

Physical Acting Training as Therapy: Outcomes from Three Therapeutic Physical Acting  
Training Workshops

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## ABSTRACT

### Physical Acting Training as Therapy: Outcomes from Three Therapeutic Physical Acting Training Workshops

Rosaruby Kagan Glaberman

The subject area of this research is the therapeutic implication of physical theatre training on a client's journey towards living in accordance with their internal judgment and motivations. The purpose of this study was to determine how healthy adults without a previous history of mental illness respond to brief physical acting training workshops. The intention was to see if the workshop participants experience an increase in their internal locus of control and attention regulation abilities. In this research paper, eight participants' experiences of physical theatre training techniques are described and analyzed. The workshops succeeded in helping the participants heighten their physical and emotional awareness in relation to their internal and external awareness of their environments and interpersonal relationships. The participants also learned about ways in which reactions and actions affect the way they interact with others and how they feel about themselves, helping them realize they have the power to choose what they focus on in their lives.

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## INTRODUCTION

Peter Brook (1968) spoke of theatre as a search for meaning in life and the actor's job as one of self-development. It is this thought that represents the foundation for this research into the therapeutic value of physical theatre. On a fundamental level, acting training is a search for clarity of self, which is done by exercising and exploring internal and external awareness and what it means to be authentic. This is an ongoing search to become a master at communicating, to another and to oneself, what life is about and what meaning can be taken from it (Bogart, 1995; Brook; Grotowski, 1975; Richards, 1995; Wang, 2000). Despite this, there is a trend for drama therapists to orient themselves theoretically in another school of psychotherapy, rather than to focus on the "healing aspects of theatre or drama as the primary therapeutic process in drama therapy" (Mitchell, 1992, pp. 50). Although there is much value in drama as a tool for many different forms of therapy, thanks to my experience training as an actor over the past fifteen years, I am interested in research and therapeutic clinical practices that utilize theatre based theories, specifically *physical acting training*.

### Definition of Terms and Research Objective

This research intends to link psychological theories and research from Drama Therapy, Humanism and Mindfulness-based Therapy approaches to the theories and practices of a physical actors training in order to shed light on its therapeutic value.

The physical training of an actor, for the purposes of this research, is delimited to theatrical exercise or techniques that train an individual to utilize her body as a means to heighten both internal and external awareness and strengthen authentic internal impulses.

The term authenticity, in this research, is defined as that which is loyal to innate internal ideas, feelings, motivations, thoughts and sensations when interacting with the external world.

The therapeutic intention of my physical acting training program is to train an individual to increase his attention regulation and get in touch with his innate and authentic actions and reactions. In this research, I am equating an authentic action and reaction with what Rogers (1959) defines as an individual's *organismic valuing process (OVP)* and I will use the term internal locus of control to describe the product of a healthy OVP. Internal locus of control is a term used by Grotowski (1975) to describe an individual's ability to feel as though the main driving and motivating force within her life, from which all actions and reactions originate, is herself.

I propose that there are specific physical theatre training techniques that help individuals become aware of their authentic inner feelings and desires, enabling them to trust their own internal judgment. These techniques aim to bring heightened awareness to the way in which an individual's reactions and actions affect the way he interacts with others and how he feels about himself. The assumption is that an individual who undergoes physical acting training can achieve an understanding of what it feels like to act and react from their inner impulses (Grotowski, 1975). It was my intention to utilize this process with participants in the hope that they might take the knowledge they gain into their daily lives and make more self-directed, satisfying life choices that are congruent with their OVP.

### **Primary Research Question**

How can a Drama Therapy program based on specific physical acting training

techniques increase an individual's attention regulation and internal locus of control?

### **Subsidiary Research Questions**

1. How does an exploration of authenticity of action and reaction start a process of transformation and help develop an individual's attention regulation and internal locus of control?
2. Judging from both my own recorded observations and the subjective writings and feedback of the participants gathered during three workshops, will specific elements of the physical acting training process appear to have been more useful than others in helping the participants therapeutically?

## **SUMMARY OF CURRENT LITERATURE**

### **Theory of Physical Acting Training**

There are many different schools of thought regarding the craft and training of actors and a multitude of acting techniques within them. One school of thought, or rather a theoretical orientation, is physical acting training. The theories behind the western physical training of an actor are mostly rooted in the investigations of Russian director Konstantine Stanislavsky and Polish director Jerzy Grotowski. Their colleges and disciples have, in the spirit of laboratory quality work, devised their own techniques and training methods. Grotowski himself was heavily influenced by Stanislavsky, as well as Eastern theatre traditions. There has been a gross misunderstanding of Stanislavsky's "approach" as being mostly a mental process by which actors search internally for emotional truth. Traditional American acting training is based solely on his early work on sense memory, when in fact such internal psychological exercises make up only a small

part of his life's work (Wang, 2006). Stanislavsky's ideas, like Grotowski's, were in constant evolution and, in his later work, he paid more attention to and was adamant about the body being the gateway to achieving consistent emotional authenticity (Wang).

Directors, teachers and practitioners across all schools of thought and traditions have developed trainings and techniques that emphasize how the body can serve as a source for emotional truth (Chekhov, 1953; Stanislavsky, 1950, 1963; Grotowski, 1975; King, 1981; Brook, 1968; Wang, 2000, 2006; Bates, 1986; Zaporah, 1995). There are no regimented or standardized series of exercises within the field. The specific techniques will not propel an actor's growth, but rather aid the actor to confront the limitations of his personal awareness (Grotowski; Wang). However, the elements I have found present in all training techniques and theories are physical and psychological confrontation, physical control/awareness re-training, impulse awareness training, harnessing energy centers, inner world vs. outer world sensory awareness training, action reaction awareness training and interpersonal awareness training. These elements, which provide the basis for my therapeutic physical acting training workshops, are all interconnected and fit under the one category of inner and outer awareness training.

In order to illuminate the principles of physical acting training, the theory behind them and the physical training process, I will first discuss Grotowski's, Stanislavsky's and other practitioners' investigations. I will then discuss in greater detail the actual physical actor training process and the therapeutic potential embedded in it.

Grotowski spent over forty years vigorously studying the essence of theatre (Brook, 1975; Schechner & Wolford, 1997). All phases of his research, Art as Performance, Para-theatre, Theatre of Sources, and his final work, Art as Vehicle,

were rigorous investigations into avenues/possibilities for the actor to uncover physical impulses, which are primal, alive and authentic (Richards, 1995). He believed that the actor, his body and his encounter with the spectator were the most important elements in theatre (Grotowski, 1975). Ultimately, he found that a truthful encounter was one in which there was no separation between an actor and a spectator. From 1969 until 1999 his work reflects this deep search for the purest encounter with life (Grotowski, 1995). Brook (1997) attests similarly: that the art of performance allows an individual access to a different level of perception. The way to achieve or reach towards this different level of perception, according to Grotowski, is through *physical action training*.

Physical action is a term Stanislavski used to describe his acting process of utilizing precise physical memory from an actor's own life as a source for authentic expression (Richards, 1995). Grotowski took up the term physical action in his own research to describe the physical technique of training actors to act and react from pure impulse (Richards).

In essence, this type of physical acting training is an organic method of interaction both within the actor, incorporating the individual's will, thought, body and feeling, and between actors (Merlin, 2001). The actor must pay attention to what he or she feels physically, cognitively, spiritually and emotionally (King, 1981; Pisk, 1975). An actor must always ask herself "what is my present state of being?" As Zaporah (1995) said, regarding teaching theatre students to embody characters, "they had to embody themselves before they could embody anybody else" (p. xx). At the same time, the actor must place her attention outwards and judge how she feels in relation to another person, thing or sensation. This training is often referred to as a psycho-physical training

combining the confrontation of both physical and psychological limits (Merlin, 2001).

Gearing one's attention to inner and outer awareness includes the process of identifying what the difference is between a habituated premeditated action, thought or feeling versus a spontaneous pure impulse action, thought or feeling. An impulse leads to the expression of truth inside someone (Callery, 2001). There are many techniques geared towards understanding this difference and achieving it physically. One such technique involves moving only from one's center. The center is a term used to describe the area in a person's abdomen that holds the body together. It is believed that all pure impulses come from one's center (Wang, 2000). In training, an individual might focus on walking from one side of the room to the other, moving only from their center. This activity forces an individual to make the distinction between a movement that originates from an impulse from their center and one that does not. It is a struggle to achieve this distinction and within this struggle there is the possibility of transformation. Through this type of transformation, an individual can become more trusting of their own internal judgment, feeling, and desires, developing their internal locus of control. This exercise is just one of many geared towards this end. Due to the limited scope of this research project, aside from the physical training exercises that I chose for my program, I will not be describing other techniques in detail, but rather their purpose.

In the process of accessing true impulses, the actor must train his body in order to shed both psychological and physiological blocks that prevent authentic expression (Grotowski, 1975). One does not easily experience a true impulse because of the many layers of doubt, questioning, shame, and culturalization (Richards, 1995; Grotowski). Actors often fake an impulse by taking on the attributes of a character or emotion and

thus train themselves to pretend rather than truly be (Brook, 1968). The physical acting training consists of intense and repetitive or explorative physical movement in order to harness one's natural impulses. As one's experience of the physical exercise increases, often after years, a deeper synthesis and understanding of how to continually be authentic prevails (Grotowski 1975; Zaporah, 1995). This training occurs in relation to one's self and environment so that a simultaneous inner/outer dialogue takes place. It is a difficult and strenuous physical and psychological process because one must continually confront and shed old habits, as well as try to achieve a high level of physical commitment, focus and articulation.

The extreme difficulty of the physical feats Grotowski demanded of his actors was essential. As Grotowski said to one of his students, "the real value [of the exercises] lies in [your] not being able to do them" (Crawley, 1978, p. ii 13). It is the encounter with the form and the strong emotional reactions that matter because it is within that struggle that an individual learns about and assesses his ability for true impulse reactions and actions (Wang, 2006).

The difficult process of physical reeducation and impulse training is, in part, a psychological challenge in which one must allow one to make mental adjustments towards the physical experience of the exercise (Merlin, 2001). This process therefore often incorporates facing our inner critical voice, learning from it and moving beyond the judgment of self. It requires understanding the complexity of the constant dialogue between inner and outer awareness and a heightening of attention and concentration on what is really happening in the moment.

These practices of being authentic, getting in touch with one's impulses and

paying attention to the physical and emotional dialogue of inner and outer awareness do not simply lead to good acting; they lead to a discovery and investigation of the self and other (Grotowski, 1995; Wang, 2000). In this light, the actor's training process can be seen as the epitome of a psychological struggle for authenticity of self, meaning, and an effective way of communication.

Learning and awareness come in stages of confrontation with self, with others and with the physical training itself (Bogart, 1995; Brook, 1968, 1975; Grotowski 1975, 1995; Richards 1995). Individuals' ability to notice their interpersonal inhibitions and psychological and physical blocks is key to the success of the trainings (Grotowski, 1995; Richards), as well as the success of psychotherapy (Weiner, 1998).

The rules within the specific trainings are designed to isolate components of human behavior and address how individuals organize specific aspects of behavior or experience. This is done in the hopes of encouraging individuals to inhabit their bodies and deconstruct habitual behavior. The training teaches that, regardless of the surroundings, who an individual is, how he perceives his environment, and how he responds to these perceptions will remain the same unless he becomes aware of and questions his typical level functioning. It is for these reasons that physical acting training has been considered by many of its practitioners not just a model for performance, but for life (Callery, 2001; Grotowski & Furmaroli, 1997; Zaporah, 1995).

### **Support for Physical Acting Training as a Theoretical Base for Therapy**

In an attempt to isolate the theoretical base and therapeutic factors of physical acting training, I found many connections/parallels with the theories of Humanism and Mindfulness-based treatment. Following I draw attention to these connections.



### *Humanism*

Rogers (1959) believed that infants have inherent and unique motivational and regulatory systems called the *organismic valuing process* (OVP). As defined earlier, the OVP is “the evaluation of experiences in a manner that is consistent with one’s intrinsic needs” (Joseph & Patterson, 2007, pp. 120). According to Rogers (1961), fully functioning individuals live according to their OVP. They have internally driven values and motivations enabling them to be open to experiences, to choose to live each moment fully, and to feel responsible for their own behavior. They do not feel the necessity to conform and therefore are creative in adapting to circumstances. Living in accordance with one’s OVP is difficult because the OVP is prone to being replaced by what Rogers named *conditions of worth* (1961). These are external sources of motivation, values or beliefs and are the products of cultural norms and societal or family rules. They influence individuals’ thought processing, attitudes and behavior and often result in *habituated action*, behavior that is not internally motivated (Joseph & Patterson). Throughout this research, I will continue to refer to externalized motivation and values that affect one’s behavior as habituated action. One of the goals of physical acting training as therapy is to shed habituated action.

In Humanism, as well as in physical acting training, an exploration of the authentic self (innate impulses) is a primary goal (Carver & Scheiver, 2004; Richards, 1995). The conditioned behavior that Rogers describes is similar to an actor who is trained to act out clichés. He has developed a lack of trust in his own internal judgment. Stanislavski (1937) and Grotowski (1975) both spoke of *organicity* as a state of being that the actor trains to achieve, or relearns, by returning to reactions and actions that are

authentic, internally located and primary (Richards). In order to achieve organicity, an actor must learn to get out of the way so that his body can think for itself (Richards). This way of being is attributed to the innate way of children, which is lost as one ages (Grotowski).

According to Rogers (Rogers & Stevens, 1967), adults will inevitably incorporate the outside world's opinions into their valuing process, but ultimately they must trust the primary intelligence of their own body to be fully functioning. Countless theatre arts instructors and practitioners, besides Grotowski, such as Pisk (1975), Callery (2001), Merlin (2001) and Zaporah (1995), when depicting the physical training of an actor, also speak of the body's natural intelligence. They all emphasize the importance of an individual learning to pay attention to an "inner rightness" (Pisk, p.11) or inner feeling and then portraying a physical response to that feeling. Bates (1986) depicts a rather compelling training exercise in which he was blind folded and was able, purely through physical concentration and awareness, to move through a maze of chairs without running into them. He states of the experience: "I decided to shut off my brain and try to feel through my body. Immediately, I experienced something quite astonishing" (Bates, pp.189). Taking these numerous theatre practitioners and Rogers' lead and assuming the body does have a higher intelligence, the aim of therapy could then be to enable the client to evaluate her experience internally, thus creating more satisfying and authentic emotional expressions, decisions, actions and reactions (Rogers, 1959; Rogers & Stevens, 1967).

If living according to one's OVP and personal motivations is essential to being a fully functioning, healthy person (Rogers, 1961; Sheldon & Elliot, 1999; Sheldon, Arndt,

& Houser-Marko, 2003), a physical actor's training could potentially be used to help an individual learn to make more personally satisfying life choices that are congruent with her innate needs.

### *Mindfulness-based Treatment Approaches*

There is a growing body of empirical research and literature that supports Mindfulness-based therapy approaches as a direct path towards improved psychological functioning and mental health, with meditation at the center of these approaches (Baer, 2006; Lazar, 2005; Germer, Siegel & Fulton, 2005). Attention regulation is one of the main techniques in meditation (Shapiro, Schwartz, & Santerre, 2002). It is what Mindfulness-based approaches such as Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction (MBSR), Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) use as their therapeutic focus (Baer). These approaches encourage an individual to pay attention to the moment (Baer). It is believed that by paying attention to the moment, an individual is more able to come to an understanding of what she wants and could possibly achieve in a given situation. This also allows for more spontaneous and creative interactions. Attention regulation is also one of the critical goals of physical actors training (Grotowski, 1975).

Zaporah (1995), the founder of Action Theatre and a specific method of improvisational training, has based her work on Buddhist meditation, improvisation and the necessity of being in the present. In her training, an actor undergoes intense periods of physical training to heighten awareness and increase spontaneous creativity. A good actor is one who is able to act and react purely in the moment, which physical acting training demands (Grotowski, 1975). Similar to Grotowski, she attests that individuals

become free of their habitual behaviors and perceptions when they “become more conscious of our moment to moment thoughts, sensations, emotions, feelings, and fantasies, in addition to the outer world we inhabit” (Zaporah, pp. xxi). Although Zaporah’s techniques are relevant to theatre, the lessons that are learned through the process greatly affect daily life: “because we place the activity of the mind into action, we can observe its ways, examine who we are and how we operate. We can consciously redirect our functioning” (Zaporah, pp. xxi). This process of physical and psychological self evaluation is echoed throughout all physical theatre training literature, as diverse as Meyerhold, Grotowski, Cahikin and Brook (Merlin, 2001). It involves an actor training physically to understand himself on the continuum of inner and outer awareness and the crucial element is attention regulation.

Attention regulation has been defined as “monitoring of the content of experience from moment to moment” (Lutz, Slagter, Dunne & Davidson, 2008, pp.1). Clients of MBCT, MBSR and ACT are similarly encouraged to heighten their awareness of how they are acting or reacting at all times. For this type of therapy to be most effective, daily practice of these elements is required and clients are given homework assignments (Baer, 2003, 2006; Lazar, 2005).

In light of this discussion, it can be postulated that training one’s awareness to be in the moment, aware of one’s actions and reactions, as both Mindfulness-based treatments and physical acting training demand, has therapeutic value. It helps an individual become aware of how her actions and reactions (attention regulation) make her feel, so that she may then choose to act according to her own wants and desires (internal locus of control). These ideas, along with the previously described benefits of a healthy

OVP combine with the focus on increasing internal impulses in physical acting training to provide the terms of reference and processes under investigation in my physical acting training therapeutic program.

*Physical Acting Training as Related to the Current Field of Drama Therapy*

Only a small number of Drama Therapists have directly adapted elements of Grotowski's research on physical actions (Mitchell, 1992, 1998; Johnson, 2001; Johnson, Forrester, Dintino, James, & Schnee, 1996). Johnson's Developmental Transformations utilizes the elements of an encounter with self and the other, the body as a source of feeling and thoughts, and the process of removal (disarming of falsity for transformation to occur): what Grotowski termed the *via negativa*. Developmental Transformations also contains an active goal of physical depth and intimacy in the work (Johnson et al., 1996). Each of these aspects were important at different stages of Grotowski's research (Schechner & Wolford, 1997). Mitchell (1992, 1998) has also been adamant about integrating elements of Grotowski's research as a primary theoretical base for the therapeutic benefits of the dramatic process. He developed a therapy model that utilized the essential elements of Para-theatrical work (Mitchell, 1992, 1998). These elements include the processes of disarming one's own culturalization and experiencing the vital truth of an encounter with one's environment that is reciprocal and total (Grotowski, 1995; Schechner & Wolford). Mitchell's (1992, 1998) frame involves training his participants physically and then enabling them to devise their own healing rituals, which represent the container for letting go of negative emotions. Continued work with these elements of Grotowski's research is valid and important for the field of Drama Therapy to establish a theoretical frame based in the

dramatic process. However, fundamental elements of Grotowski's work, and the practice of physical theater in general, are missing, namely: training an individual to act and react in direct relation to others from her innate impulses (OVP). Grotowski considered this to be key in all his phases of work because it leads directly to the experience of vital and authentic emotions (Grotowski, 1975; Richards, 1995). The effects of other processes, such as disarming and encounter, are thus simply by-products of impulse training. This simple distinction has been repeatedly overlooked, skewed or misunderstood (Brooks, 1975; Grotowski; Richards). It is my conclusion, then, that in order to reap the full therapeutic benefits of his work, a therapeutic program must be centered on physical training.

## **METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS**

My intent in pursuing this research was to investigate, in a drama therapy group setting, the potential therapeutic value of physical acting training. By highlighting internal action and reaction impulse training and attention regulation training, I have sought to determine the therapeutic value of short-term physical theatre acting training workshops, specifically in regards to the development of the participant's internal locus of control and ability for attention regulation. Due to the limited application of Physical Theatre Acting Training (why capitals? do you need to include a reference?) methods in Drama Therapy practice, it was deemed appropriate that the creation, as well as the application, of a therapeutic program based on these elements would be the best method of research into this topic. To this end, I will present my inquiry and its outcomes, in accordance with qualitative research standards (Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Patton, 1980, 2002; Stake, 1995), as a descriptive group case study, in which I will first describe the

context and process of the therapeutic interventions and then postulate the value.

The types of data that I collected during this study include the participants' reflective self-narrative journal writings, the notes I made during the workshops and my reflections following. In addition, I include in my analysis the thoughts and insights shared in group discussions during the process. Each journal has been coded in order to identify common themes and relevant material. This data has been analyzed through the theoretical lenses of Drama Therapy Group Process, Physical Acting Theories, Humanism, and Mindfulness-based Approaches.

### **Participants**

There were eight research participants in total to participate in the three therapeutic workshops. Two of them were present for one session, two for two sessions, and the remaining four were present for all three sessions. The participants were students between the ages of 18 to 31, with varying degrees of theatre training and experience. Two participants had no previous theatre experience, six had previous theatre training and four were still involved in theatre performance to some degree.

The participants were recruited through posters, advertisements in student newspapers and departmental emails (see Appendix A). The eight participants were selected from a sample of fourteen people who had contacted me via email regarding the advertisements. I conducted short phone interviews to determine which candidates were appropriate for the study (see Appendix D). The prerequisites for the research participants were that there be 8-10 healthy, adult Concordia University students who did not have a previous history of mental illness, had full use of their physical bodies and were between the ages of 18 and 30. I also wanted the group to consist of individuals

with a range of previous acting training. The reasons for these delimitations were: 1) A range of previous acting training within the group would allow a comparison between the participants who had previous acting training (physical or not) and those who did not. 2) The nature of the workshops necessitate that the participants have full use of their physical bodies. 3) Because of the short-term nature of these workshops, the outcome of the participants' experience would be better determined if they were mentally stable. 4) The age limit was set in order for there to be a variety of life experiences amongst the participants, while still allowing the therapeutic factor of universality to exist. It was also intended to help them feel more comfortable opening up about their experience.

All of the participants who were chosen stated that they were interested in becoming more aware of their body. Some of them explained that they were mostly interested in having more physical theatre training, but the therapeutic aspect was also of interest. Three of them stated that they might be interested in furthering their education in the realm of drama therapy. I selected those participants who met all the prerequisites and who provided the most diverse life experiences. Of the participants, two were men and six were women. Both men participated in only one session (one in the first session and one in the second session).

### ***Essential Considerations for Program Creation and Practice Methodology***

The format of this research project necessitated that I take on the multiple roles of researcher, instructor and therapist. While creating my program, in light of my research question, I chose exercises that I felt directly addressed sensory awareness, inner and outer awareness training, and impulse control. The exercises also encouraged attention to interpersonal dynamics and learning, brought attention to the difference between and the



intentions behind actions and reactions, and encouraged group cohesion and personal expression. It was my intention as a researcher/therapist to focus on drawing these factors out of the activities in order to increase the therapeutic benefit for the participants.

Since the workshops were focused on physical acting training, and in order for the participants to reap the full benefits of the methods, my facilitation of the workshops necessitated me to take on the role of an instructor. As an instructor, I gave the participants detailed points of focus and instructions on how to operate within the individual activities. It became apparent early on in the workshop process that my talking about the intensity of the process increased the feeling of awareness in the room. I reiterated these points throughout the entire process. In order to model how to do particular exercises, as well as to enhance the energy level in the room, I would sometimes participate alongside the participants. I would remove myself from the process when I felt that they needed autonomy and could hold the space on their own. I made sure to relay to the participants the importance of taking responsibility for their experience within the workshops. I explained that how they could personally benefit from the process was very much dependent on how much they invested themselves in the activities. In this manner, the participants were taught and given detailed instruction about how to reach a high level of awareness through simultaneous attention to outside and inside experiences, which are physical, mental and emotional.

The position that I chose to run the workshops under was to be completely transparent with the participants about every aspect of the process, including my research intentions and the potential therapeutic benefit of the sessions. Keeping in line with my role and training as a therapist, I structured the workshops in alliance with typical drama

therapy group therapy sessions. I attempted to create a safe and contained therapeutic environment and encourage them to play. I included sharing and processing time, as well as a therapeutic opening and closing to each session (Emunah, 1994; Jones, 2005). I also ensured that I conducted the workshops in a confidential, non-judgmental free space where the participants were encouraged to embark on a journey of self-discovery. I paid careful attention to allowing the normal development of important therapeutic factors in group therapy, such as Interpersonal Learning, Universality, Group Cohesion, Modeling and Imitative Behavior (Yalom, 1995).

At this point, I will explain my therapeutic orientation as well as my personal values as I feel that this was a major influence in the outcomes of the workshop process, specifically in regards to how I made interventions and steered the focus of the activities. In line with Humanistic theory, I believe that humans have an innate ability for continued growth, learning and understanding of themselves and the world around them. I believe that people are the agents of their own success and emotional well-being and that individuals who function from a place of internal motivation are more likely to lead happier and more fulfilling lives. In order for people to change, they must first be aware of how they relate to themselves and to others and they must accept their flaws before they can change them. I believe in validating a client's lived experience, as it helps them accept their current emotional standing. I believe psychological and emotional functioning is represented in an individual's physicality and vice versa, and therefore therapy should try to combine both the body and the mind. I truly believe in the therapeutic potential of physical acting training and the self-discipline it takes to live and act in the moment in accordance with one's inner impulses and desires, as I believe this

frees the soul from the often rigid constructs of society.

### **Summary of Workshop Process**

The three workshops were set up as a progression. Each day's activities were structured around a particular theme upon which the next week's session would expand. The individual workshop sessions were divided in two sections with a break in between. At the beginning, middle and end of the sessions, the participants were asked to respond to specific questions in their personal journals. The questions were related to the themes of the day and asked the participants to describe their physical and mental state before and after each workshop session (see appendixes E-H). I told the participants that, besides giving them a tool for further self-exploration and expression, the journals served as a tool for me to later analyze their experience of the workshop. They were given a handout detailing ways of writing in the journal (see Appendix E). Preceding the journal writing, we had discussion and sharing time, allowing for further exploration and analysis of the group's dynamics, integration of their personal associations and experiences as related to their lives and personal obstacles. At the end of each workshop, I asked the participants to be conscious throughout the week of any differences they felt or insights they had in relation to the workshops or other aspects in their lives. The following week, the session began with a discussion of the personal realizations the participants had throughout the week.

### **Description of Workshop Process and Activities**

#### *Session One: Inner Awareness vs. Outer Awareness*

The first day served as an introduction to the primary focus of the workshops: attention regulation and impulse control of internal and external actions and reactions. I explained

to the participants that the intention of the project was to collectively embark on a therapeutic and transformative process in which they would understand and begin to identify the difference between a habituated action, thought or feeling and a spontaneous pure impulse action, thought or feeling. This would allow them to feel more aware of and in control of their actions and reactions, which would hopefully produce more satisfying outcomes for them. The first step in this process was to simultaneously focus physically and mentally on inner and outer awareness. In order to tangibly break down these concepts and easily apply them, the beginning half of the session highlighted internal awareness and physical self-control of impulses and the second half external awareness and physical self-control. Therefore, the journal writing questions for day one (see Appendix E) asked the participants to rate their current understanding of internal and external awareness before and after the process, as well as assess their understanding of personal choice.

After the participants were introduced to each other and we had discussed personal associations to inner and outer awareness, they were led through a simple physical warm up (see Appendix I) geared towards heightening their physical awareness, waking up their energies and becoming in tune with one another. They were introduced to the concepts of constriction and releasing of energy, physical impulses and physical centers. Constriction is the process of pulling energy into one's body, letting nothing out and becoming a receptor of energy, versus release, which is a complete and total letting go of energy. I suggested the idea of being a black hole versus an open free vessel. As a black hole, they were to become as small as possible in the space, trying as hard as they could with every muscle in their body to suck energy into their bodies and condense it, a

very physical process. I would then shout out “release” and at once they were to expand that energy outwards sending it out in all directions, letting everything go as if air and energy could pass easily through their bodies. They explored the difference between release and constriction, noting how they felt in each extreme. As part of the lesson in dual awareness of internal and external factors, they were continually told to not only pay attention to their process but also to others.

The participants explored increasing their internal impulses through experimenting with extremely fast physical responses to an external stimulus and then to an internal stimulus. The response options I gave them were standing, lying on their stomach, lying on their back, standing still and jumping up to the clap of my hands and then to the silent impulse from the group, initiated randomly by any of them. The aim was to learn to react quickly in the moment (Appendix J for longer description).

Another important aspect of internal physical awareness and control that we explored was an activity geared towards making them aware of their physical centers. They were instructed to focus on walking from one side of the room to the other moving only from their center, which requires a high degree of physical concentration and energy (see Appendix K for longer description). Not surprisingly, due to the impossibility of the task, this was a frustrating activity for many of the participants.

The second half of the day focused on outer awareness, but the participants were instructed to continually gage and maintain attention to their inner awareness and feelings. The first activity used to elicit outer awareness was a game called A/B. This lighthearted game demanded that the participants experiment with placing their focus on specific individuals within the group as they walk around the room. The group was also

given different objectives to fulfill within the game: either trying to keep a great deal of personal space between themselves and others or trying to be physically close to the other participants (see Appendix L for description). To further contrast and illuminate external awareness, the group also explored a series of blindfolded exercises geared towards learning how to physically judge personal distance and trust (see Appendix M for description).

*Session Two: Heightening Awareness of Senses, Actions and Reactions*

Day two of the workshop focused on expanding on the concepts of dual inner and outer awareness that were introduced in the first session, as well as further exploring the work done with impulses. Therefore, the specific journal questions asked the participants to reflect on patterns they notice within their actions and reactions with regards to habitual versus spontaneous choices (see Appendix G).

After a simple physical warm-up, the participants were led through a process called the three layers, which contains all of the essential elements of attention regulation and impulse control. The three layers are inner sensory awareness, outer sensory awareness and interpersonal relational awareness. The process demands becoming simultaneously hyper aware of inner feelings and sensations physically, mentally and emotionally. It demands strict attention to the outside world through the senses of touch, smell, sight and hearing, as well as to imagination processes and feelings going on inside and outside in relation to oneself and the others present.

In the three layers activity, the participants started off by standing and then slowly beginning to explore their sensory elements by walking around the space. The culmination of this activity was a gradual acceleration of speed until the participants were

running as fast as they could and then, at the point of their highest speed, they were to explode into a dancing, bursting star of exploding energy. This ends with a physical containment of the magnetic energy (see Appendix N for details). Throughout the entire process, the participants were continually reminded to keep their awareness fixed both on internal and external stimuli and sensations. Once their energy was contained, they were instructed to come together in the middle of the space and partake in an exercise of moving in physical unison and sharing leadership called flocking, which was followed by individual movement in relation to out-breath rhythms (see Appendix O for details).

The second half of the workshop consisted of action and reaction partner work aimed at bringing out and connecting specific personal associations with movement. This consisted of a series of mirroring exercises allowing nonjudgmental reflection into the specifics of how the participants were feeling and conducting themselves. One person was the mover and the other person the witness and mirror. The mover was instructed to move and simultaneously speak her mind about how she was feeling. The witness was instructed to mirror the mover and periodically ask, “How are you feeling?” and “is this how you are feeling?” They were instructed to try to explore a wide variety of emotions and movements, but to be as authentic as possible. I encouraged personal associations and conflicts to be discussed and processed within the activity.

### *Session Three: Actions, Reactions and Authentic Impulses*

Day three's session was intended to further explore the origins of authentic actions and reactions as a result of pure impulses, as well as combine all the elements of the workshops together in a culminating group exploration of the outside world. The participants were told to pay attention and try to distinguish the difference between

actions and reactions with a purpose and meaning and those without purpose or meaning. They were encouraged throughout the day to look inside themselves and constantly note how they were feeling. They were encouraged to respond only from that feeling, paying close attention to whether they were responding to an external stimuli, an internal impulse, moving out of habit, moving from their own impulse or as a reaction to someone else. They were told to notice when they were acting and when they were reacting and to make a conscious distinction between the two. The journal questions (see Appendix H) further encouraged them to reflect on the above elements, especially concerning when in their lives they felt their actions, reactions, emotions or thoughts were habituated instead of spontaneous, and whether they noticed or felt a difference between the two.

The activities employed to bring out these elements within the participants first centered around partner work in which one person was instructed to be the initiator of movement (action based) and the other the follower (reaction based). This eventually evolved into breaking down the roles and partners and all participants were instructed to act and react to each other in a free form improvisation of movement and sound (see Appendix P for details). This followed a simple warm up in which I reintroduced the task of creating a dual awareness of internal and external sensations and awareness. The participants were instructed to include in this dual awareness, as best they could, their attention to the action and reaction dynamics in the group.

The second half of the last workshop session was designed to put into practice all the elements of the workshop that involved a collective adventure into the outside world. The participants' only task within this activity was to know where everyone within the group was at all times. They were told that their job was to gain as much information



about their interior experience as well as the outer experience of the city and the people. I advised them not to allow their energy to sink, but to persistently jolt their minds and bodies awake by pushing themselves past the limits of their awareness in a continual giving and receiving of energy. (See Appendix Q for detailed description of warm up preparation for the outside adventure.)

## **ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

### ***Findings and Analysis of Workshop Process and Themes***

In this section, I will describe the participants' experiences and reactions to the process as these relate to my research questions. My aim is to determine if and how the physical acting training techniques within these three workshops increased the participants' attention regulation and internal locus of control. I am looking to see how authenticity of action and reaction may have begun a process of transformation for the participants; specifically through helping them develop their ability for attention regulation and internal locus of control. I am also looking to see if specific elements of the physical acting training process appeared to have been more useful than others in helping the participants therapeutically.

During the three sessions, themes related to the research questions, as well as unexpected ones, emerged. The main themes within the three workshops were judgment of self and others, personal boundaries, the disconnection and reconnection of the body and mind, inadequacy, personal responsibility and motivation, and acceptance of one's flaws. All these themes were in direct relation to the main problem areas for the individual participants and the projective quality of the activities highlighted these issues for the participants. It is difficult to separate each theme from the others because they are

all very much related to the main theme of inner and outer awareness. However, I have found it fitting to discuss these themes under the three topics of Awareness, Judgment and Internal Locus of Control. I will be analyzing each session individually according to these topics. I will then present a summary of the findings. To better illuminate these themes, I will give examples of the participants' journals alongside my analyses. To ensure their confidentiality the participants' names been change.

During the process, it also became apparent that there were important factors and influences aside from those embedded in the exercises, such as the discussion and writing time and my directions and guidance, which aided the therapeutic process. I will be discussing these additional therapeutic factors in the section following my analysis of the three sessions.

During the workshops, to illustrate the concepts of attention regulation and internal control, I used simplified terminology such as inner awareness vs. external awareness and the idea of trying to be authentic and true to themselves at all times. I asked the participants to define and adapt this terminology for their own purposes and self-exploration. In my analysis and descriptions of the process and the participants' reactions, to make links between theory and practice, I will reference the simplified workshop terminology and place the language and terminology I referenced in my literature review in brackets.

The process in which I coded the journals to reach my conclusions included two phases. The first phase was reading through all of the journals and locating the common themes. I did this by creating a title for every point the participants made, then organizing the most reoccurring points within the journals together under a common theme title. I

then took out quotes that best illustrated the concept behind those themes. In the second phase, I went through all the journals looking for themes and quotes that corresponded directly to my research questions. I then compared the themes from the two coding processes and for the purposes of my main analysis kept those themes that occurred the most often. It is important to note that this process is subjective, as is the case with all qualitative data coding. My personal values and intentions inevitably guided the way I interpreted what the participants were saying, greatly influencing the coding process. Therefore, I believe that it is important that the reader take into consideration my personal values and therapeutic orientation, which I discussed in the methodology section.

### *Session One: Analysis of Themes*

#### *i) Towards an Understanding of Awareness*

At the beginning of the first session, to introduce the participants to the way of working within the workshop activities, I asked them to reflect upon their own personal awareness levels. As I previously mentioned, this research process required that I teach specific methods of established actors training and therefore necessitated that I take on the dual roles of instructor and therapist. In the role of the instructor, I explained that within the activities they should always be pushing themselves to expand their current level of focus and awareness. In the discussions and journal entries, the participants described internal awareness as an understanding of, as well as an observation of, one's emotions and feelings. They also stated that they felt internal awareness was useful in understanding themselves and how to relate to others. Throughout the first day, when asked to assess their own level of awareness, they spoke of the difference between

knowing what internal awareness is conceptually and a more embodied understanding of it. The participants all expressed a desire to become more connected to themselves physically and/or emotionally, which they explained would mean they were more internally aware. Outer awareness was less clear to the participants: many wrote of it as being a physical awareness as well as the relationship to others and the effect the world has on them and their experience. This provided a basis of common terminology to work from. I continued to reference their personal explanations of awareness in order to help them increase their capacity to understand and reflect on whether their experience of the moment was composed of inner or outer awareness.

In contemplating this difference between internal and external awareness, many of the participants noticed that, at times during the activities, they were unable to focus on the moment due to thoughts about their life or the other people in the room. The participants made statements indicating that paying attention to their thought patterns, physical actions and what they focus on was helping them realize their interpersonal tendencies, such as to be withdrawn and observe, or to seek the approval and attention of others. This was the start of the participants making personal differentiations between internal and external focus. According to Baer (2006), who utilized the therapeutic potential of attention regulation in clinical practice, making this separation is an important first step in the development of the personal control and awareness that is needed to choose what one pays attention to (attention regulation) and realize one's behavioral patterns (habituated actions). At this point, it is possible to contemplate the possibility of change. By the end of the first day, all of the participants expressed personal realizations about inner and outer awareness levels and displayed progress

towards being able to contemplate what the present moment was composed of (heightened attention).

*ii) Judgment*

In the first session, as the participants discussed their experiences in the activities, it became evident that comparing oneself to the others and judging one's self and one's reactions was a big theme and problem area for many of them. Lisa wrote: "I found myself watching and judging others a lot; looking to see what they were doing; also comparing myself to them. I do this often in my life too". These self-judgments brought out feelings of inadequacy and wonderings about whether they were doing the exercises correctly. However, the discussions and my explanations illuminated for the participants that the process of experiencing the activities and examining and reflecting upon their behaviors within the activities was more important. The fact that they had learned something about their behavioral tendencies (habituated action) by discussing and contrasting their different experiences was very enlightening for them. Patricia wrote: "debriefing was very helpful and an eye opener. It's been fascinating hearing how the others live the experience and how I interpret it! I am learning about judging others ... the way I see their world is not always, in fact it's not at all, how they view it". This is a good example of how the participants were becoming aware of and questioning their interpretations of reality. They were starting to make the distinction between basing experiences on what they thought others were feeling and thinking as opposed to how they were feeling and thinking. This type of analysis and questioning is a significant first step towards basing actions and thoughts on one's own feelings and thoughts (internal locus of control). As Patricia and the other participants were realizing, their individual

lived experience is the only thing that they can be certain of. These realizations evolved out of a combination of discussion, the activities themselves and journal writing.

*iii) Internal locus of control*

In discussing the participants' personal experience of the activities, the majority of the group stated feeling that they wanted or needed to do the activities in the "right" way. They also expressed the need to know the purpose of an activity in order to be authentic within it. Without this understanding they felt their participation was forced. This began an analysis of the difference between doing something only because they were told to do it (externally goal directed/externally located) versus having a personal desire to do something (internally located). This was the start of the participants' understanding and questioning their personal motivations, which according to Joseph & Patterson (2007) is important in the development of an internal locus of control.

While the discussions inspired an intellectual pursuit, the physical activities served as a representational and embodied exploration of the issue of motivation. For example, the more physically demanding activities brought out the participants' coping mechanisms and patterns of behavior when faced with a challenge, which they were then able to analyze. Some of the participants expressed that they enjoyed pushing themselves past their physical limits because they had the personal motivation to succeed, which made them feel good. Others noted that they found themselves doing the exercises only because they were told to do so. Patricia's response to the moving from the center activity is a good example of how the participants were responding to their first session. She wrote about how she was "realizing what I focus on and how I feel about completing a task when I don't have to – or how I react when faced with a challenge. It was funny to

me to think if that is my approach in life” (she had decided to give up trying to do the exercise because it was too difficult). After realizing their personal habits, each of the individual participants decided whether it was something they were happy with or whether it was something they wanted to change. Realizing and questioning one’s personal motivational source is also key to the development of an internal locus of control (Joseph & Patterson, 2007; Sheldon, Arndt, & Houser-Marko, 2003).

*Outcomes of session one: Awareness, Judgment, and Internal Locus of Control*

At the end of the first session, the majority of the participants commented that they felt awake, energized and engaged with the process, and this continued to be true throughout the next two sessions. The concluding statements and assessments of their state of mind showed that the daily activities had woken up their physical and mental awareness, which was personally satisfying. Beth wrote: “I feel relaxed and energized. I want to spend more time focused on my breathing and on my environment because it makes me so alert”. The session also engaged them in a process of personal exploration. Lisa described the connections she felt in regards to the process of the activities and how she often feels in life and about herself. She wrote: “I feel more alive, my senses and my being is awake after everything we did here in the workshop today. My mind is also filled to the brim with thoughts & conclusions about myself and my being”. The participants were pondering the sources of motivation for their actions. My reminding them to pay attention to and analyze their behavior and reactions to the activities prompted their questions. Susan noticed she needed strong internal motivation to complete the activities: “I cannot do something I don’t believe, I’m not able to push myself that way”. Lisa, on the other hand, found she looked to others for motivation and help in completing the

activities. She made the connection to her life that “I never or rarely resort to myself when it comes to hard decisions or life choices, am I weak for doing this?”

It was apparent in this first session that the participants were becoming aware of how they were affected and influenced by others’ experience or their perceptions of the others’ experience (judgment). This discussion naturally led them to question their personal motivations and habits. Through the structure of the workshop, I was helping to establish a group norm of analyzing and discussing group dynamics and the experimental process. It was becoming evident to the participants, through my encouragement of this type of projective personal analysis, that their behaviors and feelings within the group activities reflected how they behave and feel in their daily lives. Upon coding the journals, it became clear and continued to be evident that those participants who expressed more concern about how they were perceived by others also were the participants who experienced a deeper connection and bigger realization between their actions in the workshop and those in their normal life.

#### *Session Two: Analysis of Themes*

The level of commitment and physical exertion was very high during the activities of the second session. I had the sense that the participants were pushing themselves to their limit and giving all their energy to the process. All of the participants relayed that they experienced a great feeling of connectedness and awareness and had moments of being purely in the moment, which was very exciting to them. They wanted to learn and grow, which according to Grotowski (1995) is key to the success of physical acting training. Weinberger (1995, 1999) also stated that therapy is more successful when there is a desire for personal learning and growth.



Session two started off with a discussion of any reflections or realizations the participants had over the week. They all made statements about how the workshop was making them assess and become aware of how they feel about other people and how they relate to them (judgment), as well as the limitations and blocks they feel they have towards their perceptions of themselves and others (internal vs. external awareness). For some of the participants, as I had hoped, the workshop had sparked the possibility of being more in control of themselves (increased internal locus of control).

*i) Internal Awareness*

In the continued exploration of internal and external awareness, some participants seemed to benefit more from analyzing and learning about how they relate to other people (interpersonal learning), which is embedded in external awareness training. Others benefited more from learning about and increasing their physical awareness, which is embedded in internal awareness training.

For those participants who felt they were already in the habit of processing interpersonal dynamics, the workshops were making them question their logical way of functioning and desire a more physical and embodied life experience. Susan wrote: “I feel that I’m too aware of everything... I have always seen that as a problem, because I generally get stuck in my thoughts instead of enjoying the moment”. Beth, being of a more cognitive nature, wrote that she did not need to analyze herself in relation to others and stated, “I like making my body do what I want, and I like commanding my mind to extend itself. This is hard to do, but I find that these exercises help me to discover the best way to approach the goals of control, focus and relaxation”. She described how, during the week, feeling sick and bored on a bus, she was able to alter her mood by

utilizing what she learned in the first session about attention regulation. She wrote, “I started trying to focus on my breathing and increase my awareness of the world outside my window. I felt at ease once I was in control of my body and conscious of my surroundings”. Beth and Susan, as well as Aurora, continued to focus on and benefit more from the physical learning and awareness aspects of the workshop rather than from an analysis of how they relate to other people. They stated that they were usually very analytical about other people and themselves and wanted to get out of their head and into their body.

*ii) External Awareness*

Patricia, Katherine and Lisa all stated that the physical learning and awareness training within the workshops were helping them to realize and process how they felt they were constantly worried or preoccupied with self-judgment and the judgment of others. These realizations, as was evident in their writings and the statements they made during the discussions, were making them desire more self-agency, self-acceptance or self-trust (internal control). They were also in touch with a desire to reinforce boundaries between themselves and others (external control). Patricia explained that during the entire week she had felt very emotionally raw and was questioning many of the ways in which she relates to people. She was, for the first time, completely aware of how she judges and compares herself against others all the time, causing her to feel bad about herself and greatly desire change. She worried about how to handle this newfound awareness and make change. In line with my therapeutic orientation and personal values (see Methods section), I validated her experience and advised her that awareness and acceptance are the first steps towards being able to change behavior patterns that do not produce desired

outcomes. This comforted her. She wrote: “as per my question on what to do with all this awareness... it’s comforting and helpful knowing that going through it is painful but you will pull through. I think it’s true that once you’ve realized something next time you can change your behavior or reaction towards it in order to avoid that same feeling. So I am learning not just feeling”. Katherine similarly explained how she was constantly affected by other people and did not want to be so influenced by external factors. She wrote, “It is really hard for me to make decisions. I am always afraid of hurting someone... I feel I get torn apart especially by men, by their desire of my time. I am fearful that what I perceive is wrong or that I won’t be able to uphold it... I get disoriented easily by new ideas or people. I need something to provide constancy and I have difficulty giving it to myself”. Kathryn's comments suggest that this process made her aware of the difficulty she has trusting her instincts, which, according to Rogers (1961), can be a product of relying too much on external sources of motivation and validation. Lisa also stated she could see how she was aware of her ever-present need for acceptance and validation due to having a lack of love for herself. These are three examples of how this workshop process was helping Katherine, Lisa and Patricia articulate a desire to not be as dependent on other people (internally located).

### *iii) Internal Locus of Control*

The participants, in their journal writings and in the mid-session discussion of Session Two, analyzed how difficult the process of being both internally and externally aware was. They noted whether it was easier for them to focus internally or externally and what this meant for them personally. Lisa noticed that it was almost impossible for her to achieve the two at the same time: it was either one or the other. For the majority of them,

this struggle for dual awareness gave them the feeling of personal control (OVP) and satisfaction. This seems to concur with Sheldon, Arndt, & Houser-Marko's (2003) reading of OVP (internal locus of control).

The participants expressed how the accelerated running into an explosion activity had been a physical and emotional release, allowing them not to think. They stated feeling in complete control of themselves (internal locus of control). Lisa wrote "the running and exertion of energy made me forget my mind and totally focus on my body. I felt for the first time I had absolute control. Often in my life I feel at the whim of others, my environment... I feel so much more confident and okay with things/ hard events/ people in my life than I did before, like before coming in to the workshop this morning."

Katherine also had a similar experience of a shift in consciousness towards internal control as a result of focusing her attention in the moment and also experienced more distance from, an ownership of and responsibility for her personal problems. She wrote: "for the first time: a possibility that I can keep my power, ... my daily problems do not seem like a big deal. I feel I have the power to examine them and can make decisions... Really excited by being in connection with myself, more aware of my desires and values". Both of these seem to be examples of a shift towards relying on an internal locus of control.

*iv) Judgment.*

The partnered physical action and reaction mirroring activities required the participants to strive to express their inner emotional state both physically and verbally while relating to another person. This seemed to contrast, for the participants, the responsibility to be true to themselves and wanting to feel comfortable with how they

were relating to their partner. This contrast brought out many of the participants' insecurities about how people perceive and judge them. Following the activity, the group discussed their awareness of how their emotions and self-judgments were affected or dependent on people's actions and reactions. They also contemplated the power they had to affect others. Two participants were more comfortable with this responsibility than the others and they questioned why this was. Beth stated that she preferred following someone's lead because she enjoyed "interpreting others' actions and words with ease and speed – this is what makes me confident". Three of the participants stated that they did not like the responsibility of leading because they were too aware of trying to appease others by not inflicting their "weird" emotions or "boring movements" onto them. However, while in the role of the follower, they did not judge their partner in this way. This made them decide that they did not need to judge themselves so harshly. Katherine stated: "I usually worry about being too transparent (with her emotions) but right now I feel fine with it. I don't have to worry about reactions." Others explained an experience of enjoying the freedom of being able to move and say whatever they wanted and not feel judged. Lisa wrote about how she liked being able to validate people: "I loved mimicking people because I felt the power to be able to really validate their emotions, help them to feel and really understand that what they feel is not weird or bad". The majority also felt that the physical and emotional mirroring helped validate their emotions, which led them towards gaining a deeper understanding of how they actually felt. Keith wrote: "I tapped into what was truly happening inside. It was a mix of confusion, sadness, anger, pain (mainly physical), as well as doubt and disappointment. "

All of the above examples illustrate how these physical acting techniques aimed at

increasing authentic actions and reactions helped the participants make the distinction between their inner feelings and the influence of another person. The participants realized how easily emotions and feelings could be manipulated or influenced by another and how good it felt to be validated and able to express how they were really feeling. Once an individual has the understanding of the potential influence another has on her, could potentially be able to determine whether she wants to accept that judgment or not. In line with my research question “How does an exploration of authenticity of action and reaction start a process of transformation and help develop an individual’s attention regulation and internal locus of control?” this kind of awareness could aid in developing an ownership of one’s emotions, which is part of being internally located and therefore, as the above example of Katherine iterated, decreases harsh self-judgment.

*Outcomes of Session Two: Awareness, Judgment and Internal Locus of Control*

In their concluding statements of this session, the participants who had previously expressed strong realizations about being easily influenced by the judgments and reactions of other people were the participants who indicated most clearly that by the end of this second session, they were feeling more accepting of themselves and their flaws. Self-acceptance has been correlated with becoming more internally located (Sheldon, Arndt, & Houser-Marko’s, 2003). Lisa, for example, stated that she felt she could accept her internal sadness more, which was satisfying. She wrote: “I feel better after the workshop than I did entering... I feel as though I can really try and probably succeed at striking a balance between pretending to be strong/to appear strong (for the benefit of others), and ignoring my tough and sad emotions... I am feeling more confident but still pretty strange and tense in my own skin. I really badly want to love myself”. Katherine

had previously written that she was confused about the emotional and physical boundaries between herself and others due to their judgments and noted she “was scared to look at the others cause I felt it would further my confusion about who I am”. In her concluding journal entry, she clearly had started to feel more accepting of herself, less preoccupied with judgment and able to make the distinction between herself and others, which are important aspects of developing an internal locus of control. She wrote: “as to the contrast between now and earlier, I don’t care so much about all the confusion. I have the ability to keep on with myself. ...The exercises give me some proof that I can handle disorientation and still be myself”.

By the end of Session Two, there was further evidence to suggest that the participants who most appreciated how the workshop activities were helping them get out of their head and into their bodies were also less preoccupied by the potential judgment or influence of others. These were the same participants who, in the action reaction activities, stated that they felt fairly confident in their ability to distinguish their emotions from the influence of others and enjoyed being supportive and validating to the other participants. This could imply that attention towards physical awareness helps decrease cognitive processing and negative self-judgment and helps increase awareness of and ability to maintain personal boundaries. Beth was one of these individuals. Describing herself as a calm, cognitively focused person, she displayed a strong sense of self when she wrote “I was not overwhelmed with feelings... I was glad to be there for others”. She continued by stating that she was feeling open, in touch with her body and compassionate and that she did not feel she needed to question herself.

In conclusion, it seems that the individuals who validate their own ability to judge

effectively, as opposed to looking for clues or validation of their efforts from an outside source, are the individuals who are less likely to be affected by outside stimulation, such as judgment. However, these individuals also seem to crave more of an embodied experience and a release from their regular thought processing. In other words, this could imply that the preexisting personal boundary and awareness levels of the participants play a significant role in determining their focus during the process.

### *Session Three: Analysis of Themes*

#### *i) Internal Locus of Control*

In the beginning discussion on day three, all of the participants expressed how much they appreciated the process and how helpful it was. In particular, they explained how attention to their physical bodies and surroundings (internal and external awareness) was putting them in touch with their emotions and relationship patterns. They spoke about the emotional distance between themselves and other people and reflected on how they, over the week, had been continually examining the way people affect them and how they react to others. Many of them spoke again about a separation from their body and wanting to connect to themselves more. A constant theme throughout the workshops was a questioning of the responsibility for and ownership of one's emotions; whether or not they have control over how they get affected by things. The workshops were helping some of them gain more of a handle on this and develop stronger personal boundaries. For example, Katherine explained that there was a man who had been intruding on her life and manipulating her feelings. Prior to the previous week's session, he had convinced her that she needed him to be a part of her life. She described feeling invaded by him. She explained that right after the session, she had felt very in touch with her physical body



and her inner needs. Through her physical sensations, it became clear to her that she did not want him in her life and so she went straight home and told him to leave. When he refused, she called the police and they made him leave. She reported feeling very good about this event, with no remorse. After sharing her story with the group, she wrote in her journal: "I feel the possibility of life belonging to me ...I don't have to feel that I have to explain my actions all the time, or if people demand that I do, I don't have to get involved in their demands". This is an example of someone becoming more internally located and demonstrates clearly the value of this process.

*ii) Internal and External Awareness*

The activities of day three involved the participants placing their awareness on the difference between actions and reactions. This awakened feelings of acting or trying to act purely from their own impulses. The participants each commented on their personal habits and learning. For some, this had greater significance. Beth stated, "I feel at home when I act on impulse... I love trusting my gut. I want to be better able to listen to my intuition". In this last session, it became very evident that while some of the participants needed to put up more boundaries and feel in control, others needed to let some boundaries down and allow themselves to not be so in control of themselves. The activities highlighted for the individuals that in order to feel more satisfied and true to themselves, they needed to strike a balance between inward and outward awareness and control based on where they were on that continuum.

Beth, who was very self-contained throughout the process, recognized her tendency to be cognitively- based and expressed a desire to shift away from her regular way of functioning and open up more to her outside environment. She noticed how, when at a

party one night that week, she had been content to just sit on the couch and observe everybody. However, during this session, she had a poignant realization that she wanted to bring back into her life a more open state of being that she equated with how she was when she was younger. She described her younger self as being less involved with intellectual pursuits, more outgoing and less closed off in social situations. Aurora wanted to overcome some of her personal blockages in order to become more connected to herself physically. She wrote: "I felt disconnected from my body, as if it was moving apart and only in a few cases it was moving following the directions of my thoughts". She recognized that she was naturally a very introspective and cognitive person who functioned habitually rather than spontaneously and could benefit from being more in the moment. She wrote: "I think before reacting, I stop everything...(such as) that impulse being born inside of me because I still don't know or cannot predict the consequences". She stated that she had enjoyed shifting her focus towards the outside because she was able to just observe, be and not think. Both of these women are expressing an experience of shifting away from being more focused internally and cognitively towards the other end of the spectrum as a result of figuring out that they can change where they usually place their attention. This is a clear testament to the benefit of the attention regulation training that occurred in the workshops.

Lisa testified to the benefits of creating a balance between inner and outer awareness. She started to take ownership of her emotions and to feel more comfortable with herself (internal locus of control). She wrote: "I have come to some realizations about myself and the mastery I have over my actions and reactions. I have always felt that I cannot control the way I feel, the way I act, or how my environment and the people

in it affect me. A lot of what this workshop has made me realize is that I actually do!... I also learnt that in order to, when I want to, let go of my mind and my thoughts I can observe everything around me and heighten my outward awareness. Overall I feel more aware of the world around me. I have also learnt that being alone isn't so bad, in fact I learnt that I actually enjoy it!"

The outside adventure and final act helped to consolidate the participants' successes (new understandings), as well as what they wanted to continue to work on for themselves. Susan, who had also continually expressed having a hard time getting out of her head, stated that she had experienced a shift from thinking to being in the moment and playing. Susan wrote: "I loved this last exercise, it was actually the first time that I wasn't thinking at all, not about its purpose, not about anything. I was enjoying reality". Lisa also wrote about the experience helping her get out of her head and into the moment: "the minute I stepped outside I felt such a new sensation. It was because I never, ever look at the world with that much observation and intensity. I am always usually going through habitual motions". Katherine stated that she gained an even greater experience of the responsibility she has over her own permeability, allowing the outside world in but not letting it take over.

#### *Outcome of Session Three: Awareness and Internal Locus of Control*

Reflecting on the workshop experience, the participants all shared insight in to their personal habits in terms of internal and external awareness. They also spoke about how their actions are affected by and affect themselves and others. It was also evident that by contrasting internal awareness with external awareness, the workshops did indeed help all of the participants increase their internal locus of control or at least recognize it.

Katherine and Lisa, having come into the workshop, from my observation and analysis, less internally located experienced more of a shift than the others. However, all the participants noted that they were now more aware of where they place their attention and the majority stated that within that realization, they understood that they have control over what they focus on.

In this last session, judgment was not a major theme. This is perhaps because most of the participants spoke of outer awareness in terms of having an ownership over their thoughts, feelings and points of focus. They also stated feeling connected and supported by the others in their personal process as opposed to worried about judgment.

At the end of the session, they all made a personal assessment as to what level their awareness was currently at. They all said it was greater now than before the workshops. Beth, who I assessed to have had a pre-existing large capacity for understanding the combined physical and mental aspects of this work, wrote a summary of her experience, which was spot on in depicting the intentions of the trainings: “The exercises and reflections have reminded me of a particular mode of action, reaction, interaction and reflection that I like. It is easy-going, natural, free, controlled, conscious and content. It is alert, aware and alive. It makes me feel confident and strong and sexy! I have been reminded of how to evoke and prolong this mode. It requires a combination of awareness and sensitivity to external/internal events. My body feels more in tune with my surroundings, and my mind is more attentive to my body”. I find this be a wonderful description of what can be achieved in this process and how to do it.

*Summary of findings and other important therapeutic factors*

*Summary*

The benefits of heightened attention regulation and internal locus of control for the individuals within this process are highlighted in many of the participant testimonies above. In a group setting the participants were guided to make links between body and mind experiences and encouraged to get in touch with and examine themselves and their personal habits closely. The discussion that proceeded and followed the activities, provided a forum for self-examination and allowed the participants to come to their own realizations about how their experience within the activities related to their lives and problem areas. They all went through a process of assessing their own inner and outer awareness levels, as well as their relationship to their bodies, emotions and thoughts.

Those who began the process, according to my observations, being more inwardly motivated, revealed a greater distinction between inner and outer experiences and motives. They also tended to be more thought-oriented and emotionally distant. These individuals described the experience of being removed from their physical experiences and emotional reactions. They felt a need to get out of their head and into their body. In the end, these individuals were able to, at times, experience the moment and feel connected to their bodily experiences without thinking about them. They appreciated the control and freedom that they experienced in learning to heighten their inner/outer awareness.

Those who came to the workshops, by my observation, being more outwardly motivated, with less of a distinction between their inner and outer worlds, tended to experience feeling flooded by their emotional reactions to their surroundings and

interpersonal experiences. These individuals left the workshop able to create some boundaries for themselves between inner and outer awareness. They learned how to observe themselves and to acquire the distance they needed to feel more in control and accepting of themselves. In summary, the workshops would seem to have helped the participants strike a balance between inner and outer awareness, dependent on where they started off on that continuum.

### *Other Therapeutic Factors*

There are many important factors and themes within this process that repeatedly revealed themselves during the workshops that I have not yet spoken about in detail. I will now discuss a number of these factors and themes.

All of the participants were greatly affected by each other's experiences. The discussions and analyses of the activities were also vitally important in deepening the therapeutic process. Within the discussion and sharing, it was possible to identify the therapeutic factors of universality, group cohesion, and trust being established. For example, the participants' insecurities and worries, which were brought up by the activities, were alleviated by hearing others speak about similar pre-occupations, insecurities and worries. Patricia wrote: "hearing other people speak of their experience makes me realize I am not alone in the feeling of helplessness"(universality). Group cohesion and trust were already developing by the end of the first session as the participants spoke about how connected they felt to one another. Over the course of the three sessions, the participants continued to express enjoyment over their affinity for one another and appreciation for the bonds they were forming. By the last session, all of the participants voiced how, in particular exercises, (especially the final outside adventure

during session three), they felt comforted, protected and free as they followed instructions to look out for each other at all times (part of external awareness training). They stated feeling very connected to what everyone was doing and yet, at the same time, they knew they had the freedom to do and feel whatever they wanted.

Play was also an important factor in the process. All of the participants commented that they were very grateful for the safety of the therapeutic space and expressed how much they enjoyed the freedom to play, express what they wanted, be silly, weird or awkward with their physical expression without being judged. It was clear that, aside from internal locus of control and attention regulation, the transformative quality of play and the lightheartedness embedded within the activities, in addition to the feeling of a group connection, were also therapeutically beneficial for the participants.

The level of personal evaluation and revelation that the participants partook in was crucial for the success of the workshops. It was often discussed within the workshops that without the sharing and discussion components, the participants would not have fully processed the effects or therapeutic quality of the activities. Many of them had previously participated in similar theatre trainings and were not encouraged to talk about the implications of the emotions and sensations they experienced. It was clear that the exercises were effective due to the therapeutic intention embedded in my facilitation of them, as well as the discussions that followed.

The journal writing was also a very important factor in the process. Although the journal writings greatly served my research purposes as documentation, they also proved to aid in the therapeutic process. The writing time provided an opportunity for the participants to further examine their reactions to the process and their relationships to

internal and external awareness, actions/reactions and personal choice. Although I had given the participants specific questions to answer each day in their journals, they did not all respond to them specifically, but rather used them as guidelines to assess and encourage their learning about their individual personal habits, attention levels and connection between their mind and body.

Another major factor that affected the outcome of the workshops was the power of suggestion. I continually made a point of directing their experience and analysis in a certain direction, drawing attention to the essential elements inherent in each activity. As previously mentioned, this was because the physical acting training methods have clear objectives that need to be adhered to if they are to be beneficial. Accordingly, I took on the role of instructor so that the participants could learn how best to proceed during the activities and what to pay attention to. This was very much a directive therapy process. It is important to note, however, that I never pushed an agenda during the discussion. The participants were encouraged to speak about whatever the process brought up for them. I never dissuaded discussions on other topics. However, the topics discussed, particularly those directly related to attention regulation and internal locus of control were, without question, heavily influenced by the journal questions I handed out each day (see appendixes E- H) and my teachings and statements made throughout the process. This is a limitation of the study, which future research in this realm should address.

Due to my personal experience and belief in the specific therapeutic potential and value within the training, I was able to convey, through my facilitation and modeling of the activities, how the participants should direct their attention to reap the intended benefit. I surmise that my personal teachings rang true for them and they were able to



incorporate this knowledge into their own way of being, which is why the results validated my hypothesis. Unfortunately however, this does not mean that another facilitator would be able to achieve this same effect, particularly if they chose to focus the attention on other aspects within the process. Without the level of instruction I provided, other themes may have surfaced producing other results. This is a limitation of this research, but perhaps a strength of the therapeutic process I could deliver to future clients.

### **LIMITATIONS AND AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

Aside from the limitation arising from the power of suggestion, mentioned above, it is important to note that because the workshops were short-term, I moved quickly through different exercises. Ideally, future applications would contain the repetition of these physical trainings to achieve higher and higher personal awareness and attention to the mind/body connection. Although this study would suggest that the short-term therapy workshop was beneficial for the clients, further research within this area should incorporate a longer and extended process to validate these findings. It would also be useful to conduct a quantitative study to assess each participant's internal locus of control before and after workshop processes.

While the long term effects of these therapy sessions are not known, current research on Mirror Neurons (Iacoboni, 2008; Siegel, 2007), supports the hypothesis that since all the participants had the experience of breaking down or building up personal boundaries and a heightened awareness, this ability is now within their lived experience, thus making it much more likely that they will be able to experience this again.

The process was particularly helpful in assisting people to realize and establish

their, and others', personal boundaries. Future research on this topic might focus solely on this specific aspect of the process. The outcomes of such research could prove to be very interesting or useful for the treatment of populations who are mentally unstable and suffer from weak internal loci of control and personal boundaries.

Future research determining the therapeutic use of physical acting training should also include current research such as Hillman, Erickson & Kramer (2008), and Wilfley & Kuncze (1986) attesting to the psychological benefits of physical exercise. The field of *Psychoneuroimmunology* (Daruna, 2004) might also be very lucrative in providing support for a therapeutic process focusing on mind/body connections. Further research could also focus on the benefits of internal motivation and utilize Deci & Ryan's (1985; 1991 & 2000) research on goal pursuits and personal motivation sources.

## CONCLUSION

I began by asking, "How can a Drama Therapy program based on specific physical acting training techniques increase an individual's attention regulation and internal locus of control". The data gathered indicates that, indeed, a therapeutic physical acting training program can be used to increase both these elements. However, the level of success will depend on the facilitator's intention, level of instruction and ability to draw these factors out of the activities. My subsidiary research question specifically asked how authenticity of action and reaction could relate to the development of attention regulation and an internal locus of control. I believe my analysis of the workshop process offers a detailed portrayal of what turned out to be most beneficial for the participants, thereby answering my second subsidiary research question regarding whether specific elements of the physical acting training process appeared to have been

more useful therapeutically. Although it is implied in this last research question, due to the space limitations of this paper, I was unable to elaborate on the elements within the process that were less useful,

In conclusion, these therapeutic physical acting training workshops demanded participation in activities involving personal and interpersonal exchange, thus enabling participants to gain insight and notice their interpersonal and personal patterns. The workshops succeeded in heightening the participants' ability to regulate and change their modes of functioning with regards to inner and outer awareness attention levels, as well as feel as though they held the possibility to be more internally located and in control of their bodies and minds. Although there were many therapeutic factors and themes present within the workshop process, the themes that were most apparent were judgment, internal and external awareness and internal locus of control. Each participant came to the process with different levels of internal control and different proclivities for internal or external awareness. They left having experienced a shift away from their regular functioning in this regard, towards a balance in their awareness levels. Lastly, the participants gained important insights on how both internal and external factors affect their lives and understood that ultimately they have the power to choose what they focus on in their lives.

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## APPENDIX A

**!!PHYSICAL THEATRE WORKSHOPS!!**  
**ADULTS AGES 18-30 WANTED FOR**  
**INNOVATIVE RESEARCH WORKSHOPS ON**  
**THE THERAPEUTIC VALUE OF PHYSICAL**  
**ACTING TRAINING!!**

I am a Creative Arts Therapy Masters student seeking participants for my research project. I will be conducting short term therapeutic workshops aimed at helping individuals become aware of their bodies and feelings as well as ignite their innate desires. This is a great FREE opportunity to explore dynamic acting techniques in a supportive environment. The techniques used are known to build confidence and increase body and mind awareness. If you want to have fun, play and explore your self-expression and awareness this is perfect for you!

If you are interested please contact me at:

[rbyglabe@yahoo.com](mailto:rbyglabe@yahoo.com)

*Note: workshops will be held on 3 Saturday's in April from 1-3:30 pm. Workshops will be conducted in English. No compensation will be given to participants. Only serious inquiries please.*

## APPENDIX B

### CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN:

#### Theoretical Basis, Support and Application of a Therapeutic Physical Acting Program

This is to state that I agree to participate in a program of research being conducted by Rosaruby Glaberman of the Creative Arts Therapies Program of Concordia University. (514) 848-2424 ext. 4790)

#### PURPOSE

I have been informed that the purpose of the research is to investigate the therapeutic benefit of physical acting training as a base for a Drama Therapy program.

#### PROCEDURES

I understand that participation in this study will require that I:

- Be available to participate in three 2 1/2 hour therapeutic workshops on April, 11 12:30 –4 and on April 18 & 25 from 1:00pm- 4 pm in VA-Room 212 at Concordia University.
- Write in a journal (at the beginning and end of each workshop) describing my personal thoughts and feelings.
- Wear clothing to the workshops that will not inhibit my physical movement.

I understand (in regards to my personal well being):

- Some of the exercises may be physically demanding for me and I am by no means required to push myself past my physical limits.
- If at any time during the workshops I am uncomfortable or need to sit down and take time for myself I am allowed to do so.
- The workshops may bring up emotional issues for me or other members of the group. If this occurs the group leader is trained to help process this safely and therapeutically.

I understand (in regards to specific needs of the research):

- Some or all of my journal writings within the workshop will be used as data for the research and may be included in the final research paper.
- My physical expression as well as comments I have made during the workshop will be used as data for the research and may be included in the final research paper.
- My name and any identifying circumstances will be omitted from the final research paper so that I remain anonymous. I may be given a pseudonym.
- All information will be kept in a locked cabinet where only the researcher has access
- After the researcher has transcribed my journal electronically she will make it available for me to keep. If I choose not to keep it she will safely dispose of it.
- That if there are specific journal entries or moments that occurred during the workshop that I do not want the researcher to include in her final project I am free to request her to omit them.

### CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

- I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation at anytime without negative consequences.
- I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary and there is no financial reimbursement.

### CONFIDENTIALITY

- I understand that my participation in this study is CONFIDENTIAL the researcher will know, but will not disclose my identity.
- I understand that the data from this study may be published.
- I understand the purpose of this study and know that there is no hidden motive of which I have not been informed.

I HAVE CAREFULLY STUDIED THE ABOVE AND UNDERSTAND THIS AGREEMENT. I FREELY CONSENT AND VOLUNTARILY AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY.

NAME (please print)

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SIGNATURE

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If at any time you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact

Adela Reid, Research Ethics and Compliance Officer, Concordia University, at (514) 848-2424 x7481 or by email at [areid@alcor.concordia.ca](mailto:areid@alcor.concordia.ca).

## APPENDIX C

### INFORMATION LETTER

#### Research Study: Theoretical Basis, Support and Application of a Therapeutic Physical Acting Program

You are invited to take part in a research study. This project will provide the basis for the Master's Research Paper for Rosaruby Glaberman in the Graduate Program in the Creative Arts Therapies at Concordia University in Montreal, Quebec. This study is investigating the possible therapeutic potential of physical acting training. Previous Drama Therapy research documenting the therapeutic use of physical acting training is limited. However, research has shown that a successful process in which participants trained physically enabling them to devise their own healing rituals, which represented the container for letting go of negative emotions. The proposed research is foraging new grounds within this field and will add to the literature by focusing on the possibility of physical acting training as a way for an individual to become aware of what their authentic inner feelings and desires are, enabling them to trust their own internal judgment as well as regulate their attention.

The procedure of this project contains the creation of a therapeutic program and the application of this program with healthy adults age 18-30 from Concordia University in three consecutive weeks of three hour long workshops per week. The information obtained through this project will be added to other information gathered for this study. This information will be used primarily for the researcher's Research Paper. Subsequent to completion of her studies the data may be used for future presentations and publications. All personal information will be kept private; no details through which you could be identified will be used in the paper, presentations, or in any publication. The information will be kept for 7 years after the study is done. The information will be kept in a locked filing cabinet. Your name and any other identifying information will never be used in any presentations or publications of the study results. No harm should come to you for participating in this study. However, the workshops will be somewhat physically demanding and you must be the judge of the limits of your physical capacity, which will be honored and respected. If you become upset due to the emotional processing in the workshops, please talk to a good friend, your doctor, or another support person who can help you. If you require further support information, you can contact the primary researcher via e-mail. She will not keep a copy of your name, telephone number, or details of the message. A copy of the final thesis will be kept in the thesis office as well as in the Concordia University library.

Thank you. If you have any questions about this study, please contact the Masters student or her supervisor.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact Adela Reid, Compliance Officer, in the:

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## APPENDIX D

Questions asked at initial phone interview:

- How did you hear about the project?
- What struck your interest in the project?
- Do you have a previous mental illness diagnosis?
- Do you have previous theatre training or performance training?
- What type of physical limitation do you have if any?
- Are you between the ages of 18-30?
- Are you willing to agree to the following time commitments: April 11, 18 & 25<sup>th</sup> from 1:00pm-4:00?
- Are you willing to keep a journal of your thoughts and experiences before and after each workshop (time will be given during the workshop)? Do you have any questions?

Information given at the time of initial phone interview:

- Workshops will consist of a variety of physical acting techniques and vocal activities aimed at heightening one's awareness of the internal and external world. The intent is to encourage the participant to become aware of what their authentic inner feelings and desires are, enabling them to trust their own internal judgment, and to heighten their attention
- Participants will be expected to keep a journal of their experience of the workshop and their feelings before and after each workshop.
- Time will be given for journal writing within each workshop.

## APPENDIX E

Factors to consider during journal writing:

- #1. The here and now: recording feelings and thoughts in the moment. (With specific regards to the workshop activities. How did you feel during the activities? What did you think about? Please give details).
- #2. Period review: reconnecting to the recent and distant past. (How the workshops activities could or have informed your outside life).
- #3. Body: ways of connecting to our bodies. (What is your relationship to your body?)
- #4. Environment: ways of exploring and connecting to our culture, social and political issues,
- #5. Recurring patterns: ways of exploring significant events and situations. (Reflect on your behavioral, emotional and cognitive patterns. Do you recognize these patterns in the group work? )
- #6. Work and productivity: ways of exploring meaningful outer activities. Thought and desire manifested into action. (How much does your inner life reflect your outer life?)
- #7. Wisdom dialogue: inner dialogue, personal values, mentors/guides on our path for meaning, truth and wholeness. Events, situations- recurring feelings, emotions, life riddles, fate and personal destiny.
- #8. Concerns: explore the issues that have the most meaning to you.



**APPENDIX F**

## SPECIFIC QUESTIONS FOR DAY 1.

Beginning of workshop writing:

#1 What does inner awareness mean to you? What does outer awareness mean to you?

Explain your understanding or feeling about your inner awareness. Rate your current feelings and levels in regards to this.

#2 How conscious do you feel about your choices during the day? Do you often make habitual choices or spontaneous choices? What does a real choice mean to you? Are you happy with your choices?

End of workshop writing:

#3 What activities during the day stick out in your mind? Please describe any pertinent sensations or realizations you had.

#4. Please reflect on questions one and two again.

#5. Describe your current state of mind and feeling.

## APPENDIX G

### SPECIFIC QUESTIONS FOR DAY 2.

#### Beginning of workshop writing:

#1 Reflect on any thoughts you may have had over the week. Speak to how you feel right now and any thing that is bothering you.

#2 Reflect on how you feel your actions and reactions effect your life and the lives of others. Are you aware of this? Do you recognize any patterns that you would like to change in regards to this?

#3 How conscious do you feel about your choices during the day? Do you often make habitual choices or spontaneous choices? What is does a real choice mean to you? Are you happy with your choices?

#### End of workshop writing:

#4 What activities during the day stick out in your mind? Please describe any pertinent sensations or realizations you had.

#5. Please reflect on questions one and two again.

#6. Describe your current state of mind and feeling.

## APPENDIX H

### SPECIFIC QUESTIONS FOR DAY 3.

#### Beginning of workshop writing:

#1 Reflect on any thoughts you may have had over the week. Speak to how you feel right now any thing that is bothering you.

#### Mid session writing:

#2 Reflect on when in your life you feel your actions, emotions or thoughts are habituated as opposed to being spontaneous and vice versa. Do you know the difference? Does your body feel different? Can you tell the difference between when you are moving out of habit, from your own impulse or as a reaction to someone else?

#3 Speak to how your attention level was affected by the exercises. What did you become aware of?

#### End of workshop writing:

#4 What activities during the day stick out in your mind? Please describe any pertinent sensations or realizations you had.

#5. Please reflect on the entire workshop process and speak to what you feel you have or have not gained from the process.

#6. Describe your current state of mind and feeling specifically in regards to your understanding of internal awareness and having a feeling of mastery over your actions and reactions. Do you feel you learned anything in regards to being more internally aware and your regulation of your attention or not?

## APPENDIX I

### Physical Warm-up:

The participants close their eyes and focus on their breathing while identifying a place inside their body, where they feel most connected to themselves. They continued to do this while slowly rolling down their spine to touch their toes. They were then instructed to sway slowly back and forth and bounce gently up and down while making sounds. This is in order to release tension and create heat within their bodies. Then they were told to roll back up their spines and stretch their bodies up and out as much as they can. They were then instructed to look at everyone in the space in order to see and be seen.

### Breathe Warm-up:

The group is instructed to come very close together (shoulders touching), close their eyes and create breath patterns together. One person at a time, upon their self-appointed lead, leads the group in a breath pattern using different rhythms and tempos. The group is then instructed to walk around the space and focus internally on their bodies and breath.

## APPENDIX J

### Impulse Activity:

The participants were instructed to stand completely still and were then given the options of standing, lying on their stomach, lying on their back, and jumping up. They were instructed to go from any of these positions as fast as possible, as if they were in a race for their lives. They were instructed to try to feel their movement coming from inside of them, as a spark of energy- an impulse. I clapped my hands and on the clap they were instructed to change positions. After a period of time doing this I instructed them to continue in this way but instead of moving on my claps they were to move together, on a group impulse. They were then instructed to continue working in this way while moving through the space.

## APPENDIX K

### Walking from the Center:

In this activity all movement must originate from their center as a direct impulse. The participants stood in two lines and placed their hands on the hips of the person in front of them. The people behind were told to pull backwards on the hips while the person in front was told to try to move forward with their center (their hips). This was to give them the idea of resistance and the physical energy needed to achieve this task. They then had to do this on their own, trying to walk across the entire room leading with their centers.

## APPENDIX L

### AB Activity:

Each person in the group (while walking around the room) picks a person (person A) in the group in their mind and tries to stay as far away from them as possible. They are instructed to pay specific attention to this person, to keep them in their sight at all times. Then they pick another person (person B) and try to be as close as possible to them. This is repeated a few times. Then the group picks another person A and person B and tries to be as far away from A as possible and as close to B as possible at the same time. Eventually the group tries to come to a collective stand still where they are as far away from their A as possible and as close to B as possible (this is achieved when everyone is still). Then the group is told to walk around the room again, placing attention on one person and slowly adding awareness of 2 people, then 3, then 4, 5, etc-until they have awareness of where each and every person in the group is at all times. They are to try to also have a heightened awareness of the world outside the room, the city in which they live, the country, the world, the galaxy, and the universe. At one point I instructed them to pick someone and to imitate their exact movements, thus causing a ripple in effect in which everyone is imitating everyone else. This was a very humorous experience for the group. To end the activity I instructed them all to simultaneously try to make sure that each person in the entire group knew that they were paying attention to them.

## APPENDIX M

### Blindfolded Activity Series:

The participants stand in a circle and, on their own lead, call out one of the other group member's name. The person whose name is called is then instructed to close their eyes and walk towards the person who called out their name. In the first round of the game the person who called out their name makes noises for them to follow. In the next round of the game they walk to the person in silence. The group then formed two lines facing each other. Each person had a partner. The partners then took turns closing their eyes and running as fast as they can towards their partner and stopping just before they got to them. The next phase included each person running as fast as they can across the room with their eyes closed towards the rest of the group. This was then done again while holding hands with a partner.



## APPENDIX N

### Three Layers Activity:

This process starts out slow as each participant is told to stand somewhere in the room, that they feel comfortable in, and begin to do a mental scan of their entire body. This is done by releasing tension, memorizing how their body feels and at the same time visually memorizing the room and the people in it. This process entails pushing the participants to pay attention to every detail, to constantly ask themselves “am I seeing?” “Am I looking?” to notice when their energy drops inward and when they stop paying attention to people and objects in the room, as well as when they stop paying attention to their breath and how their body feels at every moment. Within this activity they were instructed to experiment with different movement qualities such as kinesthetic energy, resistance, slow motion and fast movement, hard lines, angles, curves, thrusts, stabs and swinging. They were told to pay attention to how each quality of movement effected how they were feeling. They were asked to think about what experiences in their lives were similar to these movement qualities and which ones they feel more comfortable with. The concept of impulse was re-introduced. They were also instructed to follow specific impulses occurring within the group such as jumping, rising and falling to the floor at the exact same time. The culmination of the three layers is a gradual acceleration of speed to the point of which the participants are to run as fast as they can. At the point of their highest acceleration they were instructed to explode into a dancing, bursting star of pure energy. They were encouraged to push past being tired and give their energy to the other members of the group. The dance ends by slowly containing all of the magnetic energy within their bodies.

## APPENDIX O

### Flocking:

The group was told to stand in close proximity to each other and one person begin to lead a movement, which the other group members follow. The group mimics the leader as closely as possible, and the leader moves slowly to ensure that the group is following. The objective of this exercise is to move in unison, leaving an outside observer unable to identify the leader. Like birds that flock south for the winter, group members work together to move at the same pace, taking care of each other's needs. When the direction of the flocking changes and a new person is at the front of the group, a new leader (the person on front) naturally emerges from the group. Group members need to be in tune to each other to make this exercise successful. They were told the objective of the exercise is to move in unison and to come to a finish together. Flocking is a concentration activity, an exercise in moving in physical unison with the group and sharing leadership.

### Breath Movement Activity:

This activity demanded the participants to physically connecting their out-breath patterns, matching the quality of their movement to the quality of their out- breath and experimenting with different rhythms and tempos as if the two processes were inseparable. They were instructed to be physically still on their in-breath and to move on their out-breath

## APPENDIX P

### Action and Reaction Series:

The group stands in two lines facing each other. Each participant is instructed to look into the eyes of the person across from them- to see and be seen. The partners then took turns communicating to their partner, only with their eyes, to either move forward or to move backwards.

The next activity in this series centered around responding to sensory impulses. Each participant was paired with another person. They were to decide who would be the leader and who would be the follower. The leader was instructed to touch different parts of their partner's body. They were also allowed to direct sound towards their partner. The follower was told to respond only to the physical touch and sounds of the leader. The partners took turns being the leaders and the followers. Each participant switched partners numerous times so that everyone could have a chance to work with a variety of people. During this process the leaders as well as the followers were instructed to experiment with different forms and qualities of reactions to the impulses. They were told to resist their partner's touch, completely melt into it, react harshly and fast then soft and slow. They were asked to notice what kind of reactions they were most comfortable with. They were continually reminded to try to make their responses authentic and notice if they can tell the difference between when it was an authentic response or a planned response.

In next phase the followers were instructed that they no longer had to simply react but should both react and act to the leaders. The purpose was to make a clear distinction for themselves as to when they were initiating action or when they were reacting. The

leaders were told to also respond to the followers but still keep in mind that they were the leaders. Then the labels of leaders and followers as well as the restriction of partners were taken away and the whole group was instructed to move, act and react together while making clear decisions to either act or react. They were asked to really know at each moment what they were reacting to or what was causing them to act in a certain fashion. It was reinforced that they should only act or react if they had a true desire or impulse to do so. They were encouraged them to challenge themselves. The group was asked to find a way to come to an end of this activity together.

For the culmination of the action reaction series and to highlight their personal understanding and observation of themselves, the participants were instructed to sit at one end of the room, which would be designated as the audience. The rest of the room was the playing space. They were then told to, one at a time, enter the space and move only if they had a really true impulse to move. After all participant had gone they were each given min, if they so desired to go back into the playing space.

## APPENDIX Q

### Outside Adventure Warm Up:

Prior to embarking on this journey the participants were reminded of all of the different elements of attention to action and reaction, of acting from impulse and desire and of the importance of being very conscious of their bodies in space. Before leaving the room the participants were lead in a quick energizing warm up. This started with a very physical breath exercise in which one jumps up and down while bending at the waist and breathing out on a sound. One then returns to standing while taking four deep breaths in and pumping ones bent arms together towards the front of the body and away towards the back of the body. One then takes four breaths in while reaching up over the top of ones head. This is repeated about 15 times. They were then lead in an activity of gathering energy from the sky and from the earth and putting it into their body, really trying to make it as physical as possible by tensing their muscles. They then partook in a game if throwing an imaginary ball of energy around the room. At this point, once the energy was collected again back into their bodies, they were instructed to begin the outside journey by looking at everyone and jolting their awareness out and up. Together they left the building and explored outside.