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KING LEAR

GET THE RIGHT FEELINGS THROUGH THE RIGHT MEANS:

This is possible only by making a great psychological effort inside yourself, and this effort must not be made once, but must be made continuously. Only by this persistent, continuous making of psychological efforts will we be able to get results, if we are able to persuade ourselves that this is the only way. Whether the exercise is pleasant or unpleasant, tiring or easy, we must shut our eyes to this question, and must realize that the only thing that matters is that we go on making new efforts in spite of all unpleasant things.

IMAGINATION & INCORPORATION:

Let us take the scene when King Lear is on the heath - "Blow winds..." The idea of the exercise is to get the feelings through the imagination. At the moment when the hero has reached the climax, through the imagining of this special moment of the character we have to penetrate into its inner life, and then we must incorporate this inner life or feelings. Through the imagination we must get the inner life of the hero and incorporate it.



THE SOURCE OF THE FEELINGS:

Criticism: What was the aim of the exercise? It is the same as yesterday - to awaken the source of the feelings, to prepare the place in our soul which will be able later on to receive the feelings, which will come from somewhere, and will not be our personal feelings. You have made an effort to awaken the feelings by means of the imagination, but this effort has made so many difficulties for you.

First of all, the imagination itself is not yet developed enough to be able to catch the feelings of the image. By exercising our imagination we will, in time, get more and more this ability to see something in our imagination, and at once receive a prick in our heart. Imagination which does not do this is not real imagination, because artistic imagination is always full of these feelings and pricks.

Secondly, our bodies are still so stiff in a certain special way - half psychologically stiff - and this is the same for everyone. The finest developed artist has this stiffness in his body; this special kind of stiffness which does not want to be permeated with the feelings, because they awaken us too much. Our body wants to be sleepy, and when we give it such a strong medicine which requires that it will arise, the body protests against it.

EURHYTHMY:

In the beginning of eurhythmy training there comes



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a moment when the body protests, and we have the same thing. You must not think that the exercise itself is unpleasant - it is only unpleasant for our bodies which do not want to take part in this awakening process, although our creative spirits want to perform it. Every actor wants to perform Lear, but all the other things around our creative spirit whisper to us not to do it.

#### THE ACTOR'S INSTRUMENT - HIS BODY:

Therefore, you must do the next step consciously, and lay stress on it. By trying to imagine this picture, and penetrate into the inner life of the image, try to find the most suitable physical bodily moving forms, so that you see that you are responsible for the forms. You must do the movements because you want to do them, not because of physical contractions which are the result of the protest of our bodies. Imagine that you wish to do certain movements, because you see them in your imagination. In finding this form, try to fill your body with the feelings which you are able to see.

Now try to do just the moment of, "Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks!" Imagine that you are so inspired, so happy, that your whole body is burning with feelings. Then you will never have the slightest feeling of bodily heaviness. Your body will be your friend which you use with great pleasure and freedom.

Because of this ability to permeate your body with



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the feelings, it will never disturb you. When your body is full of feelings you will get a strong voice. When you are weak in your body and you try even to call someone, you will be unable to do it because you only have a body without feelings. In a disaster, when you are really full of strong feelings, you will never tear at your voice, because it comes at once into the right place if you are full of feelings, but if you are empty of feelings you will tear at it. Of course we must have a technique because we are always in danger of shouting. Emotional emptiness can spoil the physical instrument.

#### THE FEELINGS:

Criticism: Feelings, or what we call feelings, are not a vague thing. They are something upon which we can rely, and to get this we must work consciously, which means first of all to understand what we are aiming at in our Method, and secondly, each time when we are doing some exercise, or when we are rehearsing, we must be conscious of what we are aiming at, and by which means. If we do not make this effort, we will flounder in something which we call vague feelings, which will not lead us to any results. You may get much pleasure from such floundering, but you will not grow up as actors. You will only grow if you do the exercises consciously - what am I aiming at, and with which means? Please remember this.

The task you were given was: I must get the fire



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of the imagination and pour it into my body, by preparing in my imagination this or that bodily form, and through incorporation to fill my body with the fire which I have seen in my imagination. Quite clear? By doing such things very consciously you will in time reach the moment when you will do all these things in the most beautiful way - unconsciously - and then you are free.

If you start with unconscious or super-conscious work, you will lose this conscious approach when your subconscious will be really powerful, and you will be able to rely on it. Now you are not able to do this, and as yet you have not the right to rely only upon your subconscious. In doing the exercises be very careful to realize what you are aiming at, and with which means.

Repeat the exercise with King Lear. First, imagine the inner state, the psychology, the feeling, the life of the character. Second, you must imagine it in a very clear and well formed outer appearance of the person, and then you must incorporate it by filling your whole body with the fire you have seen in the image. Without this groundwork, this seeing of your image in your imagination and then rehearsing it, without this your are psychologically lost on the stage.

#### THE OBJECTIVE:

Let us continue the same work, but this time you must add the objective. That means that you must fill your



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body with the objective. It is only theoretical when we speak of the feelings and the objective as separate - we do it only for the purpose of approaching the problem. Therefore, try to fill your whole body with the objective and consider it as if it were another thing. The objective is: "I want to increase the power of the wind and the elements." You must be prepared to go through this difficult stage because, later on, you will have the result of this work - it will work on inside you.

SIGNIFICANCE:

I have told you many times that all points of the Method are leading to the feelings. One of the differences between real art and naturalistic art - which is only photographic - is that the smallest thing on the stage or in any art in general, is the significance. In naturalism everything is insignificant, and only the content is significant. What I have to say can be significant, if for instance it is Shakespeare's words, but this is Shakespeare's work and not the actor's work to speak significant words. But how to speak depends upon the art, the kind of speech, the kind of movements, which are significant. Feelings are significant in art and significant in naturalism. It is something very fine and indescribable and we must not describe what this significance is, but we can say that the same thing can be significant and can also be insignificant - that is enough.



Our artistic nature must respond to this request to do everything whether speech, movement, radiation, etc., with significance. Through simple exercises we can awaken in our souls this instinct for significance. At the moment when our instinct for significance is awakened on the stage, feelings are awakened at the same time because to do something significantly, being empty at the same time, is impossible. By having certain feelings, everything can be done significantly. On the other hand, if we have certain feelings and we are going to perform on the stage simply, naturalistically, it is very possible that the feelings will not help, and the whole performance will be insignificant in spite of all the feelings which are there. Therefore, it is not the same thing to have the feelings and to be significant on the stage, or to have the feelings and to perform them significantly. But if we turn the problem we will see that to be significant means to awaken the feelings.

Exercise: From where you are sitting, get us with significance. It is a very simple thing - you must not exaggerate anything. Your soul will be colored by this significance. If you will pay attention to what is going on in you, you will see that some feelings are going on inside you. Pay attention to this and love it. It comes through, not only to the audience, but for the actor himself. Very often when a part has been acted many times by the actor and has been well prepared, he feels that something has happened to it, then



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he will find that he has forgotten the significance.

Without knowing that this significance is so important, and keeps us always a little uplifted in a good sense, instead of this we begin to exaggerate and try to strengthen things inside of us which are quite opposite to this significance. The more the actor exaggerates the less significant he is. Be conscious of the wonder that happens to us when we are significant. Some actors have discovered this significance for themselves, and they use it all the time and in this way they develop habits. Instead of this we must have significance for everything.

Exercise: Try adjusting your clothes with significance. Then sitting down, do the same thing. This is the safest approach between the actor and the audience. If the actor is able to do everything significantly, then he always has a connection with the audience, even by doing the smallest things. Now look into the next room with significance. Walk about the room with significance. Do it in different tempos, but keep this feeling of significance.

When you are lost on the stage it means that you have lost this significance. When you are significant you are able to stop this disappearance. It will be a springboard from which you can find the lost feelings, etc. It stops this disappearance on the stage.

SUSTAINING:



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Now add the exercise for sustaining. This ability to sustain gives us the feelings. This beautiful tail is the feeling, and to sustain with the right instinct means to nourish the ability to feel. Move and sustain as long as the content of the sentence requires. The more right it is the more it appeals to your feelings. If we prolong the tail of the sentence too long, we will kill the feelings, just as we will if we do not sustain long enough we will kill our feelings. We must develop this fine inner sense, which is really the feelings. You will gradually get the sense for what is right and what is wrong in this exercises. The length of the sustaining depends on the content of the phrase. This ability to sustain gives us the ability to feel, and vice versa.

Now speak some sentences with a partner. One row of partners will ask, "Won't you come with me?" and the answer must follow on the basis of this sustaining, "Yes," or "No," in accordance with the music of the question. You must find this music between you. If you miss the exact moment when the answer should be given, then you are lost. You have the right to build upon the question that you answer, if you have the "ear" to continue things - this is the ability to improvise on the stage. When we have an ear which is everywhere, then we have the ability to improvise. Inside of you, when you are doing complicated things, you must do them as sure as when you answer immediately on the ground of sustaining. Don't be



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afraid of breaking, or being in a hurry - lead this line as long as you like as long as you are sure.

#### CONTACT OR ENSEMBLE:

Another point in our method which leads us to the feelings is that of contact or ensemble feeling. Exercise: Get up from the floor together. Realize that if it is real contact then the feelings will be there. The more egotistical a person is, the poorer he is in the realm of his feelings. The real egotist has only a few nuances in his feelings. On the other hand the more a person is open to everyone, the more feelings are flowing through his being. Just so in our profession, if we are able to establish the contact we develop our feelings. Whatever you do, if it is done with contact, it will never be empty. What kind of feeling will be awakened is a different question, but with this kind of feeling you will be able to do the exercise. The reason that the tempo often increases when you are working in this way is because the feelings grow. All of these points are the doors to the feelings.