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July 14, 1939

FEELING OF EASE  
SCENIC TIME  
ANTICIPATION  
FEELING OF FORM  
THE OBJECTIVE  
FEELING OF TRUTH

Stanislavsky  
Hamlet

FEELING OF EASE:

We shall try today to do simple exercises, and the first will be for developing what we call the feeling of ease. We try to develop in our students some qualities which can be always at their disposal, and we think these qualities are very necessary in all plays and all parts.

We shall start with the simplest exercise. It is a bodily exercise, but at the same time a psychological one - it is a feeling of ease. So first of all, try to find in your psychology this feeling of ease and then try to move your hands and arms up and down, to pour this feeling of ease into your body - not the opposite. First get the desire to be easy, and then move your hands because of this desire. Each time try to get it stronger and stronger, this desire to have a feeling of ease. Do not forget that our arms and hands start from the center of the chest. Move your arms from this center. The more you stress this psychological side, the easier will your body become.

Now in quicker tempo but with the same feeling of ease. The body will get the ability to move easily.

M. Chekhov

July 14, 1939

Now will you please kneel down and get. The psychology is the first thing - the body is the second. You have the ability to concentrate strongly, now concentrate on the feeling of ease.

Will you, by getting down, lift your hands and in getting up lower them. Now, in quicker tempo. The quicker the body moves, the more the psychology becomes stiff. Move quickly, but still keep strongly this desire to be easy.

Will you now walk about with your whole body permeated with this feeling of ease. Now increase the desire and run about. While walking, will you please remember that from this center in your chest also the legs start their movements as if we are walking on long scissors. With the feeling of ease - with the center in your chests, will you please move about.

Now try to keep this feeling of ease and pay attention to the following thing: It lies also in our nature that when we try to combine consciously the psychological and physical exercise, the body becomes stiff. Even in such exercises as feeling of ease the body becomes stiff or tends to. So have in mind this danger of stiffness. Feeling of ease - center in our chests and free bodies.

Now stop and continue the feeling of ease without moving - the body is free, the center is in your chest, and feeling of ease. You must get the feeling that your body has

M. Chekhov

July 14, 1939

lost part of its weight, as though it did not weigh as much as before. This is the most important thing to experience - our body without weight. This ability to develop the feeling of ease is absolutely necessary in such cases on the stage where we are going to perform a heavy role. To be heavy on the stage kills our art, but to feel oneself easy and to perform heavy things, that is art - not to be heavy even when pretending on the stage to be fat. If you will really be heavy on the stage, then it will not be pleasant for the audience. If you are light and pretend to be heavy, you will get pleasure and it will become art.

Keeping the feeling of ease, change positions. Take the position definitely and keep it. Try to observe this feeling of ease during the pause and during the movement. Strong staccato - do it much more staccato because you have more difficulties which I want you to overcome.

Now in couples - fight with one another but with the feeling of ease so that your muscles during this fight are quite free. Start the fight with a feeling of ease, and if you feel your body becomes stiff, discard it. In each movement try to be easy. Breathe properly.

Now we shall combine it with music so that you will get a phrase. Take this phrase, not as a musical suggestion, but simply as a space of time in which to put your movements, and then stop. Then again the movement, and stop, so that you

M. Chekhov

July 14, 1939

can master your own body from inside making it easy. Without muscles. First listen to the length of the phrase.

SCENIC TIME:

Here we touch another exercise which we will not do today specially, but I want only to point it out. For each artist, and especially the actor, it is very important to develop the ability to anticipate everything, and first of all, time. It is very easy on the stage to confuse the feeling of time as it is quite different - it is always longer or shorter than our time. Therefore, if we do not exercise specially the ability of scenic time, we may drag our play or make it too short.

This exercise with the music touches the feeling of time, that is the ability to anticipate what you are going to do on the stage, i.e., a dialogue, monologue, read a letter, etc. You must anticipate not only the action but the scenic time - how long you are allowed to keep the pause, or to think on the stage, or to talk across the stage, or to do a soliloquy.

ANTICIPATION:

This is a very special feeling of time which comes from the development of anticipation. Having this space of time, which is given by the music, you will anticipate what kind of movement you are able to do. You cannot go on

M. Chokhov

July 14, 1939

indefinitely, and you must be able to anticipate what kind of movement you are allowed to do.

You see one interesting thing - if you have feeling of ease and the ability to anticipate scenic time, all your movements and pauses and positions become beautiful. So you will get beauty, not from the desire to be beautiful, but through certain things around this beauty.

#### FEELING OF FORM:

We will try to get the feeling of form so that the body becomes more and more able to experience this form with no vagueness and floundering on the stage. Now concentrate on the desire to get the form and to experience it. First psychologically. You know that the feeling of form is something which you can develop just as you can develop the feeling of ease - as simple as desire. It means everything and nothing.

There are such artists in all the arts who have from nature this desire for form, which we see immediately in their creations. One group of artists can be understood as floundering people, very brilliant perhaps, but floundering because they do not give us the feeling of form - others are masters of form. There are, of course, other artists who sacrifice everything for form and then we have a sharp, dead thing - the artist becomes a fanatic for form. There must

M. Chekhov

July 14, 1939

be a certain amount of sound feeling of form. We must find this "middle way."

Get the desire for form. Experience your body as a form - very consciously. Everything you do now consciously will become in time super-conscious, and that is our aim - to create super-consciously. To get this ability we have to go through this school which requires very conscious work, so try to experience your head, the neck, shoulders, legs, arms, and feet as a form. Again try to overcome the stiffness which always comes.

Exercise:

Lift your hands with the feeling of form so that you feel you are a moving form. By lifting your arms and hands don't forget your whole body, which is a form, and part of this form you have decided to move, but the whole body is the form. If you will lift your hand with a feeling of form, and take your arm out of this form, and feel that the form is left in the air, you will get the feeling of form much stronger.

Exercise:

Kneel with the feeling of form - you move your form when you move your body. Will you please walk about trying to have the feeling of form - free bodies always. Now try to run about with the feeling of form. This is very difficult. Concentrate on the desire to have the feeling of form and do not allow your bodies to distract you.

M. Chekhov

July 14, 1939

Exercise: Alan and Hurd:

If we have the feeling of form, we can experience our own body and all other articles around us. Very often we see on the stage one actor with no relation to the other actor - disharmony. We will find immediately on the stage what position we want to have if we have this feeling of form. Take extremely expressive forms with your body, and take into consideration your partner.

Exercises in two groups - boys and girls:

The theme is suggested by the music from which you will create your group. Between the groups must be space, and it must be harmonious with both groups. The group - space - the group.

**THE OBJECTIVE:**

The objective, as Stanislavsky teaches us, is the will of the character on the stage. What the character desires in the play must be found out, and if the actor who is going to perform this particular part knows of the desire of this particular character, then he has the character in his hands and can do everything on the stage. Always try to get the aim of the character, and then all will be harmonious and stream to one point, which is the desire of the character, or the objective.

2174  
M. Chekhov

July 14, 1939

Exercise:

The conditions are that we have not to take the objective, which is the will, with our intellect. It does not concern our will at all, but it does not mean that we are without it. We need to develop the ability to do it, and know where it sits, as it were - our will - in our whole body and not in our head, so that our intellect and our will are always fighting with each other. The more we think, the less powerful we are. The more we are doing and willing, the less intellectual we are. I speak about the average. There are special things, but this is a different branch and does not concern us. The more intellectual we are, the stronger we are without intellect. We have always this task to find the medium or the "middle way," but as the whole world is now intellectual, so we have to stress the will because we are "ill from lack of the will."

To take this objective, that is our will, with our whole being means to get the desire to touch it - to get the desire in our legs, arms, hands, and torsos, as if to be ready to touch it or to imagine ourselves already touching it so that we will gradually get the ability to touch it with our will and not with the intellect only. When you have fulfilled your objective, you must learn to drop it because our human will is undeveloped - we are too clever in our intellects, but we are babies in our will. So very often we get the desire, and we cannot get rid of it.



M. Chekhov

July 14, 1939

We, as actors, must develop the ability to get the desire, whenever we want, and drop it whenever the objective is fulfilled. To take the objective we need to exercise how to drop it. Imagine you are acting the whole evening Hamlet - five hours if uncut and three hours if cut, and you have found your objective, and you are living with this objective for five hours. You can well imagine why actors drink; because they have stored up their will, but they are not able to stop it at a moment. They have spoiled their talent and it wastes and exhausts, physically and psychologically, the organism. So it is very important to "drop the objective."

If we had time, we would demonstrate just the same techniques for psychological things, for instance, to have the objective, to say certain sentences with the objective, to persuade someone. It is purely psychological. Again, it must be taken with the whole being and not with the brain.

#### FEELING OF TRUTH:

Another exercise we have taken from Stanislavsky's method - the feeling of truth. That means that whatever we do on the stage must be truthful - whether we are acting Ibsen or Chekhov - it is one feeling of truth. If we are acting Shakespeare, it is another and different feeling of truth, but always the feeling of truth must be there. For instance, we have to imagine invisible things as if they were actually here, which develops the feeling of truth.

M. Chekhov

July 14, 1939

Exercise:

Here lies the [imaginary] rope across the room - exercise tug-of-war. Take this rope and try to pull it, and if you are truthful, it will be a real fight. At the moment when you lie, your rope will become rubbery.

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