want to collaborate on the data? • How confidential is my data? • How do I make sure I do not lose my data? <p>The x: and y: drives of the RUG network are for most research projects the easiest and readily</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Personal laptop or computer

<p>available solutions. Both drives are regularly backed- up, so no worries about that. If you need to share data within the RUG the y-drive is the best solution. Both drives are easily accessible from elsewhere by login into uwp.rug.nl</p> <p>For datasets that should be shared with students or with external research partners Unishare is an option.</p> <p>Need more information? Take a look at the site of the Digital Competence Centre (DCC)</p> <p>Feel free to contact the DCC for questions: dcc@rug.nl</p>	
<p>3.5 Storage after your research</p> <p>Are you planning to store / archive the data after you have finished your research? When yes, please explain where and for how long. Also explain who has access to these data</p> <p>NB do not use a personal UG network or google drive for archiving data!</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> X-drive of UG network</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Y-drive of UG network</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Personal laptop</p> <p>The retention period will be 10 years.</p>
<p>3.6 Sharing of data</p> <p>With whom will you be sharing data during your research?</p> <p>For example, if you are taking an internship at a company, and you store UG-data on the drive of that company, then this would count as such.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Universities or other parties outside the EU/EEA</p>
<p>4 – Final comments</p>	
<p>Thank you for filling in the RDMP.</p> <p>Do you have any other information that was not addressed in this template that you think is useful to mention?</p>	<p>Final thesis product will be shared with research participants, with consent of all research participants. Pseudonyms will be used for names. Content for using interview and ethnographic data was asked and given.</p>

Appendix C: Human Subject Research

<p>Please answer these questions when you do human subject research. Include this document in your BA or MA thesis as an appendix.</p> <p>In some cases an explanation is required. Please keep the answers brief, but avoid a telegram-style.</p>	
<p>1. Vulnerability</p> <p>1.1. Will the research project involve participants who are in any way vulnerable?</p> <p>Explanation: human subjects may be "vulnerable persons", depending on the circumstances relating to the project and or the research subject.</p> <p>People may be vulnerable when for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - they are below the age of 18, - they cannot freely give their consent or freely oppose participation in the research (e.g. students who have to participate in a research project in order to get credits); - they may not be fully able to form an opinion about the processing of their personal data (i.e. people with learning disabilities) - the processing of personal data about them could be harmful to them (e.g. processing of opinions of people about their current job). <p>(See appendix 4.)</p>	<p>My research project involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - vulnerable persons, namely <p>People telling about their personal religious and spiritual beliefs, this could possibly be harmful.</p>
<p>2. Providers of personal data</p> <p>2.1. Who will provide the personal data to be used in the study?</p> <p>If the personal data will be provided by an external party (not being the student or the UG), please describe the party/parties and indicate for each party whether an agreement has been signed. This may be the case when you do an internship or if e.g. a hospital provides you the data.</p> <p>In the case of interviews or surveys, the researcher provides the data himself. These data can be obtained from the subjects, or supplied by the UG (in case if you are going</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Data is obtained from the participants directly (e.g. via interviews).</p>

to use data sets that already exist, secondary use.)	
2.2. Is (informed) consent of the research subjects necessary in order to process the data?	Yes, informed consent is required. Subjects of the ethnographic fieldwork have been asked consent online for the use of their data, interviewees have been asked for consent to record the interview and use the data.
2.3. Will participants be enlisted in the project without their knowledge and/or consent? (E.g. via covert observation of people in public places, or by using social media data.)	Data of TikTok creators is used with their knowledge/consent, data of comments of tiktok users is used without knowledge, but sensitive data will be removed.
2.4. How will you recruit participants?	2 Interviewees have been recruited online through direct message requests on tiktok, and 2 responded to an open request on instagram. Tiktok creators have been found on and messaged through a TikTok account specially created for the research.
3. Safety 3.1. How might your research have a direct impact on the lives of your research participants? Are there any doubts or concerns regarding the safety and /or wellbeing of the research participants during the research period? Impact can happen during and after the research project. For example, because their life world is interfered with; it may be dangerous for them to work with you; their privacy is at stake; or when the research may make them feel uncomfortable in any way.	People share their personal beliefs, worldviews, and feelings with me. This is private information in itself, plus they might later change their minds about what was said. This could make them feel uncomfortable.
3.2. Are there any doubts or concerns regarding your own safety and /or wellbeing (or of any of your fellow students) during the research period?	No
3.3. How will you handle the risks of your research project?	Respondents will be asked consent for using the data, and be told that they don't have to talk about anything they don't want to and can always ask me to remove data afterwards, contact me to add information later on, or change their minds during the interview.

4. Categories of personal data that are processed	<input type="checkbox"/> Nationality <input type="checkbox"/> Job information <input type="checkbox"/> Information revealing racial or ethnic origin <input type="checkbox"/> Information revealing a person's political opinions <input type="checkbox"/> Information on a person's mental health <input type="checkbox"/> Information about a person's sex life or sexual orientation <input type="checkbox"/> Information revealing religious or philosophical convictions
5. Technical/organisational measures 5.1 Select which of the following security measures are used to protect personal data. See the FAQ for more information on the difference between pseudonymisation and anonymisation.	<input type="checkbox"/> Pseudonymisation
6. Data transfer 6.1. Is there any personal data transferred to countries outside the European Economic Area (EU, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein), or will you conduct research in any non-EU/EEA country?	Yes, one interviewee is from Canada, and the finished thesis will be shared with that person.
When you would like help filling in the form, or when you have questions or remarks, please discuss this with your supervisor, or contact the faculty's privacy and security coordinator: h.a.ten.have@rug.nl	

Thesis Appendix D: Research Logbook

In this logbook I have kept all the information of the work I did for my thesis research. This information might be useful as an extension of the methodology chapter for a better understanding of the research process, and to gain a clear image of how I distributed my available time, from the start of the bachelor-thesis seminar until the final submission date. Some logbook notes were in need of specifications, these are referred to in the table and can be found all the way at the bottom of this document. The keeping of this logbook has helped me by establishing a clear picture of how much time I have spent on the different elements of the process and making better predictions of how much time I might still need.

<u>Date:</u>	<u>What did I do this day:</u>
24 january	First seminar, start of thesis seminar.
13 february	Uploaded initial statement (<i>specifications 1</i>), still thinking about various possible topics for my thesis.
24 february	Finished reading book 1 for reading case studies (Courtney Bender)
27 february	Deadline: handed in thesis proposal outline (so made a final choice between topics)
28 february	Presented my outline, got useful feedback
10 march	Finished book 2 for reading case studies (Nicholas Campion)

17 march	Finished theoretical summary for reading case studies
25 march	Final presentation of reading case studies books
30 march	Made a thesis Tiktok account and started digital fieldwork process; saved 4 videos, liked 10 videos, followed 5 accounts (orientation, testing) <i>(specifications 2)</i>
31 march	Deadline: Finished thesis proposal: finally a good idea of what I will be doing. saved 3 videos, liked 13 videos, followed 11 accounts (orientation, testing)
1 april	Saved 1 video, liked 7 videos, followed 8 accounts (orientation, testing)
10 april	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Started preparing for first supervising meeting and made a working schedule - saved 4 videos, liked 5 videos, followed 1 account (orientation, testing)
14 april	Saved 1 video, liked 5 videos, chose best creators: followed 3 accounts, unfollowed 3 accounts (irrelevant)
15 april	First thesis supervision meeting with Aditya <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - decided to reach out to Kim Knibbe as second reader.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - searched on tiktok but only saved 1 video (defined scope to only energy healings)
18 april	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Searched for dutch energy healing videos & creators (unsuccessful)
22 april	Searched for reiki-content, found and followed new creators
23 april	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Decided specific scope requirements (<i>specifications 3</i>) - revised sub questions and main question into 3 themes. - started on chapter plan.
24 april	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Started approaching participants and searching - finalized chapter plan. (<i>specifications 4</i>)
25 april	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finished 2nd draft for 2nd meeting, not far enough because I should have started writing. - Algorithm finally working for me: fyp suggests multiple reiki-healing livestreams (earlier only tarot). found 3 useful livestreams of 3 different creators to process later - Made and published a tiktok to find interview participants, sent to friends with question if they

	want to engage with it to make it more popular. <i>(specifications 5)</i>
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28 april	Second thesis supervision meeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Did reading about digital ethnography, approaching participants online. - Established messages to send to people (in English and Dutch) <i>(specifications 6)</i>
29 april	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Searched for more livestreams, found one more. - Searched for more users with interesting engagement and followed them and sent them messages. - Sent out a request for interviewees on my personal instagram account and directly came in contact with one person that is interested!
30 april	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A user that I messaged on tiktok responded and is interested in doing an interview! planned an interview for saturday. (3th of may) - Did some general research on reiki practices and ideas, and Tantric Buddhism <i>(specifications 7)</i>

1 may	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Did some more reading - Started preparing the interview guide (<i>can be found in other appendix doc</i>)
2 may	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Did more reading - Found out how to best make an interview guide, looked into older interviews I did, and finished the interview guide. Practiced it on my mother through the phone.
3 may	Had my first interview (2 hours long) (<i>transcript can be found in other appendix doc</i>)
4 may	Got a free subscription for a month to (<i>tiktok creator</i>) platform from my first interviewee, so I can book a digital energy healing myself. Subscription will end on june 2nd. all subscriber benefits are automatically activated.
7 may	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Found another participant (active tiktok engager and reiki practitioner herself) that wants to do an interview). - Transcribed the first interview - Made a setup of how to write chapter 4. - Messaged <i>Rachel</i> asking for a private remote session. (using private account, as this will be

	<p>just for my personal experience.</p> <p>messed @account asking if she wants to do an interview.</p> <p>messed Beth about when she would like to do an interview with me, planned the interview tomorrow evening.</p>
8 may	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Got a reply from <i>Rachel</i>, booked a remote session on monday. - Finally started writing, had trouble doing this. Should have had an interview with Beth, but she forgot so we planned it for saturday evening. - Planned third interview with tiktok user Michelle on sunday. - Did more theoretical reading.
9 may	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Did more reading - Did some more writing. behind on schedule.
10 may	Conducted interview of 1 hour with Beth. (<i>transcript can be found in other appendix doc</i>)
11 may	Conducted interview of 1 hour with Michelle. (<i>transcript can be found in other appendix doc</i>)
12 may	Had my first ever digital reiki healing: private session with digital reiki master Rachel. (recommended by Esther). (<i>specifications 8</i>)

13 may	Third thesis supervision meeting with Aditya
16 may	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Did some reading - Did some transcribing of interviews - Planned my last interview with Lara on saturday.
17 may	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conducted interview of 1 hour with Lara. (<i>transcript can be found in other appendix doc</i>) - Did some reading and transcribing.
18 may	Did some transcribing of interviews
20 may	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Did some reading - Did some transcribing - Should have really started writing but here the stress took over and I had a big writing blackout/block, did not know where to start and how to proceed.
21 may	Still felt very overwhelmed so only coded the first two interviews
22 may	Finally started writing: started establishing a clear image of the theoretical framework, it was a very chaotic day.
23 may	Finally really found my flow: almost finished chapter on theoretical

	framework, finished last draft for final supervising meeting.
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24 may	Finished chapter on theoretical framework (3).
25 may	Finished coding other 2 interviews, put in all useful quotes per theme in the chapters to be able to analyse and sort them later
27 may	Had the last thesis supervision meeting with Aditya , started stressing out again because of time pressure. Worked on reading and sorting information for writing chapter 4 & 5
28 may	Started writing chapter 4, finished the last part of theoretical chapter (3).
29 may	Start of a big writing sprint. Almost finished analysis chapter 4.
30 may	Finished chapter 5, almost finished chapter 5.
31 may	Last day before the deadline of the first thesis draft (23:59) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I finished chapter 5, - wrote chapter 6, - got together in the document all that I had so far for the introduction, methodology, and conclusion, and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - started working on the bibliography and the layout of the document. (not finished). Did not finish what I wanted unfortunately. - Sent the first draft document out for feedback via email (to Aditya) and handed it in on brightspace.
9 june	Received feedback on the first draft through email from Aditya.
11 june	First time after some days working on thesis again (the days in between I have spent on finishing resits for the academic debates course), read through the feedback on the sent file.
12 june	Started reading more literature needed for revising of chapter 6; chapter on placebo from volume by Sarah Coakley.
14 june	Read more of Sarah Coakley and searched for Berger and Luckmann (recommended literature in feedback)
15 june	Worked on finishing methodology and appendices (finishing of writing out transcripts, logbook, and fieldnotes details)
16 june	Finished methodology, revised and finished chapter 6

17 june	Wrote conclusion chapter & introduction
18 june	Last day, final thesis deadline 23:59. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finished introduction, - Worked on cutting words to meet word count, - Made layout and bibliography, - Finished polishing appendices, - Read the whole thesis over to spot mistakes and repeating, - Processed all feedback.

Specifications of Logbook

1. 13 february: Initial statement (handed in on Brightspace)

Elske Bos, s4537262

Date: 13-02-2025

For my thesis, there are for now 3 subjects that have my attention. The first is belief within romantic relationships, and specifically a relationship with one secular/non-believing/atheist (need to get these distinctions more clear) and one spiritual/religious person. a possible research question (which still could be narrowed down) could be; “How do religious or spiritual beliefs influence the dynamics of romantic relationships when one partner is secular/non-believer/atheist and the other adheres to a religion or spirituality?”. this question displays my specific interest in the influence that beliefs have on the dynamics, which is still a rather broad concept.

for this topic I would take an anthropological approach (i think), and zoom in on specific cases, but also do extensive research in existing literature of mixed-faith relationships, to be able to test some of these in real life on my cases.

The second subject that appeals to me is that of religion/spirituality and psychedelics, and in particular of people that become religious/spiritual after the use of psychedelics, for example through a psychedelics-induced psychosis. an interesting question would be the following: “(How) Do experiences of altered consciousness through psychedelics lead to the formation of new religious or spiritual identities?”. This would also be anthropological research with use of interviews for some specific cases, or surveys gathering specific experiences of people with spiritual experiences during or after psychedelics. I do not know if there has been (m)any research done on this topic already.

My last topic of interest is still a bit vague, as I still see many paths I could go with this; spirituality on modern-day social media. I have looked a little into distance reiki and other healings on a distance that work through social media but I do not know a question for this that interests me enough, but also the topic of conspiracies on social media grabs my attention. If I could formulate some possible research questions and approaches on this, I believe this would be the most accessible topic for me as the other topics could have more ethical constraints, or form difficulties with finding participants and resources.

(Another topic that interests me is the question of why religious people would want to do religious studies, as i think it is an interesting contradiction, but as I have enough topics and eventually would have to make choices I set this aside for now.)

2. 30 march: Digital ethnographic fieldwork notes

I created a new tiktok account (using private RUG mailadress:

e.bos.16@student.rug.nl)

name account: @thesistiktokspirituality (might change name later, not sure about how anonymous I should present myself)

relevant settings:

- no private account
- location services off
- no syncing contacts, no suggesting account to others

- allow comments & mentions & direct messages from everyone, no filtering comments of others
- only I can see my following list & liked videos (privacy)

started searching for relevant hashtags to establish a relevant algorithm for myself to find relevant videos and creators

searched for hashtags: (not yet to find useable videos or creators, but just to start liking videos that had relevant themes in order to get a personalized For You Page

- #spirituality
- #spiritualiteit (NL)
- #spiritualiteitnederland
- #energyhealing
- #reikihealing
- #tarot
- #tarotreading
- #pranicenergy
- #pranichealing
- #spiritualhealing
- #energiehelen (NL)
- #reikihealing
- #reiki
- #reikihealing (NL)
- #reikinenederland (NL)
- #distancereiki
- #witchtok
- #withchtoknl (NL)
- #soundhealing

searched for livestreams: hard time finding relevant live streams (most are tarot-readers that are earning money through gifts from followers)

did not find energy healing livestreams yet

started watching, liking, following and saving throughout the days:

throughout the days I get a lot of follow requests and sometimes direct messages, all from accounts that use the same pictures and content of popular creators that i started following earlier, but who have a slightly different name (a letter or something else added in). my guess is that these are scam accounts because many “real” creators have information on their account about creators stealing their identity in order to make profit from users (will explain better later, not really relevant this).

feel like i need to read about digital ethnography (and ethics) before i start doing research online.

question i have for example: do i need to let people in the livestream know that I am there to do research? and that i am recording the livestream?

3. 23 april: Specific research scope requirements

note: Scope requirements have changed during the research process, so might differ now from the thesis arguments, showing these just to give insight into the process.

main q: *How do English-speaking TikTok users interpret and experience the spiritual dimension of their (active) engagement with digital Reiki-based (energy)healing content?*

English-speaking content, users, and creators: reasons:

1. Language use is an *important filter* on tiktok: it helps to decide who sees what content and what meanings are attached to certain spiritual messages (explain how this happens in the thesis).
2. Furthermore, on TikTok, the english language is *dominant*, acts as a shared language for users I noticed, allows engagement with healing practices that transcends local or national boundaries; relevant for reiki: also global in nature and works independently from time or place.
3. English content is *globally oriented*. So videos that are created in english, are consciously directed to users over the whole world. This makes that english

content is culturally influential, often goes ‘viral’ (because it’s more likely for more people to be picked up by tiktok’s algorithm), and speaks to a big global audience. This in turn helps me get access to a richer dataset than when only focusing on dutch creators, as I found that the data of dutch users engaging with dutch creators is simply too small, and won’t allow me to get the full picture.

4. The full picture would be that of active users who engage with energy healing content WITHIN a *community*: because use of language shapes experience and engagement: the english language on tiktok has formed a shared language that forms a community/culture of people who use it (by blending terminology from New Age thinking and popular psycho-spiritual language). By actively engaging, so not just consuming content but also replying and participating, people become part of this language community. (*my reasoning, need find sources that explain more about how language (online) creates community*) this works less when only focusing on dutch-speakers, because they use a mix of dutch and this english shared tiktok-language.

Reiki-energy healing focus: reasons:

1. *Rich data*: When searching voor “#energyhealing” most videos (that have most engagement) are reiki-healing video’s, most creators with this specific and clear criterium are to be found.
2. *Specific analysis*: of experiences and interpretations of engagement will become more specific when focusing on experience of this specific form of energy healing.
3. Reiki represents broader trends in online tiktok spirituality (how) but as a energy-healing category demarcated enough to allow deep analysis.
4. *Visual*: Its visual characteristics (hand movements, use of crystal props) are great for analysing the practices and its different elements as opposed to for example sound/frequency healings.

Focus group: active users/followers of reiki-creators: reasons:

1. *Age group less important than behavior*: looking at a social practice instead

of a demographic group, because within lived religion research behavior is more important than age. A focus on active followers will provide me with more info on how engagement with reiki-healings is experienced and interpreted by followers than a focus on one specific group. My first reasoning for choosing gen-z as a focus group was because of the assumption that they are the most active and engaging group on tiktok, which in general is often true, but it depends on the context. Other demographic groups could be just as active as well

New age debates relevant if age used as category?)

2. *Not only gen-Z engages*: This leads me to the second point; in this case I saw many millennial people interacting with energy healings online as well. It is another question to see how age influences engagement with online digital healings. but seeing other age groups interact as well immediately contradicted my first assumption of the gen-z ‘culture’ which I earlier defined more fitting as a ‘language culture’.

4. 24 april: Chapter plan: (8000 - 10.000 words) (7 chapters)

Note: chapter plan has changed later on during the writing process, showing this here just to give insight on the process.

1. Introduction (300 W) (including 2 & 3)

- 1.1. problem statement/knowledge objective/research questions
- 1.2. defining and accounting for certain concepts
- 1.3. explaining the groups/scope/research space (and why)
- 1.4. explain broadly about methods and introduce informants

2. Methodology (keeping short) (450 w maybe more)

- 2.1. short & general an what qualitative research methods and why
- 2.2. about doing digital ethnography general (gathering data method 1)
- 2.3. about interviews (gathering data method 2)
- 2.4. about the ethics

- 2.5. about positionality
- 2.6. about making selections and recruitment (logbook helpful here)
- 2.7 about the analysis (digital mining for ex.?)

3. Theoretical Framework (keeping short as possible!) (450 w ,more needed))

3.1. Lived religion Theory

3.1.1. Ammerman

3.1.2. McGuire

3.2. Digital Religion Theory (Campbell)

3.3. Explaining the other useful theories (not official frameworks)

3.3.1. Mimetic Theory (Girard)

3.3.2. Algorithmic Divination

3.3.3. Authority and Authenticity

[Analysis chapters:]

4. Chapter on platform/techno-cultural side (theme 1) (2000 w)

4.1. On TikTok as a platform in general (algorithmic structure) (keeping short!)

4.2. General content analysis

4.2.1. Content formatting

4.2.2. General engagement with reiki content

4.3. Algorithmic Divination (as possible expl. for authenticity)

4.4. Mimetics (as possible explanation for authenticity)

4.5. Digital Religion (using Campbell)

4.5.1. Tiktok as a sacred space

4.5.2. Authenticity through authority on social media

5. Chapter on personal/spiritual/lived religion (theme 2) (2000 w)

5.1. Motivations (what are users seeking)

5.1.1. Mimetics or other (first) possible theoretical explanations (short)

5.1.2. Users narratives on their motivations

5.2. Lived spirituality (integration in daily lives)

5.2.1. *On (spiritual) meaning-making*

6. Chapter on sociocultural/linguistic context (theme 3) (2000 w)

6.1. Background factors (definite factors will become apparent from data)

6.1.1. Linguistics (for ex.)

6.1.2. Upbringing/culture (for ex.)

6.1.3. Age? (for ex.)

6.2. General: how does background influence interpretation & experience

7. Conclusion (800 W)

7.1. Summarizing main findings generally (short

7.1.1. *Theme 1*

7.1.2. *Theme 2*

7.1.3. *Theme 3*

7.2. Drawing conclusions: building up argument (answer from 3 questions/themes)

7.2.1. *Theme 1*

7.2.2. *Theme 2*

7.2.3. *Theme 3*

7.2.4. *Presenting central argument*

7.3. Contributions and implications

7.3. Limitations and further research recommendations

8. References

9. Appendixes

- Interview questions
- Interview transcripts
- ethnographic research fieldnotes
- codings?
- other extra's

5. 25 april: content information of recruitment Tiktok-video I made:

Tiktok for finding participants I made:

sound used: Anxiety - Doechii (currently viral, 4.0 Million posts with this sound),
higher chances of algorithm picking up

3 aesthetic photos used (in theme of reiki and spirituality) as background for text,
slideshow format

text in slide 1: “Have you ever felt energy through your screen? Or better said; have you come across reiki-healing related content on TikTok? (think of creators performing hand-healing actions through the screen, or talking about reiki for example). And if so, do you occasionally interact with it? by liking, or maybe commenting or stitching it for example). if this resonates with you, then you could be of great help for me!”

text in slide 2: “Hi, my name is Elske and i’m a dutch student of religious studies, writing my bachelor’s thesis on how people experience and interpret digital reiki healing content on tiktok. I want to look into experiences that people that have engaged with such content experience and how they interpret the spiritual dimension of it. How you feel about it, or make sense of it, and what the underlying reasons for this could be. I am looking for people that want to do a short and informal interview! (through a call, the Netherlands might be far away for some of you) talking about their personal thoughts and experiences on this topic. (20-30 minutes). It is anonymous and casual, just you and your experiences.”

text in slide 3: “Of course you would not have to share anything you don’t want to, and can always contact me afterwards if you would like me to change or erase things that were said. All data will be anonymous, and nothing will be shared or published to the outside world. Doing the interview I will follow ethical academic guidelines. It is only for education purposes, and you would be of enormous help to me! If you

want to be an interviewee for my thesis, please leave behind a comment or send me a direct message! Then together we can plan a time for a short call that works best for both of us. I hope the algorithm will bring this video to the right place!”

Text in caption: “Looking for interviewees! I am Elske, 23 years of age, and almost finished with my academic bachelor’s study on religion in the Netherlands. I chose this study out of great interest in everything spiritual, religious, and in other forms of making sense of the world around us that don’t fall under these categories. I am specifically interested to find out more about the lived experiences of people; how do people experience the world? What place does religion have in their everyday lives? And in what different ways can people’s attitudes towards religion and spirituality be explained? This thesis is a small step for me towards answering questions I have had my whole life so far. If you are interested in helping or if you just want to know more, you can always DM me! I can explain everything that is not clear. Thank you so much in advance!”

results until now: (28th april:) 461 views, 4 saves, 9 likes and 3 comments (asked friends to like and react too, comments and saves are irrelevant, only from own friends to increase reach), 2 new followers (people I followed from livestreams, will dm them)

so to conclude: no success, need for making a new video

changes I could make:

- less text in images
- different sound
- use video format (me talking, showing my face to gain trust?)

so for now I have 2 interviewees.

- Esther: very active user/engager with digital reiki content
- Michelle: less active engager with reiki content

need for 1 or 2 interviewees more: (found 3d interviewee: Beth)

Found 4th interviewee after asking around in personal surroundings: Lara.

→ maybe a reiki-healing TikTok creator ? (other digital creator)

how could this help answer my question:

- can reveal how content is designed to be spiritually engaging (relevant for theme 1)
- Help explain how intentions and expectations of content creators might shape or contrast with user interpretations.
- Provide context on **how they perceive users' reactions** — do they believe people actually feel healing? What kinds of engagement do they notice or value?

6. 28 april: Message to send to possible participants:

English version: "Hi! I'm Elske, a religious studies bachelor's student from Groningen, the Netherlands, and for my thesis I'm doing research on how people experience and interpret digital reiki-healing content on TikTok. I'm specifically interested in looking into people's experiences with energy-healings or other forms of spirituality online, and how they feel and think about it and make sense of it. I am currently in the process of looking for people who occasionally/actively engage with or come across reiki-healing content on Tiktok and would be open for a short, informal interview, (20-30 minutes) where I would ask some questions about personal experiences with it. I saw your comment on (video) and was wondering if you would be interested to help me? The interview can be on a(video)call, because I know I'm kind of far away. All data will be anonymous of course, and will not be published publicly anywhere."

Dutch version: (for dutch users) Hoi! Ik ben Elske, en ik schrijf momenteel mijn scriptie voor de bachelor religiewetenschappen aan de Universiteit in Groningen. Ik doe mijn onderzoek naar hoe tiktok-gebruikers digitale reiki-heling content ervaren

en interpreteren. Ik ben dan vooral geïnteresseerd in persoonlijke ervaringen met het zien van zulk soort video's/livestreams, of eventueel ook andere vormen van spirituele content op TikTok, en hoe mensen zich daarbij voelen, of associaties die ze erbij hebben. Momenteel ben ik hard op zoek naar mensen die wel eens zulke reiki-video's tegenkomen op tiktok (of zijn tegengekomen ooit) en die mij zouden willen helpen door middel van een kort en informeel 1-op-1 interview (20 tot 30 minuutjes). Dit interview kan gewoon via de telefoon/videobellen, dus je hoeft er niet voor ergens naartoe en het is zo gedaan! Ik stuur jou nu een berichtje, omdat ik je comment onder de video van @... tegenkwam en me afvroeg of jij hier misschien interesse in zou hebben. Alles wat gezegd zal worden blijft natuurlijk anoniem, en zal nergens anders dan bij mijn docenten gedeeld worden. Als je eerst nog vragen hebt kan ik die natuurlijk hier beantwoorden! Laat het maar weten.

(idea: i have a semi-big following on my personal instagram account (around 1900) and could post a request or something like a quick survey in my stories to find participants, if tiktok alone does not work)

also posted an Instagram story on my personal account, asking for interviewees: (in Dutch)

text: (Dutch)

“Voor mijn scriptie ben ik op zoek naar mensen die mij willen helpen d.m.v. een kort interview! Ik doe onderzoek naar hoe tiktok-gebruikers de spirituele dimensie van digitale reiki-healing content ervaren en begrijpen. Ben of ken jij iemand die wel eens reiki-videos/livestreams op TikTok is tegengekomen en zou je het leuk vinden om mij te helpen? Stuur me dan een DM! (Interviews kunnen gewoon via bellen en alle data blijft natuurlijk anoniem!).”

→ results: possible candidate for an interview! (Michelle)

sent direct messages on tiktok to 40 users that I had seen engaging with reiki-healers on tiktok. Here's where i found the users and how many users per creator I sent a message:

- from live Celeste: 3
- From live anonymous (SW): 1
- From live Rachel: 6
- From live anonymous (A): 7
- From comments anonymous (S): 1
- From comments Mark: 5
- From comments anonymous (W): 5
- From comments anonymous (J): 2
- From comments Rob: 2
- From comments anonymous (E): 8

(eventually got 2 respondents through tiktok and 2 through instagram)

→ (30th april: results: response from Esther who wants to do an interview!

(moderator for creator Rachel)

7. 30 april: did some general research on reiki and Tantric Buddhism

(after Aditya recommended me to do this)

watched videos on youtube:

- on tantric buddhism:
- tantric buddhism vs. individualism
- core of buddhism is that individual self is an illusion

Vajrayana buddhisme = tantric buddhism

Shingon buddhism = Japanese Vajrayana

Het Vajrayana is dan ook niet een geloofsreligie maar een ervaringsreligie, omdat het niet om geloven maar om ervaren gaat.

Alleen voor vandaag...(usui 5 principles dutch)

1. ...word niet boos

2. ...wees niet bezorgd
3. ...wees dankbaar
4. ...wees ijverig in je werk/je bezigheden
5. ...wees vriendelijk tegen mensen

8. 12 may: Notes on personal experience with digital reiki healing (also included in fieldnotes: Appendix E)

Today I had planned an online meeting of one hour with digital reiki-master Rachel that I had been observing for a while. I have been watching some of her livestreams and had had an interview with one of the active moderators in her livestreams. *(in the appendix doc with ethnographic fieldnotes the specifics details about this creator and her livestreams can be found)* I had never received reiki-energy before so I figured it would be good to have such a experience, in specific with distance/digital reiki in this case, in order to get a better sense of my research topic though personal experience. I booked the session by messaging the creator on tiktok, and got a message back with her offer. Because of the transcription on the tiktok channel of Rachel that I got from Esther, I could get a discount on the price for a private remote session, which would be 30 minutes long. We planned it on monday, and Rachel messaged me to follow her account on instagram and call me though the direct message function on instagram on the agreed time. So I did on monday. I sat down on the couch and removed all sources of distraction, and called Rachel. It was a videocall, so I could see her face and she could se me. She sat in the same spot as she would have during her livestreams, with her dog on her lap. She greeted me and I greeted back, and she asked me if I ever had received reiki before and I told her no. Then she asked me if I knew what it entailed and if she should explain it a little bit, and I told her I knew a little bit about it but that she could explain some more to me. She explained she is a Japanese reiki-master, channeling Japanese dragon's energy to her patients. She compared the body to a pipeline through which energy from the cosmos can flow down into the earth, through certain energy points that can be blocked. Her reiki serves to move this energy from a distance, as it moves independently from time or space, in order to help my body heal itself, to clean its own energy-pathways so the energy can flow freely. This can promote relaxation.

She explained how she would go about doing the healing; first she would feel if I have any blocked chakras, and then she would cleanse my energy and remove blockages using dragon's energy, and lastly she would create an energetic field of protection around me. She also told me that sometimes she gets certain visions while doing the healing however that she does not claim to be a medium but she will tell them to me afterwards anyways and leave them open for interpretation. Then she began the healing and told me that I can sit or lie down however I want, and that my face does not necessarily need to be on screen. I could close my eyes and just relax and let it happen. For my own feeling I did want to have the screen in front of my face, but I did close my eyes and sometimes opened them slightly to see what was happening, because she remained silent during the healing. Soft ambient music was on in the background. With her hands and her eyes closed she moved in front of the camera, and I was paying attention to bodily sensations. I was thinking a lot during the healing, mainly about the effects it had on my body. Were the bodily sensations just apparent because I was hyper-aware of my own body all of a sudden, or did they really come from the energy she was channeling? After a while I did start feeling more relaxed and a little bit sleepy, but my immediate thoughts were that an explanation for this could be that I was lying down on my couch with closed eyes and that that fact alone might be reason enough for my relaxation. I also started feeling a little bit light-headed, nauseous after a while, and my arms were a little bit tingly/light. Also I sometimes saw some bright colors on my retina; yellow and bright green. I felt like I was thinking way too much about my bodily sensations, so I tried to minimize this as much as possible, which was a big struggle inside my head. Eventually I was more able to just give in to the fact that I was relaxing and that I was not experiencing such heavy sensations. I realized that I unsuspectedly had had high expectations for what would happen during this session. After 30 minutes Rachel told me that she was done, and what she had felt from my energy. She told me I did not have big energetic chakra blockages, only a little bit in my heart chakra and an even smaller amount in my solar plexus chakra. She explained to me that this could mean that I sometimes experience difficulties in letting people come close to my heart or giving and receiving love, and that I might experience difficulties speaking my truth or being my real authentic self. She also had some visions while doing the healing; of me being some kind of princess in a past life, like an European medieval princess, that could not be a princess because she had to fight as a soldier to

protect her country. She explained that maybe this could be interpreted metaphorically as me not being able to be my full authentic self, who I really want to be. Or at least me having this feeling. When I heard this I was surprised because this is not something that I would necessarily immediately link to myself, but I received the information with an open mind. She asked me if I had any questions or remarks and I told her I did not, and thanked her for her time and energy, and we ended the call. Afterwards I felt very normal, maybe a little bit more relaxed than before, and also a little confused about what I had just experienced and how I should interpret it. It felt good to have had my first experience with (distance)reiki, but my views on it had not really changed.

Thesis Appendix E: Digital Ethnography (Fieldnotes)

In this document I have written out notes on the digital ethnographic fieldwork on Tiktok that I have done, of which I have used elements in the analysis. I have made a list below of all of the material that I have been engaging with, however only have written extensive field notes on the video's, live streams, accounts, and comment sections that were specifically and directly useful for the data analysis, otherwise this document would be too extensive.

9 reiki-creators used for analysis (of which 5 in detail)

22 Tiktok videos analysed (of which 4 in detail)

12 Livestreams attended and analysed (of which 4 in detail)

168 interesting/useful viewer comments noted down in total

Creator accounts used for analysis + general info:

1. Celeste (Pseudonym) → led me to interviewee Beth

Reiki master teacher from the USA. Her bio states; "I can guide you to re-program your brain & heal your traumas". 31,9K followers, 282,9K likes total. Posts videos of general live updates and Tarot card readings, does reiki-healing livestreams multiple times a week. Calls her follower community her "soul tribe". Gets messages through from archangels. Talks with followers and states affirmation during her reiki livestreams. Plays ambient music in the background.

2. Rachel (Pseudonym) → led me to interviewee Esther

Rachel, Japanese dragon energy, connects to dragon goddess Seoritsu-hime during healing sessions. Has 24K followers and 90K likes in total. Japanese healer, based in Scotland. always does dragon energy cleanse and makes energy protection around someone's body at the end of each session. Also does full remote sessions: only photo and name is needed (distance reiki). Helps with anxiety, depression, cancer, physical pain, mental pain, skin issues, period issues, chakra balance, energy cleansing, energy protection from psychic attacks or bad energy. Charges 25 dollars (20 for subscribers) for a private personalized reiki healing session (35 min). livestreams are collective healings, meaning everyone can receive the energy. Seeing

visions during sessions depends on the day, does not have any meaning specifically. Talks with followers during reiki livestreams, sometimes sees visions. Plays ambient music in the background.

3. Rob (Pseudonym): Used only for videos and comments sections

His bio states: “My goal & dream is to lift & raise the vibrational frequencies of all that is”. Reiki master from Australia. Has his own youtube account where he does reiki healings as well. Has his own website and manifesting guide E-book. Has Tiktok video’s on Reiki healing, vibrational alignment, guided meditation, “Truth and advice”. Has 1,6 million followers and 30,4 million likes in total. His reiki-healing tiktok videos are very popular and have lots of interesting useful elements, and rich comment sections. Uses messages of archangels and attributes such as feathers and crystals for his digital healings. Plays ambient music in the background.

4. Mark (Pseudonym): Used only for videos and comment sections

Reiki master from the USA. His bio states: “Reiki master, I only have one account. Connecting people through love.” Has his own “guide”, offers reiki session bookings, has his own reiki-healing youtube channel as well. Has 282,4K followers and 7,1 million likes in total. Has Tiktok videos on psychic protection, negative energy plucking, manifesting wealth, manifesting love, cord cutting, aura cleansing, reiki affirmations, brain massage, crystal healing, sound baths, reiki healing, shamanic reiki, tuning forks. Will use his videos on reiki healing. Uses attributes such as feathers, stones, and incense during his healings. Plays ambient music in the background.

5. A: Used only for livestream (1x)

Female reiki & intuitive healer, attended one reikihealing livestream where she did collective as well as personal healings, followers pay her for the personal healings. Speaks out affirmations during her healings. Makes many noises and movements during healings.

6. C: Used only for livestream (1x)

Female reiki healer, attended one reiki healing livestream where a collective healing was done using a seashell as attribute. Has 3445 followers, and 2752 likes in total.

Bio states: “Usui Reiki practitioner”. Does livestreams often. Has reiki-healing Tiktok videos as well.

7. *K: Used only for livestream (1x)*

Female energy & Reiki healer, attended one livestream. has 27,1K followers and 58K likes in total. Bio states: “Channel, Energy worker, galactic healing, light language, Reiki/energy work. Does livestreams often. Shares videos of personal life updates and talking videos. Has her own energy-healing youtube channel.

8. *E: Used only for livestream (1x)*

Female reiki master teacher, has 21K followers and 68,6K likes in total. Attended one of her livestreams where she talked with followers and did an energy clearing + healing for the collective and some personal healings. Bio states: “Reiki master teacher, Psychic mentor & medium, I do not reach out.” Wrote her own book. Has many Tiktok reiki videos and does livestreams occasionally. Plays popular/rock music in the back of her videos instead of ambient music, like most other creators do. Shares personal life updates and stories about her past traumas in videos.

9. *R: Used only for livestream (1x)*

Female reiki practitioner, attended one of her livestreams. Has 527,7K followers and 9,1 million likes in total. Bio states: “Live reiki on youtube/backup: *(name account + personal link)*. Hosts Women’s Life recovery groups, does virtual guided meditations & workshops, creates sleep meditations. Does livestreams on tiktok and instagram multiple times a week, has many reiki/ASMR healing Tiktok videos. Uses attributes such as crystals and scissors in her videos, uses whispering and ASMR noise techniques for relaxing effects. Talks about aura and chakra balancing, 3d eye clearing activations, settling the nervous system, manifesting your soulmate.

Livestreams attended:

1. *Celeste: 4 livestreams:*

- 25 april: 10 minutes: Fieldnotes below
- 3 may: 1,5 minutes
- 15 may: 5 minutes
- 20 may: 4,5 minutes

2. *A: 1 livestream:*
 - 25 april: 10 minutes: Fieldnotes below
3. *Rachel: 3 livestreams:*
 - 25 april: 3 minutes: Fieldnotes below
 - 2 may: 19 minutes: Fieldnotes below
 - 10 may: 13 minutes
4. *C: 1 livestream:*
 - 29 april: 6 minutes
5. *K: 1 livestream:*
 - 2 may: 10 minutes
6. *E: 1 livestream:*
 - 15 may: 15 minutes
7. *R: 1 livestream:*
 - 15 may: 12 minutes

Reiki-videos analysed:

1. *Rob:*
 - Viewed 10 in total for analysing comments
 - Analysed 2 in detail for analysing comments & practice
2. *Mark:*
 - Viewed 8 in total for analysing comments
 - Analysed 2 in detail for analysing comments & practice

Notes on personal experience with digital reiki healing

Date: 12-05-2025

Meeting with: Rachel

Today I had planned an online meeting of one hour with digital reiki-master Rachel that I had been observing for a while. I have been watching some of her livestreams and had an interview with one of the active moderators in her livestreams. (*Specific*

details about this creator and her live streams can be found below) I had never received reiki-energy before so I figured it would be good to have such a experience, in specific with distance/digital reiki in this case, in order to get a better sense of my research topic though personal experience. I booked the session by messaging the creator on tiktok, and got a message back with her offer. Because of the transcription on the tiktok channel of Rachel that I got from Esther, I could get a discount on the price for a private remote session, which would be 30 minutes long. We planned it on monday, and Rachel messaged me to follow her account on instagram and call me though the direct message function on instagram on the agreed time. So I did on monday. I sat down on the couch and removed all sources of distraction, and called Rachel. It was a video call, so I could see her face and she could see me. She sat in the same spot as she would have during her live streams, with her dog on her lap. She greeted me and I greeted back, and she asked me if I had ever received reiki before and I told her no. Then she asked me if I knew what it entailed and if she should explain it a little bit, and I told her I knew a little bit about it but that she could explain some more to me. She explained she is a Japanese reiki-master, channeling Japanese dragon's energy to her patients. She compared the body to a pipeline through which energy from the cosmos can flow down into the earth, through certain energy points that can be blocked. Her reiki serves to move this energy from a distance, as it moves independently from time or space, in order to help my body heal itself, to clean its own energy-pathways so the energy can flow freely. This can promote relaxation. She explained how she would go about doing the healing; first she would feel if I have any blocked chakras, and then she would cleanse my energy and remove blockages using dragon's energy, and lastly she would create an energetic field of protection around me. She also told me that sometimes she gets certain visions while doing the healing, however that she does not claim to be a medium but she will tell them to me afterwards anyways and leave them open for interpretation. Then she began the healing and told me that I can sit or lie down however I want, and that my face does not necessarily need to be on screen. I could close my eyes and just relax and let it happen. For my own feeling I did want to have the screen in front of my face, but I did close my eyes and sometimes opened them slightly to see what was happening, because she remained silent during the healing. Soft ambient music was on in the background. With her hands and her eyes closed she moved in front of the camera, and I was paying attention to bodily sensations. I

was thinking a lot during the healing, mainly about the effects it had on my body. Were the bodily sensations just apparent because I was hyper-aware of my own body all of a sudden, or did they really come from the energy she was channeling? After a while I did start feeling more relaxed and a little bit sleepy, but my immediate thoughts were that an explanation for this could be that I was lying down on my couch with closed eyes and that that fact alone might be reason enough for my relaxation. I also started feeling a little bit light-headed, nauseous after a while, and my arms were a little bit tingly/light. Also I sometimes saw some bright colors on my retina; yellow and bright green. I felt like I was thinking way too much about my bodily sensations, so I tried to minimize this as much as possible, which was a big struggle inside my head. Eventually I was more able to just give in to the fact that I was relaxing and that I was not experiencing such heavy sensations. I realized that I had unsuspectedly had high expectations for what would happen during this session. After 30 minutes Rachel told me that she was done, and what she had felt from my energy. She told me I did not have big energetic chakra blockages, only a little bit in my hart chakra and an even smaller amount in my solar plexus chakra. She explained to me that this could mean that I sometimes experience difficulties in letting people come close to my heart or giving and receiving love, and that i might experience difficulties speaking my truth or being my real authentic self. She also had some visions while doing the healing; of me being some kind of princess in a past life, like an European medieval princess, that could not be a princess because she had to fight as a soldier to protect her country. She explained that maybe this could be interpreted metaphorically as me not being able to be my full authentic self, who I really want to be. Or at least me having this feeling. When I heard this I was surprised because this is not something that I would necessarily immediately link to myself, but I received the information with an open mind. She asked me if I had any questions or remarks and I told her I did not, and thanked her for her time and energy, and we ended the call. Afterwards I felt very normal, maybe a little bit more relaxed than before, and also a little confused about what I had just experienced and how I should interpret it. It felt good to have had my first experience with (distance)reiki, but my views on it had not really changed.

Live reiki healing session by Celeste, 25-04-2025 (19:06 amsterdam time)

Duration: 10 minutes

start of attending: 55 people watching including me

C: Celeste

F: Followers commenting

I scroll through the for you page of my thesis Tiktok account. For the first time I notice that I come across a livestream where someone is doing reiki. most livestreams I have seen up until now have been tarot-card readings, soundhealings, or people who talk about religion or spiritual beliefs. I see a black woman sitting in what looks like a backyard where the sun is shining, but she is sitting in the shade, wearing a blue one shoulder top, bright pink pants, a lot of colourful necklaces, of which one seems to be a specific sign; a sort of cross/sword looking symbol. earrings, a red headscarf with some kind of brown head jewellery on top of it, with what seem to be crystals or other kinds of stones attached to it. On her face she is wearing big watermelon-shaped sunglasses with pink shades, and bright red lipstick. On her arms I see more stones in the form of multiple colourful bracelets. A striking appearance. At the bottom of the screen you see names pup up from people as they join the live, or give it a like. Also some people have commented already, and I am able to scroll back in the comments that have been placed earlier on before I joined the live which I found by chance. On the background, calm and ethereal music is playing. The woman is talking with a loving and relaxed voice, and waving with a long white and thin-looking crystal in one hand towards the camera. The message by the host that stays in the screen while other comments as they pass disappear to the background to make place for comments from other people is;

“Celeste read the room blessings on blessings (hands emoji, purple heart, purple looking glass ball emoji).”

I will now describe what is being said: (C is Celeste, F are followers that comment)

C: “open up space for that new beginning, to be more calm, yes, let that go. Anxiety, we are getting rooted.

F0: “bonjour c’est antoine vous parler en france pour apprendre moi respiration ballon gonflable”

C: Oh, that is beautiful. Meditating. When you ground, we search. we search, on what calls upon you. That is how you get to know your spirit team better at the same time. (deep sigh). Ahh. Breathe.

F1: I just made a literal post about mother Guia being the interconnected web and spider.

C: There you go, (*name F1*), we are aligned (?) because we are getting rooted. Connected. Being that spider that you mentioned. Mama gaia is everything.

F1: I feel her presence in this energy today

F2: I set my intention to find my joy and motivation again.

C: alright, (*name F2*), you are setting that intention, the joy is within. The joy is within. We are clearing the negative energy before we start our Reiki healing alright? setting your intentions. Everyone, type in your intentions, what are you setting your intention for this reiki to be? Utilizing this aries energy, It’s your body, it’s what you feel. There you go.

F3: wow those glasses are fabulous.

C: I know, aren’t they the best? and they are from Dollartree. I should be a sponsorpersion for Dollartree. To look cool, and represent yourself authentically you don’t have to spend much. Release, they have a big statement don’t they? and they were only a dollar twentyfive.

F4: Release anger and sadness.

F3: clearing out negative energy

(I liked the livestream by double tapping)

C: release, release, release, set your intention.

F3: That's a fabulous deal.

F5: *(a lot of emoji's; stars, eyes, hands, bees)*

C: What? yeah! A dollar twentyfive. Dollartree is my favourite store. Oh thank you (name) you're so beautiful, yamaste, yamaste! *(places two handpalms against each other and bows her head and smiles)*

(on the top of the screen is a pinned message by a moderator: "Tappie tap tap 20K (smileyemoji's)")

F3: I'll take it I used to go there so much when I was younger, they are all gone now!

F6: I release my old trauma bonds.

C: A balloon? No, no balloon. Balloons we do not throw into the air, this destroys mother Gaia I know what you are talking about. I think I understood what you wrote there in french. *(about the french message from earlier, that keeps getting repeated by the user) (keeps on talking about dollartree, repeating messages, irrelevant)*

Release, what are we letting go of? We are getting geared up for a new moon. On sunday, so today and tomorrow is kind of your last day to letting go and setting forth what you desire to start co-creating. And i'm gonna give you a heads up, the new moon is in Taurus. Which means that Taurus is the one that brings all of your manifestations into your intangibility *(? little bit inaudible)*.

F7: My only mama

F8: Namaste. My Team is with you love, and im trying my best to Understand heal others (hand emoji, heart emoji, lightbulb emoji)

F7: honest women (heartface emoji)

F2: I would like to let go of my negative thoughts and things holding me back.

F9: Hello soul fam

C: Tauruses are the ones that , are attuned with the greater things in life, with the finer things in life. yeah. With the tangible things in life. They bring in that money. The tangible things into the 3D. But you have to have space to bring it in. So you must release. So set your intention, I've been sitting here for an hour already, I was meditating out here.

F10: I'm a taurus!

F11: new glasses everyday cute (heartface emoji)

F9: 111 (sends stickers)

F12: letting go all trauma

C: yes (*name F9*) welcome in, we still have not started, we are still not at the twentythousand. I'm clearing negative energies as everybody is walking in, Right? I want you to let it go. We are utilizing aries (*inaudible word*) creative energy, to release a lot of anger, release all of these emotions, right. And at the same time, we are connecting, to mama Gaia. Getting rooted, connecting. That brings calmness, takes away anxiety.

F9: (*tags other F's name*) hey soul sister

F2: (moderator): Tapping and sharing the live shows gratitude Thank you!

F13: I'm here! your video reminded me!

F9: yes I have back pain today

C: You are able to make conscious choices. More guided choices.

F8: I'm working on making my tongues of fire into a Technology of instant Aura healing (*banded heart emoji, other hearts*)

C: What do I need to let go of? So that I am able to quantumjump with this new moon that's coming in Taurus. Ooh! I did that update (?)((inaudible)) It's on my page. it's a beautiful energy to tap into.

F14 (my interviewee 2!): Omg I just found you and followed immediately your energy is radiant!

F0: comment faire gonfler un ballon gonflable

C: Oh thank you (*F14 name*) Welcome home, welcome home. Thank you for joining. (*calls name F14*), i'm just clearing negative energy. clearing negative energy. We are to let it go, it doesn't serve you anymore, you deserve what you desire, we don't need that.

F8: (*tags name F14*) same

F14: gorgeous mama!

F15: loving the watermelon glasses!

C: whe are opening up space. Open space, let it go. It's not worth it, it's not worth it. You deserve what you desire, remember that. Let that go, yeah. Let that go.

F2: I want to become a positive person full of love willing to accept it.

C: Start seeing affirmations (*name F2*). Everything I desire is on it's way to me now, I am the luckiest person on this earth, love follows me everywhere I go, I attract love and kind people into my life.

F9: I release it to receive.

C: *(calls name F9)*, welcome home. release,

F2: you have a very calming energy.

F16: Namaste.

C: *(starts singing a high pitched 'ooo' tone, goes on with high/low pitched differentiating tones and 'eee' sounds)* Let it go. *(sings 'eeeeaaaa')*

F17: Thank you (butterfly emoji)

C: you are welcome, *(name F17)*. Welcome home. *(sounds a singing bowl in front of her)*

F9: I am free

C: Yes you are free *(sings 'eeeeeejjaaa, ooooooo, aaaa, oooooo')*

F8: Yessss bring back our ANCESTORS TONGUE (fire and stars emojis)

(a message comes into screen from tiktok: ("influencer's name")'s team has completed the 1st stage of the team quest and unlocked Team Cheers, all members can now send it to celebrate")

F9: I am free of trauma

F16: I thought I knew, I didn't.

C: yes you are, let it go, free yourselves, you are capable of doing that. *(sings 'aaaa')*

Livestream fieldnotes: A

Live reiki healing session by A, 25th of april, 20:04 (amsterdam time)

Duration: 10 minutes

130 viewers at start of session, including me.

A: Energy-healer/host

F: followers

M: Moderator

A blonde woman is sitting outside, we see a sunny environment behind her and she is sitting in front of a bush in the shade. Her hair is hanging loose and she is wearing a black top. Ethereal and ambient sound-frequency music is playing in the background. She is talking to her followers and making movements with her hands but also with her whole body. It seems as if she is letting energies of some kind move through her whole body, and she closes her eyes and makes many different facial expressions doing it. In the top of the screen a comment by her (as host) is visible: “My name is (*name*), I’m an intuitive healer, mentor, friend & spiritualist. My goal is to help bring in awareness of how we can heal and rid the body o... (*rest of message is not visible unfortunately*)”

Interesting messages that are visible from before I joined this livestream: (contexts unclear)

F: Ive had chills since I logged on

F: Hey (*name host*) It’s so good to see you :) I really needed a chill out moment

F: I’ve been waking up with my arms asleep for three days

F: me too

F: Feel like i’m being zapped

Moderator: Clearings and or an activation: \$45

F: I release abandonment broken heart betrayal for all generations

F: does it affect everyone in the live or is it only for one person?

now what happens during the live from the start:

A: *(is standing up, shaking her lower body and her arms, her bracelets shake too. She shakes her hand like as if she is trying to get something off her body. Her eyes are closed. Then she slowly sits down again.*

M: Set your intentions. Quantum energy is intelligent. it will go wherever it's needed.

F1: Oh we goin deep huh

F2: got me up shaking too (laughing emojis)

A: Release; 'I am afraid of allowing connection to my heart'. Release: 'I am afraid of letting connection and love in my heart.'

(she begins to swing her hands and makes facial expressions with her eyes closed, her mouth opens and closes sometimes without making noise. She squeezes her eyes closed and opens her mouth as if she is screaming, but she sighs fast in and out. She swings her arms above her head and it looks like she is grabbing things with her hands in front of her. This movement goes on throughout the livestream but stops when she is talking to the viewers. Then her eyes open again as well.)

A: Beautiful. beautiful. Release: 'I am afraid of getting hurt.' Thank you for the gifts! Thank you (name follower). *(proceeds with the movements and takes a very deep and fast sigh in and out.)* Good. Good, good, good, good. Okay moving up... Release; lack of authentic expression, holding your breath, biting your tongue. Swallowing your words. Keeping yourself small for others. Release: having been told to always stay silent, to keep the peace. There we go. Release: Lack of acceptance. Of yourself, lack of acceptance of your truth. There we go, good. Release the fear of saying the wrong thing or putting your foot in your mouth.

F3: That's awesome my h.s last week said no more biting your tongue and staying quiet lol

A: Okay, release control. manipulation and gaslighting, used to keep you quiet or under control, or under the thumb of someone else. Control, manipulation and gaslighting used to keep you quiet and in line, under the control of someone else. ooooh. oh oh oh.

F4: Wooooooo feeling that one let go!

F2: huge release

A: That was a good one. That was a good one. Okay, release: religious ideologies and dogma that no longer align with you. Ooh. Release the lack of faith you have in yourself to lead yourself into the life, into the body, into the existence that you are in; deserving, happy, loving, peaceful, fulfilled. Release. Release the lack of faith you have in yourself. To make that your reality. Beautiful!

F2: fear of success fear of failure

A: Yep, fears of success. Release the lack of faith you have in yourself to succeed in life. Thank you for the follows, likes, shares and love, I appreciate each and everyone of you! There we go. Allright. Release judgements, expectations, and assumptions placed on you by way of others. Okay this is gonna be for those of you that are neurospicy (*meaning neurodivergent*) or that were born with a defect. It is the idea or the label of being born defective, being born different. Release having been born defective or different.

F5: (*applauding hands emoji*)

F2: (*looking eyes emoji*)

A: Release: frustrations in intelligence. People assume that you are dumb, when you are not. There you go. Wooo.

F6: Please give me your healing energy while I try to unclog my toilet please bless me and my toilet

A: Release; alienation and isolation from a group, alienation and isolation from society. There we go. Beautiful.

F5: I too say neurospicy

F7: Felt that pull in my heart

A: How does everybody feel?

F8: Tingly

F2: relaxed yawning

F9: Needed that! Ty!

F10: Felt that in my back under my ribs. Good release!

F11: Light (feather emoji)

F12: This was needed! Thank u!

F3: cold, light and like i need a nap lol

F12: Feeling a lot better released a lot

F13: That feels amazing thank you!

F5: Happy to see you live! (heart emojis)

A: I usually like to this when we finish up the collective, we will be going into clearings, individually, but everybody in the room will still receive, as energy is freely given and received all the time. If you stay in the space, you will receive, okay. But I like to get people to try to... like one to five or one to ten, on a count of one to

ten, when you first started *points at her one hand*) and here to where you are now (*points to other hand*), how much did you shift to feeling better, to feeling lighter, feeling less pain, feeling more clear mentally? It is that easy, everyday, to shift yourself, and your body into healing, and into clarity, and harmony. I love it. I love it, I love it.

F2: from 7 to 1

F14: 8,5

F15: Light and balanced, from 3 to 9

F7: awesome (smiling emoji) much lighter, from 5 to 8

F16: beautiful, thank you (heart emoji)

A: You are very, very welcome. Yes, very. (*wind blows her hair in her face*) wind is coming through, baby!

F17: I feel much more grounded and at peace (heart emojis)

F18: feeling lighter! thank you (heart emoji)

F19: maybe 9-10, thank you (heart emoji)

F2: I've only been in here 10 minutes

A: So what we are going to do now, we are going to do individuals. this is going to continue the healing process, we are going to be clearing, or activating. Whenever we activate, we are activating a part within you that is already there, we are bringing your awareness to it. It is a gift or ability, I don't really like to be calling it a gift, everyone has the abilities. It's just; have you brought your own awareness to it? I'm going to clear that area for you, and amplify the energy around it, so that you allow yourself to come online, you allow yourself to explore your ability to connect. It

activates it, it creates that symbiotic space for those abilities to amplify naturally for you, okay. If we do clearings, we are clearing energy that's in your field, or if you are struggling mentally, or struggling with pain, if you are struggling with just feeling 'off', or something is going on and you are just not sure, you are feeling a little 'bleh', a little tired. We move the energy that is creating that dissonance in your system, to allow you to feel lighter and at peace, walking away today. So if you want to do that, it is forty five dollars, and it is through all of my clickables, okay. I have a list already, so I will be taking a few more, and then I'm gonna hop off of here, okay.

F2: truly appreciate your time and energy to helping us heal (heart emojis)

F20: You have got some great energy lady! Love the space.

F21: sent on paypal

F2: Clickables. I like that (sunglasses face emoji)

A: Thank you so much, thank you thank you. I appreciate all of you for showing up for you. And like I said, you stay in the space, you continue to receive, regardless of if you get an individual or not. Right? Clickables, yeah! So, it doesn't matter, it will go to the individual I am with first, and then everyone receives it, as a byproduct of that container, that process. Okay? Okay, miss (name), I have you first my love, and then I have... who do I have?

(here I stopped watching)

Livestream 1 Rachel: Fieldnotes

Live reiki healing session by Rachel, 25th of april, 19:20 (Amsterdam time)

Duration: 3 minutes

118 viewers at start of session, including me

F: Followers

Mod: Moderator

setting and situation:

Japanese looking woman, young, probably between 20-30 years old, sitting inside on the floor with her back against her bed, a small dog on her lap sleeping. She has black hair tied to the back with bangs and her skin is very smooth, could be a facefilter. She sits with her eyes closed, and occasionally blows out some air with her lips rounded. Her hands are moving towards the camera, as if she is grabbing something invisible in front of it. Different movements every time, sometimes shaking or swirling her hands a little bit, or rubbing them together. In silence she does these movements, sometimes you hear her sighing or blowing. Ethereal sound frequency music is playing in the background with a soft and high women's voice singing tones over it. As the livestream starts and in between her mini-healing sessions or collective healings, she interacts with users who greet her in the comments. Mostly she greets them or talks back to them in Japanese, sometimes in English. A big number of the people that interact with her in the livestream seem to be Japanese, and the other, slightly smaller half is English-speaking. Japanese messages can be translated, but I was only made aware of this after my interview with the moderator of this influencer, so in the two livestreams that I recorded before I had not translated the Japanese messages yet, but in the last one I did. This first livestream I saw of her was on the 25th of April, at 19:20. I will not be documenting every hand movement the creator makes, only when these are relevant to the context or mean something specific. My specific focus here is on the social interactions with followers.

Pinned message on the top of the screen written by the creator: "I'm a reiki master. Reiki with a powerful Japanese dragons energy. Feel the real Japanese reiki energy from a Japanese reiki master. Subscribe... *(rest of message is not visible)*

Earlier sent messages by followers in the chat that I find interesting:

F: Tonight I am so depressed broken heart

F1: Hi (*name creator*), I haven't been on when you have in a while, it's nice to see you!

F2: You heal all of us

F3: Is it for everyone?

F4: (*responds to F3*) This is collective healing

Mod: Yes, this is a collective healing, means everyone can receive the energy

F4: (*receiving a personal mini healing:*) Can you have a feel around, I've been going through a tough time at home so I've been all over the place not sleeping etc. Thank you so much it's been such a stressful time. Thank you that really does make me feel so much better.

During these three minutes, there emerge now new comments in the screen, which is why I stopped watching the livestream. This was the first livestream I had watched of this creator and I had already viewed her account and decided that her video's could be useful for my analysis, which is why I spent the three minutes following the people that I had seen engaging with her in her livestream. This is how I came in contact with one of her moderators by sending her a message if she wanted to be an interviewee, which she did. Through the interview I got to know more about the way in which this creator builds up her livestreams, which is why I now was aware at which times she often goes live, what kind of healings she does, and how to translate the Japanese messages. For this reason I decided to do more ethnographic fieldwork for this specific creator, as I could be sure to get interesting new data to analyse.

Livestream 2 Rachel Fieldnotes

Live reiki healing session by Rachel, 2 may 2025, 17:08 (Amsterdam time)

Duration: 19 minutes

12 viewers at start of session, including me

R: Rachel

F: Followers:

M: Moderator

Setting and situation:

This day I had been scrolling on the FYP of my thesis tiktok account, and by chance found a video by this healer of whom I had joined the livestream before, with the information that she would be doing a reiki-livestream that evening, which is why I was able to be early, so that I could catch what was happening from the beginning on. The livestream starts with 17 people online. The interactions start with many people asking to be on the list for the mini-healings sessions that day. The list gets filled up very quickly. The healer apologises to people who respond disappointed that they did not make it, and tells the audience that she will need to change up the mini session regulations again because she is gaining more subscribers quickly. She rubs her hands and waves to the camera. She starts greeting people that join the livestream in Japanese.

R: So the mini session is closed guys, thank you.

(she starts the healing with her hands in praying position in front of her chest, then begins the hand movements towards the camera. In between she talks to people coming in)

R: It's already may, I can't believe it! May! How have you been feeling this month?

F: Hope everyone is doing well today. It's finally friday.

F2: It's a long weekend in the UK too!

R: I will now do collective energy healing, I mean energy cleansing. Wow, what's that, thank you so much *(name follower who gifted her something)*, that's so cool!

F3: Rachel it's been a while

R: Negative attachment cleansing, energy cleansing, your physical body, energy, aura, and soul have been cleansed right now. Happy friday, happy may.

(A lot of talking was in Japanese, which I could not understand, which is why I left the livestream for a moment. After 15 minutes I went back in to see if anything had changed, and it had; the healer was talking in english to someone, doing a personal mini-session for her)

earlier messages:

F4: don't know where this comes from, yes I felt it, thank you so much

R: Do you feel overwhelmed? A little bit? Or did you use your energy this past week a lot? Because your aura and energy was quite bright and light, and a lot of going on today. Maybe that is why your heart has been feeling a bit pressured?

F4: Glad to hear, it's been a busy week. my brother moved in yesterday.

R: Okay, that makes sense. Not only physically, but your energy is also quite like, a lot is going on it looks like. Your energy looks like your week has been quite busy. But you don't have to worry at all, because there is no bad energies attacking you or anything like that.

F4: Perfect! Thank you so much.

(Rachel closes her eyes and starts healing again)

R: Ahh, this massive Mickey Mouse came right in front of me. *(Talking about a vision she just had)* Like boom, mickey mouse. Feel like I'm healing mickey mouse. Have you been going food shopping? Because I see a shell of a grocery store or supermarket, I can't tell. It could be a vegetable section.

F5: yes, yesterday

R: Is this supermarket, or convenience store? Do you know 7/11? I don't know why, but just 7/11 came up on my vision.

F5: Supermarket

R: I see a small boy all in yellow, in yellow clothing. I think it's yellow.

(Here I stopped watching)

Reiki-healing video 1 Rob Fieldnotes:

Date: 29-05-2023

Duration: 5 minutes

13,8 million views, 1,6 million likes & 62,2K comments

Front text: Bad luck, curse, hex, evil eye & bad energy protection healing. If this video has reached you right now then this is no coincidence.

F: viewers' comments on the video

Text underneath video: Bad luck, curse, hex, evil eye, & bad energy protection healing ASMR. If you feel like there's some negativity following you around, then all of that changes through this healing video! All that's required on your end is accepting it & believing it with an open mind & heart. I do need to let you all know that I create this content to help people through loving, kind & uplifting intentions. I truly wish everyone who stumbles across my videos the highest of love, light & peace. #asmr #visualasmr #energyhealing #reikihealing #reiki #spiritualtiktok #evileye #badluck #curse #removal #cleansing #lightworker #starseed

Rob is standing in front of the camera, his face, shoulders, and hands visible. In one hand he carries a big blue crystal. His hair is long and he has a beard. He speaks calmly to the viewers;

“If this video has reached you right now, then this is no coincidence. because the universe has sent me to you during this time to help remove bad luck, curses, hexes, evil eyes, and I’ll be further protecting you against toxic people and bad energies. If you accept this energy protection today, then all we need to do is simply nod or say I accept. let’s begin.”

He sighs out and puts his hand and the crystal closer to the camera, making slow movements with both across the screen.

text appears in the screen: “If you have been feeling negative energies lately, then i would recommend staying around until the end, as I can help you remove any type of energy that’s weighing you down.” and: “5 5 5 5”.

He speaks again: “I would like to call in Archangel Michael to come on through you, to help to shield and to protect your energy”. He sighs out again and proceeds with the hand movements, always looking straight at the camera. he says: “I can guarantee that if you believe this healing with an open mind and heart, that anything that does not belong in your energy will simply slip away. It is time to release anything that does not serve you or your highest good, so you can live in peace. I will now proceed to pull out any type of bad luck, curses, hexes, evil eyes, or any type of bad energy that might be around you during this time. Please take a deep breath in and out.” He starts moving his hands in plucking motions, pulling imaginary threads of energy from the screen. He keeps on doing this for some time, until he starts talking again.

Text appears in screen: “if you feel like there’s lingering negative energy around you, then there’s a chance that someone might have sent you some nasty energies that are weighing you down. I can assure you that this energy will now dissipate & dissolve away. You deserve to be free from any type of energy that does not serve you or your highest good, and so is it.

He speaks: "I am now sealing off these reiki healing energies to further protect you from this time and space moving forward. You are now free of anything that does not serve you or your highest good. I also ask to borrow Archangel Michael's shield to act as a buffer to further protect you from any type of negativity moving forward. And so it is."

the video ends.

Interesting comments on the video:

F1: the weird thing is I actually feel like somethings happening in a good way I feel something leave everytime I watch his videos or streams.

F2: I usually don't believe in these things but ever since I started watching your videos frequently somehow I feel more peaceful and joyous.

F3: Thank you archangel Michael... I felt it, every vibration. Thank you.

F4: For some reason this made me feel really tired... or maybe I'm just tired anyway

F5: I felt this helped. Love how reiki can be long-distance and virtual. Thanks!

F6: I started feeling tingles in my forehead.

F7: Watching and listening I started to feel as if I was right there with him. It was the weirdest thing.

F8: I accept in Jesus name Amen

F9: Eyes closed immediately and some sort of relief thank u

F10: breathing through and listening to this literally made my headache disappear i feel so much better thank you.

F11: The part that pulling out it's like i feel something going outside of me

F12: as i was watching i felt pulls from my stomach and I felt nauseous & even sore in some spots around my stomach, till the end (shocked emoji)

F13: Thank you! I literally started crying afterwards because I felt so relieved after some personal stuff that has happened to me (heart emojis)

F14: I accept (I felt tingling all around my body so I think it's real ngl)

F15: I really only felt the weight on my shoulder lift. My brain felt a little more clear/relaxed and was finally able to sleep without overthinking a lot

F16: I suddenly felt my head getting lighter and making me calmer so I think this worked

F17: Does it mean anything if my left ear started ringing while you were doing this?

F18: Thank you I felt like this giant weight flew off my body and my mind feels at ease

Reiki video 2 Rob Fieldnotes:

Date: 29-04-2025

Duration: 5 minutes

3,6 million views, 394,1K likes & 17,3K comments

Text in front: Removal of black magic, curses, hexes, & evil eyes. (ASMR reiki)
#asmr #asmrsounds #asmrvideo #energyhealing #protection”

Same setting as previous video description, only is he now using a clear white crystal. He speaks:

“If this video has reached you right now, then there is a very high possibility that someone or something has been projecting some black magic, hexes, curses, or evil eyes your way. Not to worry there because I’ve been sent with the spirit of Archangel Michael to protect you from this and to remove it from you as well. If this is something you would like to receive, then simply nod or say I accept. Let’s begin.”

He starts doing the movements with his eyes closed. Text in screen says: “Divine intervention is here. Angelic protection has arrived to protect you right at this moment.”

He speaks: “I call upon your spirit team to be present through this healing. May they assist you with the removal of any black magic, hexes, curses or evil eyes that may have been projected your way.”

Text in screen says: “The crystal I am using is a clear quartz. This master healer crystal can assist you energetically with the removal of any dark energy that may have been sent your way.”

He speaks again: “I will now proceed to pull out and remove any of this energy from you. Please take a nice big deep breath in, and out.” Starts pulling away the energy. “You are being protected with the highest of protection that is available to us within this universe and beyond. Angelic divine presence is now upon you.

Text in screen: “I am here to remind you that you are powerful beyond measure. You have the might of the universe within you to liberate yourself from anything that is no longer in alignment with you or your highest good! & so it is!”

He speaks: “Any type of black magic, hexes, curses, or evil eyes have now been removed from you. I will now proceed to seal off this energy healing session, using the highest love, light, and protection. I am visualising a white and golden luminescent light, shielding and covering the entirety of your being. May this light fortify your energy field so you can become impenetrable. You are now protected from any dark forces that do not wish you well. And so it is.”

Interesting user comments:

F1: This made me feel light and sleepy. I believe the curse is connected to my sleep schedule coz I'm having a hard time getting a good night sleep. Thank you.

F2: I randomly got a chill and a tremor in my arms. When you finished i felt emotional, thank you.

F3: I started feeling nauseous then felt like there was a huge knot in my belly until you started pulling it out... weirdes experience ever but thank you I accept (heart emoji)

F4: I was having a headache all day and now it's gone!

F5: I accept the light & Golden energy and I let go all the ghosts of my past and the evil eye's energy. (my soul is feeling it, I ended up crying during the Reiki) tysm (heart emoji)

F5: I sneezed 3 times in the middle of this when you said you were snatching away at the bad energy and hexes and evil eye.

Interesting comments underneath other videos of Rob:

F: I am not convinced that a rock is going to speed my metabolism... this is absurd.

F1: Anyone elses stomach start hurting in the middle of it?

F2: I felt hot when the video was over, like my metabolism is already going faster.

F3: The sneezing fit I had when you were pulling out the bad energy, haha.

F4: Crazy, because I did a meditation this morning and michael, Ariel, and Raziel came up to me in that same order.

F5: If someone believes this I have all the legal right to laugh. No hate intended.

F6: I actually felt something. Like mini palpitations for a few seconds.

F7: These videos always pop up when I need them most. Very appreciated.

F8: I'm usually sceptical of online or app random energy or healing "work" but i feel it very hard, completely & real from you. Thank you.

F9: You always come at the right time when I need protection, thank you.

F10: Damn I lowkey felt a physical weight lift off my body.

F11: I remember you did one of your miracle readings. And a few days later I was on the road with some friends, we were running out of gas on e and a 20 dollar bill fell out of the sky right in front of us.

F12: Crystal Jesus, I never commented on your videos before and I'm not really a "believer" but somehow, I can't explain it, your videos are helping me.

F13: I'm super grateful for the divine timing of this video. I really need this. I was just diagnosed with Bell's Palsy. Thank you.

F14: Blessings from the universe that I stumbled on your video on my rhythm when I just went on and do need the healing and it was sent by the universe.

F15: Crystal Jesus. You always show up when im sick. And I breathe with you and I end up expelling lots of sick gross studd and I feel I start healing.

F16: This made my nose run.

Reiki video 1 Mark Fieldnotes:

Date of video: 2-9-2024

Duration of video: 1 minute

17 million views, 673,1K likes, 18,7K comments.

Text on thumbnail of video: “removing all negative energy from you”

Text in bio of video: “Ne4gative energy removal. In this ASMR reiki energy healing, I remove any and all negative energy that is in your body or aura. This will help you release anxiety and stress, cultivate a stronger inner peace, and make way for new opportunities to come into your life. All you have to do is either nod or say ‘I accept’ to receive this healing. All of the energy removed in this session is grounded harmlessly into the earth. I love you all, and thank you for watching! - Mark. #reiki, #asmr, #vidualasmr, #energyhealing #reikihealing #stressrelief”

Mark is visible in front of the camera from his shoulders to his head, and plucking towards the screen with his fingers while talking to the viewers. He is wearing a cape around his head. Ambient music is playing in the background and you hear soft tickling noises that correspond with his hand movements. There is no talking in the video, just Mark making plucking motions with his hands and fingers. At the end he moves his hands multiple times towards the camera in a different kind of motion.

Interesting/useful comments of viewers on the video:

F: My ratio doesn't want to believe in this but I felt it in my stomach and my head got lighter

F1: I can feel the energy, and burst into tears during the healings. I'm so grateful for that. Thank you, I love you.

F2: I feel sleepy while watching

F3: Other healers don't have the same effect you do. I always feel the energy removed when you come across my fyp.

F4: I felt my head got lighter, it really works

F5: I literally could feel this. How.

F6: I thought it was nonsense, but instead I felt heaviness in my head and now I feel better, thank you!

F7: Oh man goosebumps on my whole body, thank you

F8: How is it possible to work through a video? I honestly want to understand!

Reiki video 2 Mark Fieldnotes:

Date: 13-09-2023

Duration: 1,5 minutes

16 million views, 680,6K likes & 15,6K comments

Text on thumbnail of video: “Removing evil eyes”

Text in bio of video: “Part 8: Evil eye removal. When people look at us with intense jealousy or anger, their negative energy can affect us and what we are manifesting and trying to achieve. Remember to safeguard your plans, and protect your energy. Don’t tell everyone your goals or your business. Keep an open heart but stay safe! I love you, and thanks for watching -Mark. #reiki, #evileye, #evileyeprotection, #reikihealing, #asmr, #asmrvideo, #visualasmr, #asmrsounds, #reikimaster.”

Text in video: “I am going to remove any Evil Eyes that have been placed upon you.”

Mark sits in the same position as in the previous video, wearing a different shirt and a pointy crystal around his neck. He looks right at the camera and immediately begins plucking and moving with his hands towards the camera. He does not talk during the video. Ambient music plays in the background, and you can hear tickling sounds that correspond with his movements.

Interesting comments of viewers:

F: Thank you. Why did i feel my gird eye a lot when you removed the evil eye? Does that mean I'm evil?

F1: The way I FELT those pulls

F2: Tell me how my headache instantly went away!

F3: Anybody's forehead feel cold when he started to pull then instantly go back to normal? Just me?

F4: Omg I felt something I can't explain it thank u

F5: Why does it feel like something is actually moving out

F6: Is it weird that I felt like something was pulled out my left eye and started to twitch and then felt like something was being pulled out again?

F7: This was actually relaxing

F8: I genuinely felt it after every grab

F9: Positive energy I felt it

F10: This gave me chills

F11: Did anyone's eye start to hurt

F12: Ngl they give me really good luck and without it I have terrible luck

F13: Let God remove them I don't have power to remove by myself amen.

F14: I really felt that some energy is pulling out of me. I got lots of misfortune in life before watching this. Hope it will help.

Interesting/useful comments found underneath other videos by Mark:

F: Thank you. I feel this spiritual energy.

F1: You have no clue how much I needed that. I wish you could have done that in person. It still worked though. Thank you.

F2: Wow I feel like I am breathing better somehow

F3: Thank you so much Mark. I have been having heavy evil eye energy on me lately. Now it is gone!

F4: Do I have to look at the screen the whole time?

F5: I believe only in God.

F6: Had my eyes closed and felt you pulling.

F7: I felt that in my heart chakra. Thank you so much, I needed this.

F8: Thank you you have made me feel calm, my mum passed recently, I have been in a very dark place. But you have helped.

F9: I trust the process in Jesus name

Thesis Appendix F: Interview Guide, Questions and Codes

1. Interview Transcripts Color-Codes Legenda:

These are the color codes that I used to analyse the interviews and divide useful interview data into the three different themes that correspond with my subquestions.

Green: About consent for the recording

Theme 1:

- Deductive: About Tiktok as a platform in general
- Deductive & inductive: About reiki content, and about forms of engagement with reiki-content (extent of interactions/community etc)
- Inductive: About algorithmic divination
- Inductive: About tiktok-spirituality/reiki-healing as digital religion (seen as sacred space, authenticity of creators, etc)

Theme 2:

- Inductive & deductive: about motivations for engagement with Tiktok-reiki
- Inductive & deductive: about emotions and feelings attached to spiritual experiences, Reiki in general, or Tiktok-reiki. (talk about resonance for example)
- Inductive & deductive: about interpretation; how the spiritual dimension of digital reiki-healing is understood specifically, talk about meanings or beliefs attached.

Theme 3:

- Inductive & deductive: On how spirituality is understood generally by interviewee
- Deductive: about personal context and background factors (general) (age, sex,

language, upbringing, other contextual aspects)

- Inductive: About secular spirituality: specifically about western/secular/atheist/scientific culture, so also overlap psychological thought/placebo etc)

2. Interview questions:

I prepared one interview guide that was used for every of the 4 interviews. Together the prepared questions take up between 1 and 2 hours to discuss fully, with slight differences in what questions are asked to each of the different interviewees, dependent on their specific situation and context. For example, I ask Esther a lot of specific questions about her engagement with Rachel's livestreams as this is a more specific focus point of mine, but I skip these questions in the interviews with Michelle, Lara, and Beth. Every interview is semi-structured and in-depth, so there is room for conversation-style questions or for going deeper into interesting topics, or to skip over unnecessary questions or changing the order. I divided the questions into different themes and focused on the background questions first in order to get to know the interviewee and get them as comfortable as possible with me to talk about their personal experiences.

Background questions: (keeping short)

1. First of all, what is your name and your age, and where are you from?
2. What kind of work do you do, (and what did you study for it) how did you get there
3. How would you describe yourself as a person to someone who does not know you? (can be short)
4. What are your activities on a daily basis? or in other words, what would a typical day for you look like?
5. Are there topics that you find very interesting in general, or topics that you know a lot about/are very invested in? (explain why)

6. Can you tell me about the context you grew up in? (people around you , upbringing, etc) How did you become who you are now? (very vague and broad I know, but just tell me the first things that come to mind)
7. Do you have friends/familymembers/close others with the same interests and opinions as you?
8. Did you grow up with any form of religion or spirituality around you, how would you say this affected you?
9. Would you say you are spiritual (or to an extent) or religious and if so, why? How would you describe your spirituality? And is your personal version different from other versions you have learned about or seen? How?
10. Is there something you really believe in? If so, what is it and why? If not, why not?
11. What is reiki according to you, and what role does it play in your life?
12. Did you ever receive physical reiki from someone? How did this affect you?

about Tiktok:

1. How long have you been active on Tiktok?
2. How much time do you spend on Tiktok?
3. How often do you engage with other people's content? In other words, do you like and comment a lot, or chat with others through Tiktok?
4. How would you describe the content that you come across on your ForYou page? Do you think you are on a specific "side" of Tiktok? (#witchtok or #gymtok for example)
5. Do you often see spiritual content? What kind of? Can you name examples?
6. Do you feel that sometimes certain content is meant to reach you at that moment?
7. Would you say the content you come across is mostly in english or local content?
8. What are your thoughts and feelings on Tiktok as a platform? Are you content with the way you use it and what it brings to your life or would you change something?

About Reiki-livestreams

9. (Esther:)I found your account by looking at the active engagers of the livestream I saw by Rachel. What is your role as a moderator in the livestream of Rachel and what does it mean to you personally? (Beth:) I found your account through your comment on the livestream by Celeste. Did you ever see video's or livestreams of her?
10. (Esther:) How did you achieve this position, (Beth:) what motivated you to engage with this Tiktok-creator? (Beth:) In the comment you said that you immediately were fascinated by her energy and that you started following her. Wat was this about her energy that attracted you, can you describe what your feelings and thoughts were then?
11. (Esther & beth:) Can you describe what happens during the livestreams? Are there any striking things that have happened that come to mind? Have you been active in more of her livestreams, and if so, can you describe who she is and what she does exactly during these? Have any striking things happened that you can think of?
12. (Beth:) do you know the creator personally, can you explain who she is and what she does exactly? (Esther:) What is Japanese Dragon's energy according to you?
13. Do you engage with any (other) (healing or spiritual) creators on tiktok through livestreams, and in what ways? (reasons?)
14. (Esther & Beth:)Are there always different people in the livestreams or always the same, and do people know each other (personally? or only through tiktok?)
15. What do you think draws other people in to watch or participate in livestreams?
16. Do you feel a certain connection to people in the livestreams or to Tiktok-creators? If so, in what way?
17. Do you feel like you are part of a certain community on Tiktok?
18. (Esther:) Yesterday I was in the livestream by Rachel for a couple of minutes, and I saw that she interacted with you, that she gave you a cleanse/healing (or something like a reading? I am not sure). Could you explain what happened

here and how it made you feel? (She said something about your energy but I missed it)

19. How would you describe your feelings when receiving digital (distance) reiki?
20. Do you think digital reiki though tiktok is experienced differently by people than physical reiki in real life?
21. Would you say your engagement with reiki-healing content or in the livestreams is spiritual, or from spiritual intentions?
22. What does your engagement with the reiki-content on tiktok mean to you in your daily life?
23. Do you think most people watching the livestreams experience it in the same way as you, or do you think it is very different for everyone?
24. Would you say you feel like you need to “believe” in (digital) reiki for it to work? If so, to what extent would you say you believe? If not, what would you need to be able to believe it?
25. (If belief:) have you ever been skeptic about reiki-healing (in general in your life)
26. Do you think there is a difference between real life reiki and digital reiki on tiktok? If so, what is the difference?
27. Has your view on spirituality or healing, or the world in general changed since you’ve been engaging with this content?
28. Is there anything else you think is important to share, or just any remaining thoughts or topics not covered?

Thesis Appendix G: Interview 1: Transcript

Interview with: Esther (pseudonym)

Date: 03-05-2025

Duration: 2h 7m

Style: Discord video-call, recording transcript

(I started the recording 1 minute after the start of the video call, so the transcript begins in the middle of a sentence, but no important information was missed)

I: I have the computer to work with it and it works so much better like if I would use my cam only via cam it would look like this if it works. I don't see anything yet. I will close the app. Maybe that will help. I yeah, well, it doesn't work. No. I open the the app now again, it will be here in a minute. If I close if I... can you see me? if I have my Google, can you see me now?

E: Yes. Oh, okay. I don't do this often, so I have no idea how it works, but okay. um yeah, so great that you that you wanted to help! Oh, that's so cute. *(about her cat)*

I: Yeah, you're welcome.

E: What's his name, or her?

I: This is *(name cat)*.

E: I wish I had a cat, but no.

I: I have three, so, that is the running around in the background or in front of me.

E: No problem. At all. Okay, um So you saw my questions, right? Yesterday? *(I had sent the interviewee the interview questions the night before at her request)*

I: Yes, I uh I read them all um, and I made my mind around them, so I have some some things to tell you. I'm prepared. I have my Google translator on my other desktop so if I have to look up a word, I can do it in a second so we should be good.

E: Yeah, I made the questions just for me to make sure that I don't forget anything, but it can just be conversation wise because these are a lot of questions. So I said an

hour, but if I really, if we really go deep into every question it will probably take three hours.

I: Yeah. yes, hahah.

E: I um, will make sure that I get the most important questions. But so I will first, oh, first I need to have your verbal consent for the recording that you are okay with me recording this , because that needs to be for ethical guidelines.

I: Yes, I confirm you can.

E: So you're okay with it, great. Okay, thank you. Um I have the questions here somewhere. Oh yeah, so first, I will introduce myself a little bit again. My name is Elske. I'm from Groningen and I don't know if you know it. It's in the Netherlands, all the way a city in the top of the Netherlands. Some people from Germany know it?

I: I never heard of it um yeah, I know the Netherlands I was in Amsterdam like two years ago so um maybe I was near you sometimes. Yeah, it could be. there was I think two hours away from my my city, but everything is close so it does not matter.

E: um and yeah, I'm 23 years old right now and I'm doing my bachelors thesis for um religious studies. Have you ever heard of the study religious studies?

I: No I did not study ever, I could have, but I didn't. No, I did not really hear of it.

E: Okay, yeah, it's in the Netherlands study is not really known because it's very small but it's um yeah, generally you learn to study the phenomenon religion from all social science approaches, such as philosophy and sociology, psychology, and I started doing this because I had a fascination for different forms of spirituality for all my life, but I really don't know a lot about it. So um that's why I wanted to study it just to know more. And specifically about people's reasons to believe in certain things. So for this research I have a specific focus on Reiki healing, um specifically digital reiki healings, um so looking at how very old techniques and ideas intersect with modern ideas and technologies, and how this affects the way that people experience this. So you are the first person that I found that wants to do an in-depth interview and I think your position as a moderator is interesting for me as a

researcher because uh you have a place between the creator, her name is *Rachel* (*Pseudonym*) am I right?

I: Yeah. I think her real name is (*real name*) but um, she calls herself (*short name*). Yeah. for for TikTok and um yeah. I love this this position to to be a connection from *Rachel* to the community. But um I don't see myself that much higher up to the other person which are looking the live. Yeah. Yeah, I think it's really um close still, but um yeah not much closer actually.

E: Okay. um yeah before this I didn't know what a moderator on TikTok was because I never saw those livestreams. But you can explain me later on what this means. But first of all I would like to start with the background questions, which we have to keep a little bit short, I think, because the most important questions for me are at the end. So I see it happening that we spend an hour on the first questions and then we don't get to the last ones. So if you just could just answer in maybe a couple of sentences, the things that you think are most important. Um yeah, so first of all, your name, what's your name, your age, where you're from?

I: My name is *Esther*. Um I'm 30 years old. I turned 30 last month, so it's a whole new chapter. I'm really excited about it. um I am from Hanau, that's like 15 minutes next to Frankfurt, which has one of the biggest airports in in Germany. It's like right in the middle of of uh central Germany. um and uh Hanau has like 100 thousand people living here so we are actually one of the bigger cities because if you across the mark to 100,000, you are like the bigger city, just like Berlin or something but not that much because Berlin is like over 3 million people, but like, yeah, Hanau is it's is a small, big city. It's it's like funny. yeah, I work for my city directly. um, I would work at the public auto office. So if you are car gets totalled, or you get a ticket for uh speeding or something, um you would call me, um and I can check if I can do something about it or um yeah, I just I just work with these things. um It's really, really nice because, um when I was younger, I wanted to go to the police and then when I got my driver's license, I was like, hm, maybe I could get to be a teacher for driving and um that's like a really huge connection to both of them because I work with the city police, um department, we have to, uh check if somebody is parking badly or if they do smaller crimes, or if they are speeding, and I also have to work with the all the rules for driving and that's really the perfect connection to both them.

So it's a really nice job for me. Um, I didn't study for it, but um I didn't an apprenticeship for three years and just like an office manager and um work for the city like for four years now, four and a half, and I really enjoy it and getting really happy that it's a really nice contract for living so I never have to worry again if I don't mess this up so that's really fine.

E: Yeah, I get it. It's here. Okay. And um okay, so moving on already, um how would you describe yourself in in short as a person to someone who does not know you, so to me, actually.

I: very kind. always trying to help somebody but not an um in a way that's annoying. Yeah, but in a helpful way. And um like really open minded. Empathetic. that's maybe a good word for it.

E: Yeah. Okay, yeah. Great. And, um what does a day for you, a typical day, look like from morning to night?

I: I'm really not an early bird. I really have to force myself to get up in the morning but it doesn't matter if I slept four hours or six six hours it's always trouble. um when I did that, I go to work or I work from home. I can work from home twice a week, so um we have a schedule uh which switches like every three days, but um so I do my office job. I call people a lot during my working hours, so calling people is not difficult for me. um and when I get homework, when I have as I can end my work day, I typically do a bit of household chores and um eat something. Maybe cook something if I'm in the mood for it, I like cooking, but it's really something I have to be open about if I got enough motivation for it, and normally I just be on Discord calls a lot with online friends. I have a lot of friends all around Germany or Austria. And maybe we watch a movie together on Discord, or play something. Right now we are in the middle of a Minecraft hyperfixation. So we are playing Minecraft like the last for the last two or three weeks, and we just finished watching the German translations of um the epitri (?) diaries. So anime, and um yeah, that's just what I really do uh most time. I remember friend lives in Berlin so we don't see each other daily, which is why we are calling like the whole day.

E: So did you meet those friends earlier in life or did you meet them online?

I: Um, at first, um that's like it's actually a funny story too. Um, I've found um a creator on Twitch, her name was a *(name)*. um she just left in Berlin and was just doing online makeup and stuff, something like that, and she had a nice community, and I chatted with them a lot and then three years ago she made a community meeting in Berlin. So everybody who wanted to come could come to Berlin meet *(Twitch creator name)* and um yeah, talk to everybody and I was like well, I just go for it. I don't know anyone from there. I'm just being brave now. I would never do this normally. So I was very brave and I drove on train to a foreign city, lived in a hostel with foreign people I really did not know for a few days it was a nightmare, really. and I met the the funniest, nicest people and since then I was chatting with them, calling with them sometimes and like last year there was like a group of people, just online friends, and some knew each other from other communities from other streamers and I sort of um came into it as well and um yeah, that's like the friend group I've got from there and I met my boyfriend there two years ago in Berlin, I saw him there the first time but since summer I just started randomly flirting with him and it worked! So we are together now. I don't know, but um yeah, because he's in Berlin and I'm living in Hanau, we can't meet each other that often. So um if it works, he comes uh for a few days to me, or I was with him for a few days and yeah, that's the schedule we have now. He actually comes tomorrow for a week, so that's why I don't have time next week. It's really nice how uh a small decision, a brave decision to meet another city with new people can change your life so much. It's really nice. It was like, meeting these people and and hanging out with them, I'm living in the middle of them, so we had a few meetings just at my house with like nine other people. because I was in the middle. it's was like a part was missing, and that they filled that gap was really nice. It's not that close anymore but the few friends I have on online are the ones that I am calling a lot daily. But I also have friends in real life so they are online and not that nearby but I also have a few people here in my area which I see regularly so yeah. To have online communities going.

E: I don't have that, I don't know it but it sounds very nice. Oooh! *(sees another cat of I. again)*

I: She's really, really, really cute. (*mentions cat's name*), Like the Marvel character, um I don't know if you watch Marvel.

E: I've never seen it, no.

I: There's a god of mischief. His name is (*name*) and that's why I called him (*name*) because he's such a trouble maker. That's his personality.

E: Oh he is so cuddly, so cute. Okay, um okay, so for your interests, are there any topics that you find very interesting in general or um topics that you know a lot about?

I: I enjoy Anime's or movies in general. I love to go to the cinema cinema, regularly, not that much anymore, but a few years ago I was like once or twice, or even three times a month in the cinemas if the movies were good, so as it really, really often, um but I enjoy reading as well, it's just like sometimes I enjoy more playing some games, sometimes I enjoy more reading and I can read like 30 books in half a year or something. It just depends on the mood and what fixation I have.

E: And why do you enjoy it so much?

I: Yeah, I don't know. Sometimes it's just like an escape, but the real world, um it's sometimes depending on how I'm feeling in general. um I figured that when I'm a bit depressed I tend to read more to escape, uh, but um sometimes it's just a really good book and I want to know how it's um uh how the story is continuing. Anime's are really fun shows to watch. They are hilarious, and I love the art style a lot, um, sometimes I like to be creative and draw on my own, but I'm not that trained to do anime. it's really hard, I tried to follow a tutorial to it, but it doesn't work for me that well, but yeah, I like that a lot. And I also like Tarot cards. I normally watch videos of it as well. But I have my own cards. I try to check what the Tarot-cards are saying for me and I actually let this influence my day sometimes, but not that often. Just when the cards are..., for example I had asked the cards if my boyfriend and I would work, just like some clingy girl would do. And um the cards also said that it would work very well, but then they just pull out some cards that are like, yeah, something is off. um maybe uh like he would be lying to me and then I figured out he didn't stop

smoking like he said. And after that was resolved, the cards were good again. So I think sometimes they have a point.

E: How did you start doing tarot cards? How did you find out about how it works and stuff?

I: um I think, I've always been fascinated about it, but I watched some creators on TikTok, actually, um there's this one girl called *(name)*, who does these cards and I always was fascinated about, like they see a specific card and they exactly know what they mean. Maybe I just have to learn what they mean, but they are a lot of cards, so my cards I have, they are like for cheating, and I have a few books as well because all cards I have have the explanation on the bottom. So I can just read the points, what it could mean, or I just check the books I have to read what they might mean and then I can try to figure out what it could mean for me, for the question I have asked and I like these ones because they are colored. *(shows me some cards)* So these are the... uh I don't know the word, the cups, they are blue, because they are the water signs, and the the swords cards are air signs so they are white, and the fire signs are red, and these are the uh I don't know the word, like sticks, wooden sticks. I don't know the actual word for it, and then they have green cards as well. They are the um pentacles. They are like coins. And they are the earth signs I think. So um there's signs, zodiac signs, and the nature thing, and they are all playing together. They're coming together in some way and that's really fascinating. And I think because it's just such an old thing, they have to be, they have to have a point, somehow, because a lot of fire signs, for example, I am an Aries and my brother is a Leo, um, sagittarius as well is a fire sign. um they can be a lot. and a lot of aries or Leos or sagittarius can be a lot, so they somehow have a point and there's actually a small difference between March aries and April aries, I think, because the the second part of the zodiac, the later month, I think is normally a bit more intense than the previous ones. That's the experience I got. I just think Tarot or horoscope things are so well known and astrology in general, so they should have a point, you know. It's not just like I just write down that aries are, I don't know, lazy and I call it that because I met one lazy Aries and that's what I think all Aries are, but there has been research about Aries or specific science and that's why I think that they have a point. And that's like uh why I believe in something like that. It's not that all people are

different. It's really that all people are different but it just... let me check the word. I don't have it. Yeah, characteristics. Yeah. Some characteristics are just so similar to a lot of them, uh a lot of aries or a lot of libras or whatever, so you can say that most Libras are fascinated with balance because their sign is all about balance and they like harmony so much they have to balanced this out. So you can say that a typical libra wants balance and that's true for a lot of libras well. So, yeah, I think there's a point to it. When you start to read into it, you come to horoscopes, you come to astrology, you come to tarot, and to so much more spiritual stuff. that that's like a new world to dig in and it's really nice to do research about it.

E: Yeah, would you say you are really invested or really inside this world of knowledge already?

I: Um I'm not that deep, but I um I am already in this bubble, if you can say it like that. what my other interests are like, one of your questions will be what I watch on TikTok; it's like a bit of Witchtok, a bit, but I'm not that deep in the bubble yes, um but also like crystals. I love crystals, they look really cute. and they have so much other symbolistics or characteristics you can use for Reiki, for example, or you know that every zodiac sign has their own characteristic crystal, which can help them better, like I think Japis. That's like a brownish reddish crystal. They are like a protection stone for Aries, for example. I know that because when I was seven years old or so we were at the restaurant and there was a machine, you could use a coin to put in a machine and then a crystal comes out and there was an explanation that these specific crystals are for this and this zodiac sign, and I pulled my own zodiac sign, and my crystal and that's when I knew oh, this is my stone. So that stone had a meaning for me, and that's like cute, and it comes back in and so many other things, it's really nice.

E: Okay. Yeah, I get it. I have a lot of crystals myself, but I don't know where they are right now, but I have the same feeling with them. Let's see. Oh, yeah, okay. So, can you tell me a little bit about the context you grew up in? So, your upbringing, people you know around you, or anything you can think of. And how did you become who you are right now?

I: Yeah, I grew up with my mother and my father. They were together since, for like... I think I was twenty or something when they separated. I have a little brother, he is just like one and a half years younger than me, so we are really close in age. And we used to fight a lot when we were kids, but it got better some day and since I moved out, it was really much better to get along. like two days ago he moved in with me actually um because my mother had to get a new apartment because her old place was too expensive and she had to get a smaller apartment with her boyfriend so there was no room for my brother, so he moved in with me like two days ago. So that is a really new adjustment. And my father married one of his friends. I think what made me who I am, was like, I figured out that my mother cheated a lot on my father and my step brother, so one of the sons of my stepmother who married my father, told me that they had an affair also, so um that was interesting so they were actually not together like five years, but like 15... it was really huge. and I had to deal with it on my own. I never had the feeling that I could bring stuff up that affected my daily life. I um to my parents, I never could uh talk to them about something but I don't know why I never did this. For example, I got bullied in school, and when they asked 'how was school', I'd just say 'yeah it was fine'. I never talked about it with them. And I don't know why, I still have to figure it out. But if I had something and I shared it with them, they dismissed it like it wasn't a big deal and they didn't help me, and that's when I learned I can't depend on them or something like that. And because I'm the first born, they all depended on me. It's not like I'm parenting my parents, but they don't have enough people to talk to about their conflicts. So they tell me about it, which is fine, but it is sometimes affecting a lot of other stuff, so if, for example, if my father is mad at my mother and he tells me about his frustration about it, which is legit, but I don't want to get between them so I have to set boundaries. And it's really heavy sometimes on my shoulders to work with that.

E: So you didn't really feel any room to talk about your own stuff then?

I: Yeah, maybe. um maybe that's not that, but I could talk about it with them, and I think they would get it, but um it was always like I have to deal with it on my own for some part and um it was always like a task, I think. Sorry my cat is distracting me head he is tearing up my couch again, I'll be back in a second just a second please. Okay. That's why he's called (*cat's name*) because he is such a troublemaker. He

plays on his back, under my couch, and then he scratches his whole back along the couch from under it. It sounds funny, but it's destroying my furniture and he knows he's not allowed and he ran away as soon as I tried reaching under the sofa so he does it on purpose. Yeah, I think it's he's just too spoiled or something but yeah. Yeah..

Okay. But for example, when um my father, we had a family home which he owned and he had to sell it because it was too expensive, all in all. So he had to sell it and it was his childhood home. He loved it very much and it had a lot of meaning to him because when he was younger, he built it with his father, so when he was a child, he really had to carry the stones to put in the wall and it has a lot of meaning and it was really hard for him to let go of this house, and then he tells me about it. Then I was also sad about losing this home. So it's not like that my feelings didn't matter, but um I had to carry his weight too. And my mother had to move out of this house and had to find new arrangements to live in and then she sent me like every apartment she found online, and wanted to visit them and I had to set boundaries for this because it affected me that much, on a long time basis. So I had to say, please just send me the apartments you really can visit and really can afford. I will go with you. That's fine, but you can't text me 20 apartments if they are all not the right ones. And all the emotional load to look for them, to imagine my mother living there and yeah, it was too much. And I learned to set boundaries and it worked. Really well, actually. I was afraid that it wouldn't work, but that's like still growing up, but you're already grown up. That is interesting. I also sometimes have a flashback from my childhood, where I remember something. from like 20, 25 years ago or something and how it affected me, then I cry about it for like three days. To reflect on it and to work on it and then it's better. But every few months I have a flashback, I remember and then it weighs me down and then I have to grow for it and to to work for it and that's exhausting. That's really exhausting, because that that's always some things you thought were over, and then you are like 10 years old again and crying because something happened then, and yeah. For example, my grandmother was in the hospital and I had to go to a smaller shop in the entry ways and she was on the second or third floor, so I took the elevator and when I was alone in the elevator while, like eight years old or something, I got stuck. and nobody was there and I panicked and I pushed all the buttons and after a few seconds, but it felt like hours for me, but it was not more than a minute that I was stuck. The door opened again and it was fine, but I was stuck for a second and I panicked and I was like this' (*shows me how she was shaking*) and I

was traumatized. And I got back to the room where my mother and grandmother were sitting, and I sat in a... let me check the word... My grandmother had a walker, to carry herself, walk better, and there was a place to sit as well. And I sat in this thing and because I was so distracted, distracted because of the elevator, I um sat too far behind and I fell into a box which is on the walker. It it just was stuck there. It it just fell into it and my mother and my great grandmother were laughing at me. They don't see that I was in distress because of the elevator, they didn't ask why I was so pale or something. but they laughed at me because I was sat in the thing. Yeah. That's a memory to... yeah. But doing with a child in my age and yeah, that maybe that's something why I can't talk about anything because it doesn't matter or something. I don't know, but that was like core memory I remembered like one or two years ago and I it's really weird and yeah, traumatizing. Yeah, because why the fuck are they laughing at me? It hurts that I fell into the box on the walker and I was still shaking from the elevator and they didn't see it. How could they not see it? I was distressed so much and yeah don't know. I can't ask why to my grandmother because she's dead already but if I would ask my mother maybe she wouldn't just I don't know if she remembers or something, but yeah..

E. How how do you think she would react when you tell her?

I: I think if I would say that this had an impact on me, she would say, oh, well, I thought it wasn't a big deal. Then she would move on I think. She doesn't do it in a mean way, but maybe she will be sorry about it, but um yeah, she will she would say that she thought it wasn't a big deal.

E: Yeah. So she might not acknowledge it? What it meant to you.

I: I think she would acknowledge it but not like I needed it to be. Okay, my cat is here now.

E: Awh, that is cute. Um okay, so I'm moving on a little bit with the background questions. Did you grow up with any form of religion or spirituality? Maybe in your home or around you, your friends, and how would you say this affected you?

I: Um it was like nothing. We had um we weren't religious at all. We were Christian, but the protestant one, not the Catholic one. protestant, And the protestant, they are

another form of Christian. They're not as strict as the Catholics, but um when you are like 13 or 14 years old, you can have like lessons in your church, in my church because we are another different form of it, another special form, we took two years of lessons instead of one year, which is annoying for a puberty child to have to spend one evening in your week to sit in a church and listen to religious people if you're not really interested in it. But it was fun all in all, to experience it, and to see the religious part of this life, I think, but when you're finished, you'll have to... I don't know what you have to do, you have to go to church, let me check the word. Like the service of the church, where they pray and something, and you have to say a special prayer in front of the community of the church, like something like that. And then you get confirmed. The translator said it was like 'confirmation'. In Germany it's 'konfirmation', I don't know. And then you can have a party with your family and friends and yeah, you get some presents, most of them are money and most of my teenage friends did this just to get the money out of it. I made like 900 euros from it but it wasn't like... yeah, because it depends on how much family you invite and how much they will give you. Most of them will give you like 20 to 50 euros and um I made I nearly 900 euros in this time from this party, just from presents, um and that was my first bigger money I could spend on things I wanted, which for a teenage girl is really nice. But I never went to church after that. I was like three times in the church after my confirmation when I was 14 or 15 years old and that was on Christmas. We never went to church before so we went to church for Christmas service once or twice or three times maybe but then I never went to it. But now when I have to be in a church because of somebody dying, and you have a church service because of it, or something. I just sit there, try not to laugh because I imagine... Christianity, it's like a cult. If you think about it, it's kind of like a cult, but one of the biggest. and um as soon as I have this thought in my mind, I have to try to hold my laughter back, it's so hard to not laugh while everybody is crying because somebody they love died and they are sad about it.

E: because what is the thing that makes you laugh then exactly?

I: Because I don't believe in God. I believe bad happens to you if you do bad things like karma. Yeah. That's what I imagine. And it's just like a bit of energy, I think. You have good energy, good will happen to you. If you have bad energy, karma will get

you, I think. And all this 'God loves you', 'it was God's plan to kill a baby after birth because God knows what'. that doesn't make sense, No, there's no higher person or god who decides who can live and who doesn't, there were medical conditions why this baby died. God didn't do about it so he is not real and yeah, that's that's how I think it is and um I think always the church tries to pull people back to their cult to come more often to the church to visit the church to spend money on this. The church isn't that tricked for it, but the Catholics are. They are really much, I think they they have people during their service like child's who have to help during the service, um they have the pope which they adore because they think he had a connection to God.. No, he was voted by other old people, and he doesn't have a connection to God. God doesn't exist. So I get that they want to have a figure they can look onto but it doesn't have to do something with God. It is the person.

E: So is there something, because you don't believe in God, but is there something else that you do really believe in? And why?

I: I think, I imagined, um like multiple universes at once, like, um, you have your own timeline. And if you do something where you can.. maybe you walk on the streets and a car pulls up and they could hit you but they didn't because the person braked and stopped before hitting you. That's how I think there are two possibilities. The one where he stopped and your timeline continues or the other timeline which copies itself likewise, and where you die, and then your timeline has ended. And I think, I imagine that we had so much times in our lives where we could have died just by small accidents or a bigger one or maybe you get an accident where you got hurt really bad and you just survived because the doctors were there in time and could help you in time. I think there are always two timelines and one way is that where you died and there is one where you continued and sometimes it's just always like a 50/50 chance and when you die you lost the 50/50 timeline. Okay. there's multiple universes and um that's how I imagine it. I also think it could be possible to be rebirthed. Like your soul never dies, but now I am a German woman and when I die I get to be a frog and when the frog dies I get to be a lion and when the lion dies I am a Chinese baby or something. That's how I imagine souls could work.

E: Okay. And do you think there is a meaning to life?

I: Meaning of life?

E: Yeah. big question, hahah.

I: The first thing that comes to my mind is just to survive and the pressing part is to survive the daily life. Not like to fight for food or something, but just to go through your day and wake up in the morning and go to work and something like that. I don't think there's a real meaning to our life. If you look at it from the biological side, it's like, yeah, get kids and reproduce and continue your life line and so on, but I don't think this is the purpose. I think you should just live your life, enjoy your life do what you want, learn what you want, experience what you want and even what you don't want to experience because like loss of somebody is really depressing and sad, but it's always something... everybody has to go through it and um it forms your personality, I think. The meaning of life should be that when you're sitting in your death bed and you know you don't have much time and you will die in the next few days you should not have to regret your life. You should be able to say yeah, I did what I wanted. I didn't miss any of it and I didn't miss to do something. I did everything I wanted. I could do more, but I'm fine not doing these things because I can't do it anymore and I had a good life and I'm okay to to die. I think. I think that's a good explanation. I think. Not to regret and to have good time. Yeah, it would be so sad, you imagine you are like 80 and you didn't ever go on a rollercoaster and always wanted it, but never did it because you never took time for it or something like that, just like simple things like going on the roller coaster. or never read that book you liked, you always wanted to read and never took the time for it. You have to prioritize some things to enjoy them and um yeah.

E. Yes, I agree. Okay. Uh, and now about Reiki in specific. What is it, according to you, and what role does it play in your life?

I. I think Reiki is energy. Like we know from, I think Newton was the scientist, everything is out of an energy if I hit something with a specific force, the force can go on the other thing and continue, something like that, but um Reiki is like a spiritual energy thing like how you can experience feelings or just in general how your energy of your body could be working if you are strong enough to do something or not, and reiki can influence these energies and can do that if you have a blockage,

like for example, you have the chakra in your throat and your neck and some Reikihealers say that the throat chakra influences the way in which you can speak your truth or speak in general, or speak and stand up for yourself. I imagine. And if if you have a blockage in here, you may be not ever be brave enough to set a boundary or to speak out loud the boundary and so I think Reiki can help to lose these blockages so that your energy can flow better through your neck and through your from head to the rest of your body and maybe it can be a motivation to set a boundary for example. or to speak of something you are afraid of speaking out loud and um that's what I think is reiki doing, even if it would always be just a placebo it still helps for me so I don't care if I just imagine it's helping or it's actually helping. The fact that it's helping me to go better through my day is the important part.

E. Okay. And did you ever in receive any physical, so 'real-life Reiki' from someone, and how did it feel?

I. No, I didn't actually. I would love to, but I didn't find anybody who would um practice reiki in real life. I always um differ between in real life and online because that's easier to differ. But um I would love to learn Reiki. I found a school that teaches it. It's not that far away, but I would have to take time for it to travel to it and it costs a bit of money. But I would love to use these lessons and to practice reiki on my own, professionally trained, so that I can really do it. I tried to do it on myself with the information *Rachel* gave me over the lives. I like it a lot that you can ask a question and she can explain it quite good so I could try it uh for me, but um sometimes I have trouble to connect to the energy or to do something and sometimes it works better so I think I still need help with that and a guide would be really good. So if I can take these lessons I would be very grateful but it always depends on what the money says about it because it's like I think 300 euros for a lesson, a day lesson. And and I'd have to travel for it and it's, I think, two hours away which is okay but I would I don't know if it's more days to do the training or of it's just a few hours but I have to plan it in advance and have the money for it so t's a plan for the near future and I want to do it this or next year or maybe the year after that, but I will definitely um take some lessons some day. um yeah. Yeah, but I didn't. I just received it online.

E. Okay. Yeah. And on TikTok specifically, in general, how long have you been active as a user on TikTok?

I. Uhm, I think since the pandemic started. So over five years. sometimes more, sometimes less, but I'm really active on TikTok. It's like a daily thing for me to be on TikTok. It's like brain rot actually to watch videos the whole day, at least one hour a day, but maybe more hours, maybe sometimes if I have nothing to do, I will just stay on my phone for like the entire day to watch TikTok videos. It's really, it can be really much. Yeah.

E. Yeah, I know it myself.

I. Hahah, it's dangerous to stay on there the whole day, but sometimes it's the best day ever.

E. Yes it can be, and sometimes it's not, but um and how often do you engage with other people's content, how much do you comment and maybe stitch people's videos?

I. Sometimes more, sometimes less, but it depends on the videos I watch. For example, I follow some authors I like, I like reading their books and I comment there sometimes to engage with other people or to do recommendations for their books or to finance them or something. They posted video like yesterday that they have to cancel a new audio book because they don't have the money for it. They don't make much profit and I recommended that they maybe try to do a kickstarter, that they can collect online the money for it, from the followers they are willing to engage with, and maybe they see it and maybe they think about it. But I also try to... they are like a smaller business, and I love to engage with smaller businesses. I found a 19 year old German boy, a few weeks ago, who crafts small figures out of wood, and he had like a dino. It was really cute, and I commented like oh my God, do you have Etsy? I want to buy two dinos because he needs a friend (*holds up another wooden dino*). And he doesn't have Etsy and then I found out that he was German and like still in school and it was a hobby for him and and now he um he got many interactions on this video because it went viral a bit and he had like 40 thousand likes on it, so a few people saw it so he started a small shop and now he's live every other day and you can watch him craft some wood things and I think if I wouldn't have commented like this, and if I didn't text privately with him tp; 'hey maybe you can start a shop or maybe you can just look other shops up to sell your work', then maybe he wouldn't have had the courage to actually sell his work. So that was really nice. And these

smaller businesses, I like them very much, and I don't think that I would interact with other videos. I don't comment on them, I think, and I mostly like them and share them with friends if they are funny or if they can relate to it or something.

E: Yeah. Okay. And how would you describe the content that you come across, your FYP, what does it look like? What 'sides' are you on?

I: It's a lot of creative things, like artworks and woodcraft or something. some witchtok, some tarottok, booktok. A lot of anime things, like the shows I like, but also something like... so ADHD things. Yeah. Somebody can relate, or if they struggle with mental disabilities or disorders or something, they watch these videos as well. Sometimes it's just like these reddit stories on a Minecraft parkour if you ever saw them. I can watch them the whole day. And it's quite funny because I know a lot of reddit stories now and I can recall if I ever watched it and if I know, oh, that was a good story I can watch the whole video again and not be mad about it. Sometimes it's like that's also a really niche group of videos, but like a race for marbles where you can pick a color, and then you'd see which marble color could be first or second or last, or whatever. And a lot of cat videos. I have a colleague who likes Star Wars and I watched one Star Wars related video, and now my FYP is all over Star Wars things, and sometimes cat and Star Wars or creative Star Wars things, or food or something. And now I always send him Star Wars related things, and he sends me cat related videos so it's really, really funny how this affects the ForYoupage. And it's really funny to see how the algorithm of TikTok catches up on these things. You look up one anime, your whole feed is about this anime now. And um sometimes a bit cosplay, especially of the anime's I watch um sometimes cats in cosplay of the anime, it's really, really funny how niche these things can be. Also a bit of ASMR, like light triggers or the hand movement noises and things like that. Some gaming things. I watch a TikToker from Australia. His name is (name). He's mostly gaming, he played some horror games and I watched some clips and then I found it on twitch and I'm one of his VAT watchers, and now he's mostly streaming on TikTok, but I think he's one of the biggest Australian streamers now, which he worked for really hard, and I love it when I see him on my feed when he's live. Yeah, something like that, movies, anime's, gaming, cats. Spiritual things, books.

E: Okay. So a whole mix of everything, yeah, same for me. And how often do you see spiritual content and what kind of, next to the tarot readings, also other kind of stuff?

I: Yeah. Um, I would count the tarot videos also as spiritual ones. Sometimes I see five videos of tarot in half an hour, sometimes I don't see one video in one week, it just depends what the algorithm thinks I might need, and I think also that they pop up when I need them the most. So that sometimes a bit accurate. Sometimes they are random, like; 'this is one crystal, this is another, and you can choose and one of them is your daily reading now. And if you choose this, this is your reading' and yeah, that was exactly the crystal I had chosen, so I stayed and watched the video. I have a few reiki-creators I follow, so they are on my foryou page sometimes. I have a few I don't follow and they pop up randomly, but I don't often interact with them because I never felt a really good energy from their videos. It's dependent on how the energy works on me, if I've heard something or not, and if it felt good or not. So that's how I chose to watch the videos. Or if I just need the video, if for example they do something about headaches and I have a headache, I watch the video to reduce my headache. But yeah, sometimes they are just for random things I don't really need right now, so I don't watch it.

E: Yeah. And do you think they often pop up when you need them the most? Is it often the right message that you need?

I: Like seventy percent, I think. Could be a message I needed to hear, they can definitely influence my day or my decisions sometimes. And sometimes they are just random things and I can't relate at all. But um they are often accurate with their messages for my day I think.

E: And about the language, is the most content that you see, Is it global content, so in English, or is it most constant German?

I: It's mostly English, yeah, it's mostly English.

E: Yeah. Okay. And the last one about TikTok, what are your general thoughts and feelings about TikTok as a platform? So are you happy with the way that you use it and what it gives you, or would you change something about it?

I: I may consume it too much. I spend maybe too much time of my day looking through TikTok, but it's also like when I'm working and I have to get a mental pause for a moment to reset my brain or something, then I scroll through Tik Tok for a few minutes. But it's mostly out of habit, but also to get other things on my mind, and it's also for relaxation, I think. To relax and to get my mind to something else and get back to my work, for example. But I also find it really distracting sometimes. Sometimes I have to do my work and I can't concentrate at all and I see myself scrolling every two minutes. I do something at my computer at work and then suddenly I have my phone in hand scrolling through TikTok, and like, oh, fuck I have to work again and then I put my phone back. I do one thing, and then I have my phone back in my hand. Yesterday it was really hard at work because I couldn't put my phone away. It's like a love-hate relationship.

E: Yeah, same for me. Very recognizable.

I: Glad I'm not alone.

E: No. No, you're surely not alone. Okay, so that's about TikTok. And now for me the most important part; about the live streams. So I found your accounts through *Rachel's* live stream, who I found by accident, just by scrolling. And I saw that you were a moderator. What does it mean to you to be a moderator and how did you achieve the position?

I: At first, just like a small background info; I found reiki because I watched ASMR videos. And some ASMR videos also practice Reiki in an ASMR kind of way to double the experience, I think. And I've watched a creator, I think her name was (*name other creator*). And that's when I felt the first time the influence on myself through reiki. So that's when I learned about Reiki, and I followed her, and watched some of her videos and I found that really relaxing. And then it was a random day, I know I stood in my kitchen, I was cooking and I scrolled, and then there was the live of *Rachel*. And then I joined, and she had like an ad; 'if you subscribe, you can get a mini personalized session'. And I thought okay, it's six euros and sixty nine cents for me to subscribe on TikTok, so I thought okay, six euro's, it's not that much. I try it. and I subscribed, and messaged her that I wanted a small mini session. And I never experienced reiki before, just that before I had seen a video where I maybe felt

tingles in my shoulder or something. But this was so intense, because Ruka was only fixating on me, that I had to sit on my kitchen floor because I couldn't stand up anymore because I was so dizzy and I loved this feeling. It was it was not an uncomfortable dizziness, it was like when you were a child and you spun on a chair and then it stopped, and then your head is still turning inside. It was like a good dizziness. It was really weird. And I enjoyed it, and then I stayed and then I watched more videos of her. And that's how I uh learned about Reiki, and learned about *Rachel* and I just I met her and I stayed. And that's how I found her. That was like February last year, and since then I watched over 200 lives of her. Tiktok can actually count and say how much minutes you have, and I have over 17,000 minutes in her live that I have watched, because I stayed really every single live I could get. I missed maybe 10 or so in this year. Since I'm her follower.

E: How often does she go live? Every day?

I: She was live like every other day, maybe three to five times a week. Now it's maybe three times a week. She changed her policy for the minisessions because now she has over 90 subscribers which are there every month. I think she didn't cross the border to 100 subscribers yet, but she's really close to it. And now she has the rule that you can get one minisession every week. But that's mostly not possible for everybody, because she has too many subscribers and not much live time, so that doesn't work for most people because of timezones. And you if you are in the live just like two minutes after she started, you don't get a place on the list because it's full. So yeah, you have to be so quick to get a place on the list, and I try always to be one of the first in the live because I enjoy these minisessions so much. *Rachel* was on holiday during the the whole month of June. June was last year, and it was so exhausting because I really felt how it was influenced um by *Rachel* how my day was because it made me... she grounded me so much and I was calmer, and now I got so much mood swings and um it was a really, really f*cking annoying month for me because *Rachel* wasn't there. After two weeks I was going crazy, and after four weeks it was so exhausting to go through the day. It's not like an addiction, but it's a balance that was lost. That's it. That describes well, I think. At the beginning she had a personal private session; 30 minutes reiki only on yourself for I think 10 pounds. If you were a subscriber you get a small discount, so it was like ten euros for me to get

a personalized session for half an hour from her. And I took the opportunity when I could, because it's nothing really, it's really nothing. Ten euros for a half an hour is a dream. And that was so intense and so nice. And then after that she gained some followers and some subscribers and some customers, and she changed her prices. I think she changed them twice. I'm not sure. And since May or April last year, I think, she has the prices that she has now so you can purchase the 'dragon-pack', as she calls it, you can have five sessions for 75 pounds, which is dependent on the current rate, but it's like 90 to 95 euros. Which is not that much for five sessions. If you check other prices it's really cheap. And I am normally getting like one private session a month. I just renewed my dragon packs, it's like the fifth dragonpack I got since she has this offer and a single session costs I think 20 pounds or 25 pounds which would be 30 euros, so it's okay. It's really cheap in comparison to other reiki master-creators but um yeah I think her pricing is reasonable. I get a lot from it, and yeah. And *Rachel* grew so much since her first live, I actually learned just like a few weeks ago that I was her first subscriber ever, and that was her first live too, so I was like the first customer she got from TikTok, and I'm really feeling special about it. I met her on day one and I stayed, and never went another way. And um I became moderator because I'm always there, and she needs somebody who's always there. Or mostly. She has three moderators. She has another one who lives in the USA, and me, from Germany. She herself lives in Scotland and she is Japanese, so she has a lot of Japanese subscribers as well. That's why she switches from English to Japanese a lot. I don't speak one word of Japanese, so I don't know what she's saying. Sometimes she translates if it's important for everyone, but you know, mostly she's talking to a specific Japanese customer. And after she got me, and the other moderator, I think one or two months later she got another Japanese moderator as well, so if (*name japanese moderator*) is there, I don't have to check the Japanese messages if they are blocked, then I can unblock them that they can be seen by everybody. I love the translation feature of TikTok. I don't know if you knew it, but if you see a Japanese message, for example, you can hold on it, and then it can translate it, and it's really accurate. It's sometimes a bit weird, but at like 90% of the message is right, and I get what they wanted to say. They just can answer it in English and they can do the same thing for them so they can hold on my message and translate it and it works really good.

E: Ooh, I will try that.

I: That's really nice. And um yeah that helped me a lot to be a moderator. I was really honored when she asked me. I was the second person she asked, she asked the other person her name is *(name other moderator)* in our community. And yeah, I basically check if somebody rude is in the chat to block them if needed, and sometimes people come in and just say well this doesn't work and laugh their *ss off. And that's just distracting for us. I don't want to argue with people who don't appreciate what we have in this livestream, so sometimes I have to block them or to mute them at least. Sometimes there are scammers or spammers in the chat, but mostly it's really okay. At first she had to check this herself, but I think it has made her work easier since she had the moderators because when she's live, she often has 90 to 120 viewers. Sometimes she has 300 viewers. So there are a lot of people in it, and a lot of messages. And it's helping to not overlook a message she needs to read, so I can fixate it so that she can see it. I just want to help her in the first place. And to... What's the word? Let me check. To support her. Yeah. I just want to support her work and um to make it easier for her and um to also help make it the safe space that it is. So if somebody is there, I can block them or something, so that it's still a safe place for us, you know.

E: Okay. And um can you describe what happens generally during a live stream?

I: At first she, when she's live, it Takes a few minutes until we have the normal viewer rate. Normally she does collective healings, so that means she does a healing for everyone. Like cleansing bad energy away or something. If somebody has wishes for a special healing, like somebody saying they have a headache for example, there is always somebody else there who also has a headache. So it's a common wish. And most days Rachel can do a collective healing for headaches, for example, or if somebody else has a wish, she says that we can tell them and she can check if she can do these wishes for healings after some time. Yesterday she was really quick, because it was just just like 10 minutes after she got live that she did the minis, but normally she's like 20 to 30 minutes doing collective. Then she does the mini healings where she mutes the chat, so she has the chat only for subscribers, so that random people can't spam or whatever, so she has room for the subscribers and for the mini-healings. That's always a really calm chat flow. It's normally only the people

who get the minis texting. When they have their turn. And it's never a really busy chat. And after she does her minis, which our normally like five to eight people I think, then she does collective healings again. She always does a head massage, that's like a whole cleanse for the head, face, ears, back of the head, brain or, whatever, and it's it's really funny how she always does this movement because for some people it really feels like somebody is really touching your head and massaging it. And that's like something she really does every live, because we all love it. And yeah, if we have requests we can say it. Mostly she can do our requests, but sometimes she doesn't have time or something. And it's always a bit dependent on how her dog is acting, because she has a small dog; Her name is (*name dog*) and I don't know if you saw her? *Rachel* always sits on the floor with a blanket, and (*name dog*) is laying in her lap and sleeping. And sometimes I have the theory that some energy can activate the dog. Sometimes it's hungry, but if (*name dog*) is making too much trouble she has to cut the life short. but um if (*name dog*) stays calm she's a bit longer live. If (*name dog*) gets back up again, which is really funny, we often say that it's always (*name dog*)'s live, and *Rachel* is the guest, which is really funny. And yeah, sometimes she just chats with us a bit, but most of the time she does reiki and chats with us at the same time, yeah.

E: Okay, okay. And can you explain, if you know, what the Japanese dragon's energy that she uses, what is that, and where does it come from?

I: A lot of people ask *Rachel* about the dragon's energy. She explains it like... I don't know if you believe in ghosts, but if you talk about ghosts you have a picture in mind, like some invisible or lightly visible thing, like a person is sitting in the corner and creeping you out, or something like that. Sometimes you have good gohsts, sometimes you have bad ghosts. It depends on what you believe in, I think. And *Rachel* explains these Japanese dragons like ghosts. Just like you would imagine a little dragon sitting on your sofa or something, she says that these dragons are always good. They never have bad energy, They always have good energy, and I imagine them with this 'golden retriever' energy. Like, in your face, I'm happy to see you. They are like that. they just want to give you healing energy. Yeah. So *Rachel* uses this energy, she gets energy from the dragon and puts it on us. Like wifi and a router. Where the wife comes from, she uses this energy from the rooter and puts it

imaginary, remotely on us, and that's what I say if somebody asks how this works. I always say; it's like Wi-Fi, you can't see it, but it works. And that's like another energy resource she can get energy from. And I'm actually one of a few people who can feel the difference between her energy and the dragon's energy, which is really special. Because if she uses her energy, it's just like calm and gentle energy, and the dragon's energy is more intense and it always, really always, get dizzy from it when she uses it. I described it with that the head is turning; that's the energy um you get when she uses the dragon's energy. She doesn't always use the dragon, sometimes she just does her own energy and then at the end gets the dragon's energy as well to just get a part from it, or to make it stronger. And that's when I feel that she changes the energy source. So I can feel the difference and it's really funny to experience. Sometimes I don't have a specific wish for receiving energy, or just say yeah, please check for blockages and release the blockages if needed, and then I can look inside my body and feel where I feel something, and then I know oh, she does the throat chakra or oh, she does the root chakra or yeah, she does grounding now. Because when she does grounding, my feet always tingle. Always. I don't know if you know the feeling when you don't have enough blood flow in your feet or something, and then it's it' tingling like crazy? That's kind of how it feels for me when she does grounding. When she does that it always feels different, and it's so nice to experience this. It's also a bit of an ASMR effect, because she does this for me and I enjoy this very much. It's really exciting always, to receive it. I can make you feel a difference. Okay. To get back to your question; if she uses these dragons, she just gets the energy from them instead of herself. It's like a power bank for energy, from the dragons, and not her energy, or the energy of the universe, or wherever she gets her energy from, but it's another source of energy.

E: Yeah. Okay. That's cool.

I: Yeah, it is so exciting. I love it. If you are watching her live again, try to feel what she does, and when she says she is using the dragons, try to differ, and try to see if you feel something else, because it's really exciting. For me, when she uses the dragons, it's really spinning around. it's the best feeling ever.

E: I will try. I'm really curious now. Because I have not felt it yet, but I was just there to see what happens and I think I was not open for receiving anything yet.

I: Yes, you have to be open for it. If you want to, I have two other YouTube healers I found. One of them I found on TikTok as well. His name is um (*name other creator; Rob*), I think he has really calming energy as well, but he doesn't use Japanese energies, he receives his energy from angels. Archangel Michael, or whatever. And that's one of the creators I will always feel something from as well. And I found another creator, I don't know his name right now, but his energy is really intense, really, really, really intense. And I can send you some links if you want to?

E: Yes, that would be great.

I: If you don't feel something from this, I don't know how you can feel it, because this like; in your face energy, but good, it's a good feeling. I love it. But it was intense, even for a collective, it's really intense.

E: Okay. Yeah, I'm curious. If you can, send me the links afterwards or something, then I will try. Okay, let's see.

I: I just sent you his YouTube, you can check what you want to receive from him. I just sent you the link from him. It's very intense. He's nice.

E: Ah, I know him. I know him too. Yeah. Okay. Thank you. Um, I'm looking at the time, because I don't have a lot of remaining time, but I do have a lot of questions, so I need to see...

I: I'm sorry.

E: No, no problem! Uhm, yeah, one question. What do you think draws people in to watch... draws other people in to watch and participate in live streams?

I: I think it's mostly the ASMR feeling they can get. It's like, just the calming experience. Just to relax a bit more, and reiki helps a lot with that. What I find interesting is that *Rachel* is one of the few reiki-healers that doesn't do ASMR. *Rachel* doesn't make finger noises especially to hear it better, she just does this. And there's nothing ASMR about her reiki. But I think the newer curious people are just there to have a look, and maybe get a bit calmer energy or just relax. And the other persons who are there are the ones who know Reiki, and they know that *Rachel* has

good energy and know that she's a legit healer. So you have the curious ones and the ones who are there for her reiki energy in specific, I think.

E: Okay, and do you feel like, with the livestreams, that you are part of a certain community of people?

I: Yeah.

E: And how?

I: She has like 90 subscribers, and she has at least 40 people who are always there. It's always the same people who are there, always the same Japanese ones, always the same international ones. I found one viewer who also lives in Germany, so we chat a lot outside of the streams to just connect, and talk about reiki, because we don't have people who enjoy Reiki in real life, and it's really nice to have somebody who gets it too. I tell my best friend about it, she's like; what the fuck are you talking about? And I don't get the message that I... I might sound crazy when I talk about it, and you don't have anything to understand it, but it's nice to have somebody who can relate to it, and who understands it and gets it too. So it's really important to have people around you to talk about it. And I'm really happy to meet people who are also speaking German, to talk about it, but international connections as well. I also know that I don't have to check the subscribers messages, because I know our people, our community don't post rude stuff. So if the Japanese message is blocked for whatever reason, TikTok is really random about this, I can just unblock it so that everybody can see it. And I don't have to look up what it says, actually, because I know these people won't be rude. They always post nice things, and that's my job in this live, to check that the messages are okay. Sometimes new people are rude, or sometimes the message is a bit tricky, but in context it would work, so I can unblock it too, but I have to check the random messages and the subscribers are always safe. They are a safe community, so I don't have to stress about them or worry about them.

E: Yeah, nice. Would you say that your engagement with the healings for you is spiritual, or has spiritual meaning of any kind?

I: Um a bit, I think. It's just like, I believe in good or bad energy. I think it has something to do with a good spirit guide or something. We have two people in our

community who are medium so they can see ghosts or something, and one of them told me that I have a specific god who is watching over me, which is really creepy but also really cool if you really think about it, that the god, I think it was Poseidon or something, that a god picked me to watch over me. Like an angel or something. And it's nice to know something about it, and... Can you repeat the question? I have lost track completely.

E: Yes, if your engagement with the reiki healings and with the live streams has any spiritual meaning for you, for your life?

I: Okay, it can have a meaning I think, but I don't think that it's more or less meaningful or something like that, if that makes sense. It's just like, this is good energy, and *Rachel* has her Japanese goddesses who help her do these healing, and I'm really grateful about these things. And when she was on holiday in June, she posted a shrine, that's like a temple in Japan. And this place was so powerful, and I just saw a video of this place and it was like; energy in your face. From this from this video. So I think that there is really something going on with Japanese goddesses or something, but I don't know any more about it, or think that there's a specific Reiki god or something. But I think Rachel has her connection to it and uses this to help us, heal us. And I definitely believe in these dragons, ghosts, 'thingies'. They are like hyper fixated puppies who you can call, and then they want to give you energy and attention, and that's how you can get them. And one of the mediums of our community told me that I have a few, actually. So when I tried to practice on myself I just imagined asking my dragons for help, and then they helped me. And I had a live session like last week, I think, where I just thought about that it would be nice if my dragons could help *Rachel* and after the mini session, she said that she thought that my dragon helped her. And I didn't communicate it in advance, so that was what I thought about it, and she definitely received energy from my dragons to help me heal me. Yeah. That's really cool. Because I didn't tell her that and it would be really random if she just made this assumption, but that was too much on point to not be real, I think. That's why I think these ghosts are real. Do you know the feeling when you are somewhere, and you feel somebody's watching you? Or you just have the instinct to just turn around because you heard something or something like that? That's how you have it with the dragons, or with the chakras as well. Sometimes it's

like an instinct, that when I try to do some reiki that I felt that my crownchakra was opening. And I really felt like this imaginary thing on my head is turning more open. And that's like an intuitive feeling, like an instinct, like a feeling you have, and you know it's there. And it's the same with the dragons. And at some point I had a mini session and my chest was so heavy, and then I asked one of our mediums to check what my dragons were doing, and she said that one of my dragons was laying on top of me to heal me, and that's what I felt. And then she sent my dragon to down from me and I had a feeling like something was not on me anymore but next to me, and um then this feeling was gone. Because she told my dragon not to sit on me. That's so random, but it's like, sometimes I can feel this and it's it's really cool. That's the spiritual thing I think.

E: Okay. Yeah, that's cool. And would you say that you need to believe in a digital reiki for it to work? And if so, to what extent would you say that you have to believe in it and if not, what would someone need to start believing in it?

I: You don't have to believe in it. It's like I said, I don't care if it's a placebo or not. I don't care if it's real or not, but you have to be open about it. You have to be... if you think; 'oh no, I don't ever want to receive any of it because I don't need it', then you won't receive the same healing effect as when you say, 'okay, I just try it out and see what happens'. That's enough to receive it, I think. It's just like, I want to receive, and that's all you need.

E: Okay. And have you ever been skeptic about Reiki healing in general, during your life?

I: Not at all, I think. It's like I said, I don't care if it's real, It's just imaginary because it helps me. And I feel better about myself and my body and and my soul, if you can say so. But I don't care if I just imagine things being better, or if they are actually better, because I feel better and that's what counts for me. And it's not, it's something... I can believe in without hurting anybody. If you, for example, have Christianity, where some people believe in abortion being murder, and women can't get health care because of it, that's affecting negatively because somebody believes in something that's written by old men in a textbook called a Bible. That's basically a book club. Yeah. So, and that's what I think is a benefit of Reiki, because it doesn't

hurt anybody. It just affects me. If you don't care about it, that's fine, you don't have to, but for me it works, and it's not annoying for anyone, and nobody would say; 'go away with your bullshit', just because they see a video about it. But there are um religious people who are screaming at you if you don't believe in God.

E: Okay, so that's a difference. Um, and yesterday I was in the livestream for a couple of minutes, and I saw that she interacted with you, and that she gave you, I think, a cleansing or a healing? But I was a little bit too late, so I didn't see what happened. Could you explain what happened, and how it made you feel?

I: Yeah, I had some, well I was watching the spirit pond-reiki videos, I felt a bit of heaviness on my chest like pressure, like something was pressuring down my um chest, and I also feel sometimes like a pulling sensation from here (*points to neck*) to my um jaw. And I think if my throat chakra is affected, I can for example when *Rachel* cleanses my throat chakra, it's sometimes a pulling sensation from here to here and also through my tongue, or I feel it in my tongue, a pulling sensation downwards to my throat when she does something around here. And I asked her about something being off about my heart chakra, and if she can cleanse this. So she did, she cleansed some energetic parts. it's like, you can imagine it like a shower. She's waterboarding this part of the body or chakra, like she's cleansing it just with water energy, because she has a water goddess and a water dragon or something, because all of her work is um some kind of water related. It's like she's cleansing the energy ways, I think. I don't know how much you know about chakras, but you have like seven major chakra points. One is in the crown, and so on and the last one is at the end of your spine and that's like the tunnel for your energy. So if she has to cleanse something, she checks if the flow of the energy is working from top to bottom. And that's why if she does grounding, she puts the energy from my head through my body, out of my feet, for example, to get it back to the earth. And that's why my feet always tingle when she does grounding. And yesterday, I felt a huge rush or pulling, something, a sensation around this area, a bit in my jaw as well, my head a bit. My head was spinning a bit at the end because she cleansed it a bit, and I also had tingly feet. And a bit of the palm of my hand sometimes, but not always. But it was like tingling, my head was spinning a bit because of the dragons energy, and that's like just a wave of energy that was just coming from *Rachel* to me. And it's

not always that intense, because yesterday it was really intense. Um sometimes I just don't feel that much in general from the healing, but yesterday was an intense day as well, and after my session, there were like three or four people after me, and I fell asleep. I overslept the whole rest of the live because of my session, and I slept completely through it and I woke up to another live playing randomly on my phone next to my head, and I slept very well in this moment. It was a really good nap. Exhausting, this was really much needed. Yeah, she has the ability to see the aura from someone. I imagine it like a colorful thing around your body, and sometimes she can see the aura. She sees if something is blocking your aura, or its intervening with your aura. And sometimes if she sees something about it, or she notices something, then she says it out loud. When I was in a really, really happy energetic phase in my life, she saw my aura rainbow colored, and bright and shining, and it was a really nice compliment if you think about it. Because you think you are happy as well and then somebody says that you are bright and colorful and that's really a beautiful imagination about yourself. And she can see something like this. And sometimes she has visions too. Yesterday she saw a violin or guitar, or saw some kind of instruments with strings. I don't have a connection to these instruments, but maybe something will happen in the next days, and it has a connection to a guitar or a violin or something. And maybe she can see something about it. I thought she had a lot of visions yesterday, more than usual. Normally she has like one or two visions with some people, somebody and some not, but yesterday she had like a few visions with a lot of people. More like a lot of visions with a few people and that was interesting to notice. Because sometimes she doesn't have visions at all, yesterday it was a lot. In one person she saw Mickey Mouse and a yellow boy. And with another person she saw a hospital and something else. It's really interesting. It's not like a dream, but just like instinct, like a picture in your mind about something. Sometimes I see things too while she does a healing. But it's really rare that I see something too, and I think it's because of *Rachel*. I don't see things outside of her healings, I think.

E: Do you see it when she does a healing on you or when she does the community healings as well?

I: More on me, I think. I don't know if I ever had a vision with the collective healing, but sometimes the collectives are like pretty light, gentle energy, and sometimes they

are really intense like she would do it just on me. It truly depends on how her energy is, how the community's energy is how I can receive it. It's another experience every time. It's always something else. sometimes it's like this, sometimes it's like that. But I think I just have the visions when she does reiki on me.

E: I think I have almost all that I wanted to know. Let's check.

I: I mean, if we forgot something, are you want to know something else too, you can text me if you want, and I can can answer it via a text or audio message. If you remember something. It's funny how you texted like it would be 20 for 30 minutes long. two hours in. Yeah, but it's really fun for me.

E: Yeah, it also depends on how much someone wants to tell me and I just saved the whole um almost the whole afternoon, because I have to go in half an hour, but yeah, it's nice that you wanted to share so much and also for you; if you think of anything else that you want to maybe change about what you said or want to add, you can always text it or send it to me. I think it's great that you wanted to share so much with me, and I, how do you say it? It will help me a lot, all the things that you told me.

I: I'm glad that it will help you for your thesis. um I think I like to talk so much about it because... always when I try to talk somebody to somebody about it, they're like; 'what the fuck are you talking about', because they don't get it. And if you are interested in this and you are open for it, you can experience so much. The nice energy of it, and it's really... It helped me so much. I had a breakup last year and it was really, really bad, and I was grieving so much, and I was so depressed, and because of Rachel she helped me so much with finding myself again, and see my self worth, and working through trauma. And I'm not dependent on her energy, but it really helps a lot to receive her energy. That's why I always try to watch every live. Because even if I don't have time to watch it directly I have the live on in my phone, and lay my phone next to me just to receive something of energy from it. And that's how I got over 17,000 minutes of her lives, because I really had my 200th live three weeks ago or something. I followed her since February last year, so I really didn't miss that many lives. It's not even only a job that I have to be there, because I'm a moderator, but I just love to receive this energy and while I am there I can help her,

so I love to be a mod for her and yeah. It's really fulfilling for me to be in this community. And I love that she is just like maybe maximum five years older than me, so it's like kind of the same age.

E: I can imagine that it's very nice. I will try to, next time when I'm in the live, to be open to receiving, because I have not even tried it yet.

I: You can you can check if you um receive something from the collective, but the collective isn't that intense actually, and because she does it for a lot of people, maybe there are a hundred people watching right now, and somebody some need more energy some don't. But you can definitely try. If you want, you can subscribe for a month and check how it would affect you if you do it in a mini-session, but you have to be early to see when she's live. When she texts it because of the time zones, she said she will be live at four p.m. That's 5 pm for us. So she's like one hour away from us.

E: Yes, I saw that yesterday.

I: Try to be there on time because you don't get place on, but you have to be a subscriber. but I love how it can help. You can also check out the videos of (*name other creator; Rob*) because he was intense for me. I found reiki because I tried to meditate a bit, and just saw some other videos that are like plucking away negativity, and that's how I found this it helped me so much so if you open for it, it can help so much and you get so much from it and I really love everything about it. So I really recommend Rachel's live because she has a really gentle energy and if you really would want to try, I would recommend to get one month subscriptions like six, seven euros for us. And if you don't like it, you don't have to continue to be a subscriber, but it's helping a lot for me, so maybe it's something for you as well. Always feel free to ask questions, if you want, you can text me during a live, if you want I can text it directly. And also *Rachel* answers your questions as well if you have something so it's a really nice, helpful community and a really good safe space to be there and receive.

E: Okay. Yeah, I will try.

I: I'm advertising *Rachel* so much hahah.

E: No but I get it, yeah. Okay, um yeah, I do have to go now, but I want to thank you for your time and I will send you, it would take a month, or maybe more because I have to finish my thesis in a month. But afterwards I will send you what I made.

I: Yes please, I would love to read it.

E: Yeah, and I'm not including names because I'm not allowed to. So you will probably get a or a new name or just a letter or something. But just so you know. But yeah, so thank you so much. And I liked the conversation.

I: Yeah. You too. Have a great day. If you have questions, feel free to ask, and good luck with your thesis. Thank you and thank you for your time and yeah. And I will see you in the live, I think.

E: Yes. Okay, see you, thank you. Bye-bye!

I: Bye bye!

Thesis Appendix H: Interview 2 Transcript

Interview with: Beth (Pseudonym)

Date: 10-05-2025

Duration: 1h 6 m

Style: Whatsapp phone-call, recording transcript

After the interview Beth sends me the poem (+ academic explanation) she made on the topic of digital reiki-healing;

Energy Healing Across Screens

Light Beyond Distance

There is a current beneath language,
a breath between worlds,
where intention moves like electricity—
not bound by skin or screen,
but guided by the soul's signature.

Energy healing does not require touch
to touch.

It listens through the invisible—
through heart fields, waveforms, and willing stillness.
It rides the breath, the pulse, the prayer
behind the words we speak
through glowing glass and satellite signals.

When one offers presence across a screen,
it is not the technology that heals—
but the truth carried through it.
Light responds to light.
Coherence responds to coherence.
And consciousness, when invited,
knows no separation.

Across oceans, across bandwidths,
we remember:
We are not healing through machines.
We are healing through miracles
disguised as connection.

Academic Perspective

Energy healing across screens functions through the multidimensional nature of consciousness and the interconnectedness of all beings within the quantum field. In this framework, distance is not a barrier, as intention and frequency operate non-locally—meaning they are not limited by time or space. Practitioners often attune to their clients through resonance within the unified field, allowing healing to take place beyond the physical. The body, mind, and spirit are accessed as patterns of energy and information, and these patterns can be read, recalibrated, and restored across digital interfaces. Many energy workers also access the Akashic Records—a vibrational archive of each soul’s journey—during remote sessions, retrieving relevant emotional, spiritual, or ancestral data to support healing. Whether through light language, guided meditation, Reiki, or intuitive sensing, remote sessions often feel as potent as in-person work, affirming that it is not proximity that facilitates healing, but presence, alignment, and trust in the intelligent design of the quantum matrix.

Transcript of the Interview recording:

(We had a little small-talk conversation before I started with the interview, started the recording halfway through this)

I: ...whole field grow and it like refused to be this kind of taboo like that which you know kind of in in your neighborhood does it and I got trained um years ago but then yeah it's a beautiful journey and I've seen this whole thing take off and I really think it's been a really beautiful thing that this world needs.

E: Yeah. Yes, I agree with you. I don't know a lot about it actually, but I I studies is just it's ever explain, okay. um Maybe I could first introduce myself. I'm I'm Elske, I'm 23 years old and I'm from groningen. I don't think you've ever heard of it. It's all in the top of the Netherlands and right now I'm writing my thesis and religious studies, did you ever hear of it of the study, actually?

I: Yeah, yeah if um in I have a degree in environmental studies and religious studies is always being really um important to me and there's a we'll get into that a little later.

E: Yeah, there's a lot of overlaps also, I think, because I get a lot of environmental studies things as well right now, but um yeah, well, it's you learn to study the phenomenon religion, but there's no clear definition of religions, so it's kind of a journey to to figure out how to approach religion from all kinds of um social sciences such as philosophy and psychology.

I: That's something that like in my path, um, what I had a spiritual awakening at 14 when I kind of started understanding energies, I started studying every religion ever just because I had something really traumatic happen that made me really I just I've studied every religion, just trying to make sense of life, right?

E: Yeah. Yeah, I get it. Yeah. And so I started this study because I was specifically interested in um yeah, different forms of spirituality in general, but also because I really wanted to know about people's reasons to believe certain things and and uh maybe mainly the psychology behind, but also the philosophy, um and for this research, I have a specific focus on Reiki healing and specifically digital reiki healings, so actually looking at how very old techniques and ideas intersect with modern ideas and in with the technology and how this affects the way that people experience it and interprets it online. So, yeah. um you are the second person that I found uh and it was very hard to find people. So thank you for that again.

I: My pleasure. In my DMs there's so many people that are like trying to scam you, but I really have a good sense of discernment. Like I really just can sense into the vibration of truth and how I was like just so excited I was like, this isn't just scam. I would love to help this lady she' amazing stuff so I was super excited.

E: Yeah, because that is that's the that I don't know the word, but that's uh difficult because I also I made a new account and I got a lot of scam messages and I was like, how are people going to recognize that I am real? But it worked, so it's great. um and um and so I found your account through the live stream of Celeste. I don't know how to pronounce, but uh so I found I saw you commented on her um live stream and then I just followed your accounts and that's what I did with a lot of other people, but no one responded so and you did. um I was And before I start, I do need your verbal concern again for the voice recording. Yeah, **you're okay with me recording?**

I: **I absolutely I'm okay with your recording and you don't need to delete it if you don't have to. And it's okay.**

E: No, I will because my phone is almost full, but

I: I hear you.

E: Um and also good to know, so I told you already big but um I'm I will be asking questions about experience, so you can always tell me not to incorporate some parts or text me later if you have changed your mind about some things, and also, um in three weeks is my deadline for the thesis so if you're interested, uh I can send you the finished product if you want.

I: I would love that. I'm sending you just some blessings to get it all done really smoothly.

E: Thank you. Thank you, I need them. okay. um so I can I will just start with the questions and I have a divided them two sections. um the first are the background questions and we can those are important, but they can uh we keep them a little bit short because the most important questions for me are uh at the the last questions, mainly. um Sorry, yeah, so just so you know, but it doesn't matter if you want to tell something stories you can tell everything. It doesn't matter. um So, first of all, what is your name and your age and where are you from?

I: My name is Beth, I'm from Canada and I'm 28 years old. I'm in the mountains of the coastal region of British Columbia.

E: Oh, wow, mountains, okay. um And what kind of work do you do? And um um yeah, and how did you get there?

I: Yeah, so I think I'm going to answer a couple of your questions because I already kind of saw them in kind of a longer format. um So I um I had a large spiritual awakening at 14 and that's when I discovered energy work. I've always been really kind of intuitive and had kind of psychic abilities growing up, but I didn't really know. I didn't have any guidance around them and it was just people kind of just pointed out that I was special as a kid in that way. And um just being really wanted of nature in that. But then a tragedy struck when I was 14 where my friend was murdered. and yeah, I'm definitely going to answer a couple of questions here because I remember you asked about the religious background. I was raised Catholic so my mom was really like, my mom had like the religious spirit in the way that she really just is a truly loving person. And so she was really, really Catholic growing up. And so she and my family extended families as well. So she raised me like that and I did catechism, which is like it's like you go through school from grade kindergarten to grade seven and it's like once a week you do like Bible study kind of thing, right? And then you get confirmed and it's a pretty big deal for the Catholics. And I never really resonated with all the practices and it just felt too like weirdly structured and just kind of, I sensed into it not being really an alignment for me. and then that's when the but I still believed in like a higher power, which is I didn't really know how to place it. And then, um when the tragedy struck, I just that's when I studied every religion possible and just found I sort of meditating and I found ancient techniques like Buddhism, Hinduism. I started working with deities like Ganesh and all of this stuff felt really natural to me. And then, um, one day I picked up a crystal and I felt the energy from it and I was with a partner at the time and we just felt the energy going through each other and it just really sparks something. And then following the next couple of years, I just still had I had a whole bunch of like psychic abilities awakened. Like I started seeing auras. I started really just experiencing things beyond the veil, as I call it. so the things that are unseen and just like, I started of seeing spirits and it just was so much me at that time because I didn't really once

again, I was reading my books, but I wasn't able I didn't have like a community around me. and I really like support me in that way. And then later on, I found a reiki master and she was a friend of mine and so she attuned me reiki and I started practicing Reiki and then I also studied therapeutic touch at (name) College and therapeutic touch is like a medically recognized a way of energy healing that they use in hospices. So I wanted to have the spiritual guidance side of like being tuned to reiki, but then also the practical, like believable, like, like societally accepted because I always knew this stuff was a little taboo, which is why people like you are really great. It's kind of big bridging the tabooess of it and just bringing back, like you said, these ancient cultures that into modern way. um So yeah, like I can't remember your original question but I answered a couple there.

E: Yeah, yeah you did. That's great because otherwise it would be very... and this is just how a conversation goes. It's great. And I have one question one question back. Why did you um uh after the traumatic uh experience, why did you feel the need to look into every religion?

I: Um, because I was raised Catholic and it just didn't that was what my structure was, and that's what my mom said to me too. It's like she wanted me to have a structure where I could make my own choices afterwards. And during my spiritual awakening, um I actually not converted, but kind of converted my mom from the ways of the church in that structured way, but then onto like more broad, like expansive way. So um I just felt like I needed to figure out life. Like life didn't make sense. Like if there was a god, then why could this tragedy happen? Like why could this friend of mine be murdered for absolutely no reason? Like why could if there is a god, why can these like really horrible things happen to humans? And I really did find my answer because I just found what the presence of God really is for me in my own ways. And that's I think was the most powerful thing for me was that I found that I could make up my own mind based on what felt right to me. And that was the hugest shift I think in my life and like started my whole journey is that I could decide it doesn't have to be from any book, but like I could take all these things from all these different cultures that resonate with me and decide for myself. because I think with a lot of religion, it's decided for you. You're being told what is, and this is the only way. And I think that's the really toxic part about many cultures, knowing about

other religions and saying like, this is my God. This is like the only way, the only way. And it's like, I just think there's many portals and avenues to access spirit and what your relationship is to spirit is sacred and to find your own way with that. So that was what triggered that and I found that, which was really nice because I do believe what you see you find if you're in the right place, just like you. You were seeking and you came coming from a really pure place and you found your answers.

E: Yeah, okay. So why I mean, how uh would you describe your own uh version, your own spirituality, let's say?

I: Um For me, I think being in the presence of like nature and just feeling like the wind on my skin, I look at I'm kind of an animist. So what that means is that I believe that there's spirit in everything because I believe that this realm that we're in, let's just say Earth, it's material matter, but it's all really made out of spirit. So, um, just being in going to church for me is, is just going outside and like feeling the wind on my skin and hearing the birds sing and feeling the harmony and peace that that is, I think that that is the truth source of God, but then I feel like humans really kind of distort that because they try to be they get in their ego and they try to be like above God and they try to like prove their power and stuff and really I just sit back and allow that power to be shown to me in a way.

E: Yeah, okay. That's beautiful. Yeah. um Thank you. Yeah, and I I agree with it. uh I think. I never thought about it like... well I did think about it but I could not really place it into words but I think you did for me so yeah. um and uh let's see. Are there any other topics that you find very very interesting in general, something you know a lot about next to spirituality or maybe connected with it?

I: So I'm um I would agree in environmental sciences that was one of my first passions was like bringing this deep need to like help save the earth. Um, and so I did those studies, but they kind of left me depressed because it just like it felt like there was just too much like too many issues to solve all at once. And then I decided to go into holistic nutrition because I thought that instead of like attacking the big problems, I could attack it from like the ground level by educating people on their power and that like how choosing what foods you eat depend, like will shift the

market based on like, basically where our dollar has power and if we're giving it always to these big, large corporations, then they're going to keep moving in those ways that are destroying the earth. So if we all wake up, essentially and realize that we have power and we put our power into making our own foods or like supporting local farms and eating, like the foods medicine and that like we've be making ourselves sick and all that, that's how I became a holistic nutritionist and then I started using that practice and I worked in Natopath (?) clinics and and other things. And then um I'm also became an herbalist and I was working at a health food store in the supplement section for 10 years. So I was doing all the consults of people's cancer, issues, their depression, their sleep issues, like everything, like just on the spot, because I had all of the the knowledge for that, so that was really, really empowering for so many years. But I started struggling with the nutrition aspect because I found people, if they don't love themselves, they won't make the right choices to change their life. So once again, it's like I went from the environment to the food, but then I went from the food to the people and I was like, people aren't loving themselves. They're not seeing the beauty that they should nourish in themselves. So that's what I started working on was like empowerment coaching and I had really traumatic relationship that helped me really get out of it and see my own strength. So I started leading women's circles and bringing like women's like sacred magic out with dance and um then the energy healing, my abilities went from being able to just do Reiki. I don't really do Reiki in the classical sense anymore because I went through this really profound shift where I started seeing my past lives, I started like going to other dimensions. I started seeing all these like, really crazy levels to life that allowed me to retrieve powers from my past life. It sounds f*ing crazy. Excuse me, but my other pasts lives had like gained healing powers. So I was able to like wave that up through like Kundalini awakening process, which was really intense and it threw everything in my life sideways. Hold on. Dad. He's just vacuuming. I heard, he's a virgo, if he needs everything clean.

E: I have a Virgo in my family actually, and it's the same.

I: Yeah, no. I love them, but yeah. So that experience really catapulted me into really, realizing that this energy healing work is what I should really be focusing on because the shifts I see in my clients are insane. Like I can help heal people from chronic

pain. I've shifted people's like by one session I've shifted people's lives into like a happier state of life by helping them realize their childhood woundings. I could because I could feel into someone's field and I can really actually see what childhood trauma they went through. Like I can experience it through like a vision and I can feel it in their field and I can like pull it out and like a realign the energy. And this is more quantum healing and I didn't know what it was when it started coming through. But um I do more quantum healing, let's just say, and that comes from that past life self and I go into someone's field and I can reorganize the structure of it to go back to its original state, I guess, before the trauma, which is just nuts. It blows my mind. um yeah, so

E: Okay, so and you say that at 14 you realized that you or maybe earlier you realized you had had some abilities and how did you realize?

I: um I've had since I've been working with energy since I was 14, it was just kind of like steps and steps and steps but then it got like wider steps and huger leaps and I went through I got a concussion um and I basically I'll go out for a little bit and then I would just psychic readings like outside, like what I meet people. I would just get these messages for them. I would be like oh my god, your grandma wants to talk to you. And it would be so specific. I would shock myself about like what I would channel and come through. So I just started trusting it and I just started realizing that this is like a huge gift, but it was also really overwhelming because the more I tuned into this gift, the more sensitive, I got, and then the more I would feel energies from people around me and like I just got so sensitive and um the concussion was really horrible. It was like my third one and it just like I was in bed for for months and I thought my whole life was over and it's for me that was a lot because I always have gotten through really bad. I've had really traumatic injuries that I've healed myself. like I couldn't walk for nine months with my leg and I had a metal plate. I put in my arm that I couldn't use my right arm for three years. So I thought I could get through anything and like that relationship, I was like, I always get over things. I always get over things, but this one really stopped me in my tracks. and with that I just went inward and I started doing like deeper like, I'd meditate from like an hour to three hours a day and just go deep into into myself and start understanding myself and the more I understood myself, the more I understood these gifts and I would utilize them

and just see how profound they were. And I had the biggest problem I had was to believe how powerful I was. Like my ego really wanted to stop me from it wanted to keep me small and it was like, no, like I actually can like basically invoke miracles. Like it sounds so crazy and even to me it's shocking and like my parents, um I remember there was a question about my people who support me. um my parents really saw my gift and they were so proud of me and they really supported me in so many ways with developing this and developing my confidence. But I just basically had to go to the deepest shadows of myself and really look at like what my limiting beliefs were, what my childhood happening was, like forgive everyone in my life and love myself and also have boundaries to put myself first. And so I'm not depleting all my energy for other people. And um just practicing, like just practicing every day. Like I go out and I like play with the wind and like I invoke spirits and I just call in my higher self and I just like light candles and use crystals and it just became like a huge lifestyle for me just to like wake up and meditate and do yoga and then make good food and then go out in nature.

E: So, uh, yeah, at least the question, your day activities, you are busy um busy does not the right word, it's not my first language, but you are busy with it every every single day or and thinking about it, yeah. How does a how they look like for you typically?

I: um so I when I had my concussion I was with a lot of stress so I wasn't waking up in like a peaceful state so I really had to like recalibrate my nervous system. But now I've gotten back to like waking up and feeling like alive and just like excited for the day. And then like I said it'll make some really good food and I'll just be like happy knowing like I'll do affirmations a lot being like everything's working out for me. And I'll just it's like I program that into my subconscious because you're subconscious mind takes up about n 90% of what your actions are. So I without awareness I really started rewiring my whole nervous system and my subconscious, which is connected to your body, to doing somatic work and yoga and affirmations. It's just like reminding my system that like, I'm telling my body like we're safe now, like we're we have all these blessings coming and when you start attuning to that, then you start seeing the blessings more. It's kind of like the law of attraction. And different coaches like Abraham Hicks (?) and stuff. And also being on TikTok and

having a creative community of people who speak like me and move like me was super inspiring and that's being it's it is a big part of my day, actually, to go on on on a plat on TikTok and just like get the messages from the readers that I really align with that I know like, in fact are really connected to my energy and they tell me the right things. And like there's a lot of readers doing a lot of things, but I've found the ones that really worked for me. And then I actually started uncovering something called light language. I'm not sure if you've come across it. I've seen it, yes. Yeah, and I thought that was crazy because when I first saw it, I didn't have it ability. Like I didn't have that ability, but it fascinated me because it really brought back this like ancient self of mine that I was really working on achieving and it just kind of like intergalactic self and all that Starseed kind of stuff. And I was like just fascinated by it and it really resonated. But then during that kind of kundalini concussion experience, I started speaking light language, and that was actually a terrifying experience because I started having like these energies come through me that felt so natural but also were so different from anything around my like current physical reality besides the people online. So I feel like if I didn't see them doing it online first, I wouldn't even like know how to access it, but since I like saw it in my reality through online, I started speaking light language and it's speaking it that's also guided me on a journey because it felt like my soul was coming through to guide my way because I trusted it so much that like my soul, my soul, my whole soul is coming in and like moving with me.

E: Wow. Okay. Whoa, okay. Um, and what do you mean when you say, uh, it resonated with me? What what does it mean?

I: It felt like... it felt so strange, like looking at people doing the late language, I could see from like an observer standpoint that it was very strange and like very unusual and like, really out there. And it's like, some things in the community can be so like "woo woo" as they say, like people can get kind of ungrounded and spiritual practice, but it's so resonated and listening to it, I was like, wow. And then I kind of I put it up like separate for me at the beginning stage. And as soon as I listened to it more and more, it kind of like activated it in me and I just had the faith that like it just came out and then it was crazy. Like, I can speak you a little bit.. uh it's been a part of my healing practice It's being one of the most powerful things, and the reason

why is because everything is vibration and everything in like the quantum field, um I'm not sure if you know about quantum like science so much, but there's something called quarks in between your like atoms and cells that are these like shifting states in molecules and it basically like they pull in infinite realities through them because they're always shifting so everything that you look at as solid is not actually solid kind of thing. vibration is the most powerful way to move things and that's why like does that like I use my hands with the energy a lot, but that's with intention, but then the sound can go straight through and like basically activate those quirks and like activate more infinite potentials and you can call it in with your intention. So, um that was just crazy for me to like, I've been studying all this for like years and years and years and it just makes, it's like become a concept that I've learned about that I've interacted with enough that it's like I just have this deep knowing of it. So I'll see if I a little light language wants to come through.

(She starts speaking light language to me)

E: Woah, okay. And do you know do you know where it's coming from them right now and what what it means in this moment?

I: so I'm still working on decoding and I'm I'm like mostly know all of it now, but like right there it felt like I was kind of like attuning your nervous system and like balancing and grounding you out and just kind of making you also feel more like relaxed with everything and smoothing our connection kind of um I know I do speak like Lyron um so that's like from a star system, Lyra and that's kind of more like, um like cat beings and then uh it comes I do speak different dialects and then I do speak some like dragon which that's pretty intense. It's very guttural and like like commanding and like it's really like deep, but it's it's super sacred and ancient. And then I also speak like, there's this one goddess (H?)ikate that I really work with and I feel like her like codes. Like she's the she's a Greek goddess and she basically is the the deity who invented witchcraft per se. So, um I'm kind of a part of her little crew and um I speak with her in some ways too, which is also just all the stuff sounds so crazy, but it's just so real, you know.

E: No, I get it. I I don't really get it, but I'm interested so

I: Yeah, your soul gets it. It's like your brain's catching up, but it makes sense, but like your soul gets it. Yeah.

E: Yeah, I think so. And um also you said a Tiktok is a good space because you seem to come across people who speak the same language and not the same things. But did you have uh friends or family or close others that also um have the same interests or are in the same, I don't know, how to say community, maybe as you?

I: Yeah, um So I, during my spiritual like ascension, it was really intense and there was stuff that I was accessing that was like way beyond where normal people go. Um, my mom, I was able to speak to her about it because she's kind of got this like, she gets messages about like the collective and kind of ways and like angels she really connects with. So she always felt the truth in it. And she's seen the power like of when I do session or like when I heal her and stuff, it's like it's so noticeable that like whatever I'm doing and whatever crazy language and like whatever my hands are doing, it's like it just works and we know it. So there's just that trust that we've had and I do believe like it's in a sole contract way, like that she and I agreed to have this lifetime together. So we could kind of perpetuate this together and that feels beautiful. But my best friend who of 15 years, um she I kind of brought her into this world and she has like super huge gifts that I've helped her activate with. So she started out just like as a girl who just like loved makeup and fun and just kind of like those like just life things as a teenager, right? And then, um, I introduced her to astrology and then she really picked up on that and then it was really funny because she knew nothing about it. And then now she's like, she goes out and reads everyone side and like she has Icelandic ancestors, so we've done some sessions where she has like cried through her ancestors and like activated her voice and sings these really angelic tones. And I helped her trust in her ability to see visions and like she has different gifts than I do, but some of them the same. And she um she literally writes songs about me and I am her music to this day, she she like cries on the phone to me because we live we live apart now that I've changed her life so much just because I've opened her up to all these things and like she her life would not be the same without it. And she held me during some of my like most intense, like, like when I was upgrading all this stuff, my body would have these massive kundalini spasms

where I'd be like rolling on the floor, like groaning with all this like ancient stuff coming through me and like me releasing so much and like she would hold me during those times and she like supported my process and like understood like stuff that she doesn't understand, but she knows that it's true. And then since then we've kind of become these like little fairy angels that just hang out together if we go out in public together, we'll just like do little healings on people and it's just been a really cool experience to have her support and I don't think I'd have gotten as far with her um support.

E: Yeah, it's great. Okay. um um yeah, I think there's a lot, but my question was uh here, is there something you really believe in? Is there something that immediately comes to mind that you really firmly believe? And if so, what is it? And why?

I: I believe that love is the answer to everything. And I believe that there are certain people on this planet right now that are coming like remembering their ancientness and like their mission here and that like we're coming together and like we're bringing up the frequencies of the earth just by us being authentic because that's the highest vibration. So I feel like there's just there's a wave of earth. Like a lot of people have despair over like what's happening and they're like have fear, but I think fear is an illusion. um and that there is actually like a beautiful wave of like awakening going on on this planet right now. And I really believe that we're going to anchor in like some really harmonious stuff and like this whole world is going to see the truth and and beauty. And I just believe in love. Like I see I'll always put my best just to be coming from a loving space, no matter what. And I've seen that create solutions when there's I would say there's one problem. And if you focus on the problem, it expands. But if you focus on the solution, the solutions are infinite.

E: Yeah. Yeah. I agree. Yeah.. Okay. Yeah, and um just searching because you told me a lot already and I'm looking at what I'm what I missed. um This one I had yeah, how would you describe yourself as a person to someone to me who does not know you?

I: Yeah, so I think I'm very whimsical and I bring like a childlike wonder to places that like a lot of a lot of people grow out of it. And so I kind of work in this way

where I'm I bring this joy and this like life to situations, but I'm also like most people can't put their finger on me because I'm very mysterious in a way as well because like I don't always care like I always always act like I know the things I do because I just bring this kind of joy that's like kind of disarming to people and I'll make everyone in the room feel comfortable and like seen and um I'm very like conventionally attractive, so a lot of people would assume that like I'm stuck up or like egotistical or something, but um the way I use that is like disarming. So it's like I make people the person who's being rejected in their life, I'll know exactly that they're the rejected person and I'll make them feel safe and just like kind of feel special.

E: Like I think everyone feels special. Yeah, that's great. Okay. Yeah. um um what I'm doing I'm very chaotic until I'm doing all of the um

I: I'm probably sending you a chaotic energy.

E: I I have enough myself um I'm a little bit ADHD

I: me too.

E: so oh yeah great. Okay.

I: I'm like pretty autistic as well, so it's just it adds to that just like out of world when whimsical, I think my own way kind of thing.

E: Yeah, but artistic is just a is it just a yeah, just a label. I think to to make sure to neurodivergence is just a different way of thinking. It's not, I don't know. I'm not I'm not good at English today, but um but uh let's moving on to the reiki. What is it according to you and what role does it play in your life specifically?

I: Yeah, so Reiki comes I can't remember the spiritual master, but there is this one guy who kind of Reiki is using collective source energy that's like pure love energy that's channeled through, but there's this one guy who kind of coined the term um and he's passed away now and I I don't know as much about him in in like I could just

that I could repeat but essentially with Reiki, you're supposed to go through for three levels and then you become a master which where you can teach it um I feel like a lot of people online aren't actually reiki masters. I feel like it's kind of like they've found their own gifts and kind of do it because there's a lot of people doing Reiki now and it costs money. And I think people have just picked up on this ASMR thing as well of it like and so they they're using their own natural energies, but to get properly attuned is like it takes a lot of studying and progress. So I, because of the way that my soul works in the way that it's shown me, I don't I don't say I do Reiki anymore as much as I'm attuned to it, just because that comes through its own dogma and has its own set of rules and I find with my work I've made my own rules. So I have that framework and I use very similar techniques, but I do it very differently because in my work, I actually work a little bit more shamanically and what that means to me is that Reiki will take divine love, energy and and push it through their hands with intention into some spots and like clear energy. But what I do is I actually suck trauma into my body and that's why I feel it. I 100% when I'm with clients, I do really intense work with like people who had sexual abuse, really severe trauma, have like has been in the army, like really intense stuff. And I suck it into my body and then I transmute it with a sound. So it's like when I'm with my patients, I'm in my patients. My clients, I have such a divine compassion for them and I think that's one of the ways I heal them is by being witness to their pain and like holding space for being with them and that. And then sucking it out of their body, feeling it with um because I've gone through so much trauma and pain in my life. It's like I can just relate to them and I just, and then I send it out through a sound through my body and I often can touch someone and they can make a sound. I make a sound that their body could never make during that trauma. So each person has different sounds that come out of me and it's crazy.

E: Okay. um and did you ever receive a physical reiki yourself from someone else and how did this affect you?

I: When I was younger, like when I was still experiencing like the journey of this, like when I was still a teenager, um I saw a copy a couple, like reiki practitioners and then I also during my Reiki training, would do group Reiki with like six other people, so I had six people doing Reiki on me at once, which was so powerful. And I've

always found myself as a teenager working with these really old ladies, like these cohorts of old ladies who had come together and energy heal themselves each other and they were all like masters at it. And I was just learning. So being like around these like mentors and masters really, really helped me. um just feel its power and it's how peaceful and loving it, but that's really the main thing that came across to me besides like healing my body is how peaceful and loved that that container felt. And then um the first time I ever got reiki attunement, um I did yoga the next day and I knew that Kuma (?) gets stored in the hips, but I did this deep hip release and I just started bawling because I about this like really specific memory of this thing that I was holding and it was weird because I knew exactly what it was. It was something that happened to me when I was a kid. and I was able to just let it go with like awareness as well as like feeling the pain. So that it was like that was a pretty for profound experience for me to be like wow. this stuff doesn't just make you feel cozy. It's like you really doing.

E: Yeah. okay. Because I never received it yet. I'm I'm having my first also for my thesis, but also out of curiosity, I'm I found another Japanese creator to Tiktok through my other interviewee from last week and she said you should try a personal digital um distance healing. Yeah. So I love that yeah I'm had to get on Monday so uh I'm very curious if I because I never really felt something from through the screen it might also be because I've looked at it through uh, well, academic glance right now because I'm searching for answers and and not really just just seeing it, but I' Yeah, so so that's what I'm going to try on Monday, so I'm very curious, but exciting.

I: I think you found a good one. I just I think you'll I think I was a good experience. Yeah, I also like next week or something when we're both available again, I'd love to do one for you as well just to kind of I make it go a little deeper.

E: Okay, yeah, I can see when I because I'm very busy next week.

I: Well whenever you can. Yeah, I will let you know.

E: I'm very curious. Okay.

I: For sure. um Okay, but I'm I'll do it for free just because you're doing all this work and I'll really? Yeah, I don't mind.

E: don't have to, but oh, this great, okay. um also, I'm gonna move on about it with a Tiktok specifically. Just how long have you been active on Tiktok for now?

I: Since 2020, um I got it was COVID and I was just like trapped in my room and I was kind of resistant to doing it because it seemed like just a young kid trying things. But then the algorithm really started like speaking to me and like I mean, it always does the thing. It always does the algorithm thing and it was a really good source of entertainment, but then it started becoming a really source of community for me and um funny enough, I haven't posted that much. Like I'm going to start posting, and I'm really going to start like this week. I'm actually going really start recreating my whole account. and doing light language and doing all this stuff. But I have my account isn't really that impressive. Like in regards to how much I've changed, but I have like 12 15 creators, 12 15 creators that have like 150,000 followers that only follow like 200 people and just based on my interactions with them and like how they feel we steal each other's spirit, they followed me, not based on my content, but my essence. And it was kind of like the way you found me, it was kind of like, I don't know, it's just like it was a gamble, but it just no one I start posting these people who I've supported for so long will support me and I just know like I'm going to have like a huge, I just feel it coming as I haven't be posting on like getting myself ready to be seen because I've gotten so many upgrades.. It's going to be fun. So I'll see how many people I can reach.

E: Yeah, I will I will look out for it. I will keep in how you keep in June, I don't know. okay. And uh how much time would you say you spend on TikTok?

I: Maybe yeah, a day or total I since my energy is like I'm in a place where I'm recouping my energy still from from my from my whole like crash with the concussion. um during that concussion phase, I was on TikTok like so much because I needed to hear like the faith and hope of things that were gonna keep going. So I'd like have tarot readers like kind of can like do that like faith peace for me. um I spend quite a bit of time on it. Probably like an hour or two a day, um but then within

that time, it doesn't feel like a waste of time. Sometimes I've used it as like a scapegoat like when I just really need it, but I have a lot of energy I use sometimes just like with exhaustion, but um it helps me like I do energy healings on myself and it's like it's always productive time spent and um I haven't used it, but it's always been a time and place that I've like needed it. And now looking back at like the work the place that I've gotten to, it's like I don't I wouldn't take away one minute of any of the time that I've spent on it. And now I'm excited to be more creative on it instead of just consuming. Yeah. Yeah, I get it.

E: Um And yeah, a little bit you told me a little bit already, but how often do you engage with other people's content?

I: I will leave comments and I will sometimes I'll just be leaving like just some emojis, but I've definitely won something really hits me all write like a full comment on like how it hit me or like a personal experience or stuff like that when I feel called. And then when I do lives sometimes, not as much. Like I watch them and um I'll I'll kind of just say hi and sometimes creators remember me and then they'll they'll be like oh hi B. And then like that that feels nice and it's something I never really thought I'd like be so into because I always thought people who are so lonely that they need people on the Internet like are not kind of weird, but I guess I kind of like had to not a judgment, but I it was like, I'm not one of those lonely people. I'm not lonely, but it does feel really nice to have like an engagement from a creator or like someone who has a lot of followers just like pay attention to you in a way. It's like I kind of I do get it. And so that's been kind of nice and so I've just been able to have some like repertoire and like reconnection with these people that I'm building a community with, which feels really good.

E: Yeah. Okay. And how would you describe the content that you generally is only for your page? Do you are are you on a specific side like I've seen which talk that kind of things?

I: Yeah, um I do I listen to a lot of tarot readings and like oracle readings. um the light language and like quantum healing stuff. I do a lot of witch talk as well. um I got information about like what's going on with the planets and like what collective

energies that we're in right now, like what people are shedding and like what to expect in your next week like based on like real things. um and some nature stuff and like poetry and um like survival things like herbalist things and just really like any anything holistic and like just seeing people share their stories or like go traveling and just really inspirational stuff.

E: Yeah, and and do you also often see uh contents from people that you don't really believe is authentic or or maybe people that are just therefore cloud or you see things that you don't believe in on TikTok?

I: There is there's times of it's very infrequent because I feel like my frequency draws in such like truth towards me, but any time it does happen, I can have my own mind about it and it's like oh, I just don't resonate with that. I'll just kind I have like leave it alone. The algorithm always tries to push some really random things like a guy with the motorcycle, like shirtless thing. And I'm like, okay, I'm not really interested in this right now. And then I'll just kind of ignore it, but there are some people on TikTok definitely like, who have needy good intentions, but they just are a little they're just still figuring it out or I don't see it too much just because I feel like I've gotten my my like dream really straightened out kind of thing, but I know it's out there.

E: Yeah. Okay. um and um so you mentioned this already a lot of times with do you feel that um content is meant to reach you at that moment that the universe is doing something maybe?

I: I don't know how to describe it, but yeah, no, um there's definitely like this is this is why it is it's fine I wouldn't see like addicting, but like there is times where I'm thinking about something and I like need an answer. And this is like I'm getting more at a point where I can give myself my own answers. That's why I like I have my own instinct about something, but then I get confirmation, which is really nice because it's like I come from that internal place where I find that most people don't have that internal place that they need the external to go there first if that makes sense. But um there's so many times where I'm like really on one topic or like even just even like a moon phase thing. It's like I'm feeling something and I'm like, oh, this this tastes like

a flavor. And then it'll tell me like the moon is in this phase and I'm like, oh, yeah, it makes so much sense. And then even if this answer is about life or like just little things, it's like I've I felt like there has been absol like, I have 100% believe that my angels, my guides, like whoever source is giving me straight up, like like content that is so like, we're listening to you, like we're hearing you, like, you didn't even know you need this. And that's why I've also collected like a handful of readers who like I really trust and that it's been like an ongoing journey of me being like resonant with their messages. And sometimes old ones fall away and new ones come, but I totally believe that.

E: Yeah, okay. and um what are your thoughts on Tiktok as a platform in general? Are you happy with you I think you are because she told me but are you happy with the way that you use it and what brings it to your life and would you change something about it?

I: Yeah, honestly like I can't imagine my life right now being where I am being so confident in myself being so aware of my own self and where I'm going without the support of TikTok. Like I truly do account a lot for my like abilities and success to have gotten to this point by just believing in myself, by seeing it out there and seeing like almost like that if someone did it before me that is possible And that's what I feel like a lot of the people on the collective, like the people waking up are doing is like showing that a different way of life is possible and that they're like blueprints or templates that you can take a step off off of because the things that they're doing inspired me to really reach into how deep my my abilities can go. And then now I'm going to share them. So it's like I'm following their lead that they set up this template that I can do it. So it's being life changing.,

E: I understand. Okay. um And so um I found your account through the comments on uh on in the live stream. Did you ever did you know her already uh the creator and had you ever seen something of her?

I: I tried to look up who it was. It sounds familiar and I probably say yes, I don't usually jump on to people's lives unless I've kind of like seen them before. So I'm going to say yes. um but yeah, I kind of just moved by the flow in the moment and

um whatever hits and resonates, um I don't usually stay on lives really a long time. So it was just it was so like kismet that you found me there.

E: it's pretty funny actually because my last uh interview was a moderator on a live stream. So she she had already watched 170 or so live streams from the creator and knew her personally and everything. So this is them very uh how do you say it's to follow different yeah um and um uh so yeah I think you don't remember then that that exact moment but you said that you were fascinated with her energy that you um that she had in that's why you started following her. Could you maybe remember or in general uh what what do you what does how do you say it? um if you feel some someone's energy is good, how do you sense that?

I: What what um um I I trust my heart so much. Like I just I know my intuition is always right because it's proven to be time again and I've really worked on the doubt. So I I have this ability of discernment like like I I mentioned a little earlier. I sense that there's this vibration of truth and I can tell when someone's coming from an aligned place, a heartspace and a place of truth and that they have good intentions. So, yeah, I kind of actually I do have like a vague memory of that because it is kind of coming up because I don't usually, like, once again, I don't usually comment on lives and I'm not usually on lives, but I think I just found her or something and I was just like really captivated. I was like this energy feels really right to me. It really makes like resonate. So using this internal compass that I've like I've forged in myself to be like, this is truth, this is truth for me. And I go through even Tiktok and I'll ask in my own head kind of like ask that place that knows everything. I'm like, is this right for me? And because like most of the time I know immediately, but like every once in a while, there's there's a energy healers or a whole world of things and they can be covert not that great, but it doesn't happen out often, but if I really sense like something really hits a chord with me, I know that that chord is like a tune that's meant to be played, I just say. so in that moment, I was like, you know what? This is really, yeah, this hits it.

E: Okay. Yeah. um um I guess, give these. um, and what do you think um other people would draw in uh what what draws other people into? what or participate in these live streams according to you?

I: I think that there is like there's like maybe two groups of people um just overall that like there's people who already know this type of thing and are looking for it and they already have this place that's like I trust this this is what I know what it is and what it's doing. and I think that there is a curious group where they're curious and they feel that there's something there and they might not understand it, but they're open to exploring it and then they're just kind of, I think a lot of people are in a big major of waking up and we're able to sense and feel things more. So with you when you don't have like a basis for that, it and it's and an exploratory framework of just being like, oh, like what is this? This this is something new or like this is different or this really feels like home but I can't explain it or just I need some healing right now. and even some people doing like the ASMR and stuff, it just it does relax your nervous system. So even if they had a long day and they just feel like they're being comforted, I think is a big thing.

E: Yeah, okay. Yeah, I think so too. And um yeah, you said it already. also, but uh do you feel like you are part of a shirt and community on TikTok and how would you describe as community?

I: Yeah, like I mentioned before, I've got these like really big created it's like I've got two versions of this world. It's like there's these really big creatives that, like I said, have a huge following, have really like mastered their skill that when I interact with them, they know it's me and they're like, oh, it's her like, like we have this like communication like that. and this might be really excited to show them like really what did I've been working on and who I really am because I feel like they just sensed that. But um then there is a clus like under grassroots community of people who I follow that have like it's like an older mom that's like has like 50 followers, but she has this really motivational content or like she'll so it's like I really because I know when I get big I'll bring up the tiny people like those big people did for me kind of thing so there's like this like community of like the people who are established that inspired me then I'll be rising up as that established person and then I'll bring all those kind of people who have we just been shouting the truth and not meeting the like validation of comments or like the like just really just keep doing it and I really honor those people and they've inspired me even showing up in

authenticity and just like just to accept you are where you are right now and everyone needs that.

E: Okay. Yeah, I've seen it. I've seen if I look through following uh or or interactions, uh between uh, I think spiritual creators and it's it's always seems like a very random list of followers with but now I get how that works a little bit better. Yeah. That's cool. um uh let's see. Okay, about uh digital Reiki in specific. If you see a video or a live stream where someone is doing digital uh Reiki, how would you describe your feelings when you receive it?

I: I think it wildly depends on practitioner to practitioner because I think each practitioner has such a different energy that they're bringing through. So I think tapping into that is really beautiful because um not only is like their own soul essence coming through, but it's also like their intentions on what they're doing is coming through. Some people are doing grounding and protection. and you can kind of feel supported in that unique way. And some people are doing energy clearings or like, yeah, it's just I think it depends on the signature of that simburging through. And I always feel those things. A lot of times they state their intentions. And then so by them stating their intentions, you can kind of access what they're giving you more by knowing it.

E: And what what's kind of intentions do you have examples with what they could give as intentions?

I: Yeah, so a lot of I think a lot of a lot of the videos I see the most would be like grounding your field, taking out people's energy that is not your own. um A lot of people do like abundance things so they're like, oh I'm attuning you to their vibration of love or like peace or abundance. Um clearing out karma contracts, um sending your solar plexus energy or like attuning all your chakras like I think stuff like that.

E: Okay. um and do you do you think that um digitaliki, so digitali through Tiktok is experienced differently by people than uh in real life, physical Reiki?

I: Yes. I think the people I think there's a psychosomatic component to it in the way that if you think and believe something, you'll be more able to perceive it. So even if someone doesn't feel anything in their body, they're being told this, they can kind of have this like essence of it and like be beginning a belief in a way. But then I do believe the more work you do on your body and become more a sensitive and like attuned to like knowing what you feel in regards to like other things, I guess I don't just moving out energies that you can receive energies more, then you can feel it in your body a lot more. And um it's like it starts with skepticism and then it starts with like opening your mind a little bit and being like, oh, maybe this is true. And then like I believe it like magic is real, but then it's like you have to believe in magic in order for it to be like presented to you so someone's experience with magic could be wildly different because of how much they believe and how long they've gone on this belief, I guess.

E: So would you say you need belief you need to believe in Reiki for it to work?

I: I think that it's not I think you can increase the strength of it. I think it always works, no matter what, but it's also like with the way I work with my clients it's really interesting because I do I work with a lot of skeptics and as well as not, but um when it comes to a skeptic, I've always left them feeling something because they had that opening of working with me. That became their opening. And then that also it's like the Reiki will always do things even if they don't feel it, even though they always will feel it once they have that opening at the same time. But um it's like, I'm, yeah, I can describe this. It's like, um. They'll feel it in ways that, like, oh, that's what I was gonna say. I that's why I lost it. When I work with my clients, um, I work with a whole bunch of different, like, range of of of everything. And so I work with that person's higher self, like when I'm in a session, they higher self and guides will tell me what they're ready for. So if it's a skeptic, they usually are only ready for like like a little increment of healing just to open them up for the next time, they'll be more open for like another thing. But if someone a lot of souls come to me because they like on a higher self basis, like we talk on a different plane, they're like some people come to me like ready to just bust it all and like do some really crazy stuff. But in a session, I never know what I'm going to end up doing until I'm there and like it's so crazy how specific it is. It's like I will remove that blockage so that that's the person's

ready for like that next thing or like it was just that blind spot that they had and I'll just know, and it's it's crazy because like some people in a session, like they're so ready to let so much go. And then some people, they're only there just to have that like pinhole like that light coming through just for them to kind of start widening it on their own and start their own journey.

E: Yeah. Yeah, okay. uh and here I have a question, I don't know about it, but um would you say your engagement is uh with Reiki healing contents in the live streams or in videos, is it spiritual to you, and if so, in what way?

I: It's a little bit vague, maybe, but yeah, um I believe that everything I do is spiritual because I just believe I'm a spiritual being. So in that context it's like I come from a place where if there's someone that I love supporting people so I really love like letting people know that they really resonated with me because that makes me feel really good and I know what that feels like for me. Um, and then just I was come from this idea of like support and and so it's supporting me and it's supporting you, but then that kind of creates a relationship dynamic on its own and sometimes you never know what's going to really affect a person and so just like leaving a comment and just being like, this really hit me today. Like might be that inspiration that they need to keep going on their journey and like you never know. So it's like I'll always put it out there and not knowing the outcome, but just from a sense of connection and you hope that.

E: That's nice. Have you ever been, uh, skeptical here is the question, about Reiki healing, but maybe skeptical about some aspects of spirituality ever in your life?

I: I think that's starts the journey is like I find my personal position I've never been like skeptical. I've been more like cautious, if you will, because I believed it. But then seeing how it translates and how it comes through, I've held this like watching it kind of energy Instead of it's like I already believed it was totally possible. There was never like a moment in my life. Like I believed in magic since I was a little kid and I played with like fairy like it would make fairy houses at my lunchtime and it just all this felt always so natural to me. And this type of lifestyle feels more natural to me than any sort of modern, like stuff that we've been fed through society. So it's almost

felt more comfortable. Like I've never been a skeptic because it feels more right than anything else.

E: Yeah. Yeah. um and has your view on spirituality, uh, or the world in general has it changed since you've been engaging with uh spiritual content online?

I: Yeah, I would say like, because all the books I read, I already had this like, like guide in myself to really know what I'm interested in and what caused me and what I want to continue studying and then like I mentioned earlier just that community that I end up finding like that I never knew I was going to find with the light language and all that. like I it blew me away just looking back at like when I first curiously it was out of curiosity, it was like, wow, this is interesting. Like this is this is so new, but like so not and so just using that curiosity as my guide really brought me to so many places that without it, like I said, I wouldn't know where I'd be. So, um it was it was a it was a surprise, but it was also felt like it was destined in a way.

E: Yeah. Okay. Okay. um yeah, okay. Well I don't have many words right now, but uh is there anything else that you just want to share or you think I should know or maybe you wrote down some things?

I: Yeah, I just wanted to say... I'll read it to you. So it came through a poem and then I did an academic perspective on basically like from your um your statement question about all this. That's like what I started, I wrote it before I read the questions, but I just felt like it would be a little guide or something you could include just for yourself or just to just to put some some good words to it. Also, healing across screens, uh light beyond distance. This is the poem. Okay. um

“There is a current beneath language, a breath between worlds where intention moves like electricity, not bound by skin or screen, but guided by the soul's signature. Energy healing does not require touch to touch. It listens through the invisible, through our heartfields, waveforms, and willing stillness. It rides the breath, the pulse, the prayer behind the words we speak through a glowing glass and satellite signals. when one offers presence across the screen, it is not the technology that heals, but the truth carried through it. Light responds to light, coherence response to

coherence and consciousness, once invited, knows no separation. Across oceans, across bandwidth, we remember, and we are not healing your machines, we are healing through miracles disguised as connection.”

E: Wow. Oh, that's beautiful. Can you could you maybe send it to me because I will definitely use it.

I: I will definitely. Amazing. And then the academic perspective of this is; “energy healing across screens functions through the multidimensional nature of consciousness and the interconnectedness of all beings within the quantum field. In this framework, distance is not a barrier as an intention no distance is not a barrier as intention and frequency operate nonlocally, meaning that they are limit not limited by timer's base. Practitioners often attune their clients through resonance with the unified fields, allowing healing to take place beyond the physical. The mind body and spirit are accessed as patterns of energy and information in these patterns can be read, recalibrated, and restored across digital interfaces. Many energy workers access the akashic records, a vibrational archive of each soul's journey during remote sessions, retrieving relevant emotional and spiritual or ancestral data to support healing, whether through light language, guided meditation, Reiki or intuitive sensing, remote sessions often feel as potent as in person work, affirming that it is not proximity that facilitates healing, but presence, alignment, and trust in the intelligent design of the quantummatrix.”

E: I'm going to need to listen to that again, but thank you. Did you... where did you did you write it yourself or did you find it somewhere this information?

I: I wrote it for free.

E: Oh, okay. Well, if you've read them more than I have until until now that my thesis.

I: I told you I'll be able to help!

E: Hahah yeah! Thank you.

I: It's okay, my pleasure.

E: It is great. Well, this was the end for my of my um of the interview, it was very, very fruitful, so I've got a lot of information that I can definitely work with. I just have to do it now in the next three weeks, but thank you so much and it was really interesting and um I will I will um get in contact with you again, maybe about uh the healing because I'm very interested in this. And feel free like if you have any other questions during your writing or anything, just feel free to ask me.

I: I'm I'm really in support of this.

E: that's great. And for you to say, if you if you if something else comes to mind that you want to share or if you want to change something, just text me or and I will I will respond.

I: Yeah. Absolutely. No, I feel I feel like you pulled some really good stuff out of me. I really love this interaction and um I'd love to keep up with you in all ways you're an amazing (inaudible).

E: Thanks. I think too. I like it very much. I like this conversation and too to get to notice. It was really a lot because I really don't know anything about all of this yet, but I will I think this is for me also maybe a little bit of a start at looking

I: You'll be a master in no time.

E: Yeah, okay. Yeah. Okay, so it was really fun.

I: I do feel like I've been holding a lot of my information back and just like practicing my own weight and it's really (inaudible) for me right now to even speak with you in this way, just because it gave me I've been building my confidence on revealing my, like truest self. And you give me confidence in just like, knowing that I got it. Like it's just I have all the tools I need and I'm just putting them with emotion.

E: Yeah, it's great. It's amazing. Okay, um well, I'm at my parents' house right now and it's here it is. Oh, it's half past 10 and they're almost going to sleep, so I will have to call it a night and for you I think a day, what time is it? my day Starting your day. That's so weird, actually.

I: I know. Yeah,

E: But thank you so much again. Yeah, enjoy your day.

I: I Take care now.

E: Bye bye, take care.

Thesis Appendix I: Interview 3 Transcript

Interview with: Michelle (pseudonym)

Date: 11-05-2025

Duration: 51.47 min

Style: Facetime videocall, recording transcript

Language: Dutch

E: Ik moet even toestemming vragen, verbaal, dat je de recording goed vind?

I: Ja, dat vind ik goed.

E: Oke even kijken of ik het kan vinden, oh ja, ik moet het natuurlijk ook nog gaan transcriberen naar Dutch. Oke, wat is je naam, wat is je leeftijd, en waar kom je vandaan?

I: Ik ben Michelle, ik ben eenentwintig jaar, ik kom uit een dorpje in Noord-groningen, Garnwerd heet dat, en mijn moeder is Zwitserse. Dus daar heb ik ook heel veel van meegekregen en ik ben daar een beetje opgegroeid, in Garnwerd, enneh, nu woon ik in Groningen.

E: Oke, en wat voor werk doe je, wat heb je gestudeerd, en hoe ben je gekomen waar je nu bent zeg maar?

I: Ik heb gewoon basisschool gedaan, toen middelbare school op het Praedinius Gymnasium in de stad, in Groningen, en nu werk ik bij de Albert Heijn voor vijf jaar. Ik werk zeg maar op alle afdelingen een beetje, dus ook met mensen en ook wel wat minder met mensen, en ik studeer sociologie, ik zit nu in mijn tweede jaar, vind ik superleuk, dus ja.

E: Oke, leuk. En hoe zou je jezelf omschrijven aan iemand die je niet kent?

I: Ohh, interessant. Ehm, ik denk... Ik ben heel nuchter, gewoon heel down to earth, maar wel heel erg open voor alles, dus ik zou niet zeggen dat ik heel spiritueel ben maar ik sta wel open voor alles, alle mogelijkheden van wat er allemaal kan zijn. Ik

ben heel open, gewoon sowieso een heel open en eerlijk persoon, en ik ben heel energiek, ik heb ook ADHD dus eh ja dat helpt, ja, ik denk gewoon een heel enthousiast en open persoon. Vind ik moeilijk om dat zo te zeggen, hahah.

E: Oke, ja raar he, haha. Maar wel handig voor mij. En wat zijn jouw activiteiten op een dagelijkse basis, of in andere woorden, hoe zou een typische dag voor jou eruit zien?

I: Okay, ehm. Ik sta best vroeg op, ja om zeven uur vaak, en dan ga ik naar de gym, dan sport ik, en dan kom ik thuis en dan maak ik een ontbijtje, en dan ga ik douchen en me klaarmaken voor de dag, en dan ga ik meestal even kijken wat ik voor studie moet doen, of ik die dag nog naar studie moet, blablabla. Nou als ik dan naar studie moet dan ga ik naar studie, anders ga ik bijvoorbeeld lezen, of even met vrienden afspreken, of mn huishouden doen, beetje zo. Ik vind het ook gewoon lekker om gewoon thuis te zijn en een beetje op mijn telefoon te zitten, haha. En als ik dan dus naar studie moet ga ik naar studie, college ofzo, en dan s middags ga ik weer naar huis vaak, gewoon boodschappen doen, beetje de alledaagse dingetjes, of zeker als het mooi weer is dan eventjes in de zon zitten, en zodoende. En dan vaak 's avonds moet ik werken om zeven uur, dus dan eet ik met een huisgenootje en dan ga ik om zeven uur naar werk en dan werk ik tot half elf, en dan in het weekend gaan we bijvoorbeeld vaak dan na werk nog even naar het terras, en uit, en doordeweeks dan ga ik gewoon naar bed.

E: Okay. En zijn er onderwerpen die jij heel interessant vindt in het algemeen, of waar je heel veel over weet, en waarom?

I: Ehh, ja sociologie dus ik vind mensen heel interessant, ook hoe verschillend mensen zijn, cultuur, ik vind, ja, religie zou ik niet zeggen maar ik vind bijvoorbeeld de Islam heel interresant, iet omdat ik dat dan zelf graag wil doen, maar die cultuur daar in het midden oosten vind ik super interessant hoe dat allemaal werkt, en al die tradities die eigenlijk ons heel vreemd zijn. Ik weet heel veel over topografie, niet perse steden maar landen, ik kan alle landen in de wereld noemen. Dat is een beetje zo'n hyperfixation, ik heb met ADHD hyperfocus, dus tijdens mijn examens heb ik in de pauzes topografie geleerd, waarom weet ik niet. maar dat is echt bizar at this

point. Ehm, interesses... Ik hou heel erg van lezen ik hou een beetje van wat oudere literatuur, dus Dickens, Henry Murray, en dat soort dingen, Kafka, en dat soort zoi. Ja, ik vind gewoon mensen heel interessant. Dus hoe mensen werken en literatuur gaat natuurlijk over mensen, en mijn studie gaat over mensen, dat vind ik gewoon heel cool.

E: Ja, same. Allright, en ehm, kan je me een beetje vertellen over de context waarin je opgegroeid bent? Mensen om je heen, opvoeding, hoe je bent geworden wie je nu bent.

I: Oeh, interessante vraag. Wauw oke, ehm... Ik zal aan de ene hand mijn gezin doen en aan de andere hand de mensen buiten mijn gezin. ik denk dat mijn gezin wel ingewikkeld is, mijn ouders zijn allebei wel hoogopgeleid, en mijn oudere zus heeft autisme en dat was vroeger heel erg lastig omdat dat heel erg veel aandacht vereiste, heel veel conflict veroorzaakt, zeker met mijn, nou ja je hebt natuurlijk verschillende soorten autistische mensen, maar mijn zus was gewoon heel erg gefrustreerd met het leven. Dat vereiste heel veel aandacht, dus daardoor ben ik denk ik heel zelfstandig en denk ik ook heel erg op mezelf, en vind ik het soms ook moeilijk om om hulp te vragen, of niet om hulp te vragen maar om te delen hoe ik me voel. En mijn ouders zijn uit elkaar gegaan toen ik elf was, en dat was ook niet zo gezellig, veel geruzie enzo, en ik denk dat ik daarom ook wel wat afstand heb van beide mijn ouders, dus ik heb niet de beste relatie met ze maar ik denk dat ik daardoor ook ook heel veel waarde hecht aan mijn vriendschappen, dus nu omsingel ik me heel erg met hele fijne mensen, en daar steek ik heel veel energie in en zij ook in mij. En vroeger buiten mijn gezin om ben ik dus opgegroeid in een klein dorpje, en zeker op die basisschool was anders dan normaal niet zo gewenst, dus dat, ze vonden mijn gezin dan dus raar, en mijn zus raar, maar wel heel veel vrienden gehad eigenlijk vroeger, en het was eigenlijk altijd heel gezellig, ik heb wel echt een fijne basisschooltijd gehad. En middelbare was dus in de stad dus dat was een hele nieuwe wereld, en heb daar de eerste paar jaar niet super veel vrienden gehad, en toen op een gegeven moment werd ik echt populair. Dat is heel stom om zelf te zeggen maar dat was wel een beetje zo. Dan zit je bij de populaire kids, en ik merkte dat ik dat ook achteraf eigenlijk niet zo leuk vond. Ja, achteraf dacht ik, ik was van die school af, en ik dacht nou, ik hoef jullie nooit meer te zien eigenlijk. Nee, ik hoefde het echt niet meer. dus

ik weet niet, ik merk dat ik me nu heel graag omsingel met mensen die ook heel open zijn en dus misschien ook wel een beetje alternatief, niet echt alternatief, maar wel een beetje, en met mensen die ook heel zelfbewust zijn, en van de wereld, en heel erg om zich heen kijken enzo. Dat vind ik heel fijn, dus ik merk ook dat ik me echt omsingel met queer mensen. Mijn echte hechte vrienden zijn allemaal bi, of homo, of alles ertussenin.

E: Openminded mensen dus wel?

I: Ja, openminded mensen. Dat is inderdaad hoe ik het zou zeggen. En ja opgroeien, ja, ik weet niet ik denk dat ik veel zo ben geworden omdat mijn gezin dus een beetje apart was, en ik heb ook wel met mezelf in de knoop gezeten vroeger, maar ik denk dat, ik heb ook wel veel therapie gehad enzo, en ik denk dat ik daarom wel heel bewust ben van de wereld en ook heel emotioneel nadenk over hoe ik me voel en waarom ik me zo voel en nou ja. Dat vind ik wel heel belangrijk. Ja. Wel bijzonder.

E: Ja, oke. Heb je ook, ja dat heb je een beetje beantwoord al, maar heb je vrienden, familie, mensen om je heen die dezelfde interesse en ook dezelfde meningen als jij hebben?

I: Ja, ik denk eigenlijk wel de meeste mensen om mij heen, ik vind het ook heel fijn om nieuwe dingen te leren, dus ik heb bijvoorbeeld, een van mijn vrienden is psycholoog, en hij is echt eigenlijk super spiritueel, en heeft ook heel veel dingen aan mij te leren, dat vind ik superfijn, dat ik dan denk van oh je hebt echt iets (*inaudible?*) nieuws te vertellen, daar kies ik ook wel echt mijn mensen op uit, ja. Ik denk dat heel veel van mijn hechte vrienden wel hetzelfde denken als ik, en niet helemaal het zelfde denk ik, omdat ik het juist ik vind het altijd heel prettig om nieuwe dingen te leren, en andere dingen mee te krijgen dan mijn eigen perspectief. Dus ik heb altijd wel het gevoel dat ik van hen kan leren. Dat vind ik heel fijn.

E: Ja. Eh, en ben je opgegroeid met een vorm van religie of spiritualiteit om je heen, en hoe zou je zeggen dat jou dat dan beïnvloed heeft?

I: Eh ja, ik ben eigenlijk Katholiek, ja ik zou niet zeggen ik ben Katholiek opgevoed, maar mijn moeder heeft het wel als optie aangedragen, want zij komt uit een Katholiek zwitsers gezin. En dat gezin is op een gegeven moment ook uit de Katholieke kerk gestapt, maar ze heeft het ook toch aan mij aangedragen van; “dit kan”. Dus ik weet er veel over, een beetje de kinderbijbel en dat soort dingen, en een beetje ik ben ook gedoopt, zo. Maar nooit echt, het was niet een verplichting ofzo. En ook zeker niet bidden aan tafel, mijn vader was dus juist er meer op tegen, of ja niet er op tegen maar gewoon er niet zo van. Dus daar weet ik veel over, ik kan niet zeggen dat ik in god geloof, ik hou het als een optie open, en mijn moeder is nu, ik denk ik de afgelopen tien jaar veel meer de spirituele kant op gegaan, dus die legt tarot kaarten en die brandt salie, etcetera. Dus die is super daar mee bezig enzo, en die gelooft ook in reïncarnatie, dus ik ben er wel mee opgegroeid, met alle mogelijkheden laat ik het zo zeggen. En dat is ook een beetje hoe ik het zie, ik kan niet weten wat de waarheid is, maar ik geloof wel, ik hoop dat er een soort universum is die een soort plan heeft.

E: Agnost heet dat eigenlijk. Dat heb ik ook.

I: Ja, precies.

E: En zou je zelf zeggen dat je spiritueel bent, en zo ja, hoe zou je dan jouw spiritualiteit omschrijven? Is jouw versie anders dan die van hoe je dat hebt geleerd of gezien om je heen?

I: Oke, ehm, ik weet niet of ik durf te zeggen dat ik spiritueel ben. Want ik ben er niet superveel mee bezig. Zeg maar als ik kijk naar mensen om mij heen, zou ik zeggen zij zijn spiritueel en ik een soort van. Alleen, ik ben er niet mee bezig maar ik geloof wel in het universum en dat het universum een plan heeft, en ik maak ook wel eens keuzes daar op basis van, dus dat ik dan denk van; als het zo had moeten zijn dan... Goed, ik heb een ex die ik dan dus niet meer gezien heb, en kom hem sinds het uit is eigenlijk niet tegen, nooit. terwijl, we wonen in dezelfde stad, we gaan eigenlijk altijd naar dezelfde feestjes, we gaan uit, weet je wel. We zouden elkaar moeten zien maar dat doen we dus niet, dus ik heb dan in mijn hoofd van, als het zo zou moeten dan kom ik hem wel weer tegen. Ik geloof wel dat het universum een soort plan

heeft, maar ik weet niet in hoeverre dat is. Ik denk dat mijn moeder nu vrij extreem is in het spirituele, omdat ze er ook echt elke dag mee bezig is, maar dat heb ik niet echt. Ik vind het gewoon fijn om te bedenken dat er een plan is, soort van. Maar ik ben niet Katholiek, nee.

E: Oke. En is er iets wat jij wel echt gelooft? En wat is dat dan en waarom.

I: Dat vind ik dus lastig. Want ik denk dus het universum, maar dan zal er altijd twijfel zijn. En ik weet ook helemaal niet zo goed, ik weet gewoon niet wat ik vind. Want ik, ik vind alles, alles is opzich een optie. En ik denk dan van ja, je kunt wel in het universum geloven, maar ja het is ook gewoon allemaal een soort grote toevalssom. En ik geloof ook in wetenschap, dat ik denk ja, oerknal en dit is gewoon hoe leven is, microbiologie...

E: Wat heb je denk je nodig om iets helemaal te kunnen geloven? Ook wetenschap, zeg maar?

I: Ja ik geloof dus wel echt helemaal in de wetenschap, dus ik geloof helemaal in de oerknal, zonder twijfel, en in de evolutie, ik weet dat dat zo is, alleen ik geloof dus ergens ook dat daar meer achter zit. Dat zeg maar, ik weet niet of dat een soort groot plan is van de mensheid moet hierheen, maar ik heb wel het gevoel dat in mijn dagelijks leven, dat de mens dus wel lessen te leren heeft en dat het wel een soort van gestuurd wordt, niet perse door een mannetje die zegt; "jij gaat nu dit doen", maar een soort kosmische, ja i don't know. Een soort banen die je kan... Ik denk wel dat we een vrije keuze kunnen maken als mens, niet helemaal natuurlijk, want alles is beïnvloed, je bent beïnvloed door alles om je heen, alleen ik denk wel dat er een soort richting is. Maar ik denk niet dat er iets is wat mij volledig laat geloven in dat het universum bestaat, dat er krachten zijn die mij beïnvloeden, anders dan puur toeval en wetenschap.

E: Oke, interessant.

I: Ja, ik denk niet dat ik ooit helemaal om kan zijn.

E: Ja, ik heb het echt hetzelfde. Ik probeer er ook achter te komen door deze scriptie, van hoe hebben andere mensen dat, en ik kom er nog niet achter haha.

I: Heeft niemand een doorslaggevend iets?

E: Ja, wat nu een beetje lijkt te zijn, want reiki is dus mijn specifieke onderwerp omdat dat grote idee van hoe kan het dat mensen zoiets kunnen geloven ergens in, om dat te onderzoeken, met reiki is het een beetje zo; als het werkt voor iemand persoonlijk, en dat is ook wat die Lived religion theorie zegt, als het gewoon werkt, als een practice werkt voor jou, op welke manier dan ook, dan hoeft je er niet perse in te geloven maar dan is dat gewoon goed en dan twijfel je gewoon niet aan dat beeld. Ja. Ja en dat is dan dus geloof, geloof is ook weer voor iedereen verschillend, en daarom vroeg ik ook van wat heb je nodig om iets te geloven, want je kunt als je bijvoorbeeld in de wetenschap gelooft kun je bewijs nodig hebben om iets te geloven, kun je bijvoorbeeld een soort verlichtingsmoment moeten hebben gehad om dat te geloven dat God bestaat.

I: Maar ja ik denk dus dat inderdaad, ik heb bewijs nodig, maar ja, er is niks, je kunt niks bewijzen behalve wetenschap. En ik ben wel echt zeg maar ja, ik studeer natuurlijk aan de universiteit, ik geloof in de wetenschap, ik ben een wetenschapper, ik geloof in bewijs en experimenteren, en zien.

E: Ja en dat is dus die background, die interessant is, want stel je komt uit een andere cultuur, daar kan geloof de dagelijkse bezigheid zijn. Die zijn dagelijks bezig met geloof, maar niet heel bewust met geloof als in 'belief', maar meer met 'religion'. Je hebt daar in het Nederlands niet de goeie woorden voor, daar heb je belief en religion in het engels en wij zeggen gewoon geloof en geloof, als een en het zelfde, maar dat is het niet.

I: Oooh, interessant!

E: Jaaa, het is super interessant.

I: Ze zijn dan dus niet bezig met 'belief', maar wel met 'religion'.

E: Ja, dat is dus hun dagelijks geleefde realiteit, dat ze gewoon offers brengen, maar zonder er echt over na te denken. Sommige mensen ook wel maar heen veel ook niet, dus voor hen is dat de waarheid, en voor ons is dagelijks leven, alles moeten bewijzen wat je doet, alles, als iemand iets zegt, moet je zeggen; “oh ja? hoe weet je dat?” ze maar. En niet gewoon “oh, jij weet dat. en dat is dus jouw geleefde realiteit die voor jou waar is en misschien...” Ja dat is zo interessant maar ook pff, zo mindfuck gewoon, en daar moet ik dus iets van zien te maken.

I: Oh ja, oh my god. Dat is wel super interessant. Elk onderzoek heeft zo zijn haken en ogen.

E: Ja, klopt. Ik ga me er gewoon op een of andere manier doorheen zien te werken.

I: Je moet gewoon aangeven wat je limitaties zijn. Dat vind ik zo mooi aan onderzoek doen, dat je dan kan omschrijven; dit weet ik niet. Helemaal prima.

E: Hahaha ja. Ehm even verder, over reiki specifiek; wat is het volgens jou, Reiki, en wat weet je ervan, en wat voor rol speelt het in je leven?

I: Ehm, nou voor mij, ik vond het al lastig want ik wist dat deze vraag zou komen en ik heb het expres ook niet opgezocht, dat vind ik niet eerlijk. Ik weet het eigenlijk niet zo goed. voor mij is het dus zeg maar, vanaf mijn begrip is, hoe ik er in aanraking mee ben gekomen is dus via TikTok. Ik kijk vaak ASMR en dan soms zie je Reiki, en voor mij is het gewoon handbewegingen naar de camera, en ik weet dat dus in het echt is het dat je iets met energie doet, dat je bepaalde dingen weg kan halen. Maar dat je dus iets met iemands energie doet, en het schijnt helend te zijn, en ik moet ook zeggen dat het, dat zal dan natuurlijk ook zijn omdat mijn lichaam daarop reageert, dat ik dat zie, zeg maar dat is ook gewoon cognitief logisch, maar dan voel ik dus wel dat er iets gebeurt met mijn hoofd. En dat is natuurlijk omdat ik dat zie, denk ik, ja misschien ook niet! Maar ehm, ja dus zoiets, iets met energie en met heling. En je hebt dat ook van die mensen die er dan bij praten ofzo, en met licht enzo, ik weet het ook niet. Voor mij is het dus niet heel veel betekenis, ik vind het gewoon lekker om te zien en te luisteren. Ik geloof vast dat als je dat in het echt

doet.. Als je het via de telefoon ziet zou ik er al helemaal niet in kunnen geloven ze maar. Ik denk in het echt is dat wel een ander verhaal, ik geloof niet dat energie via een mobiel scherm kan. Ik geloof wel dat er iets aan energie is, maar dat zie ik gewoon niet helemaal, maar in het echt snap ik wel dat, ookal is het placebo of niet, dat het iets kan doen voor iemand. De vraag was dus; wat is reiki voor jou?

E: Ja, en wat voor rol speelt het in je leven. Ja.

I: Ohja, ja. Nou ja via tiktok kijk ik het dus wel eens. Ja en dat zal echt niet dagelijks zijn, maar ik denk misschien een keer in de twee weken ofzo, dan kom ik zo'n filmpje tegen en dan kijk ik er naar en dan denk ik 'ah, lekker'.

E: Ah oke, top. Hoe lang ben jij al actief op tiktok?

I: Ohh geen idee, kan je dat opzoeken?

E: Geen idee, of gewoon een beetje een gokje van hoeveel jaar ongeveer.

I: Ja ik denk sinds het zeg maar echt een ding was, wat is dat, vier of vijf jaar?

E: Ja, volgens mij een beetje van corona?

I: Ja sinds het zeg maar een beetje populair werd , toen ben ik ook er op gegaan. Ik kan het niet zien.

E: Ja, 2020 dan denk ik?

I: 2019, 2020. Eigenlijk net als bijna al mijn generatiegenootjes.

E: En hoeveel tijd spendeer je op een dag, of in een week, of wat dan ook, op tiktok?

I: Oei, dat is een confronterende vraag die je stelt. Ja ik denk dat dat heel erg verschilt, per dag, maar dat zal ergens tussen de vijf en een uur liggen. Het zal af en

toe vast een dag niks zijn, maar ik denk dat die dagen zelden en ver uit elkaar zijn. Zelden en infrequent.

E: Nou dan ben je niet de enige die dat heeft gezegd. En hoe vaak engage, ja hoe zeg je dat, interact, wat is het nederlandse woord? Hoe vaak je engage je met andere mensen hun content? Of in andere woorden; like en comment je heel veel, of dat soort dingen?

I: Nee, eigenlijk bijna nooit. Ik like alleen dingen als ik het wil bewaren, dus als ik het nog een keer wil terugvinden, of als ik het echt heel grappig vind, maar dan wil ik het dus eigenlijk nog een keer kunnen zien. En ik stuur wel vaak dingen door naar mn vrienden, maar ik denk echt dat ik maar vier keer op een tiktok heb gecomment. En ik volg heel weinig mensen eigenlijk.

E: En heb je ook een behoefte om dat algoritme zeg maar een beetje te besturen met wat je liket en niet liket of denk je daar eigenlijk niet over na?

I: Ik denk daar wel over na in de zin dat ik soms iets like en dan krijg je dus alleen maar dat en dan denk ik ja, dan skip ik dus soms een filmpje dat ik weet oh dat gaat hierover dat wil ik niet zien. Dus dat. Maar ik doe eigenlijk nooit dat ik iets like van dit wil ik meer zien. Heel af en toe misschien, dat ik denk oeh dit is leuk! Maar ja, ik laat mij leiden door het algoritme.

E: Oke, oke. En hoe zou jij de content die je ziet omschrijven, zit je een beetje op een bepaalde 'side' zeg maar, bijvoorbeeld gymtok of iets anders? Wat zie je vooral voorbij komen?

I: Ik denk inderdaad veel, nou ja niet veel maar wel een beetje gymdingen, gewoon grappige dingen denk ik, ik hou ook wel een beetje van, niet van beautytok, maar wel van gewoon coole outfits ofzo, maar dan beschouw ik als een beetje alternatieve coole mensen zeg maar. Weet je wel tattoos enzo. Ja, je hebt ook van die nederlandse tiktokkers, daar ben ik dan weer niet zo'n fan van. Politiek wel een beetje, dus als er iets politieks gebeurt dan zie ik dat wel, kom ik dat wel tegen. Een beetje eten, kapsel dingen, ik zie ook wel vaak shorts van films enzo, wat ik wel leuk vind. ADHD

dingen, nieuws... Er zijn ook van die mensen die dan eigenlijk elke keer het zelfde dansje doen, en dan vind ik het satisfying en dan zie ik dat dus echt tien keer per dag en dan denk ik ja, wacht ik ga je er een laten zien, ik kan het niet niet kijken. Elke keer dan komt het en dan denk ik, ik moet het gewoon zien.

(zingt de sound die bij de desbetreffende video's hoort, laat me de video zien)

E: Haha, ik heb dit nog nooit gezien.

I: En ze doen elke keer hetzelfde en ik heb elk filmpje tot nu toe gezien. Ik vind hem vooral heel satisfying *(wijst naar een jongen in de video)*. En dan doen ze een soort hupje, oh fantastisch. En, ook veel Liverpool content. want ik ben grote Liverpool fan.

E: Alright, interessant. En zie je ook vaak, althans wat jij vindt dat dat is, spirituele content? En wat voor soort, kan je voorbeeldjes noemen?

I: Ik denk dat mijn spirituele content zich beperkt tot mijn ASMR kant, dat kom ik dus ook wel eens tegen, maar dat is dus vaak als ik het gewoon opzoek. Want dan lig ik in bed en dan denk ik; ik ga slapen, en dan kijk ik ASMR. Dus daar voornamelijk in. Ik zie niet heel veel van die "if it is meant to be it will be" weetjewel, dat soort quotes, met zo'n mooi, dat zie ik niet veel en dat vind ik stom. Maar een vriend van mij stuurt wel eens dat soort dingen door. Mooie gedichtjes ofzo, dat ik denk ja mooi. Maar niet heel veel spirituele dingen.

E: Heb je ooit witchtok gezien?

I: Ja! Dat heb ik wel gezien. Ik denk twee jaar geleden ofzo.

E: Ja, dat bestaat nog steeds maar is wel minder booming.

I: Ja ik heb het wel gezien, ik weet wel wat er allemaal op staat. Ik ben er wel deel van geweest. Ik heb vriendinnen die daar echt veel meer mee bezig zijn, en die geven mij dan kristallen enzo. En dan denk ik dankje! Ja, zij doen het altijd voor mij. Dan

zeg ik; “ik wil dit” en dan zeggen zij; “Ik manifesteer het voor je”. Ik heb wel eens dingen ‘gemanifest’.

E: Oke, ben je bekend geworden met dat concept door tiktok of door iets anders?

I: Ik denk tiktok ja, en dan dus tiktok. En dan zag ik dus op tiktok dat je dingen kunt manifesteren en dan vraag ik aan een vriendin hoe. We hebben dan dus op school, op uni, een project voor een half jaar, en dat zijn dan vier projecten en een project daarvan is heel populair, criminaliteit en veiligheid. En ik wou daar f*cking graag bij. En toen zei ik jongens, ik moet me hier morgen voor inschrijven, kan ik... kun je mij... weetjewel? En toen heb ik dat gedaan, en toen ben ik het ook geworden! Dus ik twijfel niet meer aan spiritualiteit, manifesteren is helemaal daar! Nee grapje, haha.

E: Nee oke, ja. En heb je soms wel eens het gevoel dat bepaalde content die jij ziet dat het ‘meant to reach you’ is op dat moment? Half ge-engelst.

I: Ja dat vind ik lastig, want dan moet je dus wel weer een soort van geloven in iets. En ik weet niet of ik dat doe.

E: Ja of een gevoel, het kan ook een gevoel zijn. Want ik zie ook wel eens Tarot-video’s, en als ik dan net even een obsessie heb bijvoorbeeld met een of ander iemand en die video zegt ja hier zitten geen hashtags onder, dit is bedoeld voor jou, hij gaat je morgen verkering vragen. Daar geloof ik niet in, maar ik heb dan wel een twijfel. Heb jij dat ooit gehad?

I: Ja ik kan dan niet denken van ‘ja, dit is het’. Ik wil het dan gewoon graag geloven, dat is het meer denk ik. Maar... Ik ben de vraag vergeten.

E: Haha, ja, of je dus soms het gevoel hebt dat sommige content op dat moment bedoeld is voor jou.

I: Nee, ik denk dat het algoritme heel goed is in wat ‘ie doet, en ik denk dat ook heel veel van dat soort creators gewoon inspelen op wat jij wilt horen. Want natuurlijk gaan ze niet zeggen van hahah nee hij houdt niet van je, want dan, niemand wil dat.

Dat wil je niet horen. Dus dat denk ik niet. Maar soms denk ik wel, dan zijn er dus wel van die, nou quotes is het niet echt, maar een beetje van die berichten met een soort levenslessen... Ik heb wel eens, het afgelopen half jaar is het uitgegaan met mijn vriend, en dan is er wel eens iets geweest dat ik dacht van ja, dat is echt zo. En of dat dan meant to be is dat weet ik niet maar het is wel fijn om te horen.

E: Ja, wekt dat dan bepaalde emoties op?

I: Jawel. Er zullen natuurlijk duizenden mensen zijn in die situatie, dus het geldt eigenlijk voor iedereen, maar op dat moment klikt dat even. Maar er zijn dan ook nu genoeg dingen die dan dezelfde soort content hebben, die dan nu niet klikken omdat ik moe dan nu niet zo voel ofzo.

E: Ja, klopt, oke. En wat zijn jouw, wat denk jij over TikTok algemeen als een platform? Ben je blij met de manier waarop je het gebruikt en wat het jou brengt of zou je er iets aan veranderen?

I: Ja, het is natuurlijk eigenlijk veel te veel. En ik moet eigenlijk gewoon sowieso veel minder op mijn telefoon zitten en eigenlijk ook veel minder op Tiktok, maar er staan ook leuke dingen op. Leerzame dingen, interessante dingen, dus ik kan niet zeggen dat het alleen maar slecht is, dus ik ja, bijvoorbeeld kook-dingen enzo. Er is ook heel veel leuke content, en ik probeer heel erg weg te blijven bij tiktokkers en tiktok video's die heel erg op de dopamine hit zitten, dus h je hebt vaak van die mensen die dan heel enthousiast praten en dan denk ik iel, daar hou ik echt niet van. Dus klik ik op 'niet geïnteresseerd', of probeer ik het weg te swipen ofzo. Daar hou ik echt niet van. Ik denk dat er ook heel veel grappige dingen op staan. Ik zou natuurlijk het liefst minder op TikTok zitten, ook omdat tiktok dus gericht is op zoveel mogelijk dopamine en prikkels geven, en ik ben daar zelf wel gevoelig voor, ook met ADHD enzo, want eigenlijk is het de perfecte app voor mij. Ze hebben het perfect gedaan. Dus ik zou er wel eigenlijk liever minder op zitten, maar ik denk ook dat er ook wel leuke dingen op staan en dat het ook oke is om daar content van te nuttigen.

E: Ja, I agree. En dan kan ik nu een stuk overslaan want dat is niet relevant. even over reiki livestreams, of reiki video's, gewoon reiki content specifiek, wat denk jij dat andere mensen aantrekt zeg maar, om mee te doen, om te kijken naar dit soort content?

I: Ik denk dat het verdeeld is in drie groepen. Ik denk dat er mensen zijn die het raar vinden inderdaad en er daardoor naar kijken, dus een soort van hate-watching, wat ik eigenlijk soms zelf, niet op reiki dan, maar op andere dingen wel doe. Dat je iets kut vind en dan dus juist er naar gaat kijken omdat dat een soort van ja. Dus dat denk ik, een soort van hate-watching. Ik denk dat er ook mensen zijn die het gewoon lekker vinden, dat is een beetje mijn groep denk ik, die gewoon genieten van het geluid dat het maakt en gewoon de vibe, gewoon rustgevend. En ik denk dat er mensen zijn die er echt in geloven en het gevoel hebben dat dat dus genezend is of hoe dan ook, en ik denk dat die laatste twee groepen eigenlijk ook het zelfde einddoel, of eindresultaat komen, dus dat het gewoon rustgevend is, en fijn. En ik denk dan ook met dat soort dingen; het maakt niet perse uit waar je voor komt, of je komt voor 'ik wil dit of dat eruit halen', uiteindelijk heb je sowieso dat het kalmerend is en dat heb je ook met ademhalingsoefeningen enzo. Of met ASMR en met dat soort dingen, dat ze dan doen van; 'haal adem'. Het is in ieder geval even peace of mind. En ik denk dat verschillende mensen er wel meer of minder betekenis aan geven, maar hoe dan ook is het even; 'ahh'.

E: Ja, dat is wel grappig want dit is bijna precies het zelfde antwoord van mijn interviewee van gister, zij begon ook met dat ze denkt dat er twee groepen zijn; mensen die het echt geloven en mensen die geïnteresseerd zijn en nieuwsgierig maar dat het allebei hetzelfde doel bereikt zeg maar. Maar zij had twee groepen en jij hebt er drie.

I: Ja, ik denk dat er dus ook mensen zijn die denken; 'uhh wat raar', maar die dan toch kijken. En ik denk dat misschien zelf die mensen ook nog wel een beetje ontspannen worden. Er zijn ook mensen die ASMR kijken voor de haat. En dan denk ik ja, maar je zit ondertussen wel een beetje diep adem te halen, b*tch. Volgens mij ben jij hartstikke ontspannen nu! Mensen die haten op iets die hebben eigenlijk altijd, oké niet altijd maar wel bijna altijd, dat ze gewoon jaloers zijn. Stay jealous!

E: Of jaloers op mensen die dus echt iets kunnen geloven en dat zij zelf dus in de knoop zitten? Dat kan ook nog. Oke. Dit gaat specifiek over livestreams eigenlijk, maar voor jou dan meer over mensen in de comments van video's. Een reiki video, als je daar naar kijkt. Voel je wel eens een connectie met andere mensen die er ook naar kijken?

I: Ik denk niet dat ik ooit heb nagedacht over dat er ook andere mensen naar kijken, als ik heel eerlijk ben. Nou ik heb wel, als ik in zo'n filmpje zit, ik ben dan niet in een mindspace waar ik denk aan; 'andere mensen vinden dit ook fijn'. Ik ben dan gewoon met mezelf bezig en met zelf tot rust komen. Ik kijk ook niet livestreams, ik denk dat dat wel belangrijk is om erbij te zeggen, want als je livestreams kijkt dan zie je dus ook mensen actief reageren, en dat heb ik natuurlijk niet. Ik voel me denk ik niet verbonden. Maar ik vind het wel, zeg maar nu je het zegt, vind ik het wel een fijn idee dat er dus wel een community en een groep mensen zijn op de planeet die net zo open zijn als ik, dat ik denk; de wereld gaat toch nog ergens goeds heen. Ik vind het wel een fijn idee, dat heb ik sowieso met alles dat een beetje links en liberaal is, van ah, er zijn ook mensen die heel open minded zijn en die wel kunnen blijven nadenken, zeker met hoe de wereld nu gaat. Want we zijn wel op een rechtse trend. Wat heel normaal is want dat gebeurde altijd in de geschiedenis, dat je van links naar rechts gaat, maar nu we in die tijd zijn vind ik het toch wel fijn om te bedenken dat er ook fijne mensen zijn die zich openstellen en die niet discriminerend zijn, ja dat heb ik wel.

E: Ja. En zou je dan zeggen dat je deel uitmaakt van een bepaalde community? Op tiktok, of rondom tiktok zeg maar?

I: Ik weet niet of ik daar actief deel van uitmaak, maar ik denk wel dat de bevolking natuurlijk verdeeld is in mensen die (*onverstaanbaar: ...manier*) denken, en ik denk dat ik daar natuurlijk, dan hoor je wel bij een bepaalde groep. Ik welke mate dan ook. En op tiktok voel ik natuurlijk wel, ja ik ben zelf een heel links en liberaal mens, en ik denk dat mijn tiktok dat ook wel weerspiegelt. Dus in die zin voel ik me wel bij de community van links-liberalen, en ik weet niet of ik bij de reiki-community hoor,

maar ik denk dat zij wel onder mijn links-liberaal vallen, laat ik het zo zeggen. Maar in enige zin wel.

E: Ja. Oh ja, nog meer over die reiki, hoe zou jij je gevoel, of de ervaring omschrijven als jij zo'n video ziet? Als iemand dat op je doet, digitaal?

I: Hoe ik het voel?

E: Ja, wat voor soort gevoelens het opwekt, wat je er bij denkt, ervaart, ja alles.

I: Eh, ik denk dat ik wel als ik het kijk er mee bezig ben of ik het geloof of niet, dan denk ik: 'voel ik wat, voel ik wat?'. En met sommige filmpjes heb ik dan dus dat ik ook wel echt wat voel, dat ik denk van oh ik voel een soort van mijn gezicht trekken, en bij sommige filmpjes heb ik dan dat wat minder. En ik zoek dus eigenlijk altijd een filmpje waar ik het wel voel. Dat ik het gevoel heb dat er iets, ja ik weet niet.

E: Ja, je wees naar je voorhoofd. Heb je daar dan, voel je daar wel eens wat?

I: Nee, wat ik dus grappig vind, ik heb soms dat als ik naar mijn voorhoofd wijs ofzo, met mijn vinger, of als iemand anders dat doet, dan voel ik dat soms. Daar dacht ik even aan. Dat je dan zonder aanraking even iets voelt. Maar dat is natuurlijk niet echt, dat is een vergelijkbaar gevoel met dat het een soort placebo is, als je hersenen het gevoel hebben en als je dan een sensatie krijgt en dat dan ook hebt. Want natuurlijk alles in je brein is gemaakt door neuronen die rondvliegen, dus ja ik denk dat, ik weet niet. Maar ik zoek er altijd wel naar en ik denk ook, ik ben ook altijd gewoon bezig met in slaap vallen. Een beetje moe worden, tot rust komen, ik weet niet het voelt altijd wel, het voelt wel veilig in dat stukje tik tok.

E: Ja. En zou je ook wel zeggen dat het ook wel werkt, als je het bekijkt? Voor je doel, zeg maar? Rustig worden?

I: Ja, dat wel ja. Ja want tik tok heeft zoveel prikkels, en dan moet ik dus gaan slapen, en dan wil ik niet in die headspace zitten van; elk filmpje nieuwe prikkels, snel, snel... Maar dan wil ik dus rust, en dat werkt op zich wel ja.

E: Oke, ja, dit is misschien nog een beetje een overbodige vraag maar ik stel hem toch even; zou je zeggen dat jouw engagement met reikheling content in het algemeen spiritueel is of vanuit spirituele intenties?

I: Nee ik denk niet dat het echt spiritueel of vanuit spirituele intenties is. Het zou een leuke bonus zijn voor mij, maar het gaat mij eigenlijk meer om dat ik vooral tot rust kan komen.

E: Oke, dat dacht ik al. En oh ja, denk jij dat je moet geloven in digitale reiki, nee wacht even. Denk jij dat je er in zou moeten geloven, in digitale reiki, voor dat het werkt?

I: Nee, dat denk ik niet. Als het echt is dan werkt het sowieso wel. En ik denk natuurlijk wel weer aan placebo, dus als ik het wel echt zou geloven denk ik wel dat het ook more likely is dat er iets gebeurt, omdat je dan jezelf ook ergens op richt, dus dan, ja. Ik denk dat intenties heel veel doen, maar nee, als het echt zo is, dan zou het moeten werken zonder dat ik erin geloof. Maar dat betekent niet dat het niet werkt, wacht, nee laat maar. Ik denk ook dat als je er in gelooft dat het helpt, omdat je dan je daarnaar gaat gedragen.

E: Ja, ook weer psychologisch eigenlijk. Dat heb ik ook al de hele tijd, ja. Eh, en ben je ooit sceptisch geweest erover?

I: Ik denk dat ik altijd een beetje sceptisch ben. Ik ben eigenlijk sceptisch over alles, maar wetenschap is eigenlijk ook scepticisme. Tot het verste punt. Dus ik denk dat ik daarom zo goed bij wetenschap kan, want dat is ook hoe ik ben ingesteld; twijfelen aan alles, en twijfelen totdat je niet meer kan twijfelen, omdat, dat is het enige, je kunt niet meer twijfelen.

E: Dat is het verschil inderdaad. Dat is het verschil, ja.

I: Ja, ik denk dat ik sceptisch ben over alles wat niet te bewijzen is, tot uiterst scepticisme. Zeg maar alles wat wij nu weten over wetenschap, zelfs daar aan twijfelen we nog de hele tijd, en dan moet wetenschap steeds opnieuw en opnieuw

bewezen worden, totdat het zeg maar een keer tegen wordt bewezen, en dan moet je weer iets nieuws verzinnen.

E: Ja, het moet in elke context ook weer kloppen. En bewezen worden.

I: Ja, niks is waar voor altijd. Dus ik ja, ik kan nergens echt helemaal in geloven.

E: Nee. En een laatste vraag; is jouw blik op spiritualiteit, of op heling, of op de wereld in het algemeen, is die veranderd sinds dat jij op tiktok zit, of dit soort content ziet en hebt gezien?

I: Ik denk het wel. Ik denk dat ik vroeger helemaal niet echt bezig was met spiritualiteit, en ja eigenlijk alleen gewoon met wetenschap en ik vond het eigenlijk gewoon allemaal maar een beetje hippie onzin, en ik denk dat ik meer en meer de afgelopen jaren, ik denk deels door tiktok en ook door mijn vrienden die ook beïnvloed zullen zijn door tiktok, en media, zich steeds meer keren op energieën en het universum. Ja, ik denk dat als je ouder wordt dat je je steeds meer keert op dat er meer is dan jij, en ja ik denk wel dat het invloed heeft. Zeg maar, ook gewoon kennis opdoen. Dat gaat heel makkelijk via dat soort media, dus hoe meer je weet, hoe meer je er ook van leert kennen en hoe meer je kunt besluiten wat je er zelf van vindt. Dus ik denk het wel.

E: Ja, oke! En is er nog iets dat jij denkt dat nog belangrijk is om te delen, of iets van gewoon een random gedachte?

I: Ehm, mmm, weet niet, ik denk dat het een heel interessant onderzoek is wat je doet, en ik denk dat er gewoon heel veel waarheden kunnen zijn. En ik denk dat iedereen zijn eigen perspectief heeft op dingen en ik denk dat dat helemaal mooi is, dus ja. Ik vind het een interessant onderzoek dat je doet omdat je niet iets probeert te bewijzen. Dat vind ik heel interessant, dat je gewoon heel erg kijkt naar wat mensen vinden. Dat is een hele interessante hoek.

E: Ja, en daarom is deze studie dus iets van een tussenweg tussen wetenschap en religie in eigenlijk, omdat je dus wel wetenschap moet doen, en daarom is het zo moeilijk ook, want je wil wel dingen gaan bewijzen eigenlijk, maar dat kan niet echt.

I: Ja maar ik denk dat je op zich genoeg bewijst, je laat zien hoe dit er uit zien, in kaart brengen is ook wetenschap. Dus ik denk dat je niet perse hoeft te bewijzen dat iets werkt of niet, of dat iets is of niet, ik denk dat het zien hoe iets al een eerste stap is.

E: Ja, het is een vorm van antropologie, maar dan op religie gericht.

I: Ja, dat is super interessant. En ik denk dat in kaart brengen stap 1 is, en het is ook allemaal heel nieuw he. Misschien wordt dit onderzoek wel gebruikt voor een ander onderzoek waar ze wel iets in bewijzen.

E: Haha dat hoop ik, dat ik dat in twintig dagen voor elkaar kan krijgen.

I: Ja, ik vind het echt al heel interessant. En vind ook dat je het op een mooie manier benadert, je laat het volledig open in hoeverre mensen willen geloven in iets. Dus je vragen zijn totaal niet van dat je er in moet geloven op niet, ze zijn gewoon heel nieuwsgierig.

E: Ja dat is ook de positie die ik moet hebben, maar ook wel wil, het kan ook niet anders, want anders kom ik er ook gewoon niet achter. Het is wel interessant, want dit soort gesprekken heb je normaal niet met mensen als je vraagt; 'wat geloof jij?'. Daarom moet ik ook honderd vragen stellen om er eigenlijk achter te komen wat iemand en hoe iemand gelooft vooral. Want als je gewoon vraagt; 'wat geloof jij?', 'Wat voor religie heb jij?', dan krijg je dus het antwoord van de institutie of waar iemand bij hoort, een groep, maar je krijgt niet van wat iemand persoonlijk denkt of gelooft. Dat is nog niet echt een veelbesproken onderwerp. Dat ga ik denk ik ook wel een beetje in mijn scriptie zetten, dat zou wel mooi zijn als dat wat meer algemene kost wordt.

I: Ik denk wel dat het meer een gesprek wordt voor onze generatie. De keuzes zijn veel groter de laatste tijd.

E: Ja, helemaal. En het is ook veel normaler om je eigen vorm te kiezen, vooral van spiritualiteit, nog niet echt van religie, maar dat je het zelf bepaalt.

Thesis Appendix J: interview 4 Transcript

Interview with: Lara (pseudonym)

Date: 17-05-2025

Duration: 53.16 min

Style: Real-life interview in house of interviewee, recording transcript

Language: Dutch

E: Oke, dan moet ik eerst weer jouw verbale consent even hebben dat je oke bent met het maken van een opname.

I: Ik ben akkoord.

E: Top, nou oke. Allereerst, wat is je naam, wat is je leeftijd, en waar kom je vandaan?

I: Ik ben *Lara*, ik ben negentien jaar, en ik kom uit Groningen, Feerwerd.

E: Oke, en wat doe je op dit moment, studeer je, werk je, en zo ja hoe ben je daar terecht gekomen?

I: Ik studeer aan het conservatorium, HBO, en ik doe student muziek. En ik ben daar terecht gekomen door na mijn middelbare school te kijken wat ik leuk vind. En toen ben ik naar de open dag gegaan, en toen ben ik daar terecht gekomen, haha.

E: Oke, top, haha. En hoe zou jij jezelf omschrijven aan iemand die jou niet kent?

I: Oh, ehm...

E: Mag je over nadenken. Alles wat in je opkomt, maakt niet uit.

I: Als een eh, wel vrolijk iemand. Netjes, ik ben wel netjes, sociaal, en weet niet. Wel gezellig om erbij te hebben denk ik. Hoop ik, haha.

E: Top, oke, en ehm, wat zijn je dagelijkse activiteiten, of in andere woorden, hoe ziet een typische dag voor jou eruit?

I: Oke, ik word wakker, dan doe ik mijn routine thuis, en dan ga ik naar school, en dat is meestal van negen tot vier of vijf, soms zes, dus hele lange schooldagen. En dan heb ik allemaal vakken die met muziek te maken hebben. En dan ga ik naar huis, dan ga ik eten, meestal een kant en klaar maaltijd. En dan doe ik 's avonds iets leuks, of ik doe 's avonds iets aan school, of ik ga niks doen 's avonds, en dan ga ik slapen.

E: En wat is niks doen?

I: Ja, wel meestal gewoon social media. Scrollen. Maar, daar stap ik nu vanaf. Want ik heb tiktok verwijderd.

E: Oh echt, sinds wanneer?

I: Sinds dat ik terug ben uit Thailand. Pas net.

E: Waarom dan?

I: Omdat ik vind dat ik veel te veel scroll, en ik vind het heel zonde van mijn tijd. Want ik kan ook zoveel andere dingen doen, en ik wil heel veel andere dingen doen, maar dat doe ik niet, want ik scroll altijd.

E: Wat zou je graag in plaats daarvan willen doen?

I: Ehm, misschien wel op mijn gitaar oefenen, of een boek lezen. Erbij stilstaan wat ik aan het doen ben, bijvoorbeeld bij eten, dat ik ook eet, in plaats van TikTok kijken tijdens het eten. **Dus ik wil meer Boeddhistisch in het nu leven, haha.** *(Geïnterviewde had me voorafgaand aan het interview verteld dat ze zich tijdens haar reis in Thailand kort verdiept had in het Boeddhistische geloof)*

E: Ja, komt het daar vandaan, van dat je je toen hebt zitten verdiepen daarin?

I: Ja. Ja ik had het eerder ook al wel, maar ja, toen heb ik het Boeddhisme bestudeerd en dat gaat er om dat je heel mindful leeft. En dat doe je gewoon door alles met aandacht te doen. En dat kan je niet doen als je tegelijkertijd aan het Tiktok-scrollen bent.

E: Nee, dan zit je met je hoofd ergens anders. Alright, interessant. En zijn er onderwerpen naast het boeddhisme, of onder andere het Boeddhisme, die jij erg interessant vindt in het algemeen, of onderwerpen waar je heel veel over weet of erg geïnvesteerd in bent, en waarom?

I: Ja, ik ben heel geïnteresseerd in nou ja dus Boeddhisme, en ook wel spiritualiteit, en dan ehm... Zeg maar, meer met de natuur leven, bedoel ik daar mee. Dus ik ben ook heel geïnteresseerd in natuurlijke 'remedies', dus zeg maar of dat werkt. Of natuurlijke medicijnen, of dat werkt. En ik denk dat dat werkt, eigenlijk.

E: Heb je daar zelf wel eens wat mee te maken gehad?

I: Ja, ik denk A-vogel dingen, dus eh...

E: Huh, is dat natuurlijk?

I: Ja, dat is allemaal placebo. A-vogel is die natuurlijke 'spiri-wiri zalf'. en Azaron enzo.

E: Oh? Dat is toch gewoon zalf?

I: Ja, ik dacht dat ook. Maar volgens mij is dat, nou ja dat moet ik dan even opzoeken of dat echt zo is.

E: Er gaat echt een wereld voor me open dan.

I: Ja, maar ja azaron dus, en weet ik veel, boven een bak zweven met eucalyptus en met een doek boven je hoofd.

E: Maar dat is toch ook gewoon voor je neus?

I: Ja klopt, maar dat is niet blijvend. De damp haalt dan dat weg, maar dat is niet blijvend, en dat dacht ik altijd. Op dat moment is het goed, maar opzich heeft het niet heel veel nut omdat het dan maar voor een half uurtje werkt. Dus alleen dat je dat dan even lekker vindt op dat moment. Hoorde ik. En tiger-balm enzo. Dat hoorde ik van iemand, maar ik weet niet of het echt zo is. Maar ik bedoelde eigenlijk met natuurlijke medicijnen ook echt zelfgemaakte dingen, met groente en fruit, bijvoorbeeld ui helpt tegen dit, en dat helpt tegen dat, en dat doe je dan bij elkaar, en dan helpt het tegen dit. Daar geloof ik opzich wel in namelijk, want het is allemaal natuurlijk. Dus het zou wel moeten werken, vind ik. Want ja, zo is de wereld ervoor gemaakt, denk ik. En eh, andere onderwerpen, muziek. Of course. Gitaarspelen, muziektheorie, en ik vind het heel bijzonder, ik ben heel benieuwd naar hoe dat werkt met frequenties van muziek, en wat dat doet met je energieën. Daar heb ik ook, dat is ook een soort spiritualiteit waar ik in geloof, gewoon dat energie alles is. En dat wat je tot je neemt, dat verandert hoe jij je voelt. En dat is met muziek heel erg zo.

E: Ja, oke, mooi. Ehm, en kan jij me een beetje vertellen over de context waar je in opgegroeid bent? Mensen om je heen, opvoeding, etcetera? En hoe heeft het jou gemaakt tot wie je nu bent? Dat vooral.

I: Eh, ik ben opgegroeid op het platteland, in een heel mooi groot huis, met papa en mama bij mij, en mijn oudere zus. Dus heel goed, een steady gezin eigenlijk, en daar ben ik ook heel blij mee, want ja, een goeie jeugd heb ik gehad. En ja dat heeft gemaakt dat ik nu geen trauma's heb, haha. En wel steady in mijn schoenen sta, denk ik? En wat wel zo... Ja. Eigenlijk ben ik altijd geholpen bij alles. Met als ik probleempjes had dan ging ik dat samen met mijn ouders uitzoeken, ofzo.

E: Ja, en wat wilde je zeggen met "wat wel zo is..."?

I: Ja, dat mijn moeder en ik, die hebben een hele bijzondere band, achtig, omdat we heel erg elkaar aanvoelen. Dus we zitten een beetje teveel in elkaars aura. En dat maakt dat ik daar heelveel moeite mee had, met dat ik dingen, nou ja alles aan haar

moest vertellen. En dat is niet gezond. Dus ik ben me nu van haar aan het afzetten, en dat is wel gezond. Maar ja, daarom ben ik nu wel een gezellig, steady persoon denk ik.

E: Dat scheelt, haha! En heb je vrienden, familie, of mensen die dicht bij je staan die dezelfde interesses en meningen ook vooral hebben als jij?

I: Ja, mijn ouders. Eigenlijk heb ik alles overgenomen van mijn ouders, merk ik. Want alle muziek heb ik van mijn vader, en ik heb de muzieksmaak van mijn vader, gemixt met die van mezelf en die van mijn zus, en soms van mijn moeder, maar nou ja. En ik lijk heel erg op mijn moeder, mijn moeder heeft ook OCD, Ik ook. En ik heb heel veel meningen overgenomen van mijn ouders en mijn zus, eigenlijk.

E: En ook wel van andere dingen, mensen, culturen, iets om je heen, in je omgeving denk je?

I: Ehm, nou ik zit in een hele linkse bubbel, dus eigenlijk heb ik heel veel gelijkdenkenden om me heen. Een paar uitzonderingen maar daar neem ik dan niet de mening van over, ofzo. Ja, weet ik eigenlijk niet. Wat voor meningen bedoel je?

E: Mja, misschien niet meningen, iets tussen interesses en meningen in. Inderdaad een bubbel, heb je gelijkgestemden om je heen of voel je je juist onbegrepen in je omgeving zeg maar?

(We worden kort onderbroken door een huisgenootje van de geïnterviewde die aanklopt en binnenkomt om wat aan linde te vragen, een korte begroeting en gesprekje over wat ik hier aan het doen ben en waar mijn scriptie over gaat, verder irrelevant om te noteren)

E: Ehm, wat was ik ook alweer aan het vragen, of wat was jij aan het vertellen?

I: Ehm, ohja, over de bubbels. Ik zit in een hele erge muziekbubbel, omdat ik conservatorium doe, dus het gaat altijd over muziek en muziektheorie, allemaal nerds. Ik zit alleen maar met nerds. Ik zit ook in een autisten-bubbel, iedereen zit op

het spectrum bij domu. Ik ook. Ja. Ik heb OCD maar ja, dat is dan wel mild. Gewoon, ik ben wel normaal, vergeleken met de enorme autisten. Maar je, ik ben dus altijd opgegroeid tussen de autisten, dus dat vind ik wel leuk. Maar ja. Eigenlijk heel veel gelijkgestemden om me heen, eigenlijk altijd al zo geweest, volgens mij.

E: Oke. En gelijkgestemden, hoe zou je dat in een zin omschrijven, die mensen?

I: Nou ik heb me altijd al wel op mijn gemak gevoeld tussen de mensen waar ik mee om ga, omdat ik me altijd wel een beetje identificeer met iedereen om mij heen, zeg maar. Ik ben wel een beetje hetzelfde, en dat is dan vaak een beetje 'linksig'. Dat dus. En interesse in iets hebben, een best wel een dikke interesse in iets, en wel een beetje de alternatieve hoek, denk ik. Maar niet heel erg. Gewoon een beetje alternatief.

E: Nee, oke. En ben je opgegroeid, niet alleen door je ouders, maar ook gewoon door iedereen om je heen, met een vorm van spiritualiteit of religie, en hoe zou je die omschrijven, en hoe zou je zeggen dat dat jou beïnvloed heeft als persoon?

I: Ehm, weet ik eigenlijk niet. Ja, vroeger, de moeder van een beste vriendin van mij, die heeft een vriendin, en die heeft een keer bij mij een soort spirituele heling ofzo gedaan, ik weet het niet echt want ik was heel jong. Ik had heel veel last van mijn OCD, en toen heeft zij dat op een bepaalde manier verholpen door, ik weet niet, mij op bepaalde manieren aan te raken op mijn armen en op mijn rug. En iets, ik weet niet hoe het ging want ik was veel te jong, dus ik weet niet meer wat ze heeft gedaan.

E: Hoe oud was je?

I: Ik denk tien ofzo. Maar dat hielp heel erg, weet ik nog wel. Ik voelde me helemaal fijn daarna.

E: Daarna. En in welke zin, fysiek fijn, of mentaal fijn?

I: Mentaal fijn, omdat ik niet meer angstig was. Ik was echt angstig door de OCD, omdat je dan dingen moet van jezelf, en als je dat dan niet doet dan kan ik niet meer genieten . Want dan denk ik steeds van ‘er is iets echt fout’, zo voelt dat dan.

E: Heb je er denk je toen veel op gelet, of kwam je daar na een tijdje achter dat je je anders voelde?

I: Ik weet het niet. Ik weet niet meer hoe ik toen dacht. Want het is heel lang geleden, maar ik weet nog wel dat ik dacht; oh, het voelt heel fijn. Zeg maar, het voelde wel heel fijn eventjes erna, en daarna ging het ook wel wat slechter weer dus het was even een tijdje. En ze heeft me ook geleerd dat ik een ‘jasje’ om moet doen, elke ochtend, en dat is dan een onzichtbaar jasje dat dan alle negativiteit van mij afweer. En dat ging ik elke ochtend doen. Mama zei dan; ‘doe maar even je jasje aan.’ Maar verder is denk ik mijn moeder wel een beetje spiritueel. Niet echt spiritueel maar misschien een beetje? Dus ik ben opgegroeid dat het wel nuchter, maar niet boers is zeg maar. Dus het is altijd wel een beetje open-minded geweest.

E: Oke, openminded. En zou jij zelf zeggen, zou je jezelf spiritueel noemen, op een bepaalde, ‘to an extent’ zeg maar, ik weet even niet hoe je dat in het Nederlands zegt, of religieus? En als dat zo is, waarom? En hoe zou je dan jouw vorm van spiritualiteit voor jezelf omschrijven?

I: Ik ben niet religieus, maar ik zou mezelf wel een beetje bestempelen als spiritueel, denk ik? Omdat ik wel er veel over nadenk, over, nou wat ik eerder ook zei, over hoe wij ons verhouden tot de natuur enzo, en ja hoe zeg je dat... Alle energieën, zeg maar hoe het allemaal in elkaar zit, en wat dat met ons doet. Dus hoe de natuur in elkaar zit, en hoe wij ons daar tot verhouden. En waarom wij ons voelen hoe wij ons voelen. Ik ben ook benieuwd naar sterren, hoe heet dat, astrologie? Ja, en hoe het kan dat mensen daar in geloven, want de plek waar de sterren staan, hoe dat dan invloed heeft op hoe wij ons voelen, daar ben ik heel benieuwd naar of dat... Want ik geloof wel dat dat echt zo is omdat het allemaal energie is. Dus ik geloof tot een zekere hoogte wel echt in spirituele gedachtes zeg maar, van hoe dat... Vooral met natuur, met gewoon natuurlijke dingen. En ik weet niet zo goed wat allemaal onder spiritualiteit valt.

E: En dan zeg je eigenlijk wel, als ik het goed versta, dat je niet perse precies hoeft te weten hoe het allemaal zit, zoals met astrologie, om het te kunnen geloven?

I: Ja. Want ik voel zeg maar dat er iets, dat er iets is. Qua eh, ja. Ik weet niet hoe het werkt, maar ik weet wel dat we allemaal verbonden zijn. Met de natuur, en met elkaar. Want we zijn allemaal natuur.

E: Ja, oke. Interesting. Ehm, en is deze versie die je nu voor jezelf omschrijft denk je anders dan versies van spiritualiteit die je hebt gezien van anderen?

I: Ja je hebt echt hekserij, ik weet niet of dat ook onder spiritualiteit valt trouwens, ik denk het wel.

E: Ja, het is niet helemaal duidelijk wat er allemaal onder valt.

I: Ja, dat ze echt ehm, ik heb een boekje hier staan met spreuken, en dat je een takje in een beetje water zet, en er een kruid bij doet, dat weet ik niet. Daar geloof ik dan, ik weet niet. Dat doe ik niet, haha. Ik denk ook, waarom zou ik dat doen, eigenlijk. Dus echt die 'potions' maken, zeg maar. Ik snap niet wat dat dan zou helpen met, ik ben wel, ik geloof wel heel erg in spreuken. Dus als je herhaalt, ja gewoon manifesteren eigenlijk. Dat je dat dan helpt bij hoe je denkt, want je zet je gedachten ergens op, en dat maakt dat je mindset verandert. Dat is gewoon een manier om jezelf een richting in te sturen, daar geloof ik wel in. Maar om daar dan een paar kruiden in een bakje bij te doen dat weet ik dan weer niet.

E: Wat zou je dan denk je nodig hebben om dat te kunnen geloven, dat dat werkt?

I: Ehm, dat het echt, ja toch wel, ik weet het niet. Dat het bewijst dat het iets doet, iets met energievelden ofzo. Weet ik veel, dat de geuren elkaar versterken, waardoor je iets doet met je eigen trillingen, zoiets.

E: Dat je dat zelf moet ervaren, of dat je dat van anderen moet horen?

I: Nee ik moet dat dan wel horen, dat hoeft ik niet zelf te ervaren, ik ben wel goedgegelovig, haha. Denk ik. En ook met edelstenen enzo, en ik heb er ook best wel veel, en ik heb gehoord dat die werken door trillingen, omdat stenen trillen. En dat geloof ik wel, en dat kan iets doen met je tot een zeker mate, enzo. Ik weet niet hoeveel dat werkt, maar ja.

E: En heb je dat ervaren, dat dat werkt, misschien?

I: Nou, ik geloof altijd zelf, ik denk dat dat ook misschien heel veel placebo is, maar ik geloof in placebo. Dus ik doe altijd steentjes in mijn BH als ik ga vliegen, of als ik iets spannends ga doen, want dat voelt fijn voor mezelf omdat ik denk oke, nu voelt dat veiliger. Dus dat is een soort van mijn geloof. Maar ik geloof niet dat die steentjes mij geven dat ik niet neerstort, want die steentjes doen daar niks aan. Het is meer mijn gedachte.

E: Dus dat het inspeelt op jouw eigen gevoel?

I: Ja.

E: Oke, aha. Ohja. En is er iets dat jij echt met zekerheid, of ja zekerheid, iets dat jij echt gewoon gelooft? En als je dat niet hebt, waarom niet?

I: Ik denk dat, eigenlijk, heel veel oplossingen te vinden zijn in de natuur. Dus dat heel veel natuurlijk kan, in plaats van chemisch, of gemaakt door ons. Dat wat wij nodig hebben al in de natuur zit. En dat je daar niet veel voor hoeft te doen. Ja, behalve dan met... Ja, het is ook maar een beetje wat je wil. Als je kanker hebt, dan heb je natuurlijk ook gewoon een chemische, dat zou je denken, dan heb je pech. Zo is de natuur, zo is het gewoon. Ik ben er van overtuigd dat natuurlijk leven het beste is.

E: Waarom?

I: Weet ik niet, zo voelt dat. Ik weet niet, dat voelt gewoon zo. Maar ik weet wel dat als ik kanker heb, of iemand om mij heen, dat ik dan denk van oke doe dan maar wel gewoon even een chemische behandeling.

E: De meeste kanker soorten komen vanuit menselijke dingen.

I: Ja, daarom. Er gaat heel veel fout, doordat wij zoveel hebben gecreeerd. En vroeger was de aarde er gewoon. Alles is voor een reden op de aarde gezet. Gewoon om te overleven. Dat denk ik. Dieren hebben allemaal een eigen manier van overleven. Allemaal een eigen sterkte, en mensen zijn niet zo sterk, daarom hebben wij een heel sterk denkvermogen.

E: Wij zijn fysiek niet zo sterk?

I: Nee, wij zijn fysiek helemaal niet sterk. Maar we zijn mentaal heel sterk, en dat is ook een manier om te overleven want dat zie je nu, maar dat maakt ook dat wij de natuur kapotmaken. En dat vind ik jammer. Dus we zijn eigenlijk een beetje te sterk geevolueerd.

E: Ja, dat zou kunnen, ja. Oke, en nou over reiki, wat is reiki volgens jou, en wat voor rol speelt het in je leven?

I: Nou, reiki is een soort heling, meditatief achtig gebeuren dat mensen doen met hun handen, dus door bewegingen te maken met je handen, daar kun je naar kijken, en dat voelt fijn. Dat maakt dat je ontspant, of dat je niet meer angstig bent. Dat helpt, tegen iets. En ja, het speelt niet echt een rol in mijn leven, ik zie het af en toe op tiktok, en dan kijk ik er wel naar want ik vind het wel interessant. En het zijn heel vaak mensen met lange nagels, en dan ziet dat er heel cool uit, het ziet er heel fijn uit. En ik vind dat heel leuk om naar te kijken, dus het is wel ontspannend. Dus dat kan ik wel begrijpen, dat mensen dat heel fijn vinden om naar te kijken. Maar zelf heb ik me er nog niet echt in verdiept ofzo, of het vaak bekeken, ik doe het niet standaard.

E: Nee, oke. Goed, heb je ooit zelf reiki gehad van iemand?

I: Nee, nou ja, nee. Reiki is echt met handen, toch?

E: Ja, handopleggingen.

I: Nee. Mijn hand is wel een keer gelezen, maar dat is iets anders.

E: Ja, dat is weer wat anders helaas. Oke, even door over TikTok, hoe lang ben jij al actief op TikTok?

I: Ik denk al, echt jaren. Volgens mij in groep acht, dus dat is ehm... Ik weet niet wanneer eigenlijk. Negen jaar.

E: Jeetje, bestaat dat al zo lang...

I: Ja eerste klas ongeveer, acht of negen jaar, ja acht jaar, ga ik vanuit. Nee, toch wel echt groep acht. Ja dat is echt heel lang, maar nu heb ik het dus weer verwijderd, ik heb het al wel een paar keer weer verwijderd en weer gedownload, en nu dus weer verwijderd.

E: Oke, en als je het niet verwijderd hebt, hoeveel tijd spendeer jij dan per dag, of per week, op tiktok?

I: Ehm, ik denk een uurtje per dag, want meestal denk ik na een uurtje wel van oke. Ja, tenzij ik echt in een auto zit of heel lang mezelf moest vermaken, dan is het wel langer denk ik.

E: Ook meerdere keren per dan of gewoon een moment?

I: Nee, wel meerdere keren per dag. Kort. Ja op reis heb ik dus best wel veel getikt, omdat als ik dan in bed lig, dan gingen we even chillen, en dan kijk ik tiktok. En dat is dan even kijken... oh het staat er niet meer bij, ik heb het natuurlijk verwijderd dus dan kan je dat niet meer zien. Ik denk op een normale dag een halfuur tot een uur en ik denk op een vakantiedag wel twee uur.

E: Oke, en hoe vaak interact jij, of eh ja, ik weet het woord er niet voor, interact jij met andere mensen, plaats je wel eens comments, stitchen, etcetera?

I: eigenlijk nooit, eigenlijk ben ik een hele passieve kijker. Dus ik scroll, en ik like alleen iets als ik het ook echt leuk vind. Dus heel vaak scroll ik gewoon eindeloos door en like ik iets. En heel veel mensen die ik ken liken ook alle video's, omdat dat een soort automatisme is, maar nee ik vind het alleen leuk als ik het like.

E: Dus je hebt ook nog nooit gehad dat je zeg maar het algoritme wil besturen door dingen vaker te liken ofzo?

I: Ja, dat wel, dat doe ik nu niet meer. Maar dat deed ik een tijdje omdat ik echt een heel stom algoritme had. Dus toen heb ik alleen maar de dingen die ik leuk vond, ook wel de spirituele dingen geliket.

E: Ja, want wat zou je graag willen zien op je ForYouPage?

I: Ehm, niet toxic dingen, dus niet; oh, hoe wordt je 'that girl' in een week? Wat moet je daarvoor doen? En dan zie je allemaal van eet dit, doe dat, en dat vind ik stom. Vond ik altijd heel leuk om naar te kijken, maar sinds ik een beetje, ja misschien ook wel een beetje de spiri-wiri kant op ga, denk ik meer aan eh, het mag allemaal op je eigen tempo.

E: Sinds wanneer is dat eigenlijk?

I: Ik denk sinds mijn reis.

E: Oh ja? Dus kort.

I: Ja, kort. En daarvoor ook al wel een beetje hoor, maar toen was ik wel meer van oke ik wil wel gewoon even weer helemaal resetten, en ik wil weer dit doen, ik wil weer gezond eten, ik wil weer dat, en nu ben ik steeds meer van; alles gebeurt voor een reden en je moet gewoon een beetje lief zijn voor jezelf, alles op je eigen tempo doen, en gewoon ervaren hoe je het ervaart in plaats van het altijd anders moeten. Ik

weet niet, misschien is dat ook wel een soort spiritualiteit, dat je, dat heel bewust in het nu leven. Daar geloof ik in.

E: Ja oke. En eventjes terug naar TikTok, hoe zou je nu de content die jij vaak ziet, wat die je zoal op tiktok, zit je aan bepaalde kanten denk je, bijvoorbeeld Gymtok of Witchtok, of wat dan ook.

I: Eh ja, ik zat een tijdje op Gymtok, maar toen ging ik op reis en toen ging dat ineens weer weg. Toen zat ik op reis-TikTok, haha, dus wat je allemaal kan doen in Thailand. En toen zat ik een beetje op spiri-wiri TikTok, en ik heb ook altijd tussendoor huizen, dat vind ik heel interessant. Rondleidingen door huizen, verbouwingen, dat vond ik altijd al leuk. Dat like ik altijd, dus dan komt dat weer. Maar ja, ehm, ja ik zit wel vaak op een kant. En af en toe is er echt een soort rare reset van TikTok dat ik echt hele rare filmpjes heb. Een hele rare humor, ofzo. Ik zit soms ook een beetje op influencer tiktok, Nederlandse influencers, dus al die mensen die dan meegaan naar Coachella enzo, en dan heb ik dat weer op mijn ForYouPage voor een tijdje. Ik zit wel altijd op een kant. Maar ik zou niet zeggen dat ik op Reiki-TikTok zit, op witchtok ook niet. Ik heb dus veel boeddhisme op gezocht en toen kwamen er veel boeddhistische dingen. En ehm, als laatst kwam ik op 'telefoonloze' tiktok. Dus, hoe kun je leven in het nu?

E: En komt het dan denk je omdat je die vaak heb geliket?

I: Ja, nee omdat ik dat echt opzocht ook. Want ik wou dat zien.

E: Heb je boeddhisme ook via tiktok onderzocht?

I: Ja, niet alleen hoor. Ook via youtube. Eigenlijk youtube en tiktok, dat was het. Niet gelezen. Niet echt, ja meer filmpjes.

E: Ja waar moet je ook een boek vandaan halen in Thailand. Ehm, wat voor soort spirituele content zie jij dan? Heb je voorbeeldjes van wat je hebt gezien?

I: Nou dus Boeddhisme, ehm, heel vaak een monnik die mij uitlegt...

E: Dezelfde steeds?

I: Ja. De monnik, die de social media doet van het Boeddhisme. En die zegt dan, of die stelt dan bepaalde menselijke problemen, en hoe dat komt, en dat dat normaal is, en hoe je ermee om kan gaan, op een boeddhistische manier. En verder af en toe, ja het is niet echt super spiritueel, dus meestal gewoon mensen die zeggen... Oh ja, ik heb ook een tiktok-meid die natuurlijke medicijnen doet, of heel natuurlijk eet, natuurlijke scincare doet met planten en dingen. Zelf zalfjes maakt, dat soort dingen. Die leeft op de meest natuurlijke manier.

E: Zou je ook zeggen dat je interesse daarin misschien daar vandaan komt of heb je dat denk je ergens anders vandaan of heb je dat zelf bedacht?

I: Nee, ik heb dat wel van TikTok, ik heb wel veel interesses van TikTok.

E: Ja, oke. En heb je soms ook het gevoel dat bepaalde video's die je ziet op dat moment bedoeld zijn voor jou, dat ze jou hebben gevonden?

I: Oh ja, af en toe heb ik een tarotlezing, en daar staan dan geen hashtags bij. En dan zeggen ze; zie je dit op deze datum? Dan is deze voor jou. Dan denk ik wel; oke. maar meestal heb ik geen zin om het helemaal uit te kijken, omdat mijn aandachtsboog door tiktok is verpest, maar vaak resoneert dat wel met mij.

E: Wat bedoel je met resoneert?

I: Dat het heel erg overeenkomt met hoe mijn leven op dat moment gaat. Maar dat geldt voor heel veel mensen op dat moment. Dus, of dat nou echt zo is weet ik dus niet, want ze heeft het niet voor mij gemaakt. Ze heeft het gewoon voor TikTok gemaakt, zo'n filmpje. En ook heel vaak zie ik dan iets met; oke, kies deze steen of kies deze steen. En dan kies ik er een en dan zeggen ze zo; heb je deze gekozen? Dan geldt dit voor jou. En dan klopt het ook heel vaak heel erg. Maar of dat nou echt het gevoel geeft dat dat echt voor mij is, nee. Denk het niet.

E: Oke, en waarom niet, in een zin eigenlijk?

I: Omdat, daar geloof ik niet in, omdat het niet voor mij is bedoeld.

E: Oke. En denk jij dat de content die jij ziet vooral in Engels is, of vooral lokaal, zeg maar Nederlands?

I: Vooral Engels.

E: Ja. En over spiritualiteit specifiek, zie je daar ook wel eens Nederlandse content over?

I: Ja soms wel. Bijvoorbeeld zo'n lezing in het Nederlands. Maar meestal wel engels.

E: Ja. Oke, en wat zijn jouw gedachten, en gevoel, over TikTok als een platform, ben je blij met de manier waarop je het gebruikt, en wat brengt het in je leven en zou je er iets aan veranderen?

I: Eh, ja. Ik zou er iets aan veranderen. verwijder het, dat zou ik ook tegen iedereen zeggen, omdat ik het eigenlijk een heel stom platform vind. Want het is super verslavend, en het verpest je hele dopamine regulering. Het zorgt ervoor dat je geen concentratie meer hebt, dat je je niet meer lang op iets kan concentreren, of ergens naar kan kijken. Het is niet goed voor je hersenen. Ook niet omdat je zoveel informatie binnenkrijgt, wat je hersenen denk ik echt moe maakt. En social media maakt heel veel mensen gewoon angstig. Omdat het vergelijkingsmateriaal is waar je niets mee moet vergelijken omdat het allemaal nep is. Dat vind ik heel slecht. En, wat was de vraag ook alweer?

E: Ehm nou, ook wel nog wat het je brengt.

I: Ja, wat het me brengt is wel mijn interesses ook, dat het mijn interesses voedt, zeg maar. Omdat je er veel over ziet. En dan denk je oh, dit is leuk. Maar daar stopt het ook. Dus het brengt me steeds een soort inspiratie vlaag zeg maar, maar ik doe er niks mee. Omdat je toch maar door scrollt, want het is gewoon verslavend. En dat is

jammer, omdat het vaak wel gewoon echt leuke en interessante filmpjes, waardoor je ook inspiratie krijgt, maar je doet niks. Je kijkt er alleen naar.

E: Ja, precies. Ehm, wat denk jij dat andere mensen aantrekt om bijvoorbeeld mee te doen in Reiki, of te kijken naar Reiki-helingen of livestreams, dat soort dingen?

I: Wat ze daar in aantrekt? Waarom ze dat zouden doen? Op Tiktok?

E: Ja, wat ze motiveert.

I: Ehm weet ik niet. Ik denk dat heel veel mensen op tiktok die dat hebben gezien voor het eerst, en toen dachten; oh, dit is fijn. En daardoor dat dan ten eerste meer zien in hun algoritme, of dat ook meer opzoeken omdat het fijn voelt. Dat het wel interessant is, nieuwig. En dat het leuk is om naar te kijken, satisfying.

E: Oke, en voel je soms ook een bepaald soort connectie met mensen die ook naar dit soort content kijken, die het ook zien, bijvoorbeeld mensen in de comments, of bijvoorbeeld bepaalde TikTok-creators die de healings doen?

I: Nee, denk het niet. Daar, nee dat denk ik niet. Zo erg zit ik er niet in. Ik wil liever dat het persoonlijk bij mij gebeurt, dan pas kan ik me connecten met mensen. Op social media kan ik dat niet, want dat voelt nep.

E: Oke. En waarom voelt het nep?

I: Omdat ehm, ik weet het niet. Het voelt helemaal niet persoonlijk, en iedereen kan zeggen; wow, deze voelde ik. En dan geloof ik het gewoon niet. Ik weet niet, ik geloof je niet op tiktok. En dan kan ik me ook niet inleven. En dan kan ik ook niet een connectie voelen.

E: Wat zou je dan zeggen dat je echt nodig hebt om het wel te kunnen geloven op social media? Of kan het uberhaupt niet?

I: Ehh, weet ik niet. Ik denk dat ja, om het te geloven, als ik het zelf voel, als ik het zelfde gevoel krijg als dat ik zou kunnen krijgen van reiki, dan geloof ik dat. Maar ik heb dus geen connectie met andere mensen, alleen voor mezelf. En als ik in het echt zoiets zou doen met andere mensen, dan zou ik wel een connectie voelen denk ik. Social media niet.

E: Oke, cool. En heb jij dan het gevoel dat je deel uitmaakt van een bepaalde community op tiktok, en hoe zou je die omschrijven als dat zo is?

I: Nee, eigenlijk niet. Ik voel me niet, ik heb geen band met mensen op tiktok. Ik heb een band met mijn generatie. Als in, ik weet hoe mijn generatie werkt. En ik weet hoe social media werkt, ik ken de inside jokes, dat is ook wel een soort community natuurlijk. Want dat is gewoon iedereen eigenlijk op tiktok. De norm, hoe het werkt op TikTok. Daar voel ik me mee verwant, dat ik dat snap, en zo. Maar ik heb geen, niet echt een ander soort community. Ik zoek daar ook niet naar. Ik kijk TikTok omdat ik mezelf wil vermaken, en ik ben een passieve scroller.

E: Ja. En wat je dus wel een beetje beschrijft van die band, zou je dat door iets kunnen verklaren, zoals bijvoorbeeld taal?

I: Ja, de TikTok slang. Er zijn echt woorden bedacht door bijvoorbeeld het zien van bepaalde videos. Dat echt onze hele generatie een bepaalde video heeft gezien, en dat is dan super viral gegaan, en nu zegt iedereen dat. En dat zie je dan overal in de comments, en daar moet ik dan altijd wel een beetje om lachen, omdat ik me dan dus wel gewoon één voel van mijn generatie, want ik denk dan dus; haha, ik snap wat jij zegt. En als je dat tegen mijn moeder zegt, dan snapt ze er helemaal geen zak van.

E: Nee. En heb je het zelfde gevoel ook wel eens binnen spirituele tiktok? Want daar heb je ook bepaalde slang. Ken je die slang, en zou je dat kunnen benoemen, en heb je dat ook?

I: Nee, ik denk dat ik niet genoeg op de spiri-wiri tiktok zit daarvoor. Maar ik voel me wel een soort van, ik voel me er altijd wel tot aangetrokken, dus het is wel een soort van, ik vind het leuk als ik die mensen op mijn ForYouPage krijg.

E: Ja, en nog een keer daarover, want je zei net wel het woord ‘resoneert’, dat valt wel onder de ‘spirituele slang’, heb je nog andere woorden denk je die je daarvan zou kunnen bedenken?

I: Eh, weet ik niet, dat snap ik niet helemaal. Ik zit er oppervlakkig in. Maar ik vind het wel heel interessant, waardoor ik wel het leuk vind om te zien allemaal zeg maar.

E: Ja. Oke, en hoe zou jij jouw gevoel omschrijven als je zo’n digitale reiki-video ziet?

I: Ehh, geïnteresseerd, qua gevoel wel een soort hypnose ofzo, dat je een beetje tot rust komt, dat je ontspant. Maar verder, niet nog. Ik heb niet het vaak genoeg gekeken om echt te voelen wat er gebeurt. Ja meestal dacht ik van oh, het voelt wel relaxed. Dus je wordt een beetje een soort van in een relaxte trance gebracht. \

E: Ja. En je gedachten?

I: Die gaan dan meestal zo; ‘oh wat voel ik nu? Werkt dit, is dit echt?’ zo. En dan kun je ook jezelf overtuigen van; ‘ja inderdaad, ik voel dit inderdaad.’ En ik heb ook het gevoel dat het gewoon een beetje je mindset is.

E: Ja. En denk jij dat digitale reiki door mensen anders wordt ervaren dan fysieke reiki?

I: Door mij wel, denk ik. Dus ik denk ook wel dat meerdere mensen dat hebben. Ja, digitaal is niet persoonlijk, en ik denk dat heel veel mensen het fijn vinden omdat je dan in je eigen kamertje, zonder contact met iemand dat tot je kan nemen. Maar ik denk wel dat heel veel mensen ook denken oh ja nee, zo op een schermpje, dat werkt niet hoor, voor mij.

E: Ja. En eh, en zou je zeggen dat jouw engagement met reiki-heling content vanuit spirituele intenties is?

I: Eh, jawel. Denk het wel. Omdat ik er voor open sta, dat dat echt wel iets is, zeg maar. Ik kijk er niet naar terwijl ik denk; ‘haha, wat de f*ck ben jij aan het doen met je handen’, zeg maar. Ik denk er wel bij na van; ‘oh, dit is ook een vorm van spiritualiteit’. Ik kijk er een beetje zo naar, een beetje objectief. Eigenlijk wel van een afstandje van oh dit vind ik wel interessant, dat dit ook een vorm van spiritualiteit is die voor heel veel mensen kan werken. Ik heb dus nog niet op mezelf geprobeerd eigenlijk. Maar dat zou ik wel willen proberen, ofzo.

E: Oke, ik ben elke keer weer kwijt waar ik was. Oke, dit kun je kort beantwoorden. Wat betekent je engagement met deze content in je dagelijks leven voor jou?

I: Niet zoveel. Ik heb eigenlijk geen engagement in het dagelijks leven met reiki.

E: nee, ah. Dat dacht ik al. En denk jij dat het nodig is om te geloven, maar dan in dit geval in digitale reiki specifiek, moet je er in geloven, om het te zien werken?

I: Eh ja, denk het wel. Ja ik denk het wel. Want ik denk dat geloof echt de helft is van het laten werken.

E: En de andere helft?

I: Ehm, is daadwerkelijk het beeld, dat iets met je doet. Gewoon het zien, het zintuigelijk ervaren ervan, dat doet iets met je lichaam. En het geloven is de helft die het laat werken denk ik. Want je kunt er ook naar kijken als willekeurige nuchtere boer, en dan denk je echt ‘wat doe jij’. En die geloven er niet in.

E: Ja. En ben je ooit skeptisch geweest over dit onderwerp?

I: Jawel, ja ik dacht in het begin ook; ‘huh, wat doe jij nou. Maar toen dacht ik, ja ik weet niet, toen keek ik er even naar, want ik sta er altijd wel een soort van voor open, ik ben nooit helemaal van nee dat hoeft ik niet hoor. Dus als ik er een beetje voor open sta dan kijk ik er even naar, en dan denk ik oh ja, dit voelt wel fijn. En dat helpt met het geloven dat het werkt. En om het echt te laten werken op niveau van dat het werkt met dingen weghalen, of veranderen, daar moet je voor geloven denk ik. Ik

denk dat het zien alleen, dus het zintuigelijk ervaren, dat dat al fijn is, maar als je echt een verandering wil maken dan moet je erin geloven denk ik. Maar dat he je eigenlijk met alles, denk ik.

E: Zou heel goed kunnen. En is jouw blik op spiritualiteit, of op reiki-heling in het algemeen, of op de wereld in het algemeen, is die veranderd sinds jij op tiktok engaged met deze content?

I: Eh, ja ik denk dat ik eigenlijk in aanraking ben gekomen met spiritualiteit door tiktok, dus dat heeft wel, ik weet het eigenlijk niet. Wacht nog een keer de vraag?

E: Ja, denk jij dus dat wat jij op tiktok hebt gezien over spiritualiteit en reiki-heling, dat dat jouw blik heeft veranderd erop, en ook op de wereld in het algemeen?

I: Ja, misschien wel, nou ja, weet ik niet. Ik kijk er altijd naar, en dan verwerk ik het op mijn eigen manier, en dat verandert niet perse hoe ik de wereld zie, want dat was al zo, maar het wekt wel interesses op. Of dat ik denk, oh, zo kijken mensen er naar, ik vind het interessant om het te onderzoeken.

E: Ja, dus je neemt het op een bepaalde manier in de leefstijl die je al hebt, neem je het op?

I: Ja klopt.

E: En hoe zou je die manier dan omschrijven, heb je een voorbeeld daarvan?

I: Nou, bijvoorbeeld dat boeddhistisch iets, die boeddhistische dingen die ik zag dat ik dacht oeh, dit ga ik eigenlijk ook doen. Maar ik word geen boeddhist, want ik denk dat ik dat dus niet goed zou kunnen, maar ik vind het een hele mooie manier van leven. Dus wat met mij resoneert, dat voeg ik toe aan mijn leven.

E: Ja, dus dan zou je er je eigen vorm een beetje van willen maken?

I: Ja, ik neem nooit iets helemaal over van iemand van TikTok. Behalve van mijn ouders, haha. Is echt zo. Nou, dat is niet echt zo. Ook niet alles. Nu niet meer, vroeger wel. Nu heb ik dus mijn eigen blik op de wereld, en dat wordt niet zomaar veranderd door een filmpje of door een uitspraak. Maar dat kan wel iets doen met mij.

E: Ja. Oke, en dat was het! Is er nog iets anders dat je denkt dat belangrijk is om nog even te delen, of waar je nog even aan dacht, of iets dat ik nog niet heb?

I: Ja, ik vond het wel grappig om te bedenken dat eigenlijk spiritualiteit voor mij ‘geloven’ is. Geloven in dat dingen werken, en dat dat dan werkt. Want er is geen scientific, eh hoe heet dat? Het is niet bewezen. Alle spiritualiteit is niet bewezen. Spiritualiteit, mensen geloven er niet in, omdat het niet bewezen is, dat dat soort dingen werken. Steentjes, of dat soort dingen. En ik geloof dat, het is eigenlijk een heel vaag iets, gewoon. Maar ik vind het wel heel mooi om te bedenken dat je niet ergens bewijs voor hoeft te hebben. Dat vind ik interessant omdat, ik weet het niet. Ik geloof er wel in dat dingen echt kunnen werken. Zonder dat er bewijs voor is, dat het gewoon zo is. Of dat hoe je je voelt, dat dat...

E: Dat geloof dat je hebt is dus meer een soort gevoel dat je hebt?

I: Ja, dat klopt. Daarom zei ik laatst ook eens, ik heb het gevoel dat vrouwen hier heel erg mee bezig zijn, omdat vrouwen meer ‘intunen’ met hun gevoel. En dat is eigenlijk echt een gevoelskwestie, spiritualiteit. En dat vind ik wel heel mooi.

