



## From the Board

Dear Member,

I write you now on behalf of the board of directors to give you some details and background about the big news - ACAT's new home. Hopefully you received the general announcement in late August.

Index	
From the Board	1
TCP News	2
Alice in Alexanderland	3
Existence	5
What's with the new look?	6
Rental Policy	7
News from the center	8

ACAT's Teacher Certification Program and general administrative office had been run out of the Elaine Kaufman Cultural Center (formerly known as The Hebrew Arts Center) for about 15 years. At several points in ACAT's history the board sought a new or permanent home with varying degrees of aggressiveness depending on the economic climate, the real estate market and the composition of the board itself. It was not an easy task. Despite the disadvantages of being a subtenant, and despite ACAT's desire to have its own space, the prohibitive costs of renting, let alone purchasing a new headquarters contributed to the reluctance to leave a space that was familiar, "settled in", fairly comfortable, in a respectable institution and located on familiar turf - near Julliard, convenient for Judith Leibowitz, who had difficulty travelling, and in the general neighborhood of other founding members including Debby Caplan and faculty Pamela Anderson, Pearl Ausubel, Ron Dennis, Barbara Kent, Jane Kosminsky, Daniel Singer, Anne Waxman, to name a few.

Sometime in late 1997 or early 1998 the board was made aware that there was a good likelihood that, due to EKCC's expanded programming in conjunction with the public school, there would no longer be room for ACAT's TCP program. The board went into a renewed search, and only when the various possible "leaseholding" situations had been eliminated did the board explore another subtenancy situation, this time at the Sandra Cameron Dance Center in lower Manhattan. Although the board was not thrilled at the prospect of having the main office and the TCP separated, the board was pleased that despite the change there would be consistency in the administrative address and phone number that

*continued on page 5*

## ACAT Has Moved!!

First Lease of our own in over 15 years!!  
TCP starting up in new space!!

2-3 teaching spaces available for rental to ACAT members! (and to others eventually)

As of August 30, ACAT has new headquarters at 39 W. 14th St, New York, NY 10011. The Fall 1999 TCP started on October 4, 1999, in our new space.

As of this writing members can reserve teaching spaces for private lessons, group lessons, lecture dems or other functions. Furthermore ACAT is starting on OPEN DAY at the center. On Wednesdays, the center will be open to as many as 6 teachers at a time to teach for a table fee of \$5.00 a lesson. For details call the center.

See the rental policy in more detail on page 7.

For more information call the ACAT office at (212) 633-2229

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!!**

**ANNUAL MEETING/OPEN HOUSE**

**February 6, 2000**

ANNUAL MEETING 2:00-3:30

OPEN HOUSE 3:30-6:00

## TCP News — Fall 1999

by Joan Frost

Last Spring term, in response to a request by the 9s to have a class on teaching groups, I invited **Hope Martin, Mio Morales, and Judith Grodowitz** to come each for an hour and a half on three different Mondays to convey their approach to group teaching.

**Hope** taught a mock introductory group class with us pretending we had had no prior experience in the Technique. We had a chance to experience a distillation of her years of experimenting with and refining the form.

**Mio**, having trained first with Frank Pierce Jones and subsequently extensively with Marjorie Barstow, was a master at observation and helping us to become more aware and clear about what we were thinking at any given moment. He took us into uncovering and discovering our sub-thoughts and feelings. It felt as if our brain cells were being challenged in new directions.

**Judith** said she looks at all areas of her life for inspiration and source material for her classes. Her interest is in addressing the whole person, since "everything meets with me". F.M. was following his muse — why not do likewise? Judy draws from Greek mythology, poetry, philosophy, social history, Bartenieff Fundamentals, and classic art and sculpture — whatever interests and inspires her. She thinks of the work affecting and affected by concentric circles, from solo to duet to group to environment. Each class was unique according to the person who gave it and each was an enrichment for us.

For our Spring term assembly, **Ralph Zito** generously shared with us, in the form of a voice class, a taste of his knowledge accrued from years of teaching voice at the

Juilliard School and now influenced and modified by his Alexander training. He had us experiment with saying the basic Alexander directions in terms of optimal vocal production. We also experimented with different ways to make certain words using our jaws, lips, and tongues in varying degrees. Some of us found we had habitually underworking or overworking lips, others, underworking or overworking tongues. For me, the class opened up entirely new areas for exploration and discovery in the realm of use and speech.

Saturday, June 20th saw the graduation of **Hyun Sook Baek, Naina Dewan, Emily Fraenkel, Loren Shlaes, and Ralph Zito**. **Beate Mathois**, who had been part of their class, will be finishing up her training in Vienna, Austria this fall. We all enjoyed an evening of ceremony, delicious food, and dancing at the Open Center Tea Room in Soho. The class presented the ACAT faculty with four "Handy-Dandy Turn-Time Charts", beautifully laminated, so at a glance, given the amount of time available for turns and the number of people in the class, we will be able to determine the length of each turn. What a clever and useful gift, especially since Ralph will no longer be around to provide this needed service personally!

In October we admitted six new candidates: **Sigal Bergman, Kate Kobak, Julia Langham, Susan Pfeffer, Lee Shapley, and Christine Suhr**. We will also be admitting a class in January.

Classes this fall are being held both at our new location (and home!) at 39 W. 14th St., Room 507 and at the Sandra Cameron Dance Center. We are looking at ways to eventually have all classes at 14th Street.

The Newsletter of the American Center for the Alexander Technique is published three times yearly by the

American Center for the  
Alexander Technique®  
39 W 14th Street Room 507  
New York, NY 10011  
(212) 633-2229

Submissions should be sent to ACATUSA@aol.com. 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. Editor: Tara R. Sullivan at (212) 489-7849.

## Alice in Alexanderland

Looking in the Glass  
by Naina Dewan

*"Come, my head's free at last!" said Alice in a tone of delight, which changed into alarm in another moment, when she found that her shoulders were nowhere to be found: all she could see, when she looked down, was an immense length of neck, which seemed to rise like a stalk out of a sea of green leaves that lay far below her.*

~ Lewis Carroll

Training to be a teacher of the Alexander Technique at the American Center for the Alexander Technique, Inc. has been simultaneously the most challenging and the most fulfilling self-chosen project I've ever completed; needless to say, it's been life-changing. As I reflect upon my personal journey through this training, I am filled with amazement, awe, and gratitude; amazement in that I have actually completed the program, awe for the depth of knowledge and insight I have gained and continue to gain, gratitude for the very existence of this program and my great fortune in finding it at this point in my life.

What has happened in the last 3 years? How could so much have happened so fast? Who was I then? Who am I now? These are only four in the kaleidoscope of questions that I pose to myself as I contemplate both my experiences since the beginning of training, and how to write about a very internal journey that is still, and will always be, in process. And I wouldn't have it any other way. Indeed, the training is a beautiful beginning to a lifelong exploration of my individual potential of kinesthetic integration, choice, and freedom, as it is a beginning to a lifelong exploration of the art of teaching this technique. I have reached the transition from trainee to teacher and eternal student, and I share my reflections of training in the spirit of the work.

### Down the Rabbit Hole

*The rabbit-hole went straight on like a tunnel for some way, and then dipped suddenly down, so suddenly that Alice had not a moment to think about stopping herself before she found herself falling down a very deep well. Either the well was very deep, or she fell very slowly, for she had plenty of time as she went down to look about her, and to wonder what was going to happen next.*

~ Lewis Carroll



Moving to New York City in the August of 1996 and entering training in October were the first steps of a journey that has led me to where I am today. After 3 years, 9 terms of ACAT, and 3 jobs, I find myself where I am today. And I re-realize that this journey has been one of falling, releasing, re-balancing, questioning, reaffirming ~ a journey of courage in the face of exquisite change. Since the beginning of training, I have changed in every realm of my life ~ psychophysically, emotionally, socially. Training has been a lighthouse, a constant in my life, the eye around which other forces dance, yet not separate from the sea of change. And this is the paradox ~ despite the constancy of training, the amount of change I've undergone in training and from training is personally staggering. Perhaps change truly is the only constant.

### Follow the White Rabbit

The beauty of training includes guidance. In my moments of anxiety, confusion, and at one point, depression, I was offered guidance. The ingenious discoveries of F.M Alexander offered me a trail to follow and explore. The wisdom, words, and hands of the teachers of ACAT, who are nothing less than visionary, offered me the illumination for this trail, which I am still on, that leads to trusting my own intuition, thinking, and teaching. The teachers of ACAT have been mentors for me, and their strength has been a model. The words lesson and re-education are very appropriately used in this work. I offer my whole-hearted thank you to the faculty of ACAT for the gift of training, to the teachers whose published work I've read and, believe me, re-read, and of course to Alexander himself.

### Advice from a Caterpillar

*The Caterpillar and Alice looked at each other for some time in silence: at last the Caterpillar took the hookah out of its mouth, and addressed her in a languid sleepy voice. "Who are you?" said the Caterpillar. This was not an encouraging opening for a conversation. Alice replied, rather shyly, "I—I hardly know, sir, just at present—at least I know who I was when I got up this morning, but I think I must have been changed several times since then."*

*"What do you mean by that?" said the Caterpillar sternly. "Explain yourself!"*

*"I can't explain myself, I'm afraid, sir," said Alice, "because I'm not myself, you see."*

*"I don't see," said the Caterpillar. "I'm afraid I can't put it more clearly," Alice replied very politely, "for I can't understand it myself to begin with; and being so many different sizes in a day is very confusing." ... For some minutes (the Caterpillar) puffed away without speaking, but at last it unfolded its arms, took the hookah out of its mouth again, and said, "So you think you're changed, do you?"*

*~ Lewis Carroll*

I entered the training at ACAT with the hope that immersing myself in intensive study of the Alexander Technique would cure my back pain and allow me to dance and perform again. While I can not say that it has been cured, I can say that I am pain free on a daily basis. And as importantly, I now know what to do when I am in pain to get out of pain. Or actually, I now know what not to do. My training has offered the ocean of knowledge and the laboratory for self-exploration that I needed, so that I can have a life where my choices are no longer restricted by pain. I remember the day that I realized that I was no longer restricted by pain; I had just finished an African dance class sometime in my 5th term, and after dancing African dance with full energy, I was not in pain. This moment was one of my happiest. And last summer, I began dancing and performing again, and continue to do so.

I remember the feeling of not having enough time as early as grade school. But it was since the 10th grade of high school, through college, until I began training, that I felt as if I never had enough time. I always felt like I needed to rush. I thought I knew what it was to be calm, yet it wasn't until I began my lessons in the technique that I experienced what it was to be truly quiet in my body. Studying the Alexander Technique has calmed the overall state of my nervous system. I'm calmer, lighter, and happier. The training at ACAT was, and is, a forum where taking time is valued. The idea of "coming back to myself" has empowered me with the practice of embodying myself with more consciousness, and the principles are my tools.

Training to be a teacher of this work has re-introduced me to myself. I have no doubt that compared to before training and now, I trust myself more and am less anxious in any given situation. The training demanded that I look at myself, that I become aware of my own habits, that I learn the difference between unproductive self-judgement and gentle, constructive discernment. Studying the technique, for me, has led to self-responsibility, as a student, a teacher,

and a woman. My lessons evolved to training, training evolved to practice and application, and application evolved to a philosophy of life that seeks to explore and experience the potential of individual choice and freedom. And I am only just beginning. Now I am ready to begin training!

### Mad Tea-Party

The beauty of ACAT includes a variety of teachers with their subjective experiences, pedagogical approaches, and philosophies. From this flowered a growing self-reliance, and the realization that I can teach from who I am. The individual beauty of each teacher is that she/he teaches from her/his individual experience. This self-reliance and this simple, yet profound, realization have proven invaluable now that I've graduated. I've experienced varying approaches within ACAT as well as outside of ACAT, I've been confused, I've been clear, but most importantly, I have heard, seen, and felt the unanimous agreement at the primary importance of teaching the principles of awareness, inhibition, and direction. And when I remember this, I am clear.

The Alexander Technique has offered me the kinesthetic experience and understanding of the inherent interconnectedness of the body, as well as a foundation for a new perspective with which to see the interconnectedness of life on this earth and in the universe. The American Center for the Alexander Technique has offered me the laboratory that I didn't even know I wanted to investigate myself and begin an on-going inquiry into what it means to be human. This work is the study of being. The existence of what's called the Alexander Technique gives me hope for the quality of the human condition.



*continued from page 1*

## Existence

A man is chained to a rock.  
So, naturally, I stop what I'm doing  
And say to him, "I don't have time  
For this. I'm very busy."

I stand  
Just inches away from him,  
Breathing into his beard.

He looks away from me  
Peering into the clouds,  
Or the sun, or further.

Finally, I notice that his stomach  
has been ripped open,  
presumably for the kidneys,  
by eagles.

"What a unique situation," I say to myself.  
Then I become aware of the feeling center  
In my brain as it  
Ices over.

And I've lost something I never even knew  
Existed.

In another poem, also called "Existence"  
The man speaks to me. He croaks,  
"Watch out."

- Bob Bradley

ACAT has had for these many years. Although all change requires some adjustment, the board was very pleased that generally the faculty and trainees were pleased with the spacious, clean, elegant new quarters. Having been discouraged by the last round of real estate situations, and encouraged by the positive response to the Sandra Cameron Center the wind had definitely been taken out of the sails in terms of seeking new space. Furthermore both Tom Vasiliades and Daniel Singer, who played key roles in the search for space had stepped down from the board.

Late this spring when it became apparent that EKCC would no longer be able accommodate the small office that ACAT had been using for general administration for the last 15 years, the search began for new office space. Coincidentally, around this same time, a personal contact came forward in the form of the person who ran the Authentic Movement Space, a space which other Alexander Teachers had also rented out regularly. The lease was expiring and this person was giving up the space, were we interested? While there were many positive aspects of the space, it was not really the amount of square footage the board had hoped for. On the other hand, the extensive search conducted by the board left us discouraged about our ability to afford the amount of space we ideally needed. There was something about this situation that had us really thinking about it and how to get it to work for us. It really had potential and we hoped that if we just got going we'd eventually figure the rest of the details out. In the meantime, for practical reasons and for the sake of continuity, we could continue to use the Sandra Cameron Dance Center for the classes that might not fit in the center. If however, we had to rent additional space to run the TCP the additional rental fee put us over our normal operating budget. However, in this new scenario, we could not only make that money back, we could take in additional monies with our ability to rent the space out to others while the training was not in session. It required some discussion, soul searching, and debate.. Do we take something less than what we want and at least have a base, or even a "home"? Or do we wait for what we really want, even though it seems to defy realistic expectations/the odds? Is this the best solution for ACAT? Is it fiscally responsible? What if registration goes up? What if it goes down? If we didn't take this new space, what risks were there with regard to our public in moving the office two or three times? What were the risks in terms of morale? Was it detrimental to continue to have the administration so far away from the TCP? Were there other ways we could possibly get the TCP to fit into the new space? What about some afternoon training again? Etc. etc.

*continued on next page*

*continued from previous page*

Unfortunately, however, by the time we'd completed our soul-searching, and decided to move forward, the space had already been rented out to someone else!! Disappointed and sobered/ we renewed the search for a new office only. However, shortly afterward we were approached by the landlord of the building where we'd been looking indicating the other spaces in the same building were becoming available. The board jumped on the chance to view the space, and as a result of the last experience realized we needed to do our weighing and measuring in more concentrated manner if we didn't want the decision to be made for us by other parties. Interestingly enough, the space being offered to us now, had some advantages over the original space we looked at, on the top floor it had skylights and therefore superior light. Because it was being built out - it would be newer and cleaner than the space below - it would really be our space to create!. However, as there would be no existing office, we would have expenses that we might not have had with the space below. So many things to think about - so little time!! More soul-searching, more budget crunching, more I-Ching throwing, more astrology consultations (just joking?) Add to that, more legal consultations etc. We had to balance the urgency of securing something in this very "hot" real estate market with our need to begin to inform and protect ourselves in the matter or negotiating a commercial lease!!

Finally it was done, and settled, we committed ourselves to the space. We chose an architect, who came our way through a personal connection and who agreed to accept in part for his fee, lessons in the Alexander Technique!! (Which the board has agreed to do - on behalf of the organization - THANK YOU BOARD.) We worked with contractors. I will spare you the details of the construction ups and downs and simply say we raced against time putting together a space that we hope you will join us in being very pleased with.

Thus we came to the point where we could apply ourselves toward our new venture - renting space to our members -

and trying to figure out all the logistics that need to be anticipated in order to carry this out. This is a work still in progress, and is covered on a different page (see Page 1). Surely you will be seeing updates about rentals in the future. We are pleased and hope that the membership will be served by having this space available to it. ACAT wishes to serve its membership first, and for that reason, is phasing in the the rental program slowly, first limiting rental to its members. Afterward we will see if the other requests from the public can be accommodated. While we prefer to give priority to our members we are fiscally dependant upon revenues we hope to generate from rental, therefore, if the demand from our own community is not great enough, we shall have to put out the work in other areas. But stay tuned and you will be kept posted as to the progress in this area.

We finally have it - our own space - it can now be up to you on creating ways to use it - we look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you to everyone who has helped make this move possible, from the early search Committees in ACAT's history to those of you who have with final touches.. Thanks to: Tom Vasiliades, Daniel Singer, Leland Vall, Richard Allon, Kathy & John Miranda, New York Movers, Ernie, Basil and all the guys at "The Home Doctor" Thanks to Alberto Perez..

Sincerely,

Jane Tomkiewicz, Executive Director, on behalf of the current Board of Directors Allison Foley, Joan Frost, Barbara Kent, Hope Martin, Alan Serchuk & Judith Lakin, Chair

---

## What's with the new look?

by Tara Sullivan

As the new editor of ACAT News, I hope you enjoy its new look. I am fairly inexperienced in desktop publishing, so I hope you will bear with me and forgive any awkward layouts or blank spaces for the moment. It is exciting to be the first to read all the submissions that come in, and it is my pleasure to present them in this format. I hope that everyone will feel welcome to submit articles and I look forward to working with all of you!

## RENTAL POLICY

DEAR ACAT MEMBER

The following is our rental policy, please read it over. PLEASE KEEP IN MIND THAT WE ARE JUST STARTING OUT AND OUR POLICIES ARE TO SUBJECT REVIEW AND CHANGE. AS WE BETTER LEARN THE NEEDS OF THE THOSE WE WISH TO SERVE, AND OF OUR ABILITY TO DO SO. We will try to give ample warning before any changes go into effect.

Every Wednesday will be an Open Day where any Alexander teacher may show up and teach a lesson for a \$5.00 fee (table fee) per lesson. This open period will last from 2:00pm to approximately 9:45pm. It will be an open room and will accommodate up to 6 teachers at a time. There will be an ACAT representative on site who will let people in. For more information about this day, speak to Leland Vall.

Beside that:

- a) We will initially rent primarily to ACAT members, considering non-members on a case-to-case basis.
- b) Anyone wishing to book space has to be given a key and leave a key deposit of \$25.00.
- c) The front half or back half of the entire space can be rented for teaching private or semi-private lessons or very small groups of up to three students at a fee of \$12/hour. Please know that another teacher may be scheduled to teach in the other half of the space while you are teaching and you will not have complete audio privacy.
- d) If you wish complete privacy while teaching a private, you may rent the entire space for \$20/hour.
- e) If teaching 4-10 students, the teacher may not use the ½ space, they must reserve the entire space at \$20/hr.
- f) For large lectures or other large group functions, the entire space is available at \$25/hr.
- g) For bulk or large reservations a discount on the rate may be applicable.
- h) Teachers may schedule week to week, or they may wish to reserve a class series or they may wish to have an ongoing regular time. Week-to-week reservations will be handled differently than long term or on-going reservations.
- i) Teachers can make week-to-week reservations for the current and next week only.
- j) There is a 48 hour cancellation period.
- k) Teachers will leave payment as indicated by the contact who provides them with a key
- l) Failure to pay promptly for space used or failure to pay for late cancellation will result in loss of renting privileges and any overdue funds will be withheld from key deposit.
- m) If teachers wish to book for a series of private lessons (let's say every Wednesday evening at 5:00) for up to within the current month and the next month (a possible 8-9 weeks), a contract will be drawn up and they will pay a 50% deposit which will have a refund rate different from the single class refund rate. If cancelled up to two weeks before the 1st class a refund of all but 10% of the total rental fee. A cancellation from 2 weeks before until the day before a refund rate of all but 20% of the total rental fee. As of the date of the reservation a refund rate of all but 50% of the total rental fee.
- n) A similar schedule will be adopted for teachers who wish to book the entire space for a group lesson series within the current month and the next month (a possible 8-9 weeks).

## News from the Center

Joan Frost, Brooke Lieb, and Kathy Miranda drove down to New Jersey together Wednesday morning, September 8th to help ACAT alum Lauren Jones give birth to her second child. Lauren's midwife broke her water at 10:00 am and at 2:10 pm, Gareth Temple Fell Hornung emerged weighing 9 lbs, 11 oz. Lauren felt that all the Alexander hands-on truly facilitated her natural childbirth and the three of us felt most honored to be participants in this unforgettable event. Lauren commented that she didn't know why more women in labor didn't take advantage of this wonderful service we, with Alexander hands, are able to offer. After witnessing the relative ease of her birth process (well, there were moments), we had to agree with her.

Marta Curbelo has applied the Alexander Technique to the practice of shiatsu massage in very well-received workshops in Italy the past three years. She will conduct this workshop next year in Switzerland. Marta taught another workshop for shiatsu practitioners in New York City this June. Marta is teaching privately in New York City and Connecticut and is active again on the ACAT faculty.

Joan Frost was one of 12 application group leaders at the International Alexander Technique Congress in Freiburg, Germany this summer. Her task was to take the material of the 3 different morning lectures (on emotion, concepts, and communication) and translate the conceptual material into a practical group experience, the groups averaging 40 in number. Joan was masterfully assisted by Fran Robertson and Cindy Reynolds.

Kim Jessor gave a workshop at the AmSat AGM in June entitled Dialoguing with the Medical Profession: Working in a Multidisciplinary Performing Arts Medicine Clinic. The workshop was part of a day dealing with Anatomy and Medicine, and other presenters included Idella Packer and Sue Collinson. Kim presented a case study of a musician she has been working with at the Miller Institute for Performing Arts Medicine.

Any teachers interested in working with a group of musicians at Queens College? Call Pearl Ausubel at (212) 787-0173 for more information.

Thanks to Marta Curbelo for her generous donation to the ACAT center. Beside various illustrations framed illustrations of Alexander, the Dart Procedures and Anatomy which are now up on the wall, Marta also donated a 3-d model of a human spine, and an Alexander "horse."

Thanks to John and Kathy Miranda for the generous donation of the industrial storage shelf being used at the ACAT center.

Exponential volunteerism!! Thanks to Naina Dewan for volunteering to help in the office on Mondays after her volunteer faculty shift!!

---

**American Center for the  
Alexander Technique, Inc.®**  
39 W 14th Street Room 507  
New York, NY 10011