RELEASE PAIN, GAIN CLARITY AND DISCOVER YOUR BEST SELF
WITH THE ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE

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Book Review

Be in Balance

By Angela Bradshaw

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Before reading this book, I knew three things about Alexander Technique (AT). I was aware that you need to have multiple sessions for AT to be effective,¹ that the lessons can be expensive and that AT may be helpful for sonographers. The author of this book has been both a radiographer and a sonographer, so I was keen to read it, but it is a general book aimed at everyone, rather than one targeted to sonographers. Angela has used AT to transform her own health since a repetitive strain injury, and her passion for the subject is evident in her writing (AT as a lifestyle choice is also heavily promoted within the book).

Personally, I do not like the cartoon style of the book; however, if you ignore the illustrations then it is a very quick read, and I read it initially in two 20-minute train journeys. I then re-read it at home, so that I could practice the technique; you do need to be somewhere private for this. I liked the AT semi-supine posture (Chapter 4), which I would happily introduce into the workplace on a daily basis, perhaps at lunchtimes, instead of sitting at a desk looking at emails.

Angela does state early on that it is a basic book, which it is, perhaps too basic. There is one web link to another AT teacher's website to view technique videos, but at £14.99, I would have liked to have seen some on-line content from the author. This would allow the reader to see what the differences in posture look like. If you are interested in AT, then my advice would be to have a lesson, as I think it is hard to fully appreciate the subtleties of small changes in posture from a book and you may feel that you are sitting correctly, but a hand on your shoulder or back would show you that you are not. I have learnt a fourth thing about AT from this book: I now know that I also stand incorrectly, but I am not sure how to fix this without falling over.

If you want to read a book on AT and like self-help books, I would suggest that you have a look at the books available and choose the one that suits you best.

REFERENCE

1. Little P, Lewith G, Webley F, et al. Randomised controlled trial of Alexander technique lessons, exercise, and massage (ATEAM) for chronic and recurrent back pain. *BMJ* 2008;337:a884 PMC3272681

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