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Notes on the Six Viewpoints of Embodiment and Presence

for Presencing Theater Work Group

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Six Viewpoint labels for sensing and perceiving the present moment (the 6 viewpoints): These labels describe the field of perception and sensation.

These viewpoints, or focuses of mindfulness and awareness, represent a means of grounding presence in immediate experience; this is a shared experience upon which we can build authentic relationships. “Authentic relationships” are achieved through more and more detailed, or subtle, recognition of shared presence.

We can practice communicating through these focuses; we can build movement languages based on these areas of discreet shared areas of recognition.

We are already connected through shared space, time, kinesthetic relationships and visual presence. The viewpoint work is a practice of bringing these areas of intrinsic connection into the foreground of consciousness through a physical play of recognition and response.

Spatial Awareness--the recognition of relative location reveals multiple dynamic relationships: person to person; the individual to the space; creation of languages of amongst and between; near and far(NEAR SPACE); relationship to architectural frame and details, or the bounded space (FAR SPACE); and INFINITE SPACE opening awareness beyond the bounded space or placing/locating oneself in the larger and larger universe. *Where* is all. Being prompted to ask the question, “where am I”, leads to a process of location, and recognition of a specific aspect of relationship to other.

Time Awareness--relative speed, duration, tempos, relationships of movement and stillness/stop and go; *When* is the fundamental question, followed by queries of: How Fast and How Slow? How Long or How Short of a time does this activity exist before the next activity begins? Being prompted to ask these questions related to time leads to a process of recognition of a specific aspect of relationship to other.

Shape/line Awareness--observation of the architectural arrangement of one’s own body and the arrangement of others, observing and communicating through these arrangements of form and line. This can be considered an aesthetic, psychophysical or narrative activity but the *shape and line response*, the visual aspect of oneself and others, is treated as the dominant language.

Movement/Kinesthetic Sensation--mindfulness of presence of body; includes all sensation of body: breath, heartbeat, weight, gravity, contact with environment, compression of supporting surface, suspension from supporting surface, balance, falling and rising, the sensation of being and moving. *The sensation of physical being* can be volitionally channeled and manipulated and formed into a language of kinesthesia, once it is identified in our consciousness; one can experience the kinesthetic presence of others by choosing to focus and feel that presence—the weight of the other, the breath of the other, the shift of weight, the momentum and balance.

Space, Time, Shape/Line, Movement/Kinesthetic Sensation are the four building blocks or areas of perception and sensation of our physical world.

Story/Image and Emotion are expressed through these other four viewpoints which describe our physical world of awareness and habitation.

The Viewpoint of Story: We are already connected through shared space, time, kinesthetic relationships and visual presence, and.....a story does proceed from these relationships. The story already exists and is flowing like a river with or without our awareness; by focusing our awareness on this viewpoint of story we can participate in the authentic story of the moment. *Story is the focus or viewpoint of “associations” and “mental contents” that arise from the activity of direct perception and experience of the four building blocks of our physical world.* Images arise as associations. Story is image that a) progresses and accumulates over time and b)changes, revealing a narrative line or arrangement.

The Viewpoint of Emotion, is the focus of:

- a) regard of the feeling self
- b) the recognition(awareness) of un-manipulated feeling of a moment in time,
- c) a moment of being--the feeling dimension that is not connected to storyline of any kind, including a psychological story line; emotion exists independent of story or psychology in the same way all of the other viewpoints do.

These Six Viewpoints all self-exist, they are self-existing.

I exist as mass, weight, breath--this is the kinesthetic focus--out of that associations(image and story) can arise, or a feeling(emotion) can attach itself to this basic kinesthetic presence.

Thoughts exist outside of the realm of direct perception--to have a thought about the presence of the body separates us from the experience of the body. To have a thought about space, time, shape or line, or an emotion disconnects us from the possibility of authentic communication.

I am thinking about you, and you are thinking about me, as we drop thought we have the possibility of experiencing ourselves and one another.

Authentic action, appropriate action, (Presencing Theater perhaps?) arises from the possibility of direct perception of body and environment. This direct perception is linked to action by skillful means, a technique if you will, of open, precise response (in Theater, this means was labeled by Grotowski as a via negativa, a technique of non-doing). If I have an accurate take on the circumstances of the moment, and the knowledge of how a response or action will arise out of that properly recognized circumstance, then I will be participating in an authentic action; an authentic moment of communication; a moment of art; a moment of theater art.