

## Debby Caplan

by Judy Stern and Jane Tomkiewicz

Debby Caplan, a beloved member of the Alexander Technique Community and founding member of our center, The American Center for the Alexander Technique passed away on Sunday Oct. 30. She will be deeply missed by those who knew her.

She was the daughter of novelist and essayist Waldo Frank and Alma Frank noted teacher of the Alexander Technique. Alma was trained by F.M. Alexander in the 1940's and was among the first teachers of the Alexander Technique in the United States. As a young woman Debby's passion was dance. She danced with the Pearl Primus and Jean Erdman companies. During her dancing years, she was trained to teach the Alexander Technique by her mother. She later pursued a career in physical therapy doing most of her work at the Rusk Institute at NYU. It became apparent to her during those years that the AT was a powerful tool for rehabilitation of especially with regard to back injuries. It was that realization that brought her back to teaching the Alexander Technique. As a co-founder of ACAT in 1964, she has been a seminal force in training new teachers. In 1997 she established the first scholarship fund in training center history. The Fund is named the Deborah Caplan/Alma Frank Fund. Double credentials as a physical therapist and an AT teacher allowed her to introduce the principles of the technique to the medical world. Her accomplishments in this area are unparalleled in our community. Her book *Back Trouble* is known throughout the world and was recently translated into Japanese. The recent production of a video captures Debby's brilliance in working with

*(continued on page 9)*

## From the Executive Director

Dear Member,

When I think that only a year ago we were in the harried position of scrambling to open in our new location, I get a great deal of satisfaction at seeing how far we've come. Although there are still some items and issues that need attention, we are in a great position to move forward and this could be year of very exciting steps. Although the future looks good, this letter cannot help but be colored by the sudden loss and great sorrow we felt with the passing our dear, dear teacher and ACAT co-founder Debby Caplan. Without her vision, dedication, generosity throughout the years, ACAT would not be what ACAT is today. So with love and thanks in our hearts we move on with our tasks.

*(continued on page 7)*

### Index

TCP News	2
Refresher Class and Book Sale	3
Freedom to Change	4
Choreography	6
Info Request	7
Journey from the Heart	8
A Call for Papers	10
Center News - Announcements	11
Member News	12

Mark your calendar!

### ACAT Annual Meeting February 25, 2001

If you haven't been here yet, come see the new space! Highlights will include:

- a 2 hour "hands-on" workshop for members led by TCP Director Barbara Kent
- a tribute and a time to collectively honor the passing of ACAT co-founder Debby Caplan
- by-law amendment concerning creating an associate member category
- elections
- reports

See page 5 for more details!

## Notes from the TCP by Joan Frost

Our final assembly for the school year featured a dance improvisation conceived by 9th term Clare Maxwell, the inspiration of which grew out of her years of training at ACAT. Clare gathered together a number of ACAT candidates to work and perform with. It is always wonderful to see our students move in a different context from that which is afforded in the regular classroom setting. We are looking forward to more performances in December's assembly.

On June 23rd, ACAT held the graduation ceremony for Patricia Benstock, Alicia Briceland, Katherine Constable, Clare Maxwell, Akiko Nishijima, Denise Rathbun, and Chris Zatamei. This was the first graduation to be held at our new home, which was transformed by the graduating class to take on a party atmosphere. It was gratifying to see how well our space could handle such an event. Unfortunately Akiko (Bo) had to return to her home in Japan earlier in the week to be with her ailing mother and Patricia (Trissie) was unable to make it at the last minute, but it was a warm, heart-felt, and fun-filled evening.

We decided to postpone our Fall admission to January as we didn't have a sufficient number of applicants who we felt were ready to train. We will be admitting a full class in January that will be joining our 10:30 class of 4th termers-to-be.

Our former 9:00 students have gracefully made the transition to beginning class at 8:00 every morning and our 1:00 students have likewise made the shift well to coming now at 10:30. It seems that the new format is working out satisfactorily and students seem to like the prospect of having anatomy every week through the entire three year training and having an opportunity to all be together for some time each week.

We decided to try a new teaching format for this Fall, initially suggested by faculty member, Cindy Reynolds, and the details worked out by Barbara Kent and myself. All faculty during the week are teaching the same theme, as follows: Weeks 1 and 2: Concepts and Principles; Weeks 3 and 4: Procedures; Week 5: Voice; Weeks 6 and 7: Table; Weeks 8 and 9: Chair; Week 10: Application. This idea came out of an interest expressed by the candidates that there be a consistency in the class material through the week.

Our faculty recently completed another enriching

weekend retreat at Barbara and Julie's gracious home in Sag Harbor, Long Island. We were grateful to have the opportunity to collectively mourn Debby's death. Words can't express the grief and sadness and sense of loss we all feel. Debby was the primary mentor for many of us, and the connective tissue for our ACAT community. She knew we were going to be having this weekend together. I can't help wondering if that was one of the considerations for her timing...

At the retreat, we shared what we're doing in our classes and we had a discussion/sharing about how we are teaching breathing. We decided to include the chapter entitled "Half a Loaf" from Carl Stough's book, Dr. Breath, on our reading list. We also had a rich discussion about mindfulness in speaking when assessing teaching skills. As a faculty, we are continually revisiting and becoming more clear about the need for the same kind of care and attention we give to our hands-on communication to be given to our verbal communication.

Saturday evening had us all celebrating Pearl Ausubel's 80th birthday! We enjoyed birthday cake and chatting with Pearl about her years of teaching. The event was organized and videotaped by Kim Jessor. For more details, see Kim's piece in the ACAT News.

Longtime ACAT senior teacher, Sarnie Ogus, announced that she will be retiring from ACAT at the end of this year. Fortunately, she has agreed to come to the TCP on a special basis so the candidates won't miss out on the special gifts Sarnie has to offer. I will be working out the details with Sarnie in the year to come. Sarnie has also been teaching (and hopefully will continue to teach) the post-grad classes along with Pearl Ausubel and Barbara Kent.

The post-grad classes have been a tremendous success and will be going for another round in November and December. If you are interested in attending future classes, please call me at (845)365-3497. If you are interested but cannot attend Wednesday afternoons, give me a listing of your available times. We may be able to set up an alternative course after the beginning of the year.

**FASCINATING BOOKS FOR SALE!  
ALL PROCEEDS GO TO ACAT**

ACAT has Kathy Miranda to thank for the contribution of a number of most fascinating books, all somewhat related to our field. She has generously proposed that all the proceeds of any sale goes to ACAT.

If you are interested in purchasing any of these books, you may do so on Wednesdays, when Jane is in the office. Softcover books will be \$1.00, and hardcover books will be \$3.00. This list has been compiled in no particular order.

**SOFTCOVER:**

Subtle Energies, Volume 3, Number 1, 1992  
Subtle Energies, Volume 3, Number 2, 1992  
Subtle Energies, Volume 3 Number 3, 1992  
Subtle Energies, Volume 4, Number 1, 1993  
Subtle Energies, Volume 4, Number 2, 1993  
Subtle Energies, Volume 4, Number 3, 1993  
 Oshry, Barry, Seeing Systems  
 Kornfield, Jack, A Path with Heart  
 Pauli, Gunter, Breakthroughs; What Business Can Offer Society  
 Maisel, Eric, Affirmations for Artists  
 Borysenko, Joan, Minding the Body, Mending the Mind  
 Becker, Robert O., M.D. and Gary Selden, The Body Electric  
 Borysenko, Joan, A Woman's Book of Life  
 Ott, John T., Health and Light  
 Woolger, Jennifer Barker and Roger J. Woolger, The Goddess Within  
 Benson, Herbert M.D., Timeless Healing  
 McFarland, Don, Body Secrets  
 Hoffman, David, The Herbal Holistic  
 Seidman, Maruti, A Guide to Polarity Therapy  
 Brennan, Barbara Ann, Hands of Light  
 Bach Flower Essences for the Family (catalogue)  
 Steadman, Alice, Who's the Matter with Me?  
 Dennett, Daniel C., Consciousness Explained  
 Richards, M.C., Centering  
 Hoff, Benjamin, The Tao of Pooh

**JANUARY REFRESHER CLASS  
NOW FORMING**

Time: Wednesday afternoons, 2:30-4:30pm  
Date: 6 weeks: January 17 thru February 21, 2000  
Fee: \$300.  
Location: ACAT, 39 W. 14th St., #507, NYC

This class will be taught by ACAT senior faculty, each taking two consecutive weeks (3 teachers each 6 week session). The class size will be limited to 6 participants to allow for ample hands-on time.

Class size limited. For information, please call Joan Frost at (845)365-3497.

Grof, Stanislav, M.D., The Holotropic Mind  
 Keleman, Stanley, Emotional Anatomy  
**HARDCOVER;**  
 Goleman, Daniel, Emotional Intelligence  
 Damasio, Antonio R., Descartes' Error  
 Murphy, Michael, The Future of the Body  
 Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly, The Evolving Self; A Psychology for the Third Millennium  
 Calvin, William H., The Cerebral Code  
 Upledger, John E., Craniosacral Therapy II; Beyond the Dura  
 Ronsard, Nicole, No Excuse Exercise Guide  
 Changeux, Jean-Pierre, The Biology of Mind  
 Feldenkrais, Moshe, Awareness Through Movement  
 Borysenko, Joan, Fire in the Soul  
 Al Huang, Chungliang and Jerry Lynch, Thinking Body, Dancing Mind  
 Siegel, Bernie M.D., Peace, Love & Healing  
 Loye, David, The Sphinx and the Rainbow  
 Gleick, James, Chaos; Making a New Science  
 Sheldrake, Rupert, The Presence of the Past  
 Cleary, Thomas (translator), Zen Lessons  
 Ferguson, Marilyn, The Brain Revolution

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## “Freedom to Change”... Jobs!

By Kate Kobak

The amount of awareness that came from my first year of training was truly eye opening. As my levels of consciousness in classroom activity grew, they paralleled my levels of consciousness in life activity. I became increasingly pleased and excited about the changes I was experiencing in class, and in turn more and more frustrated, feeling as if I could not apply them to life. Noticing that I had completely changed my approach to many recreational activities, riding the train and just walking down the street, I decided that my work situation was just not conducive to applying the work. I was asking far too much of myself—the challenges posed mentally, physically and emotionally at work were far too great, and I found them to interfere with my learning. I idealized and wished for a work situation that would allow me to explore the principles I found so useful in most other parts of my life. I became stubborn in my belief that there must be restaurant work somewhere that, while still paying me enough, would allow me a pace at which I could use myself efficiently, and also give me a wonderful opportunity to “try out my new shoes” in activities outside of the classroom.

My view is that waiting tables offers much to be experimented with. You’ve got just about everything: walking, standing, bearing weight, pouring water, balancing things on trays, using your voice to get an overly chatty table’s attention and telling them specials or offering a drink, keeping awareness of yourself in movement as well as in relationship to all the other servers, cooks, maitre’ d, busboys (who are also all in movement), keeping your relationship in distance with the patrons professional, and several more.

It’s really amazing how speaking with awareness of one’s back can grab the attention of a jabbering table of nine! Staying in the moment, keeping a broader awareness of yourself and the others around you, all the while having a sort of internal dialogue going on, balancing yourself and the five or six things that need to be done, prioritizing them and achieving them can be quite fulfilling and kind of fun in a way, if it is all done with clarity of thought and efficiency of movement. Work is work, and right now maybe I can’t LOVE my job but when applying the principles it becomes a much more interesting place to be and perhaps even bearable, because not only am I making money to pay for school but also learning while I’m doing it! The activity of waiting tables is financing my going to school so I can gain more information for applying to outside ac-

tivities, and I feel that this is why I’m going to school in the first place – to place myself in this continuum of learning.

Upon completing my third term of training I decided that there definitely needed to be a change in my job. It was shaving two hours just in travel time there and back off my day. The management was at times tyrannical and often treated us with very little respect and with complete disregard for our time and efforts spent. We were inspected for things like the color of our socks and often drilled to make sure we were describing all the wines and foods in exactly the same words, with not an inch of freedom. We were pooling our tips with extremely varying levels of business in each of the seven waiter sections. This always seemed to mean that one or two people were always completely bombarded, and therefore always turning in substantially more tips to the pool. The amount of stress and tension involved in keeping up with the pace that was set by the constant flow of customers seemed more and more unnecessary to me. The awareness I gained in class began to feed awareness of what I was doing to myself while adapting to work conditions. The idea of working quickly and efficiently but without rushing became my ideal in approaching work.

I was and currently am thinking very strongly that the training is about the work in application, not just getting in and out of the chair or how “good” my monkey is, but what I do, how I organize myself when I take the work and ideas into daily life and how I occupy my time. The job I had last year was just not set up to allow me to apply these principles to the extent I would have liked. The rapidness of the seating allowed absolutely no time for attention to details or to give good, attentive service, let alone attend to my use in the activity of service. The money wasn’t that great, and I was spending twenty plus dollars to take a cab home at night. I decided that I needed to make a change. I narrowed it down that I would have to deal with crap in EVERY restaurant, and that the biggest changes were that I needed less stress stimulus, a slower pace, and that I needed to be situated closer to home, especially when school started up again. I began faxing resumes to ads for restaurants in Brooklyn and Tribeca, and inhibiting my first response to just jump at every offer to come in and train. I became a bit choosier, considering

come in and train. I became a bit choosier, considering more than just the immediate desire to get out of my current situation. One afternoon I received a call – a response from a resume I had sent earlier that day. The job was at was a two-star restaurant in Brooklyn, very near my home. I had almost sent the resume just for fun, never thinking I would be qualified enough for the job. I went in the next day for an interview, and trained one day, right before I went away for vacation. I totally believed they would not be interested in me, being that I couldn't commit to train the rest of the week because I was going away. The restaurant has two dining rooms, one much more casual than the other. I had trained in the casual, no reservations needed area, as that was all that was available. Over my vacation I received a message about an opening at the main, very expensive two star dining room. As soon as I came back I set up a time to come in and train there; I've been working there ever since.

Looking back on the whole interviewing and training process, I notice that I took a completely different approach. I kept a sort of internal smile going. I never allowed myself (and caught and inhibited myself often!) to slip into my habitual nervous, worried and unsure interviewing, training, meeting-new-people-who-might-not-like-me state. I just took it all for what it was, and much more light heartedly than I usually would. A few people had a bit of a snippy attitude towards me, and I just let it go. I didn't react to it. I chose not to react to it. Not involving so much emotion –not as much frustration. Not allowing myself to make a judgment call on whether situations were easy or hard, customers, co-workers or managers were jerks or rude – everything just WAS. That was the way it was, and instead of wishing it otherwise, I realized fully the empowerment in giving myself the tool of adaptability. I practiced staying back when things were frenzied – not allowing myself to be swooped up into it. Things just were, and I was co-existing with them and making my own choices in how I would react. It's kind of funny but a few people at my new job have told me how calm I am on the floor. This is very uncharacteristic to me, but I notice it as well. I enjoy it. I find myself noticing others' extreme erratic bursts of energy, followed by frenzy and frustration. Often "rushing" it seems like they're sometimes running circles. Not to say that I don't catch myself doing the same thing, what's different approach. I kept a sort of internal smile going. I never allowed myself (and caught and inhibited myself often!) to slip into my habitual nervous, worried and unsure interviewing, training, meeting-new-people-who-might-not-like-me state. I just took it all for what it was, and much more light heartedly than I usually would. A few people had a bit

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I feel I have shifted this summer into consciously approaching waiting tables with my mental and physical use in mind. Getting to the heart of movement, in an environment that gives me the space to make choices towards working more efficiently. Most importantly I do find I am actually enjoying work a bit more – finding pleasure in the learning that comes from experimenting with application and observation in activity.

## ACAT Annual Meeting February 25, 2001

The tentative schedule is  
12-1:45 Hands-on workshop  
2:00-3:00 Tribute  
3:15-5:00 Business Meeting

You should receive a dues renewal and Annual Meeting mailing that will contain a finalized schedule

See you there!

## Influence of the Alexander Technique on the choreography of "Circuit"

by Sigal Bergman

"Circuit" is a full evening dance performance that was shown at Washington Square United Methodist Church in NYC in April, 2000. I worked on this piece on and off from January 1999 to April 2000. During this time I made the decision to study at ACAT and completed my first two semesters there.

The decision to be committed to this practice influenced my work by changing my tastes and interests which in turn changed my choreographic decisions. As I progressed in my studies and in the development of the piece I became more conscious of the connection between my new way of choreographing and the principals of the Alexander technique. It helped me give a context to my impulses and made my choreographic decisions clearer.

The way I created this piece was different from the way I made previous work. In the past my pieces evolved around an image or a feeling. The process of creation involved an extended period of improvisation in which I tried to find movements that best expressed my initial inspiration.

Before beginning work on "Circuit" I became frustrated with this way of working. I felt that this was a forced manner of expression. I wanted to find a method of working that would leave space to let things happen on their own rather than digging for them and controlling them. I was looking for a process of revealing rather than building. I wanted to stop looking for ways to express something and start exploring my natural inclinations in movement.

At first I couldn't define my impulses so clearly. I just knew that I wanted to free myself and that I would do so by starting with a form and seeing where it led. I chose a structure that determined the movements by combining chance methods and decisions made by the dancers. Being liberated from the need to create the movements, I was free to determine only timing and spacing parameters.

Using a form that included the dancer's input allowed me a more comfortable stance in relation to my dancers. One of the things that attracted me to the Alexander technique was the respect teachers had for their students, and the attention given to each individual's body/mind makeup. My new way of working gave the dancers an option to express their movement preferences and knowledge rather than imitate my own aesthetics

and body language. I learned a lot about how they moved and was inspired to shape the piece by utilizing some of the things I had observed.

The structure I used was a variation on Trisha Brown's score for "Locus". In her piece she imagined a three dimensional cube surrounding her. She assigned numbers to points on the cube from one to twenty six. She then translated a sequence of letters into numbers, giving her an arbitrary set of directions which she pointed to with different parts of her body. I used the same method but instead of pointing outwards I looked inside the body; Each dancer chose 26 points on their bodies that were significant to them for any reason: anatomical, psychological or other, and assigned numbers to them. I then read out a random string of numbers (three at a time) and asked the dancers to create a movement that represented their notion of the internal connection between these points. The first movement they produced was kept, making their first choices the subject of the material. I used this method in making almost all the dance movement in "Circuit".

My insistence on staying faithful to this kind of process shows a shift in my thinking. It felt like a relief rather than a constraint. In the beginning of my Alexander studies I was concerned about losing my personality as I shed some of my habits. I believed that my personality was ingrained in my muscles and movement patterns, and as I was changing them some of me was lost. With time this fear subsided. I repeatedly experienced the reassurance of remaining myself even after a big change in my movement occurred. The letting go of habits stopped posing a threat to my personality and began to feel like a peeling away of hard layers. I became less concerned with losing myself. This understanding supported my belief that my work can still be personal without dealing directly with my personal issues and movement patterns. Although I did not make up the movements I trusted that the result would express something which is personal and is mine. In a way it was a practice in non-doing in choreography; I let go to allow the coordination of the piece to present itself.

At times it was hard to maintain such a distance – to stay back- from the piece, especially when I didn't find the dancers' movements inspiring or when I was anxious for unrelated reasons. It was hard to inhibit the impulse to "do" when things did not do

*(continued on page 9)*

...Executive Director (continued from page 1)

Now that the board's energies are no longer needed for moving and coping with the move, there are a number a very exciting projects in the works: our first post-grad course was offered, filled and had waiting lists (our hope is to have 2 or 3 regularly scheduled each year); Leland Vall is heading up the Website project; fundraising is once again on the table; and initiatives such as organizational development and long term planning are being explored..

Just as last summer we were madly working to prepare to open the TCP, this summer we spent on finer finishing jobs and the joint is really starting to shape up! We opened not only the regular old TCP program (9-12 M-F) but we reopened with our expanded two track program elegantly reorganized to start earlier in the day, and have some overlapping time where trainees are all together (see TCP report).

We are becoming accustomed to the many changes that running our own space entails. Space rentals to members and friends not only help to offset our basic costs, but bring new visitors to to our center and to the Alexander Technique. This last summer saw record attendance of the public lecture demonstration offered to the public due to initiatives taken by Leland Vall. On display and available to all visitors are ACAT's introductory brochure about the Alexander Technique, lecture/demonstration announcements, member-teacher list, TCP brochure, and the literature list. Historical photos are on the walls. Plaques regarding ACAT founders and mission statement are up or going up. Memorial plaques for both Judy and Debby are being designed. Bulletin boards are up which allow trainees, faculty, ACAT members and the public post and information on various aspects of the Alexander Technique and related subjects.

If you haven't been to the space yet we hope you will visit, certainly for the Annual Meeting Sunday February 25, 2001, if not before!

New equipment acquired for the TCP and/or member users are: new table covers (thanks to Kathy Miranda's sewing skills!); a VCR; a sound system; air conditioners; space heaters; a beautiful new bookcase designed to match our old bookcases; a public phone which allows incoming and outgoing calls (thanks to Leland Vall); and a fire extinguisher (thanks to Alan Serchuk).

There are so many changes, and so many

## INDUSTRIAL SAFETY DIRECTOR SEEKS INFO FROM AT TEACHERS

Samuel Glazer met with me in the ACATUSA office while visiting in New York City in October. The reason for the contact was to urge our Society to become involved in finding ways, through the application of Alexander principles, to assist business and industry in reducing the increasing problem of carpal tunnel and other musculoskeletal injuries of the upper extremities. With the combined knowledge and experience of Alexander teachers in helping to reduce pain and in preventing such injuries in the performing arts and to people with physical problems, he believes our society could be instrumental in developing proposals that would help exposed employees in exposed occupations. He has determined that Alexander teachers now are working with corporations in this endeavor, and hopes they would share their experiences with other teachers. He first contacted me early in 1998 about his interest in Alexander and requested information on available research that would help him refer to the Technique as a science. He did not believe he could interest faculty and students majoring in Human Factors in an industrial engineering department that Alexander was worthy of their study unless it were considered a science. I sent him a copy of information from our files.

Mr. Glazer graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 1947 with a degree in electrical engineering. He spent his entire professional career with GTE telephone operations in Wisconsin, and was appointed Corporate Safety Director in 1958 to initiate a corporate safety program, and held that position for 23 years. He retired in 1981, but continued his interest in safety management. He has written several manuscripts on the subject directed to corporate management, safety professionals, and to faculty in schools of business and colleges of engineering.

(continued on page 10)

thanks to offer to those who have helped out from small to large ways. I hope I haven't left anything out (see more thanks in News from the Center), if I have, I am so sorry, please accept my general thanks! So I wish you a good holiday season and hope I'll see you in February at the Annual Meeting.

Sincerely,

Jane Tomkiewicz, Executive Director

## More of a Journey from the Heart into New York Presbyterian Hospital's Complementary Medicine Research Program

by Claudia Peyton

September 1999, Dr. Mehmet Oz invited me to speak to the New York Presbyterian Complementary Medicine Research Group. My talk was designed to explain how the Alexander Technique can enhance and benefit the pre and post operational setting. In the end attendees were truly interested and enthusiastic about the technique. As a result, I was invited to be a part in their complementary medicine research group. I was both humbled and thrilled at the opportunity before me.

Judy Stern and Glynn Macdonald had encouraged me to contact Ron Dennis and discuss his research project on Functional Reach. I did just that, I went to Atlanta and spent time working with him. Months later as an exercise I adapted elements of Ron's project in a proposal for research. The feed back was positive; however, the mind-body connection was lost on the reviewer. I was going to be sent to the physical therapy department away from the complementary medical setting. The ground work I had set was crumbling before me. I asked to be given another opportunity to present the Alexander Technique again as a mind-body education process. They agreed to have me offer this presentation and opened it to the Columbia University and New York Presbyterian Hospital community.

I needed a mentor through this process. Until now, I had relied on suggestions from others and my own persistence. I went to Judy Stern, and she met with me and made many good, solid suggestions. Since, she has mentored me through this process of understanding the landscape of the large medical institution. She also knew many of the people I had begun to know over the past two years and offered to help me with my presentation. Of course, I wanted her to be a part of it. This was big, an opportunity of a lifetime with potential to begin new scientific research about the Alexander Technique. My goal continues to evolve in the complementary medical setting.

During this same period of time I had contacted Ron Dennis for advice via the internet, and he introduced me to Dr. John Austin. Dr. Austin was interested in doing more research and agreed to become my Primary Investigator. I was supported and now in good stead.

The Presentation: Thinking In Activity , The

### Mind-Body Connection of the Alexander Technique

In preparing the presentation for the Complementary Medicine Research Group, the challenge was that in only fifteen minutes, we were to present and show the mind-body connection for the Alexander Technique. Initially for me this was obvious; I teach the thinking process of AT as the most important component of a lesson. Then I began to review literature on mind-body methods, models, and research; the many perspectives on the subject made my head swim. While reading the literature, what struck me was the way the AT is applied. It is a technique in which the mind is involved in an engaged and energized way. The interaction between the student and teacher is not passive but proactive. The use of thought is applied immediately, and the student can explore how the application of the process can be practical in life.

How do I simplify the technique and its components without losing what it truly is? This was the task of F.M. himself, in assuring that what he had developed over a lifetime remained clear and learnable. The simplest way I know now to explain AT is that it is a hands on technique; through gentle touch, the spoken word, and the study of movement as a vehicle for exploring thought, the teacher assists the student in changing their thinking. The purpose of a lesson in the technique is to enhance proprioception and build skills that promote the changing of habits.

On June 20, 2000, at the demonstration, I explained the thinking and learning process. Judy gave a hands-on presentation with the group and a volunteer. Dr. Austin attended in support and to answer questions from his experience.

The demonstration was a great success. The outcomes are three potential research projects: one on aging, another with heart patients, and the third relating to psychological issues. We are now entering into the planning stages. The process is rich and the potential for research is endless. I am truly grateful for the senior teachers who so graciously helped and supported me and my enthusiasm. Thank you from the heart.

June 30, 2000; Questions arise, thoughts to



consider - is there a conversation we should be having? As I review many articles that focus on CAM research looking to developing good research designs, I read of challenges in future research for CAM practices. Humm... Money is not easy to come by and (CAM's) study design is often dismissed as inexperienced.

In the past financial emphasis was on substances or processes that can be patented and made into investments of high return. The invested money was recovered and then some. There is funding through National Institute of Health (NIH) and National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) grants; at this time the grants are few in number and large in amounts, yet usually, given to large institutions with resources to cover many areas of interest. Humm....

The next challenge is study design. As researchers look to CAM practices with many techniques, therapies, and modalities to choose from, it looks that it may take years to accomplish the viable research needed. One advantage the Alexander community has is tremendous amounts of personal experience and years of positive feedback from our students. Examining the case studies can help us determine areas of study. We can research the kinds of grants given to various projects that will help us find ways to become involved.

These are questions that arise as I continue my study: where does this wave of change in the medical and health care environment leave the AT community at large? We need solid research with scientific outcomes. Can we develop and apply mainstream criteria to our technique? If we do, how will our community benefit? If we are to catch the wave of interest toward the integrative techniques, are we positioned move ahead with the wave? Or do we need to plan for our future differently now? Humm... I must look into this....

P.S. The recent letter to Dr. Strauss from the AmSAT Professional Identity Project (PIP) is an important step toward our future research potential. (Thanks). We need to define ourselves as Alexander Technique teachers clearly or we could be challenged along our way into research, as we were in New York State.

October 26, 2000  
Claudia Peyton

*...Circuit (continued from page 6)*

velop smoothly. In some instances I was able to stop myself from interfering and take the time to look again at the movement and the music and let the ideas present themselves. Other times I "controlled" the situation by giving a new dictation. Mostly these were unsuccessful solutions and they produced my least favorite parts of the piece.

One of the recurring comments I got after the performance was how much people enjoyed the time I allowed for things. Throughout "Circuit", sections develop slowly, allowing details to become apparent, there are long pauses and a lot of repetition. I think the expansion of time in 'Circuit' is connected to the practice of inhibition and non-doing in the process of the choreography. In retrospect I find that the biggest strength of the piece comes from allowing space for time.

*Debby...(continued from page 1)*

back pain. The AT community and therefore the world has been profoundly touched by her work and her accomplishments.

Her moving memorial service was attended by family members, fellow teachers (most of whom she had helped to train), her own students, and a very wide circle of friends. ACAT extends its deepest sympathies to her husband Larry King, her daughter Leah, her son Aron and the rest of her family.

The ACAT board has honored the family's request of making a donation to an organization that is doing research on Restless Leg Syndrome - a syndrome from which Debby suffered greatly in the last decade of her life. Individual board members, to honor Debby's memory and to help realize one of her dreams, have contributed about \$400 to the Debby Caplan/Alma Frank Scholarship fund. Some time will be taken at the next annual meeting (Feb. 25) to honor Debby. We invite members and alumna to share their comments, thoughts, anecdotes, and feelings about Debby, her life and her work in the next issue of ACAT news: The Debby Caplan Memorial Issue. Please e-mail your contribution to ACATUSA@aol.com, or call or send hard copy if you don't have e-mail.

Tax deductible donations may be made to ACAT and earmarked the Debby Caplan/Alma Frank Fund.

...*Industrial Safety* (continued from page 7)

After his retirement he began, and continues, to audit classes at the University of Wisconsin, first in the school of business, then in other departments, and since 1987, has been enrolled in classes, seminars, and in independent studies in the human factors section of the industrial engineering department.

Mr. Glazer used the vast library resources of the University for his research, and in the music library he scanned copies of the magazine, *Medical Problems of Professional Artists*, and found articles on the Alexander Technique and its widespread use in preventing injuries to those in the performing arts and in reducing pain in artists who had been injured. He subsequently read all the books and articles he could find on the subject, and spoke to musicians and to music school students who were familiar with the Technique.

Through his classes and seminars, he learned of the increasing toll of musculoskeletal injuries and that efforts made to mitigate the problems of exposed employees were limited mostly to improvements in the physical workplaces and workstations. The Alexander Technique were taught to classes in the performing arts and had helped people with crippling physical defects after physicians had gone as far as they could through medical treatment. Why, then, couldn't Alexander teachers develop procedures, based on Alexander principles to prevent similar injuries in businesses and industries?

He stated that his professor and mentor in industrial engineering studies supports him in his mission and has agreed to help him in any way he can. His first contribution was to provide names and contact information of two people at the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) located in Cincinnati, and two industrial engineering professors at the University of Cincinnati who should be asked to attend and possibly be involved in the June AmSAT AGM in Cincinnati.

Alexander teachers should send Sam information they may have that would help get this project off the ground, and inform him of attempts and of successful experiences with business and industry.

Mr. Glazer can be contacted at [sglazer@students.wisc.edu](mailto:sglazer@students.wisc.edu) and by phone (608) 242-7181.

## A CALL FOR PAPERS

In March 2001, the second annual Somerville Awards will be given for papers selected from submissions made to member schools by approved graduates or trainees in the following schools: Antioch Somatics, Aston Patterning, Body-Mind Centering, CIIS Somatics, Continuum, Feldenkrais Guild, The Lomi School, F.M. Alexander, and the Rolf Institute. Monetary awards will be given for all Somerville finalists whose papers are submitted through the individual schools (including ACAT). Awards will be given to the papers judged as best in each of the two categories listed below, to be judged by an outside committee of scientists and scholars. Finalists from each school present a summary of their papers for discussion during the colloquium for reflection and feedback.

1. Narrative Study. A carefully detailed description of your work with a person over an extended period of time, which illuminates the unique quality of your method of work and its efficacy. The emphasis in the narrative should be on carefully described details: i.e., (i) a carefully drawn description of the client, age, demeanor, uniqueness of personality, the larger context of his or her life, what brings the person to you, etc. (ii) the various sessions of work, what happened, when, for how long, etc. What changes happened, both positive and negative, and questionable? (iii) What questions were you faced with and left with?

Staying close to the details of the story, indicate how you were thinking about this work. What kinds of theoretical frameworks did you bring to this work? Did they stand up to the actual events as they unfolded, or did you find yourself having to modify the theories? The point of the narratives is not to "prove" already existing theories, but to generate the kinds of raw material that scientists need for eventual theory building. Arthur Kleinman's *The Illness Narratives* and Oliver Sacks' neurological stories are examples. Other examples occur among non-fiction writers of the natural world: Barry Lopez, Gary Nabhan, Peter Matthiesen, Terry Tempest Williams, Annie Dillard, and others. For a complete bibliography on narrative methods: [http://www.iona.edu/academic/arts\\_sci/org/Sawchuk.html](http://www.iona.edu/academic/arts_sci/org/Sawchuk.html)

A properly written narrative will reflect the writer's sense of the ambiguously textured character of the real, that his or her method is one of many, and that there is an attempt in the details of the narrative to situate oneself in the larger community of practice. The study should be at least 6,000 words.

2. Archival Study: Towards Somatics History. For more information, call Joan Frost at (845)365-3497.

## Center News - Announcements

Dear Member,

Toward the end of summer we attempted to start eNOUNCEMENTS, a monthly email to all members with announcements of varying kinds. In order to be fair and accommodate our members who do not have e-mail, theoretically, we would send out hard copies as well. Our apologies that hard copies were never sent out to non-e-mail operating members. To remedy that, we are reprinting our headline announcements for you now. After July's first installment, there were no further eNOUNCEMENTS sent out.. This was not only because we received very few, but also because we underestimated our person power and priority of tasks for the fall, so the idea is on temporary hold until we reconsider format, timing and strategy.

### VALL STEPS DOWN, SULLIVAN STEPS UP

Leland Vall has stepped down from the position of Office Assistant. I'd like to thank Leland for his enthusiasm and energy, and for the many innovations and improvements for which he has been responsible. It is ACAT's good fortune that Leland will work on a voluntary basis on several of the projects he had been working on before, including furthering the Library Project. Leland is a member of the Board of Directors and will continue to serve in that capacity. Once again, please join me in thanking Leland for his vision and efforts for ACAT and all things Alexander.

Please also join me in welcoming Tara Sullivan, ACAT Grad (Winter '98) to the ACAT Office Staff. She will be assuming the duties of Office Assistant as well as that of Facility Manager (rentals, etc.). We thank you in advance for your patience and cooperation as Tara gets acquainted with the many facets of these positions. As Facility Manager, Tara will be handling studio rentals. In order to find out about studio times or prices, please call the office and leave a message as prompted in the mailbox pertaining to our space.

### OPEN DAY

Anyone interested in hosting or partially hosting OPEN DAY? Please call us at the center. Many thanks to Robert Bradley who has been the host for a number of months, but who will be stepping down. Until either a new full-time host or

complementary part-time hosts can be arranged, the OPEN DAY will still be in effect, however access may change slightly. For those of you who would like to come to OPEN DAY and have never been a renter, please call the office to notify us that you wish to use it so that access can be arranged.

### WE NEED YOUR TOWELS!

We need your old, clean towels for cleaning ACAT's floors. You can drop them off at the office anytime. Thank you in advance!

### MANY THANKS:

To Kathy Miranda for making table covers, including making one and matching bolster covers from Judy's Liebowitz' cover. Also for a donation of books to our library and to be sold.

To Joan Frost and Barbara Kent for donating serial lessons to Richard Allon, in exchange for the architectural services he rendered ACAT at the time of our move.

To Joan Frost and Karla Booth for the work of starting up and publicizing the teacher refresher courses at ACAT.

To Bob Bradley for hosting OPEN DAY.

To Leland Vall for his hosting of OPEN DAY, for donating an incoming phone to serve TCP and renters, for work on launching an ACAT website and for continued various initiatives and service.

ACAT grad and Board Member Allison Foley wishes to thank all those members who sent cards and letters and made calls and visits as she recuperated from an automobile accident that occurred late summer.

We are all saddened by the passing of Esther A. Seligman on May 5, 2000. She is survived by her husband Otto Seligman. His address is 59 Gordon Way, Princeton, NJ 08540 (609) 921-1780. Esther certified in about '83-'86. Her husband, Otto, told me how much she loved teaching the Alexander Technique. Otto also said that many students attended her memorial service. Because much mail continues to be sent to our old address, a notice mailed to us in May did not arrive until the summer, and we are sorry not to have shared this loss with you sooner.

## Member News/Announcements

Teaching space available on the Upper East Side. Available Friday all day, weekends, and weekday evenings. Call Barbara Pearlman at (212) 986-4582.

ACAT Grad Barbara McCrane is looking for part-time baby-sitting help starting in December 2000 or January 2001, a few afternoons a week. Her daughter, Hannah, is 2 years old. If interested, please call (212) 875-7134.

Peter Grunwald's Natural Vision Improvement Workshops are coming to the United States in Spring 2001. One will be in Sonoma, California and the other in Litchfield, Connecticut. If you would like to add a friend to the mailing list or if your address has changed, contact Linda Franke at linda@frankes.com or (415) 437-9200.

Allison Foley will be teaching a workshop on the Alexander Technique and its Application to Yoga on Saturday, December 16, 2000 from 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. at Go Yoga, 218 Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn. The fee is \$20 in advance, \$25 on the day of the workshop. Interested? Call Allison at (718) 218-7146.

Space Available in physical therapy offices. Very reasonable rates; locations in Midtown and Clifton, NJ. Contact Larry at (212) 639-1256.

A feature length article by ACAT Board Chair Hope Martin will appear in the upcoming Direction issue on Spirituality. In "Synchronizing Body and Mind", she describes her extensive involvement in both the AT and meditation. Drawing interesting parallels between the two, she even goes on to work the AT into the 4 Noble Truths. The following short excerpt will give you an idea of this insightful article. Read the rest in the next issue of Direction!

"Both men [Buddha and F.M.] worked with their experience exactly as it was. They were using themselves as their own laboratories to propel them into deeper understanding. In that sense neither Alexander work nor meditation is "self improvement." We don't have to improve upon ourselves. That notion is fundamentally aggressive. Rather, both disciplines point to what is innate: in the case of Alexander work, our innate grace, ease and coordination; in the case of meditation, our innate wakefulness."

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