

ATI-LA TRAINEE CORNER

Every Thought Counts - Freediving & The Alexander Technique



Michelle Lai, ATI-LA AT Teacher Trainee Free Diving

On February 21, 2022, I received my AIDA II Course Freediver certification with Christina Sours' Spitsea Diving in Redondo Beach, CA. It was an intensive weekend, though I was surprised how easeful & comfortable the process was as I proceeded through the course completing a static apnea (breathhold) of 2:30min and a 15 meter constant weight dive (diving on one breath hold while finning).

During the open water session of the course, I was so excited to discover that the Alexander Technique is an invaluable tool for freediving. Conversely, freediving is a great barometer for the possibilities of ease that can be accessed through the Alexander Technique. Even more exciting to me is how clear the principles of inhibition and end-gaining become while going through the process of preparing for a dive and going down the line - diving to depth while finning. Your state of mind and ability to “relax” and be free of unnecessary tension as well as your ability to be completely present in the moment without thought, or with directed thought, is of utmost importance while freediving. Each thought uses oxygen, every unnecessary tension creates more co2 in the body. Every thought counts. If I end-gain, it has a direct effect on the quality of my dive. Inhibition and letting go of unnecessary tension becomes a necessity.

As a third year teacher in training at ATILA and a newly certified beginner freediver, I am thrilled to explore the depths and parallels of what the technique and freediving have to offer - a key to access the life and presence that thrives both above and below the surface.