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**Alexander  
Technique**

INTERNATIONAL

— ExChange —

MAY 2024

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## A Letter from the Editor

Dear ATI ExChange Readers:

I have just finished a four-month process choreographing *Seussical the Musical* for eighty elementary school students ages 8-11. It was the biggest single cast I have ever worked with and to make the situation feel even tighter, we were working in a school cafeteria with little to no backstage. I had to exercise some serious creative problem solving to fit that many children in the space and move them around for storytelling. It was challenging and ridiculously fun.

What struck me about the process of making *Seussical* with the children was that they each had a very clear and often competing idea of what to do. Listening to all the ideas from that many children would have ended the process quickly with 80 different and separate versions of the show. I had to figure out a way to stay student centered and an attentive listener while still moving the whole cast and show forward as a collective. We had to decide to be a group of people creating together and that we would respect the decisions that were made as emerging from what was determined to be the best for the group. I relied on the children to express to me if things were not feasible and they had to believe that they could accomplish what they were directed to do. Sound familiar?

Shifting our awareness from our single personal organism to the relational entities we become part of may require a shift in skill of our AT work, but not a shift in principle. Applying the AT to a collaborative body can perhaps feel differently and invoke certain skills or attitudes that are not applicable in personal practice, and still the fundamentals—the philosophy—of the Alexander Technique hold up. The May 2024 issue of the ExChange touches on the connectivity that comes through relationships and learning from each other.

As promised, **Joseph Weissenberg** brings us the second installment of his marketing encouragement through a discussion of *The Optimum Selling Strategy* for understanding your value and growing your business as an AT teacher. To showcase the work of the marketing education that Joseph has been offering to ATI, **Lucie Pierro** has contributed an article entitled *My Personal Experience in ATI's Marketing Strategy*. Lucie reflects on her experience utilizing the methods touched on in ATI's Marketing Think Tank and the subsequent Marketing Pilot Project, which includes a video that she made as part of the Project.

Included in this issue is an interview with **Violeta Winograd**, conducted in Spanish by **Harold Rivas Perdomo**. Violeta is the director of the Centro de Técnica Alexander in Argentina. The interview is a fantastic addition to this issue because of Violeta's commitment to Non-Violent Communication as well as her interest behaviorally with group dynamics. Further, Harold's flexibility in fluidly using both Spanish and English has made this contribution to the issue important and possible. Bringing the stories of AT teachers and practices from all over



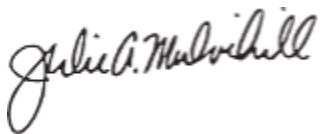
our international community is a fantastic way to get to know each other and the reaches of our work collectively. The video of the interview is available in this issue as well as a transcript written in both Spanish and English.

Perhaps most obviously a perspective on the importance of the practice of the AT within a collective is the collaboratively written poem entitled *LISTEN*. In content and given it is the evidence of a collaboration, the poem speaks to connectivity and our responsibility for each other. **Shawn Copeland** has contributed a follow up article to his work in the December 2023 issue. This series article, entitled *The Not-So-Faulty Sensory Appreciation System*, offers an in-depth accounting of our nuanced nervous systems. Understanding how the nervous system operates signifies perceiving and understanding students (with trauma) who seek the guidance of an Alexander Technique teacher and using our work not to “fix” but to share and encourage.

The last aspect of the issue is an invitation and “the scoop” on the ATI Conference in October 2024. Collaboratively written, this contribution includes a description of the site as well as the foundational philosophical bend that is being fostered for the conference via the Conference theme as well as preparatory work in order to create a thoughtful and reflective learning-together spirit for the Conference.

As always, the ExChange is available to support you on your research and writing journeys. As you will see in this issue, we take multimedia and image-based submissions in addition to written articles. It does not matter what language you speak or write, 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

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# My Personal Experience in ATI's Marketing Strategy

*By Lucie Pierro*

As a proud Teaching Member of ATI since October 2023, I joined the Communications Committee and quickly learned about the Marketing Think Tank (MTT). This group is interested in marketing ATI as well as assisting teachers in marketing the Alexander Technique and their own work. I have been a Vocal Coach and Recording Studio Owner since 2012, so as a new Alexander Technique Teacher seeking to expand my business, it seemed like a perfect fit. I felt curious about how I could market new Alexander Technique lessons and expand my reach, perhaps beyond singers and musicians. Out of respect for the work of F.M. Alexander and ATI, I joined the group to help build the right strategy to grow my work and my business, *Breathe Music*.

Joining the MTT group has been a wonderful experience for many reasons. I have enjoyed meeting and getting to know fellow ATI members; I gain so much insight from their experience. I'm grateful for the opportunity to connect with other like-minded teachers. I am also fortunate to share my knowledge in marketing. In a prior chapter of my life, I worked in marketing; building websites, e-newsletter funnels, graphic design and provided social media management to small businesses. In the MTT, I made a presentation to the group about how to use Facebook and its benefits within the world of all social media platforms. Most importantly, our time together has helped me to align my business goals with how I will expand my client base to work with more students who want to learn the Alexander Technique.

*Overall, I'm so glad that I joined this group. It's been a valuable resource for me, both personally and professionally. I would highly recommend it to anyone who is looking for a supportive and informative community of people.*

Out of the Marketing Think Tank, a new group emerged in December 2023 called the Marketing Pilot Project. Led by Dr. Joseph Weissenberg and Rosa-Luisa Rossi, I was happy to join and support their mission; to create a new website for prospective students who want to learn the Alexander Technique from ATI Teaching Members. The objective is to help the public at large, who have no knowledge of the technique or F.M. Alexander's work. Through new funnels and powerful messaging, the user can gain an interest in very basic concepts of the technique, guide their curiosity, and pique their interest enough to contact an ATI Teaching Member and sign up for lessons. Utilizing the formula of A to B is a concept that the Marketing Pilot Project group has learned about from Dr. Weissenberg's years of research in marketing strategy. In general terms, the content from the website, a social media post, or an article calls on a specific niche or problem the reader may be experiencing, acknowledges their pain point, and provides a solution that can be possible if they study and learn the skills of the Alexander Technique.



The group spent time discussing how this new website would correlate to ATI's current website, [alexandertechniqueinternational.org](http://alexandertechniqueinternational.org). We came to the agreement that each website serves a different purpose and that the current website does not provide enough information for potential students to learn about the Alexander Technique. As the new website is developed, the hope is that the two websites will refer to each other linking content to build a lasting online presence for both websites in the major search engines. The most profound goal for this project is to gain appreciation and acclaim for the work of F.M. Alexander to all.

Over the last few months, the Marketing Pilot Project has been meeting biweekly to develop content for the website. Our first assignment was to create profile videos for each participating member. As we are building connections and creating a common ground for the benefits, we have each experienced from learning and utilizing the Alexander Technique, we began to create a written profile and shared it with the group for feedback. As the creator of the video, I must take the reader on somewhat of a journey from a struggle I experienced before learning the technique, to the discovery I had once I began learning and applying the technique. We each explain in the profile video that this discovery fuels our approach for new students we work with. It is vital to acknowledge the problem, the suffering I dealt with prior to discovering the technique and to share my unique personal story. It has become apparent that we should meet the reader where they are at knowing that they may not even be aware of their problems or cause of distress. We must change the narrative from giving a reader an immediate solution, and instead share a problem they may relate to and provide an invitation to learn about a solution.

Creating profile videos was a wonderful project as we worked together to design the best biography in written form followed by practice sessions to create the video with a conversational presentation around our written work. Throughout this process, we had a wonderful exploration not only of getting to know each other but understanding how the technique helped all of us despite our different backgrounds. One teacher spoke about his efforts to find confidence when he spoke and to share stories in the most authentic way. I spoke about problems when my voice continued to strain, and how the Alexander Technique provided a baseline for growth and development, moving away from vocal tension. The key component to these meetings is that we have been deliberate in creating a process and message that not only serves us as teachers, but also the Alexander Technique in the most positive manner.

As we continue to support one another and work on our profile videos, we began working on other assignments. We created a slogan, are writing an introduction page for the website, have agreed on the best list of keywords, and are currently making tutorial videos to post on YouTube and the future website. Creating basic tutorials in video format will help interested readers learn about the work. The tutorial videos are very basic, short introductory exercises and presentations to give viewers a very basic understanding and entry point into utilizing the



technique. The goal is for the website content to be approachable and accessible to readers who are seeking our mission “to strength, stability and confidence.”

In the interest of ATI's sustainability and growth, I felt it was important to share my experience as part of the Communications Committee and specifically in the Marketing Pilot Project. In a world where education continues to evolve online, it is imperative to create collaborative spaces that foster the exchange of knowledge, innovation, and experiences as we continue to grow the work of F.M. Alexander. My hope is that other members will join us to create an online community that celebrates the experience of the Teaching Members in ATI, ultimately benefiting the students we serve. Together, we can make an impact and inspire future generations of learners.

You can see the video I created in the Marketing Pilot Project here:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WaS16i7EoZU>

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**Lucie Pierro** owns and operates, *Breathe Music*, a music space to build any new musical skill and learn the Alexander Technique, working with artists of all ages and levels. The Breathe Music Studio is ready to record demos, or professionally tracked recordings. Lucie is a vocal artist, vocal coach, and an Alexander Technique Teacher teaching vocal skills that are accessible and build joyful, vocal strength both in-person or online. As a performing artist, Lucie has worked in theater, commercials, film, and in the music business both on and off stage for over 25 years. With her bandmate and now husband, she has built a recording studio hosting a myriad of music projects which evolved into coaching professional musicians, recording artists, aspiring singers young and old.



# The Optimum Selling Strategy

*By Joseph Weissenberg, PhD*

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 six 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.

This is the second installment of my article series on marketing and the AT in conversation with Michael Masterson's book entitled *Ready, Fire, Aim* (2008). If you have not yet read the first article, I encourage you to go back to the December 2023 issue of the ExChange and catch up. That is not a requirement, however, for gleaning from this second article skills and activities that may expand your understanding of your own AT practice as well as your ideas on how these tools might support and create visibility for ATI.

The focus of this article is on what Masterson calls the "Optimum Selling Strategy". I will describe it and offer some examples of how it can be used both for private studio AT practices and for Alexander Technique International as an organization.

## Optimum Selling Strategy

Discovering the Optimum Selling Strategy (OSS) will help you to understand how to acquire new students (or members, in the case of ATI). After the first initial conversations (and perhaps lessons) with a student, ask yourself and your students: *What other products can we*



*sell?* Remember that products are benefits of the Alexander Technique. Is a benefit 'relief from pain'? Is a benefit 'confidence'? *How can we make the offer more enticing?* Imagine if you could bundle the benefit you know is happening with another you know is possible! *How can we make the advertising copy more compelling?* Think about how to do the next advertising campaign with even greater goals. *What other media sources should we test?*

## Identify The Optimum Selling Strategy

I have been teaching a course on Marketing for ATI for the past year. From that course and experience the participants and I have discovered a few nuggets of wisdom to share with you as you begin to implement these ideas on your own. As the process of the marketing strategy progresses, we found out that the biggest strength comes from working together. Together we worked on content for a profile video of an Alexander Technique teacher. Alone you would never reach the level in content and strategy performance we have now in operation. I encourage you to find collaborators to pilot your ideas with; these collaborators can be a sample of your dedicated student body or perhaps other ATI member colleagues! Ask for outside eyes to preview your content.

The optimal selling strategy for ATI is to create a unique appeal to potential students of the AT by using keywords to bring the message across to the public.

***Our mission statement is: "Empower yourself to strength, stability, and confidence."***

In this statement we have four of our keywords ready to use. For example, every content of every profile uses the transformation sentence: "The technique empowered me to ..."

And how did the Alexander Technique empower you? Think about that. This will help you to come up with several ideas of what to sell to your customers.

With this approach we also show social proof. We prove ourselves worthy to be worked with. There are so many people out there selling worthless stuff you do not need, especially with the advent and expansion of Artificial Intelligence. This is why you need to prove and give your prospective students security in your capabilities.

Given there is so much to consider around your specific interests, geography, and situation within the AT community, consider the following questions to help you get started:

1. **Where are you going to find your customers?** Discover where you need to go to find your ideal customers for your product/service.
2. **What product will you sell them first?** You need one main product you want to sell. You can have one or two offers for attracting people and a few extra informational brochures, e-books, introduction tutorials, etc.



3. **How much will you charge for it?** Look at the cost other practitioners are asking then find your own selling point. Less pricy wins for initial attention.
4. **How will you convince potential students to buy your offering?** We need to know how the student wants to spend money. Test headlines. Test copies. Test hard approaches, soft approaches. Test benefits-oriented selling. Test all that comes to mind, but only if you have a reasonable chance to improve the selling.

The mandate is to never spend a lot of money. Do at the beginning what the competition is doing. Start by imitating success; do what everyone else is doing. Find a process that gives you information about benefits of the technique that are:

- Easy to understand
- Easy to follow
- Great value
- Under \$50
- New lead product every six month

When you have established and gathered this information, then go out and talk to people. Tell everyone about the product. Let people know and talk about your product. Talk to people who are successful and find out what they are doing.

Assemble a master list of media placements – a map of where all the marketing activity in your industry is taking place. Below is an outline of five platforms you most likely recognize and use yourself. Each social media platform offers unique features, demographics, and engagement opportunities. Here's a brief overview of how to use some of the most popular platforms and strategies for effective media work:

**Facebook:** Facebook is one of the largest social media platforms with a wide range of users. Use Facebook to share updates, news, events, and multimedia content such as photos and videos. Engage with your audience through comments, likes, and shares, and respond to messages promptly. Utilize Facebook Groups to build communities around specific interests or topics related to your organization or industry. Consider using Facebook Ads to reach a larger audience and promote your content or events.

**X, formerly Twitter:** Twitter is known for its real-time updates and short-form content. Use Twitter to share quick updates, thoughts, links, and engage in conversations with your followers. Utilize hashtags to increase the visibility of your tweets and join trending discussions. Retweet relevant content from other users to build connections and increase engagement. Participate in Twitter Chats related to your industry or interests to network and share knowledge with others.



**Instagram:** Instagram is a visual (picture)-centric platform ideal for sharing photos and videos. Use Instagram to showcase your organization's culture, products, services, and behind-the-scenes moments. Create visually appealing posts and stories using filters, captions, and stickers to engage your audience. Utilize Instagram Stories to share temporary updates, polls, quizzes, and interactive content. Collaborate with influencers or partner organizations to expand your reach and engagement.

**LinkedIn:** LinkedIn is a professional networking platform focused on career development and business connections. Use LinkedIn to share industry insights, leadership articles, job openings, and company updates. Engage with your network by commenting on posts, sharing relevant content, and participating in LinkedIn Groups. Publish long-form articles or posts to establish yourself as a thoughtful leader in your field. Use LinkedIn Ads to target professionals and decision-makers with sponsored content or job postings.

**YouTube:** YouTube is the largest video-sharing platform, ideal for hosting and sharing video content. Use YouTube to create and upload educational videos, tutorials, product demos, vlogs, and promotional content. Optimize your videos for search by using relevant keywords, titles, and descriptions. Encourage viewers to like, comment, subscribe, and share your videos to increase engagement and reach. Collaborate with other creators or influencers in your industry to reach new audiences and cross-promote content.

When working with these platforms, it is essential to tailor your content and engagement strategies to the preferences and behaviors of each platform's user base. Regularly monitor analytics and metrics to track the performance of your content and adjust your approach accordingly to maximize engagement and reach. Some of these platforms also work together, for example you can cross post between Facebook and Instagram to increase visibility.

Your objective is to find out not just where your competitors are advertising, but also how often they are advertising and, if possible, how much they are spending. You want to know where the most popular locations are and what locations your competitors go back to time and time again. The best locations for the competitors will be probably the best locations for you as well. Posting often and consistently will ensure that you get visibility.

### **What product to sell first?**

After figuring out where your customers are, selecting the right product to sell to them is the next most important task. Have more than one idea ready. A successful product is one that captures the imagination of the marketplace. You cannot know whether your product will do that until you test it. But if you are prepared to test several product ideas rather than just one, you will likely increase your chances of success.

How to pick a product:

1. Find out what products are currently hot in the market, remembering that the market is where you are situated in your local community, not necessarily the wider AT world.



2. Determine if your product ideas fit that trend.
3. If it does, you are set to go. If it does not, follow steps 4 and 5.
4. Come up with your take on several hot products.
5. Improve them in some way by adding features or benefits the originals lack.

### **What products are hot?**

It is easy to find out what products are hot in any market. Look at the primary media that you have identified for the community you are in and for the AT work that interests you; take note of what products are advertised the most. It is reasonable to conclude that the most commonly sold products are the hot products. But it also helps to know how long they have been hot so you can gauge where you are in the trend. You do not want to launch your take on a hot product at a time when the market is getting tired of the original product. If possible, you want to be in at the beginning.

Once you have identified the top three to five products in the market, spend some time studying them. Make a list of their features and benefits. Compare one product to another. Try to figure out which characteristics are the most appealing. Then make a list of any shortcomings you notice.

### **Features of Product vs. Benefits of Product**

The better acquainted you become with the product the easier you see the faults. What you are looking for is a product that really excites you; an idea that feels like it might capture the market and create a tipping point buying frenzy. If it feels that way your success is not guaranteed but it does mean that you are excited about teaching and you must search for the best way to package and present the idea to the public.

Many Alexander Technique teachers have the feeling that we can teach all and everybody. With that philosophy you advertise broad and wide, having less specificity for the products that you offer. Offering to all means selling nothing. Acclimating yourself to a specific need means to be able to help because you can address the problem and the prospective student thinks you know what you are talking about. If you have a potential student who is a pianist with wrist problems, for example, they will not go to a teacher who talks about feeling good about life in general. This does not address the specific need for help for this particular potential student. The person will want to have help in their wrist while playing piano. The more you can identify your customer's specific need, the easier it is to get a person to become your student.

### **How much should you charge?**

First, find out what the competition is doing. The best is that you take the same price. For every product there is an optimal selling price. This optimal price can change during a product's life cycle. Testing a higher price is only good if you first tested against the standard price in your industry. If the response is the same with the higher price, then it is okay—maybe your quality of teaching is better suited for that individual and they are willing to pay the higher price for you.



This idea is only proved by first testing at the standard price, moving to a higher price when you find yourself with more limited time for new students with that issue, for example.

If you set the optimal selling price lower, you might get a good response from the market with more students coming your way. The challenge is to figure out how much to charge for a product that you are selling with the main purpose of bringing in new customers. If you reduce the price too much it might bring in the wrong customers. A wrong customer is someone who is not really interested in the work and will not be a sustained, repeating student. The idea of optimal pricing and discounting applies to front-end marketing only – to bringing in first-time customers who you will want to develop long term students as people who will refer others to you.

After determining your optimal selling price and bringing in new students, you will want to develop your relationship with your students as much as you can and sell them products that are similar to the products they first bought from you, but at much higher prices. It might seem like this is ruthless but let me assure you that this is strategic business practice that will help your private studio thrive. It will provoke your teaching, encourage you to know what you value about your work, and help you to receive what your offering is worth.

### **Testing your Big Idea**

The optimum selling strategy includes the media you choose to advertise in, the product you decide to sell, the pricing of the product, and the copy platform. The copy platform is the big idea behind your advertising campaign, along with all the words and images you will use to sell your product. This is the best media source, advertising campaign, and language around making your specific product visible.

The only way to figure out if your product works, wording, format, and so on is by testing it. You just must keep trying different things to find out which platform works best. You need to showcase the good value of your product. Contrast with competitors and highlight the deep value compared to the inexpensive price.

To begin with you have the idea for what you want – the purpose of the product and how people want to enjoy it. Then you have to translate those needs and desires into a structure. Finally, you have to tie it all together with a style, something that tells your prospective student just what they can expect from your offering. Conveying the “Big Idea” and stirring the emotions of your customer. You stir emotions for these reasons:

- To identify the person’s need for your product
- To uncover all secrets possible of avoidance and betrayal to oneself, debauched kinesthesia as F.M. Alexander has laid out
- To go deeper and tell what happens if no change will happen

Many Alexander Technique teachers do not want to be reminded of their own experiences in their own journeys with the AT. It is not about going into the fear or insecurity that can



be present with impending change but showing that you know the vulnerability, that you can talk about it with practicality, reliability, and perspective.

It is also not about putting the other person down, to sound like a punisher or as if the potential student is "broken." Rather, it is about appealing to the humanity of the potential student, being compassionate about what it takes to reflect and make changes. It is about showing that you know the situation and that you can support and offer practical shifts for the student. Your expertise is to help the person to empower themselves. This brings gratitude to learning the Alexander Technique and noticing all the changes that come along with practicing the technique. We need to show the consequences and how to get out of a cycle of confusion and making everything hard. This method is about respecting the Alexander Technique work, your value as a teacher and practitioner, and your potential students.

There are only four concepts you need to understand to design and direct the advertising for your private studio or AT organization.

### **THE FOUR KEY CONCEPTS EVERY MARKETING GENIUS MUST KNOW**

1. The difference between wants and needs.
2. The difference between features and benefits.
3. How to establish a unique selling proposition (USP) for your product.
4. How to sell the USP

#### **Wants and Needs:**

Needs include: air, water, food, shelter, transportation, clothing, work. Everything else are wants. But even food, clothing, transportation, shelter, are very often becoming wants. Recognize that, as an Alexander Technique teacher, you are in the want business. You have to create a want in the heart of your potential student. An advertising slogan has to sell wants in order to stimulate emotions that will help you sell your product. To create those emotions, you need to get potential student customers thinking about how your product is going to enhance their lives, the benefits they will earn.

#### **Features and Benefits:**

**List all the Features of your service:**

**List all the Benefits of your product/service:**

You want to arouse a feeling of irrational exuberance regarding your product in your prospective student customer. Write down all the benefits you can imagine. Do not stop with ordinary benefits. Deconstruct every benefit you list into deeper benefits. Do not use abstract language but be specific and targeted.



If you feel your customers are looking for success, define success in concrete terms. What exactly do they want? And then ask: Why? And then ask again: Why do they want those things? Keep going until you have described very specific benefits or desires that feel important and true to you. You can go deeper by asking *WHY?* Deconstruct every benefit you list into deeper benefits; define the words and go deeper. The benefits should be based on emotions that are tempting or taunting your customers, fantasies they dream about during the day or fears that keep them up at night.

If you can figure out how your product can provide benefits to your customers that satisfy their deeper and stronger emotions, your advertising copy will be powerful. Keep going until you have described very specific benefits or desires that feel important and true to you.

### **Establishing a Unique Selling Proposition (USP) for your product.**

You can sell your product very well by talking about its many benefits, but you will find that the most successful advertisements are those that highlight a single benefit above all the rest. When this one benefit can be presented as uniquely characteristic of your product, you have an advertising proposition that can last and last and last. This is a USP.

The distinguishing characteristics is the most important detail in your advertisement. It is about how you can distinguish your private studio business, or the ATI organization, from others.

Two things help:

1. Make it better than the competition
2. Make it *seem* better.

How can your product be a good thing for your potential student customers?

It is easier to sell a product if it really does have a substantial benefit that the competition lacks. What is your benefit that others do not have? And if you cannot make it better, you can make it feel better than other products.

To succeed in our over-communicated society, a company must create a position in the prospective student's mind. This position takes into account not only your private studio business strengths and weaknesses, but also those of your competitors. Advertising is entering an era where strategy is king. Now you must be first to get in the prospective student's mind. People normally spend one or two seconds to consider information, therefore you need to come up with a unique position. And then you have to communicate that position clearly and concisely, so it will be understood in the few moments of attention you are likely to get for it.

And finally, in selling the product you have to emphasize that USP all the time so that you eventually "dominate" that position in the hearts and minds of the marketplace. Your idea should be the first thing that people think about when considering the market. The USP has to be a benefit to the buyer. You need also to explain why that specialization benefits your potential student customers otherwise they will not be motivated to work with you.



That's what you need to consider:

- Faster Service
- Better Price
- Superior Quality
- Convenience
- Personal Service
- A Better Guarantee

A USP needs to have three characteristics:

1. The appearance of uniqueness
2. Usefulness – it needs to make sense for the customer
3. Conceptual Simplicity – it needs to be trendy, simple to explain
  - The only society that proves ...
  - The only teachers to have ...
  - The best information to have about ...
  - The only website that gives profound information about ...

The USP applies to your product. The Big Idea applies to the marketing promotion, the particular sales effort you are creating with a writer. Brainstorms for ATI:

- The only society that credits ...
- The only society that is based on ...
- The only society in our field that grows

For your private studio, you need to sustain not just a single advertisement but an entire advertising campaign. The campaign stems from the USP. Something like a slogan or quote – establish good habits. For example, ATI's approach to creating a unique selling position of AT with the public can be found at the domain [www.establishgoodhabits.com](http://www.establishgoodhabits.com). We will explain that every time a person uses the body, they will act habitually. To change habits and create better health, a person might start to think about their own personal use of the body or the action. The best thing is to take something that will interest your customer. For the teachers of the Alexander Technique this means to know what the prospective student customer needs and which client you want to serve. Like for a golfer it is how to create a good swing. For a pianist it might be to play effortlessly and with more precision. You need to find out what your target group wants, needs, and desires.

ATI as a society needs to stand for something. And this is what we want to convey to the public, that we “empower people to ...” Every person should know what our purpose is. The purpose is stated in our mission: “Empower Yourself to Strength, Stability, and Confidence!”

Most of the Alexander Technique teachers support the opinion that you cannot learn the Alexander Technique from books. But this is an old-fashioned opinion from a time before videos had been readily available as they are now. With our technological possibilities we can make the



Alexander Technique for beginners available. In this way, we become known by a larger community. We will end the hiding behind a veil of impossible tasks none can bypass. We should create a feeling of accessibility.

Most AT teachers will realize in time that they need some guidance. Advising a potential student that they need at least 20 hours to get the basic idea forms in the mind of the potential student a feeling of elaborate fraud. Every student has the right to take as many lessons as seems right. Further, potential students who are Gen Z or younger are digital natives who have an approach to learning that includes technology and accessibility at the heart of the methods. If we intend to appeal to these individuals as potential student customers, then we need to meet them with learning approaches and market to them as well.

Our work is to demystify F.M. Alexander's discovery and the Alexander Technique. Sometimes, when we talk about Alexander Technique we make it sound super fancy and hard to understand. But when people start something new and seek help, they want to feel they can actually make change. If we keep saying it is an endless journey, it might sound like a student cannot benefit unless they take tons of lessons for a really long time. That could make it seem too hard to bother trying. Our goal is to make F.M. Alexander and the Alexander Technique as simple and reachable for everyone as possible, no matter where a student starts from.

### **The Big Promise**

Brainstorm how you could improve the life of your customer. Come up with some possible claims you can make in your ads – many claims are based on the Big Idea. Determine the biggest benefit of your product and write a claim about it. So you have product features and benefits, plus one benefit and market it usefully. A Big Idea and a Big Promise expressed in a headline or, preferably in several headlines that you can test, along with numerous specific claims and the proof that they are valid, is the heart of the strategy.

If the Big Promise is big enough, you will not have any trouble coming up with dozens of claims that will excite potential students and persuade them to buy our product.

### **Checklist:**

- List of features and benefits
- Identify a rising trend in your market – best is a trend that is just beginning
- Ask yourself: “Which of my product benefits could tie into that trend?”
- Ask people to find out – test – which is your strongest benefit with your product?  
Create for each benefit a strong Big Idea
- Create several headlines
- Make a list of claims, including proof of those claims
- Get two advertisement campaigns and test them against each other
- Take the version that works best and make that the basis of all your sales and marketing efforts and constantly improve it.



- As you roll out an advertising campaign, make plans to start the process again so you can keep your selling ahead of the market.

**SELLING** must be your top priority. It must consume 80% of your interest, creativity and time spent. Most important for us as a team of ATI marketing collaborators– set business targets. The most important for us is to learn about marketing and to bring you up to the basics of marketing. The moment I learn something new, I want you to learn it too. We all have one problem. None of us knows what works. First, we need to create the Optimal Selling Strategy.

**How can we learn? By working together on the same strategy.**

**One last thing:**

**Do you know when selling becomes easy? One thing for sure is, when you know your purpose. As soon as you know your WHY, you will attract people.**

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**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.



# ATI Entrevista with Violeta Winograd

By Harold Rivas Perdomo



El 4 de Marzo, Harold tuvo la oportunidad de entrevistar a Violeta. Esta entrevista es un punto de referencia para el ExChange porque es una vista interna de una conversación entre un alumno de formación y una profesora de formación, abarcando experiencias internacionales, hecha en Español y luego traducida por ambos al Inglés. Este es justamente el tipo de intercambio que el ExChange desea fomentar y facilitar. La sabiduría que Violeta y Harold juntos comparten con nosotros resplandece con júbilo, compasión e intención.

*On March 4, Harold had the opportunity to interview Violeta. This interview is a benchmark for the ExChange because it is an inside view of a conversation between a trainee and a teacher trainer, across international experiences, conducted in Spanish and then translated by Harold and Violeta into English. This is just the kind of exchange the ExChange wants to encourage and even facilitate. The wisdom that both Violeta and Harold share with us shines through with excitement, compassion, and purpose.*



Podcast Episode  
**036. Auto-observación, qué podemos aprender de la Comunicación No Violenta? con Violeta Winograd**  
Back to Being (español)

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/2b1FxrveFv8lcSqR53HW5R?si=j15ONdR9QpSKPRX7Hr3yzzg>



Violeta Winograd | Buenos Aires, Argentina

Harold Rivas Perdomo | Boston, MA

Marzo 4, 2024

## Transcripción (ES)

Harold: Quisiera comenzar aprendiendo un poco más sobre la Técnica Alexander (TA) en Argentina. ¿En su experiencia, como fue la llegada y el recibimiento de la TA en Argentina?

Violeta:

Los dos primeros profesores argentinos que hubo eran una pareja, que se formaron en Amsterdam, Holanda, en la escuela Paul y Tessa, y volvieron cerca del año 2000. Después de tomar clases con ellos, conocí a Mariana di Paula en Uruguay, y cuando hice una experiencia de dos semanas intensivas, me fui a Holanda a formarme con Arie Jan Hoorweg. Mientras yo estaba en Holanda, Jessica y Pablo invitaron a Merran, que era la Asistente de Dirección de la escuela donde yo me estaba formando en Holanda, a abrir una escuela acá en Argentina. Merran se mudó a Argentina y en el 2006 empezó la formación acá.

Yo y otras tres profesoras que estábamos formándonos juntas de casualidad en Holanda, terminamos la formación en esa época, entre el 2005 y 2006-7, una después de la otra. Merran se vino a acá y al poquito tiempo llegué yo, recién graduada. Entonces, la escuela nació en el 2006 con un grupo de doce alumnos que se habían juntado para empezar la formación. Al poco tiempo, Merran, y los

## Translation (EN)

Harold: I'd love to begin by learning more about AT in Argentina. In your experience, how did AT arrive in Argentina and how was it received there?

Violeta:

The first two Argentine teachers were a couple who trained in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, in the Paul & Tessa school, and returned around the year 2000. After taking classes with them, I met Mariana di Paula in Uruguay; and, following a two-week intensive, I went to train in the Netherlands with Arie Jan Hoorweg. While I was there, Jessica and Pablo invited Merran Poplar, who was the Assistant Director of the school I was training in, to start a training school here in Argentina. Merran moved to Argentina and began the project here in 2006.

I, along with three teachers who trained together in the Netherlands, graduated around that time, between 2005 and 2007, one right after the other. I moved back here shortly after Merran did. And so, the school here started in 2006 with a group of twelve students who came together to begin training. A little while later, Merran and the two teachers who invited her ended up with differing criteria, and the school experienced a divide. Merran continued as the director of the



dos profesores que la habían invitado, vieron que no tenían un criterio similar, y la escuela tuvo una separación. Merran se quedó con la dirección de la escuela, con el apoyo mío y de otras dos profesoras que nos habíamos formado con ella en Holanda.

Fuimos primero su equipo de asistentes, y de ahí, Merran y yo empezamos un proyecto. Compramos un espacio para alojar a la escuela, y con eso armamos el Centro de Técnica Alexander en el 2008. Unos años más tarde, empecé a ser la asistente de la escuela, hasta que en el 2018-19, Merran decidió irse a vivir a Brasil. Yo “heredé” la escuela y pasé a ser la directora. Desde entonces, se han formado más de cincuenta profesores hasta ahora. Entiendo que es una de las escuelas que se mantiene más viva y con cantidad de alumnos bastante estable. Ahora justo un poquitito menos, pero hemos tenido entre once o doce mínimo, hasta dieciocho en algún momento. Desde el 2008, el hecho de haber creado un espacio especial para la escuela, creo que fue una de las cosas que facilitó de alguna manera la construcción de una comunidad. Y desde entonces invitamos regularmente a Jacob Sluijter que es un Holandés que vive en Estados Unidos que conoce la Comunicación No Violenta (CNV), y por quien fuimos introducidas a la CNV. Desde muy el comienzo de la escuela, la CNV también es parte de alguna manera. Lo invitamos a él a dar talleres dentro de la escuela, y hemos realizado retiros de TA y CNV desde el año 2009.

¡Yo creo que entre el impulso de Merran y mío de crear un espacio para la comunidad más allá de la escuela—es

school, counting with my support and that of two other teachers who had also trained with her in the Netherlands.

At first, we were her assisting team, and from there, Merran and I started a project. We bought a space for the school to live in, and with that we established the Centro de Técnica Alexander in 2008. A few years later, I became the assistant director of the school, until in 2018-19, Merran decided to move to Brazil. I “inherited” the school and became the director. Since then, more than fifty teachers have graduated from here. I take it this is one of the schools that remains most vibrant and with a steady number of trainees. At this moment it’s less so, but we’ve had between eleven or twelve minimum, up to eighteen at one point. Since 2008, the fact that we created a special space for the school was probably one of the things that facilitated in some way the formation of a community. And since then, we regularly invite Jacob Sluijter, a U.S.-based Dutch who knows Non-Violent Communication (NVC) and who introduced it to us. Since the school’s inception, NVC has been a part in some way. We invite him to do workshops at the school, and we’ve held AT and NVC retreats since 2009.

I think that Merran’s and my drive to create a space for the community, beyond a school—in other words—a center for Alexander Technique where more people can do workshops and give private lessons, plus the contributions of NVC, turned this community into a real festivity basically! We are quite united, we have a



decir—un centro de Técnica Alexander donde otras personas podían dar talleres y donde se podían dar clases individuales, más el aporte de la CNV, hicieron de esta comunidad básicamente una fiesta! Somos muy unidos, compartimos un Whatsapp todos juntos, donde todo el mundo participa.

En el 2014 (o un poquito después) creamos nuestra asociación y de ahí empezamos a trabajar juntos más formalmente como asociación de profesores. Este año hicimos la transición para hacernos cargo de la escuela de Buenos Aires desde la asociación porque hasta ahora la escuela seguía perteneciendo a STAT (la asociación Inglesa). Ese es nuestro proceso y entiendo que como en todos lados del mundo, el crecimiento de la técnica es a paso lento porque las clases individuales no se pueden acceder de manera masiva. Pero sí es muy bien vista la técnica acá. La gente que escuchó hablar, escuchó hablar muy bien de ella, y yo estoy muy orgullosa de la comunidad que tenemos y del trabajo que hemos hecho todos estos años.

H: ¿Se puede decir que Usted cuenta entre los pioneros de la TA en Argentina?

V:

No me auto-percibo de esa manera, primero porque yo tomé clases acá con los dos profesores que habían llegado antes que yo y que se formaron antes que yo. Y después, la primera directora de la escuela fue Merran. Entiendo que soy de las primeras, pero no me considero pionera en

Whatsapp [group chat] together, where everyone participates.

In 2014 (or a little later,) we established a teachers' association and began working together more formally as such. This year, we made the transition to be in charge of the school through the association, because until recently, the school continued to be under STAT (the English association.) This has been our process, and I take it that just like anywhere else in the world, the technique's growth is slow-paced because private lessons can't be accessed on a massive scale. But the technique has been well received here. Those who have heard of it, have heard great things about it, and I'm really proud of the community that we have and the work we've done all these years.

H: Could it be said that you stand among the pioneers of AT in Argentina?

V:

I don't perceive myself that way, primarily because I took classes with the teachers who had come before me and had trained before me. Also, the first director of the school was Merran. It's true that I am among the first ones, but I don't consider myself a pioneer in this, aside from—of course, now serving as the director of the school, and as president of the association—I play an important role.



eso, más allá de que—claro, ahora teniendo el rol de directora de la escuela, y ahora en particular, también presidente de la asociación—cumpló un rol importante. Pero no, no me auto-defino como pionera en eso.

H: Yo soy Colombiano, y como alumno de entrenamiento me interesa traer la técnica a aquellas personas que de pronto no tienen acceso por motivos económicos. ¿Cómo ha sido su experiencia con esa parte del trabajo?

V:

La verdad, no sé qué decir; mi experiencia es sorprenderme. Me sorprende que en un país como Argentina, con tantos problemas económicos y de estabilidad económica que—y ahora ni hablar, esta es una de las crisis más grandes que he vivido a lo largo de mi vida; está realmente muy difícil, nadie entiendo dónde está parado, los precios aumentan cada día y no puedes prever lo que va a pasar la semana siguiente—a mí siempre me sorprendió que acá en Argentina es como si el interés por la Técnica fuera mayor que la dificultad. Ha habido personas que han pedido becas, o subsidios del gobierno para estudiar y en general lo han recibido. Pero me parece que la mayoría de las personas hacen un esfuerzo por el interés que tienen por el trabajo. Porque no es que es una sociedad que la tiene bien fácil y que se puede dedicar cinco días a la semana (porque acá todavía la formación de profesores es de Lunes a Viernes, por tres horas y media.)

But no, I don't define myself as a pioneer in this.

H: As a Colombian trainee, I'm interested in sharing the technique with those who might not have access due to financial reasons. What's your experience been like with this aspect of the work?

V:

Honestly, I don't know what to say; my experience is to be amazed. It amazes me that, in a country like Argentina, with so much economic problems and instability—especially now, this is one of the biggest crises I've lived so far; it's really difficult, no one knows what they're doing, prices are rising every day and you can't predict what will happen the following week—it always amazes me that, here in Argentina, it's as if the interest in the Technique were greater than the difficulty. There have been people that have requested scholarship funding, or government subsidies to train and have generally received. But it seems like most people make an effort because they're interested in the work. Because it's not a society that has it real easy and can set aside five days a week (training here is still Monday–Friday, for three-and-a-half hours.)

So, it's not easy to find adults who are willing to set aside every morning for a training program. In general, people already have their profession by the time



Entonces, no es fácil encontrar adultos de entre 25 y 45 años que dispongan de todas las mañanas para una formación. La gente en general ya tiene su profesión cuando conocen la TA, acá por lo menos. Entonces, es más bien una sorpresa. No se como logramos tener esta escuela a flote en este contexto económico. Yo creo que hay algo muy valioso que es el sentido de pertenencia que se da de ser parte y de estar colectivamente cuidando de un trabajo que es tan singular, central, y significativo, que es más fuerte que el déficit económico.

Eso también me sorprende porque entiendo que a veces muchas de las cosas que se cuestionan en la comunidad Alexander son la carga horaria y económica que implica una formación. Y lo entiendo, no es una formación que sea fácil: no es “online”, ni hay cien alumnos para un profesor, entonces no puede ser muy económica porque tenés un profesor cada cuatro alumnos en un espacio físico—osea, es cara en ese sentido. Pero yo creo que el crecimiento de una escuela va por un lado. Claramente no es una facilidad acceder a esos recursos porque acá en Argentina no está, no existe. No es fácil, es un gran desafío para todos los que son parte, sobre todo los alumnos que se forman.

Entonces, me parece que el interés, el amor por el trabajo, el sentido de pertenencia gana por sobre la dificultad económica y se encuentran los recursos necesarios. En la escuela sí tenemos flexibilidad—tratamos de, en la medida de lo posible, responder con flexibilidad. Tenemos un sistema donde una parte del arancel puede pagarse en cuotas, entonces

they meet AT, at least that’s the case here. So it’s much more of a surprise. I have no idea how we manage to keep this school afloat in this economic context. I think there’s something really valuable, which is the sense of belonging that comes with being a part of this and collectively caring for a work that is so singular, central, and significant, that it’s much stronger than the economic deficit.

It also amazes me because I know that, sometimes, a lot of what is questioned in the Alexander community is the financial and time commitment that comes with training. And I get it, it’s not an easy training: it’s not online, nor are there a hundred students per teacher, so it can’t be economical because you have one teacher per four students in a physical space—in other words, it’s expensive in this way. But I think that the growth of a school goes alongside that. Clearly it’s not easy to access those resources because here in Argentina they don’t exist. It’s a real challenge for all who partake, especially for trainees.

So, I think that the interest and love for the work, and the sense of belonging overcome the financial difficulty and the necessary resources can be found. We do have flexibility in the school—as much as possible, we try to respond with flexibility. We have a system by which a part of the cost can be paid in quotes, so some trainees have six years to pay the three-year program. We design a way to make it a bit easier. But yes, it all continues to be a huge investment of time and money for those who train. And it’s evident that their



algunos alumnos tienen seis años para pagar el programa de tres. Diseñamos alguna dinámica para hacerlo un poquitito más fácil. Pero sí, todo sigue siendo una inversión grande de tiempo y dinero para todos los que se forman. Y se vé que el interés es mayor que la dificultad, básicamente creo que es eso.

H: ¿En su trabajo entrenando a estos alumnos, también incorpora la Comunicación No-Violenta (CNV)?

V:

Sí. En general, no de manera directa. Son pocas veces en el año donde hacemos algo puramente de CNV dentro de la escuela. Pero, creo que la escuela está completamente atravesada por la CNV. Está atravesada en la manera de enseñar, porque hay espacio para expresar las emociones, que por ejemplo yo no percibí habilitado en mi escuela en Holanda—yo no le iba a contar a mi director como me estaba sintiendo en ese momento. Esto es algo que acá es bastante cotidiano, hay mucha intimidad entre los alumnos también en el vínculo con los profesores. Entonces se dan conversaciones sensibles, vulnerables, hay espacio para eso.

Además, de manera indirecta, la CNV ha atravesado la comunidad de profesores. En la escuela somos un equipo de once profesores estables en este momento, e inevitablemente esto nos ha ayudado a transitar los conflictos que emergen. Yo creo que la CNV ha sido un gran soporte para enfrentar, mirar, y deshacer las posibles tensiones, rispideces o

interest is greater than the difficulty, I think that's basically it.

H: Do you also incorporate Non-Violent Communication (NVC) in your teacher-training work?

V:

I do. In general, not in a direct way. Only a few times a year we do something purely NVC within the school. But, I think the school is completely interwoven with NVC. It's interwoven in the teaching style, because there's space for expression of emotions, which I for example did not perceive in my school in the Netherlands—I wasn't going to tell my director how I was feeling in a given moment. That's something that's quite normal here, there's a lot of intimacy among the trainees, and also in their connection with the teachers. So this gives way to having sensitive, vulnerable conversations, there's room for it.

Plus, in an indirect way, NVC has woven into the teaching community. At the school, we're a team of eleven steady teachers at the moment, and this has inevitably helped us navigate conflicts that emerge. I think that NVC has been of great support to confront, examine, and undo possible tensions, asperities, or opposing



perspectivas opuestas que han surgido en todos estos años.

Entonces, no creo que sea explícito; aunque a veces hacemos alguna cosa explícita, y la persona que te digo [Jacob Sluijter] sigue siendo invitada a la escuela. Sino más bien, que es algo que está muy engranado históricamente. A la vez, yo que soy la directora de la escuela, también tengo un programa de capacitación en CNV. Hay muchos alumnos de la escuela que han participado de los talleres de CNV. Y hay participantes de los talleres de CNV que terminan haciendo la escuela. Ya no es solo por mi interés o el de unas pocas personas, son años de varias personas estando en contacto con ambas disciplinas, y reconociendo su conexión. Son prácticas muy distintas pero tienen su paradigma en común. Ambas prácticas nos permiten reconocer nuestros patrones habituales. Tienen una perspectiva similar; yo a veces digo, son como dos luces que apuntan al mismo lugar. Vienen de lugares distintos pero apuntan a una misma dirección: es reconocer que tenemos formas habituales y muchas veces limitadas de responder, ya sea psicofísicamente desde la perspectiva de la Técnica o mirando más directamente nuestro sistema de creencias. Y una y otra nos ayuda a reconocer esos sesgos limitantes de alguna manera. No soy la única ni mucho menos que ve esa conexión y que practica desde ambas perspectivas esta propuesta integrada de transformación y de reconocimiento de los hábitos de un ser humano.

Yo creo que las dos están reconociendo que hay interferencias, y que en realidad no hay que imponerse algo

perspectives that have emerged all these years.

So, I don't think it's explicit; although we sometimes do something explicit, and the person I mentioned [Jacob Sluijter] continues to visit the school. Rather, it's something that is historically engrained. Simultaneously, I, as director of the school, also have an NVC training program. There are many [AT] trainees that have participated in the NVC workshops. And there are NVC-workshop participants who end up training [in AT]. It's no longer because of my interest or that of a few people, but years worth of various people being in contact with both disciplines and acknowledging their connection. They're very distinct practices but share a common paradigm: both allow us to acknowledge our habitual patterns. They have a similar perspective; I sometimes say, they're like two lights that point to the same place. They come from distinct locations but point in the same direction: acknowledging that we have habitual and sometimes limiting ways of responding, be it psychologically from the AT perspective or looking more directly at our belief systems. And one and the other helps us recognize those limiting biases in some way. I'm not the only one nor anything like that who can see this connection and who practices, from both perspectives, this integrated proposal for transformation and recognition of a human being's habits.

I think that both are acknowledging that there are interferences, and that in reality it's not about self-imposing something new, but rather recognize what's limiting our innate capacity to be



nuevo, sino que hay que reconocer lo que está limitando nuestra capacidad innata de ser compasivos unos con otros, de expandir nuestro organismo, y que la compasión y la expansión son casi la misma cosa. Me parece que las dos traen este proceso no-directivo/no-invasivo, de auto-observación y de expansión a través de reconocimiento de lo que tiende a limitar, y no como un acto volitivo en sí mismo.

H: ¿Nos puede explicar un poquito sobre la sociocracia y la holocracia, y cómo las ha utilizado en su trabajo?

V:

Voy a dar una definición muy mía—no viene de la sociocracia, viene de la TA de hecho. Para mí, estas dos son prácticas que buscan darle soporte al organismo social. La idea es hacer una analogía entre cómo funcionamos bien internamente cuando las partes se coordinan entre sí, y la relación de eso con un organismo social: ¿cómo vamos a hacer para trabajar coherentemente, eficazmente y constructivamente como organismo social? La sociocracia y holocracia vienen a traer herramientas de soporte, estructuras y prácticas que facilitan el fluido organizacional.

Esto es un poco más nuevo en mi vida que las otras dos: la CNV la conocí en el 2008, la TA en el 2000. La sociocracia la conocí en pandemia; entró en mi vida como anillo al dedo, alineándose a un interés que si había tenido desde muy chica que tiene que ver con la dimensión social. Finalmente encontré en la TA una herramienta concreta para transformar el mundo

compassionate with each other, to expand our organism, and that compassion and expansion are basically the same thing. I think that [AT & NVC] both bring this indirect/non-invasive process of self-observation and expansion through recognition of what tends to limit, and not as a volitional act in-and-of itself.

H: Could you tell us a bit more about sociocracy and holacracy, and how you've used them in your work?

V:

I'll give a personal definition—this doesn't come from sociocracy, it actually comes from AT. For me, these are two practices that seek to offer support to the social organism. The idea is to make an analogy between how well we function internally when the parts coordinate, and the relationship of this with a social organism: How are we going to work coherently, effectively and constructively as a social organism? Sociocracy and holacracy bring tools for support, structures, and practices that facilitate the organizational flow.

This is more recent in my life than the other two: I encountered NVC in 2008, AT in 2000. I learned about sociocracy during the pandemic; it entered my life like hand in glove, aligning with a yearning I'd had since I was a child, which has to do with the social dimension. I had finally found in AT a concrete tool to transform the entire world, but from my youth my



entero, pero mi interés estaba desde mi juventud, en transformar el mundo, no en transformarme a mí. Después me di cuenta que transformarme a mí es la mejor manera de transformar el mundo. Pero ahora además, entiendo que hay herramientas que, desde mi transformación, pueden dar soporte para que haya una colaboración colectiva y saludable. Y que no se salta de manera directa de un buen uso individual a una colaboración eficaz. En mi experiencia, ese no es un puente tan directo; hay que darle ciertas pautas para que pueda suceder.

Una de las cosas que más me fascinaba de los libros de Alexander era esa especie de 'no sabemos cómo sería la sociedad y el mundo si todos cuidáramos de nuestro uso'. Y es verdad: no lo sé, no sabemos, eso no sucede. No todo el mundo cuida de su uso ni tiene como prioridad su verticalidad frente a cualquier acto de la vida. Eso no pasa en general y estamos haciendo un gran trabajo de campo desde la técnica para ampliar esa posibilidad en cada individuo. Pero creo que también existen herramientas como la sociocracia que facilitan la organización social tan anhelada, y que dejan que ese cambio individual se pueda expandir a una dimensión social.

La sociocracia también ha sido de gran soporte en la organización de la Asociación acá en Argentina, y de la Escuela. Las dos son distintas: en la Asociación somos cincuenta profesores, y en la escuela somos once, y los objetivos son bastante distintos. Pero la sociocracia ha colaborado para encontrar muchísima más claridad en cómo trabajar juntos

interest was in transforming the world, not myself. I later realized that transforming myself is the best way to transform the world. But furthermore, I know that there are tools that, from my transformation, can offer support so there is a collective and healthy collaboration. And that it doesn't jump directly from individual good use to an effective collaboration. In my experience, that's not a direct bridge; you have to give it specific guidelines so it can happen.

One of the things that fascinated me the most about Alexander's books was that kind of 'what would society and the world be like if we all took care of our use'. And it's true: I don't know, we don't know, that doesn't happen. Not everyone in the world takes care of their use nor has their verticality as a priority in front of any act in life. In general, this doesn't happen and we're making a great grass-roots effort through the Technique to expand this possibility in each individual. But I think there are also tools like sociocracy that facilitate the social organization that is so longed for, and that allow for a personal change to expand to a social dimension.

Sociocracy has also been of great help in the organization of the Association here in Argentina, and of the school. Both are distinct: we are fifty teachers in the Association, and eleven in the school, and the objectives are quite different. But sociocracy has helped us find much more clarity in how we work together (including in groups larger than fifty people,) how to structure the organization and meetings, how to make decisions as a group without having to use majority-vote (for example,)



(incluso en grupos más grandes como cincuenta personas), cómo estructurar la organización, las reuniones, como tomar decisiones entre todos, sin tener que usar (por ejemplo) la votación por mayoría, que es útil para algunos casos pero deja completamente silenciada a la minoría.

La sociocracia tiene prácticas muy concretas de toma de decisión que hacen que se favorezca la escucha de todas las individualidades. Y no por eso, a la vez, tenga que ser una organización pesada que no puede tomar decisiones porque necesita la aprobación de todo el mundo. La sociocracia promueve el equilibrio entre la autogestión horizontal y la eficacia de la organización. Entonces eso ha sido una nueva dimensión en esta comunidad que ha colaborado muchísimo con nuestro potencial. Estamos aprendiendo, es nuevo para todo el mundo, pero aun así ya se pueden ver los frutos de ese soporte. A veces me gusta pensar en la Técnica Alexander, la CNV y la Sociocracia como dimensiones anidadas. Es fundamental una coherencia interna en mi propio organismo para poder estar a gusto conmigo misma, no importa la situación. Después necesito poder comunicarme con otra persona para poder entendernos mutuamente en una situación vincular entre dos personas. Y después, con el colectivo: ¿si quiero trabajar entre diez personas, o cincuenta, o diez mil, cómo voy a seguir cuidando de mi propia coordinación y uso, e integrarlo a una participación colectiva que realmente permite trabajar en equipo? Porque los grandes cambios no se van a dar por una sola persona haciendo su cambio individual. Ese intercambio entre los demás

which is useful in some cases but leaves the minority completely silenced.

Sociocracy has very concrete practices for decision-making that render a preference for listening to all the individualities. Not because of this does it have to be a heavy organization that can't make decisions because it needs everyone's approval. Sociocracy promotes equilibrium between horizontal self-management and organizational efficacy. So this has been a new dimension in this community that has collaborated a lot with our potential. We're learning, it's new for everyone, but even so we can already see the fruits of this support. I like to think of AT, NVC, and Sociocracy as nested dimensions. An internal coherence in my own organism is fundamental to be happy with myself, no matter the situation. Then, I need to be able to communicate with another person so we can understand each other mutually in a two-person connection. And then, with the collective: if I want to work amongst ten people, or fifty, or ten thousand, how will I continue to take care of my own coordination and use, and integrate it in a collective participation that actually allows for group-work? Because big changes won't happen because of one single person making their personal change. This exchange between everyone has to happen, first through relationships, and then, perhaps, through major organizational proposals. We can achieve a much greater visibility in the work of the technique if all of us who are involved make a collective, common, change, versus if one person alone makes a move.



se tiene que dar, primero a través de vínculos, y después, quizás, a través de propuestas organizativas mayores. Es mucha más la visibilidad que podemos tener en el trabajo de la técnica si entre todos los asociados hacemos un cambio colectivo común, que si una sola persona hace una movida por sí sola.

H: ¿A parte de dirigir la escuela, tiene otros proyectos relacionados que esté emprendiendo?

V:

La escuela, desde la pandemia, habita un espacio cultural que está llevado adelante por una asociación civil que yo impulsé cuando conocí la CNV, con esta intención: cuando conocí la CNV y conecté y reconocí que la necesidad de contribuir con el bienestar de los demás era una necesidad de los seres humanos, me dio confianza para crear un espacio de colaboración y contribución. Invité a mi entorno a colectivamente generar un espacio cultural, de puertas abiertas, donde suceden un montón de cosas, además de la escuela. Eso fue en el año 2009–2010. Vino con la confianza de la individualidad y de la posibilidad del vínculo, pero no tenía idea de esta otra dimensión más estructural. La sociocracia también ha colaborado con este espacio cultural que se llama OiHoy Casa Abierta. Entonces ese es mi otro proyecto, mi otra dimensión más cercana, de la cual participo un montón.

También tenemos este retiro que se llama “Fuera de lo Conocido”, que es algo que organizamos desde que vino Jacob la primera vez en el 2009. Es un retiro en

H: Aside from directing the school, do you have any other related projects you are undertaking?

V:

Since the pandemic, the school inhabits a cultural space that is led by a civil association that I started when I encountered NVC, with this intention: when I first learned about NVC and connected and recognized that the need to contribute to the wellbeing of others has been a human need, it gave me courage to create a space for collaboration and contribution, open-doors, where all sorts of things take place, in addition to the school. That was in 2009–10. It came with the confidence of individuality and the possibility of relationship, but I had no idea of this other, more structural dimension. Sociocracy has also enhanced this cultural space called OiHoy Casa Abierta. So this is my other project, another, more close dimension, in which I participate a bunch.

We also have a retreat titled “Fuera de lo Conocido” (Out of the Known), which is something that we organized since Jacob first came in 2009. It’s a retreat during Holy Week where Merran, I, Jacob, or Mariana (who directs the school in Uruguay), Ignacio (my partner who is also a teacher), and other colleagues and teachers of Alexander, create a space for integrated



Semana Santa donde Merran, yo, Jacob, o Mariana (que es la directora de la escuela de Uruguay), Ignacio (mi compañero que también es profesor), y otros colegas y profesores de Alexander también, generamos un espacio de trabajo integral entre la CNV y la TA y que sostenemos desde entonces.

Además, el año pasado fui convocada a escribir un libro que se llama "Más Allá de los Hábitos", que habla sobre todo de la conexión entre la TA y la CNV, y presenta un poquitito los lineamientos de esa dimensión más social que trae la perspectiva de la sociocracia. Y desde la CNV, desarrollé un programa de aprendizaje que se llama, igual que el libro, "Más Allá de los Hábitos". Porque así como la TA y la comunidad de Alexander está muy embebida con la CNV, la CNV que yo comparto esta muy embebida de la TA. El programa se llama "Más Allá de los Hábitos" por la propuesta de ambas de reconocer el sesgo para poder mirar fuera de los hábitos, fuera de lo conocido.

Esos son mis mundos en este momento.

H: Uno sigue siendo alumno a lo largo de este trabajo. ¿Qué consejos le da a alguien que quiere emprender un camino nuevo en la TA?

V:

Creo que una de las cosas más valiosas de las cuales me he nutrido es de la interacción. Para mí, no hay desarrollo, crecimiento, y aprendizaje si no hay

work between NVC and AT and that we host since then.

Plus, last year I was commissioned to write a book that's titled "Más Allá de los Hábitos" (Beyond Habits), which speaks most of all about the connection between AT and NVC and presents a bit of the alignments of the more social dimension that comes from the perspective of sociocracy. And from NVC, I developed a learning program that is named the same way as the book, "Más Allá de los Hábitos". Because just as AT and the Alexander community is really embedded in NVC, the NVC that I share is really embedded in AT. The program is named that way because of the invitation from both to recognize the bias to look past our habits, outside of the known.

These are my worlds at the moment.

H: We continue to be students as we grow in this work. What advice would you offer to someone who wishes to start a new journey in AT?

V:

I think that one of the most valuable things from which I've nourished myself is interactions. For me, there is no development, growth, or learning if there are no relationships. I wouldn't want to be



vínculos. No quisiera ser una profesora que está sola en el mundo y que no tiene retroalimentación a través del intercambio con los pares, porque valoro ese ida-y-vuelta con otros seres humanos. Creo que tanto la TA como la CNV nos invitan a estar abiertos a esa interacción, o sea que no es que quiero hablar con vos para convencerte de algo—yo quiero intercambiar con vos para que nos nutramos mutuamente de la perspectiva del otro.

Yo sentí que el libro—y el libro es una de las actividades más solitarias que he hecho en mi vida—pero así y todo, me veía como en conversación. O sea, yo no pudiera haber escrito el libro si no estuviera dando clases y talleres e intercambiando con personas. Todo el tiempo la inspiración venía de la interacción. Entonces era: ‘¡Ah, esto está buenísimo para el libro!’ y me quedaba con la idea que había emergido del intercambio. De hecho, es de los lugares donde más disfruto de mi misma, en la conversación con los demás. Hasta me entero de cosas que ni sabía que pensaba, porque sucede en esa singular conexión que se da entre dos personas, o cinco o diez. Ahora, no importa que es lo que quieres hacer, mi mayor recomendación es que estés en contacto con otras personas.

Quiero invitarme y a los demás a poder pensar lo más transversalmente posible e integradamente posible. En la sociocracia se habla mucho de estructuras anidadas; de hecho, la palabra ‘holocracia’ viene de ‘holón’, que es una parte del todo y pertenece a un todo mayor. Nuestro organismo está diseñado así, pero nuestro organismo social también. Es una invitación

a teacher that is alone in the world and that doesn’t have feedback through an exchange with others, because I value the back-and-forth with other human beings. I think that both AT and NVC invite us to be open to those interactions, in other words that it’s not that I want to talk with you to convince you about something—I want to exchange with you so we can nourish each other mutually from each other’s perspective.

I felt that the book—and the book is one of the most solitary activities I’ve done in my life—but even with that, I felt as if I were in a conversation. In other words, I could not have written the book if I weren’t giving classes and workshops and exchanging with people. All the time, my inspiration came from interaction. So it was: ‘Ah, this is great for the book!’ and I would stick with the idea that had emerged from the exchange. In fact, it’s one of the spaces in which I enjoy myself the most, in conversation with others. I even learn about things I didn’t know I thought about, because it happens in that singular connection that is created between two people, or five or ten. Now, regardless of what you want to do, my biggest recommendation is to stay in touch with other people.

I want to invite myself and others to think as transversally and integrately as possible. In sociocracy there is frequent mention of nested structures; in fact, the word ‘holocracy’ comes from ‘holon’, which is a part of the whole and pertains to a greater whole. Our organism is designed this way, but our social organism as well. It’s an invitation to recognize the



a reconocer la interconectividad de todas las dimensiones de las cuales somos parte; e invitarnos a pensar transversalmente lo individual, vincular, y social como parte de un mismo todo. Para mí, esto es importante: no separar esas dimensiones.

interconnectedness of all the dimensions we live in; and an invitation to think transversally about the personal, relational, and social as part of one greater whole. For me, this is important: to not separate these dimensions.

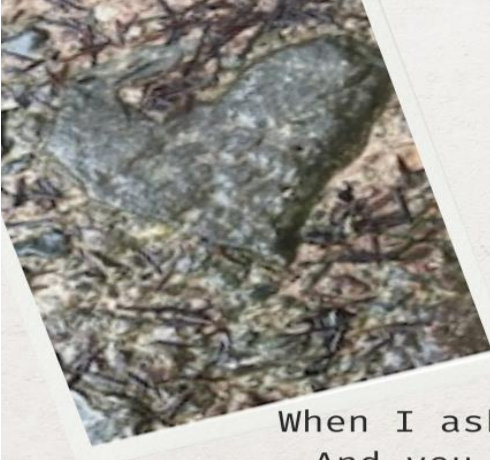
*Violeta estará participando como Invitada Especial en la Conferencia Anual 2024. Para más información sobre su trabajo, consulte su página web aquí: [Violeta Winograd](#).*

*Violeta will be serving as a guest speaker at the 2024 Annual Conference. For more information about her work, please visit her website here: [Violeta Winograd](#).*

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**Harold Rivas Perdomo** is a member of ATI's Just Inclusion working group, and is a conductor, percussionist, and emerging leader in arts administration. As a Colombian-American musician with a profound devotion to service, Harold is committed to sharing the Technique with fellow Latino/Hispanics, and within his artistic spheres. Harold is fascinated by the journey towards healing and the importance of agency in life. Harold is interested in doing research and spreading the word about AT. Harold is completing his second year in training at Boston Conservatory at Berklee (Boston, USA), studying with Debi Adams, Jamee Culbertson, and Bob Lada.





# LISTEN

When I ask you to listen to me  
And you start giving advice  
You have not done what I asked  
And I'll not know I'm being heard.

When I ask you to listen to me  
And you begin to tell me  
Why I shouldn't feel that way  
You are trampling on my feelings.

When I ask you to listen to me  
And as a response you take action  
To step in and solve my problems  
You have failed me, strange as that seems.

When you do something for me  
That I can and need to do for myself  
You weigh in on my burden and fear  
And weaken me, strange as that seems.

So, please listen, just to hear me  
Gift me your attention till I feel heard  
And if you want to talk about that  
Pause a minute, for taking it in.

Then, and if you want to talk,  
It will be your turn. I will listen to you  
I will be your witness and breathe with you  
We will be in your tangle together.

~Anonymous



# The “Not-So” Faulty Sensory Appreciation System

*By Shawn Copeland, DMA*

I mentioned in my previous article entitled “There are No Body Mapping Errors,” which was published in the December 2023 ExChange, that my learning is guided by those who come to me. In the last ten years, there has been a substantial increase in the number of students entering higher education with existing traumas. I have seen many students entering college already feeling behind in their performance abilities, and thus, fully committed to the idea that “working hard” leads to fast results. These students are often challenged or paralyzed with deep-seated beliefs of their lack of enoughness and worthiness and suffer the debilitating effects of perfectionism. All of these combine to create an environment where students perceive to have little time to slow down, heal from trauma, and develop healthy self-images and safe working boundaries.

In the last few months, I completed a certification in Somatic Trauma Therapy. This certificate was the natural evolution of my training to serve those coming to work with me. As one might expect, the training involved an extensive deep dive into current neuroscience, looking at the Polyvagal Theory as it is understood today, as well as our current understanding of neuroplasticity, and the mind-body/body-mind relationship. Understanding the structures of our nervous system and how they interface with our senses was key to this training.

Let’s begin with the basic structure of the nervous system. The central nervous system is comprised of the brain and the spinal cord. The peripheral nervous system includes the nerves branching out of the spinal cord that innervates your arms and legs. The enteric nervous system, the network of nerves through your abdomen, is sometimes referred to as the “gut brain” or “second brain.” Finally, your autonomic nervous system (ANS) controls your essential bodily functions and has two branches. The first branch is the sympathetic system which, simply stated, controls our panic responses of fight and flight. The other branch is the parasympathetic nervous system, which controls systems active when the body is in “rest and digest” mode. It (PNS) also controls our panic survival system's freeze and dissociative responses.

We can see that our brain has three areas that have evolved in function over thousands of years. The lowest part of the brain, the brain stem, is the oldest part and is commonly referred to as the reptilian brain. This area controls vital functions such as breathing, heart rate, blood pressure, locomotion, and balance, as well as sleep, arousal, and temperature regulation (to name a few). The midbrain or mammalian brain is the central area of the brain, sitting on top of the brain stem. This is the second oldest area of our brain and acts as a relay center for sensory and motor control, controls reflexes, and evaluates and regulates our safety and survival responses. The cortex, the outermost layer, is the youngest of the three areas. Here is the seat of our memory, thinking, learning, reasoning, problem-solving, emotions, consciousness, and sensory functioning. This area also plays a role in our survival responses.



The brain repeats one essential function above all other functions: ensuring our safety. It does so by taking information from three categories of sensory input: exteroception, interoception, and proprioception. Our exteroception tells us about what is happening outside of our bodies and includes the senses of sight, hearing, taste, touch, and smell. Our interoception informs us about what is happening internally and includes our chemoreceptors, baroreceptors (pressure), thermoreceptors (temperature), mechanoreceptors (motor movement), and nociceptors (threat). Our sense of belonging is also part of our interoception. Proprioception tells us the position of our bodies and limbs from mechanoreceptors in our skin, connective tissues, and muscles. Proprioception borrows information from our interoception (mechanoreceptors) and exteroception (sight, hearing) to tell us about our environment, and where we are in space.

The sensory receptors of exteroception, interoception, and proprioception are always on, sending data to our awareness. This data is what feeds our conscious and unconscious awareness. When we analyze this data and make choices based on it, we do so by comparing incoming data with our previous knowledge and our lived experiences. It is important here to make a distinction between the two systems of sensation and perception. If we are referring simply to the data from our senses, this is sensation. Perception is the interpretation and comparison of that data to our previous experiences. If I say: "I feel something touching my skin," that is a sensation. If I say: "My clothing feels soft and smooth," this is perception.

Let's come back to our essential brain function, to ensure our survival. Our brain is continuously asking "Am I safe?" This is done in both the midbrain and the cortex of the brain. The current thought in neuroscience is that the midbrain is doing this at a rate of eleven million bits of perceivable data per second. Our cortex does this at around ten to sixty bits per second, considerably slower than the midbrain. To accomplish these processes, our sensory appreciation system must be incredibly efficient.

The human body is hardwired for efficiency. Once we learn something, the brain takes steps to ensure the process happens quickly and at the lowest possible caloric cost. The way that our sensory appreciation system serves to ensure our survival is no different. It is designed to adapt and normalize. This is called Sensory Adaptation.

Our five external senses all adapt to repeated exposure (our eyes have some inherent movement qualities to prevent this action in our vision). This is hard-wired in our nervous system and ensures that we have the resources we need to attend to other stimuli in our environment. This process helps us "tune out" unnecessary information and distractions, thus preventing sensory overwhelm. It also ensures that the midbrain and cortex have the necessary information, moment by moment, to ensure our safety.

So, we come to the title of this article. Is our sensory appreciation system debauched, faulty, or unreliable? The answer is a complicated yes and no. No: our nervous system uses information from our awareness and our perception to make decisions about our safety one millisecond after another. If we are alive then it is working just as it should be. And Yes: our perception is



designed, by default, to adapt and normalize our experiences so that we can continue to pay attention to the new, novel danger: the tiger lurking in the grass just around the corner.

Sadly, FM twisted the truth about this system to use it to his advantage as a means to establish credibility and an authoritative teacher/student relationship in the teaching of the Alexander Technique. Yes: perception, thus proprioception, is faulty. It is based on the comparison of the “now” with our previous experience. But No: there is no amount of training or lessons in any technique that will change this; it is hardwired to do this by default. So, why, then, is this important in AT Teaching?

We, teachers, want to be sure that we understand the subtlety of our sensory appreciation system, and how FM manipulated truths for his advantage. Why? Because the mistruth creates an implicit bias in our teaching that influences, subtly, how we talk to our students and how they respond, subconsciously, to our teaching. Let’s come back to thinking about who our potential students are. Remember, AT is still somewhat fringe in many countries and cultures. Our clients come to us usually after exhausting modern, western medicine. They may have been told that they are imagining their condition, or that there is no solution to what they are experiencing. Often the Alexander Technique and we as teachers are their last resort.

When this person walks through our door, we have the potential to change their life. Imagine if, at this moment, we begin to share the central tenets of the Technique, and we come to this concept and say, “Yes, your awareness/senses/perception is broken, but we can fix it!” While that may be well-intentioned, telling someone that something is broken in their body, when it is functioning just as it was designed, is a subtle form of gaslighting. It is at this moment, when we want to inspire hope and change, that we may inflict further distrust and trauma.

The realities of perception and its relationship to awareness is a lesson that is best left to the student’s curiosity, discovery, and realization. We can employ a variety of experiential movements, using games, video, and mirrors, to create scenarios where the student can explore and develop their proprioception. In doing so, they will realize in their own time, that their perception may be different from reality. This is our opportunity to share with them that this system is functioning just as it is designed. This system is keeping them safe, continuously. This becomes a life-changing moment where they might realize that they are not broken, and have all the tools to continually align these two aspects of their sensory appreciation system. We can support them through this journey, ensuring them that we too are on this ever-changing, ever-evolving path. We are walking alongside them, continually renewing our perception to align with reality.

<sup>1</sup>One might wish to refer to Jean Fisher’s latest article, “Gaslighted: The experiences of Robert D. Best, an Ashley Place pupil” for an historical account of this behavior. Fisher, J. “Gaslighted: The Experiences of Robert D. Best: an Ashley Place Pupil.” Poise Journal Vol. 2, 2024.



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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.





Our guest speaker, Violeta Winograd is Chair of the South American professional body of AT Teachers and she is the director of the AT teachers' training school in Buenos Aires. Violeta will offer a Keynote Workshop and follow-on sessions about her work that can be characterized as self-management replacing organizational administrative authority.

The interview with Violeta included earlier in this issue of the ExChange is layered with more firsts. We publish an interview in Spanish, with translations and transcripts. Harold Rivas Perdomo, who conducts the interview with our guest speaker, is an ATI trainee in Boston. Violeta joins us in the ExChange through her conversation with Harold and then she will join us at Conference from South America. She shares her work in the Alexander Technique training program in Argentina, which includes NVC, holacracy, and sociocracy.

Pulled from the interview and appearing in an abridged way here is Violeta's response on incorporating NVC in her teacher-training:

*Only a few times a year we do something purely NVC within the school. But, I think the school is completely interwoven with NVC...*

*I think that both are acknowledging that there are interferences, and that in reality it's not about self-imposing something new, but rather recognizing what's limiting our innate capacity to be compassionate with each other, to expand our organism, and that compassion and expansion are basically the same thing. I think that [AT & NVC] both bring this indirect/non-invasive process of self-observation and expansion through recognition of what tends to limit, and not as a volitional act in-and-of itself.*

Harold also asked Violeta about holacracy and sociocracy. A condensed version of her response might help us to understand generally what these concepts mean, and I encourage you again back to the full interview published earlier in this issue for a more nuanced and thorough response.

*The idea is to make an analogy between how well we function internally when the parts coordinate, and the relationship of this with a social organism: How are we going to work coherently, effectively and constructively as a social organism? Sociocracy and holacracy bring tools for support, structures, and practices that facilitate the organizational flow.*

*Sociocracy has very concrete practices for decision-making that render a preference for listening to all the individualities. Not because of this does it have to be a heavy organization that can't make decisions because it needs everyone's approval. Sociocracy promotes equilibrium between horizontal self-management and organizational efficacy.*

Do these modalities cooperate with AT? Why should we be interested in NVC and sociocracy? In the interview, Violeta explains how these modalities work together for her and how she experiences them in concert within her work and perspective:



*...I like to think of AT, NVC, and Sociocracy as nested dimensions. An internal coherence in my own organism is fundamental to being happy with myself, no matter the situation. Then, I need to be able to communicate with another person so we can understand each other mutually in a two-person connection. And then, with the collective: if I want to work amongst ten people, or fifty, or ten thousand, how will I continue to take care of my own coordination and use, and integrate it in a collective participation that actually allows for group-work? Because big changes won't happen because of one single person making their personal change. This exchange between everyone has to happen, first through relationships, and then, perhaps, through major organizational proposals. We can achieve a much greater visibility in the work of the technique if all of us who are involved make a collective, common change, versus if one person alone makes a move.*

Even now in the lead up and planning, the conference is cultivating a spirit of collaboration wherein learning and change are prioritized. Using these ideas we can braid, twist, and gather our thoughts jointly through interactions and shared experiences.

Through the days of living together at Gaunts House, the Conference site, we can practice, in real-time emergent ways of learning from ourselves and the tangle we share collectively.



For those who are unable to attend, there are ways to participate in this year's Conference project. While there will be no online aspect of the Conference this year, please heed our invitation to contribute even if you cannot be there in person. Perhaps submit a poster, poem, an artwork, a mind map reflecting your way of teaching, an article or essay for display in our corridors of learning. Share your recent learning, your thoughts, hopes, concerns to help grow our vision, mission and purpose for AT, ATI,

The World. By sending a contribution, you offer stimulus, you become included and can influence those present at the Conference. We undertake to reciprocate and listen to what you contribute, folding it into the shared Conference experience.



For those who can attend, Gaunts House is a tranquil estate with an abundance of outdoor space with wild spaces, trees, and a kitchen garden. Still, it is easily accessible by bus, coach, or car from airports as well as by taking a train to the closest big town of Poole. The closest small town, Wimborne Minster, is about a 5-minute drive away and Poole is about 20 minutes away. There are several reasonable taxi companies, cars, and minibuses that can be booked ahead. Gaunts House is an educational trust and has guiding principles and a philosophy that govern the administration of the space, which align with our values as AT practitioners.

**Submit Your Annual Conference Contributions To:**

**Sharyn West**

[sharynwest@btinternet.com](mailto:sharynwest@btinternet.com)



## *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 cover art 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:exchange@alexandertechniqueinternational.org)

