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CONCENTRATION: Review of Exercises: New Students:

Concentrate on the sounds which come from one side. Then concentrate on a black flower which you see in your imagination. Then on a spot on the flower. The whole process of concentration; be aware when you leave the object of your concentration; be aware of the difference between being concentrated and not being concentrated.

There is one very important difference between right and wrong concentration from the actor's point of view. The wrong kind is when it makes our brain tired, when there is great tension in the brow and the neck, tension anywhere is what we have to avoid. Our brain must be quite free; we must use our whole body. Our kind of concentration must embrace our whole being, our will which lives in our legs and arms primarily - this is the region of our will in spite of all scientific statements to the contrary. The region of our feelings embraces our lungs and heart, and the region of our intellect - which is so useful for everything but so useless for our special actor's art - embraces the head.

Our being is psychologically very tangible and movable, and the poor small thing which we bear with us, our body,

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is for our actor's artistic psychology, quite unimportant. Therefore, to be concentrated in our sense means to appeal to the will in our legs and arms, to our hearts and lungs, and very little to the intellect. To be concentrated means to use quite different parts of our body. When you concentrate with the head, try to understand what is going on with you. If you really concentrate with the brain you will feel at once that other parts of your being gradually die, and you are helpless.

As actors we need first of all our bodies, which must be full of life. When you take the objective you do it with your whole body and whole being, and the same is true with concentration. When you send out your will to the object you must take in everything which is in and around you. To take it with your invisible hands means also to send out this something. You will not be able to act on the stage if you are tense in your brain, but only if you are free in all parts of your being.

Repeat the exercise of concentrating on the spot on the flower. If you are able to concentrate with your whole being you will get a very interesting thing. You will become stronger and stronger psychologically after each effort to concentrate with your whole being. You will feel full of activity after such concentration, and you will be awakened in one minute, in thirty seconds, with such concentration. It awakens some real abilities, some actor's abilities inside you, whereas if you are concentrated with your brain you will feel that you

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have awakened a certain kind of activity, but a special one. Our being must be more harmonious, more rich, more powerful, and we must have the ability to control our spirit, our will, our feelings from inside.

MOVEMENT:

Concentrate on the center in your chest. Imagine that your arms and legs start from your center. Move your arms from this center; your arms will feel very, very long, and the same with your legs - they are very long, like scissors. In time this will give you a fine kind of beauty. Send out your activity in your arms and legs from the center. Practice doing this during the day.

IMAGINATION:

Your whole being must be concentrated on the image you have to create. Imagination is a process of creation and concentration at the same time. When imagining something and creating some images, we must use our full powers of concentration. Now imagine an old human figure, dressed in black with a long stick in his or her hand. This old figure, swathed in black, takes a few steps and then falls down.

INCORPORATION:

Now incorporate the image you have seen. Be very faithful to what you have seen in your imagination. It is one

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thing to be inspired, but without an image, without concentration, you don't know what you are doing. But our exercise is for incorporating very exactly, without any additions. You must be sure that you do what you have seen in your imagination. If you find that your body disturbs you when fulfilling the exercise, do it many times. Many unexpected things will disturb or help you, but the purpose of the exercise is to incorporate exactly what you have seen in your imagination.

The imagination is much richer than we think; we are not able to catch the images which are constantly arising in our imagination and passing through. We must develop the ability not only to catch these images, but to govern them; the ability to as it were swallow them in our actor's being, and incorporate them. Through these two abilities to be able to catch images and manage them, we will develop the power of the imagination itself. If we are able to do what we imagine, through this doing we increase the power of our imagination; by incorporating we increase the image.

CONTACT:

Please form two groups. Imagine there is a big circle on the floor. You cannot enter the circle but must always move on the periphery. One group must influence the other. The groups can move around the circle as they like, but the place of each group on the circle will be affected by it. The

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two leaders must be in the closest connection to each other; not only the kind of movements, but the theme which you have to express must be corresponding to each other. Each of the leaders must take into his soul everybody belonging to his group.

First establish the groups. Such invisible gestures are as concrete as visible gestures, and even more so. A certain amount of human warmth must be given from one to the other. Without it, all our efforts will be only an illusion. Have full confidence in your leaders, then they will be free to create anything they like.

Next, one group with a leader must make a harmonious composition, and the other group will watch and "read" what is being done and will then "reply" to it.

THE FEELINGS:

Don't suffer about this thing; don't take the sketches from the point of view of the performance, but merely as material for exercising, and you will feel at once that the weight has dropped from you. Let us take as an example The Fishing Scene. First, open your hearts to each other and to the world of the feelings - this is the same thing.

THE INSPIRER:

Before I knew about these personal and impersonal feelings, I had always seen my audience standing high on a mountain as it were, and I had the idea that my audience could be an angel. When I got this idea I got such pleasure, and the audience became my inspirer; it gave me everything; it inspired me.¹ Such imagination gives concrete help to the actor. Later I lost this imagination, but while I had it I had no fear before the audience - the fear which consciously and unconsciously makes so many constrictions in the actor.

The suggestion to open your heart towards your audience means something concrete for the actor. We need some angels, whether we want them or not. In our art it is most important to have some angel to whom we can appeal, and who inspires us and makes us free from these bonds. Try to open your hearts to somebody or something you like. It will give you some freedom to let the feelings go through you. Establish the contact with something. You must have very strong feelings; angels have very strong feelings, they have fire and power and they envelope you with fire and strong feelings. Our nature weakens everything.

Appeal to your imagination; concentrate with your full powers because the angel only gives inspiration if the human being is worthy. For example, if we have the ground of atmosphere, or objective, or an image, then we will get it.

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The feelings that fly around in the world are very strong - they are flying as colors. If we want to join these colors and these feelings, then we will get the real power of expression. You have to give the ground for the angel. Today the atmosphere was not shown clearly enough to the angel. Everything was too weak, therefore, too personal. Perhaps the angel is ready to come, but perhaps our hands are too weak to receive it.

Begin again by imagining some things and turn them into the atmosphere and show them to the angel. Gradually you will begin to experience one very important thing. You must not be contracted in your body or your psychology. When you are contracted the angel is not able to go through this. It is lack of faith in the angel. It is better to act and speak badly than to be contracted. Allow yourself to be lost and helpless but don't become contracted - it is better to suffer the feeling of being lost as an actor, because it will come if you are really brave enough - this beautiful ability to be on the stage and only let the things come through you. When you are playing a character which is contracted it is the same - you must not be personal but must give the impression of contraction and tension. I knew an actress who was once so contracted that she broke a wine glass in her hand. How can such a person hope to get any inspiration? With our exercises we are trying to make everything free, and we have reached some-

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thing.

You must be able to sit in a chair without moving, and believe that you are pulling a rope, for instance, without doing it. You have the full impression that you are doing it. If you must have real movements and situations, this is a certain kind of contraction and delusion which you must escape. This is the same question as closing your eyes in order to avoid seeing things around you. This is the same process as when you first try to meditate; you get tension in the neck and head. But you must make it free, and after many efforts you will be able to collect things you want, being absolutely free.

The same is true when you are acting - you must not become tense. When I was very young I could not overcome this tension although I felt that it was wrong. I tried to pray for ten minutes before the performance, but immediately I went on the stage I was tense again. But it is much simpler for us - we must only exercise and be brave enough.