

THE OBJECTIVE
GESTUREStanislavsky
Hamlet
Dr. Rudolf Steiner

OBJECTIVES:

In our limbs we have the real source of our will - our real activity. We have proved that if we try to get our will impulses through our brain and intellect we miss the right point. If we try to awaken our feelings, that is not the will, although the heart and the intellect are very closely connected with the will. The will is sitting in our arms, hands, legs and feet and in general in our torso, but primarily in our limbs. So if we try to exercise the objective from this special point of view, we will take it with our limbs, our whole body.

The idea of the objective was given us by Stanislavsky, but we have added to it the taking of the objective by the whole being, not with the intellect alone. Let us choose a certain point which it is our objective to touch. Now fill your whole body with the desire to touch this point. Now try to walk with your conscience inside you - try to control your body and decide whether your arms are ready to touch the point - whether your arms are ready - whether your whole body is filled with this simple desire. Ask yourself whether your whole body is filled with this activity, which we call at the moment the desire to touch this point, "I am ready to touch this point." Now touch it, then leave it consciously and try to compare

the state of your body when it is free from the objective and when it is filled with the objective.

To be able to take the objective with your whole being. If we ask ourselves whether it was simply and exclusively a physical action, the answer will be "No," because the will power which is awakened in our whole body is entirely a psychological thing. Without this psychological impulse we cannot do this, so if we can realize that the simplest so-called physical action is absolutely a psychological action, we will be able to understand that each psychological objective, however complicated it may be, can be taken with the whole body.

If one acts Hamlet for instance, one will find so many deep psychological problems and desires and objectives which fill Hamlet's spirit, but we must be aware of the fact that the complicated psychological states of Hamlet's spirit can be taken with the whole body.

GESTURE:

There is no psychological moment which cannot be experienced by our whole body and this is the secret of taking the objective as an actor should take it. If you will recall some performances you have seen, and think of them from the point of view of the objective, you will see that instead of actors filled with an objective there was a head walking on the stage with a dead body, the body only moving because the director asked it to move. The body was not acting at all

because it was empty - only the head was used because the objective was intellectually taken.

The actor of today always has a certain objective, because he is always doing something on the stage, always aiming at something, but because the objective is taken only with the head we get the impression that a dead body is walking before us and the question arises "why should the audience be asked to come and look at a number of heads?" But the actor must be in the whole body. Because this is the actor, and the head is not the actor. When our bodies are sufficiently awakened to take the psychological objective, then we have the right to enter the stage and to show our whole being to the audience, and to be expressive with all the means God has given us.

Again I must recall Doctor Steiner's words when he says that the difference between the head and other part of the body is that the head is not able to make gestures, while the body is gesture itself. On the stage, actors do quite the opposite - they try to make gestures with the head and face, which is always wrong, and they do nothing with the body which is the gesture. I can't sit down with my head, but I can sit down with my whole body. With my head I have nothing to perform. By acting with my whole body. With my head I have nothing to perform. By acting with my whole body only then can I really make an impression on the audience as an artist. My head cannot make an artistic impression.

If a painter tries to paint the face he tries to show through this part the whole individuality, and never the face itself. To paint the face itself is only photography and this is the point from which we can gain very important knowledge. Although the face and head are not able to make gestures, they are here on our shoulders for radiating. We must have our artistic content in the body, and the head will radiate our individuality. For instance, the muscles of the eyes are so fine that they can and must be moved out of the spiritual content which we have everywhere. So that a very important rule for actors is never to force our faces to act, but to leave this marvelous part of our being free so that it can be a place from which we radiate, without knowing it. When I am looking at someone I have the objective in my body, and my face is free to radiate it. At the moment I try to work my face from inside there will only be a grimace.

So we come again to the problem that the objective must be and can only be taken by the whole being, and not with the face. The face is something different, and again I must say that Dr. Steiner has discovered that when we look at a person eye to eye, we get the impression first of all of the moral qualities of the person, whereas at the moment we look at the profile, we get at once the impression of his intellectual abilities. The face has its own task. For instance, in my face there is a certain cowardice of thinking - I am thinking, dancing; my thoughts are dancing over things and are not brave

enough to penetrate into the thing with the will. I am dancing into the thing, and I understand it because I have danced into it, but I am not able to think day after day about one problem and reach the solution. Dr. Steiner says that the audience gets always the impression about the intellectual composition from the face. The actor must not require from his face and head anything more. If I am acting and I know this rule - if I am speaking in a scene which has a moral content, then as director I would try to show the actor's face to the audience and not the profile, while if I wanted to emphasize the intellectual side I would of course show more the profile. In the art of make-up, this is very important. I must know what kind of a profile I must have for my character. For example, I must make up my full face with the idea of what I have to convey to my audience about the moral qualities of my character, but this is all I have to do with my face. To speak about the intellectual and moral qualities and let the muscles shine and radiate, that is all - everything else belongs to our whole body.

Now please take the objective: "I want to comfort someone who is sad." This is more psychological than the other objective we had, which was to touch the object, but please try to take the objective, this desire to comfort him, with your whole body. Ask yourself if your hands and arms are full of the desire to comfort. It is absolutely essential and

important to take the objective consciously and wittingly, not so that the objective comes accidentally, like a snake, and passes you so that you do not know whether it is there or not. With professional skilfulness you must be able to take it and leave it. This ability to take the objective consciously and wittingly, will give us not only the necessary skilfulness on the stage but it will increase our power to have the objective. When we take something vaguely we are actually losing our power but when we are doing the same thing very consciously starting, and stopping, and continuing, then it gives us power to be masters of our objectives, and to have them powerfully.

In our use of Stanislavsky's invention of the objective, we must know that in one scene on the stage we may need to change consciously, four or five objectives. We can do this only if we are masters of this starting and stopping. Two senses are actually used - the power of the objective will come gradually if we exercise it, and the ability to change the objectives as quickly as we need.

Take another objective: "I want to force Alan to touch the box." This is one of the approaches to acting out of our individuality, because unless we are able to fill our body with this objective-activity, we will never be able to act by using our creative individuality. Without it we become puppets with that pseudo-freedom which old actors acquire, but which is only an elaborated screen behind which the actor more

or less skilfully hides his inability to awaken the creative spirit. We don't need to do this because we have a method which appeals immediately to our individuality. So we don't need these tricks behind which to hide our inability to awaken the individuality.

If you had been able to watch yourselves in the simple exercises we have just done you would see how individually you have pronounced the sentences. You only need open the doors of your creative individuality and then it will shout into the whole world its secrets, but when the doors are shut by our intellect then individuality is not able to break through, and the tricks comp. The objective is one of the ways to this individuality which is really the artist in us. It is actually the reason why we came to this school. Because we heard this knocking of our creative individuality to be let out - to say something in our lives. Because we were born to be active - to create something. Because we wanted to open the doors. Each profession has its different doors - the painter has his particular door - we have it in our body, in our ability to work with our body, so that it will be an open door to our creative individuality.

The objective, and this power which we have for fulfilling the objective, has nothing to do with hypnotism. Very often we confuse these two things so that perhaps sometimes you will get a result, but hypnosis has nothing to do with creation, and is in fact very destructive. The danger

is there but we must realize that the objective is never a possessive power. In hypnotism there is always a certain element of annihilation without which it cannot be fulfilled, because the whole trick is that the individuality of the other person falls asleep under my power, and he is no longer there. But when two actors have an objective, and they are fighting together in a very active dialogue, they are not killing each other, they are giving each other power.

With the objective, I give my power out - while with hypnotism I take your power. Very often actors make this mistake with the audience, when they try instinctively to hold the audience. The idea is right but sometimes the means is wrong. Because they sometimes hate the audience, they fear the audience, the audience is their enemy and they try to impose ~~their enemy and they try to impose~~ their acting, their gesture, their soliloquy on the audience. This is quite wrong. The audience must be considered as a partner and we simply have to give ourselves to it, as to our partner on the stage.

Another objective: "I want to leave the room by that door." The condition is that Alan must not guess your real objective. Try to keep him unaware as long as possible. By "condition" we mean that we can have an objective, and we can have different conditions by which we can fulfill it.

Another objective: Alan as a lecturer will begin his speech, and being inexperienced he will then forget what he has to say. The audience helps him silently. At this moment

will you take the objective: "I want to help him to get out of this terrible state." After a long pause he will remember the end of his lecture, but not the beginning which often happens, but before he starts, try to carry on the objective. Try to take the objective at the right time - not artificially too early or too late, but justify taking it at the right moment. When he begins to speak, hesitating at the beginning, carry on the objective until you see that you can leave it. The purpose of the exercise is for taking, carrying on, and leaving the objective at the right time. Try to get it in your whole being, that is the secret. The head and everything is free.