

"THE TASK WITHIN"
Practice by
Lorenzo Ponteprimo

INTRODUCTION

The practice I am developing revolves around the question of how to bring the physical, mental, and emotional state in a synergetic creative flow, to access systematically our deepest artistic potential.

Time, focus, and honesty are the three most important pillars. By continuous practice in the safest environment needed, any art professional or passionate can develop a more insightful honest focus on an object of observation throughout an extended period of time. Allowing for deeper inner clarity, awareness, and a renovated sense of artistic purpose.

The practice is divided into three phases:

Phase 1) **PREPARATION**

Phase 2) **EXPLORATION**

Phase 3) **CONCLUSION**

Each of these phases can be performed and studied independently from one another, with different results than if done consequently.

Choosing to go through all three stages it is mostly advisable for workshop formats since A complete session requires 3 to 6 hours.

This practice sees its beginning development and inspiration in the work "RE-COVER". A 5-hour long improvisation performance, developed with the choreographer Edan Gorlicki as the artistic director and the INTER-ACTIONS dance company.

POTENTIAL RISKS

For safety reasons, I feel obliged to make sure that every participant is aware that this practice has the potential to bring them to face heavy aspects of their personality and/or history. In the worst cases, the exposure can be potentially traumatic. Even if the practice was developed (during the research process of "RE-COVER") with the help and influence of teachers from the "Dance and movement therapy" Hochschule of Heidelberg, I am not a trained therapist and therefore it is of the utmost importance that every participant that decides to practice, is responsible for their own inner journey and mental health. Once again, the goal of the practice is to research how to access a deep creative flow for artistic purposes, not psychological healing.

PREPARATION

What do we need to be as ready and as available as possible, for creative work?

From my experience as a contemporary movement and performing artist and as a yoga teacher and practitioner, I have observed that a great way to access our artistic potential is when we manage to slow down our quick state of being, bringing the stream to a calmer and manageable state, where we can focus on something else than merely trying to handle the high current of thoughts and sensations.

Preparing our whole system can be done through a series of awareness-focused exercises. Combining different physical training techniques like yoga, primal movement, fitness, floor-work, and contemporary dance improvisation, in combination with breath work and meditation/visualizations, we can bring our whole physical, mental, and emotional body to a high level of readiness and openness.

The goal is to scrape away what's unnecessary in the body and the mind while working on the activation and cultivation of what's needed to sustain an honest exploration.

Since this phase it's about preparing our system, the artists/practitioners will be encouraged and supported in the research of all the work intensity possibilities within the spectrum of "work regenerating energy". The "work consuming energy", from the moment that it's depleting and not energizing the system, can be responsibly approached and explored by the practitioner in the second phase: the exploration.

This preparation has a high degree of adaptability and the practice can therefore be adjusted to the various needs of the artists in every situation.

My advised length for this phase to be properly executed is around 2 hours. Nevertheless, this can also be adjusted to the various needs and possibilities, both by extending or reducing the time.

EXPLORATION

This phase consists of one long improvisation (2/4h) with two tasks:

- 1) The "NO TASK" task.
- 2) The "ANCHOR" task.

The participants are free to switch from one to the other according to their needs.

The lack of guidance is a chance to slowly allow the inner tasks to emerge. To have the chance to explore and maybe understand the existing patterns, interests, thoughts, wishes, etc...

For many, improvising for such a long time with such an open range of possibilities can be challenging in the beginning. Therefore the "anchor task" it's there in case the participant needs support in the mitigation of the moments in which they feel lost. The anchor task is not one in particular but has the characteristic to help maintain focus over the subtle signals that could be the beginning of the next exploration.

This improvisation has the goal of bringing the artists to meet harder to access aspects of their creative subconscious. The safest and most judgment-free environment, long period of time, focus, and honest observation, are fundamental components for this sensitive work to show its benefits. When these elements are applied, surprising discoveries can be made from the first attempts.

The recommended length is between 2 and 4 hours with endless possibilities to be adjusted for different results and needs.

In group sessions, the theme of discovering one freedom will inevitably have to face the limits coming from coexisting with others, who have the same right to discover their freedom. This adds another layer of potentially revealing discoveries in the participants.

Throughout the whole phase I will remain vigilant, available to anyone. In case that's not needed by the participants, I could even step out entirely from the space and come back for the conclusion of the practice.

CONCLUSION

A lot can happen in such a long and intense practice. In this phase, the practitioner will be guided first through a meditation, after which will have time to find ways to recap and consolidate some of the most important discoveries.

During the meditation (around 1 hour) a still and silent observation of the effects of the practice can take place. After the long state of flow, finding a state of concentrated stillness might be easier than usual.

Writing down ones thoughts has the double effect of consolidating the experiences and gently speeding up the the flow of thoughts. After that, it will be easier to transition to sharing via talking with me and/or others.

A mindful transition back to "normal life" will be necessary.