

THE ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE

Background

The Alexander Technique was devised by Frederick Mathias Alexander in the late 1890's. He developed it in order to treat actors who had lost their voices because they had developed a habit of tensing their glottal muscles prior to speaking on stage.

He also found that, in some people, other conditions such as chronic neck and back pain had a similar underlying pathology and responded well to his technique.

How it helps

Most people unwittingly interfere with the mechanisms which determine their balance, poise and posture by their habitual way of doing things. Instead of releasing freely into action, they tighten muscles excessively and misuse them, often pulling themselves down or out of shape and imposing unnecessary strain which can lead to physical problems.

The Technique provides a means of preventing inappropriate habitual reactions by bringing activities under the guidance of conscious reasoning, making this (rather than instinctive reaction) the dominant factor affecting how people use their bodies. Lessons in the Technique can help pupils to overcome bad postural habits by re-establishing their poise and free movement in all areas of activity.

By successfully bringing these learnt behaviours back under conscious control, an improvement in health and well being can be experienced, in both physical and psychological areas.

Who can benefit?

People who seek relief from stress and pain, from back, joint and breathing problems and also from other difficulties.

Those who have not been able to gain relief using more orthodox treatments.

Those for whom balance, poise and coordination is a great help in life such as performers and people living and working in stressful circumstances. People who are prepared to make a commitment to improving their health and quality of life.

Others who need to learn how to deal more effectively with life's tensions, problems and pressures.

Lessons

Individual lessons last from 30 to 40 minutes. Pupils should wear comfortable, loose clothing which allows freedom of movement.