

**The Alexander Technique Voluntary Self-Regulation Group  
c/o 10 Victoria Road, Harborne, Birmingham B17 0AH**

29th November 2005  
Sheila Dane  
Foundation for Integrated Health

Dear Sheila,

This is the Alexander Technique Voluntary Self-Regulation Group's initial response to the suggestion that we should join a federal regulatory structure with other organisations.

At the outset we would like to say that we are grateful for the support and funding that we have received from the Foundation since the inception of ATVSRG in the Autumn of 2001. We would also like to reaffirm our commitment to achieving the milestones that we have agreed with you, and our commitment to proceeding towards a regulatory structure that will be proportionate, accountable, consistent, transparent, and targeted.

However, we would like to make the following points.

1. As the AT is a taught technique and not a therapy, the principles of the AT itself and the AT profession differ from those of the partners suggested in the new federal framework. There is an enormous gulf between the philosophy and approach of the other disciplines and our own. This became evident during the meetings of the working group involved in preparing the Standards Template a few years ago. We consider that there is no possibility that we could have 60-70% competencies (p.14 Regulation Seminar Report) in common with any of the prospective partner-disciplines, i.e. Aromatherapy, Bowen Technique, Craniosacral Therapy, Healing, Homeopathy, Massage Therapy, Naturopathy, Nutritional Therapy, Reflexology, Yoga Therapy.
2. With that in view, the ATVSRG wishes to continue exploring other possible regulatory structures and will seek to find other disciplines undergoing regulation with which we could have more in common. We would welcome the Foundation's support in this.
3. We are very concerned by statements such as 'it is about public perception. The majority of people coming to see Alexander Technique teachers have an expectation of entering into a therapeutic relationship'. (Seminar report p. 7) To define the AT and the way it is to be regulated in terms of public perception in this way would be to distort what the AT is. This is in no way in the public interest.
4. We fully apprehend our professional responsibilities to the public. All four organisations in ATVSRG have existing Codes of Conduct and the ATVSRG has done significant work in developing a Code of Conduct for the profession. We have expressed our willingness to include independent parties within a complaints procedure, in keeping with government thinking on safeguarding the public interest.

5. We believe that the progress the ATVSRG has made in voluntary self-regulation exemplifies many of the features of best practice in professionally-led regulation as defined by the Better Regulation Task Force, and we will be happy to continue working with POWFIH to achieve this goal.

ATVSRG