

## Tasha is a patient person

By Sheila O'Brien

'Tasha' and 'Patience' may not be two words which you feel naturally come together in the same sentence (especially when she has just shown you her irascible face after you two thousandth repetition of a basic lack of understanding of Alexander Principles). But, Dear Reader, you would be seriously deluded if your thinking did not include 'patient' as one of Tasha's attributes. Let me tell you a story...

My study of the Alexander Technique is now into the seventeenth year, so anyone with sense would presume that I have had time enough to grasp the nettle when 'changes' occur. However, pain can overcome the fiercest resolve to act like a grown-up, analyse the conditions present and wait for matters to calm down and a better 'me' to emerge the other side of the change. Oh, I've had my fair share of pain throughout the years, several broken bones and two babies give you a good idea of how sweet a pain free day is, but the pain I had this year was completely overwhelming.

'Aha!' I can hear you thinking – this is an excuse for some bad behaviour – and it IS! This pain (in my shoulders if you are wondering which part of the anatomy was affected) was so severe that I needed several hospital visits, during which Specialists informed me that 'pain management' was essential as a 'first phase' approach to my condition. If there was no respite from the pain with the use of large doses of medication I had been administered, this was to be followed by an operation to remove the nasty bits of matter that had accumulated in the soft tissue of my tendons and ligaments.

As you can imagine I was horrified! This sort of thing shouldn't happen to me! I was invincible! I had invested large amounts of time, money and 'thought' into the Alexander Technique to avoid such dramatic effects on my health! The Technique was my saviour, it had turned my life around, changed me from a bundle of manic energy clothed in a seemingly confident body, to a competent, successful member of society!

I had been through many changes before and borne them quite stoically I had thought, so had I been foiled, was Tasha merely the leader of some Cult with designs on my mind, money and energies? To my great shame, in the depth of great pain and under the influence of heavy doses of drugs, I voice my doubts about the Technique to Tasha...

Did she lash me with a scathing tongue and highlight the complete lack of analysis in my thoughts? Did she deride the lack of intellect that was voicing these thoughts? She did neither! Instead she calmly and confidently tried to gain a clear understanding of the 'Specialists'' view of my condition. She studied her numerous texts on anatomy, psychology and re-read several of Alexander's relevant writings. She caringly pointed out to me the use of myself which had contributed to the condition I was now enduring, and the ongoing life conditions which were influencing my use. She must have been offended by my outpourings but didn't show it. She was PATIENCE PERSONIFIED!

And what happened to the pain? The doctors thought it would last for months as the inflammation was so great –it lasted three to four weeks. The doctors felt that it was a condition that would recur and would eventually need surgery to rectify, although they had no idea why it occurred in the first place and could give no guarantees as to its not returning after surgery. Tasha gave me reasonable analyses, based on an understanding of my use and life conditions, of why my shoulders were in such a state. I am acutely aware now of the way in which I hoist them back in my everyday use. It's my way of 'shouldering' life's problems.

So when she gives you that 'look', next time you move or speak without thinking first, just think of how patient she can be by repeating the same thing over and over again. The principles are fairly simple really, our inability to put them into practise is simply down to ingrained habits. So 'Tasha' and 'Patience' can fit neatly into one sentence, every lesson we have is proof of that!

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