



direction

volume 3 number 6

# Group Dynamics

**900 Lessons,  
Only One Teacher**

**15 Destinations to  
Rejuvenate with Alexander**

**Frederick, Nicholls and  
Grunwald on the Group Dynamic**

**Meade Andrews Turning  
Groups into Art**

**Travelling Teachers  
How Do They Do It?**

# direction

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DIRECTION considers all submissions. Please contact the Editor for author guidelines prior to submitting material at the address below or paulcook@directionjournal.com with "New Article Submission" in the subject line of the email.

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## Editorial ■ by Paul Cook

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In mid 2007 I called Michael Frederick looking for some inspiration. The conversation we had was so inspiring and so interesting that it gave me an idea. I asked if we could do it again, but this time I wanted to record the call and share it with others. Michael obliged as always and that re-

recording was used to relaunch *Direction Journal* in November 2007 after an 18 month closure. Since then I've interviewed and recorded dozens of conversations with other imminent Alexander teachers helping to revive *Direction* and amass an archive of valuable material for the article writing process. In addition, we have also implemented print-on-demand (thanks to David Gorman), employed contractors from [elance.com](http://elance.com) and built a simple but effective blog website using [Squarespace.com](http://Squarespace.com) (thanks to Pedro de Alcantara). In the past few weeks we have also delved into Facebook and Twitter! (see inside front cover)

If you have subscribed to *Direction* in the past, you will notice in this issue a change in the editorial style. Rather than solicit individual articles from Alexander teachers, I have extracted many insights from the live interviews to construct articles with a more journalistic feel. Instead of hearing from just one teacher per top-

ic, you will now have the adventure of hearing from several teachers in each article.

This issue I talk to teachers who know group teaching. Priska has done amazing things with over 900 employees at Victorinox—Jo and Michael G support her in the article *The Company You Keep*. If you're not convinced that group learning is effective enough, then Michael F, John and Peter will help you understand the basics in *The Group Dynamic*. If you're a teacher of the Alexander technique and haven't run groups before, you will be given some starting points by Meade in *An Étude A Day*. Our final feature article *Welcome Prophets*, sheds light on the life of a travelling teacher—Peter, David, Vivien, Steven and Cathy open up to reveal the secrets of doing it well. Our centre section this issue is a feature on residential. Living away from home in a healing environment, with good people, beautiful food and inspiring views can be the change that changes everything. The holiday retreat is becoming more popular with baby boomers, I wonder how long it will be before someone books a cruise ship for an Alexander escape?

I hope you find inspiration and learning from the wonderfully generous teachers who have helped me craft this issue into existence. See the inside cover for the full list of Alexander teachers who are featured or contributed. I'm honoured to be able to call on all these exceptional people for help and guidance. Many interviews didn't become articles, but you can listen to them all at the website in the "Audio Archive" regardless. Enjoy.

December 4th, 2009



# The Company You Keep

**In the last 12 months, the Alexander technique has been associated with some of the largest corporations in the world and one of the most influential media personalities in history.**

When you can sport a resume containing names like Google, Victorinox and Texaco-Chevron, plus a mention from Oprah Winfrey, not only will doors begin to open, but they may open faster than you can manage. Ultimately, the credibility of your own version of the Alexander technique is still on the line despite the pioneering work of some of your peers.

Communicating with business owners and decision makers is an area that might daunt Alexander teachers. According to Michael Gelb, Josephine Gray, Priska Gauger-Schelbert and John Baron however, it's clearly a matter of sticking to principle and trusting that the work will speak for itself when the pressure is on.

In this article we will be looking at the process of securing a corporate client, evolving the relationship to increase your influence, managing hundreds of people and proving that you have done what you promised to do.

## **Knock Knock**

There are a couple of main avenues to secure a corporate teaching role. The first and ill-advised route is to don a corporate uniform, pack the laptop and start knocking on doors. Obviously you need to reach the decision makers of the firm. Speaking "at" the secretary at the front of the building is probably a waste of time unless she has already experienced Alexander lessons. So many people knock on the front door of businesses trying to find a way

into the fortress that the "gate-keeper" is well trained in displaying a happy face at the door but tossing your business card or glossy brochure straight into the trash once you leave.

Another approach, which has been shown to be effective time and again, is to build a relationship first. Whilst that may sound simplistic, it's who you actually build a relationship with that matters most and as it turns out, most of your work has already been done.

The relationships you have already built are the best ones to call on. Assuming you have an existing teaching practice, there's every chance someone who already trusts you and knows you are brilliant, will know someone who works in a large organization. Someone you teach might work for Toyota or has a friend who does. This is the person who will usher you past the heavies at the front door into the inner sanctum of influence in the firm.

Your first meeting with a decision maker at the corporation will be to explain who you are, and generically, what you do. For example, "I help people get out of pain and stay out of pain whilst they work". Do not under any circumstances get caught up explaining primary control, kinaesthesia or faulty sensory awareness. You've seen enough blank looks in the past to know that Alexander technique jargon is not common knowledge. To keep the communication going, it's important to use their language.



**Priska Gauger-Schelbert** teaching in the office



**Priska Gauger-Schelbert** teaching at workstation



Image courtesy Priska Gauger-Schelbert

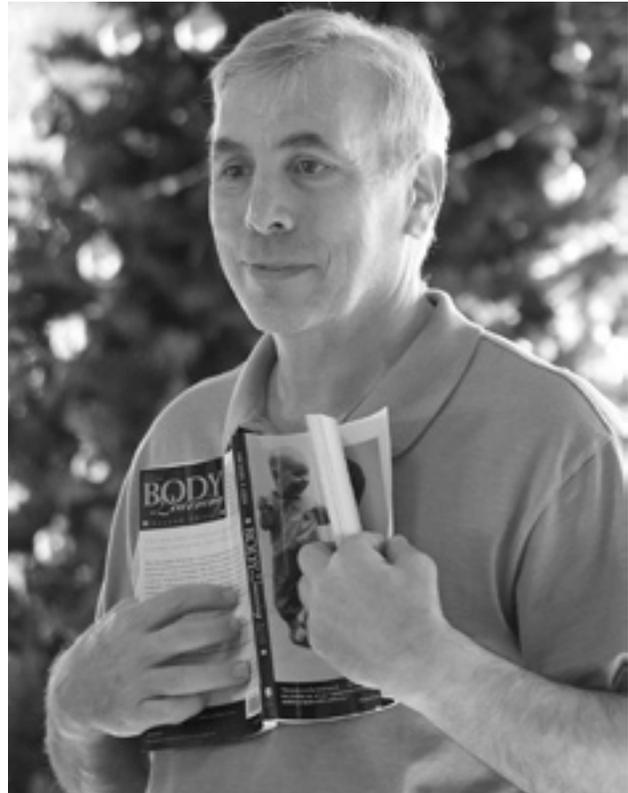
**Priska Gauger-Schelbert** teaching in the storage room

It's okay to speak in terms of posture. It really is. This is a word that people have an understanding of already. It may be a flawed understanding in your professional opinion, but that is not a concern of the company. What they want to know is whether you're authentic and if you can help them.

Michael Gelb works within the top echelon of corporate trainers in the world. His experience gaining work at corporate headquarters is impressive—DuPont, IBM, Merck, Microsoft and Nike reside in his resume, which may be all a bit daunting to the average Alexander teacher. Whilst he doesn't necessarily carry a chair and table through the door to begin work, his process of gaining the job can be imitated.

During our interview, Gelb ran through some of the keys to communicating effectively with the decision maker at the firm on the first meeting and the first assumption that he makes sets the tone for the entire interview. It's not a case of running off a spiel about the Alexander technique and all the positive results, but rather asking questions.

"I operate on the basis that my courses are bespoke," says Gelb, which assumes that whatever the challenges faced by the com-



© Nick Erickson

**Michael Gelb** draws inspiration from his book to make a point at the 2008 residential in Malibu, USA

pany, he can address them in a valuable way. So, in effect, all he is gathering from the first meeting is evidence to support what he already does or can do.

For example, he may be asked what topics he presents on and his reply to this is,

"I never answer that question! I say, tell me more about your conference, who will be there, what have you done before, what are the goals you have, what are the ideal outcomes, at the end of the session if you ask your people, 'what did you get out of that?' what would you like them to say? I listen carefully to their answers, and only then do I tell them what I'm going to do."

In effect, the meeting is all about research so that he can more fully understand the issues. And then, once the problems are out in the open, his reply is coached in their terms. Gelb:

"It's really simple, you just use the words they use...for example, they might say, 'We really need more creative thinking, but we also need people to be more resilient.' So I say, 'We can do a program on creative thinking and resilience.'

And they say, 'Wow that would be fantastic! That's exactly what we need, you're a genius!'"

In his reply, Gelb builds rapport with the person by clearly indicating that he's understood their issue and at the same time quickly confirming that he has a program that fits their issue like a glove. This is only effective if you have listened very carefully to their use of language. Summarizing their issue in your own words might help you, but if the person doesn't hear their own words repeated back, they may begin to lose faith that you're both on the same wavelength.

This is definitely not a time to start explaining the "how" of your process as far as "faulty sensory appreciation" and "debauched kinaesthesia" goes! You don't talk about what you will do with the employees in order to achieve the outcome. There really is no need for the employer to know much more unless they ask. In most cases they will hear their own words, hear your confident offer of a solution and want to go to the next level.

The mantra, "you have to feel the Alexander technique in order to understand it" is all well and good if there are signs of scepticism, but getting stuck explaining how the Alexander technique works can be a slippery slope to navigate with someone who has never looked into mind-body re-education before and has allocated 15 minutes to listen to your pitch. If you're asked for it—provide, if not—don't.

The most important thing you do at the first meeting is listen to them speak more than yourself. Ask lots of questions, record it if possible and then set up the next meeting, preferably with the employees.

### **Break Time**

Your first meeting has opened the next door in your adventure into the company but that doesn't mean the pressure is off. Priska Gauger-Schelbert was invited to work at the Swiss company Victorinox after an employee improved their forearm and wrist problems through lessons in her private practice. Asked whether she thought her work at Victorinox might not work, she exclaims,

"Yes, many times...in the beginning all the time! I actually developed my work from each visit to the next."

Josephine Gray was invited to present the Alexander technique to an IT division of Texaco-Chevron in 2001. Her first step was a "brown bag" presentation. Many large companies today have a schedule in place for visiting presenters and often this is no more than a lunch-time presentation to employees. Gray advises:

"Make the most of this time to touch as many people as possible because it's the hands-on work that will really make the difference. If you can enlist the help of fellow colleagues so that everyone receives a hands-on experience, even better."

Based on employee responses, the decision makers will ascertain your value to the company. If the company doesn't have its own evaluation process, make sure you have a way to prove your worth. This is done via questionnaires, before and after the event.

Here are some questions that Gray used to gather evidence of the value of the Alexander work. When recorded before and after the workshop, they can be assessed quantitatively, meaning they can be easily measured with numbers.

1. How aware are you of your posture at your work-station?
2. How severe is your pain or discomfort (on a scale from 1-10)
3. Are you able to effectively deal with the pain at your workstation?
4. How satisfied are you with your ability to stay symptom free?

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## *Live the dream on the tiny island of Alonnisos*

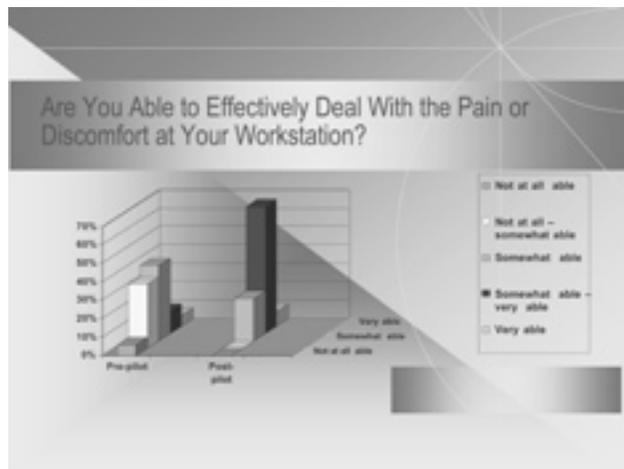
Every morning there is an organised walk to the local bay down a steep mule track. There, Chi Kung and swimming experiments are explored before regrouping back up at the village for more traditional Alexander work. The afternoons are left free for reflection, resting and holidaying. The evening we meet up again for further hands-on and to eat at a local taverna. Accommodation is in the hilltop village, either in a villa or pension.

Full details on page 16 in the Residential Feature section.



## Client feedback

### Are You Able to Effectively Deal With the Pain or Discomfort at Your Workstation?



#### BEFORE/AFTER

<b>NOT AT ALL</b>	10/0
<b>NOT AT ALL – SOMEWHAT</b>	30/0
<b>SOMEWHAT</b>	40/20
<b>SOMEWHAT – VERY</b>	10/70
<b>VERY</b>	10/10

Representing a 600% increase in the “SOMEWHAT-VERY” category; from 10% to 70% of participants. (reproduced with permission)

## Negotiations

Companies are presented with many choices in corporate health programs nowadays, so your ability to tailor a program to their exact needs is crucial. A “one size fits all” product simply wouldn’t have worked for Victorinox due to the diversity of the workforce. Production line workers from varying immigrant backgrounds meant that Gauger-Schelbert was compelled to adapt daily to individual needs and this is of course where Alexander technique shines compared to other “packages” that are being sold.

Writing a draft proposal outlining your hours, space needed, employee commitment, payment amount and terms is the next step. Once the draft has been agreed to or modified through further discussion, a contract is written up.

You may decide to bill the company monthly or quarterly but this will depend on the length of the contract. If this turns out to be a six month agreement, an interim payment can be negotiated.

The variables within a workplace are so many and varied that your way of working in a home studio is not likely to transfer easily. In Priska’s case, she didn’t even speak the same language as her pupils.

“On the one hand I was completely convinced about the AT, but I had no idea how to translate the AT into a language understood by production workers. Often they are immigrants and not used to thinking and even don’t like to think about something... so the question is how to get them interested in this work with understandable words and means-whereby’s to use.”

An important part of the proposal is your salary. Gauger-Schelbert negotiated with Victorinox on a “sensible hourly payment”. John Baron, an Alexander teacher based in San Francisco, secured work with Google in late 2008. He believes that your fees are determined by “whatever the market will bear”, which means you have to do your own research. Most likely the fees that a billion dollar fortune 100 company expect to pay are different from a smaller operation. Knowing what to ask for without selling yourself short but at the same time staying within the bounds of reasonable seems to be a grey area.

Your research could be based on what the competition is doing. What results are they offering and do they intend to put their claims on the line with evidence-based assessments. A process you can use to demonstrate the cost effectiveness of the company’s investment is based on the existing cost of not addressing the problem.

For example, during your initial meeting you may have asked what the issue costs the company. Some simple arithmetic will show the accumulated cost over time if it is not addressed. If your work is able to reduce this cost by 10%, 20%, 30%, then what you can charge is a factor of this saving.

It’s important to realize that you are not just reducing workforce-injury-related expenses, you are helping to increase productivity plus addressing worker satisfaction. To put a number on this can only be based on hypothetical estimations unique to the industry you are working within, but that is where the results at the Victorinox company can be used as an example.<sup>1</sup>

Once the contract is agreed upon it’s time now to tackle the workplace...or the coalface as it’s affectionately described. Do you have the resources to help dozens or hundreds and are you ready to adapt to the challenge?

From humble beginnings, Gauger-Schelbert created such a positive result from pilot studies in the workplace that she was suddenly faced with the massive task of dealing with a workforce numbering 900 plus employees.



Image courtesy Priska Gauger-Schelbert

**Balance-Time** in action.

“I realised that more than fifteen minutes a week were needed to teach them how to become aware of themselves, while they were working. That’s where Balance-Time™ comes in—as a compromise.”

Balance-Time™ is led by a department manager and group leaders two or three times a day. It allows every employee to stop their work, let go of excessive tension in their bodies and find connection again to their whole self through “certain movement sequences...so that adequate muscle tonus (reduced muscle tension) can emerge in the whole body”.<sup>2</sup>

Movements were designed to be as simple as possible so that they could be done at the work place whilst standing. The movements are similar to Tai Chi and based on the fundamentals from the Alexander technique. For example, standing, monkey, moving the head, the arms, hands, shoulders, legs, all in an appropriate manner.

Balance-Time™ is an example of converting the basic principles of Alexander technique into a format that can be readily absorbed by many people at the same time. In addition, it is an understandable process that could be transferred to other workplaces. For example, if an AT teacher went to Toyota and started talking about the virtues of the Alexander technique in the workplace, they will probably get a second interview, but it is a slow start. If they could

introduce the same processes that Victorinox had used to create such impressive results with their workforce, the decision makers would be more receptive in the first instance and also likely to pay larger sums of money for the same result.

### Getting Help

Perhaps the workforce you’ve been given access to isn’t 900 plus people like the Victorinox company. But what if you need to reach 100, 200 or 300? Are you equipped with effective group teaching skills? If you can only work on an individual basis, 300 lessons a month is going to be a stretch!

There might be other Alexander teachers in your area who can share the burden, but the catch is that you are still the person coordinating this and ultimately the workload may not be what you really want in your life. The trade off with securing a large corporate contract and getting a great result is that they are going to want more of you. So the next question is, “How much do you want to work?”

If 300 people is too much work, then only present your services to smaller organizations or build into your proposal the ability to pay other teachers to help with the work. In Gauger-Schelbert’s case, she decides when she works based on “mutual agreement” with her client.



Image courtesy Priska Gauger-Schelbert

**Priska Gauger-Schelbert** teaching in the factory

## Evolving The Relationship

The following 7 points have been suggested by Gauger-Schelbert as very important in developing your relationship at the company:

1. "Really get to know what the company needs; understand why the Alexander technique can be a support for them; find ways to work with different employees"
2. Be completely open in your mind"
3. "Really get into contact with the employees"
4. "Accept that the work place isn't as comfortable as the private studio"
5. "Be satisfied with very small progress"
6. "Be flexible to the constant change within a company"
7. "Use language that people understand and forget about 'AT-jargon' etc."

## In summary

There is no argument that the Alexander technique can offer effective solutions yet to be seen in corporate health. When corporations as large as Google, Victorinox and Texaco-Chevron have the confidence to associate their brands with this little known method it's only a matter of time before Alexander teachers will be called upon to help address decades of mishandling of chronic movement problems in the workplace.

Being prepared to handle large groups of people in a professional manner, using methods that are known to work, will enable the Alexander professional to shine as the authentic leader amidst the inevitable rush of copy cats in a massive market desperately crying for help.

The pioneering work of Priska Gauger-Schelbert at Victorinox may be a tipping point that will allow many other Alexander teachers to enter the workplace and hopefully not have to reinvent the wheel when they get there. Her success serves as a shining beacon for the profession to live up to and will hopefully inspire others to step up in confidence.

## Endnotes

1 P. Gauger-Schelbert & P. auf der Maur, *Alexander Technique Coaching in the Victorinox Company The Lugano Congress Papers*, Volume 1 Statbooks: London (2009).

2 *ibid.*, pp 174

## About the contributors

**Michael Gelb** trained as an Alexander technique teacher in the late 70's then went on to become highly sought after in the corporate world as a consultant in Innovation and Organizational Development. He is the author of 12 books including *Body Learning: An Introduction to the Alexander Technique*, *How to Think Like Leonardo Da Vinci* and *Innovate Like Edison*, *The Five Step System for Breakthrough Business Success*. He has presented workshops to DuPont, IBM, Microsoft and Nike and has been featured by the New York Times, Washington Post and Good Morning America. [www.michaelgelb.com](http://www.michaelgelb.com)

**Priska Gauger-Schelbert** attended the Performance School in Seattle in 1991. From 1992-1995 she was trained by Jacqueline Webster in Zurich. Since 1995 she has taught at her own Alexander technique studio. From 2001 onwards, she has introduced and taught at several companies (Victorinox, Siemens) and developed Balance-Time™. Priska teaches individual and group classes. Her main focus lies on the aspects of reflecting on thinking patterns and doing less, so that one's inherent potential can be lived fully. She is married with four children and lives in the central part of Switzerland.

[www.alexandertechnik-schwyz.ch](http://www.alexandertechnik-schwyz.ch)

**Josephine Gray** started studying the Technique in 1983 in San Francisco to rescue her career as a professional violinist from a debilitating repetitive strain injury. She has since studied in London and Rome and has a Bachelor's degree in Music Performance. For the past 5 years Josephine has taught actors at the American Conservatory Theatre Summer Congress and singers at Opera and the Arts for Young Girls.

[www.alexandertechnique.com/josephinegray](http://www.alexandertechnique.com/josephinegray)

**Please visit [www.directionjournal.com/companyyoukeep](http://www.directionjournal.com/companyyoukeep) for the full extract of Priska Gauger-Schelbert's congress paper and Josephine Gray's pilot study report PLUS two bonus interviews with Josephine Gray (recorded 17th May, 2009) and Michael Gelb (recorded 1st June, 2009).**

# The Group Dynamic

**In the Alexander world group teaching has often been regarded as the poor cousin to one-on-one learning.**

Introductory groups are an obvious necessity in order to reach more people initially, but thereafter, to learn the true Alexander principles you “must be given the experience via a course of one-on-one lessons.” It could be argued that this is in fact the best and only way to fully understand and integrate such fundamental change into your life. After all, “that’s how I learned it and that’s how my teacher learned it, so it must have been the right way.”

In this article we look closer at the potential of group teaching on an ongoing basis. Can people learn sufficient amounts in a group setting to transform their lives? Are there benefits for students, teachers and the proliferation of the Alexander work that are being missed due to the favouring of the traditional one-on-one teaching model? And, are there lessons to be learned from the Pilates and Yoga industries on what happens when you become the next big “thing?”

## What is the “Group Dynamic?”

Michael Frederick trained firstly with the Carrington school during the mid 70’s in London, then spent a further 12 years learning the group teaching model under Marjorie Barstow in the USA. He has been teaching individual lessons and group classes to actors and other professionals for over 30 years and qualifies his belief in group learning with an opening statement:

“Marjorie Barstow was very clear in her strict adherence to Alexander’s principles and discoveries. You have to apply and live the Alexander principles of observation, inhibition and direction within yourself. Group teaching does not replace FM’s understanding of the importance of individual teaching. It is simply ‘working on yourself’ within a group setting. In group teaching you are still teaching individuals . . . it is just the dynamic is different because more people are watching. The skill of group teaching takes years



**A group** activity at the 2008 Sweet Briar residential in Virginia, USA

© Nick Erickson



© Nick Erickson

**John Nicholls** working at 2008 Sweet Briar residential in Virginia, USA



© Nick Erickson

**Michael Frederick** enjoys a group activity at 2008 Sweet Briar residential in Virginia, USA

to master just like the skill of giving a first-rate 30 or 45 minute Alexander lesson takes a minimum of three years in teacher-training to implement clearly.”

Frederick describes the effect of a group dynamic as:

“You can go beyond the limitation of self [because] the group collective consciousness is not so caught up in the petty ego of the individual. A gestalt action occurs when all participants connect together in a kinaesthetic, psycho-physical dialogue. A curiosity of human exploration ensues and you transcend everybody’s habit pattern.”

Peter Grunwald is a prolific world traveller and presenter of his Alexander inspired “Eye-Body Vision” work. His main mode of teaching is via groups and retreats. “In a group situation participants are able to share new concepts, understand a new vision and their thinking changes simultaneously.”

But do people learn more in a group? “Group work complements individual lessons,” says Frederick, “...we need people. If you create an atmosphere that is friendly...there’s trust, participants are not being judged, they can let their guard down, be more authentic and let go of their fear based habits.” Grunwald adds; “When they have attended a group over say 6 days, they take the principles and apply them on a much wider basis in everyday life—in their relationships, their communication, in computing, their community, not just their back pain...or whatever their personal challenge is...”

But the effective facilitation of a group is not something that just anyone will intuitively achieve. It is a skill-base that is highly specialized and may require years of learning in activity. According to Frederick, activating a group dynamic effectively is an “artform” and Grunwald warns, “We can become an Alexander teacher without leadership skills, without purposeful living...we cannot assume we know how to lead a group.”

### Activating the Group Dynamic

You begin by working with yourself. Your Alexander training is being pushed to a new level due to the strong stimulus to perform and achieve a constructive end. Frederick advises,

“If your inner state is centred, then that influences the group dynamic. It’s not about being clever with teaching techniques. The biggest mistake Alexander teachers make is thinking that you’re just giving information to the group. It’s more subtle than that, you must be sensitive to when you’re going off base—working on yourself first, inhibiting and giving your directions as in individual teaching, is of utmost importance.” Grunwald describes it, “...you lose contact with the group if you just go straight into the content. As a workshop facilitator I need to apply the principles to myself first and then apply the same principles to the activity of leading the group”.

Start with small groups and work your way into experience with this process. “Perhaps begin with 3-7 people” Frederick suggests. “Don’t be afraid to make mistakes, but treat every experience as a lesson for yourself more than a lesson for others. You must learn how to do small things to activate the group, for example; how to focus people who are watching you or how to handle people who drift off or are difficult.”

Grunwald looked for every opportunity to be involved in groups—during his training course and after he graduated—due to a personal need to overcome a chronic speech impediment. From attending acting classes to professional leadership courses such as Robert Kiyosaki’s “Powerful Presentations” series in the early 90’s, he was determined to learn what he didn’t whilst training to be an Alexander teacher. He says, “how to lead a group and make sure they are all involved to the core of their being...there are principles behind [this process] which have little to do with the actual content.”

Frederick goes on, “Walter Carrington said to me, ‘you don’t help

people—you create an environment that allows that help and learning to be present.” Creating this environment requires “[an] understanding of how to use your language to activate different individuals’ curiosity to learn. Creating an atmosphere that isn’t fear based is important so that you can really get through to everyone in the room.” Then, and only then, you apply teaching techniques, activities and procedures.

### **An Evolutionary Step**

One hundred years ago, Alexander positioned himself within the high profile medical community on Harley St. His marketing pitch was to solicit the hardest cases from the top specialists and work his magic on them. This was decades before the drug cartels swallowed the medical community at the same time pushing all charlatans into the street who didn’t have double-blind, placebo, controlled trials to prove their methods.

In August 2008 the British Medical Journal published the now widely-quoted randomised control study on chronic back pain.<sup>1</sup> It marked a new dawn for those who have long dreamed of contemporary validation for the Alexander technique. More importantly from a government health perspective was the study’s conclusion that implementing Alexander technique would be more cost effective than the existing treatment model. The problem with this conclusion for the Alexander community is that this finding is based on the traditional one-on-one teaching model.

What would happen if any government health service decided to implement Alexander lessons into their community back-care model? How many people could be helped at one time? How long would it take to amass the qualified teachers needed to service millions of people on a daily basis? Perhaps a model already exists to learn from.

A contemporary “success story” of epic proportions is that of the Pilates and Yoga industries. The Pilates growth rate from 2000 to 2006 was 613.3%,<sup>2</sup> with some 10.7 million people doing Pilates exercises at that time.<sup>3</sup> A 2008 study funded by the Yoga Journal indicates that 6.9% of U.S. adults, or 15.8 million people practice Yoga and a further 18.3 million Americans, say they are very or extremely interested in Yoga.<sup>4</sup> “Yoga is no longer simply a singular pursuit but a lifestyle choice and an established part of our health and cultural landscape,” says Bill Harper, publisher of Yoga Journal.<sup>5</sup>

But why has the uptake on Pilates and Yoga been so strong? An Alexander professional might well assert that people love to “do stuff” and that this attitude matches perfectly the philosophy of the fitness industry. Also, trainers in modern day Yoga and Pilates can be up and running much quicker than the 3 years full-time

training required of Alexander teachers.

John Nicholls also trained with the Carringtons in London during the 70’s and went on to open three training schools on three continents—his latest project being in New York. Nicholls believes there is a simple answer to the widespread uptake of Pilates, Yoga, Tai Chi and other artforms in western culture.

“Groups are the way that people expect to learn! The format creates community and helps support people through the change process socially. People so value that sense of being in a community of shared interests. . . there are some aspects of learning that work so much better in a group.”

Grunwald concurs, “I notice in my private teaching practice that those who only come for individual sessions and haven’t attended a 6-day retreat first, show a lack in their understanding of the wider implications of what they are learning.”

But Nicholls goes on to qualify his sentiments,

“My one concern is that I don’t want to give the impression that we should abandon giving individual lessons. It would be terrible if we lost the skill and power of the individual one-on-one work. In fact,

## *Midsummer solstice in Ireland*

plus a free week at the Alexander Technique Centre for  
DIRECTION subscribers

Chrysalis is a quiet retreat centre in the countryside near Dublin. Excellent vegetarian food... an opportunity to relax and be looked after... a week-long residential course suitable for those new to the technique or wishing to deepen their understanding of it. Daily individual lessons included. Starts on Sunday evening and finishes lunchtime on Friday. Full details on page 16 in the Residential Feature section.





© Nick Erickson

**Lucia Walker** facilitating a group activity at 2008 Sweet Briar residential, Virginia USA

in an ideal world, I think people would begin their Alexander experience with some introductory group classes, and go on to have individual lessons that would then be mixed with more advanced group work. There's a powerful change in the nervous system—a feeling-level change—that some consistent, individual work can bring about. I'm concerned [that we] keep a balance there."

The combination of individual and group mediums seems to create a formula that allows greater expansion in the pupil than cannot be achieved by either method alone. Grunwald has observed this, "When individual work is combined with the group dynamic work, there is a wholistic learning process which propels the student to a greater self-realisation and motivation—it brings a much deeper, wider view into learning. Self and environment becomes a congruent whole, versus either self or environment."

With the staggering growth of Pilates and Yoga over the past decade it is easily argued that their pedagogy has been eroded by the meteoric need for teachers and trainers. The well-entrenched model of one-on-one teaching with subtle hands-on technology in the Alexander world differentiates the work from any other "doing" technique. This difference could well be the protection from a similar fate.

In any case, the fact remains that the brand name "Pilates" commands immense respect from the community, the fitness industry and increasingly the medical/para-medical establishment.<sup>6</sup> The reality is it has been recognised to be working better than the existing fitness/back pain model, despite the opinion in some industry circles that the pedagogy has been diluted.

### **Cultural expectations**

Whether you're teaching Running, Dance, Painting or Voice, most subjects begin with a classroom or group environment. Once a student has developed a basic understanding in this safe, com-

munal atmosphere, they may then choose to get tutored more intensively. If they are looking to be highly adept at the skill they are studying, it's more financially and time practical to invest in a one-on-one learning process.

But the Alexander technique does not follow the cultural norm. It's learning process is in fact the reverse of cultural expectations. A professional singer, runner or artist may choose to get to the top of their game faster via one-on-one learning but does this model fit the person wanting help for back pain or personal development?

More ominously, if we rule out that a student of the Alexander technique is actually wanting to become top of their profession via a specialized one-on-one process and they are actually looking for help with chronic pain or discomfort, then they are probably expecting a one-on-one interaction to be therapeutic, not educational.

Might this be another answer to the slow growth in popularity of the Alexander technique over the past 100 years? Educational communication on the first induction is via group classes. Therapeutic communication on the first induction is one-on-one.

If the Alexander technique suddenly came into the popularity stakes a number of issues would arise quickly if we look to the experience of the Pilates industry as an example. Teachers will have more work than they could handle. The public would have to selectively choose between fully qualified teachers of the Alexander technique and physiotherapists, chiropractors and personal trainers who claim to have a "qualification" to teach the work.

The communication of Alexander principles is more than likely to become diluted. Demand would increase for training and certification in addition to regulatory demands by medical and government authorities. This would lead to increased membership in societies and in due course, greater respect for FM Alexander's discoveries.

One day the Alexander technique might be picked up by some enterprising individuals and turned into the next "Pilates". Is the community prepared to oversee the work getting broken into a format that can be more widely disseminated or stand by and watch it happen?

Alexander technique has a 109 year tradition and culture of being mainly taught one-on-one. There may be decades of retooling needed to adjust teaching technology to accommodate large groups as the norm. The time is coming however, when medical and corporate organizations will approach Alexander teachers on a daily basis to bring our work into larger groups than most teachers are used to working with today.

If our profession is unable to effectively provide for this demand, other professionals will. These professionals will be versed in the art of group dynamics and quickly able to adapt the Alexander technique to suit.

### Endnotes

- 1 S.Hollinghurst, D.Sharp, K.Ballard, J.Barnett, A.Beattie, M.Evans, G.Lewith, K.Middleton, F.Oxford, F.Webley, P.Little *Randomised controlled trial of Alexander technique lessons, exercise, and massage (ATEAM) for chronic and recurrent back pain: economic evaluation* BMJ 2008;337:a2656.
- 2 S.Archer *Pilates Participation Drops Slightly* IDEA Health and Fitness Association
- 3 IDEA Fitness Journal, Volume 5, Number 4 April 2008
- 4 Press Release: *Yoga Journal Releases 2008 'Yoga in America' Market Study Practitioner Spending Grows to Nearly \$6 Billion a Year*
- 5 *ibid.*
- 6 *ibid.*, According to the Yoga Journal study, "...nearly 14 million Americans say that a doctor or therapist has recommended Yoga to them."

### About the Contributors

**Michael D Frederick** qualified as a teacher of Alexander technique under Walter and Dilys Carrington, London 1978, certified as a Feldenkrais practitioner under Moshe Feldenkrais in 1984. He trained with Marjorie

Barstow from 1981-1993 and is the founder and director of the first three Alexander Technique International Congresses. [www.alextechworkshops-international.com](http://www.alextechworkshops-international.com)

**John Nicholls** has directed three teacher-training programs throughout his career on 3 different continents. His latest training school is with life partner, Nanette Walsh in New York (ATNYC). He was the chair of STAT 1985-86. His highly praised book, *The Alexander Technique: In Conversation with John Nicholls and Sean Carey*, was first published in 1985, with a Danish translation, and a greatly expanded and revised second edition in 1991 (English version only). [www.atnyc.us](http://www.atnyc.us)

**Peter Grunwald** discovered and developed the application of Alexander principles to the process of seeing consciously. He successfully stopped wearing glasses for myopia and astigmatism and pioneers worldwide his Eyebody Method in integrating step-by-step brain, eye, body functions. The method includes the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual aspects of seeing. He completed his Alexander training in Sydney (1987) and also attended post-graduate trainings with Marjorie Barstow 1985-1990. His best-selling book *Eyebody*, first published in 2004 and updated regularly, is available in several languages. He sees students one-on-one, leads 6-day retreats and 3-week intensives. He lives with his family in New Zealand. [www.eyebody.com](http://www.eyebody.com)

**Please visit [www.directionjournal.com/groupdynamic](http://www.directionjournal.com/groupdynamic) for two bonus interviews with John Nicholls (recorded 28th September, 2009) and Michael Frederick (recorded 26th October, 2009).**



**Michael Frederick** working the dynamic at 2008 Sweet Briar, Virginia USA

# Special Feature: International Residential Events

## AUSTRALIA - Melbourne

MAITRIPA CENTRE, HEALESVILLE

**Duration:** 5 Days  
**Dates:** January 2 - 6, 2010  
**Tuition:** \$400 (yoga and voice classes extra)

**Faculty:** David Moore & Jenny Thirtle

**Contact Details:**

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Website: www.alexanderschool.edu.au

## GREECE - Alonnisos



**Duration:** 7 days (separate courses for teachers and beginners)  
**Dates/Tuition:** 18th - 25th June / €510  
2nd - 9th July / €510  
16th - 23rd / £465 (teachers only)  
3rd- 10th September / €510  
(tuition fees include accommodation)

**Description:**

Alonnisos is a quiet Greek island of herbs, pine forests, olive groves, boat taxis, a sunken village, tavernas, dolphins and crystal clear sea. Great for snorkelling, swimming, and doing nothing! The nearest airport is Skiathos, but it's possible to go via Athens or Thessaloniki with bus service and ferry. Note: Courses of individual lessons available throughout the summer €35 each or €315 for 10.

**SPECIAL OFFER:** Half-price boat trip to local islands to all DIRECTION subscribers. See advertisement page 6.

**Faculty:** Penny O'Connor

**Contact Details:**

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Web: www.alexanderingreece.com

## IRELAND - Galway

Chrysalis, DONARD, Co., Wicklow



© David Kenna Photography

**Duration:** 5 days  
**Dates:** 18th - 23rd June 2010  
**Tuition:** €575

**Description:**

Every year around the Midsummer solstice 15 new people, beginners, teachers and trainees share five wonderful days together at the beautiful Chrysalis retreat centre. Participants enjoy two private sessions a day and there are two or three group sessions a day. It is like having 20 lessons in one week! The transformation is phenomenal. Five days of pure Alexander work can actually work miracles, people who arrive hardly able to walk end up dancing and singing on the last night. A weekend course is also offered in February (26th - 28th, 2010)

**SPECIAL OFFER:** One free week intensive tuition at the Alexander Technique Centre in Galway for DIRECTION subscribers.

**Faculty:** Rick Brennan

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Ph: + 353 (0)45 404713  
Email: richardkbrennan@eircom.net  
Web: www.chrysalis.ie or www.alexander.ie

## **ITALY - Tuscany**

VILLA CHIARA DI PRUMIANO



© Nick Erickson

**Duration:** 5 Days  
**Dates:** August 6th - August 11th, 2010 (Friday – Wednesday)  
**Tuition:** Contact course provider

### **Description:**

This week will offer practical, in-depth study in the Alexander Technique. This study includes several individual Alexander lessons with Master Teachers complemented by a small daily homeroom group in which you work closely with one teacher for the whole week. There will also be a variety of related afternoon and evening classes and activities from which to choose such as Yoga and Tuscan cooking. Chiara di Prumiano is a beautiful historic villa surrounded by vineyards and olive orchards. Located in the hills 1 hour drive south of Florence on the way to Sienna. It is a magical setting which boasts outstanding food and wine.

**Faculty:** Michael Frederick, Silvia Sferlazzo, Lyn Charlsen, Rosa Luisa Rossi, Annemarie Broekhuizen.

### **Contact Details:**

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Web: [www.alexandertechniqueworkshops.com](http://www.alexandertechniqueworkshops.com)

## **MOROCCO - Marrakech**

KENZI FARAH LUXURY HOTEL



**Duration:** 7 Days (B&B with 2 evening meals, 5 days tuition)  
**Dates:** May 9th - 16th, 2010  
**Tuition:** Contact course provider

### **Description:**

First developed over 20 years ago, the Shaw Method applies principles of the Alexander Technique to swimming. Unlike traditional approaches where the emphasis is on swimming as quickly as possible, we focus on the swimmer and the quality of their learning experience. We have re-crafted all four strokes to promote the best possible alignment with minimum strain to the joints. Our teaching breaks down each stroke into a series of progressive practices, which are delivered through skilled hands-on instruction. An Art of Swimming holiday is designed to transport participants away from the stresses and strains of daily routine to a calm and relaxed setting. You will find it easier to centre your attention and enjoy the learning process with the Shaw formula, which has been evolved over many years.

**Faculty:** Steven Shaw

### **Contact Details:**

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Email: [info@artofswimming.com](mailto:info@artofswimming.com)  
Web: [www.artofswimming.com](http://www.artofswimming.com)

## NEW ZEALAND - Coromandel

MANA RETREAT CENTRE



© Micha Wellnitz

**Duration:** 6 days (can be part of a 3-week Intensive Programme)

**Dates:** 2-8 January, 2010 (or 1-22 January)

**Tuition:** NZ\$850 (accommodation approx: NZ\$540)

### Description:

#### Eyebody Retreat—in the Conscious Use of Seeing

The 6-day retreat is a deep, inner journey from the eyes to the brain and applied to the conscious, practical applications in reading, writing, distant and close up seeing. We discover the origins of symptoms of myopia, hypermetropia, presbyopia, astigmatism, cataracts glaucoma, floaters, squints, and how glasses or surgery may influence our natural ability to see effortlessly clear and coordinated. We learn step-by-step to apply Intentions for Presence applied to the brain itself and then we begin to apply purposeful seeing in daily activities such as in reading, driving a car, computing—all without glasses or any other aids—instead of using our own brain's synapses.

**Faculty:** Peter Grunwald

### Contact Details:

Shelley Tibbitts

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Web: [www.eyebody.com](http://www.eyebody.com)

Other countries in 2010: USA East Coast, UK Wales, Germany - Northern and Southern Retreats, Switzerland, Denmark, Italy, Japan, Australia.

## SPAIN - Cataluña

MAS COLLADES



© Julia Pritchett and Julia Paprotna

**Duration:** 7 Days

**Dates:** 24th – 31st August, 2010

**Tuition:** €590 Full, €413 Students; teaching assistant discounts. (accommodation and communal self-catering meals included)

### Description:

The course is for teachers, 9th term teacher-trainees and experienced pupils.

We provide a supportive environment with a range of different activities and interaction with other people allowing us to explore our “use” in situations that resemble daily life more than a typical lesson can. An important element of these courses is that they are self-catering: working with others to prepare meals is a good place to put to the test our capacity to inhibit and direct in real-life situations.

**Faculty:** CPD Workshop leaders: John Hunter, Dorothea Magonet

**Assistant teachers:** Philippa Castell, Núria George (some vacancies: apply for details)

### Contact Details:

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An additional course is conducted in Spanish on these dates: 16-20 August, 2010. Consult website for further details.

## **UNITED KINGDOM - North Norfolk** CRANMER COUNTRY COTTAGES



**Duration:** 4 Days (Luxury self catering, 4 days tuition)

**Dates:** January 8th-11th, 2010

**Tuition:** Contact course provider

### **Description:**

First developed over 20 years ago, the Shaw Method applies principles of the Alexander Technique to swimming. Unlike traditional approaches where the emphasis is on swimming as quickly as possible, we focus on the swimmer and the quality of their learning experience.

We have re-crafted all four strokes to promote the best possible alignment with minimum strain to the joints. Our teaching breaks down each stroke into a series of progressive practices, which are delivered through skilled hands-on instruction.

An Art of Swimming holiday is designed to transport participants away from the stresses and strains of daily routine to a calm and relaxed setting. You will find it easier to centre your attention and enjoy the learning process with the Shaw formula which has been evolved over many years.

**Faculty:** Steven Shaw

### **Contact Details:**

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Web: [www.artofswimming.com](http://www.artofswimming.com)

## **USA - California** MALIBU SERRA RETREAT



© Nick Erickson

**Duration:** 5 Days

**Dates:** December 28th, 2010 - January 2nd, 2011  
(Monday – Saturday)

**Tuition:** Contact course provider

### **Description:**

Each day begins with a home group session working closely with the same teacher for the week. Several individual lessons with a Master teacher are complemented by afternoon and evening activity classes. Located above the beaches of Malibu, California, Serra Retreat Center covers 26 acres of flowering gardens and hiking trails with mountain top stillness near Santa Monica and Los Angeles. Exceptional facilities include meeting rooms and dining room that overlook the blue Pacific.

**Faculty:** Michael Frederick, Lyn Charlsen, Frances Mardsen, Meade Andrews, Dominique Jacques, Michael Gelb.

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## USA - Ohio

HUGHES HALL, OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY, SCHOOL OF MUSIC

**Duration:** 5 Days  
**Dates:** December 27-31, 2009  
**Tuition:** \$525 (10% discount for teachers and full-time students)

### Description:

#### 21st Annual Alexander Technique Residential Course

This is a workshop for beginners and experienced students alike. The teachers, all of whom are teaching members of AmSAT, ATI, or both, are trained in a wide variety of schools but have all been influenced by Marjorie Barstow. Along with traditional Alexander instruction, we emphasize working in activity, and include various kinds of performance, yoga, qigong, martial arts and developmental movement among our offerings. Body Mapping is taught by its originator, Bill Conable. There are special classes for graduate teachers and trainees. Several of the faculty also have advanced training in energy work.

**Faculty:** Bill Conable, Dale Beaver, Diana Bradley, Donna Doellinger, Martha Hansen Fertman, Robin Gilmore, Lucy Venable.

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Web: [www.alexanderworkshops.com](http://www.alexanderworkshops.com)

## USA - Virginia

31ST ANNUAL SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE



© Nick Erickson

**Duration:** 7-14 days  
**Dates:** July 6th – 11th and/or July 13th – 18th, 2010  
**Tuition:** \$1150/week, double (early payment discounts available)

### Description:

Each week offers practical, in-depth study in the Alexander Technique. This study includes several individual lessons with Master Teachers complemented by a small daily home-room group in which you work closely with one teacher for the week. There are also a variety of related afternoon and evening classes and activities from which to choose. Located near the Blue Ridge Mountains, Sweet Briar College covers 3,000 acres of woodlands, dells, and small lakes. Recreational facilities on campus are exceptional and include a large swimming pool, tennis courts and a gymnasium.

**Faculty:** Michael Frederick, John Nicholls, Lucia Walker, Lyn Charlsen, Steven Shaw, Judy Stern, Martha Fertman, Barbara Kent, Anne Waxman, Meade Andrews, Carol Boggs, Nanette Walsh.

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## USA - Virginia

SEVEN OAKS



**Duration:** 5 Days  
**Dates:** 27th June – 2nd July, 2010  
**Tuition:** \$350 (room and board \$375)

### **Description:**

Several years ago, the founders of this residential course had a dream: to create a supportive, deeply nourishing community dedicated to the discoveries of FM Alexander. This dream continues to expand and flourish each summer during the third week of June in the breathtaking mountains of Virginia, two hours south of Washington, DC. We joyfully welcome longtime returning participants, as well as beginning to advanced students. We also offer a specialized teacher refresher track. A continued inspiration for our community is the faculty's shared study with Marjorie Barstow, the first graduate of Alexander's original teaching training course. We honor her legacy as a pioneer in the realm of teaching in groups, and for her ability to raise even the simplest activity to an art form.

**Faculty:** Meade Andrews, Jan Baty, Dale Beaver, Cynthia Mauney, Teresa Lee, and Antoinette Kranenburg.

### **Contact Details:**

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## USA - Nebraska

DOANE COLLEGE, CRETE



**Duration:** 6 Days  
**Dates:** June 12th – 18th, 2010  
**Tuition:** \$550 (food & accommodation additional)

### **Description:**

#### **36th Annual Barstow Summer Institute**

The Barstow Institute continues a long tradition of summer Alexander Technique workshops established by master Alexander teacher Marjorie Barstow. She pioneered a lively and unique approach, including application of the principles in group teaching. The Institute welcomes everyone, including beginners, performers, professionals and experienced students and teachers who are interested in refining their understanding and the application of Alexander's principles to daily application work in small and large groups, lessons in Feldenkrais ATM, Tai Chi, and more.

**Faculty:** Diana Bradley, Marilou Chacey, Stacy Gehman, Mio Morales, Nancy Forst Williamson

### **Contact Details:**

Ms. Gerry Johnson  
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Email: gerry.johnson@doane.edu  
Web: www.barstowalexandertechnique.com

## **USA – New Mexico**

GHOST RANCH RETREAT CENTER, ABIQUIU



© <http://www.ghostranch.org/>

**Duration:** 7 Days  
**Dates:** August 8 – 15, 2010  
**Tuition:** \$1000 (plus sliding scale room & board options)

### **Description:** **The Annual Alexander Alliance International Summer Retreat**

Join an international faculty for a week-long immersion into the work of FM Alexander as inspired by Marjorie Barstow. Set in the glorious mountains of Northern New Mexico—made famous by the renowned artist Georgia O’Keefe—students will explore the principles of the work as applied to real-life activities: hiking, swimming, horseback riding, performing arts, painting, and activities of daily life. The course is open to all levels, from novices to trainee teachers to post-graduates. This is an excellent way for AT Teachers to expand their skills for teaching in groups and teaching all types of activities.

#### **Contact details:**

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Email: [office@alexandersw.com](mailto:office@alexandersw.com)  
Web: [www.alexanderinternationalretreat.com](http://www.alexanderinternationalretreat.com)

## **WALES - West Wales**

WAUNIFOR ESTATE



© Dr Farzin Deravi

**Duration:** Weekend  
**Dates:** 16-19 April  
**Tuition:** £245 (includes food and accommodation)

**Description:**  
This weekend course is held every April and is for teachers, 9th term trainees and experienced pupils. A full CPD programme is provided for qualified teachers where you can gain valuable experience of the dynamic of group teaching. Teachers can attend as full participants or on a “half-and-half” basis, whereby half of the class-time each day they will teach the pupils, and run or assist in workshops; the other half of the time they may attend classes for teachers and workshops as part of their professional development. There are special fees for this arrangement, please consult the organiser for further details. Self-catering (communal cooking); special diets are catered for.

**Faculty:** CPD Workshop leaders: John Hunter, Dorothea Magonet

**Assistant teachers:** Philippa Castell, Penny Spawforth, Tim Soar, Núria George.

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# An Étude a Day

**Étude: a short musical composition typically for one instrument, designed as an exercise to improve the technique or demonstrate the skill of the player.**

“My experience may one day be recognized as a signpost directing the explorer to a country hitherto ‘undiscovered’ and one which offers unlimited opportunity for fruitful research to the patient and observant pioneer.” FM Alexander<sup>1</sup>

Working in groups may have been an optional teaching method in the past but Alexander teachers are increasingly called upon to manage large groups, if initially only for introductory purposes.

One option is to give every person a number and have them wait for their one-on-one lesson, but people, businesses and societies today are in a hurry. If they have just heard about Alexander technique on Oprah or their team leader has announced that every employee is going to benefit from Alexander technique over the course of the next 3 months, they don’t want to be kept waiting.

As the word gets out and the phone starts ringing off the hook, do you have a way to help as many people as possible in as short a time as possible? In other words, are you prepared for the tsunami that is coming?

Meade Andrews is a 23 year teaching veteran of the Alexander technique and has created and refined many workshop activities for actors, dancers, musicians, singers and teacher trainees. She also runs continuing professional development courses for teachers of the Alexander technique.

She has observed that the learning curve in a group class is heightened by the involvement of the whole group in the experiential process. By creating shared movement experiences among the members of the group Andrews believes it has an effect on their ability to



**Meade Andrews** finds a moment to praise at 2008 Malibu residential USA

© Nick Erickson



© Nick Erickson

**Up, up** and away... Malibu USA.

remain alert, focused, and present throughout a group session, especially as she works with an individual in front of other participants.

At the beginning of each class a “thematic movement exploration” is conducted with the intention of awakening the primary control and she calls this process “preparing the receptive field”. Andrews defines the receptive field as,

“a condition of kinaesthetic and cognitive alertness that can enhance the student’s primary control and receptivity to the specific components of the Alexander technique: observation and awareness, inhibition, and direction.”

Andrews observes the following enhancements in learning:

‘individuals are more available for a lively, responsive interaction with the hands-on work with a teacher in front of the group... observers who have developed ‘kinaesthetic empathy’ via the étude are able to focus more fully on the individual receiving the attention because they can “see and sense” more specifically... throughout the workshop, a more articulate and detailed approach to observation develops for all.’

As a whole, the students and teacher are increasingly “united within the gestalt of the receptive field, enhancing the learning possibilities inherent within the subtleties of the Alexander technique.” Judith Stern, a past director of and currently on the teaching faculty of the American Centre for the Alexander Technique (ACAT) in New York observes, “The workshop itself is ‘the experience’ - I found it quite remarkable to both observe and participate in.”

Alexander teachers are best “qualified” to comment on the effect an étude has on a group teaching environment. Stern goes on, “Meade has a unique ability to teach group process and helps Alexander teachers develop the skills she has so clearly defined.”

Judith Grodowitz, an Alexander teacher with 22 years of teaching experience with actors and performers, describes Andrews’ work “... a supportive ensemble spirit is created almost immediately, thus participants felt free to explore. As the work progressed towards demonstrations with individuals, comprehension and learning was magnified by the movement experiences the group had shared together earlier.”

In this article we will look at some of the introductory activities that you might use if suddenly placed in the spotlight with 20-70 audience members. Ideally you will have organised a group of colleagues to help with the event, but with or without their assistance, you will want to bring every single person in the room at least to first base.

Rather than explaining to them “what” the Alexander technique is, we are giving them an opportunity to experience their reality differently first and then weaving the explanations around their observations of themselves. You could launch straight into FM’s story, you could begin explaining physiology and anatomy you could even get someone up the front and dive straight in. However, there is another, gentler and more personal way to touch audience members where they are, in this very moment. Welcome to the Études of Group Work.



© Nick Erickson

**Meade bringing** the group alive, Malibu USA

### **The Three Bodies Étude (concepts of postural habit and primary coordination)**

This comes first in the group process for several reasons:

1. People are coaxed out of their chairs and onto their feet, moving through the room.
2. It serves as an ice-breaker, and allows people to interact with each other.
3. It focuses on observation, awareness, and recognition of habit, the first step in the AT process.

The étude breaks down barriers for participants because they are actually being allowed to take on a character that isn't necessarily them and creates a group synergy that becomes more than the sum of its parts.

The process asks the participant to create a postural set in their body. After each set has been created internally, the participant is firstly instructed to take a walk around the room and then secondly, asked to shake hands with someone else in the room.

Instruct the group to do the following:

1. Recreate FM's pattern when performing. E.g. he would tighten his neck, pull his head back and down, raise his chest, pull in his lower back, lock his knees etc.

Next: Take a walk / shake hands / Feedback

2. Create a collapse or slump in your body.

Next: Take a walk / shake hands / Feedback

3. Create imaginary juggling balls and pretend to juggle them. (variations on this can be to imagine the colour and size of the balls, then change to juggling clubs, then fire torches!)

Next: Take a walk / shake hands / Feedback

After each step, get feedback from participants on their observations. You'll notice that as the activities become more energetic, so too do the interactions within the group change and become much more spontaneous than with the earlier personas.

Andrews observes, "To juggle within a collapse is impossible, even imaginary juggling! In order to manage the imaginary balls you must become free, you must engage the inner child and let go." Whilst participants are having fun, you have them in the palm of your hand.

At this point, when the experience of freeing has become personal and of course validated by other people in the room, the explanation of Alexander's discoveries is easier and also makes sense on a kinaesthetic level. It's the experience before the explanation that seems to be the key to success in groups and also to differentiating Alexander's work from all other "things" that participants might have tried before.

One major pitfall of explaining the "head, neck, back" theory of Alexander's prior to the experience of integration in the individual, is that people automatically associate these concepts with not only their preconceived ideas about posture, but a particular quality of posture that implies you must keep your back straight and stiff, or that it's bad to bend.

## **The 4 Circles of Attention Étude** **(focusing attention clearly in the room)**

This étude works to gather the attention of each person in a cumulative fashion in much the same way a perfect wave gathers its momentum and size over a large distance before it can begin to peel along a point break. It brings what is known as the “group dynamic” into action and unites everyone in a common awareness or energy for the next step. If you have ever wondered how to get an audience on side, this could well be the missing link in your process.

The following paragraphs can be used as a script when you are in front of the class. Read it aloud now to get a feel for how it works.

**1st Circle** - You: think about what you notice within yourself, take stock of every single sense you are aware of and bring it all into your attention now. Increase your sensitivity in your hearing, eyes, skin and the motion of your breath. Note: Keep this simple, it's just a beginning point.

**2nd Circle** - Colleague: extend your attention to the people sitting/standing either side of you. Limit your awareness to those within your immediate vicinity and become aware of their pres-

ence, their energy perhaps, the sound of their breathing, their scent, their visual shape and form.

**3rd Circle** - Teacher: extend your attention now to the teacher or leader of the group. Take in all the information you can about them in a non-judgemental way. Experience the distance between yourself and the teacher as closing, as if you are getting closer to them.

**4th Circle** - Everyone: now consider every person in the room, yourself, your colleagues and the teacher. Accept them into your awareness, plus also all other elements of the room—the chairs, tables, floor, roof, windows etc.

Be sure to ask for everyone's feedback on this étude in order to gauge how far participants have progressed within the group dynamic.

## **The Thinking Étude (how thoughts affect physiology)**

In this étude you may have a very large group of people. You want to introduce them to some basic concepts but also have the luxury of being able to break into smaller groups later for individual attention.



© Nick Erickson

**Going experiential** with the group, Malibu USA

Lyn Charlsen, director of the Alexander Training Institute of Los Angeles says, "I can observe the step by step progression that leads the participants through a sequence with a theme throughout: inhibition, sensory perception, attention to particular moments and individuals."

### Step 1.

You will be asking participants to use the following thoughts to focus on whilst sitting, standing or walking.

"I must do it fast and have to get it over with quickly"

Ask for feedback on breathing and awareness of sensation in the body.

"I'm at ease with myself and I have all the time I need"

Ask for feedback on breathing and awareness of sensation in the body.

### Step 2.

Now, direct their attention a little more specifically this time by asking them to "notice where in relation to their body they felt heavy, light, easeful or blocked, pressure or heaviness."

Finally, ask them to "notice in relation to their movements: where do I feel heavy, light, easeful or blocked, pressure or heaviness."

This is the very beginning point for people to look inwards and find out what they actually already know about themselves. It's not a right and wrong lesson on human movement which is what most people are expecting from a teacher. It is a safe and relevant exploration of their inner awareness which sets them up to ask more questions and want to continue the adventure within the small groups which come next.

At this point it could be timely to recount Alexander's story to help explain what is going on here. His story will have a totally different relevance to someone who has just been guided through a simulation on their own terms and could well introduce a brand new understanding of the work for someone who has only had one-on-one lessons in the past.

### The Physiology of Inhibition Étude

One of the hardest terms to explain in a neutral way is inhibition. It needs so much defining that there is little a teacher can communicate verbally without the benefit of a personal interaction, backed up with hands-on guidance. The physiology of inhibition can be experienced using the following simple étude.

The teacher firstly asks all participants to lie on the floor with the strict instruction to do "nothing".

Step two is to begin giving instructions for action, for example, "go for a walk", "raise an arm", "sit in a chair".

Get feedback from participants after this process. What you will find is that people have very powerful experiences of wanting to do what they are told, of wanting to do the right thing. The mere act of not moving when they are requested to do something creates all sorts of tension, tightness, feelings of frustration and interference with their breath. And the wonderful thing is, the participants are telling the teacher what their reaction to inhibition is doing within their body.

But what if we explained inhibition first? Would it mean that all these feelings were triggered whenever we asked someone to inhibit a certain habit or response? "We might have lost the chance to explain it properly if we allow the student to develop their understanding without exploring the meaning first."

The next step is to take their feedback and weave it into the new version of the activity. Instead of refusing to react to the instructions, allow participants to choose what they are going to do. But

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before they move, ask them to insert a pause between receiving the instruction and carrying it out thus bringing in the concept of inhibition.

“The importance of allowing people to explore their own experience before we get into subtle explanations cannot be overlooked.” In Andrew’s experience, “people tend to get stiff if we get subtle too soon.”

It’s little wonder. Every person has their own life-learned and embodied understanding of what sitting or drinking or looking at the horizon entails. When we use words to describe what we mean, we cannot assume that the student will actually hear what we are saying. In most cases it’s safe to assume that they are instantly creating their own understanding of our explanation before they even experience what we actually mean.

When teachers stand in front of large audiences of people and explain the AT, without first giving people the opportunity to explore and discover their own personal experience of the concepts,

“participants lose the opportunity to approach this work from a brand new perspective, one that isn’t influenced by their miscon-

ceptions of themselves or other disciplines they may have previously explored.”

It may also help avoid the common question, “is this like...?”

### The Experience of Inhibition Étude

Form the group into a circle and follow this 3-step process.

**Step 1:** the first participant says “yes” to herself (out loud) without doing anything else as a means to apply what she has already learnt about inhibition;

**Step 2:** she makes eye contact with someone across the circle (2nd person) and says “yes” (out loud) to them;

**Step 3:** as the 2nd person begins the 3-step process, the first person moves across the circle and takes the place of person 2, who will be moving to the place of person 3 by then.

This kicks off a domino effect where many people are moving across the circle at the same time.



© Nick Erickson

**Together we learn, Malibu USA**

A further variation on this étude is to get participants to remove the “yes” and simply make eye contact first, nod their head very lightly and then proceed according to the aforementioned steps.

Text doesn't do this étude justice\*, but in action, it provides a plethora of interesting circumstances for people to observe themselves in activity, as well as others in the room.

### **Caught Red Handed Étude (exploring kinaesthetic awareness [relationship, size, movement] in the actual moment of activity)**

Take a look around the room whilst you're explaining something of deeper meaning, perhaps anatomy or kinaesthesia. (Perhaps ask people to take notes on this topic as “there will be a test later”)

What you will notice is obvious. People compress themselves into all sorts of positions on their chairs with pen and notepad in order to get everything you say down on paper.

Pick out a particularly good example and whilst you're still talking, make your way over to the person you would like to catch red-handed in their habit.

Ask them to pause. What do they notice about themselves? Have them describe in their own words what they notice about the relationship of their head to the rest of their body. Then ask permission to offer some guidance with your hands.

By using the activity the person is performing in the moment, you help everyone in the room understand the concept of in-the-moment awareness. Then of course, your hands give the person the experience of freeing their neck and allowing their head to lead them out of their predicament, not their usual habit of stiffening back into an upright position. The rest of the group can begin to see the change occur in-the-moment as the person moves from habitual posture to dynamic poise and balance.

It takes many years to perfect the art of effective group teaching. Using études for workshop presentations are a good starting point that Alexander teachers can learn to use in a variety of environments. They can be adapted to specific audiences and not only offer every individual the opportunity to experience a new sense of self, they can also empower the teacher to present to larger and larger groups.

The future for the Alexander technique is looking brighter and brighter. Developing the skills to work with larger groups may be viewed as optional today, however, if the mainstream press decides to run with the Alexander story on a more consistent basis, these skills might well become a necessity.

Group teaching is an artform that Andrews has developed to such a refined level that she now conducts post-graduate training for Alexander technique teachers around the world.

### **Endnotes**

1 F.M. Alexander *The Universal Constant in Living* p xlii E.P. Dutton: 1941

### **About the Contributors**

**Meade Andrews** has taught and performed as an actor, dancer, choreographer, director, and movement coach for dance and theatre throughout her career. Her Alexander technique training was at the Alexander Alliance (1983-86) and she has worked throughout the US, Canada, Europe, and Japan. She currently maintains a private practice in Boca Raton and teaches in the graduate acting program at Florida Atlantic University, directed the dance program at American University and continues to present workshops at the Studio Theatre, her professional base for 20 years. Mentors that Andrews attributes her learning to are: Marjorie Barstow, Frank Ottiwell, Bruce and Martha Fertman, Carol Boggs, Michael Frederick, Jessica Wolf, Judy Stern, Elisabeth Walker and John Nicholls.

**Judith Stern** has been a physical therapist for 34 years and an Alexander technique teacher for 17 years. Judy specializes in chronic or acute pain conditions, combining her knowledge of physical therapy and anatomy with her knowledge and skill as an Alexander technique teacher. A senior member of the ACAT faculty, Judy also maintains a private practice in Rye, New York.

**Judith Grodowitz** was on the faculty of the New School Drama School graduate program (formerly named the Actors Studio Drama School) from 2000-2007. She received her Alexander training at ACAT, NYC certifying in 1987, and has continued post-graduate studies with many leaders in the international Alexander community. In 2003, she completed a year-long advanced training certification in The Art of Breathing, led by Jessica Wolf and based upon the work of breathing innovator Carl Stough. Certified member, AmSAT.

**Lyn Charlsen** is director for the Alexander technique Institute, Los Angeles. She has been an Alexander technique teacher for the University of Southern California School of Theatre, USC Music School/Opera Division, and also for California State University. An Alexander technique teacher for 27 years, Lyn trains A.T. teachers and practices in Van Nuys and San Monica, CA.

**Please visit [www.directionjournal.com/etude](http://www.directionjournal.com/etude) for free audio, photos and other resources supporting this article, including a live interview with Meade Andrews recorded July 6th, 2009.**

\* Visit [www.directionjournal.com/etude](http://www.directionjournal.com/etude) for a verbal description of this process by Meade Andrews

# Welcome Prophets

**You've heard the old adage, "A prophet is never welcome in their own home town." <sup>1</sup> In other words, the unknown is often more attractive than the known. This human psyche works in the favour of those wanting to hit the road with their hands, those wanting to take their expertise to other parts of the country and world looking for profits.**

Do you like travelling? Does the idea of getting paid whilst you travel sound attractive? Sounds like an advertisement for an Avon representative doesn't it? Well, it's not such a foreign concept in the Alexander world as teachers have been working their way around the world since the days FM and his brother AR would cruise to New York in the 1930's.

Very few Alexander teachers can be seen owning a mansion by the sea based on their teaching income alone. More often than not, working in this profession is a labour of love. So, is it acceptable for the touring teacher to love what she does and take a profit home?

The lifestyle certainly suits some more than others and in the research for this article I spoke with a veritable list of expert travellers who have been getting paid to travel for decades. It's lucrative if done well and also extremely rewarding for all involved. However, it takes skill to organize, host and profit from touring both as the tourer and the host. Without following some strict guidelines your experience will not only be expensive, but likely to be the first and last time you ever attempt the feat.

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the following teachers whose opinions and experiences helped in the research for this article. Whilst their approaches to the communication of FM Alexander's principles may differ, what they know about travelling or hosting teachers contains valuable lessons for all.\*

Vivien Mackie, Peter Grunwald, Steven Shaw, David Gorman and Cathy Madden travel extensively around the world annually and Varda Shepherd hosts Nilli Bassan at the Byron Alexander Centre each year in Australia.

These are the people who are already making this process work for them. They have been generous enough to supply all manner of advice and guidance for those who have considered it, but never taken the first step.

## The Magic Formula

When asked how they organise their international trips, it was unanimous—touring teachers credited personal relationships as key. Here are some of their responses:

Mackie: "When I reflect on all those years of working abroad, nearly every trip is the result of a personal connection..."

Madden: "I rely on personal contacts/relationships rather than marketing myself...I am almost always 'asked' rather than 'asking'."

Grunwald: "My organizers are interested in the principles of my work and are closely following the process. They are not just in the business of organizing events. I've found this to be a very important factor over the years."

David Gorman is a marketing machine and whilst he does rely on a "host/registrar" to help with on-the-ground organising, he does "the main publicity surge" himself. He's savvy on the computer and has honed a process to quickly produce a flyer for print or PDF for emailing. He has web pages that allow online signup and payment to courses and uses a professional contact management company to manage his large email contact list.

You'll more often than not be staying with the person who is helping to get your event going, so the personal network you have built is crucial.

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\* See biographies of contributors at end of this article



**Awaiting the prophets**, 2008 Sweet Briar, Virginia USA

© Nick Erickson

## Show me the money

When asked if there is money in travelling and teaching the responses were mixed. Whilst some demand a profit if they are going to leave their family behind, others are happy to have a fully paid trip to somewhere exotic or to visit family and not be so concerned with a big income. Teaching income estimates range from \$750 per day to \$2000 for a week's work away. The clearest guidance comes from Gorman,

"I would say, that if someone is considering travelling to teach as a way of earning their living or supplementing their existing living from teaching, they'd be well advised to set things up so that they make at least the same amount after expenses as they would do from their teaching at home—at least. Though, if they thought it through carefully they'd see that they really have to make more 'profit' in order to account for the time spent organizing, packing,

travelling there, travelling back, unpacking, etc. which they do not have with at-home teaching."

Gorman states in no uncertain terms that being profitable requires a clear plan and being willing to cancel events if there isn't sufficient remuneration guaranteed.

"I should go away from my home and family to teach and lose money? If a workshop does not have enough people signed up to make a decent profit, then I'll cancel it. Doesn't happen often, but once in a while..."

Grunwald realised early in his career that travelling the world was not a novelty but a life-long mission. "Building global networks takes time, so I have applied inhibition and direction as a core philosophy in my business. Growth has been steady and organic, not always highly profitable but founded on my greater sense of purpose."

But it must be kept in mind that the teachers who are rewarded the most are those who have been doing it for a number of years in order to build up a clientele, and also those who have something unique in their approach to the work.

Grunwald has brought his one-of-a-kind Eyebody Method® vision work based on the Alexander principles to the public in 10 countries for nearly 20 years. His success is based on a fundamental law of marketing success. In his words,

"you must define your niche that sets you apart from local teachers, otherwise, why would people come to see you?"

Steven Shaw developed his Shaw Method of swimming instruction early in his teaching career and has since trained over sixty instructors to carry on the work in his absence. He is in demand on five continents, not because he is a teacher of the Alexander technique, but due to the fact that his approach is unique. His "profit" is guaranteed as only he can provide what the customer wants.

The following points need to be considered when looking into whether or not you are made for travelling and teaching:

- planning well ahead (i.e. Grunwald plans his work three years ahead)
- collecting deposits in advance to pay for travel expenses
- being willing to carry the costs if there are not sufficient registrations
- building a support network with personal relationships
- be willing to consistently revisit the same areas
- understand that building an international client base requires a long-term view

## Hosting a teacher

But this is all from the side of the teacher who is packing and unpacking their bags. What about those in the support crew who take care of everything so that the guest can arrive and begin work?

The host of a touring teacher has an enormous responsibility to the people who are wanting to attend—not to mention themselves. Without people helping to bring the event together the host can not only wreak havoc on themselves with stress, but also on their own practice if it is neglected in the lead up to the event. The amount of work involved must be fully appreciated before embarking on the journey.

Varda Shepherd says, "... the process rests on my client base year round, which is a lot of steps... over the years there has been an evolution of certain templates e.g. flier/database/excel sheet of income/expenditure/certificates of participation, but it isn't rocket science."

What I found when speaking with hosts of touring teachers is that the benefits don't necessarily come from tuition fees alone. For example, old and new students who are attracted to a special event, might continue lessons with you if inspired by the visitor. Another area is the sale of add-on goods and services whilst the student is motivated by the visiting teacher.

One way for the host to guarantee an income is to make an arrangement with the touring teacher to help collect payments on any products they sell. For example books, audios, DVDs, goggles and other equipment. Running a special offer on such paraphernalia and booking private lessons can really add another layer of income to the trip. If the touring teacher does not generate enough income to justify their time and energy, they may not come again.



**Cathy Madden** leads a group activity in Japan

Image courtesy Jeremy Chance

## Guarantee an income

The income from course fees against expenses is a balancing act that must be clearly defined at the beginning of the relationship. When you go through the step-by-step guide later in this article it will be clear from the outset whether you are planning to cover costs, make a little extra or make enough to justify bringing the family with you to Tuscany next year.

Budgeted expenses aside, there are other ways to guarantee your income with a small group of attendees. When people come to a touring teacher event, they are willing to pay a premium for something they cannot otherwise access. So, the first expectation an attendee has is that an international visitor costs more.

The second expectation an attendee has is for the visitor to have other goods to buy. Some examples are below.

### 1. Your book is your reputation.

If you are travelling and don't have your "life's work" between two full colour covers you are not only letting down your new, long-distance students, but you are letting your income potential fail. There are a number of reasons why.

Firstly, a completely different level of respect is commanded by people who have their own book. Today it's affordable and relatively easy to self-publish, nevertheless the impression the public have of you is raised immeasurably when you are "in print". In this age of the downloadable Ebook, the somewhat old-fashioned process of writing, editing and publishing is still held in very high regard. Secondly, if your subjects think that this is the best time to get a copy of your book, "because anywhere else you'll pay \$10 more" they won't only purchase one copy for themselves, but grab a handful for those they love.

**2. Other people don't necessarily travel and promote their goods**, but they will reward you handsomely for doing it on their behalf. Shaw recommends and sells swimming goggles. Who better than Shaw to trust on your underwater vision? He sells out on every trip and the manufacturer is only too happy to have an international sales person selling for them all over the world! You may also carry a handful of other Alexander books that you recommend.

**3. Offering an audio recording or video at the end of the workshop** is a tried and tested method of multiplying your income on the day and in years to come. Grunwald offers additional items that allow for continued learning. For example, he carries with him copies of his book which is updated regularly, and other supportive material such as CD home-study courses and his own

design of pinhole glasses which support the process of inhibition. Considering participants' investment in the event may have been in the hundreds or even thousands, participants won't think twice about paying extra for a recording if it means they won't lose one single minute of their experience.

Audios and DVD's are easily pirated these days and whilst all sorts of "terms and conditions" are bandied around, copyright is a very expensive thing to enforce. It's better to look upon any recorded material as advertising. Whoever gains a copy of your work and likes it, is more likely to come to a future event and how much has that new customer cost you? Nothing! They in fact paid you to advertise. Your cost has been merely storing a master file.

**4. Finally, a new area that will be covered in much more detail** in a forthcoming Technology issue of Direction is online products. Very few Alexander teachers have mastered the art of making money on the internet. A combination of fear and ineptitude holds most at bay, but there are countless opportunities for further income

via the web and it's only a matter of time before the nut is cracked and more teachers get the idea. You might offer:

- i. an exclusive email coaching club
- ii. membership access to an online archive
- iii. private forum
- iv. video consultations
- v. articles and ebooks
- vi. audio and video downloads

Learning resources provided via the internet bring you to your students, where they live, where their habits are. If they continue lessons with their local teacher plus learn via their home computer, it results not only in multi-layered learning but gives them a medium to share with others at the same time.

Planning your work as a host of the visiting teacher might involve 12 months work. The following guide may help with the process.



Image courtesy Jeremy Chance

**Peter Grunwald** facilitates an experiential circle



Image courtesy Steven Shaw

Steven Shaw, teaching from the centre.

## 10 Point Plan

1. Contact fellow teachers and estimate how many students might be interested in attending a visitor teacher workshop event
2. Approach helpers for the event
3. Invite the chosen teacher to create a vision together
4. Estimate total costs:
  - Travel expenses
  - Accommodation
  - Venue hire
  - Food
  - Teacher fee
5. Estimate total Income
  - Tuition fee x expected attendance
  - Product sales
  - Books
  - Recording of event
  - Online coaching clinic
6. Check venue: lighting, heating, cooling, access, bathrooms.
7. Equipment check: whiteboard, markers, chairs, tables etc
8. Payments / Receipts Procedure
9. Feedback form for participants to fill out
10. Debrief after event, to plan for next one.

All the best made plans and commitments will not take the place of passion and vision. A one-off expedition might be an interesting experience, but unless you have a way to support new students in far-flung places, or a clear intention to return, stay at home. What seems apparent after talking with so many successful travelling teachers is that they have a long-term view of their international forays. Something more than profit and sightseeing motivates all of these gifted people and whilst there are obvious benefits to being from “out-of-town”, the relationships they have developed around the world are what bring them back to work year after year.

### Footnotes

1. Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honour, except in his own country, and among his own relatives, and in his own house.”  
*World English Bible* Mark 6:4

### About the Contributors

**Varda Shepherd** completed a music performance and teaching degree at Tel Aviv University while studying the Alexander technique, graduating in 1990. Later she studied music and movement therapy. She learnt Qi Gong with Master Peng Jiu Ling and the basics of Chinese medicine with Nili Bassan. She runs a private practice in Byron shire, teaching Alexander technique and counseling individuals, couples and families employing a range of therapeutic modalities. As the Director of Byron Alexander Centre she is the primary teacher, receiving guidance and support from foremost proponents of the Alexander work from around the globe.  
[www.byronalexandercentre.com](http://www.byronalexandercentre.com)

**David Gorman** has been teaching since 1980, becoming well-known worldwide for his innovations to the Alexander work and notorious for challenging the orthodoxy of the profession. He has been invited to teach all over the world in universities, conservatories and training colleges, at conferences and symposia, and with performance groups and health professionals. In 1982 he discovered a new model of human organisation — Anatomy of Wholeness — with its profound implications about our in-built natural tendency toward balance, ease and wholeness. From 1988 to 1997 he trained 45 teachers in London, England.  
[www.learningmethods.com](http://www.learningmethods.com)

**Steven Shaw** completed his teacher training in Israel (1990) where he developed a creative way to teach swimming based on the principles of the Alexander technique. The approach increases the benefits of being in the water through greater body awareness. In 1997 Steven co-wrote The Art of Swimming book with Armand D'Angour and in 1999 produced The Art of Swimming film. The Shaw Method of Swimming has received wide-ranging endorsements and support from health professionals, including The Chartered Society of Physiotherapists, sporting organisations including the ASA, the Institute of Swimming Teachers and the Society of Teachers of the Alexander Technique (STAT). [www.artofswimming.com](http://www.artofswimming.com)

**Peter Grunwald** discovered and developed the application of Alexander principles to the process of seeing consciously. He successfully stopped wearing glasses for myopia and astigmatism and pioneers worldwide his Eyebody Method in integrating step-by-step brain, eye, body functions. The method includes the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual aspects of seeing. He completed his Alexander training in Sydney (1987)

and also attended post-graduate trainings with Marjorie Barstow 1985-1990. His best-selling book Eyebody, first published in 2004 and updated regularly, is available in several languages. He sees students one-on-one, leads 6-day retreats and 3-week intensives. He lives with his family in New Zealand. [www.eyebody.com](http://www.eyebody.com)

**Vivien Mackie** studied with Pablo Casals from 1952-55 and graduated from Walter Carrington's training school in 1973. She directed a teacher training school in Melbourne Australia from 1990-93 and published her book with Joe Armstrong, Just Play Naturally in 2000. Her musical expertise is demanded in Japan, Australia, USA and Europe where she hosts master classes and workshops annually.

**Cathy Madden** began studying with Marjorie Barstow in 1975. She was a founding member of The Performance School in Seattle and teaches for the University of Washington's Professional Actor Training Program. Cathy assisted Marjorie Barstow for many years in Lincoln and internationally and now travels regularly throughout England, Germany, Switzerland, and Australia. She is Associate Director for ATA, an Alexander training school in Tokyo and Kyoto, and former chair of Alexander Technique International (ATI). She is also Director of the Alexander Technique Training and Performance Studio, and Artistic Director of Lucia Neare's Theatrical Wonders. [www.cathymadden.clearwire.net/](http://www.cathymadden.clearwire.net/)

**Please visit [www.directionjournal.com/welcomeprophets](http://www.directionjournal.com/welcomeprophets) for two bonus interviews with Steven Shaw (recorded 26th July, 2009) and David Gorman (recorded 10th August, 2009).**

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## FROM OUR READERS ON THE NEW WEBSITE ARCHIVES...

*This is a brilliant way to promote connections in the Alexander community and spread all the resources you have without the expenses of publishing etc. And, it is already making a difference! Yesterday I had a lesson from an Alexander Technique teacher here in Montreal and we talked about the article about yoga. Since we are from very different training schools, it was wonderful to have a point of departure for discussion. Congratulations. I look forward to further developments.*

March 31, 2009 | **Kit Racette**

*I managed to navigate my way through your logging on process and changing my contact details - thanks to your brilliantly idiot proofed instructions - perfect for my level of computer awareness!*

March 31, 2009 | **Sylvia**

*I think you are tremendously imaginative with the Direction Journal site. The audio files, all of them, provide a wide range of topics that are thought provoking for me, as an Alexander teacher, and I anticipate will be of great interest to my more advanced students as well. Also, you are a truly clever AT marketer. You've really brought Direction back to life, and you've found how to use technology to connect teachers, students and others who have interests associated with the technique (I'm thinking of the specialist in back pain you interviewed). I applaud all of your good work!*

March 31, 2009 | **Wendy Salkind**

*I found the conversation with Gitte beneficial to me in many ways and confirmed my email to you a couple of days ago about other modalities and AT and clients with various health issues. Thank you for your ability to be creative for the AT community.*

March 31, 2009 | **Priscilla**

*Congratulations on what appears to be a very successful revival of Direction Journal! I'm very excited about all the new content on the website and am thrilled at the prospect of sitting down and finding the time to listen to Walter's audios - what a wonderful resource - the Alexander community should be proud of you!*

March 31, 2009 | **Julia A'Court**

*Thank-you very much for circulating this interesting interview. I was particularly interested to hear Ms. Fjordbo's views on using her expertise in trauma therapy and the Alexander Technique with the same students/patients. I have heard opposing views on the usefulness and legitimacy of combining the Technique with other disciplines, and have not yet reached any conclusions (and may never do so), so I am glad to be able to know her point of view.*

March 31, 2009 | **Karen**

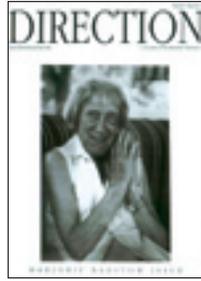
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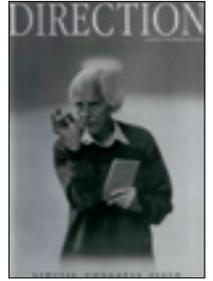
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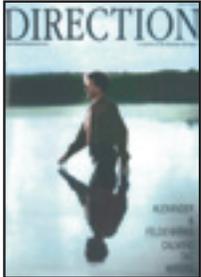
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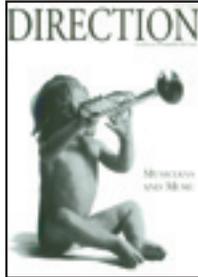
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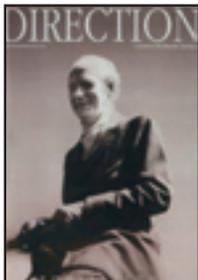
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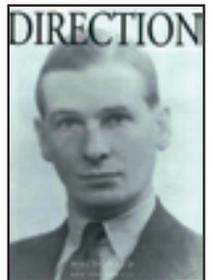
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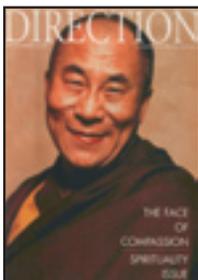
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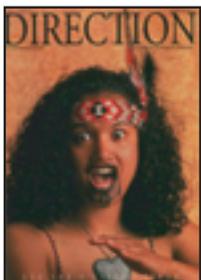
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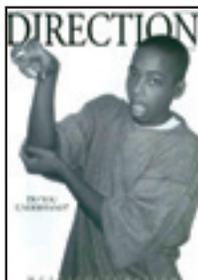
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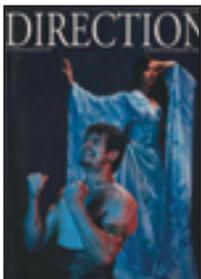
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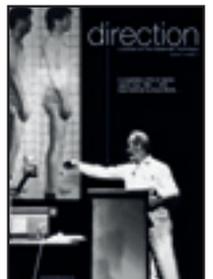
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