



*Alexander
Technique*

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A Letter from the Editor

Dear ATI ExChange Readers:

The December 2023 issue of the ExChange is here and highlights a range of the possibilities of what ATI member research includes! Recently, I have been working to open up ATI's understanding of what research is. My aim in doing this is to encourage you, as members of ATI and Alexander Technique practitioners, to contribute and expand the scholarship around what AT is and can do for individuals and communities. I am routinely inspired by your insights and practices and I want the ExChange to be a platform for sharing your ideas. In support of your work, I have included in this issue an article on *Writing Research: Don't be afraid!* that will hopefully give you some tips for situating yourself in a research process and moving that process into a written account. Surrounding that article are examples of the good work and different styles of researching and writing. I hope you will recognize that your teaching, your practice, and your interests are all research processes.

Shawn Copeland's *Re-Mapping Our Nervous System* is an examination of Copeland's own teaching habits in evolution as he works with students who have gone through gender transitions or are experiencing other remarkable shifts in body schema. His insights about what he understands he is doing with his words, his hands, and his presence unfurls as he encounters students (re)shaping their identities and attempting to belong in their own bodies. This article is an example of research stemming directly from teaching practice and is written from a presentation he made at the ACGM in Boone, North Carolina.

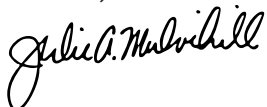
A View with a Difference by Julia Gilroy is a review of the book entitled *Atlasing-Step Away from the Chaos* written and published in 2022 by Julie Pauls. The review is an open and affirming account of the book. Gilroy describes with delight the ways in which AT is paired with interior design in the book. Gilroy notes that book author Pauls utilizes her expertise as a physical therapist and AT teacher to write for a non-expert reader and that the framing of the technique may invite curiosity and a deeper dive for those who may only have a peripheral knowledge of AT.

This issue of the ExChange highlights a method of research wherein the researcher, Joseph Weissenberg, takes a compelling book from the business world and synthesizes it with his understanding of marketing the Alexander Technique specifically. Weissenberg deftly applies the marketing tools from *Ready, Fire, Aim* (2008) by Michael Masterson to ATI and private practice AT businesses. Rather than a review, Weissenberg's article, entitled *Overcoming the Uncomfortable: Embracing Marketing for Alexander Technique Services*, teaches readers about mindfully creating, selling, and improving the benefits of AT in order to grow.

Other features in this issue of the ExChange include a tribute to beloved Japanese AT teacher and teacher trainer Yuzuru Katagiri as well as a collection of responses to the October ACGM in Boone, North Carolina, USA.

As always, the ExChange is available to support you on your research and writing journeys. We also take multimedia and image-based submissions. It does not matter what language you speak or how far along in the process you may find yourself, the ExChange is interested in your work and in sharing it with our community.

Onward,



~julie

ATI ExChange Editor, exchange@alexandertechniqueinternational.org

Re-Mapping Our Nervous System

By Shawn L. Copeland, DMA

Allow me a moment to tell you a story, my story, of the last 7 years of my career. I am a teacher. Some days I teach the clarinet. Some days I teach the Alexander Technique. And some days, most days, I teach the person in front of me using all the knowledge and skills I have been fortunate to acquire. As a teacher, my learning is led by the students who have come to me in workshops, classes, and private lessons. When met with something that I do not know about, I listen, watch, and learn. I seek out the education and the training to work with the communities that have come to me since I began teaching the Alexander Technique in 2006.

In 2016, our lives all took an unexpected turn that changed my teaching in ways that I could never have anticipated. On June 12, 2016, I was in DeLand, Florida at Stetson University, expecting to wake up and welcome 80 middle and high school-aged clarinet players to our annual, weeklong, Clarinet Clinic. Instead, the world woke to learn that 49 of our brothers and sisters were brutally murdered at the Pulse Night Club in Orlando, FL.

I identify as a cisgender, gay, white, southern, male, who was born and raised in Central Florida. Orlando was my home during my early 20's. I came of age in the dance and drag clubs of Orlando. I spent many nights in Pulse. This is my home.

In the months following the Pulse Night Club shooting, we all struggled to process and adapt to our new lives, where our most sacred of places, our dance clubs, were no longer ours, and no longer safe. Like many moments in my life, I turned to music for comfort and for expression. I contacted my long-time friend and muse, Carlos Velez, and asked him to write a piece for me that celebrated our time together in Orlando, and commemorated those who lost their lives while living their truth. What resulted was *Pulse*, a 3-movement sonata for clarinet and piano. In an autobiographical way, this piece was about me and Carlos, friends for 18 years, who would first go to Firestone (movement 1, the dance club), then Southern Nights (movement 2, the drag cabaret), and end up at Pulse to dance into the wee hours of the morning.

In the months leading to the premiere of this new piece, I realized and had to process that in order to play this piece of music, my identity as a gay man from Orlando, had to be front and foremost when I was on stage. I had to tell my story of who I was and why I was doing this work. I essentially had to come out in my profession, no small task.

I toured with this piece for a year, playing at international clarinet conferences and universities throughout the US. Following each performance, there was always a group of young people who wanted to sit with me and tell me their stories, their fears, and their celebrations. It was then that I learned about representation and the power that we have in paving the way for others who come after us. Students were telling me that they felt it was now safe for them to express their gender and sexuality on stage because I was doing it, I was making that possible for them.

This was yet another moment of growth. Could I accept this new role that I was placing myself in? Did I know what I was doing? I was just doing what felt authentic to me, which meant that I needed to follow this up with more learning.

In the summer of 2019, I was teaching Alexander Technique at the summer festival where I have taught



since 2005. I will withhold all specific details to protect the individuals but at the summer festival, I teach roughly 40 students each summer. These students range in age from 15-25 and are all studying orchestral instruments and piano. I met a young man in his undergraduate years of study, a percussionist. He was excited for our lesson as he had read “all the books” and was ready for his first hands-on experience.

To begin, I asked him to play snare drum for me. He set up the drum and began to get ready to play and I saw him transform into a model of “good posture.” He placed his feet together, moved his head up and back, pulled his shoulders back, and placed his weight in his back, standing firmly behind his hips. I commented casually as we got to work that this was a very male way to stand and observed him blush. I asked several times about what that might have been but was assured it had nothing to do with playing the snare so on we went. Following this lesson, I did much reflecting and considering what might have been behind this interaction.

Two weeks later, he came in with a pair of cymbals. He was tasked by his teacher to learn to crash the cymbals using his back muscles. Off we go exploring the connection of the arms into the back and connecting this with primary movement (control). He was delighted and commented, “This is why I couldn’t play cymbals last year following my chest surgery.”

It was at this moment that I saw the individual in front of me: He is a transgender male. And while I had properly identified him as he would have liked me to, I realized at this moment that I needed to reconsider what I was teaching and how I was teaching it. Much of my information about the body and how the body moves was from a binary, gendered point of view.

In the months following, I began to explore the importance of gender and gender expression in movement and touch. I conducted workshops where we explored movement outside of our gender norms, and we explored how gender norms influence the way that we touch one another. As an Alexander Technique teacher, touch is very important. Recognizing and giving space for gender is essential in allowing our students to feel safe in our teaching spaces.

In Spring 2020, I had an individual in my class who introduced themselves with they/them pronouns and identified as gender fluid. In an essay in the first few weeks of class, the student reported to me that they were exploring how they organized through their pelvis in relationship to how they felt within their gender. They explained that they would adapt the tilt of their pelvis to appear and feel more masculine or feminine at any given point in time, and would think differently about how their weight was distributed through their pelvis, depending on their gender identity at each moment.

After talking with this student privately, they were comfortable sharing this information with the class (and with you) and allowed us to take part in their journey through their expression of gender in movement. As we moved through the whole body map, they explored within their body, the differences between societal norms of gender and movement, and the authentic expression of their gender. As they noticed these subtle changes in their body, it opened the possibility of more movement patterns throughout their whole body that may express gender and identity. What was beautiful in this moment was how the other students explored in the same way, and thus, unlocked habitual patterns of movement placed in their bodies through their beliefs of how they “should” be rather than how they “are.” Students explored the intersections of masculine and feminine presentations and movements and thus found that they themselves were not as binary in their gender as they once thought. This was such a beautiful and poignant experience.



In the coming months, several events converged. The quarantine trapped us all inside and alone. I was in Seattle and had a front-row seat to the BLM riots and CHAZ events happening around me. I chose to use the extra time to complete an online Certificate in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion from Cornell University. It was then that I felt equipped to look at my work through this lens.

Body Image vs. Body Schema

I turned to phenomenology and the work of Shaun Gallagher to understand the relationship between gender, movement, and our body maps. Gallagher defines body image as “a system of (sometimes conscious) perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs pertaining to one’s body” while body schema is defined as “a system of (generally non-conscious) sensory-motor processes that constantly regulate posture, movement, and function without reflective awareness or the necessity of perceptual monitoring” (86).

While Shaun Gallagher’s work is part of a growing and heavily debated body of knowledge, what is clear is there is an aspect of our SELF (image) that is based on perception and an aspect of our SELF (schema) that is based on anatomical structure. The *image* is malleable, while the *schema* is not. The *image* also includes our body map, since this is the aspect of the system that is changeable. Within our body maps are our experiences of emotion, race, ethnicity, nationality, education, religion, gender, sexuality, and many other aspects that shape and inform our development. From both my AT and Body Mapping training, I believe we enact our body map through our schema. Our lived experiences are reflected in our movement; our movement tells the story of the life that we have lived.

Mapping

As infants, we are often confronted with obstacles that we must overcome. In these moments, we learn things about ourselves and our environment either through experimentation, mimicking, or from direct interpersonal contact that assists us in this process. This is mapping, and specifically, body mapping. If it works, we will practice this and repeat it when faced with the same or similar obstacle in the future. The nervous system recognizes the benefits of this behavior and begins turning those maps into habits, which become our maps for moving throughout the world.

For reasons of safety and belonging, we may perpetuate these maps long past their usefulness. This is nothing new or earth-shattering for us as teachers of the Alexander Technique. The theories of Body Mapping have long been established and accepted in our pedagogy. Still the question is in these instances, are these errors?

Our brain and nervous system have one primary function and one secondary function. Primarily, our brain is tasked with our safety. Secondly it is tasked with our movement. To keep us safe, our middle, mammalian brain is continuously taking in information from our exteroceptive senses (vision, hearing, taste, smell, and touch), our interoceptive senses (temperature, pressure, heart rate and visceral function, threat, empathy, emotion, and ownership/belonging), and our proprioceptive senses (body position and our relation to space and time). This information flow is always on and flowing in one direction, from our sensory receptors to our brain. Contrastly, our prefrontal cortex is also working with the question of safety. This area is concerned with higher-ordered reasoning and works to inhibit the inner brain to make more logical decisions. Our inner brain works quite quickly; the prefrontal cortex works slower by comparison.



Belonging Ensures Safety

Belonging is one of the earliest measures of our safety. As a human, we are social creatures; interaction and touch is a non-negotiable requirement of our well-being. Belonging to our family, friends, and communities is essential to ensuring our safety. Our brains, from a very young age, are always working with the relationship of safety, threat, and belonging, and making choices that are likely below the level of our prefrontal thought.

Remember body schema is hardwired. It is the map of the tissue within the tissue that allows the brain to know how to communicate with the various parts of our body. Our body image however, is malleable and heavily influenced by our beliefs, influences from societal and cultural norms, education, gender, identity, and our previous lived experiences. When a four-year-old female who is being taken to her first ballet class by her mother who danced all her life makes unconscious choices about her body image and how to shape her body, she is ensuring that she “fits in” and belongs in the class, receives positive feedback from the teachers, and belongs to her mother. This is when “fitting in” falsely leads to belonging. “Fitting in” places value on the ways that we are similar and requires conformity; belonging places value on the ways that we are different.

My life partner is a clinical psychologist (PhD). When I came home and began discussing my discoveries in my AT classes with him he was not as surprised as I was, he was more surprised that this was coming up to be honest. He shared with me:

I often do psychological evaluations for individuals seeking gender affirming surgeries. As part of this, I take the individual outside and teach them to walk down the street, stand in line, order food, and other daily activities, in the gender they are transitioning to.

For a transgender, non-binary, and gender-fluid person, their movement must reflect their presenting gender despite what their anatomical structure dictates. This is a non-negotiable aspect of their safety. Our movement reflects our identity.

When we, consciously or unconsciously, make choices about our body in order to fit in, we do so to remain safe. They are not errors as we normally might think of them; it is not a matter of right and wrong. We make these choices because they work, we survive. Perhaps this is just the intro ballet class or beginning band, but our inner brain does not understand these subtleties. Sometimes it is as complex as being able to safely buy groceries or work in a public space. Ensuring that we remain in the protective shield of our social and familial communities is one of our nervous system’s primary functions.

Upgrading the Map

When working with your students’ maps that are no longer serving them, you can often work it backwards to the moment of learning when these choices are about doing what a teacher/parent/friend told them to do. When faced with the prospect of being abandoned, we instinctively choose conformity. This student is not broken nor needs to be fixed. They safely arrived in your teaching space and are doing just fine. At the time that they learned it, this map was the best choice available and solved the immediate need; otherwise, they would not have worked so hard to learn it. The brain, nervous system, and the way that maps are created are all working exactly as they should. It is simply that the nervous system is



working with information that is outdated and no longer serving the student well. They need an upgrade. I often say to my students:

You know, last night my phone company pushed out a software update. Yesterday, my phone made and received calls, text messages, and emails quite fine. And today, it supposedly is doing that differently. Was it wrong yesterday and is today suddenly right? No, it is just different. Today my phone is perhaps more effective and efficient than yesterday. Body Mapping is simply a software update.

Let's look a bit more deeply at those who take lessons in the Alexander Technique. Despite much effort, the Alexander Technique is still not readily available and quite fringe throughout the various societies around the world. In some instances, people stumble upon it after many attempts to receive treatment for chronic pain or injury that traditional medicine has not been able to alleviate. By the time students arrive in our teaching spaces, they perhaps have been told many times that they are imagining their pain, or that there is no hope for recovery and they must cope with their new reality.

There is great potential in these moments. We know that students come to us having arrived at a place where we are uniquely equipped to affirm their experience and offer the very change for which they have been searching. In these moments, we are changing their perception of themselves by updating their understanding of their bodies. It is a "software update" not correcting errors. To think otherwise would invalidate the lived experiences of the person who is seated in front of us; who has come to us for relief, help, or to experience their bodies and life differently.

Of course, none of us would intentionally invalidate the experiences of our students. But when we as teachers orient from a place that is binary in our teaching, a place that is grounded in correct facts and errors, we create an implicit bias that is reflected in our teaching, our language, and most importantly, our hands. Implicit biases are unintentional and unconscious. To prevent them, we must reflect on our ideas, our training, and our pedagogy.

References

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Shawn L. Copeland is a multidimensional musician, pedagogue, and entrepreneur whose talents have made him a leader in both the performance and musician wellness spaces. He is the founder of [mBODYed, LLC](#), a new program specializing in Alexander Technique and Body Mapping Training for performers. He believes in the inclusion of the body in the creative process and strives to create a safe place for the whole person to learn. His pedagogy teaches that the body represents lived experiences and seeks to affirm these experiences while helping students grow.



Review: A View with a Difference

By Julia Gilroy

Atlasing-StepAway From the Chaos

by Julie Pauls

Julie Pauls explains how her interior designer, Melissa Campbell, helped turn her house into a home and motivated her to write the ebook *Atlasing – Step Away from the Chaos*. It introduces us to Pauls's *Atlasing* approach in her consulting practise, ATLAS Posture®. Published in 2022, this ebook is divided into fifteen short and beautifully illustrated chapters with catchy titles and equally thoughtful, poetic subtitles. A serious accident as a child inspired Julie Pauls to create order from chaos in her home, and especially in her own body.

Pauls skillfully uses the analogy between home and human design and gives advice on posture, sitting, breathing and spatial awareness from her perspective as a certified teacher of the Alexander Technique. Her experience as a physiotherapist specialist in posture and in Integrative Medicine gives credence to her clear anatomical descriptions and outlook on body maintenance. The book is sprinkled with personal stories, quotes, and humour that gives it more of a homey, welcoming feel rather than an intellectual study.

The central theme is 'Atlasing: Artfully navigating the anatomy of your own frame.' Pauls describes how deepening our understanding and thinking of key anatomical areas frees up our movement. Furthermore, she explains that by exploring our use of furnishings, aesthetics and spatial organisation both in the home and in ourselves, we can positively affect our emotions, will, mind, and inspiration so in short, improve our lives all round. It is through home design that the mind-body-spirit connection becomes more tangible for Pauls.

She describes the three goals of *Atlasing* as inspiration, support, and direction, which are demonstrated in the photos, source notes and posture prompts throughout the book. The best example of these goals is in the second chapter when she pinpoints the head, chest, and pelvis as important weight-bearing centres (when reclining in the chair) detailing the anatomy of the head and neck relationship, being aware of breathing in stressful situations, and a rather skimpy description of the pelvis (the more defined description is in a later chapter). Besides allocating these areas she invites the reader to put into practice the three action phrases she uses in her *Atlasing* work: direct the head, explore the support of the pelvis, and stay inspired. Although her directions seem physically based, she posits they have a positive impact on our mind and spirit too. I found the use of symbols indicating the three areas a good visual reference for beginners to the technique. This helped them in their task to tick off each area as they let go of the tension. A simple image was used to demonstrate the Atlantis-Occipital joint. This invites the active participation of the reader. A skilful way of showing the importance of exploration when practising the Alexander Technique! This chapter ends, like most of the others, alluding to our body as our home or 'mobile' home which retains the book's link to home furnishings and in particular, the array of chairs she introduces to us.

Examples of the Alexander Technique are cleverly woven into descriptions of furniture particularly the chairs. Her wooden manikin sits on a stool like a horse saddle and Pauls invites the reader to rock on their sit bones and discover their back muscles and feet as extra support. Snuggling into a high backed chair you can become more aware of your breathing and three dimensional rib cage. While showing the Aeron office chair she introduces an exercise to relax your eyes and suggests experimenting with standing,



sitting, and perching to keep in motion. Perhaps the most important part of this chapter is when she admits that no matter what kind of chair you have in front of you, if you respect your own human structural design you will be able to sit on the chair comfortably.

Devoted home furnishers are easily drawn into her well-being suggestions from unwinding on the shower ledge, to breathing in the snug rocking chair or working out on the pilates bench. Using the home to introduce the Alexander Technique to the general public encourages the idea that it is something you can explore in your home. Sprinkled throughout the book are quotes from well known stories such as the *Wizard of Oz* and *Goldilocks*, sports phrases, even financial comparisons. This gives the impression that there is something for everybody. The author's use of language captures her points poetically in the chapter subtitles. In the chapter entitled, "Slice of Space" she writes, "Finding options all over the place. Search the gaps to discover more space," which captures the essence of the chapter very nicely (31). She finds a place to put an old desk in the hall and compares this to becoming aware of space we may have narrowed out of or closed in our body.



In the "Reset and Reform" chapter where she talks of changing your perception of exercising she writes, "Step away, most every day. Recapture your form and a light sense of play" (42). The chapter ends in her quoting eminent teacher Marjorie L. Barstow on the benefits of having an inner smile whilst finishing with the nursery rhyme *There was a Crooked Man*. This is significant and poignant because she has a crooked smile due to her accident and she talks about the importance of loving your imperfect self. Perhaps my favourite idea is from the chapter "A Ledge of One's Own" where Pauls describes a ledge of one's own as being the best place to be alone. The ledge is in the shower where she encourages you to habitually create a moment for yourself to unwind with relaxing scrubs and sweet smelling lotions.

Witticisms are tucked into paragraphs such as 'wooden it be easier...' when writing about her wooden manikin's position or using alliterations such as "ponder, plan, pray" in the chapter "Balanced Sitting" (9). Catchy phrases such as 'motion is lotion' all help to lighten the mood of the book whilst highlighting the points she makes in each chapter. Her personal anecdotes give a human feel to the inanimate furniture



and brings a homely feel to the subject: The oak desk she found at Paddington Station, her meeting with Dr Cranze the 'body-conscious' chair designer, or her return home from hospital. Pauls also quotes her eminent teacher Marjorie Barstow that Alexander Teachers will certainly appreciate.

It is a useful ebook for Alexander Technique teachers to think 'out of the box' when explaining certain principles of the technique. The more a teacher can explain something from different points of view and adapt it to the interests of the student, the better the teaching. Using analogies as a pedagogical tool can be powerful. Not all the principles are considered in this book because the theme is around the author's own specialised work in posture, or as she calls it, *Atlasing*. This risks a false interpretation of the method, in particular, the importance of how our thoughts and ideas influence our mood and physical well-being, which was mentioned several times in the book but not emphasized enough in her examples. However, for newcomers to the technique there is enough information for them to experiment with some aspects of the technique, which could inspire their curiosity and encourage them to find out more about it. Perhaps most strikingly, Pauls does not use the common vernacular of the technique which enables the public to associate more easily with it.

Her adept use of analogies, precise explanations and light, humorous use of language make this book both practical and entertaining. An easy and pleasurable read for Alexander Technique teachers, students, and the general public. There is plenty of information to ruminate on. Her last quote from Soren Kierkegaard returns to her theme of chaos: that life is never orderly or predictable and that if we accept this reality and find a stability in ourselves and our surroundings we will be **Home**. This rounds off her book nicely with the Alexander principles of being in the present as well as maintaining and having confidence in our human design.

Atlasing—Step Away from the Chaos

By Julie Pauls, 2022

Available at Apple Books Store: <https://books.apple.com/us/book/atlasing/id6443396209>

Julia Gilroy's interest in the Alexander Technique grew naturally from her career as a professional classical and contemporary dancer. She was introduced to the technique in the dance studies program at Surrey University UK. Her dance career took her to Paris where she completed the teacher training course with Gilles Estran before training in LearningMethods with David Gorman. She now works at the health centre at PNSD (Pôle Nationale Supérieur de Danse) in Mougins, France. Julia is a member of ATI and ATI France.



Writing Research: Don't Be Afraid!

By Julie Mulvilhill, PhD

Research is different things to different people—there are as many ways to consider research as there are researchers to consider it. No matter what methods a researcher employs or what a researcher plans to accomplish, for me the research always boils down to a process of asking questions and investigating those questions. The research process can be methodical and structured and also creative. Ultimately, research is simply about being curious. Research is alive, organic, and sometimes rhizomatic or circular rather than linear. The research process is inquiry and investigation, not necessarily a quest that must result in finding an answer. In some ways, the research process is designed by the questions being asked.

The purpose of this article is to be a useful tool for people who are new to research or who have not considered themselves researchers before. A further intention is to inspire the many research processes that are in progress (even those that are as yet unrecognized) into becoming written research to be shared with the ATI and the broader AT communities. There is always research and writing assistance available from the ExChange—the presumably isolating process of writing does not have to be lonely.

The following description is one way of writing research—not THE way of writing research.

The research process can initiate with an idea or a question. As a researcher I take that idea and I look for voices and sources that surround it. Sometimes those voices include my own, and sometimes the voices are other people with specific experiences; sometimes the voices are other researchers who have written and shared their work. More than likely, the voices that may be part of an inquiry and investigation for me are going to be a combination of first-person voices (primary sources), gathered through interviews, hosted group discussions, or surveys, as well as secondary source material of other researchers that write about the topics adjacent to my research idea. I believe collecting and hearing a diversity of voices is important for offering me perspective about my research questions.

Consent and documentation are important parts of academic research. Not all research is academic, but consent and documentation are always important to pull through into my work, even when I hope the product of my research will be creative or different from traditional written research. Consent means that people give their permission to be part of the research process whether that be through interviews, surveys, or even through my own observations of them.

It is certainly permissible to speak about my general observations without consent from anyone, as an arch of a period of teaching, for example. However, if I am going to give specific anecdotes or point to experiences that are not my own, I must receive permission from the people whose experiences I am referencing, reflecting on, or sourcing as part of my work. Consent not only offers an ethical pathway for including a variety of voices in the research process but it also enhances the credibility of the written research because I have legitimate corroboration of what I am trying to say. Consent is good for the people who agree to participate in my research process and it is good for me as grounding for my written research.

There are many ways to request consent. Certainly talking and explaining what I am doing in research is akin to what I do in requesting consent in teaching—likely, something we all have experience doing as AT teachers. Still, for writing research, I think it is important to request written consent. This is an extra layer of protection for both me, as researcher, and my would-be participants because it is an added step that



allows the participant to ask further questions, recognize the seriousness with which I am approaching the research, and ensures that I utilize the participants information and discoveries in ways that we both agree. The participant should be able to hold me to the consent I have requested from them, and if I want to do something other than what we have agreed to, I would then need to come back and ask the participant for further or different consent.

For surveys and polls, consent might be as simple as checking a box at the start of the survey or poll: *I understand that by completing this survey I authorize the researcher to use my information to do XYZ.* For interviews, consent may be a written paragraph that proclaims the intention for how the interview material may be utilized in the research, signed by both the participant and the researcher. Further, it is good practice to record all research interviews, for a recorded interview (audio or video) wherein the participant may provide verbal consent as well. Social media is tricky for inviting consent because consent can easily be manufactured and manipulated in those spaces. While social media certainly can be a good forum for conducting research, I prefer to contact people I intend to interact with individually and request written consent before engaging with them on social media. If I am interested in a large population that I intend to interface with exclusively through social media, then I will build my consent into my research platform (like through a google form survey or another encrypted platform) apart from social media, and then utilize the social media to disperse the research tool. When utilizing secondary source materials like books, articles, and other produced media, citations are the ways in which I can ethically conjure those voices in my written research. The ExChange is always happy to help with questions about consent and citation!

Documentation is an important part of the research process because it allows critics, people with questions, or even future collaborators to understand the actions I take to get to the points that I make in the written research. Documentation gives my inquiry credibility and substantiates the claims that I make. Most importantly, documentation provides data for me to consult, wade in, and watch unfold as the research process evolves. Documentation includes notes from sources I have read, transcripts of interviews I have done, and journals of my own experiences as well as outcomes of surveys or polls. My intuition, deeply situated in the material data of the research, is also an important part of the research process.

I like to think of the research process as a dinner party. Who will I invite to the dinner party? I want to invite experts and people from whom I am interested in hearing personal reflections about experiences related to the research questions. I like to invite people who might support or deepen my ideas and also those who may have divergent perspectives from each other. How will they speak to each other? Do they agree? Do they disagree? Do they create more questions for me to ask? Of course, in reality I conjure this imaginary dinner party by analyzing my notes from sources I have read, transcripts of interviews I have done, and journals of my own experiences to put those voices into conversation. Through analysis, I continually deconstruct and reconstruct this dinner party, making connections and allowing new questions to emerge.

Analysis for me is a process of turning the collection of source materials of the research into a conversation. It is often messy with connections, tangents, and more questions. I often use big sheets of paper to draw on to help me organize what I am gleaning from the conversations. I draw lines that connect speakers and cite page numbers for quotes that send me back into the ideas or reveal more questions. Sometimes the analysis and the conversation can continue for a while but at some point I have to stop playing around with the ideas and describe the points that emerge as salient features of the dinner



party conversation. What is everyone talking about? What is surprising or memorable? What is glaringly left out of the conversation? The messy research PROCESS analysis must shift into a clear and clean research WRITTEN Analysis, which I will describe later. What gets written can acknowledge the messy process but is a clear description of what I determine to be the important information used to make my claims, support my ideas, or provide counter arguments for my Discussion.

A research process can often generate many research products—written, danced, photographed, collaged, etc. Leaving behind some ideas in order to pursue and present others is part of moving the research process into a research product. The great thing about a research process is that I can always go back, look more, look differently, and discover new questions to continue pushing into different research products. For writing research, I do not have to present everything all at once. From my analysis, I can choose one idea at a time to turn into written research.

Written research follows a structure that is determined by the research questions and organic flow of the research idea itself. How something is presented certainly is dependent on what it is that is being presented; we do not use golf clubs to play tennis. Still, a breakdown of academic research structure, as a baseline, might help to give me a bit of an idea of the ways in which my research might flow. Generally speaking, written research follows this structure:

- Introduction
- Methodology
- Analysis of Data
- Discussion
- Conclusion

Even when there is a departure from this ordered structure, the information of these sections must appear somewhere, somehow within the written research. Research is a creative endeavor; I often find research expression through artistic means to be an inherent part of what I do as a researcher. It is important to me that when I write my research, I feel empowered as an artist, not simply in the design of what I write but in the means-whereby that I write. I often feel that I curate my written research, quilting the voices together from my dinner party conversation in order to express the ideas that feel relevant and exciting to me to share. Written research is, for me, a performance, and the structure of how it is presented is meaningful to me both as an author and a reader.

Conclusions and Introductions are the only aspects of written research that are not part of the research process. They are elements of written research specifically. Therefore, it is effective to write those sections after writing or considering other aspects of the written research first. Conclusions and Introductions are bookends for the purposes of communicating my research—they are not accounts of the actual research, which in reality probably is ongoing with questions leading to more questions. Conclusions are distilled reflections of what I present through the research and how I might connect it to future written research or other research processes. Introductions are means of easing the reader to my questions, process, and ideas for this particular written research. I encourage writing the Introduction section last.

The Methodology section is a point-by-point accounting of what I did to accomplish my research. It is a sharing of the research process, not the findings or the content of the ideas, but of the actions I took as a researcher. Methodology sections are important for establishing the research process as an ethical set of activities to show that what I did was reasonable and humane. Sometimes a Methodology is a simple paragraph outlining procedures while other times it becomes the most exciting aspect of the research



process and what I become most interested in as I write my research. As AT teachers, we are always curious about our activities—*what* we do is interesting but so is *how* we do it! The Methodology is an explanation of *how* I did what I did in the research process.

I have described analysis in the research process and also outlined that written Analysis is a clear description of what I interpret the data to be doing together. The Analysis section of written research is where I begin to pull together the voices and allow them to interact, in order to show a purpose. The Analysis, which is often focused on the voices of others, leads directly to a Discussion of the ideas where I get to freely insert my own theories and claims, drawing all of the voices together. For the Discussion section, I often feel that I am at my most empowered as a contributing voice in the research because I get to describe my own thoughts and connections to the ideas of others. It is in the Discussion section where I can present my own claims and offer my reflections or revelations.

Personal experiences are an important part of research. Written research is often inspired because I discovered something in my own teaching that I then want to write about, for example. There are research modalities that specifically promote the examination of personal experience as research such as Auto-ethnography and Phenomenology. When considering personal experience as research, consent may not be an issue, but documentation is still important. Keeping a journal, taking photographs or video of yourself (F.M. studied himself in mirrors!), or utilizing movement analysis techniques like Laban Movement Analysis are good ways of capturing experience. I could also invite someone to interview me or ask other teachers to provide prompts for my own experimentation and reflection. Further, reading secondary sources about my questions or ideas may be an important way of grounding my research. Research invariably includes myself but sometimes my research centralizes my experience for a particular purpose. Being clear about that purpose and documenting the research process may be important for keeping me accountable to my aims within the research.

Research with a partner or group can be fun and challenging. Having people to hold me accountable to my role and to the aims of the research might be what I need in order to actually do the research. Still, collaboration can bring challenges to research processes and, more specifically, to writing the research. I encourage research partners to establish roles and expectations ahead of time and assess those expectations along the way. The collaboration is an important feature of the research and needs to be treated with respect in order for the research itself to be respected. If partners are constantly at odds with each other then there may be significant features of the research that are overlooked or twisted because of the preoccupation with the relationship. Instead, collaborators should be clear with each other so that the process can unfold in ways that are agreed upon. What roles will you each take with the writing? Will you look for consensus in the writing or can you disagree with each other? What kind of creative structuring might the writing take given that there are multiple authors?

Because research is different for every process and for every researcher, the best way to find out what to do is to dive in! I know there are many research processes out there taking place all around us in the ATI community. Writing the research happens when you find yourself inside of the research process and are excited about sharing your ideas. Being curious and asking questions is the only experience you need to embark on a research process and the ExChange is here to support you in writing from those many questions and ideas already in play.



Julie Mulvihill holds a PhD in Dance Theory and Practice from Texas Woman's University and a teaching certification in the Alexander Technique from Chesapeake Bay Alexander Studies. Julie is the editor of the Alexander Technique International's ExChange Journal. She also serves as the president of the World Dance Alliance- Americas. Julie has presented dance work and taught dance and AT in university and community programs all over the United States. She combines her Alexander Technique training with her passion for dance making and pedagogy. Julie has studied, practiced, and taught all kinds of movement in all kinds of ways with all kinds of people.

If you are interested in being an advocate for AT research please consider the Call below initiated by other members of ATI.

Call for ATI Research Working Group

ATI's mission is to: Create and sustain open means of global communication for people to discuss, apply, research, and experiment with the discoveries of F. Matthias Alexander.

ATI supports and encourages research to enhance our understanding of the Alexander Technique and its key concepts.

The objectives of the research working group:

- To share past and current research conducted and published about Alexander Technique.
- To promote and support new research about the Alexander Technique

The process that FM Alexander underwent as he uncovered what we now call the Alexander Technique was a meticulous process and can be defined as research based: he posed questions, honed his observation skills, collected data, and developed theories. Then, he analyzed the data he collected to answer his questions. This working group sees the importance of research to understand Alexander Technique, how and why it works and how to apply it in different contexts.

If these objectives are important for you as you teach the Alexander Technique, we invite you to join the Research Working Group.

Send an email to Gaby Minnes Brandes or Maria Weiss

office@weissinstitut.com

gminnesbrandes@gmail.com



In Memoriam: Yuzuru Katagiri | 片桐ユズルさんを悼む

Reflection by Robin Gilmore

Poem by Cathy Madden

Translated into Japanese by Sue Southgate

I first met Yuzurusu in 1991 after he had extended an invitation for “someone” to travel to Kyoto and stay for several months in an apartment he had rented for the purpose of being a place for the Alexander Technique. Little did we know then that the “Alexander Room” would become a homebase for the first AT training program in Japan. I returned to Kyoto twice a year, spending about two months every spring and autumn until 1999. The soil had been prepared by Yuzurusu. All that has grown, blossomed, decayed and grown again is because of Yuzurusu’s vision.

Yuzurusu was a friend and official translator of Gary Snyder, one of the Beat Poets. The title of an epic poem by Snyder conveys all the words and experiences that represent Yuzurusu:

Mountains and Rivers Without End
for Yuzuru

your voice twinkles still
words carving doorways
revealing the possible

gentling our follies
optimizing each
emerging baby synapse

dancing with wakening worlds



私が初めてユズルさんと出会ったのは1991年、彼が京都を訪れ、アレクサンダー・テクニークのための場所として借りたアパートに数か月滞在してくれる「誰か」を募集していた時でした。その時はその「アレクサンダー・ルーム」が日本での最初のATトレーニングプログラムの本拠地になるとは想像もしていませんでした。私はその後も1999年まで年に2度、春と秋にそれぞれ2か月ずつ京都で過ごしました。土壌はユズルさんが整えてくれました。そこから成長し、花開き、枯れ、再び育ったものはすべてユズルさ

んのビジョンの賜物です。

ユズルさんはビートニク詩人Gary Snyderの友人であり公式の通訳でもありました。ユズルさんを象徴するすべての言葉と体験は、Snyderによる叙事詩の題名によって表されています。

この追悼文内の美しい写真は、Bill Conableが撮影したものです。

ユズルさんへ

あなたの声は今でも煌めく
言葉が戸口を刻み
可能であるものを現わしながら

我らの愚かさを鎮め
生まれたてのシナプスを
一つずつ最大限に活かしながら

目覚めつつある世界とともに踊りながら





Overcoming the Uncomfortable: Embracing Marketing for Alexander Technique Services

By Joseph Weissenberg, PhD

Embracing a customer-centric mindset, focusing on revenue generation, perfecting sales systems, and building a strong team will position Alexander Technique International (ATI) for sustainable growth and a broader impact on individuals seeking pain relief, enhanced posture, and overall well-being. The book *Ready, Fire, Aim* (2008) by Michael Masterson offers valuable insights that ATI can leverage to promote and sell the Alexander Technique effectively. In particular, I draw inspiration from *Part Two - Stage One: Infancy* of Masterson's text and believe that the strategies described there might inspire ATI to create a comprehensive and effective marketing approach for promoting the Alexander Technique.

For this article, I will describe and analyze how Masterson's strategies can be considered in AT terms and utilized to strengthen ATI. By doing this I hope to encourage AT practitioners in their private studio businesses, as well as consider the scope of these ideas for ATI as a global organization that is an ambassador and advocate of the Technique. ATI, and you, can implement the following strategies to enhance its marketing and growth efforts.

- 1. Start Small and Test:** ATI should adopt a cautious approach when introducing the Alexander Technique to new audiences. Begin with targeted pilot programs, workshops, or introductory sessions to gauge interest and gather feedback. Testing different marketing messages, formats, and platforms allows ATI to refine its approach before scaling up.
- 2. Focus on Cash Flow:** Prioritize revenue-generating activities that sustain ATI's operations and growth. Develop income streams such as workshops, online courses, and memberships to ensure consistent cash flow. Efficient financial management enables ATI to invest in marketing, education, and outreach initiatives.
- 3. Perfect Your Sales System:** Create a clear and compelling value proposition for the Alexander Technique. Develop a structured sales process that educates potential clients about the benefits and outcomes they can expect. Emphasize how the Technique addresses specific pain points and enhances overall well-being.
- 4. Build a Strong Team:** ATI's success relies on a dedicated and skilled team of certified Alexander Technique teachers. Foster a sense of community and collaboration among teachers, providing ongoing training and support to ensure high-quality instruction and positive client experiences.
- 5. Create Scalable Systems:** Develop standardized programs and resources that can be easily replicated across different markets and audiences. Establish online platforms for virtual classes, workshops, and educational content to reach a wider audience while maintaining consistent quality.
- 6. Customer-Centric Approach:** Listen to clients' needs, feedback, and testimonials to understand their experiences and satisfaction levels. Use these insights to tailor marketing messages and improve program offerings, enhancing client retention and attracting new participants.
- 7. Strategic Alliances:** Collaborate with healthcare professionals, wellness centers, and educational institutions to increase the visibility and credibility of the Alexander Technique. Partnering with like-minded organizations can expand ATI's reach and attract diverse audiences.
- 8. Invest in Marketing:** Allocate resources to strategic marketing initiatives that highlight the unique benefits of the Alexander Technique. Utilize a mix of digital marketing, social media, content creation, and targeted advertising to raise awareness and attract potential clients.
- 9. Embrace Adaptability:** Monitor market trends and adapt ATI's offerings to meet evolving client needs. Stay open to incorporating new technologies, formats, and platforms that resonate with



modern audiences while maintaining the core principles of the Alexander Technique.

10. Track and Measure: Implement data-driven decision-making by establishing key performance indicators (KPIs) to evaluate ATI's marketing efforts and program success. Regularly review data to refine strategies, allocate resources effectively, and drive continuous improvement.

Ready, Fire, Aim by Michael Masterson is about starting and growing an entrepreneurial business. Many AT teachers do this, however unconsciously, when building a private studio practice. The same principles can apply to ATI as an organization in building awareness around the Technique and connecting potential practitioners with member teachers. I am going to use "business" as a term that reflects what ATI can do. Further, "business" can also refer to what is possible for individual AT teachers building private studio practices.

The easiest way to create profits in business is to sell the best customers a higher-level version of something they have already bought. Now, I know it is a stretch to think of the Technique in product terms because we focus so much on the means-whereby but think about products in terms of benefits of practicing AT. For private businesses as well as in considering ATI, we can learn how to identify our best customers and the products we are selling by examining our processes:

- Identify where your business is now and what specific problems, challenges, and opportunities lie ahead.
- Determine a path to get your business to the next level and then chart the next path to reach the following level.
- Continue to grow your business
- Be in charge of all this growth and profit from it.
- Surround yourself with helpful, work-loving people.
- Reduce the time you spend working.
- Swap the job you have now for the very best job in the world.

When we do the above, we learn about our clientele, and we learn about ourselves. ATI can implement this at a board and committee level, and private studio AT teachers can try these tasks and then bring their experiences to the ATI board and committees. In this way, we all learn and grow the AT community together.

CREATING MAGIC WANDS OF BUSINESS

Business needs to grow quickly because you become easily frustrated if your approach does not work. You might even think selling is not for you. Marketing is not a fixed application you use and it will work. It is about finding out who and what your client needs are and how you can help in a specific way with the least effort, and then say why this is important. The ways in which business can grow is by one or more of the following ideas:

1. Coming up with new and useful product ideas.
2. Selling those products profitably.
3. Managing processes and procedures efficiently.
4. Finding great people to do the work or work with.
5. Getting people, procedures, products, and promotions going.

The main problem when you first set out to grow your business:



You don't really know what you are doing.

So, let's examine some fundamental skills that can help when you are looking to grow your business. First, you have to know how to make a sale. Then, you have to be able to put that sales process into action. Before your business makes its first sale, it is nothing more than a set of unproven ideas that you have in mind or are spending money on. This is how it starts for most Alexander Technique teachers:

- **Main Problem:** You don't really know what you are doing.
- **Main Challenge:** Making the first profitable sale.
- **Main Opportunity:** Achieving a minimum critical mass of customers.
- **Main Skills Needed:** Selling the product.

What could that mean and are the main challenges and opportunities for ATI:

- **Main Problem: You don't really know what you are doing:**

This could apply to ATI's efforts to expand its reach and promote the Alexander Technique. ATI needs to develop a clear and effective marketing and growth strategy.

- **Main Challenge: Making the first profitable sale:**

For ATI, this could involve attracting new students or practitioners to engage with the Alexander Technique through their educational programs or workshops.

- **Main Opportunity: Achieving a minimum critical mass of customers:**

ATI can aim to grow its membership base and expand its influence within the field of the Alexander Technique, increasing its impact and reach.

- **Main Skills Needed: Selling the product:**

ATI needs individuals who are skilled at promoting and explaining the benefits of the Alexander Technique to potential students and practitioners, ultimately encouraging them to engage with ATI's offerings.

ATI can apply these fundamental business concepts to achieve growth, develop new educational resources, efficiently manage its operations, collaborate with experienced professionals, and effectively market its programs. By doing so, ATI can expand its reach and impact within the field of the Alexander Technique. When it comes to promoting Alexander Technique services, the initial hesitation is entirely normal. Many individuals find the concept of "selling" these services unfamiliar and, at times, uncomfortable. This initial discomfort can be one of the most significant marketing challenges to overcome.

As you navigate this unfamiliar territory, it is essential to recognize that these feelings are shared by many, including new practitioners and members of Alexander Technique International. When individuals are not initially comfortable with marketing their services, it can be an obstacle that requires a mindset shift. Over time, this discomfort may lead some people to believe that marketing is not aligned with their values or abilities.

The key takeaway is that these feelings are common and can be addressed. ATI and its members may face similar challenges when it comes to marketing the Alexander Technique. Recognizing and addressing this hurdle is a crucial step towards developing effective marketing strategies and embracing the promotion of this valuable practice. Let me describe in short what we need in order to sell our product:



1. Find a niche – like musicians, for example
2. Create an ebook, a workshop, articles, or valuable information to attract people
3. Show benefits and make a claim
4. Show social proof
5. Being consistent in offering services

What we need to do at this point is to discover ways in which these ideas apply to ATI. As a group, we should consider:

- Who we are and who do we serve – What is our niche?
- The benefits we sell
- Create a Website
- Use an attractive Domain
- Offer one Main Product
- Have 'goodies' to attract
- Use a free facebook group to answer questions
- Use free Zoom calls for people with specific needs and problems
- Have a sales process

What we as Alexander Technique teachers really struggle with is that we never learned to sell or many have even a dislike of selling. In order to be successful you must become first and foremost an expert at selling and offering your service. And there is only one way to do that. Invest most of your time, attention, and energy in the selling process. Successful means to earn money from your time investment of marketing your service. It does not help us to be proud of the Alexander Technique, if we do not sell it.

The priorities should be in this order

1. Selling
2. Pushing (to make more sales)
3. Improving (product and sales)
4. Organizing

The ability to stimulate sales can be really hard and challenging, and it is a lesson that comes straight away. Does your offer please your customers? The top priority is to **figure out what people want**. Whatever business you are in, it is the same everywhere. What does the customer want and can you give it to them? This is why you need a niche approach. That means, to know what the people of the niche want, describe it and make it visible for the people. Explain why your service is different, why they should come to you, and how they can benefit from what you are doing. Have the benefits of what you do in mind and people will follow.

For example, this might be an approach to attract ATI members to work on a committee:

Does promoting and selling your work make you feel uncomfortable? Do you want to see how marketing works and learn to become an independent entrepreneur where people line up to get your service, without knowing all the wiz of big marketers? How can you find simple straight forward strategies to be seen and have fun selling your service with ease? If these questions spark for you, then we would love to see you at the Communications Committee, where we work and devote our time to learning about making sales and marketing our service on the internet!

Does this sound attractive to you? If not, then two things most likely happened:



1. You do not need it.
2. I did not sell it right. Used the wrong words or did not come up with the correct language you can understand.

What does this mean for ATI? There is a direct relationship between the success of a business at any given time and the percentage of its growth and progress that are devoted to selling.

- **Coming up with new and useful product ideas:**

ATI can innovate by developing new educational resources, courses, or workshops related to the Alexander Technique to meet the evolving needs and interests of its audience.

- **Selling those products profitably:**

ATI can generate revenue by effectively marketing and selling its educational materials, courses, and memberships to teachers, practitioners, and the general public.

- **Managing processes and procedures efficiently:**

Efficient management is crucial for ATI's operations, including administrative tasks, certification processes, and member communication. Streamlining these processes can enhance the organization's effectiveness.

- **Finding great people to do the work or to work with:**

ATI can benefit from collaborating with experienced Alexander Technique teachers and practitioners to expand its reach and offer diverse perspectives to its members.

- **Getting people, procedures, products, and promotions going:**

ATI must effectively promote its offerings to attract new members, students, and practitioners. This involves creating marketing strategies, content, and campaigns to raise awareness and engagement.

As soon as you want to teach, you need to become known. And there you need a strategy, which goes along with it. Basically, you have four possibilities of selling.

1. You go out and talk to people, send articles to people, connect as much as you can with people in your niche and tell them what you have to offer.
2. You create a generic social media presence. It takes a little while, but the most important thing is consistency. You keep posting and writing about your service and the benefits.
3. You send out ads. In social media, magazines, newspapers to people you want to reach and are your perfect customer group.
4. You use affiliates, people you pay who will sell your service, which can at the beginning be very costly.

When you begin a new business, the sooner you can make the first sale, the better your chances are of success. Get your product ready enough to sell, but don't worry about perfecting it. Sell it. Then, when it sells, make it better. To improve your product, create an instant impact message that describes the chief benefit of your business. Have something to hand out to people. Look at your competition.

The sale is essential, because you never know if your idea of selling is a good one until you give it the ultimate test in the marketplace. One marketing tip for this work includes: Never unilaterally decide what you want to sell. Find out what the market wants to buy. Identify several ways to test your basic selling idea. Selling is not optional, it is essential. Focus on figuring out how to acquire customers in a way that creates cash flow.



The principles I have outlined regarding selling and marketing can certainly apply to Alexander Technique International as it seeks to promote and sell the Alexander Technique effectively. Here's how these principles can be relevant to ATI:

- **Connecting and Networking:**

ATI can benefit from connecting with individuals, organizations, and practitioners in the field of the Alexander Technique. Building relationships and networking can help ATI reach a broader audience.

- **Social Media Presence:**

Maintaining an active and consistent social media presence is crucial for ATI. It can use platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn to share information about the benefits of the Alexander Technique and its programs.

- **Targeted Advertising:**

ATI can invest in targeted advertising campaigns to reach individuals who are interested in or could benefit from the Alexander Technique. These campaigns can run on social media, search engines, or other relevant platforms.

- **Affiliate Marketing:**

While affiliate marketing may initially be costly, ATI can explore partnerships with certified Alexander Technique teachers or practitioners who can help promote ATI's services and programs to a broader audience.

- **Quick Sales and Iteration:**

ATI should focus on making its offerings available and accessible to potential students and practitioners. The key is to get people engaged with the Alexander Technique as soon as possible. Once engaged, ATI can gather feedback and make improvements based on real-world experiences.

- **Instant Impact Message:**

ATI should craft a clear and compelling message that highlights the primary benefits of the Alexander Technique. This message should resonate with potential students and practitioners and convey why they should engage with ATI.

- **Competitor Analysis:**

Understanding the competitive landscape within the Alexander Technique industry is crucial. ATI should analyze what other organizations and practitioners are offering, identify gaps, and position itself uniquely in the market.

- **Market Research:**

ATI should conduct market research to understand the needs and preferences of potential students and practitioners. This research can inform the development of programs and marketing strategies.

- **Customer Acquisition and Cash Flow:**

ATI's focus should be on acquiring new students and practitioners while ensuring positive cash flow. This means efficiently converting potential clients into paying participants in ATI's programs.

- **Market Demand:**

ATI should align its offerings with market demand. It's essential to provide what potential clients are



looking for rather than pushing products or services that may not meet their needs.

ATI can apply these principles to its marketing and growth strategies by building connections, maintaining a strong online presence, utilizing targeted advertising, exploring partnerships, and focusing on quick sales and iterative improvement. By understanding market demand and adapting to it, ATI can effectively promote the Alexander Technique to a broader audience and achieve its growth objectives.

Let me demonstrate one detail about our marketing initiatives. For creating an instant impact message, we used in the Marketing Think Tank training the hook-wants-claim strategy. Following is a three-step approach to write headlines for the example 'Leadership Training.'

The first step is the hook: get the attention of the people. Consider that things which hurt or could be lost are more compelling to read than nice outcomes. Created for the leadership niche is the example, "The costliest communication mistake for leaders." Words like mistake, pitfall, trap, pain, cost, etc. will be read ten times more than words which comfort you. Saying, "Good communication skills for leaders" is much less attractive to know and to be studied.

The second step are the wants: What do people of your niche really want? Read articles, talk to people, look at the market and write down what people want. When a leader wants to be successful in business, desires to talk and approach people with more ease, and to communicate without effort, they will not listen or be interested if you talk about easing up and letting go of tension. You need to use the trigger words, which are compelling for a leader. Therefore, it is important to listen to the wants of your prospective customers.

The third step is the claim: tell your prospective customers the outcome you consider. It is important for the customers to know what the result of your work will be. This is what we wrote as a claim for our leadership niche: This new approach will establish successful leadership skills.

Alexander Technique teachers might consider advice for reaching people who do not know about the AT. First, Do not talk about the Alexander Technique. Next, do not use Alexandrian terminology. The person reading your advertisement is only interested in receiving help for their specific problem. They want to know if what you have will help their particular need.

Having the benefits of the prospective customer in mind makes selling much easier and compelling. Here is the next step you can do for yourself:

- **Marketing Think Tank Group:**

We have established a Marketing Think Tank group where we convene monthly to brainstorm and strategize marketing approaches. You are welcome to join these meetings for insights and collaborative ideas.

- **Immediate Application:**

Start applying the marketing knowledge you acquire right away by promoting your services. Take proactive steps to communicate the value you offer to potential clients.

- **Project Group and Marketing Strategy:**

If you desire more guidance, consider joining our project group. Here, we work on specific tasks and craft a tailored marketing strategy that can benefit your individual goals.



Regarding the term “selling,” it is essential to reframe the concept. While some may associate it with pushy or unethical practices, genuine selling is about transparent and well-intentioned communication. It involves conveying what you offer in a way that is understandable and beneficial to others.

The growth of Alexander Technique International has primarily been organic. However, as ATI continues to expand, there’s a growing need for a structured marketing approach. For ATI to further its growth and mission of bringing the Alexander Technique to the world, it must adopt a visible and consistent marketing strategy. Implementing such a strategy will attract students and demand for its services.

The alternative is not sustainable. Societies that neglect marketing and fail to engage with people may face decline and eventual obsolescence within a decade. Many Alexander Technique teachers are experiencing a decline in students, and societies are witnessing a decrease in teachers. Fewer people pursue careers as Alexander Technique teachers if they cannot make a viable living from it.

Recognizing this trend five years ago, I embarked on a journey to study marketing. Sharing this knowledge with others has deepened my understanding of marketing. The process involves making your services visible, crafting a compelling message, explaining the benefits, highlighting your unique value, providing evidence, offering incentives, and consistently delivering exceptional service. In essence, it is about creating a positive and helpful communication approach that benefits both the provider and the recipient. With the modern times of computers and AI, the world needs us more than ever. People just do not know it. With a respectful and well-intended approach people will notice. Let us make the Alexander Technique and our services visible to the world.

A second article with marketing and selling tips is coming in the next ExChange issue. Join the Marketing Think Tank and be on the lookout for *The Optimum Selling Strategy* article in 2024.

Reference

Masterson, M. (2008). *Ready, Fire, Aim*. Published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Hoboken, NJ.”

Joseph Weissenberg holds a PhD in music pedagogy from the University of Art Mozarteum Salzburg as well as an MA in music and dance education. Joseph did his Alexander Technique training with Joan and Alex Murray in Urbana-Champaign 1997-98, finishing with Ruth Kilroy in Boston 2000. He did a postgraduate two year training with Rivka Cohen 2000-2001. Joseph holds certifications by AmSAT, ATVD and ATI. Joseph has created trainings for diverse populations utilizing AT and is the author of two books *Alexandertechnik und Bühnenpräsenz*, Utz Edition 2015 (German) and *Soul Room Meditation*, ebook 2022. Joseph is proud to serve ATI as the Communications Committee Co-Chair, Marketing and Social Media.



Reflections from the October 2023 ACGM

Multiple perspectives on the conference experience from Boone NC and Online



Para mí, es una bendición ser miembro de ATI y me siento muy agradecido por haber podido participar en la más reciente conferencia anual, que se llevó a cabo en Octubre del 2023. Actualmente, soy un estudiante en el programa de certificación de la Técnica de Alexander en Boston Conservatory at Berklee; mis maestros son Debi Adams, Jamee Culbertson, y Bob Lada. Por ser mi primera vez como participante de la conferencia anual, me siento tan contento de ver como conllevamos una semana llena de eventos especiales y de temas importantes con mucho aplomo y cariño. ¡Muchas gracias por una experiencia maravillosa, y espero alegremente la venida de la próxima conferencia anual!

Harold Rivas
AT Trainee, '25 | Boston, USA

The recent conference was a big learning curve for me not only in terms of the technology to negotiate, but also the English language (my mother tongue) used in a new way digitally and verbally to me as American English...however I got used to it!

It all started with my sponsors who worked with me and encouraged me to 'be active' in ATI. First, I looked at the ATI ethics document, and onwards then to Just Inclusion. I met with an immediate 'full on'





engagement with an exciting group of people, and I noticed more and more what 'Just' meant even within our emails. 'Inclusion,' was demonstrated to me and I felt completely elated that I could be myself. This was something I had not experienced in all my memberships of Health Service committees or professional memberships to date. This gave me confidence to look at the Conference and 'dive in' to the Whova experience and keep 'clicking' until the various aspects were starting to look familiar to me - so making a mistake was just a click away from finding where I started.

There was always help and most importantly for me, in Ireland time zone, someone for me to message or to receive a reply. That was really impressive - I tested the waters of sending messages and invites, especially if I recognised any names from before. The interactions made those early 'business' parts of the conference a learning experience as well as 'seeing' people in motion/real life and getting to know how ATI works. To say that I was so happy to receive replies to my invites and messages is an understatement! I thought I would send plenty and see if I got a response - I actually know how hard-working ATI members are, and the hours and hours they give voluntarily already, so I was prepared to accept a small response yet I had a 100% replies!

This has helped me enormously to feel part of something. I recognise some new ways of working, mostly in attitude to others that I found like a breath of fresh air. I experienced patience, encouragement and being listened to, and if there was a need, I was gently guided in the ways of ATI to keep things moving along as best they can. All I can say is, the learning about the organisation and how it goes about its business was positive and impressive. I was left wanting more, and to learn more, realising that participating in the conference revealed to me new skills which I can see the value in, that I felt I was starting to learn. What's not to like, about 'being active' with ATI?!

In gratitude to all (you know who you are!),

Bridget Sheeran
ATI Teaching Member | County Cork, Ireland



オンラインで参加した4つのワークショップで気づいたのは、みんなが言っていることが常にどこかでつながっているということだった。

基本にある考え方は共通していながら、ATが進化・発展していることも感じた。

マージのことを知っている人から彼女の引用を聞くのもいつもとても嬉しく思う。私にとってそれは貴重な褒美のようなものです。

アマンダ・コールの本を読んでいる最中で、そこにある「誰のために教えるのか」「発見とテクニックの切り離し」「レッスンを受ける時の受動性 / 能動性」といった点からの観察も興味深かった。

Kirika Rotermond-Nakamura

ATI Teaching Member | Remagen, Germany



Driving to the conference through the hills of North Carolina was like moving through a vivid, idyllic painting of Fall colors--including the colors you never recall in other seasons--like a shade of red that is so bright it's almost neon in the sunlight. The timing of the conference was perfect for experiencing the beauty of Fall; over and over, I witnessed our ATI members stopping to enjoy the view of the mountains and trees. The setting was a constant reminder to "pause and notice."

The most special thing about the conference was being in person with such a rare group of people. The moments of serendipity combined with organized events are the magic of being in person--a



15-minute lesson that you didn't plan with someone that you didn't know before; a personal connection in a workshop that you couldn't have otherwise found; a shared laugh or glance--those are the kinds of moments I'd been missing in the past few years of online experiences of AT. Throughout the day I looked forward to the three family mealtimes where I would be able to sit down next to other Alexander folks and talk about what we've been experiencing. I loved having the chance to sit with groups of people I'd



never met before or people I'd only seen in two dimensions and finally got to meet in person.

Also, the sense of being together in a group (in our BODIES together as a group!) was so wonderful! My eyes, my peripheral vision, and all senses were full all the time of ways of being present; I was surrounded by so many models of the kind of person I strive to be! There were several memorable "group" moments at the conference: the opening circle, which was full of mind-reading connection moments; the keynote address by Erik Bendix which included a partner exercise in listening that had my partner and me laughing until we cried, it was so much fun!; the first moment of the plenary workshop when we all had a chance to do a dance improv together; the business meetings; and the closing circle (when I got to have an impromptu lesson from Tommy Thompson!).

I attended the conference with my 2 ½-year-old daughter and my dad. It was such a warm and receptive environment for all of us. My daughter tagged along with me through most of the day and my dad got to be part of those wonderful mealtime conversations and meet some of my heroes. I took my daughter to business meetings and hung out in the corner on a couple of occasions. Everyone was so warm toward us and welcoming of her needs and parenting; I think she benefited as much as I did from the week! There were other parents and families there as well, including a 15-month-old and her mother and father. And Mary Beth Coolidge held a workshop specifically for parents, which was a great opportunity to gather and talk about AT and parenting.

The evening activities were also gems. On Tuesday evening, an impromptu jazz trio formed that was beyond description; the planned jazz duo of ATI's Ingrid Knight (one of the parents attending the conference and a gorgeous pianist) and her bandmate were then spontaneously joined by ATI's David Jernigan (a bassist) and it became such a beautiful improv between them all. The lobby was glowing--full of the rest of the ATI folks sipping wine, lounging, dancing, and happy to be together enjoying such incredible world-class jazz. There was a square dance Wednesday evening with an excellent caller and band I happen to know--I was so delighted to see the turnout--it seemed like everybody was there! We square dance on a regular basis in our corner of North Carolina, and our ATI square dance was one of the best I've attended because everybody was so ready to party and partner! My toddler and father also made it through the whole two-hour dance! I kept asking my 2-year-old if she was ready to go, and she would reply "No. MORE!" On the final evening, there was a no-talent show that was FULL of talent and humor and heart; I laughed and cried; I got to witness several of my mentor teachers and many other new friends "perform;" it was incredibly moving and wonderful to see some of the work of some of the performing artists we have in ATI.

Overall, the conference was an opportunity to witness the moment-to-moment way that people live with Alexander Technique and to see all the ways that they express it, share it, and embody it. I feel so fortunate that I was able to attend. I made new friends and strengthened colleague relationships in a way that just hasn't been possible online in the past several years. The serendipitous run-ins of being in person are truly what is special in a group of people like this because we are all experts on being present!

Bridget Esterhuizen
ATI Teaching Member | Murphy, NC



Alexander Technique International Artists! Call for Submissions

The ExChange would love to publish the work of Artists as scholarly and practice driven evidence of AT at work. Are you a photographer? Media artists? Do you have digital images of your paintings, sculptures, chalk drawings, etchings, or explorations wherein the process of creation is rooted in your practice of the Alexander Technique? The ExChange is here for you!

We are taking rolling submissions of artwork for publication as our coverart as well as significant contributions for inclusion in the ExChange journal.

Submission Requirements:

- Artwork must be original (you are the maker)
- Please submit all artwork in Jpeg or pdf format.
- Include a clarifying statement about your work (less than 500 words) in a word document
- Include a biography of yourself (about 100 words) in a word document
- Attach all items to one email with your name in the subject line and address that email to: exchange@alexandertechniqueinternational.org



ExChange: Call for Submissions

ExChange, the journal of Alexander Technique International, is calling for submissions of scholarly articles, book reviews, and creative essays.

The past nearly three years of experiences with a global pandemic have given us pause to consider our work: to reflect, reimagine, revel, and make revelations about ourselves as AT practitioners, teachers, and ambassadors. What are you learning about yourself? What are you learning about or from your work? What challenges, grounding, or buoyancy has AT provided as you move through our current world?

Have an idea that you want to send to Julie? Fill out this brief [ATI ExChange Idea Form](#) to get started.

For publication in the Summer issue please submit by February 15. For publication in the Winter issue please submit by September 15. We are accepting rolling submissions.

Submission Requirements:

- Please organize your work in a Microsoft Word document and PDF
- Title your submission with your last name and an abbreviated title (include full title in the document itself)
- Photos included need to be in jpeg format
- Send your work as attachments to the email: exchange@alexandertechniqueinternational.org

Tips for Submission:

- Submissions should be less than 6,000 words (concessions can be made on a case-by-case basis)
- Some submissions may roll over to a later issue if they need more time for processing
- Submitting early is always welcome!
- Direct questions to Julie Mulvihill, Editor of the ExChange: exchange@alexandertechniqueinternational.org

