

Lessons to Teachers

LESSON X
CONSCIOUS CONCENTRATION
THE CREATIVE IMAGINATION
"WHO" - "HOW" - "WHAT"

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"Who": The teacher must display all the qualities which the pupil hopes someday to have, and much more, because she must lead the pupils to higher ideals, through the power of her understanding and her greater vision. The pupils must trust her and be willing to be led by her, confident that she will be able to supply their needs.

"How": To do this the teacher must radiate a feeling of security, of understanding, of love, and of truth. She must win the confidence of her pupils and their enthusiasm by the power of her whole being. She must know her subject so well that it has become part of her being, and she must be able to turn to a creative source within herself before every lesson, so that every time she appears before her pupils she will come with fresh vitality and power. This will bring a quality of joy. She must train her imagination so that she can invest old material with new forms so that she will retain the interest of the pupils.

The ability to do this will give the teacher a quality of joy which will be infectious and will encourage her pupils. She must be active and must give with her whole

being. She must feel that in giving her ideas to the pupils she is giving things of real form and substance, which they can see and feel, not only with the intellect but with the whole being. She must feel what is going on in the minds and the hearts of the pupils and must speak to them slowly and clearly in order that they will understand. She must always have a knowledge and a feeling of the whole before her.

"What": (a) For us "concentration" has a special meaning. It is our method of contacting and merging with the creative spiritual forces. It is the door by which we can enter into the creative spiritual world.

(b) We must train ourselves in order to develop our powers of conscious concentration. This is done in three steps: first, by exercises which help us to contact and communicate with physical things and to feel their "spirit." These exercises commence with seeing and hearing. In the second step, we begin to be able to imagine the objects of the physical world. In this stage we are beginning to be able to do without the help of actually seeing and hearing the object. In the third step, we pass into the vast world of creative imagination where we can enter at will.

Exercises in order:

(1) Ask the pupils to observe an object in the room, study it closely, observe the form, shape, color, texture, weight, proportion, etc. Then pass on to another object.

(2) Now ask them to close their eyes and try to imagine the object they have been looking at in every detail. Ask them to try to see it as clearly in their mind's eye as in the actual physical form. Suggest that they become the object they are imagining. In that way they will "feel" its quality - they will be "at one with" the object, and will begin to sense its personality, its being.

(3) Ask the pupils to study the whole room once more, then close their eyes and imagine certain objects. The teacher can then question them about what they saw, how much of the detail they were able to visualize. This must be tried again and again until the student begins to grasp the difference between being passive and active when seeing things. In this way he will begin to sense that the object has a life and being of its own and will begin to yield his own being to the being of the object.

Tell the student that the feeling of relief and joy he will experience on being allowed to look at the actual object, after the effort he has made to see it in his imagination, is one of the means of realizing what it means to be really concentrated.

(4) Ask the pupils to choose one sound out of the many sounds around them. Ask them to recognize the sound and then to hear it more distinctly than the others. They must be aware of one sound.

(5) Ask them to again choose one sound and to focus their attention on it alone, even though the musician may be playing an entirely different tune. They must be conscious of their one sound to the exclusion of all others.

(6) Then ask them to think of a small tune and continue to think of it while the musician plays another tune.

(7) Ask the students to choose some object or place in the room and then start to play a game, continuing at the same time to be aware in their consciousness of the chosen spot or object.

(8) Ask the pupils to imagine two objects - a tree and a horse, meditate on them and then gradually merge one image into the other. This must be done without breaking either image. Slowly and gradually, the tree will merge into the horse.

(9) Then ask the pupils to imagine the growth of a plant. They must close their eyes and imagine the beginning of the life of the plant and follow its process of growth and development right through to the flower. This must also be done slowly and without a break in the series of images.

(10) Then ask the pupils to try an exercise in reverse thinking. They must imagine the reverse process of any normal action, such as walking. Try to see a person walking backwards, drinking backwards.

(c) Some other terms for "concentration" are:

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TO: contact
merge
enfold
sense
identify
communicate with
give to
flow toward

TO BE: receptive
aware
conscious of
with
in harmony with
at one with