

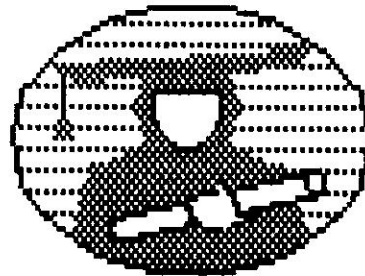
THE ACAT NEWS
NEWSLETTER OF
THE AMERICAN CENTER
FOR
THE ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE, INC. (R)

Ron Dennis, Editor

Spring

1988

ACCREDITATION



CONGRATS, ACAT!

Richmond, VA--The Accrediting Council for Continuing Education & Training (ACCET) announced on Thursday, April 7, 1988, that it had granted accreditation to the American Center for the Alexander Technique, Inc., New York, NY. An historic event, this is the first such accreditation of an Alexander Technique training program in the U.S.

According to the **Federal Register**, accreditation is "the process whereby an agency or association grants public recognition to a school, institute, college, university, or specialized program of study which meets certain established qualifications and educational standards, as determined through initial and periodic evaluations. The essential purpose of the accreditation process is to provide a professional judgment as to the quality of the educational institution or program(s) offered, and to encourage continual improvement thereof."

ACCET, formerly the Council for Noncollegiate Continuing Education (CNCE), was founded in 1974 to assess the quality of continuing education programs in the noncollegiate field. It currently accredits over 200 institutions serving in excess of 350,000 people. While not an official government agency, ACCET is on the list of nationally-recognized accrediting agencies approved by the U.S. Secretary of Education.

The accreditation process began for ACAT in June 1986, when then-Board Chairman Ron Dennis responded to an invitation from ACAT-graduate Esther Seligmann of Princeton, NJ, to join her in a meeting in Washington, DC, with Dr. Les Ross, an official of the U.S. Dept. of Education. Almost having to miss the meeting, it was Dr. Ross who

suggested CNCE as a potential accrediting agency for ACAT.

The initial application procedure required ACAT to supply information about the TTP such as duration in clock hours and basic curriculum. Eligibility thus established, the next step was the submission of an Analytical Self-Evaluation Report (ASER). This 132-page document on all aspects of the ACAT program was formulated during Fall 1987 by Ron Dennis, Pamela Anderson, and Barbara Kent. The on-site examination, which took place on March 4, amounted to an audit of information supplied by ACAT in the ASER.

According to Dr. Deborah De Vries, ACCET Vice President for Accreditation, a major benefit to ACAT promises to be that of networking among other accredited groups for information and idea exchange, an emerging aspect of contemporary continuing education in the independent sector. In addition, prospective trainees will be able to apply for student loans on the basis of enrolling in an accredited institution, and ACAT itself will be eligible to apply for certain federal education benefits, among them sponsorship of foreign students and participation in guaranteed student loan programs. ***

ANNUAL MEETING

The 1988 Annual Meeting of ACAT, Inc. was held on Sunday, Feb. 28, at the home of Pearl Ausubel. Of 52 total members, 21 attended in person with 12 by proxy. After a social hour begun at 1:30, Acting Chairman Bill Connington called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. Bill welcomed the members and gave an orientation to the agenda. After "State of the Center" reports by Acting Executive Director Ron Dennis and TTP Director Pamela Anderson, major actions taken included approval of an amendment to the Certificate of Incorporation to increase the maximum number of directors from 5 to 7, passage of Bylaw amendments to formalize the Center's new administrative structure, and elections of Bill Connington to a 5-year term as Board Chairman and Kim Jessor to succeed herself for a 2-year term. Treasurer Dennis reported that the corporation is in good financial condition, with a reserve fund of \$20,000. Outgoing Director Joanne Howell was recognized for her 3 years of service on the Board, particularly in the area of public relations. For further details of the meeting, members may order copies of the Minutes and Revised Bylaws by remitting \$2 to the office. ***

SPECIAL ACAT FUNDS

Members are reminded of the existence and purposes of two special funds established by ACAT, both entirely distinct from the operating budget. The Judith Leibowitz Fund, currently at about \$6,000, is basically for research in the Alexander Technique and development of the American Center. The Barbara Kent Enrichment Fund, \$4,000, is for projects specifically to enhance the Teacher Training Program. These funds are administered by the Board in consultation with Judy and Barbara, and proposals for their use may be directed to the Board. ***

EDITORIAL

Though I find some aspects of producing the newsletter decidedly onerous, being able this time to write and publish the truly momentous news of our accreditation made the job a real pleasure. As ACAT enters this new era of public recognition and accountability, I can't help repeating the wonderful Whitman quote from Issue 2 of the **NASTAT NEWS**: "Now understand me well--it is provided in the essence of things that from any fruition of success, no matter what, shall come forth something to make a greater struggle necessary." ***

TTP NEWS

Director Pamela Anderson announces that the admissions procedure has been modified. Applicants for the Fall 88 and Winter 89 terms now have until July 1 and October 1, respectively, to complete their applications. Under the previous policy, applications for both terms were due by May 1. Even though the deadlines have been extended, Pamela suggests that members having students interested in applying for the TTP urge them to do so as soon as possible, since, as among equally-qualified applicants, the earlier ones will be favored. ***

AUTHOR RESEARCHES HERE

Don Barone, an editor for **Prevention Magazine Health Books**, spent March 24 in NYC researching a chapter on the Alexander Technique for a book **Hands-On Healing**, publication due early next year by Rodale Press. Arranged by the ACAT office, Barone's visit included a lesson with Pamela Anderson, & interviews with Pamela, Judy Trobe, Ron Dennis, & Jean McClelland, a student of the technique. Mr. Barone indicated by phone recently that his work with ACAT people yielded a very good piece for the book, to be a major selection for the Rodale Press book club. ***

A NOT ONE

The office received the following inquiry in February (exclusive notice to membership of ACAT):

"Please send me information on Alexander Technique and its training programs.

"A friend of mine invited an Alexander Technique teacher to Japan. I would like to invite one, too.

[Signed] Hideki Nakamura, Director
The Somatics Institute of Japan
2-6-20 Shimo Ochiai
Shinjuku-ku. TOKYO 161 ***

ACAT MEMBERS AT BODYWORK CONFERENCE

A conference for bodywork professionals, "De-Stressing the Workplace: Movement Techniques for Modern Times" will be held at 47 West 13 St, 5th Fl., NYC, on Saturday & Sunday, June 25 & 26. Kim Jessor & Melanie Nevis of ACAT are among the presenters, also including reps from Roling, Feldenkrais, Rubenfeld, etc. According to founder/organizer Shelley Hainer, the conference's purpose is to enable participants to bring their expertise into greater view among colleagues. Details from Hainer at 212/864-0755. ***

HOW TO GIVE A LECTURE DEMONSTRATION (Conclusion)

By Bill Connington

The Lecture Business Basics

These will differ slightly depending on what type of lecture you are giving. Try to see the space before your lecture. If that is not possible, discuss the space with whomever is in charge of scheduling your talk. Make sure that the space is adequate for the number of people expected. If at all possible, there should be room for people to walk around. It helps if the room has natural light and good ventilation. Close air can put people to sleep. If there isn't enough room for people to walk in the the room itself, I will have people notice their habits of walking out in the hall or on the staircase. You must make sure that your voice fills the room. If people cannot hear you they will lose all interest in what you are saying. If you aren't sure if you are loud enough, or if it is a noisy room, ask people if they can hear you. They will quickly let you know if you are not loud enough. You may wish to do a few "whispered ah's" in the bathroom before you begin, or to think your throat free as you are speaking. It is best to inhibit as many "umms," "ahhs," and "urrs" as possible in your speaking. On the other hand, you need to sound spontaneous and unstilted.

Always bring plenty of cards with you. Depending on the situation, it may be appropriate to pass them out to everyone, or to let people come up to you afterwards to ask for them. It may be appropriate to have a list that people may sign so that you may have names, addresses, and phone numbers for your mailing list. I like to bring the ACAT

brochure with my card attached. I pass that out at the beginning so that people have something to read while waiting for everyone to arrive. You may want to bring other articles to pass out as well, especially if it is a group with a special interest (for example, bring an article that deals with musicians if they are musicians). Your address and phone number should be on everything that you pass out so that people can contact you if they wish.

People come up after lectures to ask questions. In some cases you will be able to answer them on the spot. At other times you can give your card and suggest that they call and you will be happy to answer any questions that they have. This is especially true if they begin to ask questions about the length and cost of private lessons. It will be fine in some situations to discuss this, in other situations where you are supposed to be promoting a group class sponsored by an institution, these questions might be better answered over the telephone. Use your own best judgment. At the end of my lectures I will offer to stay after the class to answer any questions and to give brief hands-on turns to those who did not get worked on.

Often you will not be paid for lectures. In these cases get something in writing from the group stating the day and time of your lecture so that you have documentation for your travel expense tax deduction. If appropriate, I think it is always best to ask for an honorarium (a token fee). When setting up the

lecture you can let them know that you usually receive a fee or honorarium for your lectures. If they cannot pay it, say that you will waive the fee in their case. You may be surprised--they may be able to pay you a small fee. Decide what your fee would be if you had to do a lecture out of town, or a whole day's workshop. Take into consideration your travel time and whatever income you might lose by being away from your home base.

Preparing Your Topic

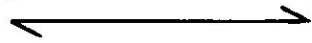
At this point I no longer do a lengthy preparation before a lecture demonstration, but I would certainly recommend that you prepare for a lecture if you don't have experience with them, or if it has been a while since you have done one. It helped me to write down my main points: my explanation of what the Alexander Technique is, how I would like to explain how to inhibit and direct, my explanation of unreliable sensory awareness, and my explanation of how one goes about learning the technique. I am careful to avoid Alexander jargon. I do my best to explain the principles without watering them down. During your lecture you will probably find that you will have to refer to notes occasionally, or not at all.

As with anything, you can prepare, but most of the learning will be in the doing. If you prepare well, you will probably feel a little bit of stage fright at the beginning of the lecture which will go away as you warm to your topic. The more you do, the easier they become. Be prepared to have more students than expected, or fewer than expected.

You may be interrupted by people who have to leave early, or janitors who have to walk through to get to a broom closet on the other side of the room. But if you stay with yourself and keep your sense of humor you will be fine.

At my first lecture demonstration at the West Side Y in New York City right after my graduation, I was told that fifteen people would be there. I began the lecture when twenty people were there and had to stop three times as the janitors kept getting more chairs. Eventually there were over fifty people in the room. At the start my legs and my voice were shaking, but by the end people were very interested, the class filled on the spot and another class had to be scheduled for the overflow. On the other hand, I have done better lectures since then when not enough people signed up for the class, and the class had to be cancelled. So a quality lecture will not always guarantee results. But as so often happens in the Alexander work, there are usually indirect results: you may learn a new way of explaining something, someone may decide to take private lessons after seeing a lecture, someone may decide to take classes at a later time, people begin to recognize and remember your name, and so on.

One of your main concerns of course will be your own use. As you present your topic, continue to direct yourself. I find it especially helpful to inhibit before I answer questions from the audience so that I can keep my answers as clear as possible.



The things that don't exist are the most difficult to get rid of.--FMA