

From: AUSTAT <info@austat.org.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 17 March 2020 8:36 PM
To: Karen
Subject: March 2020 Enews & COVID-19 update

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AUSTAT NEWS

March 2020

COVID 19: Information

For our

Alexander Technique Community

AUSTAT's highest priority is the health and safety of our members, their students and staff. There are concerns and questions about how to maintain a practice in these uncertain times, especially in a modality where touch plays a large part in each lesson. AUSTAT recommends you make yourself familiar with best practice around infection control. Please see the links below, which we have pulled together from credible sources and which provide some simple measures on how you can protect yourself and your students over the next few months.

The decision to continue practicing under the changing circumstances is ultimately up to the individual teacher. It is the responsibility of each teacher to consider their clients, and their own health based on the up to date information provided through www.health.gov.au and the state health websites:

www.dhhs.vic.gov.au

www.health.nsw.gov.au

www.health.wa.gov.au

www.sahealth.sa.gov.au

www.dhhs.tas.gov.au
www.health.qld.gov.au

TIPS TO MANAGE THE CORONAVIRUS SPREAD

These tips are common sense and you are most probably implementing them on an ongoing basis, but as a reminder here are our recommendations.

YOUR PRACTICE

- Stock your studio with at least a 60% alcohol-based hand sanitiser
- Provide antibacterial wipes
- Post a sign in the bathroom in regards to hand washing etiquette
- Ensure your bathrooms are stocked with plenty of soap
- Use paper towel in the bathroom instead of cloth towel
- Provide tissues in your teaching space
- Clean all equipment after each session
- Clean all surfaces in your teaching space regularly
- If you offer tea or water in your teaching space use plastic cups or even better ask people to bring their own.

Your Students

- Send an email to your students reminding them to stay home if they are unwell
- Request that students returning from a high-risk area overseas, please avoid making an appointment until after the 14-day quarantine period.
- Post a notice on the door requesting students not to enter if they are unwell
- If props are required encourage students to bring their own
- If you run group classes encourage everyone to look out for each other and be understanding and kind.

Alexander Technique Teachers

- Do not teach if you are feeling unwell
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water and particularly in between lessons
- Try not to touch your eyes, nose and mouth
- Seek support from your friends and community

Click for the link to a Australian Government [hand washing poster](#) and [how to wash hands poster](#) for pinning up in your teaching space.

As mentioned we recommend you continue to monitor the government advice on a daily basis and evaluate the situation accordingly.

As a community we can support each other by staying connected via the AUSTAT Facebook page. Please feel free to post any ideas, questions or comments on the page so we can all

support each other at this difficult and confusing time.

Report from AUSTAT Council meeting

Sunday 15th March 2020

- Greg Holdaway has stood down from his position on the Training Course Standing Committee and advised Council that he will no longer be training Alexander Technique teachers under the AUSTAT model.
 - Janet Davies has been appointed to the Training Course Standing Committee.
 - Meredith Connie has graduated from Penny McDonald's school and been accepted as a full teaching member of AUSTAT.
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UPCOMING EVENTS:

See AUSTAT Website 'Events Calendar'



Caren Bayer Sydney Workshop

There are a few places available for senior teachers to attend Caren Bayer's 3 day workshop on 7, 8 and 9 November.

Please contact Penelope Carr:
penelope@alexandertechniqueconsultant.com



Sydney Teachers' Work Exchange

The next work exchange will be held on Saturday 28 March Saturday 29 February 9am – 11am at:
The Alexander Technique Institute
Suite 3/188 Pacific Highway, North Sydney

Contact Diana Devitt-Dawson:
Email: diana@alexandertechniqueinstitute.com.au
Mobile: 0408 055 580

On-Going CPD Sydney 2020

Two Day Hands-On Refresher Mornings / Build Confidence!

Giving Direction (like giving a gift) to the **HN&B, Doing and Non-Doing**

with

**Head of Training, Diana Devitt-Dawson
Alexander Technique Institute, North Sydney**

Friday 3rd April & Saturday 4th April, 9am – 12noon

FUTURE DATES: See www.alexandertechniqueinstitute.com.au

Welcome! Teachers, post-grads and 3rd year students.

In a peaceful, light and supportive learning environment Diana is offering on-going *Hands-on Refresher Workshops* that build confidence in teaching and presenting the Alexander principles - to all ages. Instruction is given to each participant in hands-on application to the head, neck and back relationship in such a way that demonstrates the Alexander directions. We will work in pairs during chair work, table work and, when teaching some of the 'procedures' that demonstrate Alexander's *'the new means-whereby'* to the pupil. Once your pupil has experienced the directions (that prevent harm to the primary control) they will begin understand, and will continue with lessons until they feel that they are on the path in learning how-to self-work in daily activities and interactions to be free from harmful, automatic habits of use and reaction. As one French pupil exclaimed, smiling "*This is SO liberating!*"

The focus in the workshops include:-

1. Educating pupils verbally and with hands-on work.
2. Understanding the pupil's role in the learning process.
3. Assistance in hands-on application to the HN&B that -
4. Give the directions (like giving a gift) to 'let neck be free to let the head go forward and UP etc.
5. Video clips. Observing **Revisit FMA** first generation Heads of Training teaching students i.e., Alexander's niece, Marjory Barlow, Patrick Macdonald, Dick & Elisabeth Walker, Mr. Scott,

"We only want to gain our end in the process of ordering our heads forward and up, our backs to lengthen and widen, and so on." F.M. Alexander

Recommended Reading:

- Learning to be Teachers, Chapter 8, in *The Man and His Work* by Lulie Westfeldt.
- *Think More Do Less* by Sean Carey
- *Giving Direction, Doing and Non-Doing* by Patrick Macdonald

A Series of Mentoring/CPD Workshops

for Alexander Technique teachers and third-year trainees

A sequence of two 2-day weekend workshops per year over three years

Come to one workshop, or ideally build across all 6.

Sydney Cammeray Golf Club, 10am – 4pm, 13-14 June and 17-18 October 2020

Melbourne SOFMAS, 10am – 4pm, 20-21 June and 19-20 September 2020

\$310 per workshop, early bird \$260 by 15 May 2020

Contact Michael Stenning: mps@freedominaction.com.au



In my own personal practice, as in teaching, I assume that I can always improve my skills. Therefore, as I am working, I keep refreshing my own basics. What are a teacher's most basic skills? How do we communicate verbally and with our hands? How do we continue to build these skills? How can we refine what we are doing? How do we communicate with our pupil or our group: What is our point? What can we reasonably expect to communicate? What do we want people to have learned by the end of a given presentation? I enjoy working in a practical way with participants' questions.

Successive themes may include:

- building the big Alexander picture out of the pieces – what are the pieces?
- coordination – breath, ground and the 'Primary Control'
- communication – hands, verbal and ?
- breath
- teaching intangibles - understanding 'the sphere'
- giving a first lesson
- helping a pupil to unravelling their habits – how to figure out where to most usefully start
- teaching challenges and how to meet them. What 'interesting' or 'challenging' situations have you encountered in teaching?
- the difference between What?, How?, and Why?

- working on yourself: How and What?
- relationship between Inhibition and Direction
- giving your directions and building your “directing muscles”: How does this relate to putting your hands on? What’s the alternative?
- Working with a pupil on an activity – what is within our remit?

Up to a point these themes are circular – most themes crops up within the others. We may have someone new to the work in class to demonstrate with when relevant.

Bio:

Michael Stenning is a Canberra-based Alexander Technique teacher, of 35 years’ experience, who has given CDP workshops and training for Alexander Teachers and Trainees in Australia, Great Britain, the USA, Denmark, Argentina, Uruguay, and soon in Norway. He is a musician who used the Alexander Technique to rehabilitate himself and resume playing after his career was interrupted through the effects of tension and stress. Michael is a former Chair of AuSTAT and of AuSTAT’s Training Course Standing Committee. He is interested in the practice of performance of any kind, including that of teaching. He has worked extensively with instrumentalists, singers and athletes, as well as teachers. Michael and his partner Léonie continue their private teaching practice and recently completed the training of a new cohort of AT teachers.

“Running a teacher-training course in the Alexander Technique has brought me into contact with many teachers from different parts of the world. It is clear to me that Michael Stenning’s work is of an exceptionally high calibre. Michael’s work is clear, precise and consistent. There is a simplicity in his teaching which I believe is the hallmark of a master-teacher.”

Merran Poplar, Teacher Trainer and STAT moderator, Rio de Janeiro

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