



ACAT NOW: A Student's View

by Claudia Peyton

Is the American Center for the Alexander Technique's training program in trouble? Certainly, it faces serious financial problems. Only six month's after winning a three-year accreditation from ACCET, a national agency listed by the U.S. Secretary of Education, which enables the school to provide a financial aid program to eligible students, our board announced it would eliminate ACCET accreditation. Maintaining accreditation with this agency costs ACAT \$15,000 a year, including the fees and administrative costs for processing student loans. But from this students perspective, the loss of ACCET accreditation could cost ACAT much more -- in fact, it could spell the end of ACAT as a viable training institution with perhaps the most artistically and economically diverse student body and faculty of any in the nation.

The announcement shook the student body. Half of us depend on these loans, which we will no longer be able to apply for once the accreditation is lost. While no one said it aloud, many faced the reality that they might not be able to continue their training. And for many of us who had changed our lifestyles and made personal and family sacrifices to pursue our trainings, there were feelings of being let down, and of anger.

But by the end of a tumultuous meeting, with many questions still unanswered, we realized that this difficulty could become a turning point in the relationship between the student body and the board. We saw that we needed better, two-way communication. Students realized they had perhaps something they could offer. We agreed to meet again within ten days -- the board representative with more information, and the student body with ideas about how we might be able to help.

Within a month the board announced that ACCET would be extended through June, 1996. It turns out that there was a small reserve to draw from. Meanwhile, however, ACAT must look closely at changing how it

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ACAT NOW: A Director's View

by Kathryn Miranda

Can I speak about where ACAT is now without describing a little about where it has been? I can, but I won't.

ACAT was incorporated at its inception in 1964 as a non-profit membership corporation. "Non-profit" and "membership" summarize the nature of ACAT as an organization. This institution's life and process has evolved over time. Starting small and friendly - growing larger and still friendly. The management structure has generally included a Board of Directors, a TCP Director, Senior Faculty and Executive Committee.

The main function of the Board is to oversee the operations in ways that will protect assets and fulfill its mission. (ACAT's assets include intangibles like its reputation, its name and number in various literature, its strong collegial environment, its quality of training.) In most cases, decisions are arrived at by consensus. ACAT Board members, who generally serve 3-5 years, take on the responsibility as stewards and guardians; they have not been strong risk takers. They are conservative, protective and supportive. Their decisions may have led us to our current problems, but that does not mean there has not been growth and progress.

So what happened, is ACAT in serious trouble? Perhaps, but what happened to us is not unique. There has been a decline in many businesses. The low-or-no growth economy in the US has affected the teaching practices of many teachers. When ACAT grads and members don't have growing practices, there are fewer Alexander students and fewer Alexander students means fewer trainees.

Didn't we see this coming? Maybe, but we were hoping for an economic turn around. We were getting a lot of inquiries about the program and tried to foster the attractiveness of the TCP with a new brochure, a better catalog, more personal attention, follow-up phone calls encouraging visits to the school and open house events. We felt all this attention coming in and going out would lead to an increase in applicants. It succeeded to some degree but many potential applicants were turned away by the full time nature of training, the diffi-

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Notes From the TCP

by Joan Frost

Much has happened at ACAT since our last newsletter.

We are delighted that Barbara Kent has decided to return as Director of ACAT as of September 1st, finishing Kim Jessor's term which ends August 31st, 1997. I will become Associate Director for the same term, and Barbara and I will work closely in running the TCP. We are fortunate to have Kathy Miranda continuing as Executive Director. We are eliminating the position of TCP Coordinator, which Melanie Nevis has faithfully filled for the last 6 years. Deep appreciation to Melanie for her years of devoted service. I always found her cheerful, supportive, and willing to help by offering thoughtful suggestions.

After a year of careful consideration, and after discussing the pros and cons with the entire ACAT faculty, the ACAT Board decided in February to discontinue our accreditation with ACCET, effective when school resumed in the Fall. We met with the student body in early March to inform them of our decision, intending to give them enough advance notice to make the necessary financial arrangements. We also provided them with several payment alternatives we were considering. This began an active dialog between the student body and the administration, resulting in a wish on the part of the students to be much more active in the information-gathering process of the administration. Shortly after our announcement, we found out that student loan deferments were going to cease upon our letting go of the accreditation. We decided to extend our accreditation one more year so as not to leave any of our students in an impossible financial position. The candidates have come forth with many helpful suggestions and have nominated two students who will attend the Board meetings as candidate liaisons. Although it has been a challenging Spring in some ways, the opening of communication between student body and administration has been very positive.

In January, Jessica Wolf came to give a lecture/demonstration students on her work with Carl Stough and breathing coordination as it relates to the Alexander Technique. Jessica was very clear in describing the anatomy of breathing and the functioning of efficient breathing, as well as what can go wrong with breathing coordination. She likened breathing to ocean waves. Similar to waves, no two breaths are alike. Some waves slush up on the shore, some crash, and sometimes one can wait a long time for the next wave and when it comes, it's larger, but quiet. She cautioned us not to manipulate the breath—to leave it alone.

In March, two of our candidates, Nanette Walsh and Teva Bjerken, organized a panel for our Winter term assembly to speak about the use and place of psychology in teaching the Alexander Technique. Pamela Anderson, former faculty member and Director of ACAT, who also holds an M.A. in psychology from the New School; Barbara Kent, who has done extensive work with Ilana Rubinfeld and Synergy; and Joan

Notes From the Chair

by Lori Schiff

Dear colleagues,

As August and the summer heat begin to wind down, things at ACAT are heating up for the coming season.

The training course will begin again, still in residence at 129 West 67th Street and accredited for the school year. The Board of Directors will be enhanced by input from the trainees via an elected representative.

The Board has been working on presenting a series of continuing education courses for teachers and some extra classes for trainees. You will be receiving flyers with information soon if you do not already have them in hand. Classes presented last year were quite successful and booked very quickly!

We are also considering restructuring the Board of Directors, further routes for reducing expenses in the training course, increasing the support and services of volunteers from our community and additional ways to present information about the Alexander Technique and ACAT to the general public.

As Board Chair, I am excited to see the increasing energy and activity around supporting teachers with specific classes and public relations activities. I believe that this is the best and most interesting way to enhance all of our professional lives.

Barbara Kent and Joan Frost will be a terrific team for leading the training course. Special thanks to Barbara for returning as Director to share all her teaching and communication skills with the students and faculty.

This past year I directed some of my energy into public relations efforts for the Technique. Through contacts at *Dance and the Arts Magazine*, we arranged an interview with Jane Kosminsky on dance and the Technique which is appearing in two parts. We also placed ads in the magazine for the training course. I spoke with writers from three different magazines since January, resulting in articles that included information about the Technique in *Women's Sports and Fitness*, *McCall's*, and *Club Owners Magazine* (a health club industry magazine). We also advertised in the *Galleried School* newspaper which has a circulation of 14,000 per month during the school year.

Lectures about the Technique and teaching as a career were given by Jane Kosminsky to a group of dance professionals and by myself to a group at the Screen Actors' Guild.

By June of '95, I found that I wanted to direct more energy into my own teaching and to continue presenting the Alexander Technique to the public. The five years I have spent as ACAT's President and Chairperson have been rewarding and certainly educational. When I became "Chair" I wanted to contribute to the organization that had done so much for me. Training at ACAT and getting to know the community of teachers was and is the most life enhancing path I have ever taken.

"We are delighted that Barbara Kent has decided to return as Director of ACAT"

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Sheldon Berkowitz

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Lakin, a psychotherapist and longtime student of the Alexander Technique, who has worked with our faculty on a number of occasions, all participated. As Barbara said, "If I am working with the whole person, psychology comes into teaching as an aspect."

Transference — positive and negative, countertransference, and projection were discussed. We discussed inhibition — is it the pause that refreshes? What does it feel like? Does it feel like holding, shutting down? When we find out what's going on with ourselves in a situation, we have more energy, more space.

In April, John Nicholls gave a lecture/demonstration to our candidates. I learned that FM was proud of his slim biceps. John demonstrated an innovative way of introducing hands on the back of the chair, beginning with work while lying down on the table. He was specifically working to release the lines of muscle pull that operate the hands - between shoulder and elbow, between elbow and wrist. He thought of undoing the hands from the center of the thorax, from the central core of the body. Peggy Williams said, "Anyone can pull people apart, the trick is doing it while keeping the person connected." John posed to us: Well, how do you do that? By keeping connected yourself (of course). His workshop was tremendously informative for candidates and ACAT faculty alike.

Our Spring term assembly was organized by 8th term candidate, Claudia Peyton: Working with Actors. Claudia invited Carolyn Serota, former ACAT faculty member and current Alexander Technique teacher of Juilliard's drama division; Bill Connington, ACAT faculty member and Alexander teacher at The Actor's Institute at The New School; and Daniel Singer, ACAT faculty member and Alexander teacher at The Circle in the Square theater school. Bill said he explains an exercise after it is performed, not before, so the acting students can have the experience. Not to worry about not putting hands on — they are learning by imitation. Daniel works with the actors' attention and finding a way to stimulate their interest so they will want to use the process — e.g., leaving the last bite on their plate, not answering the phone before x number of rings has passed. He makes the agreement every time: 1) I am not your acting teacher; 2) We are not going to change what is working with the dialog; and 3) We are not going to change what is working with the movement. This helps allay the actors' anxiety that they'll lose their spontaneity. Carolyn helps her actors understand that the Alexander Technique is the best tool for enabling them to embody some imaginary thing. The actors don't need to depend upon themselves for the whole play — they can go back and up against each other. Also, Carolyn talked about using the Alexander Technique directions as a pulsing. One doesn't hold onto the directions, but can connect to them at anytime.

On June 10th and 11th we had our 4th annual ACAT retreat at Judy Stern's home in Rye, NY. It was an opportunity to share hands-on time, to hear what each other had been doing in our classes, and to talk about

the future of ACAT in a more relaxed and in-depth manner. We left feeling connected to one another and energized. We are a very strong and committed group.

We are starting to see more faculty and graduates step forward to volunteer time and service to ACAT. On June 5th, Jane Kosminsky gave a free lecture/demonstration to an organization called Career Transitions for Dancers. She recently gave a follow-up mini-group class to acquaint those interested with the hands-on work of the Technique and to give more information about our program. A number of people have volunteered to make return calls to those who have contacted ACAT inquiring about the Technique, and volunteers helping with the extracurricular and post-graduate courses we are initiating. All this good work is greatly appreciated and gives the feeling that the Center is alive and well.

On Wednesday, June 21st, we convened at a beautiful brownstone in Park Slope, Brooklyn for the graduation of Teva Bjerken, Sara Grindle, Betsy Hulton, and Mike Willis. The ceremony was celebrated as High Tea, and gave the flavor of stepping back 100 years in time. FM and AR would have felt right at home. The celebration was simple, homey, with good eats and good company.

We are looking forward in the Fall to welcoming three new candidates: Robert Bradley, Henry Lee, and Ed Malave, our first all-male class!

Here's wishing us all neck free, head forward and up into the new school year! §

"I learned that FM was proud of his slim biceps."

(Notes from the Chair, from preceding page)

At the Board's monthly meeting in June, I resigned from my position effective following the September meeting. As set forth in the By-Laws, the Board will appoint a replacement until the next election. I will continue to volunteer time to the Board, but not as President.

I want to thank the members of the Board, past and present, for their energy and support throughout these years. Your commitment and talents are a gift to the whole community.

I wish to thank Bill Connington, Jane Kosminsky and Judy Stern for contributing their knowledge, time and creativity to ACAT and to me during my term as Chair. I needed you more than you can imagine!

Best wishes to all of you for a healthy and productive fall.

Lauren Schiff
Board Chair

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culty in managing work and school, or the fact that they weren't qualified educationally (ACAT requires a B.A. or at least 3 years of full time college). Remember, if you trained before 1986 it was only 4 days a week. Could you manage full time training now? Did you have the college credits to be accepted? It is more challenging today. I think potential applicants are more aware of the time and effort it takes to develop a private practice. We've certainly tried to be truthful about postgraduate livelihood.

The period 1985-1990 was key to ACAT. We reached our adolescence as an institution. We became accredited. We affiliated with NASTAT. We developed a Reserve Fund (prior to that the Senior Faculty and members would essentially be charged additional dues to collect money to meet expenses.) And we grew. During 89-91 we had over 30 trainees in the program. We were accepting classes with at least five, usually six students. In January of 1992, we accepted our first class of less than five people. We were concerned. We were a little nervous about the financial implications but wanted to train this class and we wanted to make it work. We hoped for a class of six in the fall and got a class of five. Enrollment started to decline little by little. Each time the Board would debate what would make the most financial sense. To low enrollment, add leaves of absences and withdrawals and you get to the financial crisis we faced these past two years. We felt a bit like we were circling the wagons or throwing off ballast.

Each time the Board faces the financial implications of a low enrollment or a students withdrawal, it's critical. One person's tuition for the year can mean black or red on the bottom line. That's a tough way to run a school.

Yes, it's time to reorganize, to venture down new paths, to question our assumptions, to reach out for creative solutions. Over the past few years, the ACAT Board has actively pursued new space, fund raising, public relations, new advertising and marketing strategies, new educational programs, affiliations with larger institutions and organizational downsizing. We spent time and research on each idea's viability, practicality and cost. In some cases, we went further and developed a reasonable proposal or project and carried it out. Strategies we have researched and found not yet doable (either too expensive in time and money or the wrong fit with current operations) are new space, grant writing, consulting from organizational development experts, public relations campaign, consistent advertising, alternative accrediting agencies and finally dropping accreditation (I'll come back to this later).

Projects, programs or strategies we found doable and did, or are in the process of doing:

- 30th anniversary (saved us from going red in the 93-94 fiscal year)
- Increased volunteers (resources are always critical in taking on new projects or activities)

- Target advertising and marketing (Placed ads in *New Age Journal*, *The Juilliard Magazine*, and *Dance and the Arts*; Jane Kosminsky spoke about AT training to Dancers in *Career Transitions*)

- New promotional literature

- Post Graduate Workshops & Teacher Refresher Courses

- TCP enrichment through selective use of psychological consulting

- Faculty Development through annual faculty retreats

- Graduate and member survey to find out how teaching practices are going

Currently under consideration:

- Year long post-graduate training program

- Teachers and Speakers Bureau

- Advisory Board with Fund Raising, Small Business and Educational Expertise

I've given you a broad picture because ACAT is not just a training program. Our mission includes AT promotion and development through education and research. Our institution serves the public, the graduates, the members and the trainees.

Now to focus on the accreditation problem. Frankly, in terms of progress, it's a mixed blessing. The Board and administration have been grappling with the pros and cons for well over a year. We did not bring our deliberations into the wider ACAT community until we had a group understanding about the facts and implications. We had the students' interest as a top concern and we made every effort to come to decision that would give the students currently using government loans enough time to prepare for their training without loans. We had no intention of withholding information from the students; we only wanted to be sure that the information we gave was correct. We prepared a report outlining our reasons to the faculty to get some feedback on our analysis and our sense of urgency in making a decision.

Nobody wanted to drop accreditation but no one could come up with a way out. Joan Frost, Lori Schiff and myself presented the situation to the students with as much clarity as we could muster. In spite of all our efforts to accurately describe the situation and the implications, my fears came true and we had one piece of misinformation. A critical one at that: I had misinterpreted the USDE regulation about loan deferments. I understood it to mean that schools having USDE approval (without being accredited) could offer in-school deferments. I thought that students enrolled in ACAT could continue to defer repayments

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“One person's tuition for the year can mean black or red on the bottom line. That's a tough way to run a school.”

(from preceding column)

on existing loans while in school. Upon consultation with USDE officials I found that ACAT could not grant deferments if we were not accredited. My mistake and I regret it. Without deferments, at least three trainees informed us that they would probably not be able to continue training. The loss of income from three trainees (about \$19,000) is greater than the loss of continuing accreditation for one year (about \$15,000). Keeping accreditation one more year is the right thing to do.

The ACAT Board has a strong commitment to the students in training. The students feedback, emotional reactions and constructive responses were heard with respect and empathy and heavily influenced the Board's decision to pay for accreditation in the 1995-1996 school. We will make a decision for the following year as soon as we see what the financial picture for the upcoming year looks like. Can ACAT keep accreditation after this? Truthfully, I don't know. I

(from preceding column)

think we can, *if* the following happen - *if* other ACAT programs and activities bring in substantial income, *if* the government's planned overhaul of USDE loans does not create heavy financial burden or create obstacles in our qualifications as an eligible institution. We shall see.

This crisis has done a lot for ACAT. It's raised our conscious awareness about the need for change. Its raised the involvement level from all sources - Board, Faculty, Members and Students. We have renewed our commitment to work on the relationship between Board and Students and between the Board and members. At this year's faculty retreat we spent a good portion of Sunday afternoon on ACAT's mission and their vision for the future of ACAT, including committing personal resources and skills to make it happen. The students have generated ideas and offered resources. It's not a question *of if* we can make it work, but *how* we can make it work. §

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is currently doing business. Several factors contribute to the financial problems -- high rent, the high cost of accreditation, low enrollment, and the difficulties of fundraising in today's economy, to name a few.

The student body needs and deserves answers. Without all the facts we can't help find solutions. How is the board responding to current urgent business matters? Does the way the board conducts business need to happen differently? The idea of a voting student board member should be explored. Business advisors might help the board with short and long-term goals. Should the board include individuals whose strengths are in financial planning, business, legal arenas, and educational administration, whether or not they are Alexander Teachers? Should we investigate how quickly we could make Judith Liebowitz's dream of affiliating ACAT with a larger institution a reality?

Many of our alumni are respected professionals who have worked in the fields of administration, business, finance, public relations, and information technology. What steps are being taken to involve them in supporting the training program? In the past when we have asked our alumni for help with specific needs, they have come through. Its time for the board to appeal to them again clearly communicating what needs to be done.

What is the role of the student body in the face of these changes that will impact our lives? We do know the difficulties which arose between the student body and the board were in the way we communicated. It

became difficult to remain clear in hearing each other's point of view and not be angry, blameful, or defensive in response. I believe these difficulties turned into a blessing. In a later meeting, with the aid of Barbara Kent, we were led through a group processing session. For me, this session incorporated an emotional connection, by means of communication, to the ease, presence, and poise we embody physically in the Alexander Technique. The session enabled the students and board members to listen to each other and be heard, creating a sense of inclusion and validation for all of us. It would be good to include as many of these processing sessions as possible each term.

Sometimes conflict does have positive outcomes. As a student body, we have begun a positive dialogue with the board. Things may not always move as quickly as we would like. But we can volunteer to assist on specific projects where our strengths and talents may help. Given what we know and have learned this past term we have paved the way for the student liaisons to continue the open communication with the board and contribute with ideas, feedback, and practical assistance.

It is my pleasure to announce and welcome the student liaison for this upcoming fall term, Barbara McCrane (in her fourth term), the alternate liaison, Isabel De Sebastian (in her third term), and substitute liaison, Allison Foley (in her fourth term). I wish you all well in the journey ahead and encourage you to find in each challenge an opportunity for growth and transformation. §

“What is the role of the student body in the face of these changes that will impact our lives?”

Editor's Note: The following obituary for Marjorie Barstow, and the attached teaching aphorisms, are printed with the gracious permission of Jeremy Chance of DIRECTION magazine. It was posted on-line in the Alextech Newsgroup. Jeremy writes "I won't be writing Marjorie's Obituary in DIRECTION but I wanted to write one anyway so I offer it up to AlexTech - perhaps there are some members who know little of Marj's history and others who would like to read of her again. If I have made any factual errors please correct the record publically - I am not sure in some cases if I am correct and would like to know the truth." I have published Jeremy's posting as it appeared on-line with minor editorial changes for space considerations.

Marjorie Barstow 1899-1995

Two events first impressed upon me the magnificence of Marjorie's age. The first happened at Australian Customs when she first entered Australia. The computer wouldn't recognise her birth date of 1899 - it only started at 1900. The second came as we were travelling to Paris for a workshop. Marjorie turned to me and remarked: "Oh, I haven't been to Paris since the Germans came and went."

And now she's gone. On August 2nd, 1995, at her home in Lincoln, Nebraska, and surrounded by some of her most loyal students, Marjorie Barstow died. Had she lived to August 26th she would have been 96 years of age - a good innings by anyone's reckoning. She once declared in Australia: "I'm so old, I'm an antique!"

Marj - as she was more affectionately called - had the distinction of receiving the first official teacher certification ever handed out by FM. Of the group she commenced her Alexander training with, she was the first to qualify - the others, at FM's suggestion, stayed on for another year. Not Marj. Many of her classmates have since remarked that she always had the best hands - and indeed she went on to have one of the most influential and controversial careers of any teacher since FM himself. Marj was born in 1899 in Ord, Nebraska, USA. She was the baby of four children and, at one year of age, her family moved to the house which Marj occupied for the rest of her life. Her father was in the grain and lumber business and later in life Marj took over and ran the family business. She had a sharp mind for business - Barstow Enterprises still operates today.

Breaking with the traditional role of woman for the day - this is mid-west America we are talking about - Marj attended the University of Nebraska. She was always interested in movement and, soon after graduating in 1921, she began teaching ballet and ballroom dancing. But very soon she became dissatisfied with the progress of her students. She noticed that after a certain point in their training, nothing she could teach them seemed to improve their coordination.

Just at that time her own dance teacher returned from a trip to London raving about a man called F. Matthias Alexander and showed Marj his two books: "Man's Supreme Inheritance" and "Conscious Constructive Control of the Individual". Of these she declared: "I was so fascinated with the books that I preferred to read them rather than anything else." A salutary lesson for us all.

With her recently acquired movie camera underarm - Marj was always a little ahead of her time - she and her sister Helen (who lived to 101) set forth for London. They had lessons every weekday, alternating between FM and his brother AR (Albert Reddan), for the next six months. It was then that Marj first visited Paris.

It was not long after returning from London that Marj received a letter from FM inviting her back to join his first teacher training school. There were only three people in attendance that first day of training: Erika Schumann (later Whittaker), George Trevelyan (later Sir) and Marj. Three years later Marj returned to America.

She spent six years working as AR's assistant in Boston and it was during that time that she first met Frank Pierce Jones. It was the beginning of what was to be a life-long association between them, with Marj making an annual trip to Boston to work with Frank and they led workshops together. Jones has written that while FM had the best hands, AR was the better communicator. AR's influence on their teaching styles, and Marj and Frank's influence on each other, has generally been neglected in all the debates about Marj's often controversial teaching methodology.

Soon after this early Boston stage of her teaching career Marj needed to become more involved in her family's business. For many years she

all but disappeared from the general Alexander community in America. But Marj didn't stop working on herself. Of this period she has often remarked that she decided to get tough with herself - insisting on the rigorous application of Alexander's discoveries on a moment to moment basis in her daily activities. It may be this period that so convinced her of the efficacy of applying Alexander's discoveries to 'activities' - generally recognised as one of the hallmarks of Marj's teaching style.

This long period of steady application began to pay off and soon her reputation in the Alexander community as an innovative and effective teacher began to spread. Many teachers began the long pilgrimage to the prairie state eventually leading to the formation of the famous summer workshop which has continued every summer to this year. Marj began her life-long study of group teaching in the 1950's when the University of Nebraska invited her to teach. One semester she had three different classes. She continued with this work and private lessons to the many teachers who continued to visit her in Lincoln.

Her group teaching skills took a major turn in 1973 with an invitation from the Music Department of the University of Texas to teach Alexander's discoveries. (Marj rarely referred to the work as the Alexander Technique, preferring to call the work 'Alexander's discoveries') They gave little indication of what was involved and it was only upon arrival that she was told her class consisted of 80 people. Rather than disappoint them, Marj proceeded to figure out a way to teach that many - helped by her many years of experiments at the University of Nebraska - and was surprised that she was able to get results despite the overwhelming teacher to student ratio.

Over the following years, as the invitations from Universities, Theatre Centres, Martial Arts schools, Music camps, Alexander training schools and the like flooded in, Marj began developing a unique methodology for group teaching that continues today amongst the many teachers that she 'unofficially' trained.

It was perhaps the odd nature of her apprenticeship-style training that got her most in trouble with Alexander authorities. She never sought to train teachers but could not stop the flow of hungry students that pursued her as she made her rounds both at home and on the road. Flustered servants of the Alexander community continually demanded of her: "Do you train teachers?" She answered no. But then, with that cheeky glint in her eye, she would go on to say "I help people to observe themselves." Sometimes these activities involved teaching others. No-one could quite accept this simple attitude so that tempers and politics, in the later years of her life, began to cloud the extraordinary contribution Marj had made to the work.

In 1994 NASTAT for the first time gave official recognition to this giant of a teacher still in our midst with an award of honour "with all the gratitude, congratulations, and best wishes." No-one knew it at the time - but it was a really a good-bye message to a great teacher.

Marjorie Barstow was a true revolutionary. In her quiet, delicate but determined way, she forever altered the teaching traditions that we inherited from Alexander. People have praised and decried her, welcomed and rejected her - but none were able to ignore her. Many thousands of peoples' lives have been transformed by her work and, for those lucky enough to have experienced it, there can be nothing but thanks for her unique wisdom. To the end she always gave the credit to Alexander, never putting tickets on herself. It was always his discoveries, his work. Rather than mourn her loss it is more appropriate to rejoice at her discoveries, her work - the tremendous legacy that her own remarkable dedication had left us.

Still, we will miss her.

What you want is a little bit of nothing. But the trouble with all you people is that you want something. And that something is your habit.

All you'll get is the absence of what you had.

It is the delicacy of the movement that will give you your release.

You stopped that constructive thinking that wouldn't have allowed the habit to take place.

When I find myself pushing, I have not taken the time to see where I am before I start to move.

Inhibition is the activity by which the old habit cannot take place.

You didn't recognise that you could move without the tension you usually associated with forward and up.

Nothing will move if you don't engage their mind.

When I help her she relies on her feeling, because then her feelings are freedom and ease.

If you memorise your feeling you'll never change.

You don't want to reproduce the feeling but the mental process.

The 'magic', if you want to call it magic, is your constructive thinking.

You have to do the brainwork.

CONSTRUCTIVE: because we are changing something in ourselves which is ineffective, harmful; CONSCIOUS: because we become aware of what we are doing; CONTROL: because we are redirecting energy and bringing freedom into our whole mechanism.

Our voices are talking to your thinking apparatus; our hands are talking to your senses of feeling.

Learn to laugh at yourselves - you always move better with a smile.

I am not making a mechanical person out of them: I want my students to know what I'm doing; know how they experience it; talk it over with them.

How we get ourselves into this mess I don't know - but this is a way to get out.

He was scared as he was keeping his mind on what was bothering him, instead of looking for what to change.

What are you waiting for? You're setting your head and waiting to get a right position.

Forget all that, it belongs to the past. As soon as you get a good experience, instead of using it, you say "Oh - I usually do this and this and this." And the new experience just washes away.

You'd better talk about a preventing, because if you talk about a keeping, you will stiffen.

When you give up - doesn't that mean you were looking for a position?

The only time I fussed with you about feeling is when you set yourself to feel right.

I don't let you take all that time before you start because you're trying to feel you're right and that's endgaining.

He puts the mental state at the end of the process - that's upside down.

Its only if she starts pulling down that her attention needs to go to her head and neck.

There is no right place, there is just a little bit more ease.

Pupil: "My feelings are confused." Marj: "So long as your thinking isn't confused, you're OK. I don't know why you are pushing there. You've got some kind of idea - let's see what your idea is." Pupil: "I move my head but I'm not sure." Marj: "You're never sure. You move your head and see what happens."

You just start helping them from where they are and where their thinking is. The people who are the most difficult to help are the ones who won't talk.

Pupil: "I'm going to move my head and not pull down." Marj: "You let that little word 'not' slip in and your habit slips in. Say instead 'I'm going to move my head and see what happens' and carry on your constructive thinking through the act.

You've got so many 'nots' you'll never undo yourself!

Marj: "Why aren't you moving?" Pupil: "I thought about not stopping my head." Marj: "There's that negative thought - that's why you stiffened. That's why I let you talk - you give yourselves away."

You do have the experience that as you let your head move and body follow, your habits cannot take over.

Even those positions of mechanical advantage are movements.

Emotions are a part of your mental activity.

The head tilts a little as it moves up - I don't know myself if the tilt forward moves the head up or if the upward movement tilts the head forward.

I'm not interested in little pieces of tension - it's my whole head and my whole body.

When you don't feel some stiffening or pressure, you don't know what to do.

Your sensory mechanism becomes more and more reliable but you trust your thinking first.

He creates a feeling which stiffens the direction.

She let her feeling decide instead of her thinking.

Spend a little time in conversation finding out what the person is learning.

Once the pupil sees it for himself, he can make the change without any trouble.

Maybe he was pulling his head back a little - but he got a little improvement.

You can't tell until you move it. You move it, then you feel it - and that's what you notice. When you fix it - you've lost it.

You are not supposed to expect something - you are supposed to be experimenting.

Thinking and moving are the same thing - don't wait for perfection.

I don't want you to have a picture - I want you to know you're doing it.

That's the best of them - though I have heaps more. Please feel free to reproduce and hand these out to whoever you think might find them useful. Marj had looked over all these aphorisms and about some remarked to me "Hey - did I say that? That's pretty good." Some of them, like Alexander's, only make sense when you can understand the context - its part of the fun of learning from them. Every teacher will have come across a situation where one of these teaching aphorisms makes perfect sense. Does anyone else have some to share?

Jeremy Chance - Editor of DIRECTION, A Journal on the Alexander Technique Tel: 61-2-665.3364 Fax: 61-2-665.1578 email <jeremy@sydney.dialix.oz.au>

News from the Center

Teaching Space Needed: John Nicholls plans to visit New York in April 1996 to teach. He is in need of housing and a teaching space. If you can offer your space, or have a suggestion of a space, please contact Victoria Hyatt at (212) 628-8583.

List your AT workshop or class with a new Manhattan publication: **Time Out New York**. Send information to Gia Kourlas, Time Out NY, 627 Broadway, 7th floor, NY, NY 10012

ACAT has received a copy of "Singing. The Physical Nature of the Vocal Organ, A guide to the Unlocking of the Singing Voice" by Frederick Husler and Yvonne Rodd-Marling. The book was recommended by Missy Vineyard.

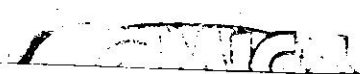
ACAT received a grant for one year listing on the World Wide Web. Our home page address is <http://www.arts-online.com/aca.htm> Our free listing includes name, address, contact person (Barbara Kent)

phone number and a 50 word ad which reads as follows; "Carpal Tunnel or RSI problems? Back/Neck Pain? Sitting too long? Both under and over exertion interfere with your use of anti-gravity muscles. Learn the successful alternative technique to find relief from pain, change the pattern and improve performance. Move up and unwind under the expert hands of an Alexander teacher."

Ruth Murray, Co-Director of the Carringtons' training course in London, will be teaching in New York City October 9 through October 20. Call Lori Schiff for information and scheduling at (212)222-0176.

While teaching at the Aspen Music Festival this summer, Lori Schiff also presented classes on Injury Prevention for Accompanists through the Festival, and workshops for Physical Therapists at the Aspen Club.

**American Center for the
Alexander Technique, Inc.**
129 West 67th Street
New York, NY 10023



THE AMERICAN
CENTER FOR THE
ALEXANDER
TECHNIQUE, INC.

MORE NEWS FROM THE CENTER

MEMBERS CONTRIBUTIONS>

In the 1995 membership renewal, members donated a total of \$530: \$105 to the Barbara Kent Fund, \$250 to the General Reserve Fund, \$30 to the Judith Leibowitz Fund, \$50 for PR and Advertising, \$150 for ACAT's Space Search.

CONTRIBUTIONS> \$100 for the Barbara Kent Fund from the Class of December 1994: Urs Sauer, Shelly Senter, Sally Sullivan and Kaori Yoshino; \$1,100 from non-member supporters and \$1,500 from corporate donations for the General Reserve Fund, \$45 for copies of Urs Sauer's paper sold to raise \$ for the Judith Leibowitz Fund.

FUND EXPENDITURES> The Barbara Kent Fund supported 2 workshops for the trainees, one by John Nichols and one by Jessica Wolf -- Total spent \$233. The Judith Leibowitz Fund supported Michelle Arsenault's documentation project "Moving to Learn" with a grant of \$800 and the JL Fund also supported the NASTAT Boston Regional Chapter in the campaign to have an ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE listing in the Bell Yellow pages - \$30 donated to help cover mailing costs. The General Reserve supported all other activities of ACAT including the TCP, the information and referral service, the Membership survey.

94-95 POST GRAD workshops and Teacher Refresher Courses were financial successes largely due to the volunteers who organized the mailings and the registration of these classes. All total ACAT made \$1400.

ACAT brochures have a new look, a new cover designed by Sara Seagull of Imprint Designs. We had 2000 printed and members can buy them for \$.35 a piece. Sara also designed our TCP brochure, TCP catalog cover, TCP Certificates and ACAT stationary.

ACAT has signed up NYNEX's INTERACTIVE CALL ANSWERING. Callers are asked to direct their call to 1 of 4 options: 1 for information

about the technique or a teacher referral, 2 for information about the TCP, 3 for 'Whatever's currently hot' and "wait for the tone" for all other messages. This will help organize our responses and hopefully make more sense for both caller and callee. **INSIDER'S CODE:** To bypass the ACAT message and go directly to the tone, press # twice.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED TO RETURN CALLS. In the ideal world, a real person answers the phone during normal business hours. In the now world, ACAT administrators are part-time and do answer the phone when they are in the office. Unfortunately this is minimal, and does create a less than perfect professional image to many callers. To expand our real person phone time, ACAT can use your help. Do you have time to return a few phone calls? OR MAYBE EVEN a couple of hours a week to answer the ACAT phone? From the comfort of your own home or office, provide information about the Alexander Technique, provide teacher referrals, take names and addresses for mailing brochures and literature, take messages, etc. CALL the office, listen to the new Greeting and let us know if you can help!

Sarni Ogus (ACAT Distinguished Senior Faculty) has been developing her Long Island practice with the following outreaches: Lecture Demo for the Center for Creative Retirement at South Hampton College, weekend workshop for Feldenkrais practioners in Alexander Use of the Self, teaching at Gurney's Inn and Health Spa 2 days per week and a 30 minute television interview by a nurse practioner hosting a Health and Wellness Show on a local Long Island station.

Judy Stern's ANATOMY CLASS is open to Members & non-members. Ten weeks of anatomy for \$325 (non-members pay \$400.) Judy's 1st term is head, spine and torso, 2nd term is hips, legs and feet, 3rd term is shoulders, arms and hands.

ACAT supports a new teacher's networking group with \$500 grant from the Judith Leibowitz Fund. The next meeting is November 14th from 7 - 10 PM at 110 Chambers Street -Third Floor. Dance Studio is on the buzzer.

IDEAS are forming now for an ACAT Teacher's/Speaker's Bureau. Our target audience will be in the health/wellness/medical arena. Call Judy Stern with your ideas about mailing lists, advertising, marketing, etc. Judy's # (914) 921-2400.

ACAT's telephone survey was a huge success - 119 teachers were interviewed or mailed in their responses. To please the treasurer, phone calls costing \$950 were paid by an MCI coupon for \$1,000. Results are taking many hours to compile, a full report is anticipated in the next newsletter.

Self-employed individuals who have already filed 1994 returns, but did not claim the 25-percent health insurance deduction, may do so by filing Form 1040X, Amended US Individual Income Tax Return. The deduction, which expired in December 1993, has been restored retroactive to January 1, 1994. Beginning with next year's (1995) tax return, the deduction will increase to 30 percent of allowable premiums.

On October 22nd, Joan Frost led a warm-up based on the Alexander Technique for the participants of the 30th Annual Conference of the American Dance Therapy Association held at the Rye Town Hilton, Rye, NY. Although the scheduled time was 7 AM Sunday morning, more than 20 dance therapists came and were very enthusiastic.

NOT TOO LATE! Most of the Post graduate workshops still have space for participants. Call Tom Vasiliades (718) 522-3043 for your last minute registration.

**NEW BYLAW AMENDMENT,
SEE OPPOSITE SIDE OF PAGE.**

NEW BYLAW AMENDMENT TO ENTITLE TCP STUDENT MEMBERSHIP

At the May 1995 meeting of the Board of Directors, a new category of membership was created. Recognizing the need to foster student involvement in ACAT, both during training and afterwards, the Board voted unanimously to include a student membership category. This gives students all rights and privileges of regular teaching members except voting. As recognized members, students will have access to all official corporate documents like financial reports and approved minutes from Board of Director meetings. Additionally, students will be invited to attend and speak at the Annual General Meeting.

This article serves to inform all members of the amendment, which will be voted on at the 1996 annual membership meeting.

NEW BY-LAW AMENDMENT: [Old wording to be deleted is left in brackets.] New wording is underlined.

ARTICLE I, Section 1. Membership [Membership shall be upon application to and election by the Board of Directors.] There shall be [one] two categor[y]ies of membership - Member and Student Member. A Member shall hold a certificate from a training program approved the the North American Society of Teachers of the Alexander Technique (NASTAT), by the Society of Teachers of the Alexander Technique (STAT), or by a Society duly affiliated with either of the foregoing. Membership shall be upon application to and election by the the Board of Directors. In addition, all applicants for membership shall be, in the opinion of the Board of Directors, in agreement with the objectives of the Corporation as expressed in the Certificate of Corporation and these Bylaws. The Board of Directors may establish a schedule of dues as a criterion for membership.

Non-voting membership to ACAT shall be a privilege of all students enrolled in the Teacher Certification Program. Student Members will be entitled to rights and privileges of membership in the organization including attendance at the Annual General Meeting, special meetings and special events.

(More News from the Center on opposite side of this page)