

PACIFIC INSTITUTE for the ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE

The Alexander Technique is not a treatment, a therapy or a magic bullet, but a way of teaching us how best to use our minds and bodies in a co-ordinated and balanced manner.

The Primary Control: Alexander's first and most important discovery.

The Control and Relationship of the Head - Neck - Back

The primary control governs muscular tone and balance throughout the rest of the body. The small muscles deep under the base of the skull especially have a big influence. These muscles possess a high concentration of proprioceptors which are specialized nerve receptors. Just as the eyes have specialized nerve receptors to see, the tongue to taste, proprioceptors are specialized to help detect changes brought about by movement and muscular activity. When these small sub-occipital muscles tighten, they disturb balance between the head-neck-back. The brain immediately recognizes it and will broadcast a message of tension to the muscles throughout the body creating an overall rigid pattern of how a person moves, breathes and vocalizes. When a person feels insecure, it is a natural response to tighten these muscles first, leading to the rigidity which prevents the musician from realizing their full potential and likely causing strain and injury.

These muscles are where response begins to manifest through our physical behavior, for better or worse.

**Begin by recognizing your behavioral response in the neck and
how it leads to your Force of Habit.**

PAUSE to give your new directions

Let the neck be free from holding the head

So the head can balance to go Forward and Up

So the Spine can lengthen and the Back can widen