

ALEXANDER TEACHERS TRAINING COURSE: 1955-59

Notes from the Alexander Training Course: 1955-59.

Kirk Rengstorff, author of these notes, had his first 7 lessons from F.M. Alexander. He was a student of Walter Carrington at Staflex House, whence the training course moved when Ashley Place became the property of Monty Alexander.

Joan and Alex Murray joined the course in 1958, on the death of Charles Neil, with whom they had previously worked from 1955.

These notes are a welcome addition to memories of their time with Walter and capture the essence of his work, both in those early days and later, when he grew into a perpetual source of renewal for the Alexander community.

Our thanks to Laurie Shawger, a young Alexander teacher without whom they would have remained unavailable. She carefully prepared the text from the original notes

We are all grateful to Kirk for allowing us to make them available to Alexander teachers in the line of descent from Alexander. These notes are happy reminders of the teaching of Walter Carrington, his most faithful follower, a model life well-lived according to Alexander's principles.

Joan and Alex. Murray,

Urbana, Illinois, July 2015.

The Teaching Technique:

Kirk Rengstorff,

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Note taking -- Listen to Walter very carefully and thoroughly (that is, watch him to see if he's saying something that may be important), and then take down accurate, thorough notes....as, when you leave England, you won't have the opportunity to hear over and over, or to ask questions, as you won't be around the training course, as Tony [Spawthorth] Little Bill [Williams] etc. always will.

Forward and Up

'Forward and Up' is not a particular position. It is a certain relation between the head and neck.

The head can be tilted back in order to 'look up' but the person can still be going 'forward and up' because he isn't 'back and down' in the bad sense. Therefore, he's necessarily forward and up. That is, the head is balanced well up on the end of the spine, the neck is not curved. The word 'forward' in this sense is not used the same way as it is when a 'looking forward, normal' position is spoken of. There it means the natural falling forward of the skull, but in this other sense it is used with the word 'up', 'forward and up' as one word, or as together, meaning the relative upness of the head to the spine which must first be achieved by letting the head go forward (in the sense of letting it fall forward slightly due to its weight) and up.

The idea of going up is analogous with the idea of a needle on a delicate instrument. When you're up you correspond to the needle being straight up on the dial; if you go down it corresponds to the needle curving over to the side proportionate to how much you pull down. No one has achieved a needle (upness) that stays straight up all of the time. It is the work of a lifetime to keep the fluctuations as small as possible.

Of course you can't always feel if you are going up or stiffening or if you are not. That's what you need teachers for at this stage. You must give the orders for what you want; this is your aim. You can't know for sure that you aren't tightening somewhere, but you must carry on giving your orders. This is your only safeguard against going wrong.

The position of the head in relation to the neck is very important to general coordination of the body. The neck serves to hold the head up, to keep it from falling forward onto the chest (it would fall forward due to jaw and forehead weight in front rather than back) Also neck muscles serve to turn the head, nod, move the head, etc. Generally it's found that people tense the neck way too much. It should be tense enough to hold up the head, no more.

The position of the head is very important to general coordination. However, attention must be paid to other parts of the body also. Even though the primary control is at the neck and head, bad habits may be developed elsewhere such as 'holding in the stomach'. These habits are or can be subconscious and can be formed even if the position of the head is alright.

The Head

The head goes forward and up from the point where it is balanced on the end of the spine. THE NECK IS NOT INCLUDED IN THIS FORWARD AND UP MOVEMENT. Too often the neck is set too far forward and the wrong idea of 'forward and up' may enhance the difficulty.

The Back

The back must be lengthened and widened. This means that the ribs must be allowed to fall into place and the shoulders must come 'apart'.

Narrowing of the back comes sometimes from stoop shouldered or round shouldered people 'trying' to straighten and hold the shoulders back. This stiffens the neck and narrows the back.

If the neck muscles are stiffened unduly, the tone of the back muscles is harmed and the back is shortened and curved in. If you think of not stiffening the neck or of 'letting it go', the head will naturally come forward due to the weight of the jaw and forehead, and it will come UP because the back muscles and whole body will be able to lengthen. In other words we 'let the head come forward and up'....it does so naturally as soon as we remove the obstacle i.e. the stiffened neck.

Forward and Up

The order and direction of 'forward and up' is the consummation of a whole process involving the use of the muscles in the back, etc. [Robin's ? in margin]
Remember that the pupil must be coming up in front as well as in back.

Hands on Chair

When putting your hands on you tend to pull your shoulders down and forward-- Instead you should bend the knees more, come forward from the hips, and think of the shoulders as being still, staying where they are. Work on this.

The latissimus dorsi is connected to the upper part of the arm, not the shoulder, and so when putting your hands on the chair and pulling (but not in the usual habitual way) apart, you activate the latissimus dorsi. Widening the back can't be fully achieved unless you undo that upper part of the arm which is connected to the latissimus dorsi.

Whispered Ah

Steps in the Whispered Ah:

1. Inhibitory order
2. 'Positive' order
3. Stimulus to smile
4. Drop lower jaw and think of it as 'going out'
5. Tip of the tongue to the top of the lower teeth (literally)
6. Do the 'ah' as if to someone across the room.
7. Close the mouth and let the lungs fill naturally with air.

Purpose of the smile in Whispered Ah

1. loosens large jaw muscles
2. prevents nostrils contracting
3. widens face
4. gets upper lip above teeth
5. psychological effects

For a while Alexander concentrated much on people's respiration-- and the practice of the whispered ah. This would bring astounding results in about a month, change of weight, complexion clearing, etc. Later he worked more on getting the primary control going and the respiration was improved indirectly. A person whose circulation is poor-- who feels the cold a lot --would do well to practice the whispered ah.

Bad breathing is always associated with stammering, asthma, and skin blemishes. These three generally arise from the same sort of nervousness-- often with ordinary cures you'll get rid of one of these things only to have one of the other two crop up.

First Lessons

The first lessons are very important because the pupil doesn't know much yet and doesn't interfere and much of the time you can get the best results you can get for a long time. When the pupil gets a little more familiar with the work he will start interfering more. If you've really gotten him up during those first lessons in the following lessons it will be easier to get results. That is why it's important for the first lessons to be given by

someone who pretty well knows what he's doing. And also that's why it's best for a beginning teacher to work with a more experienced one if possible.

Walter says pupil was much easier if F.M. had given him the initial lessons. You could feel the results in the pupil.

Series of orders for putting your hands on a pupils neck: your own head forward and up; neck free; back lengthen and widen; being careful not to collapse, leave your shoulders and your upper arms alone to lengthen your fingers; lengthen arm from the elbow; bring hand up easily from the elbow (without tightening the upper arm) as far as it goes, then you can move the upper arm if you need to to get your hand onto the neck; keep your wrist in to lengthen the fingers; lengthen between forefinger and thumb; be careful not to push the elbow out, keep it in.

When you are just learning to put your hands on, you don't want to worry about doing anything. Just practice giving your orders and putting your hands on. Once that sequence becomes established firmly as a habit you can go on to do things with your hands.

Peggy wondered about the two hollows in the back of Ted's neck. She thought they might indicate a pull in front. Walter said not to worry about them. In fact you don't want to worry about or work for anything but the lengthening and widening; you get this to the best of your ability and the rest takes care of itself in time. The best you can do for a person is to get him widening and lengthening as much as possible. It always can be said that a person could be better coordinated, but that's the best you can do for him at the time.

Sometimes you can 'trick' a pupil into getting out of a chair correctly (but how?). He will gain the experience that it can be done without stiffening etc. and he'll be more confident so that perhaps the next time you can do it without tricking him.

Especially with new students, when taking them into a chair, it is easier to take them back and off balance enough so the knees go out easily rather than have them let the knees go because if THEY let the knees go the tendency is to revert to old habits in sitting down.

Alexander would use his elbow much of the time to lift legs etc. He did this to avoid stiffening his wrist and fingers.

Some people have a tendency to sit on the upper thigh muscles rather than on the seat bones. They turn the thigh bones outwards. This narrows the hip and seat bones and they sit on the upper thigh. (Edward G. was a case of that.) [handwritten note in the margin: *CC in action*]

Canadian Ted's neck 'looked' too far forward. However, it was wrong to approach it 'directly' and try to 'take it back' for that resulted in a narrowing and a deadness of the back. In order to keep the back lengthening and widening, it was necessary to encourage the head up and slightly at an angle away to the front of the body. This is an instance of where your eyes tell you one thing is needed but when you work to principle (i.e. strive for the best L. and W.) you find you can't do what it would appear you should do.

Stammering

You don't attempt to tackle it directly. As always, go back to the Primary Control, head forward and up, etc. When this is pretty well established, in later lessons you can get the person to do whispered ahs-- then spoken ahs, all the while watching the P.C. of course. If the stammering doesn't go, then you must look for some other cause i.e. psychological, etc. Perhaps there is a problem like a bad family situation or job which must be solved to get rid of the stammering.

The top of the larynx is connected to the muscles at the back of the tongue. If the tongue is forward against the teeth, the larynx is not so easily contracted. People who curl up the tongue or tense it or do any of the number of things which contract and stiffen the muscles, also compress and pull down on the larynx. That is why it is so important to have the tongue forward and to the top of the lower teeth in the wh. ah., to prevent coming down on the larynx.

Walter says he doesn't explain much to pupils in the beginning because:

1. Alexander didn't and he ought to know
2. Pupils aren't ready to understand then--they are only apt to get wrong or preconceived ideas.
3. Only to rare pupils is it wise to explain things clearly right away.

When a pupil's back is 'in', a beginning teacher might make the mistake of trying to put his hands on the back and take it back. This can result in the pupil coming down in front. The procedure that should be adopted is this:

First get the pupil's neck free, the head going forward and up--when this is going well you can work to get the back widening and lengthening, but being very careful all the while not to interfere with the head and neck relationship you've got in the pupil.

When you put your hands on, experiment to see how much you can get with how little effort. When you feel the part undoing under your hands, see if you can lessen the tension in yourself. Use less effort still and more direction. The tendency is to start to Do to get it undone more yet. This is the danger you must avoid.

As well as giving your own orders, you want to be giving the other person's (the pupil's) orders; that is, you want to think of his head coming up out of your hands, his neck being free, his back lengthening and widening, his knees away if he is sitting. You then get the idea of getting him coordinated, you want to think of the pupil as a whole that you want to get working all together, just as you yourself are coordinated and all of a piece.

When standing, let the neck be free, don't pull under the chin, and to widen the back, come back from the ankles--as if you're going to fall back and measure your length on the floor behind you. FROM THE ANKLES....THE WHOLE BODY. Some people try to push their back back to achieve widening---but they 'come down a mile' in other words, they sacrifice their length.

You want not merely to stiffen your neck, but also to prevent yourself from doing things that will make you stiffen your neck. For instance, there are certain ways of lifting things that will make you stiffen your neck and pull down. You want your neck to be free, and you also want to think of the best way to lift the object so that it won't pull you down.

When putting your hands on pupils, you've got to forget about trying to do something to them. Think of yourself, your orders, lengthening and widening....JUST GO WELL YOURSELF....this will be transferred to the pupils. DO NOT TRY TO DO SOMETHING TO THE PUPIL. Take him up by going up yourself. Learn this right from the beginning and establish it as a habit so you'll always associate putting your hands on with going well and allowing your direction to get through. NEVER try to push or pull directly to get your result.

When using your hands, the purpose of straightening the fingers is to get a general lengthening through the whole arm.

Every experience can be helping you to build up your back. Each day your back should get stronger as you use it more and more in the right way.

Non-Doing

If you do nothing (literally) and there is no stimulus, nothing will happen. This is not what we mean by 'non-doing' or 'don't do anything'. Alexander was responding to a stimulus to sit or stand or something, and he reacted to the stimulus by STOPPING his old reactions of stiffening, pulling down, etc. Then lengthening took care of itself. *Non doing* turns into *undoing*. (italics added) As you let yourself alone you allow yourself to go up and as a result you undo generally.

If you inhibit the stiffening of the neck, the latissimus dorsi are forced to do their work. If the latissimus dorsi aren't working to hold you up, there is a pull exerted on the neck.

If the stomach is stuck out and dragging, it will exert a pull on the base of the neck in the back. A supporting hand on the stomach will help free that pull on the neck.

The neck- head relationship can't be 100% perfect unless everything else is 100% perfect. But we always work to improve the head- neck relationship. We can go to different parts of the the body, put our hands on, etc. all in order to improve this head neck relationship.

This is the gauge for what we do. A gauge the like of which remedial gym exercises and physical cultures don't have to check the results of their work.

Sensory Appreciation

Try to make obvious to people why the judgement of people with poor sensory appreciation is bad. (generally)

Basic judgement is based on manner of reaction, sensory appreciation- seeing, feeling, noticing things. If you're susceptible to emotional gusts it means that the balance of your judgement is thrown off. A person may decide his best course of action would be in a certain direction and so decides to act that way, however some stimulus comes up which evokes an emotional response like anger, and the person's decision to act in a certain way is disregarded.

A professional man trained on certain lines gets to be quite good at judging things in his particular field. The real test is how his judgement functions in other fields.

On Interviewing Pupils

Ask a pupil why he has come, get his ideas and let him know you're not interested in curing any particular ill-- only indirectly by teaching him to use himself properly.

Ask pupil if he has had any recent operations. You want to be careful not to pull apart anything that has just been sewn together.

Explain that it will perhaps take a long time, and that they shouldn't be discouraged if changes don't come about quickly.

Irene thinks it's a good idea to insist that they come every day for as long a time as they can manage. That way you give yourself a good chance of bringing about a change in the person in a reasonable time. Otherwise your reputation may suffer....if they come once a week for 9 weeks and you can't do too much in those 9 lessons, they will want to quit, tell other people, etc. You want to give yourself as much chance to get results as possible.

In a way you'll be teaching your own technique. You learn what you can from Alexander, but you necessarily put your own individual interpretation on things...you want to be careful not to claim you can do things just because Alexander did them. You are a different person and your teaching will necessarily be different from his or anyone else's. You must base your claims only on your practical experience.

You want to be sensitive to people and their reactions. You want to be able to give the pupil the benefits of this technique, and part of that job is concerned with deciding how you can get this particular person to understand and accept the ideas. If a person reacts badly, if he reacts grouchy, or with the attitude of 'this stuff doesn't make sense', it can much of the time be at least 50% the teacher's fault, for part of your job is knowing how to handle people, knowing what this particular person needs to make him understand.

A teacher is necessary for 2 main reasons. One is to explain things to the pupil, the other is to give the sensory experience of the working of the Primary Control, head forward and up, etc. with the hands. All else a teacher does is of secondary importance compared to this giving of experience through the hands.

The mirror was Alexander's external standard of what was taking place. Most people who work with a mirror get into bad habits of subjective control. A person must take a great deal of trouble (Alexander took 10 years) to learn to use a mirror properly. And even then it takes qualities of patience, keen observation, determination, etc. that are hard to find all combined in one person. Without a mirror a person will want to feel things out, so something else (i.e. a teacher's hands and objective judgement to see how we are doing) is needed.

Everyone needs someone else to check on them, even an advanced teacher, unless he is an excellent user of the mirror (which Walter says so few- no one he knows of- are).

But isn't this a good reason for learning to use the mirror???

(handwritten margin note: *N's comment*)

As a teacher you can do your pupils the most good by seeing to it that you yourself are well developed and going well. If you are, when you put your hands on someone, he will get the benefit of it without much worry on your part. The upness will be transferred through your hands. Margaret said that a child who had been developed to the point where his back was well and strong and his co-ordination was good put his hands on her and she got from him a wonderful 'up' experience....the child through his hands was allowing his good conditions to be passed on. (Of course he wasn't end gaining or worrying about being right or 'doing' anything to Margaret.)

The eyes are good indicators of what is going on inside a person. Watch for flickerings, narrowings, etc.

Also in the back, just below the base of the skull. A person should tend to be going up there. If he is, it means his ribs will be tending to be free, breathing will become slower and deeper, and conditions in general will be as good as possible. If the person is coming down onto the neck it means that general conditions aren't as good as they might be and you want to see what is causing this.

When a student is advanced to a certain point, he automatically is projecting his orders while you are working on him. It becomes a habit and the subconscious is working in your favor. It is pointless to tell a student at this stage that you are going to take him into and out of a chair....he knows it; also, if you say something like that, you're likely to interrupt the train of orders that is going on.

It is not the position of the back that is important, but the tone of the back muscles. For instance, Peggy had gotten Bill's back widening, but in the process, she lost the length. As a result, when she tried to lengthen him (by taking his neck) his back went in

slightly...but this was not bad, for that is where his back should have been....the tone was good.

To an apprehensive pupil you want to say things that will make him at ease, not worried, etc. Like 'Don't worry about if you 're right or not, it just doesn't matter' or 'You don't care if you get out of the chair or not, only don't stiffen your neck'....things like that in a voice that tells him that it really doesn't matter, and everything is 'easy go', you want to soothe away the apprehension if you can.

Inhibition

Inhibition is a positive thing. The directing of the attention and the intention in a certain way. If you have a strong decision to go in a certain direction or act in a certain way, and if this decision can be kept or stuck to and any diverting stimulus won't get a reaction, that is real inhibition. (Walter's definition)

You've got to teach pupils to inhibit: you've got to change their habits. You can get them going well and relieve pain, etc. but when they act in their old habitual ways all will go down again. If you don't change their habits no permanent changes can be secured.

Inhibition is a very difficult thing for a pupil to achieve and you can't expect him in the beginning to be able to inhibit to very strong stimuli. You have to build slowly, gradually to the point where he can inhibit. Start out with simple things, i.e. the inhibition of getting out of a chair.

Inhibition is withholding consent to react to a stimulus. Some people think of "doing" something when they inhibit--they connect inhibition with some kind of muscular activity-- this of course is not inhibition. The teacher, by observing the pupil's Primary Control, can detect such a wrong conception....if the pupil does something, it will show up in the working of the Primary Control, i.e. something will go wrong. If the pupil is really inhibiting, the P.C. will continue to work at top level.

When you see a pupil is not inhibiting, it isn't always effective to tell him so. You must experiment to see if that direct method works on him or not. If it doesn't, you must make him inhibit indirectly.

Work on your inhibiting so well that you don't stop breathing when you get out of a chair.

If a person is in pain, you work to get rid of the pain because he can't be expected to inhibit when in pain.

Approach work with an EXPERIMENTAL ATTITUDE. Try things to see what will happen. Along with this you need an attitude of not being afraid to be wrong. When

teaching you want to always maintain the EXPERIMENTAL ATTITUDE. Always proceed with a watchful attitude to look for consequences expected or otherwise. Always be willing to reject an idea, even if it's an old and cherished one, for a new and better one if the facts point to it and show it to be true. In other words, always PROGRESS-- Never get 'set' in your ideas-- be open to accepting new evidence.

Thrombosis of lower leg: you can't be as certain of how soon you can get relief and results as you can with thrombosis of the neck or back, this is because you work through the primary control and the legs are relatively far away and won't be affected as soon as the neck or back which are changed relatively quickly.

The muscles that clamp the jaw together are connected with the back muscles. So often if a person is tightening and 'pulling back' his jaw you can do much to undo that by getting the back to widen. People who do tighten the jaw thus impair their backs. See that the pupil's jaw is undone. If he is tightening in the jaw, you can't undo the back.

Is Jaw Free? test: put finger under chin and have a person talk. The hollow should remain soft-- if it gets hard, it indicates a contraction and stiffening of jaw muscles. These muscles should be free and the jaw should be thought forward.

Putting your hands on people: generally put the front hand over the intercostal arch: here you can, with your fingers, encourage the ribs to be free. Place the the back hand just below the shoulder blades-- here you can best feel the widening from the freeing of the ribs.

One way to get very quick results with a pupil is to get him down on the table and get him free and undone, etc. then get him up and get him to do work in the chair, making use of these good conditions you've just achieved on the table, then put him back on the table to undo him again, then get him up to make use of the freeness again.....this method makes a pupil 'feel' much different relatively soon.

When undoing a pupil's legs (thighs), eventually you want to take them out and away...But before they can go 'away' they must be undone. With your hands you encourage them out from the body and slightly in towards the inner part of the legs...this is because the thigh bone is slanted in that way, from the outside of the hip to the inside of the knee...then when you've got that undone, you can take the knees away from each other.

Two Aspects of Primary Control

1. It is the means whereby one can regulate the standard of functioning. The digestion, circulation and most obviously, the breathing are changed for the better.
2. Criterion for judging the standard of functioning. This is (one of) the most important things a teacher must know, i.e. how to read the P.C. accurately to see if a pupil is going up or coming down, and thus what his general standard of functioning is, good or bad, or how it tends to be.

The primary control is a guide to the general functioning. If it is 'going well', it means that the general functioning is good. Alexander learned not only to use it as a gauge (via experimentation) but also he evolved a technique whereby the use of the Primary Control was brought under conscious control.

We've interfered with the Primary Control. The result is that sensation dominates the thinking processes. So you may want to do one thing but a stimulus will arise which provokes a feeling response which is the opposite of what you intended to do. Thus your goal is lost because of the dominance of feeling over reason.

Interference with the Primary Control causes faulty functioning, this in turn irritates and distracts a person as fatigue or pain will do. It distracts from the higher thought processes. When coordination is improved and functioning is working better, this interference is freed and the person can think and respond more rationally and reasonably.

You can't always tell (even Alexander couldn't 100% of the time) all the time if you're going up or not. Only to a certain degree. But it's much easier to tell if someone else, say a pupil, is going well than it is to tell about yourself.

Activity (to a certain extent) is good--- gets vital processes going. One can, by being inactive for too long a time, get into a bad state of collapse or lassitude and general lack of good functioning. Alexander had one pupil whom he wrapped in very warm clothes and sent out for long fast walks to 'get his functioning going'.

Your feeling won't always tell you when you have been inactive too long, but your reason should tell you. If you've been in one position for a long time, get up and move about or you'll tend to get fixed, stagnate, your functioning will be less active and, of course, you'll go down.

Part of the teacher's job is to keep pupils entertained, happy, cheerful, (generally this is so) for a pupil will pull down if he's in an unhappy or bad frame of mind. You must make him enjoy coming for lessons. In some cases though, the best way to get results would

be to be stern or tough--- but even in those cases, it might only be valid some of the time---not as a steady diet.

When there's a structural defect or wrong, you can't expect top results right away. Besides the thought and direction of the pupil, there is needed the physical muscles and so on to achieve the widening and lengthening. Until you've built for this, your results can't show as much as for more developed pupils.

Don't expect too much right away. Always work toward the ideal: the most widening and lengthening possible--- but don't expect to get it right away because you won't. You can pretty well expect not to get very good results right away-- but you keep working on the lines of always trying to get more and more lengthening and widening, and if the technique is valid, finally one day you will be getting very good results with that pupil.

Look up from your teaching now and then....just look out at something else. This will stop you from thinking about the pupil and you can get a chance to see if you've been pulling down while teaching. It gives you a chance to see if you've been end-gaining and if so, to start to projecting your orders better, etc.

Is the neck free? Can you move the pupil's head without moving his shoulders and body? The head must move independently of the body.

Don't worry about whether the pupil looks symmetrical. Just work to get the lengthening and the widening.

- 1) Get the head going up
- 2) Get the back widening
- 3) Free the ribs and chest to improve the breathing

If you can't do these things you must look to see where the obstruction is and work to free it. You aren't striving for symmetry. What you are striving for is as good a result as you can get with the person at the present time. You aren't working for anything special except the free neck, the length, and the width. As you repeatedly get this experience, new things will be building up. But your real concern is getting each time the best length and width as you can.

Pupil in Chair: Having his length going, take him back in the chair. You're getting free poise of the head in connection with widening of the back.
Don't keep pupil sitting so long that he gets fixed.

Hands on neck: Do not grip with your fingers. What is important is that you get your palm firmly on. This takes care of freeing your wrist. You needn't devote your thought to keeping your wrist in, just get your palm firmly on and get your own direction going and go back and lengthen your arm.

One can get results by using much of his own energy on pulled down, heavy types, but at the teacher's expense-- it's very draining.

A turn on the table makes subsequent chair work better... (to be checked)

Lengthening your arms: When you have your hands on a chair or a person and you want to lengthen your arms, don't try to push them out from your body or think of lengthening that way. Instead, come back with your whole body away from your hands and if you're going up, this will lengthen your arms.

Do not 'lift' a pupil with your arms. You must be going well yourself, this is the only way to transfer upness to pupils. If you did lift with your arms it would pull you down in front and thus your pupil also. Also your hands would tighten and fix. That's why your back and length and width must go in your lifting. In all you lift in everyday life as well as teaching.

When you approach a person you want first to put your hand on to see if he's going up or pulling down. Then you take his head forward and up if you can, being careful that he doesn't fix or tighten in the chest and also getting the back and lengthening and widening.

If you can't take him up, you must observe to see where the trouble originates. (If he is holding anywhere, even in the toes, it will show up in his neck as he won't be going up so well.) and try to get that part undone to get him going up.

The first concern when working on someone is the head, neck, back relationship, the freeness, upness, etc. After you've achieved this you observe where he's fixed and perhaps you attack the part directly, perhaps not. The source of the trouble may be somewhere else, for example a bad pull in the region between the shoulders may have to be attacked by undoing the chest.

With your hands on someone you want to, while keeping your lengthening and widening going, COME BACK. But this is almost no more than an order, a thought, an intention. The purpose of it is to keep you from coming forward and down. If you've decided you want to go back and have the intention and thought of doing so, it isn't likely that you'll come forward.

When working you put your hands on the person and GO UP YOURSELF. This is your main concern. You don't learn which pulls pull what parts. You just keep an open mind and observe what the conditions are the case you're working on.

When working on pupils, it's good if your arms seem to be 'detached' from your body. You want a freeness, looseness, an easy lengthening and therefore freedom.

"It is essential at the outset of re-education to bring about the relaxation of the unduly rigid parts of the muscular mechanisms in order to secure the correct use of the inadequately employed and wrongly co-ordinated parts." MSI 95b- 96t

An unexpected or unusual experience may make a pupil let go.

Pulling on a leg raises the upper back.

Alexander would have pupils lean way over to one side , just to get them out of their habitual usual position.

Be careful to get lengthening and widening. You might get one at the expense of the other...what you want is as much of both as possible.

When trying to undo a specific part, you are doing it to free the neck more-- so you must watch the neck so's the pupil won't come down. Don't get all engrossed in undoing the specific part to the detriment of the neck.

Shoulders should go back and down. Most people pull their shoulders forward and down and try to compensate for this by directly putting them up and back. Instead, what you want to get is the shoulders going down and back and away and out.

Do not take the shoulders up, but take them down and back. The muscles of the upper part of the arm must not be tight. Take shoulder out-- think of pupil's upper arm as dropping from the shoulder. Do not lift it up. Take the shoulder out and away from the body and then turn the shoulder back and down, using your backhand to take the shoulder blade 'into' the back. Sometimes a person is so pulling in in front that you must take the shoulder up quite a bit first because it's pulled down so far.

Tightening of the thighs causes pulling in of the lower back, not vice versa.

Taking a person out of a chair

When taking a person out of a chair, you may want to actually take him back first, but not necessarily. Two things are necessary when taking a pupil up out of a chair.

1. Pupil must project his head up and his back back and widening.
2. Teacher must see to it that the pupil's head is forward and up and his back widening and lengthening before he attempts to take him up out of the chair. If taking him back slightly first serves this end, then do so.

Ribs and breathing

Alexander used to tell people to let the ribs contract in order to counteract their tendency to try to hold the widening once they have it. In other words, the pupil after he has inhaled will try to keep that widened state of the back...what the teacher must do is see to it that he understands that he should NOT try to hold it, but should let the ribs contract, thus keeping freedom and avoiding rigidity.

The idea of freeing the ribs is to improve breathing. Most people breathe too shallowly. When breathing improves, general conditions improve.

When you get his breathing going well, don't try to keep it too long or the pupil may faint because it's such a change to the body metabolism.

Springing (or co-ordinate set in CV terms)

A state of being coordinatedly 'ready to move' as a spring, not as a dead weight. The pupil should be like a coiled spring, thinking and projecting upward impulses.

In posture or mobilized state (when sitting down mostly, but when standing if he is thinking of moving or walking) -- Thinking of the pupil as a coiled spring or thinking and projecting upward impulses in that state--THE ACTIVATION OF THE ANTIGRAVITY MUSCLES. [This 2nd para. was originally later in the notes and has been inserted here with the redundancy left intact. Also the next sentence was close to the end of the notes. LJS]

The jet of water holding up a ping pong ball...this is the 'springing', going up, idea.

Solar Plexus (ACD dictionary p. 1148)

In stutterers and stammerers it is not uncommon for the solar plexus to be unduly tensed and pulled down. When this is true the teacher must try to undo that region, after first checking to see that the head is forward and up and the neck is free, while trying to KEEP head free, forward and up.

example: Walter had a pupil(stammerer) whose neck didn't feel free enough. By experiment and past experience he found the solar plexus to be unduly pulled down....when he freed it (HOW DID HE DO THIS?) the neck and head relation improved.

Alexander Theory

We are not concerned with what is 'right', 'correct', etc. We may not know just how the breathing mechanism is supposed to operate or just what is the right position for the head. But we are concerned with and do know what is wrong. We know if the neck is too stiff or too far forward or not sufficiently tensed to hold up the head.

By correcting what is wrong or bad we allow our mechanical functions to operate without interference. Our method of conscious control does not mean that we consciously try to operate our automatic functions like breathing, but we correct whatever is wrong or whatever is hindering our natural functioning. We let our automatic actions take care of themselves and concern ourselves with making possible conditions which best allow our mechanisms to operate without interference. We assume our automatic functions will work properly without interference.

We re-educate the body to move differently like this: first we must inhibit the urge or habit to move in the old way, in fact we say 'No' I will not move at all:-- and we do not do a thing. We let a teacher move a part for us. Slowly after many repetitions we will be able to move the part ourselves and not tighten those muscles that should not be tightened.

The mental attitude of the pupil is very important. Alexander teachers should stress that pupils inhibit their old habitual and wrong responses and actions. If an Alexander teacher does not do this and merely manipulates the pupil's 'physical' side, there can be no permanent change, for whatever good is done by the teacher's hands will be undone when the pupil reverts to his old patterns of behavior and reaction. So, a very big and important part of the teaching is to teach the pupils to inhibit and thus get control of their own reactions!!

How we can bring about change:

We must want to change, we must have a whole desire to do so. Sometimes we decide we want to change but our bodies or our muscles do not "want to" as with smokers or with drinkers. Then we must make ourselves wholly desire to change by re-educating our bodies, muscles, etc. to want or desire what we have consciously decided we want.

Feelings

Never rely on 'good' feelings, but just 'bad' ones. When you get a bad feeling it means you should give your orders.

You as teacher:

Remember it is very important to think of yourself when giving people lessons. Your first thought is to whether you yourself are going up. DO NOT TRY to do the other person good directly. That is end gaining. To do him any real good you MUST pay a lot of attention to yourself. You notice what happens to the pupil, but your main aim is to go up yourself...that upward stimulus will be transferred from your hands to the pupil, and that way you can really do him some good... and yourself as well.

When a pupil can only afford a limited number of lessons, spread them out over a long period of time. He must have a chance to practice between lessons what he learns and a chance to establish new habits and break old ones.

To tell or not to tell pupils

Sometimes if a pupil is fixed or holding a certain part of the body, if the teacher tells him he's doing so, he will release it. Another type of pupil would only get nervous and tense more if told of it... you must experiment with the particular pupil to see which approach is best.

Never pull or yank on a part to get it where you want it. Always look for a means whereby to get the result you want.

Hand on neck to take neck back

Put hand on so that palm is touching or as close as you can get it. Direct your wrist in...and keeping the wrist in, if you bring the elbow in, the neck will be brought back. Also the fingers and hand will thus be lengthened, there is no need to direct the fingers to lengthen, that will happen as a result of keeping the wrist in and then bringing the elbow in.

Teaching:

INHIBITION and Controlled Reaction are the most important things to be cultivated in the pupil. Springing is the second most important and breathing is the third.

You determine what to do with a pupil by looking at him to see what is wrong with him, what he's doing wrong or what's wrong with his posture, etc. This determines what part you'll work on next. Always free the head and neck first.

Tell your pupil to inhibit...but you can't expect him to before you get him going up because it's almost impossible for a person to inhibit when he's pulled down. The more 'up' you can give him with your hands, the easier you'll make it for him to inhibit.

Try to get new pupils to ENCOURAGE the upness, not to do anything, but to really encourage it, not just think dully of the word 'up'.

When you put your hand on a pupil's stomach, watch carefully that he doesn't interpret that to mean that he should HOLD IT IN. Many people have this tendency. If the stomach muscles are stiff and tightened, he can't go up and free the neck.

If the neck is too far forward, to get it back:

1. Free the head and neck.
2. Put a hand on the diaphragm and one on the back and let the wrists be free and go up yourself and give the pupil upward stimulus. This frees the neck more, relieves the pressure and you can take the neck back.

You check to see if a pupil is 'going well' by:

1. Freedom of the head
2. Coming up out of himself against your hand on his head
3. breathing, are the ribs contracting sufficiently?... but here be careful because the ribs can contract while the person is pulled down, so be sure the head is up and the neck free in CONJUNCTION with good breathing.

If a pupil has a glazed look in his eyes it means he's feeling and not thinking. ---?

First get the head and neck free, next step is to free the thighs-- you do this by taking the knees out and away from the body.

Don't keep a student sitting too long because there is a tendency to pull down into the hips if one sits for too long a period.

The order 'come back' when it means 'think back from the hips' is designed to break the usual habit of people who go forward in order to get up.

When taking someone up, first give your orders, then put your hands on and **FORGET ABOUT THEM**. Think of your orders to go up yourself. Your prime goal is to go well yourself. This way you can't harm the pupil and eventually you'll learn to actually do him good.

Sometimes it is essential to trick a pupil into getting the right experience (by stopping him from end-gaining) by distracting his attention while sitting him down or standing him up...but **EVENTUALLY THE PUPIL MUST FACE THE END GAINING HABIT AND WORK CONSCIOUSLY AT DELIBERATELY INHIBITING IT WHEN THE THOUGHT TO SIT DOWN OR STAND UP COMES**.

When the balance mechanism is working, the person cannot slump or pull down. When squatting, sitting, or standing (that is, when going through the process of getting to these positions) the balance should always be maintained. A teacher might, for reasons of his own, take a pupil FAR back into the chair, but this destroys the balance mechanism which generally should be maintained. [Kirk explained that it is the feeling of being balanced which is disturbed when the habitual pattern is disrupted by being brought back to an unusual place.]

It is better for a pupil to strain up than to remain collapsed (or not to go up enough or at all) because the wish or will to go up must be activated.

When a pupil has some problem like a curved spine, it is no good to try to remedy it directly. That is, it's no good to take hold of the wronged part and try to bend it or push it right. If you do this the pupil will tend to stiffen the neck or 'put it wrong' in which case, whatever good you've done for the specific part is undermined.

In some cases though, depending on conditions, it may be ok to do something directly to a part in order to correct it, but in so doing, one must watch the neck and head very carefully to see that they are not strained and are free and up and so on.

However, generally you do not directly attack the difficulty, but go back to the head and neck, see that they are free, etc. and then do the things that will cause the difficulty to disappear. For instance:

Curvature of the lower spine

1. See that the head is forward and up and the neck free.
2. Then let the pupil come back to your hand as a whole or as one piece from
3. a) ankles if he's standing b) hips if he's sitting

This procedure will take care of the curve in the spine because when the head is forward and up, it pulls the ends of the back muscles up too. Then when a person 'goes back' in a whole piece and the head correspondingly goes forward to a more counter-balance, those back muscles are pulled or stretched. This stretching causes the back muscles to contract and start to work or get life or get activated. This widens the back, relieving the curvature which is caused by 'narrowing' and 'pulling in' at the back.

Teaching Technique

In the beginning the teacher gives the pupil as much aid as possible in giving confidence, moving the parts, helping pupil to inhibit, etc. But as the pupil gets better the teacher gives less help and even makes things difficult for the pupil so that he can learn to inhibit under trying conditions.

Sometimes if a person lacks tone, just directing won't give him tone. The teacher must do something to activate the muscles. For instance, briskly rubbing the back and shoulders may activate the back muscles, then the direction will be more effective and you'll get more tone.

When you put your hands on someone and your back is going well and you come back from the ankles, **THE BACK MUST DO THE WORK, NOT THE ARMS**; the biceps have nothing to do with it. It's the back that does the work.

Use your fingers before the wrist, the fingers and wrist before the elbow, etc. If you don't do this, you're liable to work from the shoulders and keep the elbows, wrists and fingers stiff and not flexible.

If you have to 'lift' or take a heavy person up, **DON'T DO IT WITH YOUR ARMS**. Instead, get a firm hold with your hands and get your own orders going and back lengthening and widening. This will be transferred to the pupil and you'll be improving him and yourself in the process.

When taking a pupil's knees out as he sits on a chair

1. Give your orders to let your head go up and the neck be free.
2. Place your hands on the pupil's thighs (just above the knees)
3. Think of your elbows as 'going out or away' from your body.
4. Think of letting the upper arms be free: don't clench them to the sides of the body.
5. Then go back slightly **IN ONE PIECE** so that your hands will transfer to the pupil your upness from your back. The knees should then come away as you want them to.

Some pupils won't use the knees enough and have a tendency to lock them. Have them stand up, and when you get them going well, tell them to let their knees go. When they do, watch their hips so they go back and not forward. Then stop them when they've let

go some more, get them going up some more, and then have them let their knees go a bit more. By breaking the act of sitting into small stages like that, the teacher can get the pupil used to using his knees indirectly. That is, he's found the means whereby to make the pupil bend his knees and do it right.

When working on people, be careful not to go too far forward so that you're on your toes. Don't stick the elbows out too far when working-- it puts too much strain on the arms.

You as a learning teacher:

When you're ready to put your hands on people, don't wait to be told what to do with them. EXPERIMENT-- this is how you learn. Work to principle.

1. Look at the person to see what is wrong. Possibly put your hands on to feel what is wrong.
2. Give some thought to how you can correct the defect.
3. When you get an idea, act on it. See if it actually does improve the person.

Thus you learn the causal relations by experience and experimentation....you are learning by doing.

Don't copy some action you see another teacher do just for the sake of the action. If you think it may help the particular pupil you're working on, and you want to check to see if it will, it's ok, but don't just blindly copy. Know what you're doing and why.

When you reach the point where you can put your hands on people:

1. Do so often-- Here now is your chance to practice a lot and learn. Also the students room is there for you all day. You can come in early and stay late if you like.
2. Experiment-- Don't wait to be told how to do something. For instance, take a person's arm, see if he's letting it alone, take it out and away-- AND watch to see the results. Thus you learn and progress on your own initiative and develop your own style.

When you put your hands on someone, the usual tendency is to shorten the fingers as you 'grasp'. What you must do is LENGTHEN your fingers as you put your hands on.

Remember, the only reason you undo any part is so that the person can GO UP. If he is fixed anywhere, it is a block to him going up. Don't get lost in the undoing of a part and forget your main goal is to get the person going forward and up. Always when working on a person, go back to the head and neck to check on the freedom and upness.

One of the most difficult problems in this work is the communication of ideas from teacher to pupil. The same words will mean different things to each. For instance, when the teacher says, "Don't hold up the shoulders", the student may not have the same idea (due to faulty feeling tones) of what 'hold up' means as the teacher does. Thus he may actually collapse.

The only way to overcome this difficulty is by experience or experimentation. The pupil must do what he thinks is correct. If he's wrong, the teacher says so and they work together to get it right. The pupil will keep trying to do what he thinks is wanted of him. When the teacher says he's doing well, he'll get an IDEA of what's right...but this idea keeps changing, being modified, added to, etc. as experience goes on.

If you find that 'thinking up' suggests too much directness, think instead in terms of 'let go to go up' and 'let go' 'undo' and 'let the head be free'. (Experiment to find any particular pupil's "best" orders.)

Another order to take the place of 'Don't do anything' is 'keep the body still'.

Don't try to control your rate of descent into the chair with you knees. Rate of descent will be determined by how well you're going up, etc. You don't want to think about how fast you go down, just keep giving your primary orders. It's better to flop into a chair than to try to control it with your legs. If you do 'flop', it will be because you are interfering somehow with your anti gravity mechanism, and by trying to control it with your legs you only add to the difficulties.

You don't want to put stress on not doing certain things because they are pulling down. Instead the stress should be put on learning how to do them without pulling down. The Alexander technique is supposed to make living easier, not more difficult. For instance, lying on your stomach to sunbathe. Walter says of course you can do it. But be very careful not to pull the head back and the back in. It isn't a position to spend most of your time in, but certainly you should be able to do it on occasion.

After you've been sitting a long time you tend to get pulled down in the hips. When you get up, give some thought to undoing the hips, especially in front. Just stand there and order the hips free and think of coming up out of them.

It helps to know where one tends to get stuck so you can keep an eye on it and order it to be free if you find you are tensing it, as mentioned in the hips above.

If you are in monkey and you think you are pulling your shoulders forward, put them back. Just directing them back won't do any good, you've got to put them back: of course, go up and give your primary orders to do so.

If you think your arms may be collapsed, move them a bit, for this movement muscle tone is needed.

If you are sitting in a chair and think you're collapsed, just sitting there directing won't do any good. You've got to get up and move, this will bring tone. But don't move just any old way. Let the head go forward and up, neck free, back lengthened and widened

Alexander's reasoning (even) when pulled down: 'I know I'm pulled down today, therefore I will be very careful not to pull myself down anymore and I will work especially well today to get myself back up'.

The difference between 'doing' and 'ordering' is this: 'doing' is en gaining to gain an end; 'ordering' is the process of first inhibiting, then getting the Primary Control going, then ordering the arm, or whatever part is involved, to lengthen, then moving it, (ordering it to move). It employs ordering the means whereby.

When going into a squat or sitting, in order to let the knees go away, you want to be coming UP OFF OF THE KNEES. If you are sinking down, you will tend to lock the knee joints. Be aware of this so that if you come down you will know and can then watch it and try to prevent it.

It's easier to keep the breathing going better if you sleep on a hard rather than a soft surface. Due to sinking into the soft surface, and thus folding together so to speak, it's easier to interfere with the breathing.

Lying down, no matter how inexpertly done, is bound to do some good. It gets your back down and it must widen somewhat.

When lying down, think your knees up to the ceiling. Don't push them up or force them up. If you do this you will contract the muscles on the inside of the thighs-- this will result in the knee being 'pulled in' so to speak, away from the ceiling. To achieve the lengthening, you want to THINK your knees up, let them go up, in other words, DO NOT CONTRACT YOUR THIGHS AND YOUR KNEES WILL GO UNHINDERED.

When lifting something, if you aren't going up, it will pull you down even more. The heavier it is, the more it will pull you down. But if you are going up it will be lighter and you won't harm yourself.

Much work on the whispered ah, especially for CH, since his breathing, circulation, and skin conditions are so bad.

Projecting orders [Kirk referred to 'IV. Illustration' in Part II 'Sensory Appreciation In Its Relation to Learning and Learning to Do' of Constructive Conscious Control of the Individual, found in the 2004 reprint on pp 112-118, for a demonstration of this with hands on the back of the chair.]

While fully projecting, make some decision, or go through the process of making some decision, as, say, to walk across the room, sit down, squat, say something, etc.

Project animatedly, energetically!!

Fiercely, as powerfully as possible!

You must practice secondary, tertiary, etc. projecting, and not rest content only with your primary projection. [Kirk explained the additional layers of orders as such things as 'let the knees go out and away' after the primary orders concerning the neck, head and back are thought through.]

At the precise moment of starting to do something, give you PC orders afresh.

You must, while projecting, run over your series of orders "ever and again".

If stuck or not going well, take a warm but not too hot bath, then lie down, and/or project; work intensely (&don't forget the whispered ah), to work your way out of stuckness.

The varied projecting principle -- change, vary your orders (as thinking on the vector instead of on the usual, forward and up way), and add new ones (as direct the eyes to relax, undo, or to let the shoulders lengthen), to break up getting into a meaningless, projecting rut.

[Kirk explained that Walter would say go this way⁷ with his arm angled up. That is the vector, meaning that the back should stay back while the head is going forward and up.]

The loose, free-swinging, humming state of mind, make a conscious, strong, reasoning effort to get or keep it, during, throughout the day. "Why should I let others pull me down/" is an aid to keeping it.

Think, devise means to keep out of, break up, the stodgy, rutted attitude, for J & N as well as yourself.

Take frequent, gentle walks. Get as much fresh air, sunshine, gentle exercise, (and project during this time much, but perhaps not always)

Refer frequently to your Alexander Rejuvenation Project in your MGS
[Kirk's abbreviation meaning **Master Guiding Schemata**- just a way of reminding himself. He could not remember what he meant by the Alexander Rejuvenation Project, but thought, again, that it was perhaps along the lines of a personal reminder.]

You must keep in touch with the work. That is, keep stimulating, motivating self afresh, anew to work intensely.

- A. One way is to use AOK to find and read relevant passages from Alexander's books.
[Kirk couldn't remember what AOK was, other than the normal colloquial expression.]

Attitude Towards the work

Not only in class apply the principles, but also in your daily life. LIVE this work, you must! If you rely on getting it all in the 2 hours of class and forget it the rest of the time, you'll never make a good teacher.

You want to relate and 'connect up' the work with other things-- This act of connecting is how one learns. Alexander work is not a thing apart, separated, etc. Link up what it claims, implies, etc. with your other knowledge of life. See the connections and the work will be understood more by you.

Don't expect to go to class for 2 hrs. a day and in those 2 hrs. learn this technique. Your most stable and important progress must be made out of class. You must learn to inhibit your old end-gaining tendencies in your everyday activities, and then to stop, give thought to your means whereby and then, projecting your orders-- go on to gain your end.

Training Course

When you get in the training course, be careful not to get in a rut. It's sometimes difficult to keep working. There is a tendency to slack off and waste time because just trying to improve the use of yourself day after day gets dull.

It's important that you have an incentive, a motivating factor to keep you going and working. As Alexander had the actor's desire to improve himself, each of us must have desires and drives of our own.

Alexander work is a means, not an end. It is a means to a different end for different people. For Alexander it was his voice and general use improvement and a whole new field of exploration to be touched...to many teachers it is a means whereby to make a living.

In the training course, don't be afraid to ask questions. Sometimes you may think the question's answer is known by everyone else, but this may not be true, and anyway, if something bothers you, it's best to get it straightened out.

You as pupil:

You must practice not paying attention to what the teacher is doing with his hands. Instead, **CONSTANTLY** give your orders. Don't let anything distract you.

This will work in two good ways. 1) Projecting will free the parts of your body so the teacher can 'do things' with them, so your old habits and reactions are not interfering with the new habits and reactions and sensations the teacher is trying to give you. 2) Not paying attention to what the teacher is doing will teach you to be able to control your reactions to any stimulus.

Forget about what the teacher is doing, project your orders and focus visually but superficially on something else.

You as pupil Jan. 16 1957

When the teacher asks you to come back from the ankles, come back all in one piece like a post-- the ankles are the hinge and think of the head as the counterbalance mechanism. The head, poised on the very top of the neck will go forward and up as the rest of the body from the very top of the neck down to the ankles goes back in one piece.

Remember, you don't want to try to DO anything; right now, just try to let the neck alone, don't stiffen it, and let the head come forward and up.

For a while 'lengthening and widening' the back won't mean anything to you.

Every time you think of sitting down, think (No! written in the margin) of going into a squatting position to destroy the end gaining habit. (or better, just think up and don't think of any end)

Before, everything you did 'pulled you down' and tended to make your bad structural condition worse. Now the more you remember to 'use your full height', don't stiffen etc. the better your condition will get because there will be less and less to enhance the bad condition. Finally your structural condition will begin to improve; but first not so fast because the first step just keeps it from getting worse.

Importance of Joints

It's important to use the joints of the ankles and knees and hips when bending down, etc. For the trunk contains vital mechanisms and it isn't good to bend or twist it. The joints should be used whenever possible before one ever should bend the back or trunk of the body.

Don't 'half inhibit' (i.e. stand before the chair, for example, and say 'No' and only postpone the sitting down because you know you're going to soon) Inhibit so that there is a complete stopping of the old messages. (by not thinking of sitting down at all)

Your attitude as a student:

Don't worry about if your head is in the right position or if your neck is too stiff or not tensed enough. Forget about how it feels, how it should be and so on. Just decide, make up your mind, to LEAVE IT ALONE. Let the teacher do the work and you just allow him to do whatever he wants. Give your consent. Don't do anything, except allow, consent, etc. for him to do the things.

Getting into and out of a chair

When getting out of a chair you want to first say 'No' to your old habits-- come to a stop--- Then direct your head forward and up--- And also direct your back to come back-- Do not actually come back--But give these directions.

This thinking of coming back in conjunction with thinking of going up produces a pull or stretch in the back muscles which causes them to work-- and widens the back.

Then keeping these directions going you rise up out of the chair.

This is better than the 'rolling out of the chair' described in MSI because in this rolling out method you lean so far forward that the tendency is to PULL IN THE BACK and revert to old habits of getting up.

When getting into a chair give same directions as above i.e. head forward and up, back back, then let the knees go and maintain the balance until you hit the chair. Then still keeping your directions going, go back into a sitting position.

When lying down:

You want to avoid strain, but you must try to let the ribs contract while you exhale. The expansion or inhalation will take care of itself, but when you feel the widening you may want to 'hold on to it' and thus may not contract the ribs enough. It takes effort to remember to let the ribs contract until it becomes a habit.

About 20 min., not longer than 30. If you're restless or tired, get up, as lying there too long will tend to make you stiffen. Think:

1. Let the body alone. Don't stiffen it.
2. Let head come 'out of the body' and up.
3. Let back drop to the floor.
4. Let knees go up towards the ceiling.

Don't get straight up, but roll over onto side first to avoid stiffening the neck.

Information Relevant to the Technique. Work

This section includes all material not fitting into the other categories, sections
The material is "more or less" relevant

A person who has for a long time been overworking and tense may not be able to take a sudden change to complete rest-- the change is often too much for him. What he needs is to change to 'some other activity' for a while and gradually ease off. WHY.....?

Hypertension:

Most people, when moving parts of the body, besides tensing those muscles necessary to move the part, also tense the opposite muscles. Those very muscles which should slacken to allow other muscles to tighten are being tightened themselves. This puts an added strain on the muscles that are supposed to move he artas they now not only have to do the ordinary work of moving the part, but also have to overcome the pull of the

opposite muscle. This wastes energy. Also the double pull in two directions makes for pressure and tension in the joints. The bone is pushed hard in the socket.

With this exertion of opposing muscles at the same time, you push the bone into the socket just at the time of movement when it should be as free as possible. This slows up circulation and sets up ideal conditions for arthritis (and other itis's) and if the possibility or seeds of arthritis are there- they will thrive.

Electrical treatment and other treatments are used to get the circulation going again and to loosen things up. All these things are not getting at the real cause of the thing which is this hypertension. These methods or treatments can be used, and successfully , to a point-- but if they are used, it should not interfere with (and instead should work in conjunction with) work to get rid of that main cause. It may be desirable to use these other methods, because life is short and time is valuable, as long as these methods don't hinder the getting at the bad habits and stopping the cause of trouble.

Asthma. Arthritis. Stammering all have their cause in this hypertension. Hypertension isn't the only cause , but it is a major one.

Relaxation:

The proponents of relaxation say that this hypertension must be got rid of by relaxing, by taking the pressure and the tension off. This method does get rid of the tension while the person relaxes, however, as soon as he begins to do anything, the tension ust return due to the bad way he uses himself, his muscles, etc. The only way to get rid of this tension is to find a new way to use the parts, a way that won't cause undue tension.

Control of Reaction:

There are two schools of thought on the issue of controlling human action, one is to control the stimuli, the other is to control the reactions to the stimuli. The second is what the Alexander technique is concerned with.i.e. Jean Arthur wore earplugs and dark glasses; that's an example of controlling the stimuli. With controlled reaction, no stimulus can evoke undesired reactions.

Doctor's don't like people with leg trouble to put their knees up when lying down because it prevents good circulation in the legs and enhances the trouble. This is true generally; due to the tension people create to keep the knees up the knee socket is pushed into the joint and the circulation is impaired. However in Alexander work you undo the

legs, lengthen them, avoid tension, and increase the circulation as the back goes down better breathing comes about, etc.

There is no concept of general functioning in medicine, only specific functioning.

Halibrooks abdominal exercise:

They tend to develop very much the recto- abdominal(?) muscles and thus force the wall of the stomach back, so a protruding abdomen is remedied but the back is put considerably out of shape in turn producing eventually a bad pull in front.

In riding a horse you want to be sure to be sitting on the seat bones, not the thighs. Also the flat of the thigh should be against the horse; some people turn the thighs so that either the front or back of them is more or less toward the horse.

The important thing is to get people to recognize the importance of going up in relation to health, well being, etc. That is one thing. the Alexander Technique is quite another. The Alexander Technique works, i.e. it gets people going up. It may not be the only method for getting this result. It may not necessarily be the best possible one.

A child was born with her little toe curled over the next one and that toe bent slightly over the next. When she was 10 yrs. old she came for lessons. After about 20 lessons the toes began to straighten out. This shows that a child can develop tensions before it is born, and if an ailment is congenial it is not necessarily beyond repair through the technique.

Very seldom is the joint itself stiff. Generally it is something the person is doing that is stiffening the joint. That's why osteopathy is so bad. They get rid of the stiffness but don't get at the cause of it, namely the person's bad habits of use, and of course the stiffness returns.

The physical and the mental are so closely related and so intricately interwoven that it is hard to tell if one is influencing the other or vice versa. About all we do know is that they do work together interconnectedly.

You must have a strong back because the back muscles do much of your work. Especially in teaching where it may sometimes be a bit strenuous physically.

Clavicles

The collarbones or clavicles in the front of the neck should remain relatively still in breathing or singing. That is, they should not move up and down, and the spaces above them should not hollow.

Things Walter noticed in teaching: Tall slim American males tend to be collapsed and floppy, whereas tall, slim English men seem to be rigid and stiff. Solicitors and accountants are generally quite difficult to teach. They don't catch on so quickly.

Babies for a few months are really four footed animals. Their spines at this time are relatively straight and because of this no support is needed under the head, even when they lie on their backs. But after a few months the curve in the neck region develops and thereafter some support is needed under the head.

Position of the Head is very important to throat conditions. If the head is too far forward, it results in a contraction of the throat area. This leads sometimes to a rubbing of the tonsils or palate on the throat and can lead to serious irritation and throat trouble. Especially in children at a certain stage where the throat is not large enough for the relatively large tonsils. If the head is too far forward the throat is made even smaller and trouble starts.

Tonsils help guard the body against toxic poisons. If the tonsils are removed it leaves the throat open to attack. One school in America has shown that quite a few victims of polio have had their tonsils removed.

Doctors never see a structural condition improve. Always when they see such a case they expect it to get worse, as it does if the improper usage continues. (Dr. Boehme, Milw. WI)

Treatment: tends to make people more symmetrical.
[Kirk is referring to the Alexander Technique as the 'treatment' here.]

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