

GROTOWSKIS COMMENTS  
AT NEW YORK  
UNIVERSITY  
(During the initial session.)

No Techniques  
Via Negative

I am NCT going to give you any positive techniques tricks or systems.  
I am going to work with you via negative, that is -trying to remove whatever personal blocks or prevents you from expressing yourself creatively.

The VIA NEGATIVE Program  
has 3 steps.

STEP ONE: Use yourself. Dont concentrate on characters objectives, on where he is coming from etc. Do concentrate on what you yourself are personally revealing- in the service of the character certainly but primary consideration of personal experiences, energies etc.

USE OF  
SELF

(Example: Shakespeares HAMLET is not only a combination of traits Shakespeare observed. But it has within it Shakespeares own personal involvement and engagement. This makes HAMLET a projection of Shakespeares self. All master artists and geniuses use projections of themselves in one way or another. So when the actor encounters Shakespeare he encounters both the objective characters he created in his myths and the subjective Shakespeares self. The actors job is not simply to construct some kind of objective other person--but it is to express HIMSELF through the myth. And in this way there is a self involved, a self expressive dynamic actual CREATION.

Step Two: Principles of Organization= The actors score. This is a crystallization of personal energies, gestures, responses, voice production. The spontaneous use of self becomes concrete and specific- able to be repeated, re-created.

SPECIFIC  
SCORE

Step Three: Removing obstacles. Overcoming obstacles. A sculpter doesnt create anything out of wood or stone simply by toying with the surface...but he must hammer and carve to overcome the material! He must struggle with the elements out of which he will forge his creation. In the same way the actor must not be satisfied with a facile superficial gesture, statement, movement, speech...If he is to reveal something personal, relevant, profound ( coming from the first step of the process - the use of self) he must reach through the blocks, overcome them- annihilate that which prevents him from revealing and expressing himself.

Removing  
OBSTACLES

( Note: This concept of overcoming resistance to expression and realization is critically important in Grotowskis process. Grotowski is relentless in his discouragement and disapproval of any facile, imitative external element

when working on "animals" for instance..  
 One must find the animal in himself. The  
 principle seems TO BE without trying to  
 be like.)

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During the work sessions I will tolerate no distractions.  
 Those of you watching will not laugh etc for it distracts  
 the people who are involved in the exercise. (Ah but Joe,  
 he laughed once when Zbyszek was singing about the grey  
 bear and marching- remember how he tried to hide it!)

**Falling + Groaning** Falling: Fall with as little noise as possible. Don't  
 grunt. Carry out the work in silence. Grunting  
 and groaning is not necessary however satisfying  
 it is to the participants.

Vocal Production  
 Body  
 +  
 PAIN in  
 CREATION  
 Vocal Production without physical involvement is a lie and  
 is an easy way out.  
 But creation involves effort, obstacles overcome, something  
 achieved, not simply something avoided or arrived at by  
 whim!  
 It is effort, coming out of commitment ( and risk- in many  
 cases- even pain)!

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NOISE  
 DURING  
 WORK