

The Alexander Technique: The World Famous Method for Enhancing Posture, Stamina, Health & Well-being, & for Relieving Pain & Tension. By Judith Leibowitz & Bill Connington. Harper & Row, 1990.

Reviewed by Joan Arnold

"We can throw away the habit of a lifetime in a few minutes if we use our brains," said F.M. Alexander. But many of us have inherited one of the habits that F.M. never threw away--the resistance to actively selling his work. Judith Leibowitz's and Bill Connington's book--beautifully published by Harper & Row--is a major step toward changing this pattern by helping to make the incredibly useful tool of the Alexander Technique known to a wider audience. A broad-based introduction, it is a much-needed 160-page advertisement and a good addition to writings on the Technique.

The book begins with stories about people changing. The authors tell how they and their students were affected by the Technique in fifteen case studies that span a variety of ages, professions and problems. An editor, an accountant, a performer who unsuccessfully sought relief through other modalities were ultimately freed from nagging chronic conditions or were able to expand their expressiveness. Showing how a change in the body can render a change of mind, this section gives a wide range of readers the opportunity to find themselves in the book, and gives personal meaning to the subsequent instructional sections. In descriptions of the Technique's concepts and tools for change, the authors' most impressive accomplishment is putting subtle, elusive concepts in clear, accessible language. But in both the anecdote and theory segments, I found myself wishing that such

ACAT Approved for Foreign Student Visas!!

On July 19, 1990, ACAT was authorized by the U.S. Immigration & Naturalization Service to accept and enroll nonimmigrant alien students. This action means that potential candidates from foreign countries, from whom inquiries are received here regularly, will be able to apply for student visas based on their intention to attend the Teacher Certification Program.

The application to INS had been filed a year ago, and was apparently languishing both before and after one perfunctory response to an inquiry by Executive Director Ron Dennis in February. Dennis spoke to an immigration attorney in early June and was advised, none too hopefully, that personnel changes at the agency and the generally low priority of such applications were probably contributing factors.

Then, in a chance conversation on the subject at the ACAT graduation party on June 29, it was suggested by John Doran, husband of TCP candidate Sally Hesser Doran, to write to New York's Congressional representatives, explaining the problem and enclosing a copy of Jane Brody's *NY Times* article. Dennis did so immediately, and received responses within the week from Congressman Ted Weiss and Senator Alphonse d'Amato, and later from Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan. Weiss sent along a copy of a personal letter he had written to the Congressional liaison at INS.

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dramatic stories could have been expressed more lyrically, with more of the warmth and humor that can come through a lesson with Judy or Bill.

Part II conveys and illustrates the Leibowitz Procedures, directions for a series of Alexander-informed simple movements such as sitting, bending or

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The Art of Changing: A New Approach to the Alexander Technique. By Glen Park. Ashgrove Press, 1989.

Reviewed by Diane McCollough Young

The Art of Changing is an exceptional book on the Alexander Technique. Glen Park is sincere, articulate, and methodical in her exposition of the principles inherent in our work. This is not an easy accomplishment, as we all know. Just think for a moment of what thoughts come into the mind when someone asks innocently, "So what is the Alexander Technique?" The ability to elegantly respond to that question is still the major challenge to me as an Alexander teacher. In this book, the way Parks describes the Alexander method is useful both for a new student and for the teacher looking for fresh ways to re-think the work. Such basic principles as the primary control of our functioning, the inherent balance and co-ordination we achieve when we inhibit wrong doing, how to recognize faulty sensory experience; all of these are clearly defined, often with simple diagrams, and in such a way as to excite interest and further thought in the reader. So often the book is not the real experience, and what is alive in the lesson becomes boring and dry in the reading of it. Parks is able to draw the reader to the life in the ideas.

The second half of the book continues in a slightly different direction. Parks' interests are of the whole person, living well in their wholeness. Certainly FM. Alexander would not have introduced "energy bodies" as part of his work. The author makes mention of this, reminding us of Alexander's comments on hypnosis, for instance, but she recognizes this broader area of study to be an integral part of the Alexander experience, thus she calls this book "A New Approach to the Alexander Technique." Thirty-five years have passed since Alexander's death. We are exposed to, and have the choice to integrate, many secondary concepts into our work as teachers, as long as we are also sticking to the principles. Parks' interest lies very much in the sphere of what she calls the energy systems, or chakras, of our psycho-physical makeup. She discusses both our emotional and our psychical well-being and uses the tools of the Alexander method to help us come fully into our balance. I feel that Parks deals with all of this material in a sensitive and intelligent manner. She left me wondering how comfortable I am in receiving other kinds of

Changes at ACAT

By Ron Dennis

As many of you already know, I have been granted a leave of absence for the period September-December 1990. During this time I will be living and teaching in Atlanta, GA. I have thought for some time about the possibility of eventually leaving NYC, and also have found need of late for respite from my duties here; the confluence of these impulses has moved me to this decision.

At graduation on June 29, I was truly surprised when presented with a beautiful gold antique pocket watch inscribed, "In Appreciation, ACAT." I deeply thank everyone involved for this wonderful tribute.

During my absence, Kathryn Moeller Miranda, a June 90 graduate of the TCP, will be serving as Acting Administrative Director, ACAT Secretary-Treasurer, and Financial Aid Officer. Melanie Nevis will function in an expanded role as TCP Coordinator, working closely with TCP Director Pamela Anderson in the multifarious administrative aspects of that program.

For many years I have been concerned about the question of continuity in the crucial area of Center administration. I feel that the administrative plan devised for my absence is one that will increase our capacity in this area. It is a good step toward insuring the same quality of continuity in the administrative area of ACAT that we already have in the training area. Without knowing what the future will bring, I am confident that the Center now stands firmly capable of responding vigorously to any and all contingencies.

P.S. My apartment would be available Sep 1-Dec 31 to a qualified subtenant. (212) 678-0446.

information from my students in the lesson, particularly, whether the Alexander Technique provides tools for disclosure of our emotional health, our psychic balance of energy systems, and our ability to use awareness, inhibition, and direction as the means.

Parks asks us to extend the boundaries now, of our capacity for change. She challenges us to think of our wholeness continually. This book comes highly recommended. Read the first part for refreshing ways to present material, the second part to continue releasing forward and up!

1990-1991

September 1990

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December 1990

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January 1991

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February 1991

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September

26 Fall Term begins. Tuit. bal. due.
Makeup for Mon 10/8.

October

4 No classes Oct 4 & 5 (Succoth)
8 No classes (Columbus Day)
11 No Classes Oct 11 & 12 (S. Torah)
12 Applications for Win Term 91 due.

November

21 No classes Wed-Fri Nov 21-23
(T'Ksgiving)

December

3 Winter Term tuition deposit due.
10 Makeup for Thurs 10/4.
11 Makeup for Fri 10/5.
12 Last Wed class.
13 Last Thurs class.
14 Last Fri class. Term ends. Grad. B9s.
15 Dec 15 - Jan 6 HOLIDAYS

January

7 Winter Term begins. Tuit. bal. due.
21 No classes (M. L. King, Jr. Day).

February

18 No classes Mon-Fri Feb 18-22 Winter Break.

March

11 Spring Term tuition deposit due.
25 Makeup for Mon 1/21. End of Winter Term.
26 Mar 26 - Apr 10 SPRING BREAK

April

11 Spring Term begins. Tuit. bal. due.
Makeup for Mon 3/28.
12 Makeup for Mon 5/27.
15 Regular schedule begins.

May

28 No classes (Shavuot).
27 No classes (Memorial Day).

June

18 Fall Term tuition deposit due.
21 Spring Term ends. Grad. A9s.
22 Jun 22 - TBA SUMMER VACATION

July

1 Applications for Fall Term 91 due.

March 1991

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April 1991

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May 1991

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June 1991

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July 1991

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August 1991

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The ACAT News

(Arnold, continued from p. 1)

lunging. This section reaches for a high level of motivation and self-awareness in readers. Though a preceding chapter defining anatomical terms is well illustrated, the section establishing a mode for self-observation uses easily misinterpreted spatial terms like "back," "down" and "forward" for the head without the benefit of pictures. This points to an inherent contradiction in the book's premise--the admonition to study the Technique with a certified teacher, accompanied by written instructions. A careful disclaimer doesn't quite solve this problem. As someone working with the Technique, I can't say how these instructions would be used by a novice, but I find it hard to imagine learning inhibition without a teacher's immediate feedback. The final two chapters applying the Procedures and Alexander principles to daily activities, sports and exercise seem to me more likely to produce real insight in someone new to these concepts. Particularly helpful is the section on bringing self-awareness to an evaluation of one's workspace and to the actions so many do unconsciously--washing the car, eating, or gardening.

The authors have taken on the daunting task of describing a hands-on movement technique without the complex feedback of demonstration and individual guidance. Of course there is leeway to get it wrong, but they have, in a clear, cogent way, put forth an extremely useful introduction, one that can pique the interest of a greater public. This has been a good year for the press and the Alexander Technique, and the production of this book makes it a better one. Though reading and self-experimentation will never replace a pair of hands, some people really have been helped by books. Hopefully, this one will reach the many places in the world without Alexander teachers.

American Center for
the Alexander Technique, Inc.®
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New York, N.Y. 10023

(Visas, continued from p. 1)

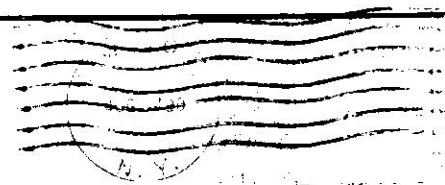
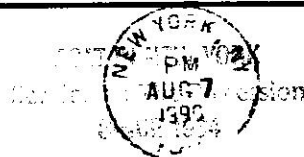
requesting an investigation of the situation.

The *dénouement* came unexpectedly as a copy of INS's routine acknowledging memo to Congressman Weiss and the official approval document from INS were received at the Center on the same day, July 23rd. According to Dennis, the approval for foreign students completes the tripod of public interface and support envisioned for the Center at the beginning of his administration, the other two legs being accreditation and federal student financial aid.

Around the Center

Judith Trobe, P.T., ACAT graduate, member, and TCP Anatomy Instructor, has contributed a full hardbound set of David Gorman's *Body Moveable* to the Center. Many thanks, Judy!

Michelle Arsenault (TCP 87) has been granted \$1000 from the Judith Leibowitz Fund to support her work with introducing the AT to children in the NY public schools. During the 89-90 school year Michelle initiated "Moving to Learn," a program of Alexander-inspired movement and anatomy activities for young children and teachers at P.S. 110 in Manhattan. Gaining the support and interest of the teachers and children involved, the program was subsequently funded by a NY-based non-profit educational organization. Michelle has also organized a number of Alexander teachers interested in this kind of application of the Technique. The ACAT grant will be specifically used for producing written and videotaped documentation of this project. Congratulations, Michelle!



N. Brooke Lieb
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THE AMERICAN CENTER FOR **THE ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE**, INC. New York

NEW BENEFITS PLANS AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS

* NEW LONG TERM DISABILITY PLAN *

Through the Equitable Financial Companies, an A+ Best rated insurance company, the American Center For The Alexander Technique is now able to endorse a quality, low cost method for you and staff to protect their income and families due to a long term disability, at an affordable rate.

Now available exclusively to all members and staff of members of the Center is the Preferred Long Term Disability Income Plan with a full association discount off the already low rates. A disability income protection plan is often the only income that a member or employee has when an accident or sickness lasts more than six months. Plan income is tax-free so that for many people only a minimal amount (and minute premium) is needed.

The plan offers protection to age 65 for any sickness or injury, a liberal definition of disability, guaranteed level premiums to age 65, liberal underwriting, the 15% discount (off already low premiums), presumptive disability, extra rehabilitation benefits, waiver of premium, portability to other jobs, options to customize the plan further, the A+ Best rated recognizable insurance company with an excellent claims and service record, and numerous other benefits which come standard with this outstanding plan.

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| <u>BASE PLAN</u> | | | |
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| AGE 25=\$5. | AGE 35=\$6. | AGE 45=\$9. | AGE 55=\$12. |

* MAJOR MEDICAL INSURANCE: *

Also through the Equitable is their extremely low cost plan health insurance which can cost as little as \$120 for an entire family per month! This could mean possible savings of \$1,000 to \$5,000 a year! The plan pays for health expenses including hospitalization, doctors, prescriptions, therapy, etc., with no maximum. The \$2,000 per cause deductible along with exclusions for pre-existing conditions have kept this plan one of the most competitive in the insurance industry.

* BENEFITS ANALYSIS SERVICE *

Also available to Center members is our free Benefits Analysis Service, with the expertise of Philip Glaser, ChFC, the Chartered Financial Consultant. Please do not hesitate to call Mr. Glaser for help with Health Insurance, Long Term Disability Protection, Retirement Plans, Cafeteria Plans, Group or individual Life Insurance, as well as general benefits design, suggestions and recommendations, Of course, there is never a consulting fee.

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