

NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2003

THIS NEWSLETTER IS ABOUT TAKING THE ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE INTO EVERYDAY ACTIVITY AND IS FOR EVERYBODY WHO FINDS THEMSELVES WONDERING: ‘HEY, WHAT WAS THAT ALL ABOUT?’

1. GLIDING INTO THE NEW YEAR

Whoopee, it’s January again. The hard work is over, reality is starting to return and Madelene and Annie are feeling – dare we say it? – disarmingly cheerful.

We believe it’s a great time for reviewing how the Christmas Campaign went, what worked, what didn’t and how we can refine it next time. We also believe in making notes *now* and putting them with the Christmas card list, so that next time around you don’t get rushed/panicked/stressed into doing the same again on automatic pilot. You can read your notes and take a few precious minutes out to reflect and decide what will work best for you.

This is just another example of Alexandrian saying no to habit. Otherwise, what will distinguish you from hamsters on treadmills, is that at some point you *will* remember that you have done all of this before, to limited avail.

The thought of hamsters on treadmills brings us on to the idea of New Year’s Resolutions. They’re great, aren’t they? Only they just don’t work because they’re something that we impose on ourselves in an artificial way.

So, does this mean that you might as well start the New Year in a physical and psychological slump? We certainly don’t think so. The chief shortcoming of resolutions is that they lack any solid underpinning. Establishing the necessary underpinning makes the resolution realisable. It may take a little time and some thought, but it doesn’t take an enormous effort. In fact, less is more. Once the underpinning is in place, the resolution or goal becomes much easier to reach.

It’s like posture and poise. Posture is that thing that you feel substandard about, yet you think that if you work at it hard enough, you ought to be able to improve... but you never can. Poise is effortless because it is underpinned by an awareness of being grounded and free and comfortable in your body and your movements.

May you underpin and glide into 2003

2. A POLITICALLY INCORRECT STORY

A businessman dragged himself home. He barely made it to his chair before he collapsed, exhausted.

His sympathetic wife was right there with a strong drink and a comforting word. ‘My, you look tired’ she said. ‘You must have had a really hard day. What happened to make you so exhausted.’

‘It was terrible’, her husband replied. ‘The computer broke down and all of us had to do our own thinking.’

Multiple choice

The Thought Police would object to this story because:

- a) it reinforces outmoded gender stereotypes
- b) it implies that computer failure engenders abnormal behaviours

or

c) it highlights habitual exploitation of vulnerable computers*

3. MAKING A CONTRIBUTION

Recently a pupil of Annie's, told her that she was having trouble sleeping. Annie talked with her about it for a while. Both agreed that the problem sounded like a combination of a medical problem and stress. Later that week Annie thought of something she felt her pupil might find helpful and sent her a short email outlining it.

During her next lesson, Louise thanked Annie for the email: it had helped a lot, she said, but it had also made her feel that her AT teacher really cared, so much so that she'd shown the email around. Annie was just as touched. Not just because she *did* care, but because it had mattered.

.So much of what goes on in our day-to-day lives is mechanical. But teaching the AT never is. It is always a creative act to which we bring our heart and mind. It is about committing and contributing, insofar as we can, to the well being of every individual pupil. It requires that we be in the moment and focused on our pupil when we work.

Hard work? No. Hard work is when.... you feel drained at the end of the day, when the amount you have achieved corresponds accurately to the quantity of energy that has been sucked out of you in the doing. The job and personal satisfaction we get from what we do puts it in a whole different category.

4. FUTURE EVENTS

**We will be running workshops on Problems with Posture in the New Year on:
18th January 10a.m-12p.m. at Friends Meeting House 120 Heath St Hampstead, London N.W.3**

**25th January 2003 10a.m-1.p.m. Healthy Living Centre 282 St Paul's Road, London N.1
2LH 020 7704 6900 07939 347099**

1st February 2003 10a.m.-12p.m. at Friends Meeting House, 7 Balgores Crescent, Romford.

We look forward to having our website www.nopain-gain.com up and running in January.

5. 'SWITCHING ON TO GYM USE' Time Out

No New Year's resolutions for us, but we were delighted to see that Time Out had devoted the January 1st Health page to our views on using the AT to work out better and with greater enjoyment. How exciting to have this media coverage at the start of 2003.

80% of New Year's Resolutions gym member will give up by March and a £1,000 investment can quickly turn into a gift to the club which aroused such enthusiasm in January.

By learning how to stay mentally 'switched on', through bench presses, circuits, weights, exercise-to-music classes etc. you can eliminate boredom and make it a mental as well as a physical work out.

If you've missed this article and would like to read it, we shall be posting it on our website.

Best wishes for a poised and focused 2003

Annie and Madelene

To receive 50 Top Alexander Tips or to subscribe to this free e-newsletter email:

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