

From: AUSTAT <info@austat.org.au>
Sent: Thursday, 9 April 2020 4:31 PM
To: Karen
Subject: AUSTAT E-News - 10 April 2020

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ENews - 9th April 2020

Dear Karen,

AUSTAT Council hope that you and your family are safe and well. We continue to strongly recommend the Alexander teaching community cease face-to-face lessons. As promised and in recognition of the difficulties that arise from this action, members of Council have been collecting information we hope will be helpful for members at this very challenging time.

Council is aware that some teachers have been contacted by their insurance providers with a request for a disclaimer from the professional association. Council is drafting a response and will update members when this is complete.

Insurance for Online Teaching

We recommend that anyone wishing to teach online should contact their insurance provider to ensure they are covered to do this.

STAT have kindly allowed us to forward to you the tips and recommendations they sent to their members recently, many of which are useful, whether required by your insurance company or not. We encourage you to read through the STAT guidelines to ensure your Alexander classes are continued with the utmost professionalism over this challenging time.

Remote teaching: STAT advice to members

The current freeze on 'hands-on' teaching caused by 'social distancing' is requiring teachers to consider how they can continue to support their pupils at this challenging time, including consideration of whether remote teaching is appropriate. 'Remote teaching' is taken here to include any form of teaching where the teacher and student are not in the same room and could take a wide variety of forms ranging, for example, from discussing books over the phone, giving advice to existing pupils online, remote 'talk throughs' in semi-supine, to other activities. For any members considering remote teaching there are important implications that need to be considered both for our Professional Indemnity Insurance and the continued reputation of the AT and STAT teachers.

Insurance

The following advice must be followed to maintain your insurance cover. This has been endorsed by our insurers.

1. Teachers adopting any non-standard method of delivery must record their decision and document the reasons for the decision. Since there is no formally agreed definition of 'non-standard method of delivery' any remote teaching or support should be classed as non-standard
2. A risk assessment must be conducted for any new activity. A generic example risk assessment for remote teaching can be **[downloaded here](#)** (both as a pdf and a word file) by way of guidance but each teacher must conduct their own, taking into account the details specific to each situation.
3. The following should be adhered to (note please read 'athlete' as 'pupil' for our purposes):
 - The teacher/instructor should be suitably qualified to instruct on the activity
 - The activity being suitable to be undertaken in someone's home
 - The teacher reminds participants to check their surroundings are clear and to keep any pets of distractions away during exercise
 - The teacher should specify at the start of any video that this is general guidance and anyone doing the exercise should be aware of their own capabilities and only do what they are comfortable to do or seek medical advice if in any doubt
 - The teacher should remind participants to stay hydrated.
 - The teacher/instructor should be mindful with regard to the use of copyrighted music/material

If your teachers/instructors is coaching vulnerable adults or anyone under 18 there are potential safeguarding points we need to consider:

- Gain written consent from parents and explain what the purpose of the training is, when it will be done, on what platform etc.
- Use an online-share platform – that way the teacher will not necessarily need access to the children's contact details and only use it for the purpose of the training.
- Do not make contact with athletes outside of the training unless with parental consent.

- Ensure that you and the athletes wear appropriate clothing at all times.

Reputation

In addition to the insurance requirements, there are serious concerns about reputation that need to be carefully considered. There is an ongoing debate about the role of remote teaching of AT and while some teachers are enthusiastic advocates, others have serious concerns. This message is not intended to adjudicate on this debate or to endorse remote teaching but to remind members that they are advocates for STAT in all their teaching activities and have a commitment to uphold and enhance the reputation of themselves, the AT and the Society at all times for the benefit of all fellow members. STAT members who are contemplating remote teaching, perhaps as a temporary measure, are therefore urged to consider the following:

- Teachers must set realistic expectations with regard to remote teaching. In particular, members are expected to stress the importance of direct practical experience in learning the Technique and must explain clearly that students cannot expect to gain full experience of AT lessons without 'hands-on' instruction;
- Members should encourage students to undertake practical learning with 'hands-on' teaching from a STAT teacher whenever circumstances allow;
- Teachers need to consider all aspects of the lesson including the technology required for a suitable quality experience, guidance given to the pupil prior to and throughout the remote teaching session;
- All forms of remote teaching require careful consideration. Each time a teacher intends to work remotely with a pupil, they should consider carefully, as they would for any other teaching activity, their level of experience, that of their student, and the activity being proposed to ensure they provide a suitably safe, beneficial and positive experience.

The above guidance has been produced in response to an unprecedented situation with the aim of safeguarding members' interests. It will be reviewed when the situation changes significantly, in particular once restrictions to 'hands-on' teaching are lifted.

Contact other teachers

Please share this information with those members who are not on email address and encourage them to create a free email account and share it with STAT. Please give them a hand if they are not too familiar on how to go about this. Thank you.

Ilia Daoussi
On behalf of STAT Council

[AUSTAT Online Forum:](#)
['Going Online - changing habits in changing times'](#)

"The only constant in life is change" - Heraclitus.

"Change involves carrying out an activity against the habit of life" - F.M. Alexander

Just a few weeks ago, we relied upon the the well-established *habits* of our daily lives – in all aspects of our work, leisure, family, personal and spiritual selves. AUSTAT Teachers could give or receive an Alexander lesson without any special consideration. However, the deep and strong devotion to the hands-on nature of our practice has quickly become incompatible with current government requirements for social living. Group lessons are also no longer possible. Our training has not prepared us for such a situation.

A.R. Alexander advised teachers to be "creative, spontaneous and adaptable to change". STAT has now set a precedent in supporting members to develop online teaching skills. In this spirit, AUSTAT proposes to hold an online forum (via Zoom) to discuss practical and appropriate ways to embrace online communication. This is an opportunity to explore novel means to impart our unique skills and knowledge to our students and to the wider community. i.e. ways to complement, rather than replace, the hands-on experience of a skilled teacher.

All teacher and student AUSTAT members are invited to contribute to this Forum. Please contact Ray Taylor (e: seedmail@bigpond.net.au) by Fri 17th Apr to register your interest with your availability for possible sessions:

- *Fri 24th Apr* *2pm – 4pm (AEST)*
- *Sun 26th Apr* *2pm – 4pm (AEST)*

Please also convey any thoughts, suggestions, ideas, resources, etc also to Ray by Friday 17th April. These will be amalgamated into a pre-reading document and circulated prior to the Forum. Confirmation of the session date and time will be advertised to all who are interested. A recorded version of the forum will be made available.

"Out of clutter, find simplicity. From discord, find harmony. In the middle of difficulty, lies opportunity" - Albert Einstein

F.M. Alexan



AUSTAT Book Club

Joining this regular book discussion via zoom can count towards Professional Development.

Every second Wednesday at 1pm

**Commencing Wednesday 15th April.
1.00pm to 2.00pm (EST)**

First book to be discussed.
The Use of the Self by F.M. Alexander.
Read preface and chapters 1 and 2.

Zoom address for 15th April and every second Wednesday after that is:

Join Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/683154783>

Meeting ID: 683 154 783

One tap mobile

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+61370182005,,683154783# Australia

Dial by your location

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+61 3 7018 2005 Australia

+61 8 7150 1149 Australia

Meeting ID: 683 154 783

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/ad7pE9Y2NB>

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