

NEWSLETTER JULY 2003

THIS NEWSLETTER IS FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE READY TO MOVE AWAY FROM THE HAZARDS OF THEIR HABITUAL THINKING

1. CIA jokes and personal bests
2. Joke: the successful marriage
3. The Bare-Assed Coach
4. Whatever happened to the 60 Second Tip?

1. OF CIA JOKES AND PERSONAL BESTS

The June 2003 newsletter has been the best received so far. Why? Because of the CIA joke. We're still not quite sure what that is about, but this is what we suspect:

- It appeals to women, because there is a notion of empowerment of sorts in there, somewhere
- It appeals to men, because it proves that they *are* the gentler and more caring sex. We could be wrong about this, but we actually know of people directing their friends to our website, simply to read the joke for themselves. (Keep it up, guys.)

Does this leave us feeling flush with success? Not really. In fact it has left us wondering how will we ever live up to our previous high standard. Suppose it's all downhill from this point on?

There are various ways of dealing with this concern. We could buy alchopops and snivel into them; we could shoot ourselves and put ourselves out of our anxiety (catastrophize? *Us?* never); we could worry about it into the wee small hours of the night.

Instead we raise the issue because it is one we hear a lot, in one form or another, from pupils. Our pupils have lessons and things start to work better and feel better. At the end of a lesson especially, pupils feel that they have made a qualitative leap; suddenly their body feels like a Volvo saloon rather than a 10 year old Lada.

The reaction kicks in immediately: will they be able to hold on to it? No, they won't; any more than we can hold on to the glory of June's joke. But we offer you two thoughts – because the Alexander Technique is all about what you think.

The first is that we focus on our failures, difficulties or whatever, terrified lest failure etc. beget an ever compounding, or at least limiting, succession of failures.

The second is that nothing empowers like our successes. Each new personal best you achieve with the Alexander Technique – or, indeed anything else – is the plateau you start from. There are dips as well as inclines – life is not the Fen Country after all – but each success moves you forward. What we don't have, on our plateau, is the thrill of discovery.

The way forward, as we see it, it is to start trusting in the process, in your achievements and in the irresistibility of your momentum. It's not unlike being in a large moving vehicle; you have a perception of being still, when you are really being propelled forward. F.M. Alexander observed, we can't always rely on habitual thinking.

2. JOKE: RECIPE FOR A HAPPY MARRIAGE

A couple was celebrating their golden wedding anniversary. Their domestic tranquillity had long been the talk of the town. A local newspaper reporter was enquiring as to the secret of their long and happy marriage.

"It dates back to our honeymoon", the old lady explained. "We visited the Grand Canyon and took a trip down to the bottom by pack mule. We hadn't gone too far when my husband's mule stumbled.

"My husband quietly said: 'That's once.' We went a little further and the mule stumbled again. Once more my husband spoke quietly: 'That's twice.' We hadn't gone a half-mile more when the mule stumbled a third time.

"My husband promptly removed a revolver from his pocket and shot it. "I started to protest over his treatment of the mule, when he looked at me and said quietly: 'That's once.'"

Some people learn things more quickly than others.

N.B. The Alexander Technique says that if you keep on doing the same old things you will keep on getting the same old results.

Coaching says that the definition of madness is when you keep on doing the same old thing and hoping for a different result.

Fortunately for her, the old lady chose to trust in the process, not in her habitual response!

3. THE BARE-ASSED COACH

It is Annie's good fortune to be working with Nicola Cairncross, formidable Money Coach and – currently- Worthing's premier Seaside Landlady.

Annie, like lots of other Alexander teachers, is a shy, retiring person -she thinks so anyway. Nicola, is dynamic and outgoing, a delightful, grounded Coach who constantly repeats that people warm to our quirky humanity, our individuality, the stuff we are loath to put on display. In coaching circles this is termed being a 'Bare-assed Coach'.

Well, Nicola urged Annie to be a Bare-assed Coach and Alexander teacher and Nicola is pretty powerful. Within a few days Annie found herself being just that – or as near as dammit. She was in the middle of an Alexander lesson in a clinic when the entire rear seam in her trousers went, from waistband to crotch.

So, you might ask, what did Annie learn?

- Professionalism, professionalism, professionalism**
- Going Bare-assed presents you with an accelerated learning curve**
- Providing the pupil with value is *always* the paramount consideration**
- It makes for total integrity in the professional relationship - you can't fake it**
- Her mother had been remiss all these years in telling her that the only hazard she needed to focus on was being run over by a bus!**

(Find out more Nicola Cairncross and Money Coaching, at www.nicolacairncross.com)

4. WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE 60 SECOND TIP?

Not wanting to be at risk from habitual thinking, we thought that we would send it out separately, later this month. Do contact us to let us know which you would prefer. Also, we would be delighted to hear what you would like to read more of in this newsletter.

HAVE A GREAT JULY

Madelene and Annie

Anything you can do, you can do better.

**To see our new 'Nogain-pain' quiz,
receive 50 Top Alexander Tips,
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