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THE OBJECTIVE  
 CONSCIOUSNESS OF ONESELF  
 OUR METHOD  
 CONCENTRATION

Hamlet  
 Shakespeare  
King Lear

## THE OBJECTIVE:

Realize what it means to sit on a chair with your whole being - to have the feeling of your whole being, your body and your psychology. What does it mean to sit? Your whole being is occupied with it. Now take the objective to get up - immediately your whole being becomes different, something like an electric spark changes your being. To have the desire to get up means to have a certain change in your whole being. Consciousness of oneself - this is the objective. This is the technique for the objective.

## CONSCIOUSNESS OF ONESELF:

Now appreciate the difference you feel between the time when you are only sitting and the time when you take the objective to get up. A certain difference is there. It can be very obvious although the difference may be a very slight one, a very fine one. It is not possible to get up from sitting without the objective to get up. The change in your whole being is very slight, but the result is tremendous. From this small and subtle change in our being depends the action - either we can't get up, or we can. In this simple

M. Chokhov

January 29, 1940

example we see that the action depends entirely upon the objective.

Another, and a better, example: how can we act on the stage, speak the words, and fulfill our business without having an objective? When you speak lines without an objective, it is a similar case to the situation of getting up without any objective. For a person who has no feeling for the theatre, it is just as ugly as to get up with an objective, being pushed up. It is a fine feeling for our profession.

This absurdity you must realize. When an actor is on the stage without such objectives, it is the most hateful thing. On the stage we see actors who may be very fine and subtle people in daily life, but on the stage the same person becomes a fool because he thinks that on the stage one can live with simple human qualities. To desire something, or in our words, to have the objective - actors allow themselves to be half human beings when they exist on the stage without the objective. It is a certain kind of shamelessness or nakedness. We appear on the stage absolutely bare, and think we are interesting for the audience. When we are without objectives on the stage, we are ugly because our whole body becomes stupid. Without the objective the body becomes half a corpse. There is no alternative - if you are on the stage, you must be there with an objective.

With your consciousness, "walk" inside your body and see whether it is filled with the objective, with this process

M. Chekhov

January 29, 1940

of sitting. The objective prepares the ground for the speech, or the action, whatever it is. It prepares the ground for the ability to act. When we develop this ability, we will see that, although we have to name our different desires, all the words we are using for naming the objective are actually terribly primitive and rude, in comparison with the live process which is going on in us when we have the objective and different kinds of objectives and nuances. We cannot actually describe the objective with human words because it is so fine and subtle - it is as subtle as music.

These slight nuances which we can experience in ourselves when changing the objective - these slight differences - can be useful for us only if we awaken to an understanding of what the objective really is. Because if we don't develop this fine feeling for the objective, we cannot know that there are perhaps two hundred objectives for, "I want to get up." There are a limitless number of objectives, and they are so fine and subtle and inspiring if we are able to be aware of them.

Exercise:

Take the objective, "I want to get up." Now take the objective, "I want to get up and pick up the box." The awareness of yourself is different. Now keep the objective and be aware of another thing - the objective is like life, it is absolutely flexible. Our soul will respond to this slight difference, and we must kill a certain abstract feeling

M. Chekhov

January 29, 1940

for the objective, a certain general feeling, a certain scheme. It must be concrete - the objective "in general" does not exist. "I want to get up" - each time the objective is surrounded by so many nuances, and they will inspire you for acting if you have such an inner ear or eye which will discover all the nuances, rather than to get up "in general."

Whether you are full of energy or lazy, whether it is in the morning or in the evening, everything surrounding the whole circle of circumstances known or unknown, - everything creates the nuances in every objective. Now try to remember your experience on the stage when you took the objective, but it was "in general" - it was not the objective for this particular play or character.

#### OUR METHOD:

When we have this ability, we will discover that, as actors, we have much finer than we seem to be. What price do you have to pay for this? A little effort to exercise the objective. And the second discovery will be that we can become finer and finer. Why not do it? Sometimes you make efforts, but you are floundering with your efforts, instead of taking some point of the Method and making an effort, you make the effort "in general." By taking some point of the Method, you will economize your power - the other way leads to a certain dissipation of your energy. One effort is absolutely conscious, the other is vague and useless.

M. Ghekhov

January 29, 1940

You can take the objective instantly. You must realize that there are simple objectives and complicated objectives. One objective may be to get up, while the other may be, for instance, at the instant when Hamlet sees the ghost on the roof of the castle. Let us say that Hamlet's objective is, "I want to evaluate the reality or the non-reality of these powers." It seems to be more difficult than, "I want to get up," but if you really get the technique of getting the objective in your whole being, you will see that there are no difficult objectives. Everything is just as easy as to get up, and when we realize this miracle, we will become absolutely happy on the stage.

Professors of psychology, in analysing this, may find it complicated and difficult, but they are intellectuals and not artists. As artists, we grasp the thing as a whole, not as professors of psychology but as beings who have a special organ, to be able to grasp psychological events as they are with our whole being and turn them into the objective. At the moment when you begin to analyze ~~wisely~~ there are such currents in the theatre - when you begin to analyze ~~with~~ your brain what Hamlet experiences, you will get the feeling that it is impossible to perform it because it is so terribly complex. But we have our way, which is to grasp the psychological event as a whole, with our whole being, and the event will become in us the will to act and not to think. It is the mystery of the objective.

M. Chekhov

January 29, 1940

If we are able to experience the objective in our being, we will be able immediately to discover this marvelous thing which is to be able to act the most so-called complicated psychological event as one whole thing which we can swallow as it is and pour it out in our whole being and will and everything which we call our actor's nature. When we get to this point, we will see that there are no difficult objectives. They are all just as simple as, "I want to get up."

#### CONCENTRATION:

This does not mean that we have to be primitive in our acting. It means to become concrete - you have simply to be concentrated - to be able to be always concentrated on something is part of our Method. If you are concentrated on this event of the powers of the ghost in the Hamlet scene, then you cannot do it primitively or blankly. If we are concentrated on the powers of the ghost, then we will get the ability to grasp the whole so-called complicated psychology in one grip of our will - where the objective sits - and we will immediately react on it.

If you will imagine - for the sake of exercising the power of concentration - that your heart is growing as large as the whole earth, you will see that everything is included in your heart and everything is near to you. There will be nothing between you, and you will come to a certain new kind of understanding of beings or processes in the

M. Chekhov

January 29, 1940

universe, and this will lead us to the concentration we speak about.

You cannot be unconcentrated if things are included in your heart and its beautiful rhythms. Try to do this for the sake of concentration, and this same concentration will bring to you the understanding of everything. With our special ability to concentrate and to turn everything into objectives, we can understand Hamlet in one instant. Each instant will be a new understanding, and for us there will exist twenty Hamlets, and each of them full of wisdom, whereas the professor of psychology will be able to write about only one Hamlet in his life.

Therefore, you must understand the objective, or concentration, with your whole being if we are to be masters of everything - ourselves and our abilities will be fully developed and functioning. But if we don't take the objective with our whole being, then we will only take it with our brain, and our experience will become smaller and smaller. Then you will become interested only in the historical sources of Hamlet. There is no limit to this kind of investigation, but for us it must mean Hamlet or King Lear, without any sources. What is it for us? Expand your heart to Shakespeare's images, and you will see this archetypal of something moving through the world - King Lear losing his body throughout the world and arising King of the spiritual kingdom.

M. Chekhov

January 29, 1940

If we will take all the points of our Method with this interpretation, then we will see where the meaning lies. The objective as such is nothing, but when you will get it, how your talents will flourish - this is the only aim. Of course, the fulfilling of the objective will always be different to what we have seen in our imagination. We must always be prepared to have the process of fulfilling the objective be not exactly as we have imagined. It can even be turned to certain pleasant nuances. But the stronger the objective lives in us, the less other things will disturb us.

There are actors who don't know what the objective is, and they are very often looking for what disturbs them because something must be done on the stage; and if the actor has nothing to do, he must substitute something, so he looks for obstacles to discard. But the main obstacle which sits in the actor himself will never be discarded. The objective, and the ability to have the objective, obviates this necessity to discard "as if" disturbing elements.

If you will open your heart to Hamlet, you will see that he is your brother. Now take the scene where he is meeting the ghost of his father.<sup>1</sup> Imagine this strange thing which is not smoke or light or flesh, but something very concrete approaches him - he sees it, and he does not see it. It approaches. Now look how Hamlet stretches his psychological feelers to this something which approaches him. He tries to



M. Chekhov

January 29, 1940

touch it, and then Hamlet speaks for the first time the word, "Father." Have this picture as full as possible with your open heart and soul. Now the objective is, "I want to evaluate the reality." It may not be fulfilled at the moment, but it can be fulfilled gradually.

Of course, the actor can diminish everything to his own nothingness, but he can also try to grow up to the greatness of other leaders in our profession. If we choose the latter, we must do it absolutely scientifically - this exactness of the scientist will lead us to the greatest possible artistic freedom which does not lie in floundering but in having a definite ground under our feet. When the ground is there, which we have elaborated with great effort and with a careful scientific approach, then we can fly because we have the ground from which we can fly.

We have tried to understand the objective, first its nature, then the understanding that all objectives are as simple as each other. Now we must elaborate this ability to grasp the objective as a whole thing and to understand that all psychologies are simple once we are able to grasp them.

We have been given such marvelous circumstances here, and we must answer this destiny by using this quiet and peace and happiness to work so that when destiny will take this from us, we will not have missed the opportunity to do all that we can. If we do not appreciate it now, we will

M. Chekhov

January 29, 1940

suffer later on. Destiny never gives anything without the hope that the human being will realize the meaning of what it is. So use your time for the work.