TECHNIQUE OF BODY AND MIND

(Principles of Self-Development)

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FROM ancient times to our days men have been striving to develop their bodies and minds by means of different exercises. There existed and exist now various schools of physical and psychic education, which aim to bring health, success and spiritual perfection to individuals. Most of our Western schools are interested exclusively in developing the physical strength of man and creating for him hygienic conditions of life. For this purpose they adhere to various physical exercises and sports, aiming to develop the muscles, but forget the importance of developing the nervous apparatus and psychic power. Indeed, body and mind are so intimately cooperative and so mutually conditioned, that it is really surprising that the necessity for their parallel development is not yet fully appreciated. Even the schools which understand this need in most cases do not have a scientific foundation. Their physical and mental exercises have no common principles and are not sufficiently condensed or balanced.

The present infatuation with sport and physical culture has assumed an ugly and unhealthy shape. From my experience as a medical adviser at one of the leading Canadian institutions for physical culture, I may say that the actual methods of free movement cause a considerable waste of time and energy, while exaggerated sport easily ruins the body and the mind.

We can compare man's organism with a harp; its strings must be capable of response to most delicate vibrations, and yet produce sonorous sounds. Our body and mind follow in the ordinary daily life a few trodden paths, smoothed over by our habits and routine. The major part of our physical and mental faculties lies inert during our whole life, hidden even from ourselves. We hardly realize what enormous treasures are dormant within us. We must by proper exercises bring them to the surface and learn how to make use of them. An average man knows little of how to control his muscles and thoughts. He is just like a child who tries to play on a musical instrument without the proper training. Most of our movements are ugly, useless and take too much energy, only because we have no technique of the body. Even the carrying of loads by a porter is an art, for it involves getting the maximum of strength from the minimum of strain.

It is the same with our thinking. We are accustomed to use a set of ideas like small change, without even realizing their true meaning. Our attention flows through a few channels presented by our daily life, while real spiritual treasures are passing by unobserved. Inertia reigns in our body and mind, and the chief aim of self-development is to overcome this. Only then will an average man become a *real* man,

all of whose faculties will be tuned like the strings of a harp, and whose whole life will be sonorous. The normal tension of our mental and physical strings means health, and man must know how to reach this tension and how to use the strings. The art of living requires its own technique of body and mind.

Self-training can be based on various principles, but the most general ones are always the best. They apply equally to the building-up of health, the study of music, or to the development of psychic power. Let us see how the processes of our organism are controlled.

All the processes in cells, *i.e.*, building up their bodies, their prolification, special functions to which they are destined as parts of an organ, their struggle against pathogenic agents, etc., are under the immediate control of the nervous and the endocrine systems. These two systems can stimulate or depress various functions of the organs, acting also in this way one upon another. The normal tonus of a cell is reached by the counter-balance of controlling impulses. The cell in the state of the normal tonus functions regularly, intensively and rhythmically in harmony with the whole organism, showing the maximum of resistance to any destructive agent. In the case of a disease the cell loses its normal tonus and becomes more susceptible to external influences. Thus, the control of this tonus by the activity of the nervous apparatus is of first importance in preserving the health of a cell and raising its resistance. This activity can be direct—through the final branching of nervous trunks in the cells; or indirect—through a stimulation or depression of the activity of other organs.

Hand in hand with the question of health stands the question of longevity. Every physiological tissue has its own life-cycle, which is limited to a short number of years. That is to say, every tissue is completely regenerated in all its cellular elements to the end of this cycle. Such a regeneration takes place in the human organism several times during man's life. It is clear that under such a condition he should live eternally without even undergoing the process of aging. But this process, and the inevitable death, can be understood if we realize that of all our tissues the nervous one has the longest life-cycle, probably equal to the full duration of man's life. With years, the nervous cell wears out and its controlling function declines. As a result, the manifold activities of other tissues are also lowered. Apparently, the normal tonus is changing, and the life-balance is disturbed as processes of molecular disintegration and accumulation of inert material in the body takes place. The proliferative function suffers also. Every new generation of cells becomes weaker, while destructive processes in them are more pronounced. Accordingly, the psychic life of a man becomes more and more inert. The general resistance of the organism is lowered and the feeling of senility is a feeling of continuous fatigue.

The length of an individual human life in big cities, where people lead a strenuous nervous existence, though in other respects live in hygienic conditions, is, on an average, lower than that of the most backward, underfed peasants. The intellectual

work, the rush, thrill, amusements, worries, excitements, brisk movements, sounds, etc., of our big cities quickly wear out man's nervous system. The nerve cells under a continuous strain lose their normal tonus; their protecting and isolating layers become thinner. As a result, the cells become more irritable and are more quickly exhausted. The other tissues, with the loss of the normal nervous tonus, lose their own tonus also. The whole metabolism in the organism is now disturbed, and the physical and psychic forces quickly decline. The food and the air of big cities are too often blamed for premature aging. A young, healthy organism can thrive in far worse conditions. It is really surprising to see how the human organism can adapt itself to the most anti-hygienic conditions without being apparently affected by them. On the contrary, normal strain upon man's body and mind increases their strength. This is the fundamental principle of developing physical and psychic forces. An American statistical study of the Shick Test showed that in slums of big cities, with their miasmas of germs in the air, the resistance of children to diphtheria is higher than that of children in the country. Physicians, who more than anyone else, are always coming in contact with pathogenic organisms, apparently acquire some kind of general immunity. There is no doubt also, that the fear of a disease lowers the natural resistance of man.

I want only to show, with these examples, that the principle of a "happy medium" must be applied in questions of general hygiene. A too careful avoidance of pathogenic agents is just as bad as an excessive braving of them.

Thus, a living organism finds its physical as well as psychic optimum when it has to overcome some moderate obstacles or to show some resistance to external impulses. The force is forged in struggle and strain.

The nervous strain laid upon average man by city life appears to be excessive for his undisciplined and insufficiently fortified nervous system. Like muscles, the nervous system needs certain exercises to develop its resistance. These exercises will not only preserve or re-establish the normal nervous tonus, and with it the normal tonus of other organs, *i.e.*, the physical and mental health, but also develop the various faculties of man. Any exercise acts first of all upon the elements of both the central and the peripheric nervous systems. The technique of a musician or of a dancer produces well-developed centers and passages for nervous impulses. This means not large muscles, which every porter has, but quick and correct mental orders and differentiated nervous passages, by which they reach the respective muscles. Thus, the technique lies in the brain and peripheric nerves, and exercising means mainly a coining of correct and quick nervous impulses out of an undifferentiated mass. As a result, only the necessary muscles are used, relieving others from useless strain.

In a similar way new faculties can be developed. Most of the people of our Western society who possess extraordinary acuteness of mind and senses, and often the so-called "occult power," show also pathological symptoms. But all these faculties can be developed in a normal way by means of tenacious work on body and mind.

Various yogas teach methods of acquiring psychic power over matter and spirit. To understand this we must realize how the nervous system is constructed. It consists of two distinct parts: sensory-motor and autonomic. The former consists of the brain and spinal cord with their peripheric nerves. Its functions are as follows: higher psychic processes, receiving of sensations from the outside, command of the skeletal muscles and control of internal organs. Most of these functions are conscious and can be controlled at will. The autonomic part of the nervous apparatus is divided in its turn into two systems: the sympathetic and the para-sympathetic. The first consists of two chains of ganglia which furnish nerves to the spinal cord, most of the internal organs, blood vessels, eyes, etc. Among its numerous functions the principal ones are constriction of peripheric blood vessels, acceleration of pulse, inhibition of activity of the gastro-intestinal tract and of various secretory glands, dilatation of pupils, etc.

The para-sympathetic system consists mostly of a pair of vagi nerves. They are cranial nerves and give fibers to the heart, lungs, throat, gastro-intestinal tract, etc. Their functions are to slow down the pulse and respiration, stimulate the intestine, stomach and various secretory glands, contract the pupils, etc. Both the sympathetic and the para-sympathetic systems control the subsconscious functions of the body and convey vague sensations from the organs to the brain. To a certain extent they are antagonistic one to another. They work independently from will and consciousness, but are united to the sensory-motor system by numerous branches. A projection of conscious impulses through these communicating passages to the internal organs, and their subjugation to man's will, is the aim of Hatha-yoga. Respiration exercises serve best for this purpose. In fact, lungs are supplied both with vagi and sensory-motor nerves, thus bridging the gap between the autonomic and conscious systems. The process of respiration in its turn is closely united with functions of the heart and the abdominal organs. Dividing the respiration into different stages and assuming certain postures, yogis are able to excite through conscious movements and pressures various autonomic nerves, especially the n. n. vagi. After a long period of such exercises, combined with mental concentration on them, yogis arrive at the point where they can intensify the excitability of these nerves and create conditional reflexes and, probably, also conscious responses of internal organs to thought. This enables them to produce at will such unusual physiological phenomena as the stopping of the pulse, the contraction of the smooth muscles of various organs, etc. The main features of these exercises are the slow rhythmic movement and concentration.

Other yogis are not satisfied with this bodily technique and develop such psychic powers as telepathy, foretelling, suggestion, exteriorization of thoughts, etc. The physico-mental achievements of Hatha-yoga are regarded here not as a final aim, but as a preparatory step to the spiritual development. The appropriate physical exercises, combined with rhythmic breathing, rhythmic chanting of prayers and mental concen-

tration, serve to strengthen the body and the mind and to develop a potential psychic force. Further, certain psychic exercises aim to sensitize the perceptibility of man and to increase his ability to concentrate his attention. The former is accomplished partly by the previously mentioned physico-mental exercises, combined with the suppression of bodily desires and sensations, which inhibit spiritual impulses and distract attention; partly by special exercises in contemplation. Thus, the perceptibility is intensified in a certain chosen direction and therefore becomes concentrated. A concentrated thought has in itself little of actual psychic power. The thought acquires this power mainly from its emotional background. In fact, the psychic power is a power of emotions or higher feelings, which are concentrated and intensified in the direction of a given thought. If the example of a steam engine may be permitted here, the engineer opening the valve would be the Free Will; the cylindrical shape of steam necessary for the latter's condensation and direction, the Thought; and the pressure of steam, the Feeling. Psychic power can be materialized through any kind of emotion or thought if it is sufficiently concentrated, as in the case of magic and sorcery.

But the spiritual preparation of man, synthetic thoughts and such feelings as love, union, desire, faith, etc., toward a subject of such a thought represent by their all-embracing, deep, volitional and absorbing nature, the largest reservoir of psychic energy. That is why all the highest religions and esoteric teachers require of their disciples the abnegation of a worldly life and the development of a loving, ethical spirit. These disciples are only permitted to use their acquired psychic power for good and unselfish purposes, partly from religious considerations, but also because an attempt to use this power for other than altruistic purposes would ruin it. Indeed, in many such cases the psychic power would not develop because of the lack of a spiritual background.

I do not intend to give here explanations of various psychic phenomena which can be produced by Rāja-yogis. It would lead us too far from the subject, to the ground of philosophy where we should study the question of space, the theory of knowledge, etc. It is enough for us to know that various psychic qualities can be developed by proper education. It must be incessantly repeated that life is an art in itself, which requires a special training of the whole nervous apparatus. We can develop our muscles, nerves, mind and spirit by teaching them just as a mother teaches her child to dress itself. No matter what is to be developed, whether muscles or mind, or for what purpose—be it to acquire health and intelligence, or a virtuosity of the fingers, autonomic nerves or psychic power, etc., the principles of teaching are the same; the difference lies only in the type of exercise.

There are three general principles: the union of the physical and mental apparatus, rhythm, and exceeding slowness in exercising. To these should be added the principle of physical and mental relaxation as a period of rest and re-accumulation of forces.

Union of Physical and Mental Apparatus. We have seen that the main factor in developing the body is the sensory-motor nervous system. Its nervous trunks comprise two kinds of individual nerves; afferent, which carry sensations from the periphery to the brain, and efferent, which carry motor impulses in the opposite direction. Thus, muscles, nervous trunks and the brain are united in one system. Touching one end of this system we induce a response at the other end. The mind can produce a double action upon the body: (1) it can develop, by attentively controlling a chosen movement of the body, the physiological tonus of the peripheric nerves, muscles and internal organs dependent on this movement; (2) a general benefactory influence may be exercised by concentrated thought and self-suggestion on a given part of the body. This activity of the mind is good training for the mind itself. Moreover, concentration of attention upon an exercise is necessary to make it rhythmic and uniformly slow.

The exercising muscles in their turn act favorably upon the mind by sending rhythmic sensory impulses to the brain and by intensifying the general metabolism; "*Mens sana in corpore sano.*"

The attention following a movement, becomes easily attached to it. Thus, a movement connected with a thinking process helps it to become concentrated, steady and gradual. If in physical exercises the mind must follow a movement, in some mental exercises, in its turn, the movement, real or imaginery, must follow the thought.

Rhythm. The importance of rhythm in physiological processes and in physical and mental exercises is not yet fully appreciated. Rhythmic movement or thinking is an organized process. Every such process continues pulsating: accumulating and discharging its energy and thus maintaining its equilibrium. These two periods form a cycle, more or less extended in time and space, and characteristic of the given process. These cycles can be exceedingly short and then we call it vibration; they may also be of cosmic proportions. All processes of the universe, physical, biological and psychological, have their cycles. In a sequence of cycles the corresponding moments mark the rhythm. Therefore, our thoughts, feelings, nervous impulses, movements, and organic functions are impregnated with rhythm. Our mind is very sensitive to rhythm and falls easily under its influence. This is proven by the influence of music and the difficulty which we experience in trying to combine two different rhythms. The longer and the smoother the cycles of a process, the less distinct is its rhythm. Sometimes it is possible to emphasize the rhythm by accentuating the corresponding moments of each cycle. There are two kinds of rhythmic processes; one represents a process degenerated into or formed of a sequence of accents or sharp movements, interrupted by equal pauses, as in falling drops. We find this also in certain physical exercises. The other represents a continuous movement, marked by evenly distributed accents, as in the case of a moving train over the knocking joints of the rails. The great majority of vibrative processes, including those in the living body, belong to the latter kind. Here, the pauses between accents

are filled in with unceasing movement, while in the former process, short movements are separated by empty pauses. Both processes require an equal sense of rhythm, but in the case of the continuous process, the sense of rhythm and the accentuating force are more intimately united. Moreover, in this process, the accents do not fall on empty pauses, but on a tense ground, thus coining it rhythmically. In physical exercises, this process offers the additional advantage of using for accents different muscular groups, thus educating each group separately. By acting upon a process in harmony with its rhythm, we can to a certain extent acquire control over the former and intensify or enlarge upon it at will. In fact, the rhythmic breathing of yogis, the chanting of magicians, the movements in ordinary physical exercises, etc., are evidences of the tremendous importance of rhythm in developing the various psychic and physical faculties of man.

It is not requisite in exercises for self-development, to catch the physiological rhythm of a given organ. We can impose upon it our own rhythm of volitional impulses, because body and mind adapt themselves most easily to these. Indeed, physiological processes are so complicated, that any superimposed rhythm will harmonize with them, except in the case of a few functions of some of the internal organs. As the present method is based upon the development of the nervous system, it is very important to make peripheric nerves responsive to various rhythms. At the same time the mind should be taught to control the combination of the different rhythms of simultaneous movements of different parts of the body. In this way the mind will be trained not only to feel rhythm, but also to exercise its full power of attention in various directions at once. Though various schools of physical culture begin now to appreciate the importance of developing the feeling of rhythm, the necessity of thinking rhythmically is not yet understood. But rhythmic thinking means an activity and discipline of the mind, and one must make a habit of it.

There are three types of the wrong thinking process: the dull thinking of uncultured people; the loose thinking of undisciplined, superficial minds, as that of children and some nervous people; and the impressionable thinking of many brilliant writers, speakers, etc., who are actually hypnotized by some attractive ideas or images and are carried along these channels without verifying them. We see in all these types the failure of man to govern his thoughts, just as a novice in music fails to control his fingers. But the will coins rhythm in the thinking process as well as in conscious movements, thus gaining control of them.

Moreover, we can speak about the rhythm of soul and mind in general, which means that all their functions are well balanced. It is this generalized rhythm that creates one's personality and is probably responsible for health, longevity, success, and psychic power. The chief aim of the present method is to develop such a rhythm. It is developed, not as the result of one or another exercise, but in con-

sequence of an acquired habit to govern body and mind, and to lead an intensively spiritual life.

Slowness. An exceedingly slow tempo is essential in every exercise. In order to keep the movement of any part of the body very slow, at least two opposite nervous forces are called upon: one is contracting the muscles, the other, intimately related to the first, is incessantly restraining this contraction. Thus, a slow and naturally uniform motion requires the height of nervous tension. One can see at once how difficult and tiresome is a slow movement. The degree of the muscular fatigue after a very slow exercise is greater than after the same exercise done at an ordinary speed during the same length of time. This fatigue is caused: (1) by the fact that our undisciplined muscles and nerves work by sharp jumps and an additional energy is required to control these jumps, smoothing them into a continuous, uniform activity; (2) by the fact that in a quick movement, part of the work is done by inertia, which is almost nil in the case of a slow movement. Thus, in slow exercises, muscles and nerves are especially active and the nervous system is undergoing an intensive training.

A slow, uniform movement requires the rhythmic nervous impulses of the sensory-motor system and an intense concentration of attention. On the other hand, a slow movement is required, that there may be time: (1) for the concentration of attention upon it; and (2) for placing several rhythmic accents during the whole period of motion.

Thus, exceeding slowness in exercising, accentuated rhythm, and the concentration of attention, form a self-supporting triad of the fundamental principles. This triad incites the consciousness of one's body, which is of particular importance in self-development.

Relaxation. The counter-part of this triad is relaxation. An undisciplined nervous system is continuously in the reversible state either of an over-strain or of an under-strain. It is not able to keep its normal tonus. That is why the strenuous life in big cities results very often in a nervous break-down, and all neurasthenic people have their "ups and downs." A normal tonus requires normal rest. This is another element of physiological and psychic rhythm. But relaxation is important not only as a rest, when we accumulate again our physical and psychic forces; it is easier to start anew a right muscular movement or a right thinking process when we are not influenced by a pre-existent physical or mental strain. For instance, a relaxed arm will lift an object in a natural, well-balanced manner, using only the necessary muscles, and thus performing an economical and graceful movement. On the other hand, most of an average man's movements and gestures are ugly and consume too much energy because of neuro-muscular over-strain.

It is the same with the mind. "Night brings counsel" not only because it brings rest, but also because it interrupts the fixed trend of thought. Moreover, the period of rest is not simply a period of accumulation of forces, but also a period of a latent fixing and arranging of newly acquired knowledge. Every musician, dancer, athlete, etc., knows that after strenuous work, a rest for several days brings paradoxically some technical improvement. Similarly, scientists very often find suddenly the right solution of a problem after a mental rest, following a period of intense and apparently fruitless thinking. It is evident that some latent work is going on in the muscles as in the brain during the period of rest.

If there is an art in action, there is also an art in relaxation, and the latter is no less important. It is difficult, especially for a nervous person, to relax his muscles, but probably it is still more difficult to relax his mind, which works even during sleep. And an expenditure of psychic energy has far more effect on general health and is retrieved with far greater difficulty than an expenditure of muscular energy. One must train oneself in relaxation. But it must be remembered that as there is over-strain, there can also be over-relaxation. When relaxed too long, nerves and muscles gradually lose their physiological tonus and an additional energy is needed to bring them to their normal state. There can even be a real atrophy of the muscle in the prolonged rest of a limb immobilized by a cast. The relaxation required is a strictly necessary rest, but not a self-indulging. One must be trained not only to get the maximum of rest from the minimum of time, but also to know the length and frequency of rest required in every kind of work. Short, frequent but complete, partial or general relaxations, physical and mental, are necessary during the day. It was recently proven at a textile factory in America, that a few 5 to 10 minute intervals in work for a complete rest increased the daily production of the factory, notwithstanding a considerable shortening of the time of work. It is very little understood by business people that frequent short rests during their own or their employees' work will but improve quantitatively and qualitatively its results.

One must make the most of the night's sleep by avoiding any mental strain before retiring and by sleeping in a soft and warm bed. I have mentioned the necessity of a regular interruption or change of work for one or several days. People with various interests in life usually exhaust their nervous system less than those concentrated in one direction.

Each of the physical exercises described below should be followed by the relaxation of the exercising part or of the whole body. This relaxation does not mean merely a simple rest, but a temporary loss of the tonus. There are special exercises in relaxation to enable one to reach its highest degree.

The same applies also to mental work, and it is a great achievement to be able at will not to think or to feel. This is an important step in spiritual self-development.

Exercises. It is clear from the aforesaid, that the importance of the method here prescribed, lies not so much in the selection of definite exercises, as in the manner of performing them. The exercises should be followed only in the main, and everyone may choose those exercises that suit best his purpose. The purposes may be diverse — the development of technique by musician or dancer, the yogi's acquirement of power over the internal organs, or therapeutic action upon some diseased internal organ, etc. In each of these cases there are appropriate exercises and it can only be recommended that they be done according to the principles given above.

The exercises for the general development of body and mind can be divided into three groups, physical, mental and spiritual, which should be intermingled and repeated several times a day, in order to keep the body and the mind tuned-up and to develop gradually the habit for it. The periods of exercising should not be long, no more than 5 to 10 minutes at a time, and the best results are obtained when done in privacy with nothing to distract the attention. No music should be allowed, because it makes the keeping of rhythm passive and too easy. The work consists of a real study of one or another exercise, as a musician would study a passage of music, until it can be performed without the excessive strain which comes from imperfectly differentiated nervous or mental work. The importance of the absolute cooperation of body and mind, creating on the one side a feeling of immersion in thought and on the other side a consciousness of the body, must be emphasized. In this way the harmony of body and mind and the power of control over these are gradually developed.

Physical Exercises. These can also be arranged in three groups according to their difficulty. The exercises of the first group are separate movements of one or another part of the body; those of the second group — combined asymmetrical movements of two, or more parts simultaneously at one and the same rhythm; those of the third —combined asymmetrical movements as above, but at different rhythms. The combinations of rhythms may vary from the simplest to the more complicated, as 3:4, 4:5, etc. All the muscles of the limbs, trunk and neck must be exercised. For this any ordinary exercise will be good, but in order to save time by using a variety of muscles in a single exercise, circulatory movements may be especially recommended. The latter, moreover, result in a better balance of muscular action and therefore, in more intense attention than straight movements.

In regard to slowness of movement. It should take from one-half to two minutes to raise an arm from its position along the side of the body to a horizontal position at shoulder-height, and every other exercise should be timed on the same basis. The movement must be uniform, the slightest jump or acceleration should be carefully avoided, and the attention focused on describing a regular line. These conditions are very important because they require a strict control of the movement and very tense muscles.

The rhythm should be marked during the movement by slight, short efforts made by some muscles of the moving part, without interrupting the general movement or changing its speed or line. Thus, nervous impulses to various muscles gradually become highly differentiated. We can train every muscle to respond separately to conscious impulses, increasing in this way the cooperation of body and mind.

The attention must be concentrated upon each movement, controlling its slowness, uniformity, line and rhythm. It is advisable for this purpose to follow the moving part with the eyes, against a wall, the floor or an object in the room. A relaxation of the working muscles must take place after each complete movement, when the part of the body returns to its starting point. The resting part should take a position either lying on a support or freely hanging in the air, so that every muscle may be completely relaxed and that part of the body present no greater resistance to any foreign action upon it than that of its dead weight. It is best, in order to assume this relaxed state, to throw the exercising part briskly about, letting it take its own most natural resting position, and remain in it. It is necessary together with the relaxation of the muscles to relax also the attention, letting it wander aimlessly over surrounding objects, never fixing upon any of them. The muscular and mental relaxation must be short but complete, and then a new exercise is to be started. Usually nervous people cannot relax entirely, but it is important to develop through practice, the faculty of complete relaxation at will.

Mental Exercises. It has already been pointed out that our mind can be trained as our muscles. Every thought can be handled as a musician handles his fingers. The technique of the mind consists of acute, active, though controlled, thinking and of the ability to concentrate the attention at any intensity on any one object or on several objects at once, and then to shift this attention freely from one object to another.

In mental exercises, as in physical ones, the greatest importance lies not in the selection of them, but in the way they are to be performed. The exercises can be divided into two groups: rhythmic observation and rhythmic meditation. Every exercise must be short (a few minutes are sufficient), but it should be repeated several times a day in between other occupations. The maximum of attention must be applied. The whole body during an exercise must be in a *very stiff* position, standing or sitting, with all muscles strained in order to keep the nervous system in tonus and to unite the feeling of one's body with one's thoughts.

Slowness in observation or meditation consists of a gradual transferring of attention from one detail of an object or one logical quality of an idea to the one closest to it. Rhythm in observation and meditation is requisite to make them active. The attention is fixed on each detail or quality for three to five or more seconds, while we

are mentally counting them (automatically), and then transferred to the next one for the same period. Thus the whole subject is gradually and uniformly studied. The further development of the mind consists in shortening the exercising periods without losing the sharpness or richness of the study. A teacher can guide his pupil by giving him some problem to observe or meditate upon for a short time, and then asking him to give a detailed and correct description of it. A variety of problems should be given.

Spiritual Exercises. A spiritual feeling, or life in general, may be characterized more or less as synthetic. Such concepts as God, Universe, Humanity, Beauty, or the Soul of a man, of an object, etc., are synthetic, and feelings of fusion with them, as those of love, desire, absorption, penetration, harmonization, etc., are spiritual ones. These feelings may be considered themselves as synthetic because they embrace the whole being of man as a psychic unity.

The aim of spiritual exercises is to develop the intensity of such a feeling of fusion with a given synthetic object. The more details enter into the representation of the object and the fuller the understanding of it, the more complete is one's fusion with it. The best method is to take the object of a mental exercise, thus completing the latter by synthesizing the object in all of its details, and revealing its "soul" and meaning. Later on the more synthetic and general subjects of meditation exercises should be used, especially those which have personal and ethical meaning.

Spiritual feelings are closely related to the synthetic feeling of one's body as a whole. We must be in a *very stiff* posture as in mental exercises, and be all the time conscious of the whole body. First we must visualize the object in all its details, passing from one to another until the whole picture is firmly and brightly fixed in the brain; then, we must strive to understand its "soul" and become fused with it through the feeling of love, absorption, etc. At the same time we must make a slow rhythmic inspiration by several short expansions of the chest, imagining that thus we absorb the object, and that the fusion with the object is increased with each portion of air. The air must be kept in the lungs at the height of chest expansion for some time, then briskly expired and the attention relaxed until the next inspiration, and so on.

These exercises, as mental ones, should not last longer than a few minutes at a time, exaggeration of them being dangerous; but they must be repeated every time a mental exercise is done. It is important to do spiritual exercises for some time with one and the same object, in order to acquire a deeper understanding of it and reach a more complete fusion with it.

The main aim of such spiritual exercises is to gradually create in man the habit of a bright and synthetic acceptance of the world, and to develop his power to concentrate his thoughts and feelings.

A teacher can, to a certain extent, direct the development of his pupil, based on the sharpness of the latter's description of the object and by his ability to understand its "soul."

Summary. The bodily and mental health and activity of a man, the length of his life, his success and intensity of living, depend mainly upon the state of his nervous system. The normal tonus of every tissue in the organism and therefore, their physiological optimum, depends directly or indirectly upon the normal tonus of the nervous system. Both function-complexes of the latter, nervous and psychic, play equally important roles in all physiological processes of the organism, and vice-versa. There is no doubt that such psychic phenomena as cheerfulness, courage, strong emotions, self-suggestion, faith, etc., have most important influences upon the body, and the power of thought is at present very little realized. In immediate connection with the question of preservation of health stands the question of the development of man's physical and psychic faculties. Man's care for his own being must have as its main object the training of the central and peripheric nervous systems. Schools for the development of psychic faculties are exceptions and their importance is not realized by the public. The schools for physical culture are on the wrong path, because in these, the training of the nervous systems appears to be an occasional by-product that scarcely attracts attention. There is the same deficiency in eurythmics, though here we meet with similar principles as in the present method, namely: slowness of movement, rhythm, attention and relaxation; but the application is different. In fact, only *exceeding* slowness and rhythmic accents placed *during* a movement and by separate muscles, have the full beneficial bearing upon body and mind. The whole method and the final aims of eurythmics are different from those of the present method. The latter probably stands in principle nearest to the Hindu yoga, which has proved during centuries its value in strengthening and developing the human organism.

The present method is designed to train the nervous and psychic systems. Thus, life is considered as an art that requires a special technique. The principles of this technique are applicable to any purpose: be it the preservation or re-establishing of bodily or mental health, the training of musician, dancer, athlete or yogi; or the development of mental and spiritual faculties, etc. The chief point of the method is the parallel development of body and mind and their close cooperation. Thus, physical exercises require concentration of attention, and psychic exercises, the participation of the body and a synthetic consciousness of it.

There are four principles in exercising: (1) concentration of attention on the exercise, (2) rhythm, (3) slowness, and (4) relaxation. The exercises can be done either by the student alone, or under the individual direction of a teacher. They should not be done longer than a few minutes at a time, but should be repeated several times a day. The work consists of the real study of an exercise, physical or psychic, until it becomes technically perfect and can be performed without excessive strain. The teacher or student himself can select the exercises which suit best their purposes, as the point of the method lies in the manner of performing the various exercises. No immediate result can be expected, but gradually, after steady work, a new "life-reality" will be developed, characterized by the feeling of power over body and mind similar to that experienced by a virtuoso over his hands, by a consciousness of body, and by the feeling of oneself in his thoughts. This synthesis of the physical and psychic nature of man represents a real power in the world which is not fully understood as yet in the West. There is practically no limit to self-development and this power grows with the spiritual achievements of man.

Although the present method does not touch upon the ethical problems of life, there is a connection between them similar to that of the musician's technique and his striving for artistic perfection. The technique of body and mind creates the joy of power and of internal harmony, and a desire for further perfection, thus forming a natural basis for ethics.