

TAKING THE TRYING OUT OF BEING

ALEXANDER NEWSLETTER MAY 2004

THIS NEWSLETTER IS FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE READY TO 'THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX'.

WE GROW THROUGH YOUR RECOMMENDATION - PLEASE FORWARD THIS NEWSLETTER TO A FEW FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES.

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1. GREAT NEWS FROM THE CUTTING EDGE

It's official! Writing in that font of all knowledge, 'The Daily Mail', biologist Richard Sheldrake cites the results of a study published in New Scientist on bio-feedback. Dr Sheldrake writes:

'Many people find ... bio-feedback surprising. But, as a scientist who has spent many years researching the relationship between mind and body, I know that it exists.'

Now Madelene and Annie, albeit not scientifically trained, have long posited the necessary corollary of this extraordinary position: if there is a relationship between mind and body, there is also a relationship between body and mind. (Anyone who is not in agreement with us on this one, we would love to hear from you.)

An empirical, selfless experiment, conducted by Annie recently, deep in her (previously) quiet suburban haven confirmed this. Annie managed to slip her index finger into the gap in the hinge side of the door and then proceeded to pull the door shut with her other hand. That's what we call devotion to scientific experiment.

Well, dear reader, here's a brainteaser for you. Annie, her daughter and her four legged life-style guru, Sharon, were all privy to this event, but which of them do you think truly felt the pain?

You've got it, Annie. And now we know why; because of bio-feedback - or, if you prefer, 'reverse bio-feedback'.

Nothing truly surprising there, you might say. What is surprising is that science is just beginning to give credence to this other notion, that it is possible - and people do - use brain activity to lower, or eliminate, their level of pain.

Not only do people practise 'relaxation therapies' such as yoga but they do a whole host of other things that improve their quality of life, such as - wait for it - the Alexander Technique.

F.M. Alexander discovered, rightly, that we can use our thinking to alter the way our body works, and feels, and this then impacts positively on our psychological state: or, put more scientifically, mind affects matter, and matter then impacts on mind.

Clearly, the medical establishment has an expertise in diagnosing, medicating and surgically intervening in pain problems that we humble Alexander teachers do not. But equally, the medical establishment has a limiting mind-set around pain problems that we do not. Annie's ex-husband, a devout believer in science, typified the scientists and doctors who are quick to dismiss 'empirical evidence' - it's only based on people's experience, after all. Their argument being, apparently, that if you can't construct a scientific theory that explains it, the experience probably doesn't exist. Of course!

Now, we have no wish to take issue with the Great and the Good. Perish the thought! But we would like to ask you: which one of the horns of the resulting trilemma* would you most like to be impaled upon?

- a) medical science's approach: you'll have to learn to live with the pain...
- b) don't know.

c) the AT conviction: you've got the problem, but you can still get out of being stuck and in pain.

* Madelene would like to point out to our readers that a tri-lemma is similar to a dilemma, but it offers 50% more choice.

2. THE VOW OF SILENCE

A man joins a monastery and takes a vow of silence. He's allowed to say only two words every seven years.

After the first seven years, the elders bring him in and ask him for his two words.

"Cold floors," he says.

They nod and send him away.

Seven more years pass and they bring him in for his two words.

He clears his throat and says; "Bad food."

They nod and send him away.

Seven more years pass and they bring him in for his two words.

"I quit," he says.

"That's not surprising," the elders say. "You've done nothing but complain since you've been here!"

This just goes to show that it really does pay to 'think outside the box'!

3. ON THE MYTHS THAT SURROUND CHANGE

While Madelene focuses on acquiring new physical skills (we shall look forward to one, or better still, a series of articles about the Alexander Technique and sailing in the next few months), Annie has become an NLP Practitioner.

Several precious 'learnings' (to use a deliciously non-specific NLP word) have come out of this training. First, that the NLP is to our thinking as invaluable as the Alexander Technique is to the way we use our body. Second, that Annie's passionate commitment to the Alexander Technique goes right through her, like the name of a seaside town through a stick of rock. Third that most of us entertain erroneous and self-limiting beliefs around change.

How many times have you heard someone say - or said yourself: 'It's going to be really hard to change.' And then it is.

NLP presupposes the opposite: that change is really quite easy, swift and not too much trouble.

Now, if your initial, gut reaction is anything like ours, you will be either rejecting this idea on 'empirical evidence' (oops, there it is again), or wondering how this can possibly be.

Suppose someone came from the furthest outpost of civilisation with no knowledge of our technologically literate world. That person would see everybody using computers and, if it were adequately explained, he/she might grasp the wonderful potential of computers.

But suppose also that this person never became aware of what, to us, is obvious: that you have to turn a computer on, before all the magic can start. What would our innocent abroad conclude: that it is only given to those more blessed than himself to operate a computer? That, for him, the possibility didn't exist?

Change is difficult insofar as our experience and our acceptance of limiting beliefs determines what we think and what we do. Change requires the acquisition of specific skills, which are neither hard nor, necessarily, slow to learn. This is equally true of both NLP and the Alexander Technique.

4. 'THE WOMAN YOU WANT TO BE' NEWSLETTER

This month sees the launch of Annie's new newsletter 'The Woman You Want To Be'. This newsletter is specifically for women who, at some time in their lives have been through a bad relationship.

In addition to the Alexander Technique, Annie is also passionate about helping women break free from the shackles of low self-worth and abusive relationships, so they can root out self-limiting beliefs, tap into their inner joy and attract the relationships they really want.

As you are already a newsletter reader, in the next few days, Annie will be sending you the first issue of 'The Woman You Want To Be' with a view to making available insights and inspirations that may be of value either to you, or to someone you know.

This will be the one time Annie will email 'The Woman You Want To Be' to you, to ask you if you would like to sign up to it, for free. You, or anyone you introduce to it, will be able to stop it at any time simply by sending an email to email@annie-kaszina.com or removing yourself via www.joyfulcoaching.com. Your information will never be shared or sold, so you can rest assured that you will not receive any junk mail after signing up.

5. FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Sunday June 12th, 3-6 p.m., Introductory Alexander Technique Group at Shine Holistic , 52 Stoke Newington Church Street, N16. Call 07939 347099 or Shine on 7241 5033 for more information.

Sunday July 4th, 11a.m-2 p.m., Introductory Alexander Group at Yogahome, Neville Road, London N16. Call 07939 347099 for more information.

Have a great May

Annie and Madelene

DON'T KEEP US A SECRET. IF YOU LIKE IT, PLEASE FORWARD THIS E-NEWSLETTER TO FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES WHO YOU THINK COULD BENEFIT FROM CHANGING THEIR THINKING AROUND PHYSICAL PAIN.

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