

## **Panel Two**

## Diffability vs Disability: Reframing Personal Definitions of Self







Becca Ferguson (USA)

## Venue: CG-055, Main Building (Ground Level)

As with many Alexander Technique (AT) teachers, Galen Cranz, Becca Ferguson and Caitlin Freeman



Caitlin Freeman (USA)

initially studied the AT to deal with physical and/or neuropsychological conditions which are often diagnosed as disabilities: Cranz for severe scoliosis; Freeman for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD); Ferguson for

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), chronic pain, bone loss, anxiety, Post -Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and substance addiction. All three have individually developed a practice of the AT that uniquely defines and reframes the concept of 'disability' to 'diffability', ('differently able'). In this workshop the three will briefly sharing their diverse paths, followed by Q & A.

Caitlin discusses her work as an autism advocate using Alexander Technique skills to recognize an autistic individual's strengths and identify areas of weakness, and help them to reframe an autism diagnosis.

Becca discusses her journey using the Alexander Technique for ADHD, chronic pain, anxiety, PTSD and almost six years of recovery from addiction to alcohol and prescription pain medication & tranquilizers.

Galen shares about her journey with scoliosis, diagnosed at age 12, and her lifelong exploration of mind/body practices to reverse her extremely curved spine, including "Cantienica", a promising Swiss system that is compatible with the Alexander Technique.

For **Galen Cranz**' profile, please see details for her Friday morning Plenary Session.

**Becca Ferguson** MAmSAT has studied the Alexander Technique world-wide, including Peter Grunwald's programs in New Zealand. She graduated from Alexander Technique Urbana, directed by Rose Bronec. Becca teaches in the Chicago and Champaign/Urbana areas, working

with clients of all ages and abilities. Areas of specialty include: "Sitting Disease", cancer patient/survivor wellness; bone loss; addiction; trauma; and AT-based mindful labyrinth walking classes/workshops. A graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design, Becca teaches customized programs she's developed with the AT, including Mindful Recovery Practices (MRP) and Alexander Technique Cancer Survivor Practices (ATCS). Becca teaches private lessons and classes and workshops in hospital settings, drug /alcohol treatment and related Behavioral Health programs such as 'drug court diversion'. She guest lectures on recovery with the AT at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana.

Caitlin Freeman MAmSAT is a professional Autism service provider. In her private practice in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Caitlin uses the Alexander Technique to work with children, teens, and adults on the Autism Spectrum. Caitlin has been a featured presenter at the Autism Society of America and other Autism support organizations, where she has lectured on the Alexander Technique as a method of sensory integration for people with Autism. Caitlin has also taught a workshop at the 2013 AmSAT ACGM in Chicago about using the Alexander Technique to help people on the Autism Spectrum. At the 2014 ACGM in Long Beach, she will teach several workshops about the use of the Alexander Technique for Autism and related conditions. Caitlin is a faculty member in the Theatre Department at Point Park University's Conservatory of Performing Arts in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where she teaches the Alexander Technique. Caitlin received her B.A. from Sarah Lawrence College in vocal performance and theatre arts, and graduated from the Alexander Technique School New England (ATSNE), directed by Missy Vineyard. Caitlin's specialty is using the Alexander Technique, voice training, and theatre coaching to work with individuals on the Autism Spectrum.

