

EXCHANGE

Volume 15, Number 3

October 2007

In Memoriam: Richard Mott Gummere, Jr. (1912–2007)

Remembering Buzz¹



Few Barrytowners will be more sorely missed than “Buzz” Gummere, who died late last spring at the age of 94. No one who visited him and his long-time wife Peg in their octagonal lantern house up the slope on Station Hill Road, where they lived for almost 60 years, came away without being won over by this man who lived his life as if it were “a great artistic and intellectual adventure,” as Cindy Kubik put it in her fall 2002 profile published in *AboutTown* (“The Sage of Barrytown,” available online at

<http://www.abouttown.us/dutchess/articles/fall02/sage.shtml>).

Buzz came from a long line of Quaker educators, and was himself a Latin secondary school teacher when he met and married Peg in 1941. He became an early advocate and spokesperson for former Shakespearean actor F. M. Alexander’s method for relieving muscular tension, the Alexander Technique. With dreams of becoming a writer, he took jobs as a grade-school teacher, greengrocer, and door-to-door World Book salesman to make ends meet. In 1950 he settled down as Bard’s Assistant Director of Admissions. Buzz loved the college and the opportunity to listen to students rather than teach them but was hopeless at paperwork. He grew restless, and in 1961 moved the family’s base of operations to New York City, where he eventually become involved in career planning at Columbia University. He loved the city, which he considered the center of the known universe. He also found the time and energy to write a book, *How to Survive Education Before, During and After College*, while living in an apartment with a menagerie of musicians, several teenagers, a cat, and a very large dog. (In the book category, Buzz also wrote

¹Reprinted by kind permission of *AboutTown of Dutchess and Columbia Counties* (www.abouttown.us)

continued on page 4



ATI Vision and Mission

To establish an open means of global communication for people to discuss, apply, research, and experiment with the discoveries of F.M. Alexander.

To foster the use of the F.M. Alexander Technique in social and environmental interrelationships.

To create a vital organization whose structure and means of operation are consistent with the principles of the F.M. Alexander Technique.

Also In This Issue:

From the Chair	2
Beyond Mind and Body, Pt. I	5
Art, Science & the AT	9
Remembering Buzz	12
Information, AT & the Voice	15
Editor’s Note	20
Note to Subscribers	21
2008 Congress Announcement	22
AGM ’07 & ’08 Announcement	23

From the Chair

*Catherine Kettrick
ATI Chair*

“If we face the facts, every honest man and woman on this earth today must admit that each and every one of us is more or less responsible for what is happening at this moment.”¹

Alexander wrote those words in 1941, at the height of World War II. He was talking in particular about the world situation at the time, but I think his words have meaning for us today.

Alexander is asking us to take responsibility for our actions. And yet, how much do we really know about how we decide what to do? Alexander believed that “...a conscious direction of an improving use will bring us for the first time within striking distance of a conscious control of human reaction or behaviour.”²

Was Alexander right?

Researchers today are finding out just how little we know about how we decide what to do, and how unconscious priming strongly influences our behavior.³

John A. Bargh and Lawrence Williams, of Yale University, did a study where they asked college students to read a description of a hypothetical person and judge their personality.⁴ However, on the way to the lab, the subjects encountered a laboratory assistant, who was juggling an armful of papers, books, a clipboard and a hot or cold cup of coffee. The assistant asked the subject to hold the cup of coffee while they rearranged their other things.

And the coffee made all the difference: Subjects who held an iced coffee rated the personality of the hypothetical person as cold, less social and more selfish than the other subjects who held a warm cup of coffee.

continued on next page

EXCHANGE

ExChange is published three times per year by Alexander Technique International (ATI), the purpose of which is to promote and advance the F. Matthias Alexander Technique. *ExChange* is designed to disseminate information regarding the Technique to ATI members and the public.

Except as noted, this publication is copyright © 2007, Alexander Technique International. All Rights Reserved. Any use of any part of this publication without prior written permission of Alexander Technique International is prohibited. Ideas and views expressed in *ExChange* are not necessarily the opinion of *ExChange*, the editor, or Alexander Technique International, its officers, or members. Editorial policy for *ExChange* is determined by the ATI Board of Directors. Subscription, \$35 per year. Ads are \$400 per page, pro-rated for partial pages. Copy deadlines: January 1 (February issue), May 1 (June issue), and September 1 (October issue).

ExChange welcomes corrections, comments, and submissions. For publication, submissions in electronic format (as email or Word file attachment) are preferred. Contact: The Editor, ExChange at ati-exchange@ati-net.com.

Other studies have shown that if there is a faint smell of cleaning liquid in a room, people clean up more thoroughly than if there is not;⁵ that the sight of a briefcase tends to make people more competitive,⁶ and that if people see words like “dependable” and “support” they tend to be more cooperative.⁷

What all this research shows is that our unconscious brain is constantly taking in information about the environment, and providing suggestions about what to do next or how to behave, all without us being consciously aware of that process. We may have a rational conscious goal (fairly evaluate a person’s personality; be polite at the dinner party) but our unconscious guidance systems influence how we react, without our even knowing about it.

What does this mean for conscious control? The research would indicate that we have far less conscious control than we think we do or would like to have. We want to believe that we are fairly evaluating a situation and responding appropriately based on a rational analysis of the facts. But our belief that we are acting fairly and thinking clearly—that “we” are somehow in control and rationally making a conscious decision or forming an opinion—may often be simply wrong.

On the other hand, if we can be aware that our reactions and opinions may have less to do with conscious decision-making and more to do with suggestions from an unconscious guidance system, we may have some hope of understanding that our decisions and opinions are not as “true” as we believe. And if we *are* going to take responsibility for what “is happening at this moment,” we need to be as aware as possible of why we may be reacting as we do, and open to the possibility that our beliefs and opinions may be as untrustworthy as our feelings.

continued on next page

Alexander Technique International

For membership information, please contact the Administrative Secretary, Linda Hein, at the address below or by email at: ati-usa@ati-net.com.

ATI general membership: \$60 per year.
Teaching membership: \$135 per year.
Trainees: \$30 per year. Membership includes a subscription to *ExChange*.
Subscription to *ExChange* alone, \$35 per year. Please send check or money order in US funds to:

Alexander Technique International
1692 Massachusetts Avenue, 3rd Floor
Cambridge, MA 02138 USA

ATI Executive Board

Catherine Kettrick, Chair
Graham Elliott, Assistant Chair
Shawn Copeland, Treasurer
Sarah Barker, Executive Secretary
Tommy Thompson, Corresponding Secretary
Julie Rothschild, Director

Committee Chairs

Debi Adams & Ann Seelye, Communications
Peter Nobes, Membership
Richard Brennan, Certification Coordinating

Antoinette Kranenburg, Professional Development
Marsha Paludan, Nominations
Patricia O’Neill, Ethics
Jamee Culbertson, Vision/Mission
Pat Nicholson, Government Relations
Matt Goodrich & Missy Barnes, AGM Site
Diana Bradley, AGM Agenda Planning
Suzanne Girardot & Jennifer Mizenko, AGM Workshop Planning
Shoko Zama, International
David Mills & Teresa Lee, Bylaws

In Memoriam: Buzz Gummere

continued from page 1

one on the Roman philosopher Seneca and one on the wise men of Colonial America.) After his retirement in the early 1980s, he and Peg moved back to Barrytown full-time, where Peg devoted herself to her art and music teaching, and Buzz explored and promoted the work of British thinker Lancelot Law Whyte, who wrote about “the unitary principle” of physics and biology.

Buzz always said that people should never give up searching for the work that gives them joy. He was a man of grace, intelligence, and humor with an unflagging interest in people. He asked that he be remembered as “a gentleman, a scholar, and a judge of good whiskey.” His last clear word was *marvelous*. ☺



More reminiscences of Buzz start on page 12

From the Chair

continued from previous page

ENDNOTES

¹ Alexander F.M. *The Universal Constant in Living*. 1986, Centerline Press, p. 238.

² Alexander, F.M. *The Use of the Self*. 1984, Centerline Press, p. 82, ftn.

³ Carey, Benedict. *Who's Minding the Mind?* New York Times, July 31, 2007.

⁴ Bargh, J. A. (2007). “The primes of life.” Donald T. Campbell Award address, Society for Personality and Social Psychology annual meetings, Memphis, TN.

⁵ Holland, Rob W., M. Hendrik, & H. Aarts. (2004). “Smells Like Clean Spirit.” *Psychological Science*, 16(9): 689–693.

⁶ Kay, A.C., S. Wheeler, J.A. Bargh, & L. Ross. (2004). “Material Priming: The influence of mundane physical objects on situational construal and competitive behavioral choice.” *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 95:83–96.

⁷ Carey, *op. cit.* ☺

Beyond Mind and Body: The Radical Notion of Psychophysical Unity, Part I

Amy Yeager

ATI Teaching Member, Massachusetts, USA

Work in Process

This is the third in a series of articles based on what I'm calling the "process paradigm"—a way of understanding ourselves and our world in terms of processes (what is happening) instead of entities (what is present). In the last article (June 2007), I explored the implications of this paradigm for our understanding of the distinction between means-whereby and end-gaining. Here I'll be looking at another concept that is central to Alexander Technique theory and practice: psychophysical unity.

"I must admit that when I began my investigation, I, in common with most people, conceived of 'body' and 'mind' as separate parts of the same organism, and consequently believed that human ills, difficulties and shortcomings could be classified as either 'mental' or 'physical' and dealt with on specifically 'mental' or specifically 'physical' lines. My readers of my books will be aware that the technique described in them is based on the opposite conception, namely, that it is impossible to separate 'mental' and 'physical' processes in any form of human activity."

—F.M. Alexander, *The Use of the Self*¹

What is the most important principle that sets the Alexander Technique apart from other approaches to health and well-being? Depending on whom you ask, you'll get a variety of different answers. Some may cite inhibition, while others choose primary control or direction. For me, what stands out most clearly is the concept of psychophysical unity. At first this may seem like the least likely candidate, since many other types of work operate on both physical and psychological levels. These days, terms like *integrative*, *holistic*, and *mind/body* are applied to a wide variety of modalities and teachings. And yet, once we look more closely, there's a tremendous difference between the typical conception of a mind/body approach and true psychophysical unity.

Mind/body approaches tend to treat the mind in terms of what it contains: mental features or states such as beliefs, emotions, thoughts, and intentions². (In this article, I'll refer to all of these as "mental entities.") To embrace psychophysical unity, we need to focus instead on what happens: all the processes involved in thinking, feeling, believing, or intending. At first this may sound like an abstract philosophical distinction. Indeed, it's typically only philosophers who spend time debating this sort of issue. Very few health practitioners lose sleep over the difference between believing and having a belief. However, the way we think about our mental lives has profound implications for the way we work with students. Those two conceptions give

Beyond Mind and Body, Part I

two different sets of explanations for why we feel, move, act, and think the way we do, and for what causes these responses to change. Since our work involves helping others learn to feel, move, act, and think differently, this is very much our concern.

In this multi-part article, I'll explore the differences between an entity-focused view of the mind and a process-focused view. The latter runs contrary to many people's intuitions and conflicts with mainstream perspectives on both traditional and "mind/body" medicine. And yet, I'll argue that it is not only a more useful view; it is also the more accurate one. Here in Part I, I'll begin by analyzing the conventional mind/body perspective, including its inherent lack of unity and its reliance on an entity-based conception of the mind.

The Mind/Body View: A Not-So-Alternative Approach

Over the past few decades, more and more professionals in medicine, education, and related fields have become interested in the interrelations between the body and the mind. For example, there is increasing awareness that we cannot fully understand psychology without studying neuroscience, and that we can't fully understand physical health without considering emotional factors such as stress and depression. This is undoubtedly great progress. Productive dialogues have opened up between practitioners in disparate fields ranging from oncology and endocrinology to yoga, massage, and Buddhist philosophy. In health care settings, mind/body approaches have created many new opportunities for treating disease and improving people's quality of life. However, looking at the interactions between mental and physical phenomena does not bring us closer to seeing them as unified. To the contrary, it actually reinforces their separation. To ask how mind affects body and body affects mind is to assume they are two separate things. We see this even in the term "mind/body," where each word stays on its own side of the slash. (Note the contrast to terms such as *psychophysical*, *psychophysiological*, and *neurophysiological*.)

In most descriptions of mind/body medicine, there's little doubt about which variables belong on either side of the equation. Consider a few statements from leading sources, listed in Table 1 (*see opposite*).

In each one of these cases, the main message is that some aspects of the mind can influence and/or be influenced by some aspects of the body.³ The first thing to notice here is how mind and body are treated as separate, with one realm affecting the other. The second thing to notice is the language being

used with regard to the mind: each source uses nouns such as *thoughts, feelings, traits, and factors*, as opposed to verbs such as *thinking or feeling*. The underlying assumption is that when the mind affects the body, we can pinpoint one or more of these mental entities as the root cause. Likewise, when the body affects the mind, it does so by changing mental entities—causing or shaping individual thoughts, feelings, and the like.

This type of thinking about causes and effects is entirely consistent with the way we commonly talk about our minds and bodies influencing one another. Some particular causal relationships may surprise us; for instance, we may not expect a connection between “emotional traits” and susceptibility to infection. But it’s commonplace to hear about things in our minds affecting, and being affected by, our bodily responses. We talk about fluctuations in hormones or neurotransmitters causing certain emotions, and thoughts and feelings causing physical effects such as the mouth watering, breath deepening, palms sweating, heart pounding, and muscles tensing or releasing.

What are mental entities?

- Discrete realities that endure over some period of time
- Mental states, objects, or characteristics

Examples: beliefs, desires, ideas, thoughts, intentions, concepts, representations, delusions, phobias, emotions, personality traits

continued on next page

Table 1. The separation of mental and physical life in mind/body discussions

<p>"There is considerable evidence that emotional traits, both negative and positive, influence people's susceptibility to infection."⁴</p>	<p>MIND (emotional traits) affects BODY (susceptibility to infection)</p>
<p>"Over the past 20 years, mind-body medicine has provided considerable evidence that psychological factors can play a substantive role in the development and progression of coronary artery disease."⁵</p>	<p>MIND (psychological factors) affects BODY (coronary artery disease)</p>
<p>"[P]hysical health is influenced by thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, and conversely, thoughts, feelings, and behaviors can be influenced by physical symptoms."⁶</p>	<p>MIND (thoughts, feelings) affects and is affected by BODY (physical health/symptoms)</p>
<p>"Thoughts affect our bodies and, conversely, changes in the body can shape our thoughts, feelings, and even body chemistry."⁷</p>	<p>MIND (thoughts, feelings) affects and is affected by BODY (physical health/symptoms)</p>

Beyond Mind and Body, Part I

continued from previous page

Since it's common knowledge (or at least commonly assumed) that mental states or objects interact with our bodies, we might wonder why feelings, thoughts, and other entities haven't played a larger role in the medical world. Why are mind/body practices still considered to be alternative or complementary to traditional medicine, rather than fully mainstream? One important reason is the difficulty in directly pinpointing mental entities. There's no precise, scientific way to measure a thought or belief or emotion. We must always rely to some degree on people's self-reports, what they say they think or believe or feel. This issue underlies the general perception of psychology as a "soft science," as opposed to fields such as biology or chemistry where more direct, objective measurements can be made and replicated. Self-reports seem "soft," and insubstantial in comparison to physical measures such as heart rate, cholesterol levels, or the results of x-rays or MRIs.

Could this difficulty someday be overcome? With advances in neuroscience, we're learning more and more about how the brain actually works. We could imagine that researchers might eventually locate discrete things or states (particular groups of neurons or patterns of brain activation) that correspond to the entity words we currently use. This would provide a firmer foundation for more scientific study of mental entities within mind/body frameworks. (For instance, researchers could verify that a person was having a specific thought by seeing which areas of the cerebral cortex lit up on a brain scan; they could then look for correlations between that thought and specific physiological changes.)

However, there is another possibility, which I'll argue here: that no such entities actually exist. Scientists haven't located them yet because there is simply nothing to find. This is not to say that we do not have conscious experiences, that we do not think or feel or believe, merely that those experiences can only be adequately understood as processes—unified, psychophysical⁸ processes.⁹

To reach this conclusion, we don't need any specialized knowledge or scientific research, just a change in perspective. The first step, which I hope readers have taken by this point in the article, is recognizing that an entity-focused paradigm is just one approach to understanding the mind. Like any paradigm, it takes certain assumptions for granted, and does not necessarily provide an objective view of reality.

In Part II of this article, I'll take an in-depth look at the assumptions underlying an entity-based view, as well as the differing assumptions underlying the process paradigm. I'll also illustrate how these two contrasting sets of assumptions lead to different strategies for helping others to change the way they think, act, and experience themselves and their world. Shifting to a process view requires a radical change in perspective, but as we'll see, it enables us to fully appreciate mental life without divorcing it from the physical body.

ENDNOTES

¹ Alexander, F.M. (1918). *Man's Supreme Inheritance*. Reprinted in *The Books of F. Matthias Alexander* (1997). New York, NY: IRDEAT, p. 111.

² I'm not arguing that all modalities currently considered "mind/body," such as meditation or yoga, are inherently focused on entities. In their cultures of origin, the governing perspective may in fact be thoroughly process-based. However, discussions of mind/body interactions in this culture tend to treat the mind in entity terms.

³ The mention of behavior and body chemistry, which are grouped along with mental factors, complicates the picture a bit. Behavior presents a categorization challenge for mind/body approaches, getting linked with mental life at some times and with physical life at others. I'm not sure what to make of the bizarre assertion that "changes in the body can shape...our body

continued on opposite page

Art and Science When Working with the Alexander Technique

Yehezkel Ein-Shay
ATI Teaching Member, Israel

Use of the Self

A student arrives for an Alexander Technique lesson, bringing with him the sum total of his Body Mind behavior. These are the totality of his beliefs, impulses, feelings, and habits, in addition to the defects and disruptions that burden his life, causing pains and disease. These become prominent and stressed during strenuous activities, such as lifting heavy objects, ascending stairs or rising from a chair. This is the student's Use of the Self, during his initial state.

The Body

When working with the Alexander Technique, the Body and Mind are addressed simultaneously. The body is a mass, a form of material, influenced, in the core of its balance, by gravity. The body has accurate measures of weight, length, width, volume, pressure, and pace, therefore constituting a scientific unit. Working with the Alexander Technique reflects, within the body, the degrees of accuracy of the instructions, directions, and opposition (head goes forward and up, opposing the back, which is left behind), expressing, in my opinion, the scientific aspect of working with the Alexander Technique.

continued on next page

Beyond Mind and Body, Part I

continued from previous page

chemistry"—what would it mean if they couldn't?! This statement seems to illustrate a different sort of separation, among different types of "body" functions (for example, physiological vs. musculoskeletal functions). These finer distinctions are worth exploring but are beyond the scope of this article.

⁴ *Mind-Body Medicine: An Overview*. National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, National Institutes of Health. (nccam.nih.gov/health/backgrounds/mindbody.htm)

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ "What is Mind/Body Medicine?" Benson-Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine. (www.mbmi.org/basics/whatis.asp)

⁷ "Physical Activity." Benson-Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine. (www.mbmi.org/basics/whatis_pactivity.asp)

⁸ I will use the term *psychophysical* in this article for consistency with the phrase *psychophysical unity*. In this context, I'll consider it synonymous to the term *psychophysiological*.

⁹ It is no coincidence that much, if not most, productive "mind/body" research has involved breathing, which is very clearly a process and not a thing. However, within a mind/body framework, breathing is often discussed as part of a causal sequence that includes mental entities: changing breathing affects a mental state (stress, anxiety) or mental objects (thoughts), which then affect physical measures (blood pressure, hormone levels, etc.). ☺

Art and Science

continued from previous page

The Mind

The word ‘mind,’ in the English language, has several enlightening meanings, relating to the placement of the hand by the teacher. The word ‘mind’ means memory, brain, head, intelligence, spirit, concentration, will, opinion, and intent. The mind, utilizing the senses, creates stimuli, to which the body responds, in its actions to obtain its goals. The mind makes use of the internal means, domesticated within a person, during the course his life on all its events. Usually, these means—the motion—are accompanied by contractions and rigidity, in addition to beliefs and habits, as mentioned at the start of this article, forming the totality of his Body Mind behaviors—the Use of the Self.

The Ultimate Goal of Learning the Alexander Technique

The ultimate goal is to change the response to stimuli in the Body Mind actions, i.e., in the Use of the Self. This therefore means changing the response to stimuli in the actions in the Use of the Self.

The response shall not be a result of impulses, memories, habits, and emotions, but rather a response that inhibits impulses; a response that is able to stop the automat within us; a response that allows for serenity, peace, attentiveness, awareness, and consciousness; a response that is a result of consideration, allowing for the body to exercise its free will, while maintaining the five principles of the Alexander Technique:

1. Recognition of the force of habit,
2. Inhibition and non doing,
3. Recognition of the fault of sensory awareness,
4. Sending directions,
5. Primary control—one after the other and all of them together.

In this manner, the teacher, if able to produce within herself the above principles when making contact with the student, passes on to him this unique experience of freedom and safety, of being here and now, of being convinced and releasing his attachments and contractions, allowing him to exit into a new state of being.

This is the state of being Out of Balance which is a known term, commonly used in the Technique, everywhere and in every style. This denotes the first practical step of the lesson.

The balance, which exists in every form of matter that comes into contact with gravity, pertains to weight, to the body.

The ultimate balance is the repeated exit, during the work, from the initial balance to the state of Out of Balance, which is an improved state, with more freedom and flow, in comparison to the initial Balance, while aspiring to reach a state of Equilibrium—a balanced state of being, which is symmetric and of mental stability [mentally stable]. Balance, for example, is maintained even by a person who uses crutches or has any other form of physical disability. Such a person is balanced in an asymmetric or “problematic” manner, however; in a state of Equilibrium, the Body [and] Mind of this person are equal.

Where Is the Art?

Work with the Alexander Technique is an idea concerning a very practical matter. It is not an intellectual idea about an intellectual idea, but rather it is an idea on a very practical issue that when applied correctly, requires of those employing it, unique and accurate qualities and abilities.

F. M. Alexander, in his ingenious and continuing investigations, said ‘Let.’ He distinguished between doing and letting.

‘Let,’ in English, means to allow, give, enable, leave, release, free. In the course of my experience, during continuing striving to apply these qualities, I have encountered resignations and discoveries. The more I had dared to resign myself, the more I was bestowed with replies and answers. The ‘Let’ teaches how to create an opening for creativity and inspiration. It wishes to move aside belligerence, force, insistence, preaching, and promise. This indeed is a Body Mind junction which, when tapped into by the teacher, allows her to continually give and provide the student with a **sensible/insightful/sensory/sensual** experience, encouraging him to meet, within the depth of his being, that same place where awareness rises to become consciousness, where he will learn the need and the means by which to apply the Use of the Self.

This is the art, this is the work requiring mastery, as described by Mr. Patrick Macdonald in his book *The Alexander Technique As I See It*, in the chapter on learning the Technique, from the middle paragraph of page 65 to the first paragraph of page 66.

He writes that the muscular movement (MM), meaning the motion resulting from the muscles, must be kept to a minimum, and that the skill should be that of a master, a real art.

The wonderful Hebrew language displays the rise in the level of skill from artist (aman) to master (uman) by changing only a single vowel without even a change in utterance.

More on Languages

In Hebrew, the words for ear (ozen) and balance (izun), originate from the same root. The ear contains the balancing system of the body, in addition to the sense of hearing. This is the meeting of body, mind, and sense in a single physical organ and in a single phonetic sound.

In Japanese:

The word for neck is Kubi.

continued on next page

Remembering Buzz

Richard Mott Gummere, Jr. — September 23rd, 1912–May 13th, 2007

At home, family and friends near, of natural causes.
 Erudite, graceful, handsome, patient with all, quick to laugh, from a long line of Quakers.
 Marx brothers, music, words, whiskey, George Washington, ancient Rome.
 A walking advertisement for the Alexander Technique.
 Devoted to a beautiful wife for 66 years, loving father of four, mentor to many.
 We are grateful for his life and his love.
 (*From Burnett & White Funeral Home's website*)

From Jeremy Chance:

I am writing to let you know that Richard “Buzz” M. Gummere Jr. passed away between 8-8.30am on the morning of Sunday May 13th, 2007.

He died of congestive heart failure, but he was 94 and lived a full life. He is survived by his wife Peggy, daughter Christine, son Elisha and other family members.

He was one of the few remaining teachers that trained with F.M. Alexander. Now I think only Elizabeth Walker & Dilys Carrington (who started her training with F.M.) remain of that elite club?

I was hoping to visit Buzz in New York next week, thinking I must catch up before he passes on. I missed by a week.

continued on next page

Art and Science

continued from previous page

The wrist is Te Kubi—the neck of the hand x 2.

The ankle is Ashi Kubi—the neck of the leg x 2.

This means that the human body has five necks. What would you think of simultaneously sending directions to five necks?

The Japanese language has a fascinating word which I have yet to find any equivalent to in any other language. The word is Fushigi, meaning mystery, wonder, peculiarity, and miracle.

Finally, the above has been written pertaining to a practical workshop on the subject of Art and Science When Working with the Alexander Technique, which was supposed to take place a recent conference in Shfayim, Israel. Since the workshop had not taken place, I was asked by the organizers of the conference, Atar Eshel and Eti Sahar to put something into writing. This has been an interesting challenge, and for this I thank you both, Atar and Eti. ☺

From Belinda Mello:

I feel I must join in with the spontaneous internet memorial to Buzz.

He was an essential part of my “post-graduate” Alexander Education.

I was lucky enough to teach a weekly class at the New York Open Center with Peg Gummere, Jennifer Kellow and Bill Walsh. Buzz would meet us after class for dinner and long discussions at a nearby Italian restaurant.

He was so clever about teasing us, entertaining us with tales of F.M. and A.R., and leading us toward opening our minds to what Alexander had to offer us. This was his way of critiquing our teaching without seeming to—the sly fox!

Many of us remember how he loved to speak, write, and lecture. He was a true teacher. My children loved visiting the fascinating house in Barrytown and the clever older couple who lived there. (I believe Buzz and Peg gave my kids a copy of “Rascal.”)

I hope I had thanked them, although you never can thank your teachers enough because you keep discovering how much they offered you as the years go by.

My love goes out to Peg and the Gummere family.

From George Pryor:

I met Buzz and Peggy at the first AGM I ever attended. They were both so accepting and cordial to me, a newcomer. I'll always remember that.

From Eric Binnie:

Because I was on Sabbatical from college and spending time in Philadelphia, even though the course was already part-time by then, I would often meet with Buzz and Peg at a very good restaurant, nothing planned just that we all enjoyed a good dinner. They were always kind to me because I am Scottish and Peg remembered having been torpedoed during WWII and rescued by Scottish fishermen, I think, and living in Scotland for a while until she and her family could be taken to safety in Canada (my memory of the details may be off).

Buzz was always very generous with information and even with research he had done on his own, such as the work he had done on the speed of mental adjustment to “The Pause” [Inhibition, as he had been taught it by F.M.]. We had some very pleasant dinners together, and I believe that when we all graduated, he gave the “Commencement” speech, though it is also possible that this was the year before or after, since I was at all three of them.

continued on next page

Remembering Buzz

continued from previous page

From Catherine Kettrick:

I first met Buzz Gummere in June 1976. He and his wife, Peg, came to Lincoln, Nebraska, that summer to attend Marj Barstow's annual summer Alexander Technique intensive workshop.

That year was the first year I kept the books for Marj. I collected money from students for workshop tuition and for lodging. (Marj rented a fraternity house for us all to stay in—and that is another story!)

One day after class, Buzz came into my little office to pay the tuition for himself and Peg. He sat down, took out his checkbook—and then started talking about the universal constant in living, and how our use of our selves is a universal constant for good or ill throughout our lives. He talked for about ten minutes....and I sat there and nodded and smiled and thought to myself: "Who *is* this man?"

Well, during that summer and in later years I found out who that man was. Buzz to me was the epitome of the gracious gentleman. He was witty, erudite and always willing to help. He generously offered his time when I was preparing an article for *Direction* on the future of the Alexander Technique. I interviewed him for that article at the AGM at Sevenoaks, Virginia—perhaps some of you remember how we sat around Buzz in the basement room while he talked for over an hour about the Technique. I remember that he and Peg decided at the last minute to attend the 1994 Alexander Technique Congress in Sydney, Australia. He and Peg were bright lights at that gathering, and I remember sitting in lobby of the dorm where he and Peg were staying, wrapped up in a blanket—because summer in Australia indoors is very cold—and listening as a filmmaker interviewed Buzz about his life and his study of the Technique. I remember how excited he and Peg were about visiting Alexander's birthplace, and watching the play about Alexander's life. And I remember the Fireside Chat he and Elisabeth Walker gave for us at one of our Ireland AGMs.

Buzz to me was the epitome of the gracious gentleman. He was witty, erudite and always willing to help.

Buzz trained to be a teacher, but says he never taught the Technique. Well, perhaps he never put his hands on anyone, but he surely taught the Technique to all of us who were fortunate enough to know him.

He will be greatly missed. ☹️

Reaching into the Black Box: Uses of Information in Teaching AT & Voice

Andrea Matthews

ATI Teaching Member, Massachusetts, USA

In applying the Alexander Technique to the study and use of the voice as a reflex-facilitated mechanism (as with any activity), I have recourse to a large body of information. Very little (if any) of that information is intended for the student to “do something” with, at least in the way we often seem to think we ought to use information. In a way, it is more for the information to do something with *you*. We can look at the information an Alexander teacher imparts to a student as falling into two (very broad) functional categories.

To put my views in context: my experience with the voice is as a professional operatic and concert singer for over 20 years (one who considers her voice and career saved by the Alexander Technique), an ATI-certified Alexander teacher since 1999, and a voice teacher working with singers and occasionally with actors. In the latter capacity, I’ve been a member of the faculty at Wellesley College since 2001. My pedagogical understanding of the voice has grown out of my own training, singing, and teaching; the writings of Cornelius Reid; observation of the work of colleagues; and information from the Technique, as well as Body Mapping (to which I’ve had a good deal of exposure over the years, though no formal training with Andover Educators or anatomists per se).

1. Information for “Show,” Not for “Blow”

This kind of information is aimed at preparing the student’s mind to allow, accept, and eventually understand the novel experiences she will have in applying the Technique in life and in particular to singing. The student should not get the idea that she needs to “do” anything about this information, except allow herself to be persuaded to explore being and moving in a new way, under the guidance of her teacher and then of her own growing awareness. This information clarifies how things actually work, which is often quite differently from how the student and population at large tend to assume they work. It merely describes how things would work were she not interfering and efforting. If things naturally happen in a certain way, there is no need to *make* them happen that way; in fact, we have to *make* them happen any other way, which is what our interfering, efforting habits are all about. As I tell my students, “Reality asserts itself. It doesn’t need your help.”

On the other hand, the student is well advised to spend time considering and physically exploring the ramifications of this information for how she “uses” herself; in other words, what does the information *mean* to and for her? For example, if you learn that your arm structure really originates at the joints of the clavicle with the sternum and not at your “shoulder,” how does this change how your arm moves? Rather than now *doing something* to make your arm move from the sternoclavicular joint (since it would be doing that anyway, if you weren’t acting on the basis of a different, incorrect assumption), you use the new information to *interrupt* your familiar assumption (and the old movement pattern it leads to), so that the underlying reality is simply manifested in a new movement pattern. Your behavior changes to reflect your new understanding of reality. You didn’t *do* anything different, but your arm will move in a new, easier way, more in line with the way you’re actually built.

Examples of this sort of information include “Body Mapping” and other clarifications of the actual structure and function of the bodymind. The ultimate intent of such information is preventive, not prescriptive in nature: In beginning to change a student’s idea of reality, the teacher persuades her to pause and allow (in other words, “inhibit and direct”), which interrupts her old pattern of movement. Movement (and all behavior is movement) will always

Reaching into the Black Box

reflect a student's "reality," and you can't fundamentally change the former without changing the latter.

It might also be argued that certain experiences generated by a teacher's use of hands-on work are also purely informational in intention. If a teacher takes a student "up" (especially a new student, or someone who has difficulty "allowing" directions to work on her), it may just be intended to show "there's a 'there' there"—a possibility of being organized in a way the student never imagined. The student is not to *do* anything immediately or directly to recreate that experience, but simply to notice it, ponder it, be intrigued by it, and to enjoy it. It is metaphorically just the view from the mountaintop.

In short, this sort of information is preventive, persuasive, and/or explanatory—not prescriptive.

2. Information to Engage, Not Control

Alongside the factual, preventive, and persuasive information described above, an Alexander teacher imparts information of a very different order. This information often seems particularly elusive to students, and it may be so in part because the distinction between the types of information, and what the student is to do with each, is not made crystal clear. (To be fair to teachers, this seems to be a clarification that needs to be made over and over again, because this is not the standard use of information in our culture.) Another reason is that while the two types of information could in theory be given sequentially in a course of lessons rather than simultaneously, in practice no student would stick around long enough to see where this is all leading.

It is often said the control imparted by the Technique over movement is indirect. "Reflex-facilitated movement" (as Frank Pierce Jones termed what the Alexander Technique is trying to elicit and work with) is by its nature efficient and pleasurable, and thus the most desirable manner of use. Reflexes cannot be controlled, but only elicited by indirect means. We are attempting to trigger and harness reflexes to do our work for us, and not do the work directly by conscious manipulation and "control." As teachers, we engage the student to engage her reflexes—a very indirect approach indeed. As such we can't say, move this muscle, or raise your arm in such and such a way. Those details must be worked out by the system itself. They are far too complex in terms of muscles, reflexes, balances, and forces for the student to organize consciously to any degree of efficiency (let alone the teacher, who has no direct input).

Information of this type ranges from what F.M. Alexander called “evolutions,” such as Constructive Rest, whispered ah, and “sit-to-stand”; to the “directions” and hands-on facilitation of the student’s directing by the teacher; to the many and varied metaphors and images used by each teacher to engage the kinesthetic imagination of the student, and thus indirectly to trigger reflex responses to organize the whole person in movement. While the *principles* on which these indirect means are based are truly the core of the work, these kinds of *tools* are often what students think of when they think of the Technique. To the teacher, they are only the finger pointing at the moon—the student will have to assimilate her experiences with this sort of information for the needed shift in her reality to really take hold, and for her old, imbalanced, efforting patterns of movement to drop away.

This type of information is intended to help the teacher, and then the student, *indirectly* engage the student’s psycho-physical resources (which include reflexes, attention, energy, direction, and structure) as a means of gaining the intended result in activity, at the least cost in effort. It is also intended to generate sufficient experience in a new way of working and moving to change the student’s reality, and thus her manner of use generally. It also is not intended as something to “do” directly, but as a means of evoking integrated, holistic movement and giving the student the opportunity to explore and acclimate to a new and improved manner of use.

Inside the Black Box

In my personal experience, the use of the voice is one of the most reflex-facilitated of human activities, and at the same time one into which we tend to bring the most conscious and unconscious interference, for a variety of reasons.

By way of example, one only has to look at the average person who may have done some choral singing, or even voice lessons, to see how “training” is sometimes less than helpful. If you ask the person to speak, they may do that reasonably easily and smoothly, at least to the unskilled eye. But if you then ask them to sing, they start not from the relative ease of their everyday speaking, but launch into a rapid sequence of preparatory movements (without which they would declare themselves “unready” to sing) that actually interferes with the easy production of sound when it finally emerges.

There is probably nothing more personal than the voice (and the process of “getting ready” to use it, which often includes generating the very *feeling* of thinking). Thus there may be no greater challenge in Alexander work than the voice—and nothing quite as fascinating, either.

How Is the Voice Reflex-Facilitated?

How the voice works is a topic of constant discussion and some disagreement, and a whole book wouldn’t address all views, let alone a brief article such as this. So I will simply put forward my views, and readers may evaluate them in light of their own understanding and experience.

To put it in extremely abbreviated lay terms, the voice is produced when a message incorporating a pitch/vowel/intensity concept is transmitted to a properly suspended vocal mechanism, accompanied by sufficient energy to create a soundwave at the desired volume. (The way one elicits a knee-jerk reflex can loosely serve as an analogy.) The vocal mechanism is often thought of as the vocal cords, suspended and tuned, within the larynx, but functionally speaking

Reaching into the Black Box

it is more useful to include the spine, ribs, diaphragm, and muscular suspensions of the larynx from the skull, tongue, spine, sternum, clavicle, and scapulae. These in turn are dependent on connections everywhere else in the body, and not least on the quality of one's attention, intention, and overall energy.

Thus is really useless to address singing without addressing the whole psychophysical person, as trendy as that might sound. Imagine a pole-vaulter who tried to execute a jump without engaging her legs and with her mind on an upcoming date. Ridiculous, of course—but this is what countless young singers in their practice studios are trying to do as they run through their scales and roulades. On the other hand, one's attention can be too focused on intricacies of vocal production better left to reflex processes. In working with singers, the old joke about the centipede who was discombobulated by the question of how he gets all those legs to work together often comes to mind.

How and Why Do We Create Interference in Activity?

There are almost as many ways and reasons for interference as there are singers, but there tend to be certain categories, which include incorrect conceptions, performance anxiety, and, not least, moderate success despite imperfections in production. (This last might seem surprising at first, but as we teachers know, it's not that efforting doesn't work that is the problem—it's that it works to some degree, despite the high cost.)

As we find with many movement patterns, interference can be introduced when one simply has an incorrect idea of the structure and/or function of the bodymind. This incorrect concept can involve local and/or overall structure and function; and in truth, an incorrect idea of the structure of the arm (just as an example) rarely occurs without an incorrect idea of the operation of the whole person.

Incorrect and incomplete use in an activity (think of the polevaulter I mentioned above) necessitates compensatory tensions that themselves become equated in the student's mind with that activity. The fact that one can actually get some sort of result from this manner of use is actually reinforcing of the manner of use. In other words, partial success is worse than outright failure (which would make us at least question our approach). The most noticeable part of a partially successful approach is the sense of effort (and after all, we're encouraged to work hard!), and that will be what gets increasingly emphasized, particularly since the more effort one makes, the more effort one *has* to make going forward! Despite the fact that we all intuitively recognize ease as a hallmark of expertise (in others, at least), we assume that continually working harder will eventually result in effortless mastery. We confuse our concentration and effort with the diligence and focus needed to attain that mastery. But what we practice is what we will perform—if we practice effortfully, we will perform effortfully.

Confusing the vocal “instrument” itself with what we want to “play” on it can also lead to poor use and interference. Unlike most instrumentalists, the singer can neither see nor touch her instrument. It is not constructed and placed in front of her, but is reconstituted to a great extent with every breath and every thought of singing. Every emotional gust or dip in energy affects its reliability, and if the singer becomes insecure about what will come out of her mouth, she will tend to “help” and “support” (read: contract, brace, and/or push) more and more, rather than sort out how the instrument is actually stabilized by suspension and expansion. The movement into a startle pattern (contraction inward) is almost irresistible, but leads to further collapse and compensatory bracing of the vocal instrument—which, if the singer then manages to succeed in singing to any degree, becomes incorporated into her concept of what she needs to do to sing. This pattern continues to intensify until an artistic or physical breakdown ensues.

How the Technique Helps

For those Alexander teachers who are not singers themselves, a couple of ideas can be helpful to orient your work with singers.

According to Cornelius Reid, there is only one true “register shift” where the “head” and “chest” mechanisms trade off, which occurs around middle C for all singers, male or female. Other vocal pedagogues disagree with this, but my personal experience confirms his assertion. More importantly, he points out that when a voice that is properly guided conceptually (in other words, when the “pitch/vowel/intensity” concept is held firmly in mind), and the vocal mechanism is appropriately poised and energized to match that concept, that shift (also known as the “break” or “passaggio”) and any other apparent shifts functionally disappear from the singer’s awareness, and are undetectable to listeners as well.

Once one realizes that the vowel sound as such *is* the voice, and thus the waveform on which the words will be carried to the listeners’ ears, the situation becomes much simpler to grasp. Thus, with regard to the “concept” mentioned above, it is important to bear in mind that coordination in phonation depends on having something to *say*—in other words, the vowel must have meaning, and not just exist as a “noise.” (This is true also of the text, which must register in the singer’s mind as meaningful words, not a collection of pretty phonemes!) This is a major (if not *the* major) factor in the natural coordination of speaking and singing that often is overlooked by singers, and even by teachers, which leads to a great deal of compensatory effort in giving the “impression” of meaning. This is about as effective as faking a smile, although many listeners have learned to allow themselves to be fooled by it.

With my own students who struggle with efforting, I often compare the vocal mechanism to an automatic transmission car, and point out that they seem to be trying to upshift and downshift manually. Turning the voice into a manual transmission vehicle attempts to compensate for singing with inadequate poise of the mechanism, too much or too little energy, and a distorted or insufficiently clear and meaningful pitch/vowel/intensity concept, and quickly becomes a habit.

This understanding of the singer’s situation translates, as you may already see, very well into the Alexander approach to reflex-facilitated movement, which should make any Alexander teacher reasonably confident—and immune to the wails of students who desperately claim that vocal technique demands “placing” their voice somewhere up their nose, or “supporting” the breath with some gastric contraction, or frowning their brow with

Reaching into the Black Box

“concentration”! The singer must maintain a very clear intention, overall physical poise and availability, and supply sufficient (but not excessive) energy to match that the demands of that intention, throughout the process—then the result is guaranteed, just as it is in any activity we encounter in AT lessons. The task is simple; it is sticking to it that is challenging. If a student is able not to act on any other (superfluous) impulses, a pleasing and easy sound usually emerges in one or two tries at a note or vocal pattern. Of course, that is The Big If!

All the same issues of self-identification with a preparatory set or pattern of interference arise as in any lessons, and if anything, are magnified by the intimately personal nature of acts involving communication and performance. Thus, all of the information I discussed above is simply offered as a preventive or indirect aid to students in the heroic acts of inhibition and direction in activity.

This is hardly an exhaustive explanation of the application of the Technique in the teaching of singers, but just a few thoughts in the direction of clarifying the issues. I hope you'll find them helpful. ☺



Editor's (Valedictory) Note

After seven years or so as the Editor of the ExChange, I'll be stepping down after this issue. It seems an appropriate “sabbatical” time in which to redirect my energies, and I feel pleased to be able to hand on the journal as a flourishing concern, as it was entrusted to me by Dan Arsenault, and by Pat Nicholson to him before that. (If there were editors before that, forgive me for leaving you out—that information is shrouded in the mists of time, at least to me!)

This announcement will also be given at the upcoming AGM, and I hope one of you will come forward soon to be the new Editor, either from among the attendees there or readers at home. The next issue is scheduled to come out around February 1, 2008, which should be ample time to get settled with production and editing procedures. After all, you'll have the next installment of Amy Yeager's series, the AGM Keynote Speech, and From the (New) Chair as the seed kernels of the issue!

If you would like more information about the work involved, feel free to email me at: andem@earthlink.net or call me at home at (781) 455-0391.

Finally, I'd like to thank my fellow members and readers for their support and kind praise during my Editorship; it's been a great pleasure to make a contribution to the life of ATI! ☺

Note to Subscribers

Dear ATI Members,

Every time we mail the ExChange, we pay \$1,200 for postage. If we could send the ExChange electronically, we could save a lot of money.

Are you willing to receive an electronic copy of the ExChange instead of a paper one? If you are, please email Linda Hein at ati-usa@ati-net.com and let us know. Thanks!

Estimado miembro del ATI,

Cada vez que mandamos el ExChange, el franqueo nos sale unos \$1200. Si pudiéramos mandar el ExChange por vía electrónica, ahorraríamos mucho dinero.

¿Estaría Ud. dispuesto a recibir un copia electrónica del ExChange en vez de una copia material? Si estaría dispuesto, por favor mándenos un correo electrónico a ati-usa@ati-net.com. Gracias!

Chers membres ATI,

Chaque fois que nous envoyons la revue ExChange par courrier postal, cela nous coûte \$1'200,--. Si nous pouvions envoyer la revue Exchange par courrier électronique, cela nous permettrait d'économiser beaucoup d'argent.

Seriez-vous d'accord de recevoir la revue ExChange par courrier électronique plutôt que par courrier postal? Si vous êtes d'accord, merci de nous le dire en nous envoyant un e-mail ati-usa@ati-net.com. Merci!

Liebes ATI Mitglied,

Jeder ExChange-Versand kostet uns 1,200 Dollar. Deshalb würden wir beträchtliche Kosten sparen, wenn wir Ihnen ExChange elektronisch versenden könnten. Sind Sie einverstanden, anstatt einer Papiaerausgabe von ExChange eine elektronische Kopie zu empfangen? Wenn ja, teilen Sie uns dies bitte per email an ati-usa@ati-net.com mit. Vielen Dank!

Kedves ATI tag,

Minden alkalommal mikor kiküldjük az ExChange-t, 1200\$-t fizetünk a postaköltségért. Ha az ExChange-t elektronikusan tudnánk kézbesíteni, sok pénzt spórolhatnánk.

Hajlandó lennél-e elektronikusan fogadni az ExChange-t papírváltozat helyett? Ha igen, kérlek értesíts bennünket ezen a címen: ati-usa@ati-net.com. Köszönettel!

ATI ga kikanshi "The ExChange" o member tachi ni okuruto ikkainituki 1200 doru kakarimasu. Moshi E-mail de okurukotoga dekireba sonobun ga Setuyaku dekirunodesu.

Anata ha "The ExChange" o zasshi toshitedenaku, E-mail de uketorukoto o onozomidesuka? Moshi soudeareba, ati-usa@ati-net.com ateni E-mail de oshirase kudasai. Arigatou!

The ATI Board of Directors

Make everything as simple as possible—but not simpler.

Albert Einstein

Colleagues, Teacher Trainees and Friends
we are looking forward to welcoming all of you!



8th International Congress of the F.M. Alexander Technique

August 10-16, 2008 in Lugano, Switzerland

www.atcongress.com

Michael D. Frederick, Jule Gartzke, Rosa Luisa Rossi, Judy Stern

“From Generation to Generation”

Please come and visit our website www.atcongress.com to find the latest Congress information including details about registration, workshops, lectures, and presenters.

The second call for papers, workshops, and lectures is now open. If you would like to give a presentation and share your knowledge with the International Alexander community, you can find the application form on the website. All applications will be received and processed through the website only and not by land mail. The deadline for completed application forms is 1 April 2008.

Our partner Amiconi Consulting (www.amiconiconsulting.ch) will be pleased to help you find your preferred Congress accommodation—be it hotel, pension, holiday home or camping site. Please note that August is holiday season in Lugano, so early booking is highly recommended.

Amiconi Consulting can also help you arrange your transportation to and from the Swiss airports of Lugano and Zürich and Italian airports of Milan (Malpensa, Linate) and Bergamo (Orio al Serio—low-cost airfares from Europe) and help you with touring possibilities before, during, and after the Congress.

With best wishes from your Congress Team: Michael D. Frederick, Jule Gartzke, Rosa Luisa Rossi, and Judy Stern

Board of Directors: Michael D. Frederick, Rivka Cohen, Doris Dietschy, Michael Fortwängler, Ora & Shmuel Nelken, Frank Ottiwell, Peter Ribeaux, Lucia Walker

You can still join us for
THE 2007 ATI ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Spanish Point, Ireland October 21-25
(pre-day, October 20)

for more information: www.ati-net.com and consult your AGM Brochure

and save these dates for next year's AGM

in Lugano, Switzerland

Aug 7-10, 2008

*pre-day Thursday afternoon and Friday morning,
and full AGM Friday afternoon, Saturday, and Sunday morning
(more details coming soon!)*

All sanity depends on this: that it should be a delight to feel heat strike the skin, a delight to stand upright, knowing the bones are moving easily under the flesh.

Doris Lessing

Worldwide Offices of Alexander Technique International

continued from page 24

Norway

Nesttunbrekka 26
5221 Nesttun
(+47) 55 13 08 63 (ph/fax)
(+47) 922 42413 (cell)
ati-norway@ati-net.com

Switzerland

Dammerkirchstr. 14
CH-4056 Basel
(+41) 61322 6879
ati-switzerland@ati-net.com

UK

28 Marshal's Drive
St. Albans AL1 4RQ
Herts.
01727 760067
ati-uk@ati-net.com

Alexander Technique International (ATI) is a worldwide organization of teachers, students, and friends of the Alexander Technique created to promote and advance the work begun by F. Matthias Alexander.

ATI embraces the diversity of the international Alexander community and works to promote international dialogue.

About the Alexander Technique

Experience of the Technique has led to praise from George Bernard Shaw, Aldous Huxley, Prof. John Dewey, Sir Charles Sherrington, Julian Bream, John Cleese, Kevin Kline, Roald Dahl, Robertson Davies, and many others. It is taught at the Juilliard School of Performing Arts in New York, and the Royal College of Music and the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London, the Stratford Shakespeare Festival and the Shaw Festivals in Canada, Boston University, Brandeis University, and many other centers.

The common factor in all aspects of life is that how we are using ourselves—the way we do things—affects the result we get. The Alexander Technique is a means of improving that use. It has been called a “pre-technique” that people can apply to furthering their own special skills and activities. It is also essentially a preventive technique with which we can learn to improve and maintain our health.

The individual is the focus of the Alexander Technique. We are all unique, with different bodies, different experiences, and different problems. We go about the process of change in different ways and at different rates. For these reasons, what happens in an Alexander Technique lesson depends very much on the needs of the student at the time. In the basic sense, though, you will learn an attitude of not trying to gain your ends at any cost, and, at the same time, how to prevent your harmful habits that cause unnecessary stress and restrict your capabilities. Obviously, since what you are changing are patterns built up over many years, a permanent change will not be brought about overnight. However, the person who learns to stop and take time, to think constructively about how he or she uses him- or herself in everyday life, will find that this simple procedure can have far-reaching results.

Further information about the Alexander Technique can best be gained from a teacher near you (see the list at right for the nearest ATI office, or visit www.ati-net.com for teacher listings), as your changing experiences through lessons are the only real way to understand the nature of the work and what change is possible.



Worldwide Offices of Alexander Technique International

Main Office, USA

1692 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138 USA
(+1) 617-497-5151
(+1) 617-497-2615 (fax)
1-888-668-8996
ati-usa@ati-net.com

Australia

29 Nareen Parade
North Narrabeen, NSW 2101
02-9913-2480
ati-australia@ati-net.com

Austria

Schubertstrasse 46
A-4020 Linz
43-(0)732-605 849
ati-austria@ati-net.com

France

10 Rue Froidevaux
75014 Paris
(+33) 01 43 35 10 48
ati-usa@ati-net.com

Germany

Dielmannstrasse 1
60599 Frankfurt
(+49) 69 60 32 55 77
ati-germany@ati-net.com

Hungary

Pozsonyi út 4, 1 emelet
Budapest 1137
(+36) 1 2258581
(+36) 1 2258582
ati-hungary@ati-net.com

Ireland

Kirkullen Lodge
Toreeny, Moycullen, Co. Galway
(+353) (0)91.555800 (also fax)
ati-eire@ati-net.com

Israel

31/4 Jabutinski Street
Givatayim 53360
972-3-731-6358
ati-israel@ati-net.com

Japan

Hieidaira 3- chome 19-13
Otsu-Shi, Shiga-Ken
(+81) (0)77-529-2881 (also fax)
ati-japan@ati-net.com