

Example 3. Sexual Orientation

For this woman the major psychosocial change happened while taking an Alexander Technique group class at her music conservatory. She attended group lessons and had a few short individual lessons during the semester, but more importantly, was practicing the Alexander Technique 20-minute lie down exercise every day, at least once, sometimes twice a day.

She didn't have any previous experience in any body-mind technique. She had always been fit, doing a fair amount of sport and exercise.

To her great surprise, she began experiencing new emotions and romantic attractions towards other women. This was completely novel to her, and confusing. When she asked her AT teacher if there could be a connection to the technique, her teacher said "no".

In retrospect, it seems possible that she had suppressed parts of herself that were not consistent with a particular self image. In her own words the softening and being better in tune with her body allowed her 'true self' to come to the surface.

Conclusion

The analysed first-person testimonies and data from the online survey supports the inference that the Alexander Technique can lead to major changes in a student's psychosocial identity.

While generally positive in the long term, the changes can be unsettling when they occur. People undergoing important psychosocial changes generally wish to have emotional support, and the opportunity to share the experiences with someone, and to gain insight into the process.

Most of the changes happen during the (three year) Alexander Technique teacher training, but it is possible that just having a few lessons or following group lessons is enough to set off important psychosocial changes. The changes can happen in a 'thunderbolt'-like experience, or occur gradually over a long period of time.

Alexander Technique teaching brings in many factors that are therapeutic in effect, like touch, changes in body posture, the release of 'body armour', and unconditional presence. Learning to apply the principles appears to increase a person's level of awareness of their psychophysical state, giving an empowering feeling of ownership and control over their activities and an ability to regulate (indirectly) psychophysical and emotional balance.

As the Alexander Technique teaches, the body and mind cannot be considered as separate – such a conception doesn't reflect the underlying reality. Resistance and defensive structures are psychophysical in nature. The unravelling of these structures