

Ideokinesis & CREATIVE BODY ALIGNMENT

THE WORK OF ANDRÉ BERNARD

IN THE 1920s an outstanding and unorthodox approach to freeing the human body's muscular stresses to achieve balanced alignment and ease of motion was developed by Mabel Elsworth Todd. Today this approach remains unique in its reliance on the creative mind to reeducate neuromuscular patterns of body balance and motion. The process, both scientific and aesthetic, engages the student's mind through tactile, visual and auditory senses, turning concept into image and image into new muscle patterns.

ANDRÉ BERNARD, one of the foremost teachers of the Todd work, studied for ten years with Barbara Clark, one of Todd's most gifted students, following an educational background in chemistry and mathematics and a professional career in acting, dancing, and radio broadcasting. He has been teaching body alignment as a member of the New York University faculty since 1966 as well as giving annual summer intensives on the West Coast and in Europe.

On the following pages we hear about his remarkable work.

CAPTIONS BY ANDRÉ BERNARD

Photographs taken during André's workshops at the Etage in Bern, Switzerland.



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To create better muscle balance in the lower back (lumbar area), think of the little knobs extending from the bodies of the vertebrae (posterior spinous processes) as folding or releasing downward all the way to the tailbone (coccyx). This can merge with the image of the tailbone extending into infinity.

An Introduction to Ideokinesis

by André Bernard

What has come to be known as ideokinesis is a discipline which employs the use of images as a means of improving muscle patterns. It is one of the oldest of the mind-body training techniques. The work was developed by Mabel E. Todd, a voice teacher from upstate New York who taught voice improvement in Boston near the time of the first world war. Some time between 1900 and 1906, when she was in high school, she is reputed to have injured her back which impaired her walking ability. As she moved on to college she was constantly searching for a means of improving her condition. The doctors had told her that her walking ability would be impaired for life, but Todd was a very determined and feisty person and she continued to search and experiment with ways to correct her condition even as she was teaching voice. The information she gathered in her search to find a way to improve her walking form the basis of ideokinesis.

Todd did correct her condition and learned to walk again very well. She was noted for her ability to climb and descend stairs with extraordinary grace for the rest of her life. As her condition improved she discontinued teaching voice and established a studio in Boston where she taught others with movement and postural difficulties to improve their own conditions. Toward the end of the 1920s she moved from Boston to New York City to teach this work at Teachers College, Columbia University. Her first book, *The Thinking Body*, was published in 1937, although some claim that an earlier edition came out in 1934. Prior to that, she had written short pamphlets, articles for the *New England Journal of Medicine*, and a syllabus for her students at Columbia University. She also gave lectures at the New School for Social Research in New York City. Asked why she had waited so long to publish her first book, Todd replied that since she was creating a new discipline, she wanted time to test its validity before publishing a book on it. Todd continued to teach into the 1950s and published her second book, *The Hidden You*, in 1953. She died in 1956.

Another pioneer in this work was Dr. Lulu Sweigard who had been a student of Todd's in the late 1920s at Columbia University. Dr. Sweigard taught the work at New York University from the mid '30s through the mid '50s when she retired. After leaving N.Y.U. she went on to teach at the Juilliard School of Dance where she continued teaching until her death. Dr. Sweigard's only book, *Human Movement Potential*, was published in 1974, shortly after her death.

The third major pioneer in the development of ideokinesis was Barbara Clark. Clark was a registered nurse who had come to Todd in the early '20s with a problem in her locomotion. Having been ill with poliomyelitis as a child, Clark had much difficulty in her walking. Todd was able to help

Clark correct that condition so that she was able to walk again very skillfully. Clark was so impressed with Todd's work that she studied the work further and became one of Todd's teachers at Todd's Boston studio.

While in Boston Clark specialized in teaching children. She left Boston in 1949 and came to New York where she taught privately. She also assisted Dr. Sweigard at New York University. Instead of writing a book on ideokinesis, she wrote several "manuals," as she called them. These have been reprinted in the book, *A Kinesthetic Legacy: The Life and Works of Barbara Clark*, by Pamela Matt. Clark moved to Urbana, Illinois, in 1972, where she died in 1982 at the age of 95.

Todd, Clark, and Sweigard are the major early pioneers in the development of ideokinesis although there were others who made significant contributions. Many teachers of this work who are of the younger generation are also contributing to its further development.

Ideokinesis has many faces, many dimensions. In order to give you a wider understanding of its scope, here is a list of some of the identifying labels which have been used for the work: *neuromuscular education, psychophysical education, psychophysiological education, psychomotor education, ideomotor education, structural hygiene, body mechanics, and physiophilosophical training.*

The label *ideokinesis* was coined by the American piano teacher Bonpensiere who was popular in the 1920s and '30s. Bonpensiere used imagery in his piano teaching and invented the word *ideokinesis* from two Greek words, *ideo* (idea or thought) and *kinesis* (movement), to describe his piano teaching method. Sweigard borrowed the word from Bonpensiere to describe the methodology of her teaching. Ideokinesis can be translated roughly as "the image or thought as facilitator of the movement." Ideokinesis began to be used as a label for the work after the publication in 1974 of Sweigard's book *Human Movement Potential* in which she used the word.

In order to understand why imagery is used as a means of changing muscle patterns, one must understand what movement is. Movement may be defined as a neuromusculoskeletal event. This means that in order for movement to take place, all three of the systems alluded to in this definition—nervous, muscular and skeletal—must be involved. Each system has its own specific role to play; the nervous system is the messenger, i.e., it transmits impulses or messages to the muscles to contract or release; the muscle system is the workhorse or the motor system; the skeletal system is the support system which is moved by the work of the muscles.

The critical point to be aware of in order to understand how the image can change the muscle pattern is this: the nervous system is more than just a simple messenger. It also organizes the muscle pattern and it does this on a sub-cortical level, that is, the level below consciousness. Let us also be clear about what the muscle pattern is. It is the complex of muscles that perform a desired movement: organizing the muscle pattern is a highly complex and sophisticated task.

It is fortunate that the nervous system does this for us below the level of consciousness. Not only do we not have to

organize the muscle pattern consciously, but we should not attempt to do so because this will interfere with the process. Our conscious role in movement is to focus on the *movement*, because the nervous system, in organizing the muscle pattern, is responding to the clarity of one's concept of what the movement is. If the movement is not done well, it means the muscle pattern is poor, and the muscle pattern is poor because the "wrong" message (faulty concept of the movement) has been sent to the muscles. This wrong message is the result of either a lack of clarity of what the movement is or a previously established poor muscle pattern associated with the movement. The objective is to change the message, that is, to rethink the movement in order to change the poor muscle pattern. This rethinking the movement is formed into an image and used as a means to change the muscle pattern.

The Lesson

The lesson is usually divided into two parts: lecture and laboratory. In the lecture part, basic concepts of anatomy, physiology and body mechanics are discussed. The images used in the laboratory part of the class are based upon this discussion.

In the laboratory part of the class, the students pair off, one partner gives assistance to the other mostly in the form of "tactile aid." Tactile aid is a light touch—including stroking, tapping, or just holding—on the part of the body which is to be imaged. The touch can be stationary or moving. Its purpose is to clarify where the image is taking place and the direction in which the image is moving, bringing focus and kinesthetic awareness to the process. Tactile aid can be self-administered but it is usually done by a partner or teacher.

In the beginning classes, the students receive tactile aid in the "constructive rest position." The *constructive rest position*, or CRP, is one in which the student is lying on his or her back on a firm surface such as a floor or a table with a pad underneath. The legs are flexed so that the angle at the knee joints is about 90 degrees. A small pillow or piece of foam rubber is placed under the base of the skull and the balls of the feet, the arms are folded softly over the body, and a tie is tied slightly above the knees to prevent the legs from falling outward. While working in CRP the student must not engage in voluntary movement, instead, the student focuses on the given imagined movement(s). This process takes about 20 to 30 minutes. When the process is completed, the partners reverse roles.

The students are expected to practice CRP each day. At the next lesson (usually a week later), new images will be discussed and given to practice in CRP. When practicing away from class, it is not necessary to receive tactile aid. In later lessons, when the student has become proficient in the CRP, imagery is used in sitting, standing, walking and other simple movements.

Occasionally, after constructive rest, the group might improvise, playing and moving about freely using the images practiced earlier in the class, as another way of incorporating their responses to the work.

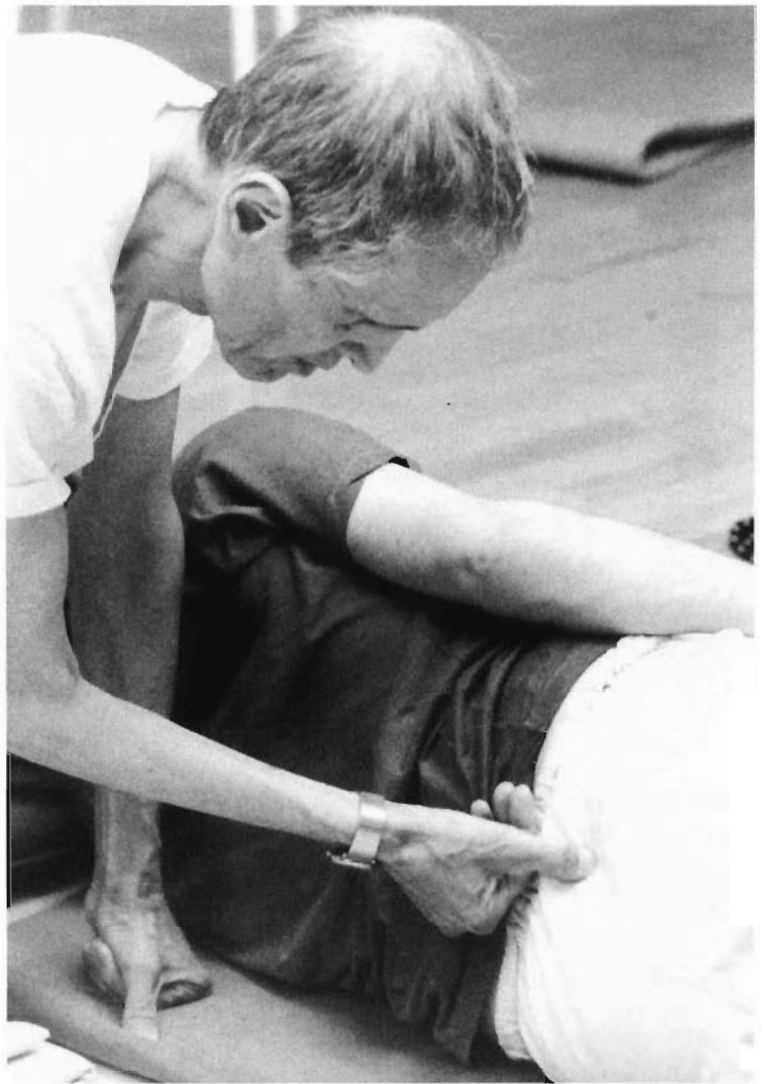


photo © 1995 Hugo Lertschen

This is an example of the imagery and tactile aid shown in the preceding photo, here on a person lying on his side.

Ideokinesis is not a quick fix. It is a thorough long-term educational process which not only helps improve the neuromuscular system but also all the other systems of one's being. It leads toward the condition called *homeostasis* which is a stable state of equilibrium between the different but interdependent elements and subsystems of the entire organism. This is experienced by a person as a general feeling of well being, less fatigue from the day's activities and a dynamic relaxation which gives one greater freedom in movement and unleashes one's creative powers. ♦

SOME ADDITIONAL PRACTITIONERS OF IDEOKINESIS:

Ruth Botchan (Berkeley, CA), Glenna Batson (NC), Irene Dowd (NYC), Joanne Emmons (Albuquerque, NM), Eric Franklin (Switzerland), Robin Friedman Stuelpner (Flushing, NY), G. Hoffman Soto (San Anselmo, CA), Mavis Lockwood (NY), Carol Loud (W. Tisbury, MA), Nancy Lyons (Sonoma, CA), Pamela Matt (Tempe, AZ), Jamie Miller (Berkeley, CA), Kayte Ringer (NYC), Richard Rosen (Berkeley, CA), Nancy Topf (NYC).

Interview with ANDRÉ BERNARD

by Richard Rosen
with Nancy Lyons

The following is drawn from a series of interviews with André Bernard conducted during the summers of 1995 and 1996 in California. The initial interview, submitted by Richard Rosen, a writer for Yoga Journal, was followed up for CQ with another by Richard and one by Nancy Lyons, a professor of Dance at Sonoma State University. Our thanks to Bonney Lynch for originally directing Richard to CQ.



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Richard Rosen: *Your teaching is popularly called the Work, but you have given some other names for it. What would you prefer to call the Work formally?*

André Bernard: Informally, I often refer to it in private workshops as a creative approach to human movement and alignment. Basically, that's what it is. Lulu Sweigard chose *ideokinesis*, the word coined by American piano teacher Bonpensiere, because she thought it expressed the methodology used in the Work, that is, the use of imagery...

RR: *...to facilitate movement.*

AB: Yes, and *ideokinesis* translated would be roughly "the image or idea or thought as facilitator of movement." So, I would have to say that it depends upon which population you're trying to reach. I think in the university, *ideokinesis* is OK, but in the broad community, I don't think it would mean anything. Something that's more informal, like *a creative approach to human movement and alignment* would maybe resonate a little better. I think the one that I contributed, and that's possibly also not appropriate for the general

public, is *physiophilosophy*. I feel that, as much as anything, this is a philosophy of the body and how you relate to it. So that implies that it's something that you think about, and of course again we get back to the methodology, which is image or thought.

I met with Sweigard quite a number of times and one of the things she said was, "In this work each individual will use it differently, will use it according to their background." So that's somewhat the same thing as I'm saying, it depends upon which population you want to reach as to what the ideal terminology for it is. It's a work that almost defies labeling...

RR: *Because it's so malleable, because it can be used in so many different contexts?*

AB: That's right. It's very difficult to make a system out of it, and I think that's one of the reasons that neither Sweigard nor Todd, nor any of us who came later, have tried to make a system out of it. By its very nature it has to have that room, that flexibility, that malleability that you spoke about.

RR: *How did you get interested in this work? You studied with Erick Hawkins, who I believe first directed you toward it.*

AB: That's true. As a matter of fact, Erick Hawkins was directly responsible for my doing this work. I had come from a background of chemical engineering. Something like this work was so utterly foreign to me, because in engineering, you have a rather rigid training. I think it's a pity that the engineers are not given a more liberal course. But underneath somewhere I knew that there was more. And so I decided, after I got out of college, that I really didn't want to be an engineer.

So I never really practiced it, I only got a degree.

As a matter of fact, in the last year of my training, I switched over from the school of engineering to the school of arts and sciences, so I could take some courses that I really wanted to take—some psychology, some biology, some literature, some foreign languages. So I did all that in my last year because I already had enough credits from engineering school to get a degree in chemistry and mathematics. That's the way I graduated.

But already my being was searching for something different. I had done some amateur theatricals in college, and I did them well and I enjoyed them. I was working my way through school as a radio announcer. By the time I got out, I knew I wanted to pursue something more in the performing arts field.

I continued with the announcing and went from there into acting. I was touring up and down the Eastern seaboard, and I remember I was in Atlanta, Georgia and Erick Hawkins and Martha Graham were performing the night we were off. So I went to see the performance... I just can't tell you the impact seeing Martha Graham and Erick Hawkins dance made on me. They were at their best. I did something that I never did much of, and never do now, I ran backstage and introduced myself to Hawkins—Martha Graham wasn't available—and told him how much I enjoyed his work. I said, "Look, we'll finish our tour, I'll be back in New York probably the end of the year, and I want to work with you." So Erick was a very nice human being, he said, "Sure, come to see me, and I'll be glad to have you."

We were delayed getting back to New York, and by the time I went looking for Erick, he and Martha Graham had gone their separate ways. I went to where Erick had told me to come, which was the Martha Graham studio, and he'd gone. And it's very hard to find somebody in New York, because he wasn't that famous then.

RR: *This was in the early '50s?*

AB: Actually the year I saw him was 1950, and then I got there later than



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Right under the base of the skull in the base of the neck is a little depression. Let's call it a "neckpit." This should be soft and deep. Find yours and check it out. Leave your finger gently in the neckpit and imagine the neckpit becoming softer and deeper and the finger sinking in. This can help release tightness in the spine all the way down through the tailbone. In daily life, avoid tightening the "neckpit" to support, balance or hold your head in place.

I give somewhat of an explanation for the general tenor of the Work, and also before each specific exercise I try to orient the students, so at least they have an idea of what they are going to be doing, whether they understand it or not. Anyway, I thought, what is this strange woman doing, and debated whether I should go back or just forget this.

On the way home I began to think: Now Erick is a very talented person. I got to know him very well. He was very generous with his students. He sort of sheltered me, and pointed me to books which were in the direction of where I was going, things I needed to know about and didn't. I was all technical information, so he would talk with me about some of the books on Eastern philosophy, which he was influenced by quite a bit. So I thought, Erick is intelligent, talented, and has the utmost integrity. Maybe—and I didn't want to face the fact—there is something lacking in me.

So I decided, I'm going back. I'm going to find out what Barbara Clark is doing, and I'm going to stick with it. So I did that, and as I began to see her more and more, I began to understand,

that. So I studied with Martha Graham for a couple of years, and then I did find Erick and I worked with him. After I worked with Erick for awhile, I saw something in the movement that he and his good students were doing that was very profound, but I didn't know how to get it.

So after class one day I went to Erick and I told him just what I'm telling you, I said, "How can I get this? Because I don't seem to be getting it from just taking your class, there's something quite involved, quite foreign to my being able to develop on my own. Is there anything I can do to begin to get a deeper insight into this?" He said yes, and he sent me to Barbara Clark, with whom he had worked... actually he had worked with Sweigard too before that.

So I went, and again, this was very

strange to me what she was doing. Remember, this was in 1951 or '52, and the people of my generation, they were not as oriented to the work I'm doing as you folks are, because things have progressed in some ways in all those years. The use of images and the use of thinking this way is not so strange as it was then, particularly for a person with my background. Not everybody was as rigid as I was [*laughs*].

But I went to Barbara Clark and she gave me a lesson and I remember where it was...I think it was above the Art Student's League on 57th Street in New York, by Carnegie Hall. So after I got out, I went to catch my bus in front of Carnegie Hall, and I was thinking, "What is this strange woman doing?" I didn't understand it. And she gave no explanations, you know.

and I began to get quite proficient at it, and she recognized that and then... See, when I met Barbara she was already 65, and she asked me if I wanted to assist her in teaching. I was interested in improving myself, for the dance and for acting. I really didn't have any designs on teaching. I told Barbara that, that I didn't really want to be a teacher, but I felt I owed her so much that I would assist her, and I would do my best. And that's the way I got involved.

Nancy Lyons: *Can you say a little more about your early performing career?*

AB: As I mentioned, I was acting when I got interested in dance, and even though I studied a lot of dance, I considered myself to be an actor who danced, not a dancer per se. My first performing with an established dance company was with Charles Weidman, and it came about quite accidentally.

I had a friend who was a member of his company, and I used to drop by their rehearsals. Charles, who was a wonderful humorist, was planning to redo the Thurber fables and needed a narrator and asked me. I said, "Sure, I'd be glad to." He didn't simply have me stand on the stage like a stick, but he choreographed little, simple movements for me. As we began to work more, he could see that I had a movement background, that I could move. After we finished choreographing that, he asked me to do some straight dance for him. That's how I got started dancing with a professional company.

Of late, I've been working with Mimi Garrard, another dance humorist.

The Work

RR: *You talk about the Work being based on images...*

AB: I don't know that I would phrase it that way. I would say that the methodology employs the use of images, for the most part.

RR: *OK...to redefine movement patterns?*

AB: Actually to *reeducate* movement patterns. I would like to say it this way, to make it a little more accurate. What you are doing is reestablishing or reeducating the neuromuscular patterns, which are responsible for the movement patterns to a great extent.

RR: *Now what about the patterns themselves. How are they fixed or stored in the body?*

AB: They are implemented, created, and stored by the central nervous system. Now, this is very interesting, I'm really glad you asked this because it is at the basis of how to really understand what the Work is about. You could say that movement is a neuromusculoskeletal event and each of the systems has it's own specific role to play. [See detailed explanation in "An Introduction to Ideokinesis," preceding this interview.]

In terms of movement, what you want to do is to learn *what* the movement is, not *how to do* the movement. To learn what the movement is, very specifically and very precisely. If you have that very clear in your intention, when you decide to do it, the nervous system will often choose the most efficient muscle pattern. The problem is that many of us have already established inefficient patterns that need a little more work to make the change. That's where the image comes in. It's a way to tap into the system. It's still somewhat indirect, but it is to modify the message that is going to the muscles in order to make a change in the pattern.

RR: *All movement then is based on an image or picture? You mentioned you have an intent that is subconscious. Could that be an unconscious image or picture of the movement you are about to make before you make it?*

AB: That's what I think. In fact, I include, as part of imagery, "thought" in general. Of course, the image of movement is very specific. If you want to get up out of this chair and leave this room, you have to think it before you do it. It is not just going to happen. So in that respect I think that is a form of imagery. Thought, desire, intention, insight, attitude. I consider all these things as forms of imagery,

which can be used as a part of a specific image in the technique to change the muscle patterns.

Anything you think is influencing you. We don't realize it. I'm interested in the health field in general, and so many of the health people believe you are what you eat, and I along with others believe you are what you think. Sometimes I say to my students not to waste their time on negative thoughts and destructive thinking and idle thought too much. It's not good for the individual.

I'll give you an extension of my thinking on it, beyond just improving the neuromuscular system. All of the systems in the body are tending to go toward what is called *homeostasis*, which is the body trying to bring itself more nearly into balance all the time. So if you work on one system, and you're somewhat successful, it tends to bring the others into balance also. This work is going to affect the whole being.

As I look at this technique, I see it on an even larger scale than what I've just described. We human beings are constantly recreating ourselves, moment by moment, year by year. Our thoughts, our intentions, our desires, our insights, our attitudes, all of these things which we are involved with in our daily life are changing us...albeit on an unconscious level; we aren't going around doing this deliberately.

One of the major benefits of the technique is that maybe we could use it in a flexible way, not in an authoritarian way or in a rigid way, but in a constructive way so that we might guide this process, so that it doesn't happen so haphazardly, as it does in so many of our lives.

RR: *It's a framework for change, or a means to channel change in a proper direction.*

AB: Exactly. We wouldn't look at ourselves at the end of, say, five or ten years, and wonder how we got that way, but rather realize that we did it, we created ourselves through how we lived for those years. G.K. Chesterton said, "After the age of 40, we all have the face we deserve."

RR: *And the body too.*

Structural Alignment

RR: *These patterns that we're attempting to redefine through your work don't like to be redefined, they resist change.*

AB: That's correct.

RR: *I'd like to know about the images: how do they function to redefine these patterns? How do they work on the level of the CNS and the brain?*

I know that sounds very strange—it did to me when I first encountered it—but if you think about it, it really isn't strange at all. If the structure is in balance, that means the muscular patterns are in balance, because they are responsible for maintaining the alignment. So you're not going to have a balanced alignment with an imbalance in the muscles which are creating the alignment. That is why we are able to put this emphasis on the alignment in order to influence the muscle pattern.

knows alignment. If you intend to perform a certain movement or achieve a certain alignment, the nervous system will organize the most efficient muscle pattern to carry out your intention. It is responding to your intention in regard to the movement and/or the alignment, *not* to your intention in regard to what muscles to use. When practicing movement, think *movement*, not muscle.

RR: *You've suggested in the past that there's really no such thing as one muscle.*

AB: I said that muscles do not act singly in normal functioning. The mistake that even experienced anatomists make is that they will analyze a movement and they will find that a certain muscle is involved in that movement, and then they list that muscle's function as creating that movement. That's alright, because it's partially true. But if you're not careful, you can get the idea that that muscle is the only muscle that performs that function, whereas if I take a step, 118 muscles are involved—that's the "guesstimate." Some yogis have learned to isolate single muscles, but that's not normal functioning.

RR: *This idea of "mechanical efficiency" must have appealed to you as a former engineering student.*



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In *constructive rest position* (CRP), the legs are folded so that the angle formed at the knee joint is approximately 90 degrees. Imagine the legs to be a pair of trousers folded over a hanger at the knee-fold. The hanger is supported from above. When you are able to imagine this image clearly and intensively, your back will release into the floor more easily.

AB: I'm going to explain it the way that I work with it. Let's go back to something else in the development of the work with Sweigard and Todd. They learned early on that movement performance and skeletal alignment are completely interdependent, and that improvement in the mechanical efficiency of either one automatically leads to improvement in the other.

RR: *You go below the muscle pattern to create the alignment? You're not working directly with the muscles to create the alignment, you're going straight to the source, the nervous system?*

AB: Yes. The nervous system doesn't know muscle in the way many of us think about it. It knows movement, it

AB: Right. That is one of the things that attracted me. Todd and Sweigard laid a very heavy emphasis on structural alignment. It is what Sweigard gave a very special name to, *postural pattern*, that is, structural alignment. She maintained that each individual had one and only one postural pattern.

RR: *They are different for different individuals, depending on body type...*

AB: Body type, and also how you use the body. So each individual has one and only one postural pattern. I make this point because some kinesiologists use the term in the plural and what I

think they are referring to with their definition, is “positions,” in other words, they are calling different positions different postural patterns. What Sweigard was saying is that when you change positions, the postural pattern doesn’t change, the position changes.

For instance, let me give you the definition of postural pattern that she gave—the postural pattern is *the constant and persistent alignment of the skeletal parts in relation to the central axis in the fundamental standing position*—which is just standing on the two legs, feet parallel, hands hanging by your sides. That is opposed to the anatomical position where you have your arms spread out and legs spread.

An individual, for example, can be right-sided—not right-handed—as when you use the right side in such a way as to pull the bony structure to the right of the central axis and actually you’ve created another axis.

RR: *An imbalance which can occur when a person always uses one side of the body more than the other, say for example a mail carrier or someone who habitually carries a bag over the same shoulder?*

AB: Exactly. If you sit, stand or walk or change positions, your bones are still to the right of center.

Then she proceeded to give a definition of what the ideal postural pattern would be and it is simply one that conforms to mechanical balance. She defined it in this way—the *ideal postural pattern is one in which the skeletal parts or weights are balanced as close to the central axis as the structure permits and the center of gravity is as low as the structure permits*—again, in the fundamental standing position. The proviso “as the structure permits” simply means that you’re not going to distort the normal contours of the human structure in order to have that happen.

I want to give you the derivation of “postural pattern.” It puts a human face on it and is where Sweigard got it. Mabel Todd was a person who had a fantastic imagination. She thought in terms of the cosmos. Sometimes she compared human organization to something that is basic to our world.



photo © 1995 Hugo Lottschen

The sternum should not be depressed or caved in. Neither should it be rigidly fixed or held in a forced high position. It needs to be able to respond to breath and movement. An image that can help you find this coordination is this: Imagine you are a puppet suspended from the manubrium (top of the sternum) by a puppeteer. In back, attached to your tailbone is a very heavy weight. You need to practice and think through this image often to get its essence. Once you get it, the results can be most rewarding.

RR: *She drew an analogy between the structure of the individual and the structure of the universe?*

AB: Yes. Todd compared the organization or structure of the human body, what Sweigard called the “postural pattern,” to the organization of matter in the universe. The heavenly bodies, for example, the planets and stars, have a certain relationship, and even though they’re in movement, that relationship is consistent. So that when we look at the Milky Way, or the solar system, we recognize it because of that relationship of its parts. Or on the microscopic level, we can take the molecular organization of matter: the molecules are arranged in a certain pattern that is specific to that particular bit of matter, whether it’s wood or iron or whatever, so that when we see it we recognize it

for what it is. Todd compared human structural alignment to this cosmic organization, and maintained that we often recognize people by this structural organization, again which Sweigard called the “postural pattern.” Todd said this was particularly true about people with whom we’d been in close touch, parents, children, spouses, whatever.

RR: *You could see someone in the distance and know who it is by the way he or she is walking or standing.*

AB: Yes. That’s where postural pattern comes from. Sweigard organized it in a more scientific way to present it on a university level. I want everyone to bring it down from the abstract, intellectual level to everyday life, so that everyone understands its human face.

RR: *Now, everyone has a postural pattern that is characteristic of them; is there also a postural pattern that is the ideal pattern for that same person?*

AB: Yes. As I said: the skeletal parts are balanced as close to the central axis as the structure permits. That's the ideal. Sweigard called it an unattainable ideal because nobody is going to be perfect.

RR: *Because perfection implies an end, and as you've mentioned, people are process.*

AB: I feel that. And I feel that it is very healthy to think of any of these processes as continual, as never reaching their fruition totally, so that you are always in process.

RR: *That works on the level of the images too, the movement never stops as you use the image.*

AB: What we are doing, for most of the work, is using imagery that images movement of parts of the structure in relation to the central axis—do they need to move up, down, in or out? When we imagine that movement, the nervous system responds to create a muscle pattern that would do that movement. Some of the muscles need to relax. Other muscles need to tense. There is what I sometimes refer to as “differential relaxation” involved, but it is not total relaxation.

RR: *You have to create right tension.*

AB: Correct. We use images to work with that. One group of images releases muscles, and the other group brings more tone. It's very simple. Those images that seek to create more distance of the skeletal parts between each other, generally are the ones that are going to be releasing muscles, because it is those muscles that tend to pull the bones closer together. Those images that seek to bring two bones closer together would be ones that encourage increased muscle tone. You have to create tone. All muscles need to have some tone. Complete relaxation is death.

RR: *That's the point Todd makes at the end of The Thinking Body about relaxation being not complete flaccidity. There is a balance between activity and release.*

AB: Absolutely. That is one of the things that is quite often not understood in the Todd work. Relaxation, the kind she's talking about, is a balance between the work and rest phase. If you look at the physiology of the body, you'll see that all of the work phases that are autonomic, as far as I have been able to determine, are balanced by the rest phase: heart beat, breathing, all the cellular activity, have pauses in them. Otherwise the organism wouldn't be able to function for a lifetime without shutting down for a long period of time, and life would cease.

In balancing the structure through imagery, you are balancing the muscle system overall, which balances the structural pattern. So a good postural pattern implies that the muscles are balanced. Generally speaking, the muscle patterns of the body in toto are a reflection of the postural pattern, and vice versa.

RR: *The muscles pull the bones into proper alignment.*

AB: That's true. I think it's better to say that than to think of the muscles as supporting the weight. There has to be some muscle work to maintain the upright position and that's understood. But it isn't so much that you pull the weight up into the muscles and hold onto it, supporting it that way, but it's more that the muscles are busy lining up the bones efficiently with gravity, so that there is the least amount of support of the weight needed by the muscles. It is so much less than people understand because many of us are going in for overwork. You can maintain a beautiful upright position without that extra work. What I'm saying is that you can get that ideal alignment, but if you are just holding that posture rigidly, it is not truly an ideal postural pattern. I feel that rigidity is one of the major sins we commit in trying to improve the postural pattern or structural alignment.

I would also like to emphasize that the whole thinking behind the postural pattern really needs to be a state of balance. The key word is “balance,” because if you're balanced, by its very nature, balance can't be a holding procedure. If you've ever seen a tightrope walker, if they got static walking on a rope, they'd fall and break their neck.

We need to appreciate the idea that the biped is actually very precariously balanced on these two thin poles we call legs, and if it weren't for our balance ability, we'd fall. This process is happening moment to moment. We don't think about it because it's already become somewhat of a reflex. That's the key word in the whole thing: balance.

The Images

RR: *What makes an effective image?*

AB: The image, in order to work, needs to make a strong imprint on the nervous system, and in order to do that it has to be unusual. It should not be boring and it should be of great interest, and it can achieve those objectives by being outrageous, ridiculous, or so beautiful, or anything that is excessive, in order to grab the attention of the nervous system.

RR: *I liked what you once said about the image as bait, and the central nervous system as the fish.*

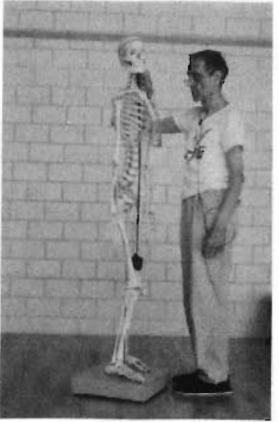
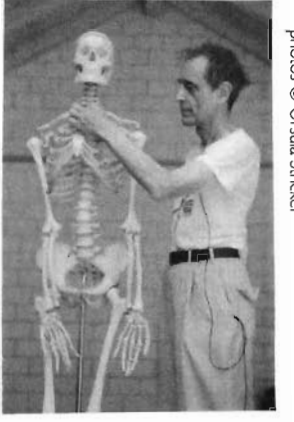
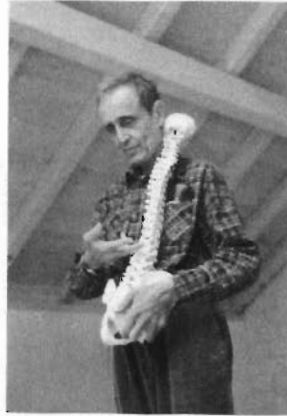
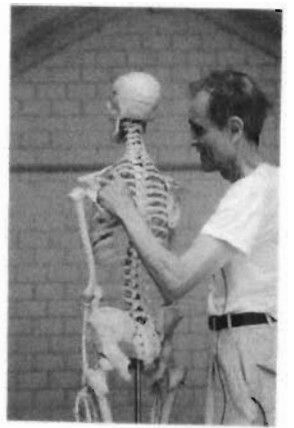
AB: Yes. And you have to make the bait as attractive to the fish as possible in order to get it to take a bite. That's where the “creative” part of the title that I quite often call the work I do comes in—creative approach to movement and alignment—because it is the individual creating the conditions to make the change.

Todd said something that was so wonderful in her book, *The Thinking Body*. You can read it again and again and always get something you didn't get before. She said that good movement takes place the same way that it rains, snows, sleets, and the wind blows—because conditions are right.

(Interview cont'd on pg 34)

CAPTIONS

- PHOTO 1: To free your wrist, grasp it lightly about four inches above where it really is and imagine that the wrist is where you are grasping.
- # 2: Reach *from* your central vertical axis (an imaginary vertical line from the floor up through the center of your body and on up through the center of your head), not *with* it. Notice how this improves your balance.
 - # 3: The foot has 25 movable bones. Allow them to move when walking. See how many you can be aware of as you walk. The feet should be articulate. Imagine them to be as articulate as the hands. Avoid wearing stiff unyielding clogs. Otherwise, unless you have superbly articulate feet, they will take on the stiff quality of the clogs.
 - # 4: The rib cage is inside the shoulder girdle. Notice that the first rib is under the clavicle (collar bone). Imagine the rib cage to be an extraordinarily large plum shrinking into a prune inside the shoulder girdle. You might lose some of your shoulder tension, but do you really need it?
 - # 5: The joints of the body need to be easily foldable, especially the thigh joint. Balance your weight on your sit bones (tuberocities of the ischia) at the bottom of your pelvis and fold your thigh bone into your body. Think of the fold as that of soft cloth and getting progressively deeper. Think of the knee-end of the thigh as extending or releasing into space.
 - # 6: The spine is a multi-jointed structure; it has 24 movable vertebrae. It needs to be supple rather than stiffly held so that it can respond to whatever you're doing. To help free it, imagine the little knobs (posterior spinous processes) on the backs of the vertebrae tumbling down like a row of dominos.
 - # 7: Place the hand and arm easily in front of you. Imagine the weight of it resting on the tops of the thigh bones where your pelvis rests. Observe how much easier it is to maintain the position.
 - # 8: The spine needs its four curves, but they should not be too exaggerated or the spine will be supporting weight too far from the central axis. To get a balance of the curves, imagine the spine lengthening down the back through the tailbone (coccyx) into infinity.
 - # 9: Imagine the top of the head brushing against the ceiling as you let your spine lengthen down the back through the tailbone and beyond.
 - # 10: In balancing your weight on your sit-bones, try to balance the weight evenly on both sides. Notice that the sit-bones are below the coccyx, so that no weight rests on the coccyx.
 - # 11: After you have practiced deeply folding the thigh in the sitting position and are aware of it, develop this awareness in your walk. The amount of the folding is not the main emphasis, although eventually you need to develop as much range of folding as possible. What is important always is the sense of the "depth" of the fold. That sense of depth should be practiced even in a slight fold.
 - # 12: The central axis of the body is like a plumb-line (a piece of string with a weight on the end) which carpenters use to reveal the line of the gravitational pull. Imagine your central axis to be a plumb-line, always becoming more nearly perpendicular to what you're standing or sitting on (assuming you're standing or sitting on a flat surface).
 - # 13: Think of the fold behind the knee as getting softer and deeper. This will help to release a locked knee joint.
 - # 14: Imagine the pelvis hanging from the lower end of the spine as you stand, walk, or even sit. Practice this and you will achieve a freedom of the lower back and pelvis that might surprise you.
 - # 15: Think of the jaw hanging from its connections under the ears (temporomandibular joint). This can help release a tight jaw and relieve other TMJ problems.
 - # 16: Think of the weights of the head, rib cage and pelvis centered over one another and the shoulders loosely thrown over the rib cage like a cape. The cape is fastened at the top of the sternum.



photos © Ursula Srincker

I think that is such a profound way of saying what it is, and of getting us out of these mechanistic concepts, talking about the synapses, etc. You need this kind of understanding, because one's understanding is part of the imagery.

RR: *You give four very specific principles to observe in the the use of imagery.*

AB: First, the image must be *moving*, it must be in the present participle, it is happening, it needs to be dynamic. If it is static, held, then you are creating a static response from the nervous system to the muscles, which creates kind of a holding pattern.

RR: *Which won't be effective in movement.*

AB: Nor in the standing position. Now, I've just fallen into a trap, I knew I was. The standing position is actually movement, because no one is ever perfectly still. There is always some movement to and from the central axis and Sweigard thought, and I agree, that the more dynamic the postural pattern, the more rapid the movement and the smaller the deviation; and the less dynamic the postural pattern, the less rapid, and it deviates more from the central axis.

The next thing is that you need to be clear about *where* the image is in the body, and since the image is going to be in movement, then it has to have a clear *direction*. The fourth principle when using imagery is that there be *no voluntary movement*.

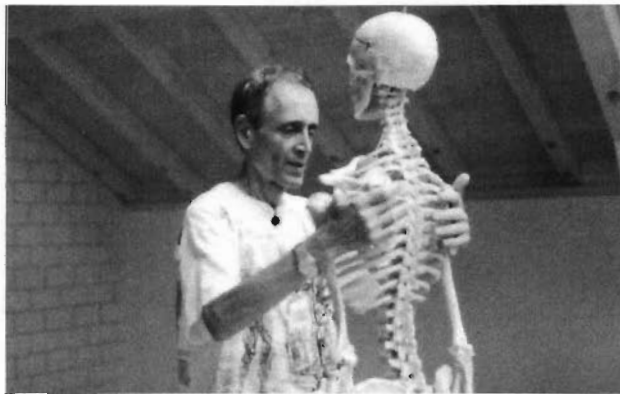
I divide the images into two general categories (though you can divide them in many ways). The first category includes what I call the *skeletal imagery*, which is simply imaging the skeleton—bones, and their relationships. An example of that is imagining that the weight of the body is resting on the tops of the thigh bones.

RR: *You show pictures of bones and use a skeletal model in your classes. Do you think it's important that students have a good idea of what the bones look like before they try to image them?*

AB: I think it's a very good idea that they have that, and better than a picture is the bone itself. I want the students to have a sense of the shape and mass of the bone, and the structure of the bony system, from a sense of touch.

RR: *The images themselves are directed at the bones?*

AB: Yes. Let's take a pair of images we have, two of the "nine lines of movement," outlined by Sweigard, that go together: one is to think of *narrowing across the front of the pelvis*; the companion to that is *widening across the back of the pelvis*. Now that is not



Shoulder tension is prevalent in our society and continues to increase. Here's another tool to deal with it: Imagine a thin but soft sponge slipped under the shoulder blade between the shoulder blade and the ribs from the inner border to the outer border. After you are able to imagine the sponge being completely between the shoulder blade and the ribs, imagine the sponge getting wet and expanding, creating more space between the shoulder blade and the ribs. Caution: avoid even the smallest amount of voluntary movement in an attempt to make the image work. Just imagine the image. Voluntary movement during this process will invalidate the process and reinforce the pattern you are trying to change. While all the imagery given in this article can be done in any position, it is better that this image and other shoulder images be done first in the constructive rest position (CRP) [see *Introduction*]. After the process is over, before moving, let your mind and body rest awhile so that your being can absorb the experience of the process.

going to change the actual structure of the pelvis, but it influences the muscles in the front of the pelvis to contract, and the muscles in the back of the pelvis to release. So again, we are using the skeletal system, and imagining its ideal alignment, to affect the muscle system.

RR: *And the second category of images are called abstract images?*

AB: *Abstract, or non-anatomical imagery* uses a representation of the skeletal structure or body such as the "suit of clothes." That is, instead of imagining the movement of the bony structure, we imagine the movement of the "suit of clothes." In this case, you'd imagine a pair of trousers with two pockets in the back moving away from one another and two in the front coming together.

Whether you use one kind of image or the other, the whole body is going to be affected—that is, if the nervous system "takes the bait"—because the whole body is going to adjust to any change you make in one part of the body.

RR: *Are these images also related to what Todd called the "compression and tensile members" of the body?*

AB: Todd points out that weights are supported either by sitting or hanging or bracing. "Sitting" is when the weight is resting on a structure below it—a *compression member*, generally the bones. "Hanging" is when the weight is suspended from a structure above—by a *tensile member*, generally muscle. And "bracing" is a combination of the two.

Todd said that we should, as much as possible, relegate the resistance to the stress of gravity, that is, the support of weight, to the compression members, so that the muscles, the tensile members, are free to move the bones.

Of course, you can't just be balanced on bone without some muscle work because the body is irregular in shape—it's symmetrical bilaterally, but not front to back—so in order to maintain the sitting or standing position,

there has to be some muscle work to maintain uprightness and balance. So what Todd tried to do with her work was to teach people how to get a balance between the bone support and the muscle support. That is one of the seminal concepts that Todd brought to body training, the idea of balancing the weights that are sitting on the bones and the weights that are hanging from the muscles.

I've often pointed out that what we're doing is just shifting energy around. When you get a release in one part of the body, there's going to have to be a concomitant energy exchange, where you need support for what you're releasing. Otherwise you'd fall down. This is particularly true in the classic Todd image of *up-the-front and down-the-back of the spine*: the "up-the-front" activates the tensile members in the front of the spine, the release in back is to relegate the support to the spine, releasing it from the muscles in the back. If you don't have that "up-the-front," then you can't release in back when you're in an upright position, because you need some muscle work or you fall down.

One more thing about the images. In *constructive rest*, there should be no voluntary movement. Whenever one goes into voluntary movement usually the established pattern for that movement is going to be utilized—on a subconscious level, it isn't intentional. That's the message going from the nervous system to the muscles to have you move. That message is pretty much on automatic.

Now here you are, wanting to change the message. When there is voluntary movement during *constructive rest*, you have conflicting messages going into the nervous system; it's like a tug-of-war between the established muscle pattern and the new one that's trying to be established. And the established message or muscle pattern is usually going to win out over the new image.

Movement is what activates the old

pattern. If you are lying down in *constructive rest*, then you are not activating that pattern because you don't have to use muscles to maintain the position, so it is the position in which we use imagery a great deal of the time.

It's like a black board: you need to erase the black board before you can put a new message on it. This position affords you an opportunity to erase the black board.

There's something related to that, which is that you should not be evaluating the process while you are in it because if you do, you are not feeding the image message into the nervous system, but you are feeding extraneous



When extending the arm, think of the end connected to the shoulder as resting there (glenoid cavity) instead of gripping around the area for support. The rest of the arm is floating on water. Note the ease of maintaining the position as you think it this way.

information which has no relation to what you want to accomplish. Like debris, cluttering up the process. After, you can evaluate it or whatever, but it's just that while you are in the process, you shouldn't do that.

The fact that CRP is a position we're not often in also has an effect. Change of position helps to break up old patterns. There was a jazz musician in New York who worked in nightclubs. Before each set he would go out into the alleyway at the back of the nightclub and he would assume

some odd position, such as hanging over a trash can, because he knew it would change his patterns, free up his creative energy. So changing positions, even when they're not so passive as the *constructive rest*, contributes to changing patterns.

RR: *You once said the goal of the image is to "become the image," to exclude everything else for the time being while you are working with it and become the image.*

AB: That's right. It's like a child playing a game and pretending she's something that she's not. The child knows that she is not that, but for that moment, she is believing that she is. But underneath that, fully realizing that she is not that. That's what a good actor has to do. Another reason this work appealed to me was my acting experience. You become the character you play... I take the time to point that out because when you say "become the image," you know somewhere you're not an image.

RR: *What you're bringing out here is something I didn't quite realize before, that there is a very strong play element in all this work.*

AB: Yes. You should play with the images, play with the process, have fun with it.

RR: *The student goes to your class and uses the images that you present in the class. How does the student then go about creating a "library" of his or her own images? Things that may be particularly effective for the work that he or she is doing?*

AB: What I ask them to do is at first to use the images fairly near to what I have given them, or from Todd, Sweigard, Clark...but then as they get proficient with them and realize the essence of the image, then they can tailor them to their own specific needs. I think they shouldn't do this at first, because

at first they quite possibly are not understanding what they are going after.

One of the reasons I don't spend too much time explaining what they're going after is that it's not a good idea to do what F. M. Alexander called "end-gaining." If you get too involved in the end result which might be desirable, you are going to confuse the nervous system. Also, you're going to shut out any other response the nervous system might have that is not what you really desire for the image to be.

I do emphasize that the student remain open to other things happening to her or him. Then you can eventually understand what other things you need. You know yourself better than anyone else. Once you get this better kinesthetic understanding, then you know what to do.

Just remember that the tailored images need to be interesting to the nervous system, which means interesting to you. I can give you an example: the image of the "suit of clothes." Each person will have his or her own desire for the style or the color or texture of the clothing. Some might see the style as attractive, or it could be the opposite, that is, obnoxious. The principle here is that the image needs to be quite active, and it needs to be extraordinary, or even outrageous. So the style could be appealing, or it could be obnoxious—that would get the attention of the nervous system. That would make the "bait" more attractive, even in a negative way. Some personalities thrive on that way of getting attention. My own preference is something very attractive.

But we're all different in our nervous system organization, and I think that's responsible for our tastes. Some students respond to some of the images very well, they like them, find them effective. Others will look at those same images and find nothing in them. The problem isn't the image or the individual, but just that different nervous systems are organized differently.



photo © Ursula Stricker

In a constructive sitting position, the angle at the thigh joint should be no more than 90 degrees, so that the weight of the legs is not pulling the body off balance. Practice balancing your weight on your two sit-bones in this position. Intend to balance the weight evenly on both sides.

RR: *Then do you offer different images?*

AB: I do it all the time in class, hoping that if I stay long enough with a group of students, I will reach them with some image, so I do give a variety of images.

You need variety. Even if an image works well for a person, the nervous system is dulled by repetition and eventually it's going to be "old hat." It will hardly respond at some point or reject it. So you need to use other images. What I advise anyone working with the system is that if they find an image that doesn't work for them, don't force. Use the images with which they feel the closest affinity. Not to discard the image that doesn't seem to work, rather keep it in repertoire and come back to it. As you do the work and change, it's like giving it to a different person. As the postural pattern changes, you see the world differently.

RR: *So if you want to tailor images to your own needs, it's something that you have to experience directly, to find out what's most effective for you.*

AB: The important word is "experience." Images should lead to an experience, they must not simply be cold, mechanical images. If you don't get an experience from the imagery, then I would say that the nervous system is not "biting," it's not taking the bait. It's like art. If you dance or perform, and you're not involved in it, there's nothing happening, it's sterile, it's not art. It's the same thing with the images.

I think one of my contributions to the work is emphasizing the art, the application of ideokinesis, rather than going into the technical side of it.

RR: *Is there anything else you'd like to say about your contribution to the Work?*

AB: I think one contribution is the fleshing out of the image to be more than just the mechanical picture. I brought into the process, in general, an emphasis on all thought as influencing the muscle patterns, and indeed the entire body, and specifically, intent, desire, attitude, insight. All of these are actually involved with the image.

These are specifics I give the student in order to bring the image alive, to make it dynamic, to make it attractive to the nervous system.

As an example, take the classic Todd image of thinking “up the front” of the spine and “down the back.” I give that as imagining a river flowing up the spine and down the back. The student is asked to imagine as well the temperature of the water, the colors of the water, the rate of flow, and to imagine the sternum as a bridge (the river flows under the bridge). As the river flows down the back, imagine the posterior spinous processes (the little knob-like structures on the back of the spine) tumbling down.

RR: *What are the differences between the approaches of Barbara Clark and Lulu Sweigard?*

AB: Sweigard emphasized the scientific aspect, and Clark the art.

RR: *Is there anything you can say about how each one of them advanced the Work or changed the way the Work was taught?*

AB: There’s no question that Sweigard made the Work more acceptable among the scientific community by her strict adherence to scientific principles.

Clark’s great contribution was humanizing the Work. Not that Sweigard was inhuman, but Clark’s artistic approach made the Work more human, even more so than Todd. Also, and this is my opinion here, Clark was gifted with the ability to create images for what needed to be done that was just extraordinary. She just seemed to have that knack of speaking the language of imagery. That’s what she imparted to her longtime students—myself, Pam Matt, John Rolland.

One of the most delightful things I remember about studying with Barbara is that we got to where we talked in the language of imagery, instead of the language of technical information. That makes all the difference in the world in

terms of how you use the work. If you want to improve your movement, you’ve got to talk in the language of movement. It’s very much like an actor: if you analyze a scene or a character psychologically, as some actors do in the modern era, that’s alright, but that analysis is not useful to the actor in terms of creating the character unless he has some ability to translate it into behavior.

RR: *Is there much movement in your classes, or are the classes mostly passive?*

AB: There’s not a lot of movement in the class. A lot of it is imagined movement. There’s not much physical movement, but the class is not passive. It’s very active mentally. The concentration, the mental energy that it takes to do images well, is enormous. Not all of us realize how important mental energy or concentration is to physical activity, to performing our daily tasks, whether they be physical or mental.

Furthermore, it’s a very important part of dance, the ability to concentrate on what you’re doing, which is really using imagery. As I watch my dancers at N.Y.U., if they fluff a phrase, I can see where it comes from: it’s the mental process that’s gone blank, or somehow they get fatigued mentally, and that’s when they lose that concentration, that’s when the movement goes awry.

RR: *What role does the breath play in your work?*

AB: Sweigard said this so well. She said, you can’t breathe any better than what your postural pattern allows. If you have holding patterns, or are misaligned in terms of being stooped over, etc. that is going to automatically limit the effectiveness of the breath. So my basic approach is that we want to free the organism so that the breath can take place freely.

Training Dancers

NL: *Do you feel like the work that you do could be useful to dancers and athletes in preventing injuries?*

AB: Oh yes. Because the better coordinated you are, the less likely you are to injure yourself. That has been my emphasis, training a person to learn good movement patterns to prevent injury.

NL: *Have you used your work as an aid in the healing process?*

AB: I have used this work principally as an educational tool, rather than a therapeutic tool, although to a great extent it has served as therapy for many of the students who have worked with me. But that has not been my principal focus.

At the beginning, I was working just as most people who come to class were. Their desire was just to become physically more centered. Then I began to see how it centered people psychologically. I see in class—and one of the things that keeps me teaching—is how beautiful people look as they begin to get close to their center.

NL: *One of the major issues right now in dance training is how to educate dancers to be whole and integrated movers, who are responsible for themselves as movers, who are thinking, feeling, sensing whole humans, as opposed to highly skilled performers with bags of tricks. Can you say how your work relates to that issue?*

AB: That’s something that I feel very strongly about. I feel that a dancer or performer or an athlete must perform from where they are at the moment. That is to say, you can’t be working on a technique to improve yourself while you’re performing, that has to be done before you perform. Mainly I was

developing these more integrated muscle patterns as I studied dance, as I worked on the dance, and then I would take what I had developed into the performance, because when I perform I want to be performing, I don't want to be a student of a body training course. This is something I emphasize quite often to my students: I don't want you to look like a posture student when you're on stage dancing. I want to see you dance, freely.

NL: *One of the goals of dancers is ease and efficiency of movement. How does skeletal alignment influence ease and efficiency of movement?*

AB: Todd and Sweigard found out early in their teaching careers that skeletal alignment and movement performance are completely interdependent, and that improvement in the mechanical efficiency of either one automatically leads to improvement in the other. The key word here is balance. That is what allows free, flowing movement, movement with ease. And that is one of the main things that I saw in Erick Hawkins that I had no idea how to achieve when I was first his student. That was one of the hallmarks of Erick's work, the ease of the movement, and yet the movement had strength—strong, definitive movement, but with ease. I rarely saw any other dance company that had performers that so uniformly did that.

NL: *Are there other techniques that you would recommend for dance training?*

AB: Contact Improvisation is something that I've always been interested in. As you begin to learn to let the

bones support the weight, or to learn to ground yourself, that helps you get a feeling for weight, for shifting it. We practice quite a bit balancing the weight on the tops of the femurs or thigh bones. It's a very simple exercise, a very simple concept, but quite profound in its result as you cultivate it.

Now, in Contact Improvisation, as you feel out another person, as you work with the weight of the other person, and as your own weight relates to them, this can facilitate the learning process of your own weight placement. I have often over the years advised my students to do Contact Improvisation, so they can more thoroughly understand what I'm trying to get them to learn.

I think every dancer should be trained in two techniques. One is tap dance, whether you want to be a tap dancer or not, because it establishes such wonderful coordination. The other training I think all dancers should have, again whether or not they intend to go into it, is Contact Improvisation, because that is going to give you that sense of weight which is so important. Learning to experience weight, what it is, learning how to use gravity. Because gravity is not your enemy in dance, as many dancers think, it's your greatest ally.

Contact Improvisation is almost like a twentieth-century *t'ai chi*...at least a part of *t'ai chi*. There's a movement in *t'ai chi* where you do what's called "Push-Hands," and there you're touching your partner, feeling them out for their weight placement and their coordination. Contact Improvisation, as I see it, is another way to do that.

NL: *Your work has a definite connection, philosophically, to Eastern*

religions, martial arts. Could you talk a little more about that?

AB: This work attempts to bring mind and body together. It is one of the original mind-body integration techniques in the West. Todd goes back to about the time of the First World War, maybe 1914. Her work relates to Eastern thought, the Eastern way of doing things, in that it attempts to have a person move, in the current saying, "smarter, not harder." It creates an awareness that you don't have if you're not totally in the movement, not only with your body, but with your mind. You're immersed in the movement, in your whole being.

My emphasis is to integrate this work into one's daily life, so that the principles are used in whatever one does, whether it be walking down the street, climbing stairs or brushing your teeth. Good movement should not be reserved for special occasions such as dance. ♦

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BOOKS ON IDEOKINESIS IN PRINT

A Kinesthetic Legacy: The Life and Works of Barbara Clark. Pamela Matt. CMT Press, P.O. Box 26481, Tempe, AZ 85285. [also available through CQ]

Dynamic Alignment Through Imagery. Eric Franklin. Human Kinetics, 1607 N. Market St., Box 5076, Champaign, IL 61825.

Ideokinesis: Body Mind Integration and Integrity. G. Hoffman Soto. Self-published. 273 Los Angeles Blvd., San Anselmo, CA 94960.

Taking Root to Fly: articles on functional anatomy. Irene Dowd. 3rd edition. Self-published. 14 E 4th St. #606, NY, NY 10012.

The Thinking Body. Mabel Todd. A Dance Horizons Book, P.O. Box 57, Pennington, NJ 08534.

Human Movement Potential: Its Ideokinetic Facilitation. Lulu Sweigard. University Press of America, 4720 Boston Way, Lanham, MD 20706.

Inside Motion: An Ideokinetic Basis for Movement Education. John Rolland. Rolland String Research Associates. Urbana, IL. Distributed by Contact Editions, P.O. Box 603, Northampton, MA 01061.