



*The AmSAT Diversity Committee (ADC) wrote a message to our community in response to the murder of Tyre Nichols, which we share below. We of the AmSAT Board are grateful for the work that the ADC has done and continues to do to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging and access in AmSAT. We support, lift up, and amplify their invitation to consider the impact of these events and the ways they affect us—personally and in our work as teachers; the ways they affect our students; and the ways they affect other individuals we know or don't know.*

*This tragedy is one of too many occurring in the United States to marginalized people, to innocent people. It has been two and a half years since the killing of George Floyd, and race-based injustices continue.*

*We honor Tyre's memory with a call to do something different: a call to all of us to pause. In the pause, can we consider deeply in what ways each of us as Alexander teachers can counteract systemic racism? We do not know what is in the future, nor do we know what our students are reacting to among the many world events. We do, however, have skills to sustain us as we consider this question, and as we meet each student where they are. We believe these Alexander Technique skills can help us work towards change, build community, and support healing.*

*With respect to all our members,*

*The AmSAT Board*

*Geordie MacMinn (Chair)*

*Rachel Bernsen, John Dalto (Treasurer), Lisa DeAngelis (Chair Elect), Matthew Dubroff (Past Chair), Emily Faulkner, Amanda MacDonald, Erin O'Leary, Ruth Rootberg (Exec. Comm), Renee Schneider (Secretary), and Eleanor Taylor*

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To the AmSAT Membership,

We invite you to pause to acknowledge the life of Tyre Nichols (June 5, 1993–January 10, 2023).

For any of you who may not already know, Tyre, a 29-year-old father who loved skateboarding, photography, and sunsets, was beaten by Memphis police so severely at a traffic stop in January that he died. Tyre was also a Black man.

Can we pause to remember Tyre and countless others who have died at the hands of police?

The perpetrators of Tyre's death, whose beliefs include a refusal to acknowledge the value of his life, have been supported by structures in our nation that allowed his murder to take place. These structures and beliefs are systemic habits that have become ingrained into the fibers of our nation.

Let us acknowledge that our use is affected as we hold and process this newest tragedy in the United States. We may not be able to change the forces that led to this event merely by considering "habits" or "the use of the self" in an isolated context. But, we can take time to examine our habitual response to uncomfortable events that may include the feeling that nothing can be done.

We can also acknowledge that our students carry this burden with them into lessons, classes, and training courses across the country, whether or not they—or we—are aware or speaking of it aloud. This is the nature of our interconnectedness as human beings. Tyre Nichols's death shifts the entire balance of our human race, as does all mistreatment, large and small.

Can we pause to become aware of the interconnectedness within ourselves and respond in a new way to this tragedy?

Notice the changes in *your* use when you consider that each life affects the entire balance of humanity, however minutely this may be so. It is this interconnectedness that makes it possible to reinforce toxic collective habits over the course of generations. OR...makes it possible to choose different behaviors that can affect the world inside and outside our studios and classrooms.

Might it also be this interconnectedness that can create freedom and improved relations within a group...our group?

Can we pause in such a way, not to opt out, but to opt in and consider new ways of using our skills among ourselves?

AmSAT is not here to change the world, but we might look at our organization and consider how we can bring our skills of conscious awareness to our collective actions and behaviors as a community. We can look at how to support greater equity, inclusion, belonging, and access for our diverse population and our diverse needs in order to fulfill our united mission: to establish the Alexander Technique as a basic and recognized resource for health, productivity, and well-being. We believe we can achieve extraordinary things if we can grow and thrive as a community, and create positive ripple effects in the greater society.

In the service of AmSAT,

The AmSAT Diversity Committee

Merissa Fuentes, Jennifer Kelly, Nicole Martinell, Jeannette Payne, Renee Schneider, Carol Swann, and Eleanor Taylor, Board liaison