

Fall Member Event

by Clare Maxwell

Brooke Lieb shared her 'Confidence from the Inside Out System' with us for the Fall members event. Brooke has created her seven-step process by combining the Alexander Technique with life coaching work. Together we deconstructed the definition of "confidence" and "success," looking at the language that we use and how it can narrow rather than expand possibilities for moving forward with our goals and dreams. For example, the uncensored definition that some of us tell ourselves is: "Confidence means knowing everything." Redefined to express our real needs and beliefs, this became: "Confidence means being well prepared and present in the moment." Needless to say, this definition seems much more possible to attain! Brooke has a complete set of materials to help define goals, identify the thoughts that keep us from mobilizing energy to realize them, and identify needed allies and resources for our journey. She is available for private coaching and workshops.

There will be another members (and associate members!) event in the Spring. Please feel free to contact Clare at (718) 243-2720 if you have any requests or ideas.

ACAT Hosts Open House for Prospective Students

by Ruth Diamond

On Monday, October 19, ACAT hosted its first Open House for Prospective Students since 1994. It was a big success and we plan to repeat it more often than once every decade. The event was planned by the Committee to Increase Enrollment, led by Stephanie Kalka.

In spite of limited advertising for the event, seven perspective applicants showed up and, according to Joan Frost, the Director of Training, at least one person has already decided to apply for admission. She was one of the two people who showed up late for the open house knowing very little about the Alexander Technique. They had seen one of our fliers and wanted to learn about the technique. Although it did not seem like very much would come of it, she has been taking lessons with Naoko regularly and plans to begin training in April.

The evening was hosted by members of the committee, Stephanie Kalka, Louis Songster, Daniel Singer and Ruth Diamond. They were joined by Barbara Kent, Naoko Matsumoto, Viki Roth and three members of the seventh semester training class; Sofia Radu, Amira Glaser and Phyllis Kubey.

The committee originally planned the event in three half-hour segments consisting of presentations by faculty, hands-on experiences and questions and answers directed to current trainees. In actuality, like all good things, the event created its own unique structure to meet the needs of all present. Joan started by giving an overview of the ACAT program and its requirements. Daniel spoke

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Save the date!!

ACAT Annual Meeting

February 6, 2005*

11:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Hands-on exchange, workshop (TBA), business meeting & schmoozing!

*Date may change due to guest speaker availability; watch your December mail for your renewal packet and your email for flash announcements!

NOTES FROM THE TCP by Joan Frost

It is a beautiful, blustery Fall day and I'm writing this during our mid-term break — a new addition to our schedule. This fall we began classes a week earlier, shortening the summer break and making possible a breather in the Fall term. Now each term has a week hiatus.

September saw three new candidates enter our program — **Leah Aser**, a student of **Judith Barkow** and **Judy Stern**, **Miho Nozawa**, a Japanese student of **Naoko Matsumoto**, and **Tom Weiser**, a student of **Hope Martin**. They all joined the 10:30 class, making it a mixed-level class of 7 (three 1st termers, one 3rd term and three 4th termers). We will continue to add to this class until it reaches its maximum of 12 students.

Last June we graduated **Hsin-I Chen** from Taiwan, who will return to her native country to teach after she finishes her doctorate in music at Columbia; **Suzy Perkins**; **Viki Roth** (also with a background in music); and **Rebecca Tuffey**, who gave birth to a baby girl in September. All are returning to ACAT to volunteer this fall, including Rebecca who will be bringing **Elly** to Joan's class as long as her infant status makes this possible.

We are continuing with our work-study program thanks again to a generous donation from **Larry King**, **Debby Caplan's** husband. **Chris Beckstrom** is serving another year as our librarian and has done a fantastic job of sorting out ACAT's archival material, reading articles and putting a synopsis of each on the computer. We now have an archival library, which may be enjoyed in ACAT's space, and a lending library. This continues to be a wonderful resource for the ACAT community. The second work-study position is that of space groomer. First term **Miho Nozawa** now sees to it that our space is clean and attractive and that our drinking water supply is plentiful.

8th term **Viki Roth** performed on the cello for our Winter Term assembly. Viki's background is in piano, but in recent years she has taken up studying the cello as a hobby and as a means of applying her AT principles. She was accompanied by her teacher, ACAT alum **Kathe Jarka**. Viki's performance included one of her own arrangements as well as a classical piece. This was followed by 5th term **Jenna Zabala** speaking to the group about ordering teaching tables. Thanks to Jenna's hard work, ACAT is now a distributor of Oakworks tables. Many trainees placed orders through Jenna for a discount and Jenna's class (now in their 7th term) gave ACAT a beautiful raspberry-colored folding table as an early class gift.

Former faculty member **Sarnie Ogus** came in to the TCP in May to work with our first and third year candidates, imparting her special way of working with the directions and matching words with hands as a way of clarifying thinking.

In June, ACAT faculty alum **Jane Kosminsky** and ACAT grad **Anne Rene Lawton** engaged the whole school in how they work with dancers. We all had fun trying out plies and brushes with Alexander thinking. Jane likes to work with dancers "where they live" and therefore doesn't focus primarily on chair work. She also asks dancers to "feel" a little less, which can at first be scary for them.

At our Spring assembly, **Suzy Perkins** delighted and touched us with a reading of her final paper (printed in this ACAT News), **Christopher Beckstrom** performed a very dramatic piece followed by a song, and ACAT faculty member **Brooke Lieb** donned a costume, put on some music, and performed a couple of 17th century court dances!

On October 15th, **Joan and Alex Murray** visited our TCP to introduce the Dart Procedures. Trainees worked with primary and secondary curves (flexion and extension) led by the eyes, going in and out of squat, and with HOBOS (hands on back of chair), going into a table-top monkey and pushing the chair away, then pulling it toward.

ACAT held an Open House for prospective trainees on October 18th. In addition to those faculty and recent graduates who came to lend their support, I'd like to thank **Amira Glaser**, **Phyllis Kubey** and **Sofia Radu**, who shared about our program from their perspective of being in it, and to **Stephanie Kalka**, **Ruth Diamond**, **Louis Songster** and **Daniel Singer**, who helped organize it. One of the attendees saw the advertisement for it on our website and came having never had exposure to the Technique - and now is taking lessons hoping to begin training in April!

We are again offering our Tenth Term class. A number of those who took it last spring found it very valuable and are also taking it this term. We have now opened the class to teachers of all levels and will continue offering the class on a Monday, Wednesday, or Friday from 10:30-1:30 as long as there is interest.

Lastly, as in the two previous years, we had our annual faculty retreat at **Pat McGinnis'** very elegant house on the Jersey shore. We were trying to count

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Board Goes on Retreat

Thanks again to board and committee members for all the energy, movement and direction! As if our jam-packed board meetings (chaired and graciously hosted by **Hope Martin** in her breath-inspiring studio down the hall) were not enough to ask, every board member is planning to attend a special weekend brainstorming retreat in early December. The retreat site in upstate New York was made available through the generosity of personal friends of Hope Martin. Hope is even planning the menu! You will be hearing about that meeting in upcoming issues of ACATNews and at the annual meeting. Thanks, board, thanks committee members, thanks Hope and thanks Hope's friends!

The American Center for the Alexander Technique Studio Space Available

Our attractive, fully-dedicated Alexander Technique studio is available to ACAT teachers, their colleagues and friends for lectures, group work or private lessons in the Alexander Technique or related fields. Convenient downtown Manhattan location.

Contact Mark Josefsberg at (212) 633-2229, mailbox #2, for more information.

The recipients of the 2004-05 work-study awards of the **Deborah Caplan/Alma Frank Scholarship Fund**, funded by **Larry King**, are **Christopher Beckstrom** (7th term) and **Miho Nozawa** (1st term). Our readers already have been introduced to Christopher in the Fall 2003 issue and have read his library update in the summer 2004 issue. Christopher continues his excellent work in the library, preparing indexes, sorting through archival materials, separating the wheat from the chaff, and getting the most mileage out of our limited space. We hope to have another library update from Christopher in the next ACATNews. Miho Nozawa comes to ACAT from Japan, where she teaches ballet. When she completes her training she looks forward to returning to Japan to teach ballet and the Alexander Technique and to apply the Technique to her dance instruction. Welcome Miho and thank you for your good work. Our thanks once again to Larry King for funding the work-study wing of the Deborah Caplan/Alma Frank Scholarship Fund.

Remember ACAT in Your Estate Planning

**Why not plan now
to make a gift to ACAT
in the future?**

Contact ACAT Board member
Harvey Rosen at (212) 873-7098.

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Submissions should be directed to acatnyc.org. The articles in this newsletter are the opinions and explanations of the authors and do not reflect a consensus of ACAT members or represent the official policy of the Center.

New Voicemail System

If you've called the office lately, you probably noticed that we have replaced the indistinct old "underwater" recording device with a modern voicemail system. We are proud of the image-enhancement this offers our organization and delighted that now we can actually understand the messages that are left for us.

This upgrade, as well as ongoing enhancements to our email and website communications, is part of our full-scale plan to improve the impression we make on the public and our service to you, our members. We appreciate all the positive feedback we've received about the new voicemail and encourage members to let us know if they encounter problems with using it.

Here's a tip to make using the new system even easier: If you don't want to hear the entire message when you call—it's aimed primarily at the public—just press any number when the recording starts to skip immediately to the mailbox choices:

- #1 Executive Director, Jane Tomkiewicz
- #2 Studio Space Coordinator, Mark Josefsberg
- #3 Lecture/Demo Coordinator, Brooke Lieb
- #4 General Mailbox (all other callers)

Use the voicemail as often as you wish; we love hearing from you!

Teaching Space available in the same building as ACAT

Beautifully renovated professional office space with 3 rooms and a comfortable waiting room. Brand new floors, high ceilings and large windows. Perfect for occupational therapists, psychologists, social workers, physical therapists, speech therapists, learning specialists and manual therapists/ body workers. Suitable for individual and group treatment. One, two, or three room rental option with shared waiting room. Affiliated with a thriving pediatric occupational therapy practice located in the same building.

Suite 503 includes: furnished waiting room - 6.5 x12 feet; interior office #1 - 12x19 feet (good for group); office #2 - 14x12 with two 6x4 southern exposure windows; office #3 7x12 with a 6x4 southern exposure windows; desk/reception area.

Continuing Studies at ACAT

The continuing studies programs at ACAT are still going strong.

The highly acclaimed "**Carrington Way of Working**" with **John Nicholls** course is being held once again. The course is filled to capacity, and we hope to introduce you to some of the new ACAT members and associate members attending the course in the next ACATNews.

The 10th term class was also repeated this Fall. Due to interest, the 10th term class has been opened up to teachers of all levels (not only recent grads). The 10th term class runs parallel to the Teacher Certification Program. In other words it can happen starting in October, January and April. The days it can be scheduled are Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. If you are interested in a 10th term class starting in January, please call or email the office letting us know which day (Mon., Wed., or Fri) interests you.

The Dart Procedures and their application to teaching the Alexander Technique. October weekend workshop with Joan and Alex Murray and Marie Stroud was filled to capacity. The Murrays introduced the trainees to their work on Friday. They allowed us to videotape that session. That tape should eventually be available in the ACAT library.

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back and determined that this was either our tenth or eleventh consecutive faculty weekend retreat. We have come to greatly value this time to reconnect, share work, and discuss ideas and andrological (adult version of pedagogical) issues. We made a conscious effort to work with Marshall Rosenberg's NVC (Nonviolent Communication) during our meeting times which contributed to a rich and authentic sharing.

All the best,
Joan

Introducing associate member Peter Doobinin

Peter Doobinin started the Downtown Meditation Community in January, 2002, and has been holding classes in ACAT's space since then. He really likes his group to meet in this environment because of the compatible contemplative work that happens in this space during the training course and all other Alexander Technique functions. He is an Alexander enthusiast as the quality of posture affects the quality of meditation. The importance of the mind relating to the body (particularly difficult sensations) is central to the work done in meditation. Mindfulness of the body can lead to mindfulness of the mind and emotions.

Peter has been meditating since 1990, co-founded NYInsight Meditation Center in 1997 and began teaching meditation on his own in 1998. He is deeply interested in helping to develop a community (Sangha), a refuge in the city where likeminded individuals can share their meditative path and contribute to a more joyful and peaceful world.

Peter's classes meet on Sundays, Mondays and Thursday nights. For more information you can check his website at www.dnymc.org, where you can find out more about Insight Meditation (Vipassana) and the Downtown New York Meditation Community. Peter would welcome any questions from ACAT members about his classes, the schedule, fees, etc.

In my conversation with Peter I can't help but notice some of the similar tasks that happen in the two disciplines, cultivating awareness of the experience of the body - and how the mind relates to the experience.

A big part of the meditative practice is to see the aversion to the unpleasant - or the desire for the pleasant - and loosen attachment to sensation. The struggling is in the mind, the challenge to move into the difficulty - and in learning to let go of the difficult. When the mind contracts around an experience, the pain gets worse.

Sound familiar?

Welcome, Peter and the Downtown Meditation Community.

Do you know our Friend and Neighbor Jayme Rich?

I first met Jayme Rich when we were each moving into our respective offices here at 39 West 14th Street. She was opening a pediatric occupational therapy practice in what is now our sister space, room 508. She was warm and friendly and not only knew about the Alexander Technique but was a big fan because her mother had had a wonderful experience working with Marj Dorfman. Small world!!

Jayme's practice has grown and some time ago she moved to a larger office on the 3rd floor, where she was joined by a number of other occupational therapists, including ACAT member and former board member Loren Shlaes. Only recently she has expanded once again by taking over another room in the building, room 503. Jayme continues to work with children and their families around sensory integration issues, balance, coordination, and fine motor skills in individual sessions, but she has expanded her offerings to include preschool sports groups, youngster sports groups, yoga for youngsters and yoga for kids. With these new offerings she seeks to bring in a variety of disciplines to help children who had been working one-on-one to ease into group situations. Another new offering is Tummy Time with Martha Eddy. Martha is a registered movement therapist who has been in practice for 22 years, specializing in neuro-development assessment. She was on the faculty of Columbia University Teachers College where she taught Perceptual Motor Development for over 10 years and was the coordinator of the Riverside Church Wellness Center. She is the author of numerous articles about infant and toddler development.

Just wanted you to know about this great resource - right here in our building!

My Process

by Susie Perkins

Besides years of chronic pain, I really wanted to change my posture. I was ashamed of the hump on my back. In some of my very first Alexander Technique lessons, I asked my teacher Charles Stein if this curvature in my spine was a permanent thing or if it could be changed. "Oh, it can definitely change," he said without hesitation and with such authority and positive belief, I was quite surprised by his answer. He said, "The spine is quite flexible and moveable. It is the muscles which hold it in a fixed position." I remember thinking my spine was a long bony structure that had been permanently fixed into a big hump on my back. Here was a brand new idea; one I could scarcely dare to believe.

So I waited. I watched. I pulled myself up higher and higher, straining to move that curve out. I got a backache, but the curve refused to move.

Charles suggested I lie on rubber balls, placed in the thoracic region. He showed me the size of the rubber ball, approximately the diameter of two hands forming a circle. Alas, no one had rubber balls this size. (Little did I know at the time no one had them, because no one was making them anymore.) So I improvised with a roll of toilet tissue paper, covered by a soft squishy round nerf ball.

Dutifully I lay down every day. Sometimes for an hour or hours. I watched and waited, looking for changes daily in the mirror.

Since nothing much was happening that I could observe, I decided, after 3 years of lessons, I needed to train to be an Alexander Technique teacher. "I'll get this hump out, because Alexander teachers have the straightest backs in the world."

When I came to ACAT I remember thinking, "Oh my God, when they see I've had three years of Alexander lessons and I still look like this, what will they think?" Day one of school. Class with Daniel Singer. "Let's skip all the intros; believe me, by the end of the week, you'll be so sick of it." So he began his discussion right away. It was something akin to an inordinate amount of focusing on the body, as opposed to what the technique was really about. "This is not body fixing!" he ranted. Remember, now, this is my first day of school, and who was this giant man ranting about what the technique was and wasn't? "If you want to fix your body, go do Pilates! Really, seriously. This is not about fixing the body."

Well I wondered, "Should I get up now, walk out of the door, and go train in Pilates? What the hell is Pilates?" Because certainly the reason I came to school was to fix my body. I wanted to get rid of pain, and I really wanted to get this hump off of my back.

How many times did I almost leave school the first semester? What kept me there? I don't know, but I suspect the power of the work had spoken to me, and without any rational or intellectual reason of the "how" it worked, I just knew it did.

First, second, and third semesters go by. I think I cried every day. Sometimes I would go to school feeling so great, and by the time I left, I was miserable. Angry, frustrated, mad, sad, confused. Still I watched my back, knowing the hump was still there. Every time someone put their hands on me, they went first to my chest and hump. I began to get very sensitive, and cranky. I knew I needed to straighten up there, but how? And then, this business of "Don't go down when you bend your knees. Think up!"

I wanted to scream as loud as I could, "I am thinking up so hard my head is about to explode! I have no thoughts of going down right now. You idiot, I am most certainly not thinking down." Did I express any of this? Did I calmly ask, "now what do you mean when you say bend your knees, but continue to move up?" No, I said nothing. I simply suffered and screamed directions to myself, hoping I would get it somehow.

Of course, one day it was too much. A classmate had hands on me, and said, "Bend your knees." I dutifully bent, and the classmate said, "let's come back up. Now when you bend your knees, think up, not down." I exploded into tears and said, "I can't, I can't." I ran away from the classmate, feeling horrible. What would she think of me?

Daniel came to my rescue saying, "What don't you understand?" And he patiently worked with me, and said, "That's it; that's all there is to it." I said "I just don't get it, and I want to go inside myself. I don't want to be in this room." Being present in times of stress was so hard for me.

I went to Joan Frost and I said, "I can't work with all these people. I am so confused. I don't understand what people want me to do. Could I just work with teach-

ers, and that's it?" You see, I didn't trust that volunteers or classmates could really know anything about my movement. Only a really experienced teacher could offer me something. Joan said, "I think you need to do whatever you need to take care of yourself. You don't ever have to work with anyone if you don't want to." I felt good and bad at the same time. This was a first step in my learning to express my needs, but at the same time I felt like I was shutting out other people.

I took her advice, and soon enough I was ready to accept the help of peers, volunteers, and anyone. I was still a bit skeptical, but I began to trust a little more.

So back to the hump. It was still there. Year one goes by. "My, how you've changed!" everyone says. "Can you see how much you've changed?" "Yes," I reply. But a little voice says, "But your hump is still there."

Is the technique failing? Am I failing the technique?

Year two. Feedback. What a dirty little word. Look, I already put up a stink in the end of last year of how under no uncertain terms did I want any feedback whatsoever on my hands. Unless, of course, it was from a teacher. That was different. That was ok. They had the knowledge and the skill. But what could we – the trainees – possibly know? We were just bumbling around with each other. Do you really think I, who was just learning to work with other people, whilst learning to monitor my own needs, really wanted to hear what they thought of my hands? Because that's what feedback was to me: judgment. Either your hands were good (light and up) or bad (heavy and down). Anyway, what do we know? We're just trainees.

I still continued to be quite skeptical that all of this stuff worked anyway. After all, my hump was still there, glaring and ugly, sticking out of my back. Ruining the perfect straightness that I saw in others.

One day I asked Pearl, "Did you believe in the technique? Did you really believe it from the beginning?" Pearl said, "No." I think I knew she was a scientist, so there, that was proof! Maybe it can't really work. Pearl continued, "But I watched my sister walk every day down a long walkway. And I saw just how much her walk changed over time, so then I started to believe." I grew suddenly very quiet and still. I was on the table, and I have never felt such calm and stillness inside. For a moment, I jokingly wondered if I was dead. Tears were flowing, but I said, "I'm not sad, Pearl. I've just never experienced such peace." Sometimes it happens when people let go, when they stop doing," she answered in her simple, direct, Pearl way.

I began to suspect after this experience that there was some major interference going on in my process, and I was the cause of it. Or rather this inner activity, the inner voice, whatever you want to call it, was so busy directing, ordering, judging, bantering, badgering, telling me, "neck free, where's the up, inhibit going down, hips back not butt back, lengthen lengthen lengthen, now direct, now inhibit, now order." There was so much inner activity, it's a wonder I learned anything. As I began to quiet a little in my lessons with Pearl, sometimes she would move me, and my mind would say, "That was impossible. The front of my torso is not that long. How did I do that?"

So what about the hump? I waited, and hoped still that the hump would disappear. But it was still going strong, not budging.

Then came the up down wrists game in Daniel's class. He said it just cleared up this whole messy feedback issue. Instead of saying to my classmate, "Oh, that was lovely; I moved so beautifully; it had up, and flow, and such direction," you could simply say, "Up." Instead of "Well, it started off very nicely and then, well, I'm not sure. Maybe it was me; let's just do it again." "Down." Instead of, "well at the end there, I'm not sure, but I felt something like –maybe I couldn't move my head, or something." "Wrists."

My complete reluctance to play this game was again my denial that we really knew anything about what was going on. Who was I to say "Up, down, or wrists?" I couldn't bear to say down to someone. And I was terrified to have someone say down or wrists to me. So I simply didn't play for awhile.

Back to the hump. I still kept checking every day to see if it was gone yet. Nope, still there. The second year of training passes into the third.

Oh my God, it's the third year. This was it. If I didn't figure out everything this year, and if my body didn't change soon, well, that would be it. I would graduate and be a terrible Alexander teacher.

I think there is a bible verse that begins something like, "Oh ye of little faith." I had been operating on faith for two years. Sometimes I had no idea what was going on, so just kept pretending and going along with it. Just keep going, putting the hands on, pretending I had a clue.

Oh, there were moments that kept me going. Sometime in my second year, I had my hand on a classmate's head and neck. Suddenly I felt something electric shooting straight up her neck. It so startled me

I almost yanked my hand off. What the devil was that? I think she said she was getting some strong sense of direction, and a lot of up.

So how did I do it? I was probably not paying attention, and in that movement of quietness, something got through.

So there were little inklings here and there of what was possible. But now that it's my third year, and this hump has shown no sign of yielding, what can I do? How is my back ever going to get straight?

When I came back to school the third year after one of those endless summers, I was so worried. I hadn't had any lessons, not a single one. I felt like the girl that Julia described one year who said, "I didn't think about the technique at all the whole summer." And someone else said, "Yeah, you could tell." Is that what people would say about me? Would they take one look at my back and say, "Good Lord, she just lost her two years of training! Look how down she is!"

Shortly after my return, Brooke happened to ask, "What happened to you over the summer?" Oh my God, here it comes; she knows. "Look how integrated your back is!" Integrated? I could hardly believe my ears! You mean I hadn't lost all of my training?

Still, with every positive comment, that little voice inside would whisper, "But your hump hasn't gone away." You know what? I was really getting sick of this. Why wasn't anything I ever did good enough?

I decided I needed to go to psychotherapy. Maybe therapy could tell me why I had this hump, and why it wouldn't go away.

I found out I was in an episode of major depression. I had suspected for awhile that I was depressed, but I didn't realize just how bad it was. Very early in therapy, I began to form an idea. For most of my life I have held tremendous feelings of guilt, fear, and badness inside of myself. No matter how hard I tried to succeed, and no matter how hard I worked on something, I was never satisfied with the result. In fact, I competed with others to be better. If I could be the best at something, then I would feel better about myself, or so I thought.

Now I think it's funny, going to therapy to analyze this hump on my back. Well, it didn't start out that way, but within the first couple of sessions I began to form an idea. Maybe all that was wrong with me, all the badness, the guilt, the low self-esteem, all the fear, and wrong things inside – maybe that was my hump. My

hump represented everything that felt wrong.

I wrote a little for AIS, as I was using psychotherapy for hours of credit, and shared some of the writing with my therapist. The next week after she read it, she said, "I'm very curious about this hump on your back. Could you talk a little more about that?" I basically explained that I felt like my back was representing how I felt inside of myself. I hated my back, the way it looked, and I sometimes felt that way about myself.

Anyway, I felt like maybe if I began to deal with the feelings of low self-esteem, failed relationships, guilt, fear, and badness, maybe just maybe something would change.

Right away I began to notice subtle differences. I became very curious about what people were saying with their hands at my rib cage. Sometimes I would just give up and say, "Ok, I'm not going to look at my back for a week." But then I'd be staring; checking it out before I even realized what I was doing.

One day in my private with Daniel, we worked on shoulders for half an hour. I really wanted to get this. Sometimes he would say, "It looks the world has been lifted off your shoulders!" Maybe something was beginning to change.

Then we began the Dart procedures with Barbara. Something felt so wonderful! I couldn't describe it, but it felt like I was moving. I showed Judith a procedure, a forward bend in the chair. She said, "I can see why you like this – you are moving through your thoracic area."

That's why it felt so wonderful! I was beginning to move through an area that had been locked away for so long. I just can't describe how good it felt to move where there was so much stillness. And how nice it is to have some stillness inside my mind and nervous system where there was so much turmoil and inner activity.

I wrote most of this in December. Where am I now with the hump? It's still there, but I think it's begun to diminish. Sometimes I think the hump was life. It was my journey through to get to where I am now. Without it, I wouldn't be who I am today.

I think the process – that is the Alexandrian process of awareness, inhibition, and direction – was the only way for me to come to terms with who I am. First I had to look at myself (be aware, and awareness includes an acknowledgment and acceptance of who I am and what I am: the good, the bad, the ugly, the beautiful.) Awareness included embracing all my habits, even the scariest, ugliest, most awful ones I had. If I did not first

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acknowledge and greet them with a smile (or a tear), then I was debauched. I could not clearly see what I was, or what I was doing, if I could not first become aware in an objective, curious manner.

Once I was aware and acknowledged what I saw, then I had to take that step back. I had to pause and ask myself, "This is what I see; is this what I want?" If I didn't want it, what were my other choices? Then, and only then, could come the direction, and a change, if I so desired. I am still working through the process and have only just begun the direction.

I have been in therapy for almost one year. My therapist is pregnant and our last session is today, the day before I graduate. Though I'm sad not to be working with her anymore, because she was so supportive and helped me so much through my process, I think the timing is appropriate. The ends are only new beginnings. If a door shuts, look for a window.

I wanted to play violin today. I so wanted to have the miracle experience of Stephanie, and her flute, and Mark, and his marimba. I'm not quite there yet. But I feel strongly that the training did something very miraculous for me.

...Open House, continued from page 1

of the breadth and scope of the program describing our rare combination of rigor and flexibility. Barbara added a sense of history, recollecting the founding and growth of the Center. Amira, Sofia and Phyllis spoke movingly of their experiences as trainees in personal terms, describing the life-altering effects of training.

The question and answer period was surprisingly long and filled with thought-provoking questions. The prospective students grappled with practical questions dealing with financial and scheduling issues as well as questions about what exactly happens in a training program. Are there examinations, term papers, anatomy quizzes?

After long and productive discussion, we adjourned for hands-on turns with the teachers, informal discussion and juice and cookies.

The Committee to Increase Enrollment has not yet set an exact date for the next open house but it will be sometime in the Winter. All ideas and suggestions and offers of help are welcome.



New York based AT teachers at Peter Grunwald's advanced retreat in Wales, U.K., August 2004.
(L to R: Julie MacKenzie, Janis Sharkey, Michael Protzel, Judy Feldman, Bob Bradley, Tara Sullivan.)

NEWS FROM THE CENTER

If you see **Kathy Miranda**, give her a hug and wish her well as she prepares to leave the NYC area and move to much greener pastures. We'll miss you, Kathy!

Good luck to **Bob Bradley**, who has moved his home and is starting a teaching practice in Stonybrook, NY. Have someone on the Island you'd like to refer? Bob's new number is (631) 751-0949.

Congratulations to **Rebecca Tuffey** who gave birth to a baby girl, **Elly**, shortly after completing her training.

If anyone is interested in a copy of Peter Grunwald's new book, **Eyebody**, give **Tara Sullivan** a call at (212) 489-7849. She has copies of the book which you can purchase directly from her, thus saving on shipping costs. "I'll even deliver!"

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