

## Many Thanks, Pamela

By Lori Schiff

Pamela Anderson will officially finish her term as Director of the Teacher Certification Program in August. She is currently on leave and has decided to resign from the Directorship at the end of her term.

She began her term as Director in fall of 1987. By June of this year, 7 classes will have graduated from ACAT totalling 32 teachers. During these years ACAT expanded the training program from 4 to 5 days per week and changed from single to mixed level classes. The idea and implementation of the this system came from Pamela. Based on reactions from faculty members and trainees, this system is working very well.

The much spoken of ACCET accreditation also occurred during Pamela's tenure. Along with many bureaucratic details, this process required ACAT to develop a means for grading trainees' progress and for reviewing the faculty and the program on a regular basis. Every aspect of the Training course had to be written down. Pamela managed all these things successfully without losing the integrity of the teaching.

With the accreditation and expansion of the school, the Directors' job mushroomed. Pamela's job required maintaining training standards while being responsive to the growing needs of the candidates, the faculty, the community (NASTAT) and the government (ACCET). Pamela proposed and designed a means to split the position. As a result, we now have a Dean of Students and Admissions along with the Director of Training. So far this is running very smoothly.

On the personal side, Pamela was also very busy. She became Mrs. Paul Kirchmeier, moved from an apartment in Manhattan to a house in Montclair, N.J. and had two beautiful sons! Change and expansion certainly describe the tenure of this Director. Whatever happened to 'doing less'?

Right. In September, Pamela will be doing less by moving into the position of past Director of Training. We can look forward to her continuing her work on the Senior Faculty as she plans to teach classes again in the fall.

## Letter to the Editor

Let me take this opportunity again to thank you for always putting together the ACAT Newsletter. It is nice to hear all those different voices. I enjoy particularly that it gives me the opportunity to observe peoples growth process during and after their training as an Alexander teacher - even if it is only from a distance.

Having been to the last ACAT membership meeting I've been reflecting about my own progress since I graduated in December 1987.

My life changed dramatically right after my training. I got married and even though we both grew up in Europe and have our families still living there, my husband David and I made New York City our home. He quit his job as a Wall Street broker to write and to travel, and since then we've been spending many months of the year on the road.

Even though all of these developments were like dreams come true, they turned out to become my challenge. Throughout my training in the AT I had been working on inner changes, which I sensed affected my body, mind and soul equally, but it had never occurred to me that these inner changes might be equalled by major outer ones: now that I had this much freedom I thought I was losing my 'direction'! I discovered that I was actually very, very scared.

Judy Leibowitz always reminded us that a teacher never knows exactly what the lengthening and widening in a student is going to look like: you stay with your directions, assisting your student to find that momentum of opening herself up and then you encounter the unknown. I found that the unknown threatened me as much as I had previously strived so hard to get to it. The inner changes I underwent throughout my training, which I couldn't grasp at the time, seemed to manifest in this new life. A life so full of opportunities and of constant movement, that is seemed to me as if I had lost control over it. The Alexander Technique had seemed like such a safe set of rules, allowing me to open, to change, yes, but within the cozy confinements of my own skeletal framework, so I thought.

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## Notes from the TCP

By Kim Jessor

Here we are, already a week into spring term! Winter term brought guest teacher Sterling Swann to our program. An Alexander teacher Sterling presented an interesting workshop on the breath work of Carl Stough. This term, we will have a workshop with Irma Rellstab. Irma trained with Peter Scott, and now runs a training program in Zurich.

Faculty Comings and Goings: Pearl Ausubel and Joan Arnold are back teaching this term. Pamela Anderson and Lorna Faraldi are not teaching classes, but both are seeing students privately. Pamela continues to be active on the Admissions, AIS and Hiring Committees and as an advisor to Joan and myself. Faculty not teaching this term include Becca Flannery and Brooke Lieb. Cynthia Knapp has left ACAT to teach in Philadelphia. Cynthia taught for many years in the training program, as well as having worked as an administrator in the ACAT office. Thank you Cynthia for your good work. We wish you well in your new endeavors. On our volunteer staff, we welcome Claire Creese, who trained with Tom Lemens.

We have begun to focus our hands-on faculty meetings around a specific teaching theme. This provides an opportunity for discussion and clarification of our various approaches to teacher training. During winter term, Barbara Kent taught us hands on the back of the chair with her usual wonderful clarity. This term, Debby Caplan will take us through monkey. In our volunteer faculty meeting, I focused on how to teach "hands on hands".

Spring term began with an all school assembly with improvisational dance performances. Recent graduate Sao Nunes and 9th term Deborah Gladstein each presented a solo. These were followed by stimulating discussion. Deborah and Sao spoke about how the Technique has affected their work on many levels. They talked of finding greater range and perceiving more choices, of how the Technique provides a structure from which to take more risks, of how directing helps with nervousness in performance, and how an initial period during training where they felt like they couldn't move or didn't want to resolved into a sense of freedom and possibility. The morning concluded with Sao and Deborah putting hands on each other and taking this into movement, into dancing together. They invited people from the audience to come up and join them. It was very exciting to have this kind of exchange, and we intend to continue this once a term, with performances and presentations from both students and faculty.

On April 12, we had a graduation ceremony at Pearl Ausubel's. Sarnie Ogus spoke, as did each of the graduates and myself. Sao Nunes read a wonderful

passage from Krishnamurti. The ceremony was simple and moving.

Congratulations!  
Ingrid Lorch Bacci  
Alina Holder  
Joy Jacobson  
Sao Nunes

Best wishes to the four of you in your new roles as Alexander teachers!

Finally, we welcome two new Alexander babies! Benjamin Andrew Kirschmeier, born January 5, 1992 to Pamela Anderson and Paul Kirschmeier, and Aaron Samuel Smith Martin, born March 31, 1992 to Laura Smith and Robert Martin.

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## Notes from the Chair

By Lori Schiff

Thank you to the membership for an interesting Annual Meeting in February. The membership was represented by about twenty teachers in person and several others by proxy. (Minutes will be mailed to 1992 members in May.)

A special thanks to Michelle Arsenault (ACAT, 1987) who presented and led a discussion of her work with children in the public school system in New York City. Her approach to incorporating the Alexander Technique into the curriculum of young children is interesting and effective. We look forward to her success in this realm of education.

My personal thanks to fellow Board members for their dedication and support throughout the year. As a result of the election of Board members and the Chair position, Connie Serchuk and Rebecca Flannery will continue as Directors on the Board and I will continue in the Chair, a 5 year term office which began in February. Finally, some continuity!!! Since we all were elected by general consent, I suspect that a lot of you are inhibiting!

Kim Jessor who has been Acting Director of Training throughout this school year was elected by the senior faculty to carry on as Director. Her term as Director (no more acting) will begin officially on September 1st.

The NASTAT Annual meeting is coming up in early June. So far, Kim Jessor and Pearl Ausubel are planning to attend. I hope to be there as well. If you are unable to attend the meeting, please proxy your votes to one of us or anyone else that you know who will be there. ACAT needs to be represented as there will be proposed amendments which effect us directly. Thanks!

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## Fixation and the Fear of Change: Parallels between Personal and Organizational Growth

by Mary Cox

(Editor's Note: This is the first part of a presentation by Mary Cox given at the Congress in Engelberg. We are printing this with permission from the author and the publisher, Jeremy Chance of Direction magazine. We offer this to the ACAT community as food for thought as ACAT continues to grow and evolve through many changes. The second and last part of this presentation will be published in the next edition of ACAT News.)

I feel very honored to be invited to come and talk to you (and very excited and very scared!) and in some ways I feel a bit of a fraud. I have spent more than a quarter of century working with people of all ages and backgrounds with the goal of helping them to change - one way or another - and throughout those years I have constantly worked on my own use of self in personal therapy, and - I am pleased to say - through having had some Alexander lessons too. I would like to acknowledge here the good work of my Alexander teacher, Wendy Bonington of Cumbria, England. So why do I say I feel a bit of a fraud? Because what I have learned most through all these experiences is how people do not change! Like F.M. Alexander, I have a very simple idea of 'the self', and what I have come to understand best is not how to be one's self, but how a person stops being his or her self, defends or hides the self, out of fear of rejection or abandonment. And I have come to see how those defenses become fixated patterns. I believe Alexander called them 'habits'.

I keep on my therapy room wall a beautiful quote from F.M. - "You are not here to learn to do it right, but to learn to meet a stimulus that always puts you wrong, and deal with it." That phrase "always put you wrong" is what I understand fixation to be about. That is, an automatic and archaic reaction from the past being brought into the present.

Over the last two weeks Ron (that's my husband, who is here in the audience somewhere cheering me on and supporting me) and I have been walking and climbing in these beautiful Swiss Alps - and now I confess my fraudulent part! When the sun is shining, the sky endlessly blue, and the path before me is familiar, then I go full of energy and determination. But the minute the cloud comes down and the way forward is unforeseen, or worse still, the minute Ron wants to explore a new and uncertain route, my immediate response is anxiety and fear, and my immediate impulse is to stay safely in my hotel, or at least in the valley, preferably on a well signed, well surfaced tarmac road! I am probably one of the most fearful and most fixated walkers ever to set foot in Switzerland! I, who encourage, support, and facilitate change and growth in others, am the most

reluctant adventurer - fearful, resistant, and conservative!

However, it is from this personal position that I have come to understand so thoroughly, and, I believe, understand with compassion, why people do not change, how come they get stuck and stay stuck. So it is from this empathic position that I work as a therapist and offer my service - as one weak and fallible human being offering to be with and to lend a helping hand to other fellow travellers.

I started my professional working life as an educator, first with little children, and then via teaching university students, I came into training managers in organizations in interpersonal and group skills. Later I trained and qualified as a psychotherapist, working with individuals and groups.

I see organizations as having personalities, like individuals, and usually the organizations personality reflects a good deal of the founding pioneer - or his/her key descendents - here, the people you refer to as 'the senior teachers'. But aside from characteristic 'traits', organizations and individuals go through normal and predictable developmental stages in developing their 'self' and their personality, and each developmental stage is accompanied by normal characteristic defenses. So, for example and put very simplistically, in infancy the defense is clinging in order to avoid abandonment, in babyhood the defense is holding - holding still or holding back, for example - in order to avoid rejection. I would say that this is very typically for most of us the defensive pattern, in terms of holding back the real self in order to be what someone else wants of us. Thirdly, in toddlerhood one of the commonest defenses is splitting, keeping the bad separate from the good in order to preserve the emerging and still fragile sense of self and in order to preserve the image of the key caretaking people, i.e. this person who I need is good, and I cannot afford to acknowledge that they are also sometimes bad. When an individual is under real or perceived threat they resort to these basic defense mechanisms. I see in organizations similar defenses come into operation when there is real or perceived threat, for example in times of economic recession or of political oppression. I offer the following rather simplified framework, given the time we have here today. We can think of two basic defensive dimensions - CLINGING versus SEPARATING and FREEZING versus MOVING (and these might be equated to symbiotic dependency versus autonomy). We can look at the inter-relation of these two dimensions in the following way:

**CLINGING AND MOVING** - Under threat people

*(Continued on page 5)*

## Anatomy Lab

### By Deborah Gladstein

In the fall of 1990, one of my Tai Chi students, Chisa Hidaka, began her studies at the Cornell Medical School at the New York Hospital in New York City. As an extension of our ongoing dialogue and mutual explorations into the workings of our bodies, she invited me to visit her anatomy lab. There we were able to study the cadaver that she and her classmates were required to work with as part of their training.

I visited the lab on four separate occasions. Each time we stayed in the lab approximately 2 1/2 hours. Since the actual class was not in session, we had the luxury of exploring and discussing our observations in a leisurely fashion. On my first visit I was filled with a sense of curiosity and anticipation as to what I would find. Although I felt mentally prepared to walk into a room full of dead bodies, I was surprised at the thoughts that came to me as I looked on with Chisa while she showed me the deep muscles in the abdomen of her cadaver.

As I marvelled at how big the psoas was compared to my imagined version, I became fascinated and somewhat appalled by the fact that medical students, the future "healers" of our society, are introduced to the human body not by observing life, but rather dissecting and labelling an assemblage of chemically preserved flesh and bones.

"Where is the Chi?", I thought to myself. Even if I learned how to use the little knife and follow the drawings in the textbook, even if I didn't feel nauseated by the smell of formaldehyde and could stay for hours in attentive exploration, I still doubt that I would be able to locate what the Chinese medical student learns to be the most important "part" of the human body, the life essence, the Chi.

Changing back into my street clothes (the smell of formaldehyde is so strong, one needs to wear special lab clothes), I continued to muse on how western science "looks" at the human body. This first visit certainly affirmed my sense that as I train to be a teacher of the Alexander Technique, I am learning how to "see" the human body from a different perspective.

For instance, I distinctly remember the first time I felt someone 'direct' underneath my hands. It was as if I could feel the physicality of thought. Now when I look at someone's body, I not only see form and structure, I "see" their thinking.

Throughout the visits that followed, I continued to deepen my understandings of the human body. As I already mentioned, I was amazed to see parts of the body that, up until now, existed either in drawings, photos, or my mind's eye. Not only was the psoas much larger than I imagined, the nerves connecting the eyes to the brain

were thicker in diameter and more substantial in general.

During my second visit I had the opportunity to hold and move a knee joint that had been separated from the main body. What was most striking about this experience was to see that when the leg is in an extended position, the kneecap rests of the end of the thighbone, not over the space between upper and lower leg bones. Although I've probably been told this before, it wasn't until I actually held and moved these bones in my own hands, that I finally understood the structure of the knee joint.

Immediately after holding and moving the joint, I tried out my new understanding by doing some walking, as well as some movements from the Tai Chi form. Sure enough, the articulation in my knees was much clearer. Its amazing how our concept of our bodies affects our functioning.

It seems like an important aspect of teaching the Technique is going to be uncovering the student's misconceptions (both conscious and subconscious) of the human structure. In this particular instance, the tactile and kinesthetic information that I received from actually holding the joint was invaluable. It would be a wonderful teaching tool to have a collection of lifesize moveable joints that the student could play with, in addition to the standard plastic model of the skeleton.

Another lasting impression that I've taken with me from these sessions is the beautiful layering and spiraling of the body tissues. I'm sure this has influenced my sense of what is happening underneath my hands as I feel someone directing. Instead of perceiving the classical Alexander directions of lengthening and widening in a two-dimensional framework, I often have a sense of the body unfolding and opening in numerous directions. To me, it's a very organic process -- more like a flower unfolding, or a sponge filling our with water, than a map of lines and angles in space.

*Deborah Gladstein is a candidate in her 9th term. Her studies in the anatomy lab were part of her Approved Independent Study Program.*

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*Editor's Comment: I have recently re-read David Gorman's articles "In Our Own Image" published in The Alexander Review. I am especially fond of the seventh and last in the series, "It's All Over Now". David gives a beautiful description of the spiraling, interconnected tissue we think of as muscles, bones and connective tissue. Also for further reading, how about Alexander's early writings on respiratory re-education.*

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*(Letter to Editor continued from Page 1)*

It is easy to lock a concept as wonderfully sound, as simple and yet complex as the Alexander Technique into a box, a very fine and valuable box even for such precious a jewel, in the attempt to protect it from any harm it might get exposed to. The precious box is here the understanding of the technique as a means for change, locking it up is trying to keep control over changes. I think many of us are prepared to yield to the inner transformation but miss to consider that it will inevitably affect ones whole life and eventually the community, and that can confront us with deep fears. Sometimes we then even question the validity of somebody else's work - I am thinking here about the painful struggle we go through to find room for many different ways of working with the AT in an organization like NASTAT.

One of the experiences that made the technique so precious to me was that the 'up' and the 'direction' seemed to provide me with a means to grow out of the swamp of the frightening and laming emotions which had seemed in the past to drag me 'down' rather than 'up'. But with learning the Alexander Technique comes heightened awareness and with that come conscious choices. That sounds quite wonderful until you actually find yourself in the position of having to live it! The technique does not save us from our inner swamp, emotions don't simply disappear. It is rather that one becomes actually aware of them as a result, and gets the opportunity to encounter one's deeper fears.

For the past 3 years I have been most of all travelling through my inner world while teaching, homemaking, travelling, singing, dancing, writing and painting. I've been studying dreamwork, tarot card reading, hands on healing, using my intuitive abilities, art and polarity therapy, Jungian psychology and working with the Divine Inner Child.

My quest is to be more and more truthful in everything I do, which seems to me to be living the principles, Alexander has taught us. And I love my work as a movement therapist. I marvel at the individual spirit of each person I have the honor to work with and appreciate their openness to letting me participate in their growth process. And thus my work appears to me like a picture book for children: colorful and whimsical, magical and full of surprises.

Wishing all of you lots of spring energy at this time of year.

Fondly,  
Annette Cantor

*(Fixation and the Fear of Change continued from page 3)*

move together and move to solve problems using  
**CONSTRUCTIVE COOPERATION.**

**CLINGING AND FREEZING** - Under threat people move together and freeze which leads to the generation of traditions, 'custom and practice', and rituals. This position is characterized by 'united we stand, divided we fall' and 'don't move or you'll rock the boat.' This is the position of **CONSERVATISM.**

**SEPARATING AND FREEZING** - Under threat people move apart, groups split, and form 'camps'. The philosophy of this position is 'each man for himself' and 'you are either for us or against us' leading to fragmentation and isolation. This is the position of splitting or **PARTITION.**

**SEPARATING AND MOVING** - Under threat people move apart and move individually in order to solve the problem. This is the 'loner' or **PIONEERING** position.

When individuals or groups face fearful and threatening stimuli they can respond with what Alexander referred to as 'conscious use and control', and when a choice is made in that way then all forms of defense may be seen as a rational choice and a relevant response to the 'here and now' reality. Very often, however, when presented with threatening stimuli people **REACT** in a fixated and habitual way, and most frequently they separate and freeze, that is they isolate to protect, leading to partition. There may be in our audience today those of you who are only too painfully aware that on this day, August 14th, thirty years ago, the people of Berlin awoke to find themselves divided by a wall - perhaps one of the more dramatic and terrible examples of partition in the community of mankind.

(To Be Continued)

*Mary Cox is a Certified Clinical Transactional Analyst and a Provisional Teaching and Supervising Transactional Analyst.*

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*This process of directing energy out of familiar into new and unfamiliar paths, as a means of changing the manner of reacting to stimuli, implies of necessity an ever-increasing ability on the part of both teacher and pupil to "pass from the known to the unknown." It is therefore a process which is true to the principle involved in all human growth and development.*

F. Matthias Alexander

## News from the Center

**JUNE GRADUATION!** All faculty, candidates and members are invited to bring themselves and a guest to the June Graduation. On Thursday, June 18th at 6:30 pm, Fernando Eschlietti, Mary Jane Fiodley, Sarah Gamble, Deborah Gladstein, Jean Rashkind and Charles Steis will celebrate the completion of their official teacher training. Please come to Sarah Gamble's loft at 40 West 15th Street and bring something delicious to eat, the party starts at 6:30 pm and the ceremony will begin promptly at 7:00pm.

The Alexander Technique was featured on a Washington TV Show called "Working Woman" which is broadcast in 20 cities nation-wide. The program anchor, Kathleen Matthews interviewed Riki Alexander and filmed a first lesson with her.

Beret Arcaya (ACAT, 1981) taught a course for violinists April 1-10 in Elza Germany and later a course for singers in Salzburg, Austria.

Hope Martin (ACAT, 1987) received a grant from the Dancer's Union in Barcelona, Spain to teach the Alexander Technique to their dancers and choreographers. She was there in January and part of February. Hope is also spending three months in the mountains of Colorado this summer doing an in-depth program of Buddhist studies and meditation practice.

Hope Gillerman (ACAT, 1981) worked five months at the American Repertory Theater as a movement coach and introduced Alexander Technique to the acting students at the Institute for Advanced Training at the theater. She really enjoyed teaching the acting students whom she found to be keenly aware of their bodies, highly motivated, and very quick to learn. She decided to stay in Boston and build her practice there. Hope is very excited about the work she is doing there as she is getting referrals from psychiatrists and neurologists. She finds the connection between physical problems and psychological problems fascinating and it stimulates her to use the Alexander process in ways that are new to her.

Annette Cantor (ACAT, 1987) is organizing a workshop for Alexander teachers and movement therapists: "An Introduction to perceiving through your higher senses" given by Sylvia Moss and Susan Baldaeus who are graduates from the Barbara Brennan School of Healing, on the weekend of May 2nd and 3rd. She expects it to be a powerful experience.

Tom Koch (ACAT, 1987) is alive and well and living in Frankfurt Germany. He is teacher in residence at the Frankfurt Ballet.

Ann Waxman (ACAT, 1984) was invited to teach at 2 music conservatories outside of Madrid Spain. She will also stay an extra week to teach private lessons in Valencia.

Ron Dennis (ACAT, 1979) has been busy writing and being written about. He wrote "Poise and The Art of Lengthening" for Thought Trends: New Dimensions in Living, an Atlanta publication and "P.S. Do you have it?" for In Touch, Atlanta's Alternative News Journal. The Birmingham News, 2/3/92 published "Standing Straight Just a Start - Technique stresses proper body movement and alignment, aids relaxation," an article about Ron and the technique.

Mary Cox's speech (see Article on page 3) will be published in the Congress Papers later this year. The Congress Papers will be published by DIRECTION and will be available for \$25 plus postage. To order call or write DIRECTION, PO Box 27075, Seattle Washington 98125, (206)525-3166. The Congress Papers consists of 28 talks, presentations and workshop summaries from the Congress in Engelberg. It was originally to be a part of a DIRECTION subscription, but its size of nearly 200 pages has rendered this unworkable.

Great loft to sublet near Union Square, 1600 sf, light, airy, cozy - a wonderful place! Available June, July & August. Please contact Hope Martin (212) 243-3867.

**RECENT REFERENCES:** The Alexander Technique has been mentioned in TMJ - The Jaw Connection, The Overlooked Diagnosis by Greg Goddard, DDS published by Aurora Press, 1991. Also see the May/June issue of Utne Reader. Their feature article is "Your Body Friend, Foe or Total Stranger?" and their Field Guide to Body Therapies includes the Alexander Technique and lists ACAT as a resource.

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*Brooke Lieb*