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PHYSICAL EDUCATION ACTIVITIES AND THEIR FUNCTION AS ART

The Ohio State University

PH.D. 1981

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PHYSICAL EDUCATION ACTIVITIES
AND THEIR FUNCTION AS ART

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By
Paul Richard Linden, B.A., M.A.

* * * * *

The Ohio State University
1981

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Once during Aikido practice I was asked how long it had taken me to reach a certain understanding of the technique I was working on. I had to reply, "My whole life." I cannot mention in these acknowledgments every person who has contributed to my understanding of the material presented in this dissertation, but I can thank those to whom I am most indebted.

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Barbara Austin typed the dissertation, and she deserves special thanks for the patient and creative way in which she helped solve typing and format difficulties.

I would also like to acknowledge permission to quote from two books:

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION
Physical education is that area of academic life that is concerned with teaching people to understand their movement and to move well, but there is something puzzling about the way "phys ed" deals with its own movement activities. Generally speaking, it sounds sensible to say that the higher the level of expertise one aims at in some subject, the more work will be necessary to master it. Certainly this holds true in the movement disciplines that I have studied outside academic physical education departments—Aikido, yoga, Karate-do, Alexander work, and Feldenkrais work. In these disciplines, movement expertise, the physical-philosophical-psychological insights that are a part of this expertise, and the ability to teach movement well all come only from the personal transformation involved in actually practicing the movements. And the greater the understanding and skill one wishes to develop, the more work one has to do.

If physical education took the same approach to movement as these disciplines that I have studied, then students aiming at becoming teachers of physical education would be required to put in many hours of practice in their chosen movement activities as part of their degree requirements. More specifically, the higher the degree they were aiming for, the greater the level of movement expertise that would be required of them and, consequently, the greater the amount of time they would be required to put into practice of movement. However, it is clear that physical education does not take this approach.

It is true that as part of their bachelor degree programs students are generally required to achieve a minimal competence in a number of activities so that they have a broad teaching foundation. However, requiring students to achieve minimal competence in a variety of activities does not necessarily
insure that they will go on to develop expertise in any of them.

Masters and doctoral programs, in fact, generally forbid students to count extensive movement activity practice toward their degree program. The MA and PhD programs in physical education emphasize book learning about movement rather than personal practice of movement. Why is it that students in higher degree programs in physical education are generally forbidden rather than required to pursue intensive practice of some chosen movement disciplines as part of their course work?

It is interesting to compare this situation with that in dance, an area which deals with movement skills that are very similar to those that are part of the usual physical education activities. Recently I was talking about this with someone enrolled in a master's program in dance, and she commented that in dance much actual dancing is required, even for people whose main interests lie in such areas as dance history rather than performance. It sounds reasonable to suggest that a dancer could earn a major portion of the units required for a master's degree in dance through classes in modern dance and ballet. However, it sounds ludicrous to suggest that a physical education student fulfill a major portion of the unit requirements for an MA by tennis and basketball practice. Why should this be so?

Perhaps the reason that it sounds reasonable for dancers to dance as part of their program but unreasonable for physical educators to participate in movement activities as a part of theirs is that dance and physical education activities are generally thought of in very different ways. No one is given a degree in dance for going to parties and dancing. By the same token, no one is given a degree in music for going to a party and belting out a few tunes, and no one is given a degree in painting for filling in paint-by-the-numbers oil paintings. There is a difference between serious pursuit of an art and merely participating in it for recreation. However, the majority of activities
in physical education are sports, and one of the main arguments for the value of physical education in the educational setting has always been that it provides a needed rest from studies, that by its recreational worth physical activity enhances the student's ability to study. Thus dance is perceived as art and physical education activities are generally thought of as recreation.

The serious artist is trying both to perfect his/her mastery of the skills and techniques involved in the art and to develop and express his/her vision of the nature of human beings in the world. The person with merely recreational interests is just relaxing and having fun. Such a person could even achieve great proficiency in the art, but his underlying purposes are not those of trying to achieve true mastery of the art and full expression of his/her vision of the world. This is not to deny the worth of recreation, but it is simply to point out that recreation and Art are different pursuits even when they utilize the same medium of production. The arts are serious disciplines for developing an understanding of the human condition, and recreational activities are not.

The reason that this is important is that the fundamental goal of academic activity is the investigation of various subjects and the development of an understanding of them. The primary mode of investigation in the academic arena is the inferential and intellectual mode, Art utilizes a more intuitive and physical way of grasping the human condition, but nonetheless art is a recognized and valued way of investigating and coming to an understanding of the human condition in the world, and as an investigative approach, art does fit within the basic function of the university. In contrast, engagement in recreational activity, however pleasant and beneficial this may be, is not an investigation of the human condition and therefore is not regarded as an appropriate element in the academic spectrum of activities.
The argument that physical education activities should be included within the curriculum because by their recreational worth they enhance the student's ability to study reveals a feeling on the part of physical educators that sports, as merely recreational activities, have no serious academic worth of their own and have to be justified in terms of their support for something which does have academic worth. Perhaps the reason that activity courses are not allowed to count extensively toward higher degrees in physical education is that physical educators have a feeling that their activities are not investigations of the human condition and are therefore not appropriate in programs leading to the attainment of research degrees.

Of course, there is one aspect of physical education that is generally acknowledged to be of serious investigative worth. Scientific and scholarly research in areas of physical education ranging from exercise physiology, conditioning and adaptives to philosophy, history, psychology and sociology do focus on an investigation into the ways human beings move through their lives. These investigations even have practical results which affect how people move and participate in movement activities. However, scientific and scholarly works per se are of cognitive rather than direct physical value and thus do not touch on the problem of the felt worthlessness of basic physical education activities, and these activities are, after all, the core of physical education and the area of it in which the greatest number of students participate. In fact, making the academic respectability and status of the discipline dependent upon its cognitive facet does real harm to the profession by alienating it from its physical nature.

The solution to the plight of the basic physical education activities must come from within the activities themselves. After all, it is not just that movement and skill development
are, per se, of little value. Music, painting and dance are all activities which, on one level, consist primarily of skilled movement. The point, however, is that they are trying to accomplish something by the use of the movements, and this something has to do with the use of the movements and the products of the movements as art, that is, as a means of investigating the human condition. Perhaps we can move towards a solution to the plight of the basic physical education activities by investigating how they could be used as arts.

PROBLEM

The problem which this dissertation focuses on is that of finding out how physical education activities can be pursued as arts.

PURPOSE

The purposes of this dissertation are:
1) To elucidate what it would be for physical education activity courses to function as arts, i.e., as activities in which students will learn to use movement as a means of developing and expressing an understanding of themselves, the world and the human condition.
2) To describe a practical method to help physical educators teach their activities as arts.
METODOLOGY

Consistent with the two different purposes of this dissertation, there will be utilized two different methods of investigation. The first method will involve a philosophical approach and will be based on elucidation of concepts about art and movement. The second method will be an experiential approach and will be based on direct participation in the artistic endeavor. The experiential approach to knowledge is necessarily very different from the philosophical approach since it has to do primarily with personal, lived experience rather than primarily with reflection about experience.

PROCEDURE

The first step will be to examine the nature of art, and this will be done in Chapter II. The focus will be on art as a process rather than art as a product. That is to say, the focus will be on how the activity of art leads to the development and expression of a world view rather than on the work of art that is the product of engagement in doing art. This is only one way of defining art, and sport has many times been analyzed as art by looking at the movement as an art product. This is perfectly valid, but it is a different undertaking from that pursued in this dissertation.

We will elucidate the nature of art by examining two books, Art as Experience, by John Dewey (Dewey, 51), and Meaning, by Michael Polanyi and Harry Prosch (Polanyi & Prosch, 52). Again, there are many other theories of art, and it would be valid for an investigation to focus on any of them; however, these two works have been chosen because the approach they delineate will be useful in pursuing just that analysis we have undertaken here.
Chapter III will examine a specific movement activity which functions as an art. Describing this movement form will give us an example of an activity which we can later discuss in the light of the ideas developed in Chapter II. In that discussion, we will be able to derive some general principles concerning the use of movement as art.

The movement discipline which will be the subject of this chapter will be Aikido, a non-violent, Japanese martial art. As we shall see, this movement discipline utilizes movement for what we have identified as the general artistic purpose, and, beyond that, it functions in a way that is very much parallel to the concepts that will be developed in Chapter II. We will not examine Aikido as a fighting art but will concentrate on how it teaches philosophical, kinesthetic and psychological knowledge: thus we will examine Aikido as a system for developing self-awareness and self-understanding. By examining Aikido in this way, we will be able to relate the theory of art to a particular movement form in such a way as to be able to draw some conclusions about how movement forms that are not currently practiced as arts could be practiced in that way.

The description of Aikido as art will be provided in the form of a detailed set of lesson plans for teaching the material, and there are a number of reasons for this format. To begin with, the most difficult facet of Aikido to learn or describe is precisely the material that we are most interested in. Describing the defense techniques is simple, but describing how they function as art to help a student develop self-awareness is very difficult. No simple expository statement of the philosophy and aims of Aikido practice would serve to convey a real sense of what it is to do Aikido and how Aikido functions as art. Actually, as will be brought out in Chapter II, to understand art we must do art and not just conceptualize about art from outside of it. The fundamental nature of the meaning created in a person's life by art can be understood only in the process of
doing art and living the artistic vision. Thus, in order to move toward our purpose of understanding the use of movement as art, it would seem that we must participate in an activity done as art and discover by our own experience what it is like to have meaning taught by movement and how the movement functions to teach meaning.

Actual participation in a movement art cannot, of course, be included within a written dissertation, but we do have one other option open: we can describe the process of doing the movement art in such a way that reading about it will provide a vicarious experience of the practice. In other words, expository statements about Aikido will not serve to communicate the nature of the art, but another way of describing it will. This way of describing the art will be the detailed lesson plan format, and it will function by allowing the reader to participate imaginally in the exercises as they are described and explained. Reading a step by step description of the exercises which would be used to teach the art aspect of Aikido will allow the reader to get an idea of the kinds of experiences, feelings and insights an Aikido student undergoes during Aikido practice. Admittedly, the vicarious experience will not be as enlivened and forceful as the actual experience would be, but this method of proceeding is the only practical way of encompassing the experience of movement within a philosophical discourse.

A second and related reason for providing the description of the movement form in the lesson plan format is that this method of proceeding will lend itself far better to a logical and comprehensive setting out of the artistic theory underlying Aikido than would either practice of the art or expository discourse on its philosophy. To begin with, the art aspect of Aikido is not something which, within the usual practice, exists separately from the fighting aspect. They are one and the same. Aikido practice consists of repetition of thousands of different defense skills with little attempt made to state an underlying theory of
organization. It is only as the student begins to understand the movement patterns in his/her guts that an underlying philosophy, theory and organization becomes apparent. Therefore, in order to present the art aspect of Aikido clearly, we will have to create a way of organizing it in a logical sequence. In addition, in order to focus specifically on the art aspect of Aikido, we will have to artificially isolate it from the total practice context and present it as a study in its own right. The material is very complex, and arranging it in a step by step lesson plan format will allow the clearest, most logical and most coherent presentation of it.

A third reason for the lesson plan format has to do with the second purpose of the dissertation, that of providing a practical method for teaching movement as art. By isolating the art aspect of Aikido and describing it in its own right, we shall have developed a core of philosophical/experiential material that is actually separate and distinct from Aikido as such, and it is this material which could be incorporated into the practice of any other movement form. This way of presenting the material has been developed and tested by the author in his teaching and found to be a successful and efficient way of focusing directly on and communicating the art aspect of Aikido.

Therefore, to sum it up, by expressing the Aikido material in a lesson plan format, two purposes will be served: material will be provided with which to conduct the philosophical investigation which is part of this dissertation, and the practical purpose of the dissertation will be fulfilled as well.

In Chapter IV, we will undertake the last steps in the dissertation. We shall examine the nature of movement as art by relating the material in Chapters II and III. From this examination, conclusions will be drawn concerning the basic philosophical problem of the dissertation; and suggestions will be presented concerning possibilities for using physical education activities as art and concerning possible research on this approach to physical education.
Teaching movement as an artistic experience (in the sense in which that term is being used here) would enable physical educators to deepen the value of their activity course offerings and thereby create a more secure place for them within the educational system. Even more important, taking an approach to teaching movement activities which includes their use as vehicles of artistic development would allow physical educators to offer deeper and more meaningful experiences to their students. It is clear that incorporating this approach into the field of physical education would be valuable.

In order to do so, two elements must be provided: an understanding of the nature of this approach and practical means whereby the approach could be applied in movement instruction. Either element without the other would be useless. It would not be enough merely to produce a philosophical elucidation of the problem and a recommendation that a change be made. That would be like a patient going to a doctor, receiving a detailed diagnosis and then the advice that he should get healthy instead of staying sick. The obvious question once a diagnosis has been offered and accepted is: "What do I do to produce change in the desired direction?" Of course it is up to the patient to act upon the prescription that the doctor gives, and the patient could choose to ignore it, but it is the doctor's job to give a specific prescription as well as a diagnosis. Thus, this dissertation seeks to provide both a diagnosis and a prescription, both a philosophical elucidation of the problem and a practical method for changing the situation under discussion.

It is clear that there is a problem in physical education concerning the values placed on movement and that there is a need for discussing and resolving this issue. It is also clear that both the philosophical and practical elements are necessary in solving the problem which is the basis of the dissertation, and
this dissertation is necessary to provide that material. That is so because at the present time there is neither a widely available course of study nor any published material which serves to convey a concise and comprehensive understanding of the possibilities developed in this dissertation for the revaluing of our approach to movement. Although the core of the work in the dissertation will derive from the use of Aikido to elucidate how movement can be used as art, and although Aikido is certainly appropriate for inclusion within physical education offerings, as a course of study it would not solve the problem we are addressing in this dissertation because the art aspect of Aikido is relatively inaccessible. Aikido practice includes many things other than the art aspect that we are interested in here, and much time is spent on these other elements. In order for physical educators to learn the art as a whole well enough to gain an understanding of the art aspect which they could apply within their own movement activities, they would have to spend an inordinate amount of time in practice.

In addition, none of the books published on Aikido provides the material necessary for either the philosophical or practical concerns of the dissertation. There are a number of books published on Aikido, but most of these spend just a few pages on the meaning of the movements and devote the rest of the space to photographs of defense maneuvers; these books are useful to students of Aikido but will not serve our purposes here. There are only two books available which deal with the use of movement awareness as we shall describe it in Chapter III, George Leonard's *The Ultimate Athlete: Re-visioning Sports, Physical Education, and the Body* (Leonard, 43), and Koichi Tohei's *Ki in Daily Life* (Tohei, 24). Both of these are excellent books but unsuitable as the basis for a consideration of how to transform physical education courses into movement arts. Both include only a very small number of exercises and therefore would not be sufficient for delineating practical methods of teaching the new approach to
movement. In addition, neither book presents a clear formulation of the methodology by which movement could be taught in this way, and so neither will suffice to define the conceptual basis of the approach.

Thus there is need to organize a clear, comprehensive and concise survey of the way Aikido approaches movement. This will serve two purposes: it will form the basis of discussion concerning what it is to approach movement as art, and it will also present the practical method whereby other movement forms could approach movement as art.
CHAPTER II

THE NATURE OF ART
How can physical education movement activities be used as arts? How can they serve as activities in which students will learn to use movement as a means of developing and expressing an understanding of themselves, the world and the human condition? We must begin our consideration of this problem by examining the nature of art in general and discovering how any art will use its particular medium as a vehicle for the development of a vision of the world, and we will base the discussion of the nature of art on John Dewey's *Art as Experience* (Dewey, 51). This work has been chosen as the basis of discussion because Dewey's theory of art focuses on art's function as a way of developing an understanding of the place of the self in the world, just the subject of interest to us. Dewey emphasizes consideration of the process of doing art rather than concentrating solely on the art product, and his theory goes on to explain how art can function as a means of developing a vision of human existence.

**SYNOPSIS**

Dewey's writing and thinking are complex and intricate, and it will be useful to provide a brief, introductory synopsis to help orient the reader. We begin the discussion in the section entitled *Philosophy of Life* by dealing with Dewey's general philosophy of life since it is the foundation upon which his philosophy of art rests. The key idea in Dewey's philosophy is that life is a process in which the organism must interact effectively with its environment in order to fulfill its needs and sustain its life. If the organism cannot fulfill its needs it dies, and the basic difficulty which every living creature must overcome is that the world offers obstacles to the fulfillment of its needs. Many times, as a result of the presence of
these obstacles, people will develop a fearful attitude towards life and try to withdraw from the world or anesthetize themselves to life's experiences. This is a negative response to feeling threatened by life. Dewey looks toward a positive response. He feels that the difficult obstacles thrown up by the world offer the individual opportunities to marshal his forces and learn to grow beyond his limits. Dewey feels that by learning to overcome obstacles the individual discovers his own strengths and discovers/creates his identity. The result of success in this process is that the individual comes to a sense of being able to deal comfortably with his environment and a sense of being in harmony with the world.

The section entitled The Function of Art begins the explication of how art contributes to this process of finding a harmonious way of relating to the world. Dewey states that for most people their experiences of the world are dull and disorderly. Since they try to withdraw from the world because they are scared of it, they turn away from their experiences of the world rather than wrestling them into a clear, coherent and comprehensive order. The problem here is that a clear, systematic organization of one's experiences—that is, a clear understanding of one's environment—is the prerequisite for the ability to act effectively in the world and fulfill one's needs. Without a good map, one cannot get anywhere. Thus, part of learning to find a harmonious accommodation with the world is the process of learning to create order in one's experience of life.

Now, order has to do with the arrangement and rhythm of things and events. Art is an activity in which we cultivate and refine our sense of order and rhythm, and the function of art is to teach us how to create order in our experiences. The artist is a person who is skilled in helping himself and the viewer of art utilize some work to make experience clearer and stronger. Engaging in art is an acceptance of life and a way of increasing one's ability to deal with it.
The section entitled *The Process of Art* deals with how art goes about clarifying experience. The key is that art selects the significant elements of an experience and gets rid of the extraneous, confusing elements. What determines significance in an experience is our interest in the events around us, that is, the fact that we automatically view our environment through the lens of our needs and our drives to fulfill them. Emotions arise when our needs meet obstacles, and emotions impel us to fulfill the needs. However, imbalances in our emotions can render us incapable of effective action: too much emotion or too little will both result in personal disorganization. Emotional energy will result in effective action only when it is conserved and ordered properly, and art is a way of ordering our emotions. Thus art clarifies experience by helping us order our emotions relative to the world.

The section entitled *The Production of Art* looks at how this ordering is accomplished. The basic point is that art involves making something. In doing art, an artist takes things and molds them in accord with his feelings. Taking time and effort to organize material means holding emotions in check and expending their energy carefully in planned action, and it is this that organizes them. Each art works within a particular medium, and each medium is especially fitted for dealing with some particular realm of experience. It is by working within the structure of a medium that emotion can be ordered and used constructively. Thus the emotions that organize an art work are themselves organized by the objective necessities involved in organizing material into the art work. Therefore, learning to mold objects to our will in creating a specific work of art constitutes a practice for learning how to act effectively in the general sphere of life.

In the section entitled *The Results of Art*, the results of this process of ordering of material and emotions are examined. The purpose of art is to organize the individual so that he can utilize his energy effectively, and the result of art is a
unification of the powers of the organism, a harnessing of them for effective action. This results from the ability of the person to function in a new state of consciousness, a relaxed open state in which he has access to all his mental powers and in which his emotions are balanced and do not distract him with worries about the past and the future. This state is one that allows the individual to be fully present and alive in the present instant just as a thrush or a fox is and to act with the same spontaneous alertness with which an animal acts. The consequence of this ability to act effectively is that we can reach our goals and fulfill our needs, and we thereby experience a sense of harmony and unity with ourselves and the world. Here we have come full circle, and we see that Dewey's philosophy of art is a particular expression of his general philosophy of life.

The section entitled Art as Knowledge examines the epistemology of the vision of the world produced by art. As we organize ourselves, our abilities to act, and our experiences of the world, we have the sense that we are learning to understand life. Art is felt to be a mode of knowledge. We must examine the epistemology of this mode of knowledge because in structuring physical education classes as art, it will be important to have a clear understanding of what it means to utilize an activity as a means of teaching students to experience themselves and the world in some particular way.

Though Dewey does deal with the epistemological basis of art, he is not as explicit and specific in his treatment of the subject as could be desired, and we shall base our discussion of this topic on Meaning, by Michael Polanyi (Polanyi, 52). We shall find that the epistemological foundation of art as a mode of knowledge is not something that can be discussed rationally. It is by means of actual artistic experience that we do our viewing of the world, and there is no way to look at that experience itself in rational terms. We cannot test the accuracy of an artistic vision of the world because it is by means of this
vision that we see the world at all. There is no way to examine
the world itself as it is and then compare it to our vision of
the world. How art creates vision can be felt and intuited, but
nothing can be said to provide a rational explication of it.
Once we have felt/understood this, we have understood as much as
can be understood about what it means to convey a vision of the
world through the process of art.

However, though art is not a rational, discursive teaching
method, it is a means of conveying a certain kind of knowledge.
The basic function of art is to help a person organize his sense
of the world, and art can also function to allow a person to
gain an experience of someone else's vision of the world. In
these ways art can serve as a systematic means of changing and
broadening students' understandings of life, and because of this
art has a place within the educational endeavor, and movement
arts have a place within the realm of physical education.

PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE*

#1. The quality that is the essence of art is part of the
activities of everyday life. Thus not only is art an extension
of ordinary living, but it is to some degree present in daily
life.

Esthetic emotion is . . . something distinctive and yet
not cut off by a chasm from other and natural emotional
experiences (Dewey, 51:78).

*In order to facilitate the exposition of the theory of art
and the reference later on to the various ideas that will be
presented, the material will be dealt with in the following
manner: key ideas will be presented in short, capsule proposi-
tions; the propositions will be numbered serially; and the capsule
statements will be followed by quotations which will amplify them
and indicate their sources.
An experience is a product, one might almost say a by-product, of continuous and cumulative interaction of an organic self with the world. There is no other foundation upon which esthetic theory and criticism can build (Dewey, 51:220).

#2. The organism is intimately connected to its environment.

[In order to] trace the development of art out of everyday experience . . . [we must] have a clear and coherent idea of what is meant when we say "normal experience." . . . The nature of experience is determined by the essential conditions of life. While man is other than bird or beast, he shares basic vital functions with them and has to make the basal adjustments if he is to continue the process of living. . . .

The first great consideration is that life goes on in an environment; not merely in it but because of it, through interaction with it. . . . The career and destiny of a living being are bound up with its interchanges with its environment, not externally but in the most intimate way (Dewey, 51:13).

#3: What connects the organism to the environment is the fact that it has needs which it must meet in order to survive.

Every experience, of slight or tremendous import, begins with an impulsion, rather as an impulsion. . . . "Impulsion" designates a movement outward and forward of the whole organism. . . .

Impulsions are the beginnings of complete experience because they proceed from need; from a hunger and demand that belongs to the organism as a whole and that can be supplied only by instituting definite relations (active relations, interactions) with the environment (Dewey, 51:58).

Dewey is stating a drive theory of human life, a theory that the living being has certain needs that must be fulfilled and that these needs drive the organism to act and achieve results.
#4. There is a rhythm to the process of need fulfillment: the organism goes from equilibrium, to need, to activity for fulfilling the need, and back to equilibrium.

Every need, say hunger for fresh air or food, is a lack that denotes at least a temporary absence of adequate adjustment with surroundings. But it is also a reaching out into the environment to make good the lack and to restore adjustment by building at least a temporary equilibrium. Life consists of phases in which the organism falls out of step with the march of surrounding things and then recovers unison with it (Dewey, 51:13-14).

#5. However, life is not such that fulfillment of needs is easy or automatic, and the organism can find itself and its purposes opposed and thwarted:

The world is full of things that are indifferent and even hostile to life (Dewey, 51:14).

But the impulsion also meets many things on its out-bound course that deflect and oppose it. . . .

It is the fate of a living creature, however, that it cannot secure what belongs to it without an adventure in a world that as a whole it does not own and to which it has no native title (Dewey, 51:59).

#6. This can, of course be painful and frightening, and some people will give up in the face of life's uncertainty and try to retreat from life and deny their experience of it:

The senses are the organs through which the live creature participates directly in the ongoings of the world about him. . . . Motor apparatus and "Will" itself are the means by which this participation is carried on and directed. . . . Mind is the means by which . . . meanings and values are extracted, retained, and put to further service in the intercourse of the live creature with his surroundings.

Experience is the result, the sign, and the reward of the interaction of organism and environment . . . . Since sense-organs with their connected motor apparatus are the means of this participation, any and every derogation of them, whether practical or theoretical,
is at once effect and cause of a narrowed and dulled life-experience. Oppositions of mind and body, soul and matter, spirit and flesh all have their origin, fundamentally, in fear of what life may bring forth. They are marks of contraction and withdrawal (Dewey, 51:22).

#7. However, for Dewey, this resistance by the environment to the person's desires is not something to be afraid of but an integral part of the most positive aspect of life since it is the necessity for overcoming obstacles to one's needs that provides the person with motive and opportunity to grow beyond his previous limits.

Life itself consists of phases in which the organism falls out of step with the march of surrounding things and then recovers unison with it . . . And, in a growing life, the recovery is never mere return to a prior state, for it is enriched by the state of disparity and resistance through which it has successfully passed . . . Life grows when a temporary falling out is a transition to a more extensive balance of the energies of the organism with those of the conditions under which it lives (Dewey, 51:14).

An environment that was always and everywhere congenial to the straightaway execution of our impulsions would set a term to growth as surely as one always hostile would irritate and destroy. Impulsion forever boosted on its forward way would run its course thoughtless and dead to emotion. . . . The only way it can become aware of its nature and its goal is by obstacles surmounted and means employed. . . . Nor without resistance from surroundings would the self become aware of itself (Dewey, 51:59).

#8. The result of growth and a successful accommodation with the universe is a sense of being at home in the world:

Mere opposition that completely thwarts, creates irritation and rage. But resistance that calls out thought generates curiosity and solicitous care, and, when it is overcome and utilized, eventuates in elation (Dewey, 51:60).

Because the actual world, that in which we live, is a combination of movement and culmination, of breaks and re-unions . . . the live being recurrently loses and
reestablishes equilibrium with his surroundings. The moment of passage from disturbance into harmony is that of intensest life. . . .

Inner harmony is attained only when, by some means terms are made with the environment. . . . In the process of living, attainment of a period of equilibrium is at the same time the initiation of a new relation to the environment. . . . The time of consummation is also one of beginning anew. . . . But through the phases of perturbation and conflict, there abides the deep-seated memory of an underlying harmony, the sense of which haunts life like the sense of being founded on a rock (Dewey, 51:17).

The basic task we face in our lives is to find a successful accommodation to the universe. This means two equivalent things: first, learning to function effectively within the structure of reality as it is and fulfill our needs in spite of the obstacles life puts in our way, and, second, achieving a sense of harmony with the world.

THE FUNCTION OF ART

#9. The basic problem that we face in our lives is that we are not fully alive. We seek to withdraw ourselves from the world. We seek to detach ourselves from our senses in order to become anesthetized to the world around us. This is both the effect and the cause of our being cowed by the resistance the world offers to our attempts to fulfill our needs. We relate to the world in a slack, disorderly way.

Ordinary experience is often infected with apathy, lassitude and stereotype. We get neither the impact of a quality through sense nor the meaning of things through thought. The "world" is too much with us as burden or distraction. We are not sufficiently alive to feel the tang of sense nor yet to be moved by thought. We are oppressed by our surroundings or are callous to them (Dewey, 51:260).

In much of our experience we are not concerned with the connection of one incident with what went before and
what comes after. There is no interest that controls attentive rejection or selection of what shall be organized into the developing experience. . . . We drift. We yield according to external pressure, or evade and compromise. There is experience, but so slack and discursive that it is not an experience. Needless to say, such experiences are anesthetic (Dewey, 51:40).

#10. This kind of limp approach to the experiences of our lives will not let us get an orderly grasp on reality and act effectively. Finding a successful accommodation to the universe necessitates being able to find an orderly way of apprehending the events and environments that surround us.

Order cannot but be admirable in a world constantly threatened with disorder—in a world where living creatures can go on living only by taking advantage of whatever order exists about them, incorporating it into themselves. In a world like ours, every living creature that attains sensibility welcomes order with a response of harmonious feeling whenever it finds a congruous order about it.

For only when an organism shares in the ordered relations of its environment does it secure the stability essential to living. And when the participation comes after a phase of disruption and conflict, it bears within itself the germs of a consummation akin to the esthetic.

The rhythm of loss of integration with environment and recovery of union not only persists in man but becomes conscious with him; its conditions are material out of which he forms purposes. Emotion is the conscious sign of a break, actual or impending. The discord is the occasion that induces reflection. Desire for restoration of the union converts mere emotion into interest in objects as conditions of realization of harmony (Dewey, 51: 14-15).

#11. The rhythms of nature affect man's existence in everything from the change of the seasons to the bodily rhythms of waking/sleeping or hunger/satiety. Nature's rhythms affect man, and rhythm is a basic way in which man perceives and understands nature:
The apprehended rhythms of nature were employed to introduce evident order into some phase of the confused observations and images of mankind (Dewey, 51:148).

What is not so generally perceived is that every uniformity and regularity of change in nature is a rhythm. The terms "natural law" and natural rhythm are synonymous.

The history of the progress of natural science is the record of operations that refine and that render more comprehensive our grasp of the gross and limited rhythms that first engaged the attention of archaic man. The development reached a point where the scientific and artistic parted ways. Today the rhythms which physical science celebrates are obvious only to thought, not to perception in immediate experience. . . . Underneath the rhythm of every art and of every work of art there lies, as a substratum in the depths of the subconsciousness, the basic pattern of the relations of the live creature to his environment. . . .

Man delights in rhythmic portrayals and presentations. . . . Ultimately the delight springs from the fact that such things are instances of the relationships that determine the course of life, natural and achieved (Dewey, 51:149-50).

#12. Art works to help us learn how to perceive rhythm and order our experiences.

There is, of course, no rhythm without recurrence. But the reflective analysis of physical science is substituted for the experience of art when recurrence is interpreted as literal repetition, whether of material or exact interval. Mechanical recurrence is that of material units. Esthetic recurrence is that of relationships that sum up and carry forward. Recurring units as such call attention to themselves as isolated parts, and thus away from the whole. Hence they lessen esthetic effect. Recurring relationships serve to define and delimit parts, giving them individuality of their own. But they also connect; the individual entities they mark off demand, because of the relations, association and interaction with the other individuals. Thus the parts vitally serve in the construction of an expanded whole (Dewey, 51:166).

[In a work of art] what was evoked is a substance so formed that it can enter into the experiences of others and enable them to have more intense and more fully rounded out experiences of their own.
This is what it is to have form. It marks a way of envisaging, of feeling, and of presenting experienced matter so that it most readily and effectively becomes material for the construction of adequate experience on the part of those less gifted than the original creator (Dewey, 51:109).

#13. The purpose of art is to increase the intensity of our experience so that we become fully alive. Dewey distinguishes between ordinary, flaccid experience and the kind of clear, powerful experience that he terms an experience:

In contrast with such [flaccid] experience, we have an experience when the material experience runs its course to fulfillment. Then and then only is it integrated within and demarcated in the general stream of experience from other experiences. A piece of work is finished in a way that is satisfactory; a problem receives its solution; . . . a situation . . . is so rounded out that its close is a consummation and not a cessation. Such an experience is a whole and carries with it its own individualizing quality and self-sufficiency. It is an experience (Dewey, 51:35).

Between the poles of aimlessness and mechanical efficiency, there lie those courses of action in which through successive deeds there runs a sense of growing meaning conserved and accumulating toward an end that is felt as accomplishment of a process (Dewey, 51:39).

#14. The purpose of art is to show us how to contact our senses and thereby make effective contact with the world.

The [esthetic] experience itself has a satisfying emotional quality because it possesses internal integration and fulfillment reached through ordered and organized movement. This artistic structure may be immediately felt. In so far, it is esthetic (Dewey, 51:38).

In this tradition, "truth" . . . denotes the wisdom by which men live, especially "the lore of good and evil." . . . It was particularly connected with the question of justifying good and trusting to it in spite of the evil and destruction that abound. . . . Man lives in a world of surmise, of mystery, of uncertainties. . . . Ultimately there are but two philosophies. One of them accepts life and experience in all its uncertainty, mystery, doubt, and
half-knowledge and turns that experience upon itself to
deepen and intensify its own qualities—to imagination
and art (Dewey, 51:34).

THE PROCESS OF ART

#15. Art clarifies and intensifies experience by stripping it
down to its essence and exposing its rhythm and structure and
meaning:

Tangled scenes of life are made more intelligible in
esthetic experience: not, however, as reflection and science
render things more intelligible by reduction to conceptual
form, but by presenting their meanings as the matter of a
clarified, coherent, and intensified or "impassioned"

Art is a selection of what is significant, with rejec­
tion . . . of what is irrelevant, and thereby the significant
is compressed and intensified (Dewey, 51:208).

Art operates by selecting those potencies in things by
which an experience—any experience—has significance and
value. Elimination gets rid of forces that confuse,
distract, and deaden. Order, rhythm and balance, simply
means that energies significant for experience are acting
at their best (Dewey, 51:185).

It is everywhere accepted that art involves selection.
Lack of selection or undirected attention results in
unorganized miscellany. The directive source of selection
is interest; an unconscious but organic bias toward certain
aspects and values of the complex and variegated universe
in which we live (Dewey, 51:95).

Dewey's theory of art, then, springs from his view of life
as a process in which the individual has needs and must learn how
to act effectively to fulfilli them. Art is a means whereby we
learn how to deal well with the process of ordering our experi­
ence: in art we select and order objects and events to make
them clearer and more intense, and the structure of this order
comes from our needs and feelings and interest in what happens
to us. Thus art is essentially a practice for learning how to achieve a good accommodation with the universe around us.

#16. Emotions arise when the individual is out of phase with his environment and are a manifestation of his drive to fulfill his needs. E-motion is a moving out into activity (see proposition #3). Emotion, as the motive force underlying our activity, must be balanced and ordered correctly in order for the individual to achieve orderly and effective action. Emotional imbalance will lead to disorder.

Art is a sense of perspective and proportion that allows us to take ourselves, our experiences and the world in a calm, open manner and which thereby allows us to gain a sense of the harmony and organization of life. Lack of feeling or too much feeling will both blind us to the structure of the world we live in and so prevent us from functioning well and achieving a sense of harmony in our lives:

Expression is the clarification of turbid emotion; our appetites know themselves when they are reflected in the mirror of art, and as they know themselves they are transfigured. Emotion that is distinctively esthetic then occurs (Dewey, 51:77).

Physical things from far ends of the earth are physically transported and physically caused to act and react upon one another in the construction of a new object. The miracle of mind is that something similar takes place in experience without physical transport and assembling. Emotion is the moving and cementing force. It selects what is congruous and dyes what is selected with its color, thereby giving qualitative unity to materials externally disparate and dissimilar. It thus provides unity in and through the varied parts of an experience (Dewey, 51:42).

Experience is limited by all the causes which interfere with perception of the relations between undergoing and doing. There may be interference because of excess on the side of doing or of excess on the side of receptivity, of undergoing. Unbalance on either side blurs the perception of relations and leaves the experience partial and distorted, with scant or false meaning. Zeal for doing, lust for action, leaves many a person . . . with experience of an almost
incredible paucity, all on the surface. No one experience has a chance to complete itself because something else is entered upon so speedily. . . . Resistance is treated as an obstruction to be beaten down, not as an invitation to reflection. . . .

Experiences are also cut short from maturing by excess of receptivity. What is prized is then the mere undergoing of this and that, irrespective of perception of any meaning. The crowding together of as many impressions as possible is thought to be "life," even though no one of them is more than a flitting and a sipping. . . . [For the person who is too active or too receptive] experience is equally distorted, because nothing takes root in mind when there is no balance between doing and receiving. Some decisive action is needed in order to establish contact with the realities of the world and in order that impressions may be so related to facts that their value is tested and organized (Dewey, 51:44-45).

On the theory that manifestation of an emotion is its expression, . . . the more intense the emotion, the more effective the "expression." In fact, a person overwhelmed by an emotion is thereby incapacitated for expressing it. . . . There is, when one is mastered by an emotion, too much undergoing . . . and too little active response to permit a balanced relationship to be struck. . . . In extreme cases of emotion, it works to disorder instead of ordering material. Insufficient emotion shows itself in a coldly "correct" product. Excessive emotion obstructs the necessary elaboration and definition of parts.

The determination of . . . the right incident in the right place, of exquisiteness of proportion . . . is accomplished by emotion. Not every emotion, however, can do this work, but only one informed by material that is grasped and gathered. Emotion is informed and carried forward when it is spent indirectly in search for material and in giving it order, not when it is directly expended (Dewey, 51:69-70).

#17. The power of emotional energy is harnessed for useful activity only when it is utilized in an orderly, systematic fashion.

With respect to human emotion, an immediate discharge . . . is fatal to expression. . . . There is not enough resistance to create tension, and thereby a periodic accumulation and release. Energy is not conserved so as to contribute to an ordered development. . . . When complete release is postponed and is arrived at finally through a
succession of ordered periods of accumulation and conservation, . . . the manifestation of emotion becomes true expression, acquiring esthetic quality—and only then. Emotional energy continues to work but now does real work; it accomplishes something. It evokes, assembles, accepts, and rejects memories, images, observations, and works them into a whole toned throughout by the same immediate emotional feeling. Thereby is presented an object that is unified and distinguished throughout (Dewey, 51:155-56).

#18. Art allows us to order our experiences of life and make them the basis for orderly action.

An experience has pattern and structure, because it is not just doing and undergoing in alternation, but consists of them in relationship. To put one's hand in the fire that consumes it is not necessarily to have an experience. The action and its consequence must be joined in perception. This relationship is what gives meaning; to grasp it is the objective of all intelligence. The scope and content of the relations measure the significant content of an experience (Dewey, 51:44).

Perception of relationship between what is done and what is undergone constitutes the work of intelligence, and . . . the artist is controlled in the process of his work by his grasp of the connection between what he has already done and what he is to do next . . . A painter must consciously undergo the effect of his every brush stroke or he will not be aware of what he is doing and where his work is going. Moreover, he has to see each particular connection of doing and undergoing in relation to the whole that he desires to produce (Dewey, 51:45).

The work of art is a unification of material experienced in the past with material being experienced and acted upon in the present:

But the process of living is continuous; it possesses continuity because it is an everlastingly renewed process of acting upon the environment and being acted upon by it . . . Experience is necessarily cumulative and its subject matter gains expressiveness because of cumulative continuity. The world we have experienced becomes an integral part of the self that acts and is acted upon in
further experience. . . . Through habits formed in intercourse with the world, we also in-habit the world. It becomes a home and the home is part of our every experience.

How, then, can objects of experience avoid becoming expressive? Yet apathy and torpor conceal this expressiveness by building a shell about objects. Familiarity induces indifference, prejudice blinds us; conceit . . . minimizes the significance possessed by objects in favor of the alleged importance of the self. Art throws off the covers that hide the expressiveness of experienced things; it . . . enables us to forget ourselves by finding ourselves in the delight of experiencing the world about us in its varied qualities and forms (Dewey, 51:104).

THE PRODUCTION OF ART

#19. Art involves acting, doing and making, and because this is so it functions as a practice for learning how to act effectively. Art is a laboratory in which we learn what effective action is so that we may act effectively in the greater arena of life.

Art denotes a process of doing or making. . . . Every art does something with some physical material, the body or something outside the body, with or without the use of intervening tools, and with a view to production of something visible, audible, or tangible (Dewey, 51:47).

The contrast between free and externally enforced activity is an empirical fact. . . . [There is a] notion that there is such an inherent and deep-seated antagonism between the individual and the world (by which an individual lives and develops) that freedom can be attained only through escape.

Now there is enough conflict between the needs and desires of the self and the conditions of the world to give some point to the escape theory. . . . The issue . . . has to do with the way in which art performs liberation and release. The matter at stake is whether release comes by way of anodyne or by transfer to a radically different realm of things, or whether it is accomplished by manifesting what actual existence actually becomes when its possibilities are fully expressed. The fact that art is production and that production occurs only through an objective material that has to be managed and ordered in
accord with its own possibilities seem to be conclusive in the latter sense (Dewey, 51:280).

Art is the fusion in one experience of the pressure upon the self of necessary conditions and the spontaneity and novelty of individuality.

Individuality itself is originally a potentiality and is realized only in interaction with surrounding conditions. In this process of intercourse, native capacities, which contain an element of uniqueness, are transformed and become a self. Moreover, through resistances encountered, the nature of the self is discovered. The self is both formed and brought to consciousness through interaction with environment. The individuality of the artist is no exception. If his activities remained merely spontaneous, if free activities were not brought against the resistance offered by actual conditions, no work of art would ever be produced (Dewey, 51:281-82).

#20. The actual "substance" that art works with is space-time, the framework within which all life exists. Thus art lets us penetrate to the core of change and that which changes:

Space and time—or rather—space-time—are found in the matter of every art product. . . . As science takes qualitative space and time and reduces them to relations that enter into equations, so art makes them abound in their own sense as significant values of the very substance of all things (Dewey, 51:206-207).

Works of art express space as opportunity for movement and action (Dewey, 51:209).

There are then common properties of the matter of arts because there are general conditions without which an experience is not possible. . . . Position expresses the poised readiness of the live creature to meet the impact of surrounding forces, to meet so as to endure and to persist, to extend or expand through undergoing the very forces that, apart from its response, are indifferent and hostile. Through going out into the environment, position unfolds into volume; through the pressure of environment, mass is retracted into energy of position, and space remains, when matter is contracted, as an opportunity for further action (Dewey, 51:212-13).
#21. In art we learn how to utilize the emotions that spring from our needs to energize our actions and organize our activities. Energy that is usually dissipated is focused and made effective in doing art. The basis for the process of art is the choice of some medium of production and the manipulation of that material in forming the work of art. The medium functions as a reflection and external manifestation of our inner energies, and it is because this is so that it serves as a way of getting a handle on our inner energies and learning to focus them.

The use of a particular medium, a special language having its own characteristics, is the source of every art, philosophic, scientific, technological and esthetic. The arts of science, of politics, of history, and of painting and poetry all have finally the same material; that which is constituted by the interaction of the live creature with his surroundings. They differ in the media by which they convey and express this material, not in the material itself. Each one transforms some phase of the raw material of experience into new objects according to the purpose, each purpose demands a particular medium for its execution. . . . The purpose of esthetic art being the enhancement of direct experience itself, it uses the medium fit for the accomplishment of that end (Dewey, 51:319-20).

With respect to the physical materials that enter into the formation of a work of art, everyone knows that they must undergo change. Marble must be chipped; pigments must be lain on canvas; words must be put together. It is not so generally recognized that a similar transformation takes place on the side of "inner" materials, images, observations, memories, and emotions. They are also progressively re-formed; . . . The impulsion that seethes as a commotion demanding utterance must undergo as much and as careful management in order to receive eloquent manifestation as marble or pigment, as colors or sounds. Nor are there in fact two operations, one performed upon the outer material and the other upon the inner and mental stuff.

The work is artistic in the degree in which the two functions of transformation are effected by a single operation. As the painter places pigment upon the canvas, or imagines it placed there, his ideas and feelings are also ordered. As the writer composes in his medium of words what he wants to say, his idea takes on for himself perceptible form. . . . What most of us lack in order to be artists is not the inceptive emotion, nor yet merely technical skill in
execution. It is capacity to work a vague idea and emotion over into terms of some definite medium. . . . The inner material of emotion and idea is as much transformed through acting and being acted upon by objective material as the latter undergoes modification when it becomes a medium of expression (Dewey, 51:74-75).

Every work of art has a particular medium by which . . . the qualitative pervasive whole is carried. In every experience we touch the world through some particular tentacle; we carry on our intercourse with it, it comes home to us, through a specialized organ. The entire organism with all its charge of the past and varied resources operates, but it operates through a particular medium, . . . In ordinary [visual] perceptions, this medium of color is mixed, adulterated. While we see, we also hear; we feel pressures, and heat or cold. In a painting . . . the medium becomes color alone, and since color alone must now carry the qualities of movement, touch, sound, etc., . . . the expressiveness and energy of color are enhanced (Dewey, 51:195-96).

In its beginning an emotion flies straight to its object. . . . [but an] emotion may be turned aside from its direct end . . . may seek and find material that is . . . congenial and cognate . . . This other material may be anything as long as it feeds the emotion. . . .

In all such ases, some object emotionally akin to the direct object of emotion takes the place of the latter. . . . The impulse arrested in its direct movement toward its physiologically normal end is . . . turned into indirect channels where it finds other material than that which is "naturally" appropriate to it, and as it fuses with this material it takes on new color and has new consequences. . . . But since there is something in the utilization of these channels that is emotionally akin to the means by which . . . [the emotion] would find direct discharge, as he puts objects in order his emotion is ordered (Dewey, 51:76-77).

#22. The medium of an art form is the container within which the artist solidifies and organizes his feelings and ideas, and it is by staying within the structure of the medium that the artist has the ability to work upon himself. The medium is a framework with clearly specified rules of operation, and that fact allows the artist to work very clearly and precisely with the experiences he is attempting to put in order.
Each art has its own medium and that medium is especially fitted for one kind of communication. Each medium says something that cannot be uttered as well or as completely in any other tongue. The needs of daily life have given superior practical importance to one mode of communication, that of speech. This fact has unfortunately given rise to a popular impression that the meanings expressed in architecture, sculpture, painting, and music can be translated into words with little if any loss. In fact, each art speaks an idiom that conveys what cannot be said in another language and yet remains the same (Dewey, 51:106).

Sensitivity to a medium as a medium is the very heart of all artistic creation and esthetic perception. Such sensitiveness does not lug in extraneous material. . . .

By temperament, perhaps by inclination and aspiration, we are all artists—up to a certain point. What is lacking is that which marks the artist in execution. For the artist has the power to seize upon a special kind of material and convert it into an authentic medium of expression. The rest of us require many channels and a mass of material to give expression to what we should like to say. Then the variety of agencies get in the way of one another and render expression turbid, while the sheer bulk of material employed makes it confused and awkward. The artist sticks to his chosen organ and its corresponding material, and thus the idea singly and concentratedly felt in terms of the medium comes through pure and clear. He plays the game intensely, because strictly (Dewey, 51:199-200).

#23. Without the medium in which to refine, develop, concentrate and express the feelings that produce art, emotion does not work and produce things; it just boils away uselessly.

An act of discharge or mere exhibition lacks a medium. Instinctive crying and smiling no more require a medium than do sneezing and winking. They occur through some channel, but the means of outlet are not used as immanent means of an end. . . . Only where material is employed as media is there expression and art. . . . The mere issuing forth or discharge of raw material is not expression (Dewey, 51:63-64).

When excitement about subject matter goes deep, it stirs up a store of attitudes and meanings derived from prior experience. As they are aroused into activity they become conscious thoughts and emotions. . . . Many a person is unhappy, tortured within, because he has at
command no art of expressive action. What under happier conditions might be used to convert objective material into material of an intense and clear experience, seethes within in unruly turmoil which finally dies down after, perhaps, a painful inner disruption (Dewey, 51:65).

THE RESULTS OF ART

#24. The purpose of art is to give people an experience of a unified, ordered and integrated way of acting, but what is this experience and way of living? It is, essentially, a unification of the powers of the organism:

There are no intrinsic psychological divisions between the intellectual and the sensory aspects; the emotional and ideational; the imaginative and the practical phases of human nature. . . . It is the office of art in the individual person, to compose differences, to do away with isolations and conflicts among the elements of our being, to utilize oppositions among them to build a richer personality (Dewey, 51:247-48).

#25. Unification of the organism results from being fully present in the present moment as it is, and this unification gives a person access to all his capacities for effective action. This unification is a state of consciousness different from that in which past, present and future are separated from each other. The essence of what we find beautiful, the essence of what makes action exactly appropriate and effective, and the essence of harmony with the world: all are the same and are the core of the process of doing art.

I do not think it can be denied that an element of reverie, of approach to a state of dream, enters into the creation of a work of art, . . . Indeed, it is safe to say that "creative" conceptions in philosophy and science come only to persons who are relaxed to the point of reverie. The subconscious fund of meanings stored in our attitudes have no chance of release when we are practically or
intellectually strained. For much the greater part of this
store is then restrained, because the demands of a particular
problem and particular purpose inhibit all except the
elements directly relevant. Images and ideas come to us not
by set purpose but in flashes, and flashes are intense and
illuminating, they set us on fire, only when we are free
from special preoccupations (Dewey, 51:275-76).

What is called the object, the cloud, river, garment,
... is not one of a kind in general, a sample of a
cloud or river, but is this individual thing existing here
and now with all the unrepeatable particularities that
accompany and mark such existences. ... Now under the
pressure of external circumstances or because of internal
laxity, objects of most of our ordinary perception lack
completeness. ... It is enough to know that those
objects are rain-clouds to induce us to carry an umbrella.
The full perceptual realization of just the individual
clouds they are might even get in the way of utilizing
them as an index of a specific, a limited, kind of conduct.
Esthetic perception, on the other hand, is a name for a
full perception (Dewey, 51:177).

It is this degree of completeness of living in the
experience of making and of perceiving that makes the
difference between what is fine or esthetic in art and what
is not. ... Wherever conditions are such as to prevent
the act of production from being an experience in which the
whole creature is alive and in which he possesses his living
through enjoyment, the product will lack something of being

Most mortals are conscious that a split often occurs
between their present living and their past and future.
Then the past hangs upon them as a burden; it invades the
present with a sense of regret, of opportunities not used,
and of consequences we wish undone. It rests upon the
present as an oppression, instead of being a storehouse of
resources by which to move confidently forward. But the
live creature adopts its past; it can make friends even with
its stupidities, using them as warnings to increase
present wariness. ... To the being fully alive, the future is not ominous
but a promise; it surrounds the present as a halo. It
consists of possibilities that are felt as a possession of
what is now and here. ... But all too often we exist in
apprehensions of what the future may bring, and are divided
within ourselves. ... Because of the frequency of this
abandonment of the present to the past and the future, the
happy periods of an experience that is now complete because
it absorbs into itself memories of the past and anticipa-
tions of the future, come to constitute an esthetic ideal.
Only when the past ceases to trouble and anticipations of the future are not perturbing is a being wholly united with his environment and therefore fully alive. Art celebrates with peculiar intensity the moments in which the past reinforces the present and in which the future is a quickening of what now is (Dewey, 51:18).

The activities of the fox, the dog and the thrush may at least stand as reminders and symbols of that unity of experience . . . The live animal is fully present, all there, in all of its actions: in its wary glances, its sharp sniffings, its abrupt cocking of ears. All senses are equally on the qui vive. As you watch, you see motion merging into sense and sense into motion—constituting that animal grace so hard for man to rival. What the live creature retains from the past and what it expects from the future operate as directions in the present (Dewey, 51:19).

#26. Art functions to put a person into contact with the universe as a whole, and it thereby helps us find a sense of harmony in our lives.

Inner harmony is attained only when, by some means, terms are made with the environment (Dewey, 51:27).

We are accustomed to think of physical objects as having bounded edges; . . . Then we unconsciously carry over this belief in the bounded character of all objects of experience (a belief founded ultimately in the practical exigencies of our dealings with things) into our conception of experience itself. We suppose the experience has the same definite limits as the things with which it is concerned. But any experience the most ordinary, has an indefinite total setting. Things, objects, are only focal points of a here and now in a whole that stretches out indefinitely . . .

We are never wholly free from the sense of something that lies beyond . . . Whether the scope of vision be vast or minute, we experience it as a part of a larger whole and inclusive whole, a part that now focuses our experience. We might expand the field from the narrower to the wider. But however broad the field, it is still felt as not the whole; the margins shade into that indefinite expanse beyond which imagination calls the universe (Dewey, 51:193–94).

A work of art elicits and accentuates this quality of being a whole and of belonging to the larger, all-inclusive, whole which is the universe in which we live. This fact, I think, is the explanation of that feeling of exquisite
intelligibility and clarity we have in the presence of an object that is experienced with esthetic intensity. It explains also the religious feeling that accompanies intense esthetic perception. We are, as it were, introduced into a world beyond this world which is nevertheless the deeper reality of the world in which we live in our ordinary experiences. We are carried out beyond ourselves to find ourselves. . . . Somehow, the work of art operates to deepen and to raise to great clarity that sense of an enveloping undefined whole that accompanies every normal experience. This whole is then felt as an expansion of ourselves. . . . Where egotism is not made the measure of reality and value, we are citizens of this vast world beyond ourselves, and any intense realization of its presence with and in us brings a peculiarly satisfying sense of unity in itself and with ourselves (Dewey, 51:195).

ART AS KNOWLEDGE

#27. An important point about the perceptions that result from the process of art is that they are felt to be truths, that is, they are felt to have some independent, objective meaning to them. They are not felt to be merely and unimportantly subjective: the sense of harmony with the world produced by art is felt as a perception of something true about the nature of the relationship between the individual and the world rather than as a mere, subjective sense of comfort or euphoria. Art, then, is a method of producing knowledge, and it is important in understanding art to examine this.

The sense of increase of understanding, of a deepened intelligibility on the part of objects of nature and man, resulting from esthetic experience, has led philosophic theorists to treat art as a mode of knowledge, and has induced artists, especially poets, to regard art as a mode of revelation of the inner nature of things that cannot be had in any other way, . . .

The sense of disclosure and of heightened intelligibility of the world remains to be accounted for (Dewey, 51: 288-89).
The key to understanding the nature of knowledge in art is to be found in the fact that art aims at clarifying experience rather than stating propositions.

A similar ambiguity attends the question of meaning in a work of art. Words are symbols which represent objects and actions in the sense of standing for them; in that sense they have meaning. A signboard has meaning when it says so many miles to such and such a place, with an arrow pointing the direction. But meaning in these two cases has a purely external reference; it stands for something by pointing to it. Meaning does not belong to the work and signboard of its own intrinsic right. . . . But there are other meanings that present themselves directly as possessions of objects which are experienced. Here there is no need for a code or convention of interpretation; the meaning is as inherent in immediate experience as is that of a flower garden (Dewey, 51:83).

The problem in hand may be approached by drawing a distinction between expression and statement. Science states meanings; art expresses them. . . . A signboard . . . directs one's course to a place, say a city. It does not in any way supply experience of that city even in a vicarious way. What it does is to set forth some of the conditions that must be fulfilled in order to procure that experience. What holds in this instance may be generalized. Statement sets forth the conditions under which an experience of an object or situation may be had. It is a good, that is, effective, statement in the degree in which these conditions are stated in such a way that they can be used as directions by which one may arrive at the experience. It is a bad statement, confused and false, if it sets forth these conditions in such a way that when they are used as directions they mislead or take one to the object in a wasteful way (Dewey, 51:84).

The poetic as distinct from the prosaic, esthetic as distinct from scientific, expression as distinct from statement does something different from leading to an experience. It constitutes one. . . . The poem, or painting, does not operate in the dimension of correct descriptive statement but in that of experience itself. . . . [Propositions] have intent; art is an immediate realization of intent (Dewey, 51:85).

Art has to do with immediately felt experience of life. Art leads to a sense of perceiving the world in a new way, and this
perception is felt to be knowledge of the world. However, it is not knowledge in the same sense that a set of propositions about events in the world would be knowledge. It is felt rather than asserted knowledge.

#29. In examining a process of gathering knowledge, the natural question to ask is, "How good is the process?" It is important to establish the validity of a method of gathering knowledge so that we know how trustworthy the putative knowledge is. We feel, then, that if art is said to produce knowledge about the world, we have the right to ask whether the material it produces is accurate and true.

However, this question of validity is appropriate in judging statement knowledge, and it is not appropriate in judging expression knowledge. Only language which asserts facts can be judged true or false. Expressive language, or any other non-statement medium, operates in the realm of immediate, intuitive emotional perception, and the question of objective validity does not apply.

Qualities as qualities do not lend themselves to division. It would be impossible to name the subordinate sorts of even sweet and sour. In the end such an attempt would be compelled to enumerate every thing in the world that is sweet or sour, . . . For quality is concrete and existential, and hence varies with individuals since it is impregnated with their uniqueness. . . . Language comes infinitely short of paralleling the variegated surface of nature. Yet words as practical devices are the agencies by which the ineffable diversity of natural existence as it operates in human experience is reduced to orders, ranks, and classes that can be managed. Not only is it impossible that language should duplicate the infinite variety of individualized qualities that exist, but it is wholly undesirable and unneeded that it should do so. The unique quality of a quality is found in experience itself; it is there and sufficiently there not to need reduplication in language. The latter serves its scientific or intellectual purpose as it gives directions as to how to come upon these qualities in experience. . . .
But words serve their poetic purpose in the degree in which they summon and evoke into active operation the vital responses that are present whenever we experience qualities (Dewey, 51:215-16).

Only superstition will hold that, because the meaning of paintings and symphonies cannot be translated into words, or that of poetry into prose, therefore thought is monopolized by the latter. If all meanings could be adequately expressed by words, the arts of painting and music would not exist. There are values and meanings that can be expressed only by immediately visible and audible qualities, and to ask what they mean in the sense of something that can be put into words is to deny their distinctive existence (Dewey, 51:74).

In talking about the sense of the connected wholeness that is the basis of the experience of a work of art (quoted earlier in section #26), Dewey talks about the intuitive nature of this equality:

The penetrating quality that runs through all the parts of a work of art and binds them into an individualized whole can only be emotionally "intuited" (Dewey, 51:192).

Not only must this quality be in all "parts," but it can only be felt, that is immediately experienced. I am not trying to describe it, for it cannot be described nor even be specifically pointed at. . . . I am only trying to call attention to something that everyone can realize is present in his experience of a work of art, but that is so thoroughly and pervasively present that it is taken for granted (Dewey, 51:192).

Dewey says, then, that art is a form of felt knowledge, and that this knowledge is of the relations of the individual to the people and the world around him, yet this knowledge is not propositional in nature and in fact cannot even be explained or pointed at directly.

This position does not, however, satisfy us as an end to our discussion. The process of gaining knowledge of life and the self through working with the meanings that art expresses is the focus of our whole discussion. It is because we wanted to gain
an understanding of how this process could be part of physical education activities that we began our investigation, and the idea that we cannot come to a clear final understanding of it is disturbing. The idea that we cannot reach bedrock in our explication of the nature of art goes against the grain since we feel that before we can use physical education activities as art, we must have a clearer sense of the nature of the vision that art conveys. However, instead of being stopped here, we can proceed further by looking at *Meaning*, by Polanyi and Prosch (52) a book which concentrates on precisely this problem of elucidating the nature of the intuitive, non-propositional type of knowledge.

Polanyi begins his book with a problem which is similar to ours in this dissertation. He is concerned about developing an understanding of why the ideals of free thought have been eclipsed in western civilization, and he suggests that the basic cause lies in a contradiction inherent in the ideal of free thought.

#101.* By Polanyi's analysis, it is the mistaken urge to find bedrock which leads to trouble: ideals and ideas are needlessly rejected when they are felt not to be solidly grounded in indisputable demonstrations.

The argument of doubt put forward by Locke in favor of tolerance says that we should admit all religions since it is impossible to demonstrate which one is true. This implies that we must not impose beliefs that are not demonstrable. Let us apply this doctrine to ethical principles. It follows that, unless ethical principles can be demonstrated with certainty, we should refrain from imposing them and should tolerate their total denial. But, of course, *

*We will continue numbering core propositions for easy reference, but to make it easy later on to distinguish Dewey's ideas from Polanyi's, we will number Polanyi's propositions starting with #101.
ethical principles cannot, in a strict sense, be demonstrated: you cannot prove the obligation to tell the truth, to uphold justice and mercy. It would follow therefore that a system of mendacity, lawlessness, and cruelty is to be accepted as an alternative to ethical principles and on equal terms. But a society in which unscrupulous propaganda, violence, and terror prevail offers no scope for tolerance. Here the inconsistency of liberalism based on philosophic doubt becomes apparent: freedom of thought is destroyed by the extension of doubt to the field of traditional ideals, which includes the basis for freedom of thought (Polany & Prosch, 52:9-10).

#102. The task Polanyi sets himself is the development of a theory of knowledge which will make it acceptable to accept the ideals on which freedom is based. He starts by noting that the ideal of science is the formulation of clear rules which can be subjected to empirical testing, and the key to proper testing is the detached impartiality of the scientist. Polanyi asserts that it is this detached, impersonal quality which leads to the skeptical destruction of ideals.

We need a theory of knowledge which shows up the fallacy of positivistic skepticism and supports the possibility of a knowledge of entities governed by higher principles (Polanyi & Prosch, 52:24).

In this positivistic view of empiricism, to call something immoral, unjust, or evil is to speak with no empirical meaning; and it appears doubtful then whether such a statement could have any meaning beyond the kind of exclamation one may make when biting into a worm in an apple or when shouting to stop others from doing things one finds distressing.

Admittedly, this conception of moral judgment is felt to be unsatisfactory; for whenever we utter moral condemnation or approval, or else seek guidance in a moral dilemma, we always refer to moral standards assumed to be generally valid, and we revere men, like Socrates or Gandhi, who face death to uphold such standards. . . . As long as science remains the ideal of knowledge, and detachment the ideal of science, ethics cannot be secured from complete destruction by skeptical doubt (Polanyi & Prosch, 52:27).
The solution is to recognize that all knowledge, including science, is actually a very personal procedure rather than the impersonal process it has been supposed to be.

We can start mending this supposed break between science and our understanding of ourselves as sentient and responsible beings by straightening out our conception of scientific knowledge. . . . Let us incorporate into our conception of scientific knowledge the part which we ourselves necessarily contribute in shaping such knowledge. Let us proceed with a critique of the exact sciences in order to displace quite generally the current ideal of detached observation by a conception of personal knowledge (Polanyi & Prosch, 52:28-29).

Polanyi points out that all knowledge is based on the activities of the knower. He discusses the example of a scientist's taking readings from an instrument (Polanyi & Prosch, 52:30). The instrument will never be 100 percent accurate, and the scientist must use his own judgment to decide whether the results are actually in accord with some prediction or whether the results are so different as to constitute a disproof of the prediction. Polanyi points out that there is no rule which can possibly decide the question and that it is always a personal judgment on the part of the scientist. In addition, in doing science, the personal skill and judgment of the scientist is the foundation for his ability to set up the pursue a line of research.

We must therefore amend our ideal of science by accrediting skills and connoisseurship as valid, indispensable, and definitive forms of knowledge. This amendment, we shall see, will open the way to a far-reaching relaxation of the tension between science and the nonscientific concerns of man. Let us observe how this is so by inquiring into the essential structure of knowing as an art (Polanyi & Prosch, 52:32-33).

The basic idea underlying Polanyi's analysis of knowing as art is derived from considering what it is to hammer a nail (Polanyi & Prosch, 52:33). Polanyi points out that what we feel
when we do this is various pressures and changes of pressure on our skin, but what we experience is that we are driving a nail. The point of this consideration of hammering a nail is that we take experience data and, on an altogether natural and intuitive basis, we put them together and treat them as referring to some object which they are the experience of.

These feelings [in the hand] are not watched in themselves but ... I watch something else by keeping aware of them. ... I may say that I have a subsidiary awareness of the feelings in my hand which is merged into my focal awareness of my driving the nail (Polanyi & Prosch, 52:33).

Polanyi calls this process of intuitive putting together tacit integration or tacit knowing. The important point is that it is a direct, immediate process, not one that is mediated by thought and logic. Not only is tacit knowing an immediate process, but it is one which creates a product which is more than the sum of its subsidiary parts.

The grounds of all tacit knowing are items or particulars ... that we are aware of in the act of focusing our attention on something else, away from them. This is the functional relation of subsidiaries to the focal target, and we may also call it a from-to relation. Moreover, we can say that this relation establishes a from-to knowledge of the subsidiaries—a knowledge of them as they appear functionally in establishing the object of focal attention. ...

A characteristic aspect of from-to knowledge is exemplified by the change of appearance which occurs when the viewing of a pair of stereo pictures transforms them into a stereo image. A stereo image has a marked depth and also shows firmly shaped "solid" objects not present as such in the original pair. It therefore involves us in a novel sensory experience, which has obviously been created by tacit knowing. Such phenomenal transformation is a characteristic feature of from-to knowing. In this manner the coherence we see in nature has an actually new sensory quality not possessed by the sense perceptions from which it is tacitly created (Polanyi & Prosch, 52:34-35).
The subsidiaries of from-to knowing bear on a focal target, and whatever a thing bears on may be called its meaning. Thus the focal target on which they bear is the meaning of the subsidiaries. We may call this an act of sense-giving and recognize it as the semantic aspect of from-to knowing (Polanyi & Prosch, 52:35).

#105. The process of tacit knowing is a personal process. Creating or destroying a tacit integration is a specific activity done by the particular person who is knowing.

The functional structure of from-to knowing includes jointly a subsidiary "from" and a focal "to" (or "at"). But this pair is not linked together of its own accord. The relation of a subsidiary to a focus is formed by the act of a person who integrates one to the other. The from-to relation lasts only so long as a person, the knower, sustains this integration (Polanyi & Prosch, 52:38).

There is a specific action involved in dissolving the integration of tacit knowing...

In from-awareness of a thing we see it as having a meaning, a meaning which is wiped out when we focus our attention on the thing of which we have only had a from-awareness. This thing will then face us in itself, in its raw bodily nature... Anything serving as a subsidiary ceases to do so when focal attention is directed on it. It turns into a different kind of thing, deprived of the meaning it had while serving as a subsidiary. Thus subsidiaries are—for this reason and not because we cannot find them all—essentially unspecifiable (Polanyi & Prosch, 52:38-39).

#106. The whole process of discovering and knowing is rooted in the process of tacit knowing, whereby elements are joined together intuitively into a coherent, meaningful package.

We might suppose, then, that a problem is eventually resolved by the discovery of a coherence in nature whose hidden existence had first been sighted in the formulation of a problem and had then become increasingly manifest during the pursuit of that problem. But this would leave out of account another factor, ... [identified by Henri Poincaré, who] described two stages in the way we hit upon an idea that promises to solve a scientific problem. The first stage consists in racking one's brains by successive
sallies of the imagination, while the second, which may be delayed for hours after one has ceased one's efforts, is the spontaneous appearance of the idea one has struggled for. . . .

It seems plausible to assume, then, that two functions of the mind are jointly at work from the beginning to the end of an inquiry. One is the deliberately active powers of the imagination; the other is a spontaneous process of integration which we may call intuition (Polanyi & Prosch, 52:60).

#107. Polanyi asserts that since the intuitive nature of tacit knowing is understandable only intuitively, there is no way to explain it in rational terms.

All our knowledge is inescapably indeterminate. First of all, as we have seen, the bearing that empirical knowledge has upon reality is unspecifiable. There is nothing in any concept that points objectively or automatically to any sort of reality. That a concept relates to a reality is established only by a tacit judgment grounded in personal commitments, and we are unable to specify all these personal commitments or to show how they bring a given concept to bear upon reality and thus enable us to trust it as knowledge. We are unable to do this because we are dwelling in these basic commitments and are unable to focus our attention upon them without destroying their subsidiary function. . . .

For these same reasons also, . . . our rules for establishing true coherences—as against illusory ones—are and must remain indeterminate. . . .

Therefore, we cannot ultimately specify the grounds (either metaphysical or logical or empirical) upon which we hold that our knowledge is true. Being committed to such grounds, dwelling in them, we are projecting ourselves to what we believe to be true from or through these grounds. We cannot look at them since we are looking with them. They therefore must remain indeterminate.

The very process of tacit integration, which we have found so ubiquitous, is, when we turn our attention directly upon it, as we have been attempting to do in this work, also indeterminate, unspecifiable. . . . Our dwelling in the particulars, the subsidiary clues, results in their synthesis into a focal object only by means of an act of imagination—a leap of a logical gap; this does not come about by means of specifiable, explicit, logically operative steps. . . . We can only point to the existence of tacit integration in
our experience. We must be forever unable to give it an explicit specification (Polanyi & Prosch, 52:61-62).

By providing this analysis, Polanyi has solved his initial problem: he has found a way to explain why it is permissible to accept as a firm basis for one's life knowledge that cannot be demonstrated as certain. The important word is "demonstrated." By Polanyi's analysis, certain kinds of knowledge are as certain as anything can be simply by the fact of our dwelling in them and living through them. They look, feel, sound, smell, and taste certain and there is no other certainty which they could have. There is nothing which could possibly be a demonstration of their certainty.

Polanyi uses this conclusion as a basis for the examination of various aspects of meaning in people's lives. He starts with such things as poetic metaphors and, in ever-increasing breadth of scope, works his way through art, myth, and religion on up to the nature of human social organization. At each level he shows how the process of tacit integration, a process structured in our very being, gives rise to ideas and standards of how things should be done, and in the end he goes back to his initial problem of how to safeguard the ideal of freedom from skeptical doubts.

#108. Polanyi's ideas about the function of art are very similar to those of Dewey:

The arts are works of the imagination, . . . Our lives are formless, submerged in a hundred cross-currents. The arts are imaginative representations, hewn into artificial patterns; and these patterns, when jointly integrated with an important content, produce a meaning of distinctive quality (Polanyi & Prosch, 52:101).

Poems and also paintings, sculptures, and plays are so many closed packages of clues, portable and lasting. Their durability is infinitely superior to that of our personal experiences, for the coherence of their parts is so much firmer and more effectively organized (Polanyi & Prosch, 52:87).
The artist condenses his understanding of the things men have seen and done, and when this understanding appeals to us, we make it our own and clarify our lives by it. Art moves us, therefore, through influencing the lived quality of our very existence (Polanyi & Prosch, 52:109).

Art produces knowledge of the meaning of the world and our lives by helping us to integrate them into greater coherence:

A work of art represents certain facts of the imagination. It does not affirm any fact of experience. . . . Appreciation of a work of art requires belief in what it means . . . (Polanyi & Prosch, 52:92).

We can grasp a work of art only through the efforts of our imagination (Polanyi & Prosch, 52:94).

The whole process of tacit knowing is a personal act, and that means that it can be understood only by living it personally:

Even though one can paraphrase the cognitive content of an integration, the sensory quality which conveys its content cannot be made explicit. It can only be lived, can only be dwelt in (Polanyi & Prosch, 52:41).

In discussing the nature of explanation in science, Polanyi brings up a related point:

To define the explanation of an event as its subsumption under a general law leaves unexplained its capacity to relieve puzzlement and isolates it from numerous other, more fundamental acts which have this capacity. Explanation must thus be understood as a particular form of insight—an insight that relieves our puzzlement through the establishment of a more meaningful integration of parts of our experience, achieved through the subsumption of a natural law under a more general law (Polanyi & Prosch, 52:55).

And, as in Dewey's philosophy, Polanyi sees the urge to intuit and understand as intimately tied up with the necessity for effective action:
The characteristic structure of all our personal knowledge comes out even more vividly when we realize that all knowing is action—that it is our urge to understand and control our experience which causes us to rely on some parts of it subsidiarily in order to attend to our main objective focally (Polanyi & Prosch, 52:42).

Half-way through the book, Polanyi reminds readers of his basic purpose in writing the book in these words:

We must not forget, therefore, that our over-all task in this inquiry is not simply to develop, on a sound epistemological basis, the semantics of the artificial coherences discovered (or created) by man—as if this were a cool, professional, academic task—but to produce, in a manner akin to art, a new moving vision of the world, imaginatively richer in the scope of its integration of disparate parts than those we have heretofore been offered by our scientific myth-makers (Polanyi & Prosch, 52:107).

CONCLUSIONS

Our purpose in examining Polanyi's book was to shed some light on the nature of the artistic knowledge. Dewey maintains that there is nothing which can be said about the nitty-gritty fundamentals of this process. Polanyi asserts the same thing, but he says a lot more about why nothing can be said, and in so doing he has clarified for us the foundation on which artistic knowledge rests. The effects produced by a work of art feel like knowledge in the sense that they are experienced as being an understanding of the world, but they are different from propositional knowledge in the sense that they are not assertions about testable facts but are, essentially, determinations to take the world in a specific way. As Polanyi says about tacit integrations, we cannot test how accurately these artistic meanings allow us to see the world because it is by them that we do the seeing. They are valuations placed upon the world, but such
fundamental valuations that we cannot detachedly consider substituting other values for them in our perceptions. They are the basis on which we perceive rather than some thing that is perceived. The function of art is to allow us to specify and change these fundamental meanings. An artistic vision, then, has to do with the fundamental meaning/tone of the world as we perceive/create it.

The knowledge gained from art is knowledge about the world in the same way that tasting a spoon of ice cream and perceiving the taste of vanilla is knowledge about the world. It is the most basic kind of personal, experiential knowledge, and there is nothing to be said concerning it. The only way to compare this knowledge to a different knowledge, to chocolate, for instance, is to taste a spoon of the other knowledge and experience for oneself the differences between the two. And that is the function of art, to allow a person to participate in a different way of taking the world, in a different flavor of being in the world. This is so whether the person is functioning as an artist creating art for himself or whether he is functioning as a viewer and recreating for himself the artist's summary of his own life experience. Art is a deliberate, carefully planned out method of teaching people how to grasp certain aspects of living in the world. It is a means of conveying a certain kind of knowledge, and teaching people to do/perceive art is a means of teaching them how to discover/create this kind of knowledge for themselves.

This discussion of the nature of art illuminates how art can fit into the overall process of education that is carried out in our schools. The fundamental goal of academic activity is the investigation of the world and human life in it. Science is a means of developing one type of understanding of human existence, and art is a means of developing another type of understanding, but they are both necessary in developing a rounded and complete understanding.
In this chapter we have focused on how art functions as a means of helping a person arrive at an understanding of the world. In the next chapter, we will examine one representative movement discipline so that in the final chapter we may be able to decide whether physical education movement activities can function as arts and therefore as legitimate academic activities, important in their own right.
CHAPTER III

BEING IN MOVEMENT
In Chapter II we arrived at an understanding of the means whereby an art can function as a vehicle for helping a person develop his understanding of the human condition, and our next problem is to investigate how a movement discipline can function as an art. In order to do this, we shall start by providing a detailed and lengthy description of Aikido as one representative movement discipline, and then in Chapter IV we shall examine this movement discipline in the light of the concepts developed in Chapter II. We shall see that Aikido does function very much in accord with the ideas presented in Chapter II, and in discussing this we shall be able to arrive at some general principles by which physical education activities can be utilized as arts.

Although we will undertake in Chapter IV a detailed comparison of the movement discipline and the ideas about the nature of art, it will be useful to note here some of the elements that will be important in the comparison, and it will be helpful to keep these elements in mind as you read through this chapter. Doing so will help you note as you read how Aikido functions as art.

It will be emphasized that what the student is learning in Aikido is how to achieve an orderly and effective way of dealing with threats to his existence, and that Aikido is really an approach to life rather than merely a physical skill practiced in a sport context. The attacks in Aikido are really symbols of all of the pressures that the environment can bring to bear upon a person, and they are opportunities to discover one's powers and abilities. This approach underlies all of the training in physical combat maneuvers, and it is very much parallel to Dewey's philosophy of life, which is the basis for his philosophy of art.

Aikido is a way of learning to make contact with our senses and organize our emotions so that we can act systematically and
effectively. The art of Aikido involves molding material—-one's own body and movement and those of the attacker—to create a product which is an expression of our feelings and our will, and movement in Aikido is therefore a medium for learning how to act effectively.

The results of the art of Aikido are a unification of the powers of the person and a way of living that is fully present in the present instant. It is intriguing how close Dewey's descriptions of this state are to the idea of Center, an idea/experience that is at the root of all Aikido practice. The result of this state of being is a sense of harmony with the universe, and it is significant that the name "Aikido" actually means "The path to a harmonious spirit."

An element that will be important throughout the description of Aikido will be that of knowledge: in just the way that Dewey and Polanyi take artistic experience to be a mode of knowing, the experiences produced by practice of Aikido will be felt to offer knowledge and understanding of the world and the self.

With this brief statement of some of the themes that will be discussed in more detail later, it is clear that the movement discipline of Aikido does function as an art, and it will be helpful to keep these themes in mind as you read through the following material.
TABLE 1
ORGANIZATION OF CHAPTER III

I. INTRODUCTION
Section 1
a. ** elevator button exercise
b. ** arm raising exercise
c. ** square in the air
d. ** search light
e. ** approach/avoidance
f. ** holding back

Section 2: Using the Book

II. OPENING UP
Section 3
a. elevator button
b. * dropping arm
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d. * walking open
e. * walking over stick
f. catching pennies
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Section 4: History

Section 5
a. ** steamroller
b. ** basic breathing exercise
c. ** soft eyes
d. * close encounters
e. ** slapping exercise
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Section 6: Center

III. ENERGY PROJECTION
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a. ** projecting a spot
b. * moving wrist
c. frozen parts
d. ramifications

Section 8: The Energy Field
Table 1—Continued

Section 9
a. ** palm pushing
b. ** snail trails
c. * sensing a push
d. catching a bean bag
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Section 10: The Nature of Practice

Section 11
a. ** movement snapshots
b. ** observing projections
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Section 12
a. ** unbendable arm
b. ** body breaks
c. ** posture and alignment
d. ** humming up and down
e. bobbing breathing

Section 13: Ease

Section 14
a. ** posture and center
b. ** walking
c. * stopping
d. ** six directions humming
e. ** two-step
f. ** rowing exercise

Section 15: Posture

Section 16
a. * sine wave
b. * hip swings
c. pivotting
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Section 17: Some Energy Exercises

Section 18
a. * hip shove
b. * testing the two-step
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d. two-step axis  
e. flamingo two-step  
f. four-step  
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Section 19

a. * rowing resistance  
b. * bracing  
c. * rowing and raising  
d. sideways rowing  
e. grapevine and arm circle  
f. stepping and swinging  
g. ** awareness is for opening doors

Section 20: Theory

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Section 21

a. ** blending  
b. ** back and forth blending  
c. ** door blending  
d. ** open grasp blending  
e. * walking blending

Section 22

a. ** blending with a steamroller  
b. * touching qualities  
c. sensitive walking  
d. rowing blending  
e. ** mirror blending

Section 23

a. driving wheel  
b. ** partner two-step  
c. ** barrel blending  
d. clapping blend  
e. a stirring exercise

VI. BLENDING WITH AN OPPONENT

Section 24

a. ** the blend is quicker than the eye  
b. yelling  
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e. pushing arms
Table 1—Continued

Section 25
a. * chest push
b. a distant two-step
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e. * two-step raising arms
f. belt game

Section 26: Harmony

Section 27
a. ** gripping
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Section 28: More Energy Exercises

Section 29
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a. ** bubble
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Section 31
a. changing direction
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c. ** injecting an intention
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Section 32
a. * back and forth domination
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c. * chicken
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VII. BLENDING WITH A GROUP

Section 33
a. ** dichotomy
b. ** in group
Table 1—Continued

c. ** traffic
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Section 34

a. ** chorus line two-step
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c. group barrel blending
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e. * group attack
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Section 35

a. ** show and tell

VIII. CONCLUSION

Section 36: What Next?
INTRODUCTION

Section 1

Our lives are changing. We are placing more and more importance on the values of holism and self-actualization, and one of the manifestations of this is our growing interest in and appreciation of ways of gaining deeper and clearer experience of our bodies and our movements. More and more people are taking up movement disciplines, sports and physical fitness activities with a serious intent to learn about themselves and achieve a state of wholeness. Many people have found that Aikido (pronounced Eye-Key-Doe, with equal stress on all the syllables) is a particularly valuable tool in this pursuit. Aikido is a non-violent Japanese martial art, the primary goal of which is body/mind integration in movement, and the exercises and ideas in this book are based on and abstracted from the art of Aikido.

The exercises included here present the basic aspects of Aikido's philosophy and movement methods in a comprehensive, systematic way and without the use of the complex, difficult and sometimes dangerous patterns involved in the practice of Aikido self-defense methods. By assembling a group of people to practice with, you will be able to work toward the goal of mind/body integration and learn how to begin applying this integrated way of moving in whatever activities are of interest to you.

However, before trying to give you an idea of what the practice involves, it would be best to give you some experience of it. You will notice that the book is divided into sections each one of which contains approximately five or six exercises, just the right number for an hour or so of practice. So let's move right into the first group of exercises.
I should point out that these exercises are exercises, that is, something in which you learn by doing. This book is like a cookbook: you can get an idea of the contents by reading through it but you can get an experience of what’s in it only by following its instructions and tasting the results. Four of the exercises in this section are ones that you can do alone; they will take just a few minutes and will give you a good feeling for the approach the book will take, but for the other two exercises you will need a partner (as for many of the exercises in the book).

[A] ELEVATOR BUTTON EXERCISE

Stand up comfortably erect with your weight even on both feet. Imagine that you have just come up to an elevator and you are carrying a package that you cannot conveniently set down. To get the elevator, you must push the button, and the only way you can do that with your hands full is to lean over and push it with your shoulder.

Standing erect, begin to want to push the button with your shoulder. If you are right-handed, "use" your right shoulder, and if you are left-handed, your left. This "wanting to push the button" must be a felt wanting, a real desire that you feel in, with and through your body. You have seen little kids visibly wanting to go over and pick something up, and you can see how they want to move. It must be that kind of lived experience that you build up about wanting to push the elevator button you imagine.

There are two mistakes that people commonly make in this exercise. The first is that they simply lean over in the usual, voluntary way in which we always move. Don't actually do a leaning over in this way; and of course it is important not to freeze up and physically prevent your body from moving in order to avoid the usual way of doing the lean. Don't purposely do any physical moving or refraining from moving. The other mistake is that people often think about doing the movement instead of thinking the movement. That is, people build up a mental picture
of themselves doing the movement or they concentrate on some verbal representation of themselves doing it, and then they are divorced from all body experience. Frequently people will tilt their heads up and gaze abstractedly up into the distance as they perform this mental operation, and you can see that their attention is directed up and away from their bodies as live, feeling things. I will frequently help people correct this mistake just by tipping their heads down and asking them to feel their bodies and then want to move to push the elevator button.

As you stand there, feel your body where it is, feel the imagined elevator button floating just an inch away from your shoulder, and feel how you are wanting to lean over and push it in the half inch that is necessary to summon the elevator. Take some time to let the feeling build. Shut your eyes if you think that would be helpful in allowing you to concentrate.

What do you feel as you do this? If you are doing this exercise with some friends, ask them what they felt. Or you can ask them to repeat the exercise, and you can watch to see what you can notice as they go through it.

For most people the result of the exercise will be that they will actually feel themselves begin to move in the direction of the imagined button, and generally an observer will be able to see a small movement in that direction. For most people the movement will be a small drift towards the button, and they will feel as though they were magnets drawing themselves closer to an iron bar. Some people will get so into the process that they will actually tip over and lose their balance.

Some people, of course, will not succeed in building up the right feeling of wanting the button, and they will not feel any results at all. In addition, there are some other results that are possible, but we will put off discussing them for a little while.

Many people look on their bodies as things, as machines which house them and transport them. They live inside their bodies and they use them, but they don't really experience them.
However, this exercise makes it quite clear that there is no separation between your mind and your body. All you have to do is feel that you wish to begin moving in some direction, and your body will begin to do that movement. This is not awfully startling: the body is, after all, the way we go about doing what the mind wants. But by and large, very few of us have stopped to reflect upon this.

The body, then is more than just the home of the mind: in a sense it is the mind itself. At the very least, it is a perfect reflection of the mind. Whatever feelings pass through the mind register in the body. Any feelings or desires that are habitually present in the mind impress themselves on the body in the form of habitual ways of holding or using the body.

[B] ARM RAISING EXERCISE

There are two parts to this next exercise. Do the first part before reading the second part.

First, standing up in a comfortable position, raise one arm over your head.

Second, raise the same arm over your head again, and pay careful attention to experiencing every bit of the process of raising it up.

*Electromyography is a means of studying muscle functioning by picking up and recording the electrical impulses that are sent through the nerves to the muscles. It has been found in electromyographic research that simply thinking of performing a movement, in the absence of any visually detectable movement, results in changes of nerve impulses to just those muscles which would operate to produce the movement imagined. So in terms of both research and the experience gained in the elevator button exercise, it is clear that a thought is the beginning of the energizing of the muscles for an actual performance.

Edmund Jacobson as far back as the twenties and thirties was doing research in this area, and he created a systematic relaxation procedure based on this concept of the interrelation of muscles and mind. His book, You Must Relax (Jacobson, 44), is interesting reading.

For more information on this area, see J. V. Basmajian, Muscles Alive: Their Functions Revealed by Electromyography (47).
What differences did you feel in how you did the two actions? In general, when they do the first action people experience the two end points of the movement, where they started from and where they went to. And when they do the second action, people experience the drawn-out distance of the middle of the movement. This excellent exercise is one that Timothy Gallwey uses in teaching inner tennis (Gallwey, 41, 42) and serves to point out the differences between doing something with full concentration on awareness of the process and just doing it to get to the result.

Most of us perform activities with our focus of attention on the goal rather than the process. We direct our attention outwards at what we are trying to do or get and by and large ignore ourselves as we perform. However, very often, we do things just for the fun of them, that is, for the pleasure of experiencing them as we do them, and if we are too inclined to focus on the goal, we lose the fun of the process. But what is more generally important, by maintaining a goal orientation and disregarding the process, we lose the opportunity to evaluate and improve the means whereby we go about achieving our goals; often, then, we allow ourselves to continue utilizing sloppy, ineffective, inefficient, stressful and unpleasant methods of action simply because they work. We may be working twice as hard as necessary, but if we notice only that we have successfully achieved our goal, and we don't pay any attention to the process whereby we achieved it, then we assume that we are indeed acting well, and that is the end of it.

Most important, if we keep our eyes on the goals and ignore the processes of our own actions, we never look at ourselves. It will become clear that every action is an opportunity to gain understanding of the actor—if we only care to pay attention to the source of the action as well as its goal. The exercises in this book depend on suffusing each movement with awareness. They are not exercises designed to produce some skill, some behavioral groove that will allow you to rattle off a skill in
a competent manner. The exercises here are ways of learning to see behind the movement into your own being, and each exercise is a key to a whole spectrum of feelings, thoughts and behaviors.

[C] SQUARE IN THE AIR

Stand up and hold one hand, your favored hand, out in front of you in a relaxed manner. With one finger, trace a square in the air. Keep moving your hand around and around the square. (The best square will be one about eight inches across and located in front of you.)

Now, as you continue to move your hand, focus on the decision to engrave a square in the air. Make the tracing of the square a clear and distinct decision: as you come to a corner, very deliberately sense that there is a direction change coming up, and intend to turn the corner sharply. And when you are tracing a side, very deliberately incise the line into the air. However, don't produce a sense of strain in yourself so that you can feel a real effort at tracing the square and thereby know that you are concentrating on it. It should be comfortable and easy to concentrate, not tense and strained; so concentrate on the square, but don't strain at doing so.

Once you have this down, make one change. As you come to a corner, with great deliberateness, intend to turn in just the opposite direction than the outline of the square necessitates. If the corner demands that your hand drop down, then determine to describe a line going up. But, at the same time as you are mentally intending to go up, continue the physical motion in the same path as before and let your hand go down.

Most people find that as they intend one direction and move in another, their hands waver, they cannot draw the square clearly and distinctly, and in general their movements become awkward and confused. Obviously this exercise is related to the elevator button exercise, and the point of it is that in order for your actions to be clear and precise, your mind must be focused clearly
on the actions you wish to perform. You cannot easily do one thing while thinking about two things. You cannot do one thing well while feeling that you really wish to do something else. As you act, you must pay attention to how you act, and if you find that you are splitting your mind, then you must find out how to unify it and put your attention totally on whatever you decide to do.

[D] SEARCH LIGHT

This exercise will allow you to feel how you focus your attention on the things around you. Stand up in a comfortable, relaxed position. Have a friend move his hand around your head in a circle. Have him start with his hand about ten inches in front of your eyes and move it slowly around in a horizontal circle. Keeping your head stationary, keep your eyes on the hand. Keep your attention focused on the hand even when it passes out of your range of vision. Next have him start in the same place and describe a vertical circle over and behind your head.

As you pay attention to the feeling of keeping your mind focused on your partner's hand, you will notice a clear sensation of attention streaming out from you to the hand. It will feel like the beam of a searchlight, and this is the feeling of directing a focused stream of attention onto some object, something which is part of everybody's experience of life but something which most of us have never learned how to attend to specifically.

Attention is intimately connected with intention. In the Elevator Button exercise you experienced how paying attention to some action plus desiring to do it served to create the movement. Let us go back to that experience and elaborate upon it.
[E] APPROACH/AVOIDANCE

1. The first part of this exercise involves a concrete focus of attention rather than the imaginal focus we used in the Elevator Button exercise. Place some small object, a pencil for instance, on the floor about eight feet in front of where you will stand. Stand up comfortably erect. Without tilting your head, but simply shifting your gaze, look at the object. Build up within yourself a feeling that it is really a nice object and that you would really like to have it, that you would really like to go pick it up.

   Just as in the Elevator Button exercise, when you really sense that you want the object of your attention, you will begin to tip towards it. There are, however, two difficulties that people sometimes experience. The first is that they cannot seriously want the pencil. I have had students who protested that they didn't, in fact, really want the pencil, so they could not build up the feeling of wanting it. However, the point of the exercise is precisely to experience something about the psycho-physical basis of movement and what you are being asked to learn is exactly the process of deliberately projecting an intention to do some activity. If you find it hard to want the pencil, then that is exactly what it is that you have the opportunity to learn.

   The second difficulty that occasionally arises is that some people tip away from the pencil rather than towards it. In my experience, these people often have a particular kind of sway-backed posture in which they seem to be leaning back away from whatever is in front of them. It is very interesting that some people will automatically move away from something they feel that they want and be unready to organize themselves to move towards it.

2. Another related exercise involves imagining various situations. For example, imagine that you have just stepped off the curb into the street and out of the corner of your eye you
see a car just about to hit you. You hear the squeal of brakes, and feel it about to hit one side of you. What drift of movement does this create?

Imagine some situation in which you are placed exactly half-way between two equally desirable objects. How does this feel?

Imagine some situation in which you are in the middle of a square with four dangerous, horrifying things at the corners. How does this feel?

The basic point of these two exercises is that intention is a two-valued process. Its basic values are approach and avoidance, plus and minus, desire and aversion, and whenever we respond to some situation we respond with some intention to try to attain or avoid something. And not only does intention come in these two flavors, but for most people it always comes mixed. That is, most people do not intend clearly but have mixed intentions: they want to both approach and avoid at the same time, or they want two incompatible things at once, and so on. And, as you can see from these two exercises, there is little difference in feeling and operation between intentions that are focused on things we are imagining and intentions focused on real objects in front of us: we react to our ideas about the world in the same way that we react to the world itself.

One of the basic elements in this book is the practice of clarifying our intentions, that is, knowing what we want to do and doing just one thing at a time, and the next exercise is a way of experiencing what this means.

[F] HOLDING BACK

Have a friend stand about ten feet in front of you. Your job will be to walk straight past him, passing by him at a distance of a foot or so. He should stand facing perpendicular to your path and put out one arm at about chest height. His job is to stop you from walking past by using his arm as a barrier.
(If you are approaching from his right, he should use his left arm, and vice versa.)

A couple of cautions are important. Your friend should not hit you with his arm, and he should take care to position the arm so that it does not press against your throat. For your part, you should avoid ramming yourself into his arm, and don't prepare to meet his resistance, but just ignore him and walk forward.

Your job will be to walk past your friend in two different ways. In the first way, pick a point on the wall behind you, and keep that point in mind. Hold an image of that point in your mind and really want to go towards it, even though you are walking away from it. Try walking past your friend a couple of times in this way. Now pick a point on the wall in front of you. Keep your eyes on it and build up a desire to walk straight to it. Try walking past your friend in this manner a couple of times.

What differences did you and your partner feel, both as the person doing the walking and as the person doing the resisting? Most people feel, as the walkers, that what seemed like a lot of resistance the first time seemed like much less the second and that they could walk much more strongly and easily when they lined up their physical and mental directions of movement. As the resister, most people feel that it was much harder to stop the walker when he was walking forward with his concentration directed forward.

The basic point is that in order to act in a clear and forceful manner, you must be able to project a clear and concentrated intention to act, and this will be an important theme throughout all the exercises.

Now that you've had some experience of the kind of exercises we'll be working with, ideas about the purposes underlying this book and the means for achieving them will seem more solid to you.
The focus in this book is on movement, but not on movement as an unimportant external thing that you do only as a means to some end which is your real focus of attention. We will focus on movement itself. Something which is only a means to an end is something that we don't care about for itself and would gladly skip if we could find a way to get to the end without the bother of working at the means. Most people move with this attitude toward their movement, witness the joy with which people give up walking in favor of cars. In the exercises we will work with, our movement itself will be the real focus of interest, and the ends the movements will accomplish will be important primarily as "excuses" to perform the movements which will be means to them.

What will we be trying to achieve by studying our movement this way? The concept/experience which is the foundation of every exercise in the book is that contained in the Elevator Button exercise, the idea that intention is the basis for movement. We will build from this beginning and learn how to use intentional awareness to clarify our movements and how to use our movements to clarify our intentions.

There are, then, two different but intimately joined uses for the exercises. The first is to use them as a way of learning to move better. As you have experienced, people's movements spring from their intentions to move in certain ways. If a movement is incorrect or unskillful, it is possible to practice the movement itself until, in some way, it can be squeezed into the correct configuration. However, it is much more efficient to go below the movement to its intentional source and work on that level as well as on the level of gross movement. By learning to project a clearer and more appropriate intention, practice of the external movement will be facilitated. Using the exercises as ways of learning to move better, they could be applied in many areas of movement, from daily activities such as shoveling snow, to sports, to movement arts such as dance, and to remedial movement training such as physical therapy.
The second use for these exercises is as a means of coming to know yourself and the people around you. As you have experienced, people's movements begin with their intentions, and by looking at their movements you can get a handle on their intentions. Everybody has a personal style, a way of moving and acting which is the expression of what they feel themselves to be, and this personal style is the sum total of their intentions relative to themselves and their worlds. The principle underlying the exercises in this book is that movement is a concrete, external manifestation of our inner workings. All our thoughts, feelings and intentions are reflected in the shapes, rhythms and qualities of our movements and in a concrete, easily observable way. By observing how we move, we observe what we are; and by refining how we move, we refine what we are.

In any case, whether one's purposes lie in the area of developing greater skill in movement or in the area of personal knowledge, the means are the same. The exercises in this book focus on becoming aware of movement, on learning to live in and taste fully the processes of movement, and this really amounts to learning to become fully conscious of the mover who does the movement. Every craftsman must master the tools of his/her craft before he can master the performance of his craft, and the self is the basic tool for accomplishing every human activity. Thus if you want to learn to move skillfully, you must come to know the self that does the movement; and if you want to learn to know the self, you can examine what the self does, that is, its movement.

The exercises we will work with in this book are not skills that you must learn by rote. They are situations which are designed to provide opportunities to investigate various facets of our nature as moving beings. The purpose behind them is not simply to teach you to move in a certain way, but to give you tools and principles by which you can investigate your own movement and continue on your own path of discovery beyond the
boundaries of this book. If you memorize one fact, then one fact is all you've learned. But if, in learning that one fact, you have learned how to learn, then you have become your own teacher, and you can go on to study anything you wish.

As you work with these exercises, you will see that there are certain basic themes running through all of them. These themes are basic principles for perceiving, analyzing and refining movement. Grasping these principles in a deep way, on the level of body feeling and movement sense, will give you a way of undertaking an orderly examination of movement and thereby allow you to undertake systematic change and refinement of the movements you are interested in working with.

We will go into it more extensively later on, but I should say a little here about the derivation of these exercises and principles. The material in the book stems primarily from Aikido, though my use of it has been influenced somewhat by my study of some other disciplines, which I will mention from time to time. The material "stems" from Aikido, and in one sense it is Aikido (at least as my still imperfect understanding of it has revealed it to me), though in another sense it is not really Aikido at all. Aikido is a martial art. The defense techniques that Aikido teaches are difficult and complex and cannot be practiced, either correctly or safely, without the guidance of a teacher. In addition, the martial tradition is one which eschews theory and intellectualization in favor of direct, experiential learning. Insofar as the exercises presented here are not the defense techniques which comprise the movement form of Aikido, and insofar as the book emphasizes theoretical understanding as a necessary adjunct to the exercises, the material in the book is not really Aikido. In addition, as you will see, there are realms of understanding that cannot be grasped without the severity and difficulty of the martial form to learn through, so Aikido itself goes far beyond the material in this book.
However, the intent of this book is not to teach Aikido, and it does not include practice of any of the self-defense techniques which form the core of the art. Many of the elements of body/mind/spirit awareness that are learned by practicing the self-defense movements in Aikido can be isolated and practiced at a basic, elementary level in much simpler, less dangerous movements, and it is this type of exercise that is presented here. Some of the exercises you will work with are common Aikido practices; some are practices that I have seen used by various other teachers; and most are exercises that I have come to in my practice and teaching as ways of pinpointing and working on specific areas of experience. Likewise, most of the ideas I use to describe the material are common within Aikido practice, but their elucidation and organization into an explicit theory is something that I came to in order to clarify my practice. The material in this book and the experiences I've had that served as the foundation of this book almost all come from Aikido, but the book itself is not Aikido or part of the traditional approach to Aikido.

The intent of this book is to make some of the ideas, methods, experiences and knowledge that are part of the art of Aikido more accessible and better known to people who are working with movement. There is a core of knowledge in Aikido that could be very useful to people in many different disciplines of human awareness, but Aikido itself is a difficult thing to study and demands years of constant practice even to begin understanding. I have used what I've learned in Aikido in many areas of teaching, from working with a varsity level volleyball team to working with paraplegics confined to wheel chairs, and I believe that simplifying and systematizing the basic knowledge contained

*Another book that has a similar aim is The Ultimate Athlete, by George Leonard (43). He is another Aikidoist, and his book is a very clear expression of how new ideals of movement could be incorporated into our lives.
in Aikido so as to allow more people to come into contact with it is really an expression of what the art of Aikido is truly about.
Section 2: Using the Book

There are really two things that a student learns in a movement awareness class. The first thing, obviously, is the material which is the subject of the course, the exercises and principles concerning movement. The second thing has to do with the right ways of approaching the study of movement awareness, and this material comprises the knowledge of the attitudes necessary for productive use of the exercises and knowledge of the practicalities of how a group of people can practice together efficiently. The first type of material is the core of the course, but the second type of material is of equal importance since without a clear grasp of the appropriate way to approach the movement practices, people will not make productive use of the exercises. Throughout the book, in the appropriate places, there are included suggestions as to how to practice, but this section will provide a systematic overview of the book and the right way to use it.

The Right Attitude

The first thing to consider is how the exercises are presented. In presenting some fact which is unknown to an audience, all that is necessary is to state it. For example, "In doing a hip throw, it is necessary to load your opponent squarely onto your hips for maximum balance and strength." Everybody understands each word in that, and the idea comes across. Then, with a demonstration of the throw and its mechanics, everyone has a good clear picture of how it operates. Of course they cannot do it until they practice it and get a feel for it in their own bodies, but that is a merely practical necessity.
However, consider another statement: "In doing a wrist twist throw, it is necessary to cover the opponent completely with your own being." Everybody understands each word in that, but the totality is nothing but murky. The statement refers to an experience which is a necessary part of learning to do the throw, but the words mean nothing to a person until he has felt the experience they refer to. In a classroom situation, the teacher can point the students at the experience by demonstrating how the throw looks when he does and then does not cover his opponent, and he can watch for the faint beginnings of the experience in the student and focus his attention on them. Obviously in a book this manner of teaching won't work. How can this problem be dealt with?

The basic consideration in helping students travel from where they are to where they would like to be is giving them a systematic way of proceeding. Since the means of transportation in a book are necessarily words (with the support of pictures), we have to find a way of using words to do the job. The problem is that we must not describe the route to the goal in words which the student can understand only after he has reached the goal. The obvious solution is to use words which he does understand: this means that the route from where we all start to the final destination must be broken down into small, discrete steps, and the first step on the route must be describable by ordinary English words with their ordinary meanings. Once this first small step has been taken and some first small new experiences have been gained, the student's referents for those normal English words have been altered and expanded somewhat and they will now serve to state the directions for the next small step.

Thus, in place of the usual Aikido exercises, this book deals with much simpler exercises. In any Aikido defense technique, there are innumerable mental and physical details concerning both oneself and one's opponent to be attended to, and it takes years of practice to build up enough familiarity with all of the details that one can attend to them all at once.
The reason that it is so difficult to describe some aspects of Aikido is that the things one might usually say in Aikido refer to such complex aggregates of experiences that it takes years to build up the referents for the words. Thus the process of simplification which is part of this book embraces at once the exercises and the words that are used in describing them, and practicing the exercises really includes two processes, experiencing what the exercises point at and learning a new vocabulary which incorporates these new experiences. This new vocabulary amounts to a theoretical framework to organize and give coherence to the new experiences, and it is an essential part of mastering the material involved in the study of movement awareness. In a classroom situation, mastering the theory which organizes and gives meaning to the exercises is pretty much a subliminal process, but here we are dealing with it in a clear and explicit fashion. However, this explicitness can result in some problems, and it will be important to maintain the right attitude towards the material while practicing the exercises.

There are two related problems that concern the theoretical aspects of the material in this book. The first is that some people will be enamored of theory for its own sake and some people will dislike it in general, and each attitude will interfere with the actual practice of the work. It is important to remember that it is experiential transformation that is the real subject of the work. Naturally theory and experience are inseparable since we cannot act upon the basis of raw sense data without ascribing some meaning to what we are taking in, but nonetheless it makes sense to ask people to focus on what they are experiencing in their bodies and to let go of a preoccupation with theories and ideas. Theories and ideas can distance one from felt experience, and it is important in practicing the exercises not to get so absorbed in thinking about what you are doing that you are not living in your actions. This kind of "head tripping" was one of the mistakes that people make in the Elevator Button exercise, and it prevents them from contacting themselves fully.
There is a time and place for everything, and it is perfectly appropriate to be intrigued by theory, but only at those times when it is appropriate. After you have mastered the experiential material, you can go in many directions with it, but it is only after you have mastered the experiences that you will have some material about which to theorize. Until then, just accept the theory element of the book as a heuristic device of significance only insofar as it moves you closer to some real experience.

The other problem relative to the theoretical elements in this book is that some people will adopt a judgmental attitude and decide that they don't like the theory which underlies the exercises. Some people might find that the exercises spring from a point of view that is foreign to them and because of that resist the exercises and the experiences which they bring.

Theories and beliefs are expressions of our expectations of what life will bring. People build up their "theories" of life based on their experiences in their lives, and they very often become attached to a view of what life is all about. However, no theory is large enough to encompass all of life. Any habits and preconceptions you may have are those attitudes and behaviors that you have tested out in your life and found to be a help in dealing with the world around you. However, there may be more in the world than you have already experienced. Perhaps old habits will not be a help in dealing with new realms of experience, and there may even be better ways of dealing with what is already familiar to you. Any belief or theory channelizes our preconceptions and our responses, and rigid belief in our beliefs prevents us from acquiring new knowledge.

It is natural for you to feel most comfortable with what is familiar and to feel uncomfortable with what is not. There is always the temptation immediately upon confronting something new to evaluate it on the basis of what you already know. Of course, that is the only way to evaluate things. On the other hand, this reaction may prevent you from ever seeing anything new. Whatever your customary ways of seeing your world might be, it will help
you to let go of them as much as possible—at least for a little while—and experience the exercises with no overlay of conflicting preconceptions. Instead of entrenching yourself in your established position, it may be productive to approach the exercises with an attitude of willing suspension of disbelief.

Aside from problems in how people relate to theory, the explicitness of exercises and descriptions in the book could give rise to another problem. If material is presented too explicitly, people may get into a goal-oriented state of mind and not stay in the process itself. The exercises are designed to point at certain experiences and skills, but they cannot be approached in a static, uncreative spirit and learned by rote. On the one hand, the exercises point at specific things which you are trying to capture, but on the other hand you must discover these things for yourself as part of your learning. In fact, you must create these exercises for the very first time. You must eventually go beyond them and find out how to modify them to make them work in new ways, and you will not be able to do that if you approach them with the attitude that they are what they are and no more than that. Thus you must find a balance between doing what you are asked to do and following your own intuition down your own path of discovery, and this balance is the right attitude in which to approach these exercises.

**Practical Suggestions**

Aside from these rather general considerations about how to approach the exercises, there are a number of specific suggestions that I have about how to work with the material.

The exercises concern both yourself and the people around you; it is impossible to do them without any partners, and working with many different people allows you to investigate the range of individual differences within a particular phenomenon. Thus you should assemble a group of approximately ten to fifteen people to work with in studying this material. This is a good, small group. It allows for enough diversity to make the
exercises interesting, and it is not so large as to be unwieldy. Of course, the material can also be dealt with in classes of 20 to 35 in a formal teaching situation, but that is very different from an informal group working together.

You will need a room that has a large space free of furniture and other obstacles so the group can move around freely. People should dress in casual clothes that will be comfortable for moving around in, and they should practice in bare feet, or with socks on, but in any case without their shoes.

The group will have to decide how extensive they want the course to be. I would suggest that an actual hour of work with the exercises is the optimal amount of time to spend on them. So an hour and a half class gives time for discussion at either end and a solid hour of work. The exercises are by no means physically strenuous, but they do demand a lot of concentration and a lot of inward focus, so an hour at them is as much as most people care to spend.

As you will see, in many of the exercise sections I include somewhat more material than you might want to work on in one class meeting. In addition, although the book is written as though you were going to practice each exercise just once, ideally the class would cover the material in the sequence in which I have laid it out and then be able to go back and do some of the exercises again in new combinations and new ways. All of the exercises form a connected whole. In the best of all impossible worlds you would be able to practice them all simultaneously so that you could experience the effects of each upon all the others. But in this world, we have to practice them one at a time and then go back to try them again and see how they look the second time in the light of the experiences we have had since we last worked with them. Thus there is a lot of material in the book and the course could be quite extensive.

However, for many reasons, such as time limitations, you may wish to shorten the course, and it certainly isn't necessary that it be as long as it could be. In the table of contents I
indicate with two stars those exercises that are especially important and which form the real skeleton of the material. I indicate the exercises that are important and serve to flesh out the skeleton with one star, and those exercises that are interesting as further practice but not truly necessary I list with no star at all. Thus the class can decide how many meetings they wish to have and decide how extensive the coverage of the exercises will be. Since approximately five exercises will take an hour (depending on how involved each exercise is), deciding on how long you want the course to last will allow you to make a rough estimate of how many exercises you can cover.

If you are working in an informal group, I would suggest that a different person be the group leader for each class. In a more usual situation, this kind of material is taught from the teacher's own internal knowledge and skill. If your group is trying to learn the work strictly from this book with no other experience, then there is no one individual who is already skilled in it, and having some one person act as the leader every time would be unfair in that he or she would not get to practice the material in the way that would be most conducive to learning it.

The function of the leader is to structure the class time. I would suggest that he or she read the chapter before the class and organize the material in his/her mind. The rest of the class should read the chapter they were working on after doing the day's class. That way they would approach the experience with no preconceptions and would review it and reinforce it after they had gone through it.

The leader must approach the class with the right attitude. If you are basing the class on the book rather than your own skill, then you are a facilitator rather than an actual teacher. You don't know it, so you cannot teach it. You can only structure the situation so that you and the group together can discover the meanings of the exercises. The group as a whole is
working in a process of discovery and creation, and the questing spirit is the most important thing to foster in the group dynamics.

Most of the exercises will be done by pairs of students, but some will be done in groups of three or more. It is important that everybody have equal chance to practice. So in an exercise in which you do some particular thing with one side of the body, one partner should do it two times with his right side, and two times with his left; and then the other person in the pair should try it. So each person gets four tries and then switches roles, and that keeps going on as long as the particular exercise is being worked on.

A good class pattern is to introduce, explain and demonstrate an exercise and then have people work with it for a while. As people get into it and feel it, it is helpful to call the group together to ask people to describe and comment on their experiences and insights. Very often it is helpful to ask a pair to show what they were doing and then either point out the mistakes they were making or point out what they were doing that was especially good. It is also frequently helpful to ask the group to observe and analyze what the pair is doing and specify the good and bad points in what they see. Then after this have people go back to practicing the exercise. Sometimes it is good to have them resume practicing with their same partners so that they can tune in better to what that one person is doing, and sometimes it is good to have them switch partners so they can experience how a different person feels in the same exercise.

One thing that is very important is to keep the class atmosphere safe and supportive. To begin with, there can be no competitiveness about the exercises. They are ways of learning something and not skills to master sooner or better than the other people in the class. It doesn't mean that a person is better if he or she can experience an exercise more clearly than someone else, and it is no derogation of a person to call him up in front of the class to have him serve as an example of some
mistake. The awareness exercises confront people with their own blind spots in a very personal way, but there is nothing personal about it. It is easy to feel that you are being put on the spot when you are asked to show what you know or do not know, but that way of feeling about the situation is something to get over. And it is important for the rest of the class to respect the person who is in the process of getting over it.

It is important for the leader and for everyone else in the class to be aware that some individuals will have trouble dealing with certain of the exercises because in one way or another they hit too close to home. No one should feel that he or she must do some exercise because everybody else is doing it, and no one should be pressured to undertake some exercise that he feels he should not work with. Naturally, this applies to physical as well as mental aspects of the exercises, for although the exercises are not at all physically strenuous, some people could have trouble with some of the movements, as a result of prior injuries for example. The bottom line is that each individual must take responsibility for his or her practice and do only what he feels is correct for him. On the other hand, of course, it is important to scrutinize one's motives and see whether the decision to avoid an exercise is based on self-indulgence and a desire to avoid looking oneself in the eye.

Any time you begin to feel yourself, there is a danger that you might feel something you would rather not feel. Sometimes the process can be very innocent and yet very powerful, as, for example, the time I led a class through some relaxation exercises only to see one of the people break down crying after class. It turned out that her brother had died the day before and relaxing herself and focusing on her body put her in touch with the grief she had been suppressing. There is no knowledge that cannot have unexpected repercussions. The awareness exercises are structured in a very non-personal way, but even so some people may be touched by them in unpredictable ways, and this is something to watch for.
It is important to realize that the movement awareness class is in no way a form of psychotherapy. It does focus on the nature of the self, but in an educational, investigative way. The intent of the class is to provide people with tools that will help them explore movement in many different ways. It is inappropriate to work with deep, personal material in the class or to undertake processing of this kind of material in the class. Therapy is a process in which the therapist works with a client on the emotional and behavioral dysfunctions presented by the individual; education is a process in which a specific subject matter of interest to the instructor is taught to people who will make their own diverse uses of it outside of the educational arena. It is important to keep this distinction in mind in working with the material in the awareness class.

I should say something about the organization of the book. The exercises are not just a series of disconnected skills. They are a sequence of experiences designed to restructure how you organize your vision of the world. As you work with them, you will probably feel that they go on and on without linking up, but when you reach a critical point, everything will tumble into a new perspective. Work with the exercises in the sequence in which they are presented. The early exercises will let you learn some skills necessary for working on later material, and though you may not grasp their significance until later on, you will need them later as a foundation.

Some suggestions about the underlying organization of the book might be helpful to you in keeping the forest as a whole in view and not getting lost in examination of the trees. To begin with, there are explanatory chapters included among the groups of exercises, and the organization underlying these is that of going from the experiential to the conceptual and back to the experiential. Thus a section or two of exercises pertaining to some topic would be followed by a chapter explaining some ideas relating to that which you've just experienced, and then there would be a few more sections of exercises on the same topic to
allow you to re-examine your experience in the light of the ideas you had just read.

In general, the exercises proceed from helping you learn how to perceive what is there in a movement to helping you work towards incorporating what ought to be there. Thus the exercises begin with helping you learn to perceive what a movement is; next you would turn to learning how to control those elements you are perceiving; and finally you would work with restructuring a movement into what you would like it to be.

Another pattern that runs through the exercises is that of examining first the self, then the other, and finally the interaction of the two. Thus, when we are working with a given element of movement, we are interested in learning to sense that element in ourselves, to perceive the operation of that element in others, and to grasp how the interaction of two or more people affects that element in each and in the group as a whole.

Finally, and most specifically, the exercises move back and forth between working with intention and action. Thus we learn to focus on intention in order to understand and modify action, and we learn to focus on action in order to understand and modify intention.

There are some other patterns that are important, but until you have begun to experience them, mere descriptions of them would not be of much interest or use. With the suggestions and comments in this section, you should be able to begin practicing the exercises properly, and as you practice them, they will tell you what you need to know to extend your practice farther and farther.
The first three groups of exercises are designed to help you feel what the intentional component of movement is. The first group was a general introduction and covered a number of topics, but let's narrow our focus in this second group. These exercises will help you develop an awareness of patterns of tension and relaxation in yourself and an awareness of how you change in response to the things that happen to you.

[A] ELEVATOR BUTTON

Start off your practice by repeating the Elevator Button exercise (la). This will remind you of how to tune in to your patterns of intention and pay attention to what you are experiencing.

In the last exercise in the first group (lf) we touched on what would be required on the level of intention to allow clear, forceful action. What interferes with our ability to act is "unintentional" intentions, that is, ways that we find ourselves reacting to events that seem to proceed from us automatically and without our clear volition. We often find ourselves unable to stop ourselves from doing things that we don't want to do, and that is a state of split intentions. Whatever we do, that is something that, on some level within ourselves, we have decided to do and intend to do. But most of us are so fragmented that we often entertain conflicting intentions and are unable to sort them out and do one thing at a time. In learning to move with full concentration, the first step is learning to relax and let go of our habitual reactions, to empty ourselves out. Once we become empty, then we are ready to fill ourselves up with new ways of intending and acting.
[B] DROPPING ARM

There is a simple exercise which can illustrate this emptying out.

1. Ask a friend to pick up your arm and then let it drop. He or she should support your arm at the elbow and the wrist and pick it up gently and slowly. Your task is to relax the arm completely, let go of it, cease to own it. If you do this, when he lets go of your arm, it will drop limply, with no hesitation. If you maintain tension in the arm it may not drop at all, or it may hesitate and then drop suddenly as you decide to send it down.

Try this two or three times. Notice that if you maintain tension in your arm, as he goes to pick up your hand, you may involuntarily move your arm towards his hand just a bit, and you will find it difficult to prevent this even when you are aware of it. Your arm should be limp as hamburger meat on a shelf.

2. If you find it easy to do the first part of this exercise, the next part can show you just how good your control really is. This time clench your fist as hard as you can and keep it clenched as your friend picks up your arm and drops it. Note that the muscles which clench the fist are down by the wrist and those which raise the arm are by the shoulder, so anatomically speaking it is perfectly reasonable to undertake to tighten one end of the arm and relax the other. The problem is that most people cannot discriminate between degrees and types of tension, so they find it hard to relax all over and then tense just those muscles necessary for a given job. Don't worry if you cannot do this, it is difficult. And it is given only as an illustration and not as a skill you must achieve immediately. The point is that on the simple level of physical exertion, many people find it difficult to make fine discriminations in what they intend to do and then perform just what they intend. People live their lives like pianists who can do no better than come close to the
key they want to hit and can't quite narrow down their intent to exactly what they wish.

[C] OPENING BELLY

The arm is a convenient place to start, but of course we need to learn to relax the whole body, not just one arm. Most people carry around a lot of unnecessary tension, and much of it is held in the belly. Focusing on the tension in your belly will help you tune in to and let go of tension and contraction throughout your whole body. The Japanese word hara refers to the area of the belly. The hara (or center, or one-point) is a spot a couple of inches below the navel and in the center of the body. It is very important to allow this area to relax and expand. This may be a new sensation for you since we have all been taught to suck in our guts and tighten our chests, but allowing the belly to find a position of natural ease will free your breathing and promote relaxation throughout your body.

Stand up comfortably erect, with your feet a bit less than shoulder width apart and with your weight even on both. Let your shoulders relax, and keep your head erect and your eyes level. In order to feel what relaxing your belly means, first clench it tight. Squeeze the belly, the buttocks, the anal sphincter muscles. Don't tighten anything else: it isn't necessary to tense the hands or face. Just tense the belly area for about 5 seconds.

Then let go of the tension. Let the hara relax completely. Then tighten it again. Then relax it.

Now, without tightening the hara, just relax it again. By alternately tensing and relaxing that area, you focused your attention on it and became aware of what it was to be tight or relaxed in that area, and you practiced letting go of tension there. Almost everyone, when they relax the belly again (without first having tightened it) will notice that there was indeed some residual tension left that they weren't aware of but did
notice when they let go of it.

Now tighten your belly again. Then relax it. Now relax it a second time. And a third time.

As you continue to relax your belly, you will feel your body getting heavier and beginning to press more on the floor. Let your shoulders and your whole body relax along with your belly and let yourself feel the relaxed weight melting into the floor. (Be careful not to relax the muscles that hold your skeleton erect so that you begin to compress yourself or slump towards the floor. You should relax only those muscles that are not concerned with actually holding you erect.)

Most people carry around a lot of unnecessary tension, and this exercise is one way of beginning to feel your body and its state of being. Once you feel what it is like to let go of the tension, you can begin to check your way of moving as you perform various activities and make sure that you are functioning in as relaxed a state as possible.

Perhaps you have worked with deep relaxation exercises, the kind of practice in which you lie down, shut your eyes, and enter a state of utter limpness, and you may be wondering why we would begin our consideration of relaxation with exercises in which you are alert and standing up. The deep relaxation exercises are certainly valuable and pleasant, but our interest here is in activity rather than rest. We are looking for ways to perform actions in as efficient and effective a manner as possible, so we are looking at relaxation in movement rather than in a static state of rest. A relaxed movement is one in which you exert all the effort necessary to accomplish your goal, but no more effort than that. You use no extra tension and do as little work as possible. Most people do more work than is necessary simply standing still, and perhaps you felt in yourself that as you were standing there you were clenching your belly just because it was your habit to stay tense.
1. If you felt tension in your belly, you also felt how to release it. But can you remember to allow it to stay released, or will performing some activity distract you so that the habitual tension slips back in? Start walking around, and try to maintain that opening feeling as you do so. Walk slowly, but walk normally. Walk as though you were going somewhere. Don't just wander around in a fog. Does having to move distract you from keeping that opened up feeling?

2. A variation that is a bit more difficult is walking around backwards. This is something we do not usually do. It will feel strange, and you may find yourself tensing up in anticipation of a bump as you walk without looking where you are going. (Don't turn your head to see over your shoulder, and walk slowly so the collisions with other people will not hurt. The class leader should be alert to keep people away from furniture and such.)

Notice that feeling tense or strange is different from the walking itself. Walking is one thing. Nervous tension is another. If you feel nervous, it is because on some level you feel that it is appropriate to feel nervous when you can't see where you are going. It is something you are doing rather than something that just happens to you. You are doing it and you intend to. Can you stop intending to? Why waste energy on feeling nervous. If you are going to walk backwards, then just walk backwards—it won't help your walking to feel tense, so don't do it. As you walk, keep your hara open.

What is the point of this exercise? The obvious purpose is to help you begin to bring your intentions to create tension into your awareness and under your control. A less obvious purpose is to familiarize you with the feeling of tension, to bring it from the background of your awareness into the foreground. Don't fight tension. Don't fight yourself. It is less than reasonable to get up tight about staying relaxed. But as you work with your
own feelings and learn ways of opening yourself up, you will more
and more often find yourself spontaneously noticing sensations of
tension, and they will begin to serve you as reminders to pay
attention to what you are intending and how you are moving. You
will find that tension is really a signal to yourself to examine
what you are doing. So we are not trying to get rid of tension
directly but are learning to value it and make use of it as an
alarm system to help us refine our ways of intending and moving.

[E] WALKING OVER STICK

Another exercise to test your ability to keep your center
open involves arming the class leader with a four foot stick. A
broom handle will do. The leader sits on the floor and holds the
stick out horizontally in front of him about five inches off the
floor while the class files past him as he sits there. All you
have to do is walk over the stick. However, the presence of a
minor obstacle will force you to make adjustments, and in doing
so you will probably tense up a bit.

Once you can walk over it easily, the leader can begin to
move it around and try to get you upset. He can, for instance,
raise it so high that you can't walk over it or slam it to the
ground just as you get up to it. The basic rule is that he will
not interfere with your gait at all: whatever he may do with the
stick, he guarantees that by the time you get to it he will have
moved it to such a position that you can walk past him without
altering your stride at all. The problem will be that your mind
will trick you. Even though you know that you need not and should
not change your movement, you will still tense up and lose your
timing. Keeping your hara open will help you settle your mind
and become unflappable. One especially disturbing trick is for
the leader to move the stick altogether out of your line of march,
but to do so just as you begin to step over it. Let him use his
imagination and dream up ways to disturb your movement. Using
two sticks is fun also. It will be best if the class forms a
circle and files past the leader keeping five to ten feet between people.

[F] CATCHING PENNIES

Staying focused on hara and keeping it open is a way of creating a stable foundation for your activities. As we will see, this stability includes both mental and physical dimensions. Another exercise in which you can test your mental stability is a game of catching pennies. One person is the thrower and stands in front of a semi-circle of the catchers with a bag of pennies or marbles or such. The rule is that the catchers may move their hands around to catch the pennies but they may not shift their bodies. That means that they can catch any penny that comes within arm's length but they cannot lean out to catch any throw that is even the slightest bit farther than arm's length. The thrower should make a point of frequently tossing the pennies just short of the catcher's outstretched hand. Most people will find that they cannot restrain themselves from leaning out to catch the penny. Just as Pavlov's dogs salivated when they heard a bell, most people try to catch things that are tossed at them. Can you experience the process of that habit of intention within yourself and disconnect it, or do you have to react in an involuntary, unfocused manner?

[G] SITTING OPEN

An exercise that you can do at home is related to the Opening Belly exercise. If you spend ten minutes a day doing the exercise, over a period of just a few months you will begin to notice a real increase in your awareness of your own movement and intention patterns. The exercise consists of sitting quietly with your eyes shut and attempting to keep your belly open for a few minutes at a time. As your attention wanders, your habitual tension will creep back into your belly, and as you notice this, you can let go of the tension again.
It is important to sit comfortably erect as you do this exercise. If you find it easy, it is best to sit on the floor. Otherwise, you can sit on a firm chair. If you sit on the floor, a modified cross-legged position is best. Start by crossing your legs, and then spread them open just a bit so that the sole of one foot touches the inside of the thigh of the other leg just above the knee. Both knees should rest flat on the floor, and the ankles should be approximately one in front of the other. If your legs and hips are not flexible enough to allow you to sit comfortably this way, you might try sitting on a chair. If it is not too uncomfortable to sit on the floor, you might wish to persevere until you loosen up and find it comfortable.

Many people find it tiring to sit erect for more than a few minutes either on a chair or the floor, but there is a way of making this position much more comfortable. Fold a bath towel in half the long way, and then roll it up. Place this under the tail bone as you sit, and you will find that it gives enough support to the pelvis to allow you to relax your back muscles. Note that you should not put the towel under the sit bones (the ischias, the bony points that touch the floor or chair surface when you sit down); the towel is to help rotate the pelvis forward a bit, not for padding the surface.

Don't feel constrained to sit in a rigid, motionless manner. Move and readjust as you feel the need. And all the while keep paying attention to your belly and keep letting go of any tension you find there. As you continue with this exercise, you may notice that some tension in your belly is related to some tension elsewhere in your body, and the exercise will expand its scope for you.
Section 4: History

Now that you have experienced a number of movement exercises, perhaps you are beginning to wonder what the approach to movement is that underlies the exercises you will be working with throughout the book. You already know that they are derived primarily from Aikido, but just what does that mean? In order to put the exercises and their underlying logic into perspective, this section will deal with the history of the Japanese martial arts and the derivation of Aikido.

There are many disciplines of movement awareness that are currently available for study. When a person considers studying one, there is an important question to consider: what are the fundamental values and goals of the system? A discipline such as Aikido is a tool for learning to become something, and the basic question in deciding whether to pursue some discipline is whether you wish to become what it will make you.

In studying a discipline it is important to understand its basic outlook and decide whether it has something to offer you. And in studying with a particular teacher, it is important to see beneath the surface of the practice to the personal feelings which are the wellsprings of his/her teaching. You have to see what motivates the structure of the discipline and the teaching of the instructor in order to understand what you are likely to become as you work with the discipline. Of course it is almost impossible for a beginner to really understand this deepest aspect of the discipline, but it is something to keep in mind.

I am not suggesting that you try to decide whether some discipline is correct in its procedures and values. There is nothing that is correct in itself. Something is right for some
purpose, and the real question is, "What is the purpose of the discipline?" Note that working with a discipline at least for a little while is the only way to get a real grasp on its reality. Even if, in the end, you decide it is not for you, you will still have benefited from getting a taste of some goals and values that are significant to other people. And it is also important to realize that you can derive benefits from pursuing a discipline even when you are not in full agreement with it, for you may find some elements of it important and valuable to you even while other things that you practice are of less interest.

As people begin working with the awareness exercises that are presented here, it frequently is not apparent to them what their underlying logic is; and as they proceed with them, they frequently wonder why a fighting art should be the source of exercises aimed at increasing relaxation and sensitivity. Simply doing the exercises without having any sense of the underlying values that give them meaning would be a very superficial way of practice. As was mentioned before, this material is not Aikido in the fullest sense. Nonetheless it does stem directly from Aikido, and the attitude underlying it is very much a martial attitude. Therefore, a brief overview of the cultural and historical context out of which Aikido arose will do a lot to help you understand the values and goals underlying these exercises and the way they approach their goal.

**Feudal Japan**

The Japanese martial arts were developed by the samurai, the professional military class in feudal Japan. This class came into being in the tenth century. At that time, Japan was ruled by an emperor and court aristocracy, and they employed the warriors in their political struggles. As time went on, the samurai came to hold the real power in Japan, and in the twelfth century they set up the shogunate, a military dictatorship which lasted (with a break of three years in the fourteenth century) until the nineteenth century.
The social structure during the shogunate period was a feudal pyramid with the emperor as the theoretical top and the shogun as the actual apex. A samurai family owed allegiance to the clan. The clan served a lord, the lord served a higher lord, and so on until the lines of power converged in the person of the shogun.

There was constant jockeying for position among the samurai lords, and the shogunate was held by different samurai clans over the centuries. As a result, from the twelfth through the mid-seventeenth century—and especially for the last one hundred years of that period—there was constant fighting among the different clans and leaders. During this time, the samurai spent much of their time defending their own lands or serving their lords on the battlefields. The fact that there was a class of people whose permanent professional concern was fighting meant that the fighting arts received a good deal of attention and underwent a great deal of development and refinement. And the fact that there was constant fighting meant that this development and refinement took place under stringent, practical conditions and not merely in the theoretical atmosphere of a classroom.

Because the development and practice of the martial arts was rooted in the life and death stakes of warfare, the samurai could not afford to be satisfied with anything less than a real perfection of the fighting skills. As a result of this need for maximal effectiveness and efficiency, the samurai developed fighting techniques based on the principle of accord, the idea that the best way to deal with a force is to work in cooperation with it rather than against it. In the same way that a beginning swimmer thrashes around and wastes a lot of energy fighting the water, and an advanced swimmer cooperates with the water and uses much less effort, so a warrior cooperated with the medium in which he moved. That medium was the opponent's attack, and the greater the sensitivity of the warrior, the more he used the attack for his own defense and counterattack.
The fighting techniques developed by the samurai on the principle of accord emphasized precision rather than mere brute force. In using the strategy of accord, the warrior had to know himself and his attacker in complete and minute detail. He had to see and be able to work exactly with the opponent's force. Any unclarity of perception or inability to move precisely would have resulted in a clash between his motions and those of his opponent. The warrior had not only to perceive exactly what his opponent was thinking and doing, but he also had to be able to surprise the opponent, control his timing and disrupt his ability to focus an attack. At the same time, the warrior had to maintain his own self-control and balance and prevent his opponent from influencing him. And all this took place under the pressures and distractions of the battlefield.

Naturally, the training in the fighting arts dealt with two subject areas, the person of the samurai and the person of his opponent, but in the strategy of accord these two areas came together to form a unity. The training in the martial arts emphasized that the two fighters formed a continuous, unified field rather than being merely separate, antagonistic objects. The things that the warrior had to understand and control in his own mind and body in order to fight effectively were the same things he had to understand and manipulate in his opponent to decrease his opponent's fighting effectiveness. The mental and physical presence of each warrior affected the other, and dealing with this was part of combat.

Of course, it was difficult to fight with the degree of skill and understanding demanded by the techniques of accord. To attain this perfection, the samurai were forced to study more than the gross, external motions of the fight. They also had to study the subtle internal elements of mind and body coordination. The samurai realized that an external movement is just the culmination of a sequence of subtle, internal mental and physical events and that in order to move most effectively and skillfully not only the external movement skills must be studied but also
the internal events which create the movement. In order to fight well, a warrior had to focus his mind so that his intentions and, consequently his movements, were crystal clear and strong. In addition to allowing the warrior to move well, this focused state of mind was also the foundation for both the ability to perceive the opponent's fighting movements and for the ability to disrupt the opponent's mind and body so as to impede his movements.

What allowed the samurai to work with the internal elements that were important in combat were Zen and other meditative disciplines. From their beginnings in India and throughout their migrations through China, Korea and Japan, the martial arts were associated with the various meditative disciplines prevalent in the different countries. These disciplines were highly developed psychological tools which focused on and were able to manipulate effectively many very subtle mental and physical phenomena. It was because they had access to such disciplines that the samurai were able to extend their training far beyond the combat techniques per se into areas of mental and physical self-control and discipline and were able to deal with the whole person rather than just certain parts.

Meditation allowed the samurai to cultivate the state of mind that would allow him to fight well and, if necessary, die well. What state of mind would enable a person facing deadly attack to embrace it and cooperate with it? Certainly a normal reaction to deadly peril is to freeze up and resist whatever is happening. The state of mind necessary for the use of the strategy of accord is a state of complete concentration, a state of unshakable calmness and alertness and inner peace, what Aikido calls being Centered. In that state of being, the warrior is unconcerned about life and death so he has no reason to tighten up or resist. Staying loose, he can clearly perceive what is happening, make instant decisions, and react spontaneously and appropriately. This state is based on mushin, no-mind or emptiness. Yagyu Tajima was a famous Japanese swordsman and wrote about emptiness in a treatise on sword work:
However well a man may be trained in the art, the swordsman can never be the master of his technical knowledge unless all his psychic hindrances are removed and he can keep the mind in the state of emptiness, even purged of whatever techniques he has obtained. . . . When this is realized, with all the training thrown to the wind, with a mind perfectly unaware of its own workings, with the self vanishing nowhere anybody knows, the art of swordsmanship reaches its perfection. (Suzuki, 11: 153-154)

When the mind is emptied out, it becomes both impregnable and responsive. Nothing can disturb it because it contains no fears, and nothing can escape it because it contains no preconceptions.

It is an interesting paradox that in giving up concern for his own life, the samurai attained the state of mind which allowed him to perfect his fighting skills and thereby preserve his life.

**Tokugawa Shogunate**

By the late sixteenth century, forces were at work to unify Japan; and under Ieyasu Tokugawa, Japan was unified in the middle of the seventeenth century. He set up the Tokugawa shogunate, which lasted until the mid-nineteenth century, when the emperor was restored to power. The Tokugawa shogunate created a strong central government and brought all the lords under the direct control of the shogun. It was a relatively stable and peaceful two hundred year period. The shogunate controlled the economy and also kept the families of the lords as hostages in the capital city of Edo (present-day Tokyo). Among the measures taken to ensure stability, foreign trade and Christian missionary work were prohibited, and Japan was isolated from the rest of the world. In this way new ideas and practices were kept from coming into the land and the status quo was maintained.

During this period, the samurai were still the warrior class but had little fighting to do. Some of them killed time in a life of dissipation, and some became rededicated to the pursuit of the martial arts. For many of them, however, this rededication
involved a shift in the meaning of the pursuit of these arts. The martial arts had all along stressed mental as well as physical training in preparation for combat. However, before the Tokugawa era, mental training was practiced as part of the fighting arts in order to allow perfection of skill in fighting. In the Tokugawa period, since there was relatively little need for fighting, the fighting arts often came to be practiced as means of engaging in mental training. The aim of those martial arts which were transformed in this way—and not all were—became the attainment of a state of complete concentration andinner peace and the way of living that springs from it. In the Tokugawa period, many of the samurai began to look upon the martial arts more as spiritual paths toward understanding life and death than as pure and simple combat systems.

Those arts in which there was a shift of emphasis towards spiritual goals also frequently underwent a corresponding change in the nature of the actual techniques practiced. The movements began to be smoothed out as more attention was paid to how they felt and somewhat less attention was paid to their effectiveness in fighting. Many of the weapons systems began to use mock weapons as safer substitutes for real weapons in their practices. Nonetheless, there was still heavy emphasis placed on the actual life-and-death elements in the arts so as to preserve their rigor as spiritual training systems: after all, it was by coming face to face with death that the warrior had the opportunity to cultivate his self-understanding.

**Meiji Restoration**

In the end, the Tokugawa shogunate lacked the power to preserve the status quo. The economy became unstable and it was hard to raise enough money through taxation to support the samurai class. Western medical knowledge and military technology began to influence people. Literacy in the commoners grew, and they demanded more say in the government and more justice. There
arose a feeling that in order to improve conditions in Japan and achieve equality with the foreign powers, a new spirit of Japanese nationalism would have to be cultivated, and this feeling found a focus in the emperor. In 1868 the shogunate was overthrown and the emperor was restored to power. In 1871 feudalism was abolished, the government restructured, and the social strata redefined. The samurai were removed from power, and shortly afterwards the wearing of their two swords was made illegal and their special top-knot hair style forbidden. Finally, the social class was abolished.

During this time, western military technology had come to have more and more importance. The traditional fighting skills of the samurai emphasized individual combat and personal encounter between highly trained fighters. The use of guns allowed a peasant with a few months of training to be the combat equal of a samurai with years of training, and the use of mass strategies allowed armies of gun-equipped peasants to overpower armies of traditionally equipped and trained samurai. The traditional fighting skills of the samurai became less and less important as time went on.

The samurai were not needed to fight, and with the abolition of the samurai class, the tax money which had been their source of support was no longer available. As a result, there were many skilled fighters who had no way of earning a living, and a number of them turned to teaching their combat knowledge as a way of earning money. In this way, the combat skills that had previously been the property of the samurai class were made available to the commoners. This allowed much wider dissemination of the skills than ever before, but also resulted in some changes.

In many cases, people modified the arts in ways which made them more satisfactory for use as sports. The main change here was that a match came to mean the artificial situation of a sport contest as opposed to the real, life-and-death situation of
warfare. Removing the focus on the possible imminence of death decreased both the combat functionality and the spiritual rigor of the sports-oriented martial arts. To begin with, sport contests must have rules and systematic ways of proceeding in order to ensure safety and enjoyment; but this very regularization of the combat means that contestants become used to ignoring certain fighting possibilities as illegal, and this crucially decreases their awareness in a real fight, where anything goes. In addition, since the contestant is fighting just for recreation or a prize, the danger and seriousness are lacking which would prompt him to delve into his feelings about life and death and come to grips with his self.

Naturally, each of the arts developed differently from the others. It is not necessarily the case that an art which includes sport techniques will not also include combatively functional techniques or be useful as a spiritual path. However, it is safe to say that, in general, practitioners of an art will tend to pay great attention to one of the three uses of the art and pay less attention to the other two. At the present time, there are in existence representatives of the original purely combative arts as well as many newer arts devoted to self-understanding, sport and combat.

I like to think of the different varieties of the martial arts as being like the different flavors of ice cream: which is best is a matter of personal preference and interest. It is a good thing that there are so many flavors so that each person can find one that he or she likes and no one must go without any at all.

Development of Aikido

Morihei Ueshiba (pronounced Morry-hay Oo-way-she-bah) was the creator of Aikido. He was born in 1883 and died in 1969, so Aikido is one of the modern martial arts.
Ueshiba began his studies of the martial arts shortly before 1900. He mastered a number of styles of jujitsu, spear work and sword work, and he also studied Shinto and Buddhism. In 1911 he encountered Sokaku Takeda, a master of Aiki-jitsu, and studied with him for five years.

The name "Aikido" is composed of three Japanese characters. "Ai" means "harmony" or "love." "Ki" means "energy" or "spirit." And "Do" means "path." Taken together, the characters which form the name of the art mean "The path to harmonious energy" or "The path of a loving spirit."

The word "Aiki" also refers to the technical strategy upon which the defense maneuvers of Aikido are based. This strategy is one way of incorporating the principle of accord into defense movements, and it is usually talked about in English as "blending." In aiki, the warrior merges himself with the attack in a fluid, circular way. In merging or blending with an attack, there is no holding back, no separateness. The attack comes in, the defender accepts it the way a whirlwind accepts anything that comes close, and then the defender releases his hold and throws the attack away.

The word "jitsu" translates as "technique." Thus a jitsu art is one which is concerned with technique and its practical applications in warfare. A jitsu art is generally a representative of the original arts which were pure-and-simple combat systems, whereas a do art is one which has transformed combat practice into a path of self-discipline. The arts which are primarily sport-oriented are also often called do arts.

Aiki-jitsu formed the basis of Ueshiba's art of Aikido. He added techniques and movement principles that he had learned in his other practices and worked at refining his art. However, as he developed his art, Ueshiba began to feel that there was something lacking in his understanding of budo ("bu" = "war," "do" = "path," "Budo" = "martial art"). He began to feel that everything he had learned was useful only for destruction.
If we look back over time, we see how the martial arts have been abused. During the Sengoku Period [1482-1558, "Sengoku" = "warring countries"] local lords used the martial arts as a fighting tool to serve their own private interests and to satisfy their greed. This I think was totally inappropriate. Since I myself taught martial arts to soldiers during the War, I became deeply troubled after the conflict ended. This motivated me to discover the true spirit of Aikido.  
(Pranin, 20: Vol. 18, August 2, 1976, p. 6)

After much inner searching, Ueshiba had an experience which revealed to him what he had been searching for.

One day I was drying myself off by the well. Suddenly a cascade of blinding golden flashes came down from the sky enveloping my body. Then immediately my body became larger and larger attaining the size of the entire universe. While overwhelmed by this experience, I suddenly realized that one should not think of trying to win. The form of budo must be love. One should live in love. This is Aikido.  
(Pranin, 20: Vol. 18, August 2, 1976, p. 8)

This was in 1925, and this experience formed the basis of Ueshiba's understanding of aiki and his way of using it in his art. Rather than seeing aiki as no more than a way of joining movements together to result in a harmonious flow of motion, Ueshiba saw aiki as a universal principle of love, and the practice in the fighting strategy of aiki became a tool for discovering the universal principle of aiki. This can be seen in Ueshiba's description of Aikido:

As ai (harmony) is common with ai (love), I decided to name my unique budo "Aikido," although the word "aiki" is an old one. The word which was used by the warriors in the past is fundamentally different from that of mine. The secret of Aikido is to harmonize ourselves with the movement of the universe and bring ourselves into accord with the universe itself. He who has gained the secret of Aikido has the universe in himself and can say, "I am the universe."
I am never defeated, however fast the enemy may attack. It is not because my technique is faster than that of the enemy. It is not a question of speed. The fight is finished before it is begun.

When an enemy tries to fight with me, the universe itself, he has to break the harmony of the universe. Hence at the moment he has the mind to fight with me, he is already defeated. There exists no measure of time—fast or slow. . . .

A mind to serve for the peace of all human beings in the world is needed in Aikido, and not the mind of one who wishes to be strong or who practices only to fell an opponent. . . .

Therefore to compete in techniques, winning and losing, is not true budo. True budo knows no defeat. "Never defeated" means "never fighting." . . .

Winning means winning over the mind of discord in yourself. It is to accomplish your bestowed mission. . . .

This is not mere theory. You practice it. Then you will accept the great power of oneness with Nature.

(Uyeshiba, 25:177-178)

The art of Aikido as it was taught by Ueshiba and is being taught by his successors focuses on training the spirit through study of the physical fighting techniques. As Ueshiba grew older, the techniques he practiced continued to grow smoother and rounder. He modified the basic aikijitsu techniques so that practice could be carried on with full force and yet minimal risk of injury. However, since the techniques still remain very close to the original aikijitsu techniques, it is easy to see how any given technique could be used so as to result in severe injury or death to an attacker. As a result, the psychological impact of the life and death situation is preserved in Aikido and operates in its training of the spirit.

In order to keep the practice focused on inner growth, there are no sport uses permitted in Ueshiba's Aikido. And though the art does still retain its fighting effectiveness, it is not for fighting. On the contrary, it is for not fighting. The physical techniques are ways of practicing the rules of aiki, the rules of
how to turn aside aggression without yourself becoming equally aggressive.

How do the techniques function as a means of changing aggressive attitudes? The key lies in the fact that it is attitude/intention which creates movement. The Aikido techniques are smooth, circular and gentle (in a powerful way), and no one can perform harmonious movements if he is filled with fear or anger. These feelings automatically lead to intentions to perform the type of movements called for by fear and anger, rigid, unbalanced, jerky movements of resistance and aggression. By examining his/her movement qualities during the execution of a defense technique, the Aikidoist can detect flaws in his attitude. And by working on the level of intention in order to correct his moves, the Aikidoist can correct his attitudes.

Basic Patterns

Now that we have looked at the historical and cultural context out of which Aikido arose, how can we summarize the basic logical patterns of the martial approach as manifested in Aikido practice? The essence of the martial outlook and the martial situation is that one must be ready at any moment to defend his life, and the logic of the martial approach derives from what constitutes "readiness." This embraces both physical and mental readiness, although in actuality there is no difference between being physically and mentally ready. In a nutshell, symmetry and expansiveness are the essence of readiness.

In terms of movement, this means that a warrior must be prepared to move in any direction at any time. He cannot do a move which commits him irrevocably to one particular direction because that leaves him vulnerable to attack from other directions. In terms of the quality of movement, the warrior must integrate both the hard and the soft in order to have the flexibility to adjust to new exigencies and the power to deal with them. Symmetry and expansiveness also mean that the warrior must
integrate and use his whole body in every movement rather than acting from some particular body part and leaving others uninvolved. And it means that the warrior must move in an open large way (even in small movements) rather than in a constricted, hesitant way.

In terms of the mental aspects of readiness, symmetry and expansiveness mean, to begin with, that the martial artist must be alert at each instant to everything going on around him in all directions. He cannot afford a small, constricted focus of attention. The warrior must also find a balance between the personal and the impersonal. If he stays too much in the personal, he will succumb to selfish desires and be afraid for himself. Instead, in order to fight well, he must give up his attachment to his self and his life and find out how power comes from emptiness. However, getting lost in that space will cut him off from the personal aspect of his being and from the people around him/her. Going to either the personal or impersonal extreme will harden and constrict the martial artist.

Being ready to fight is not a harsh, contracted, chip-on-the-shoulder kind of thing. That kind of being ready to fight is really a desire to have to do so and is a cause of fights. Instead, maintaining the proper readiness to fight is really a way of avoiding ever having to fight. Learning to pay attention to one's physical and mental balance is a method of rooting out ways of dealing with the world that lead to clashes and replacing them with more effective and comfortable strategies of behavior. The proper kind of readiness is even-tempered and open and "wins" fights by eliminating them before they occur. Yet it is also the readiness to fight if it becomes necessary, and it will win in that case too.

As I have worked with Aikido (and also jujitsu and karate-do), I have been struck by the genius of the masters who shaped and preserved the Japanese martial arts after the end of the period of constant civil war. They structured the arts so that the
knowledge gained in combat by the warriors could be saved and passed on and in a way that would not necessitate more violence and killing. And I have often been especially struck by Ueshiba's genius in creating Aikido, for he took the practice of the fighting techniques and found a way to make it serve very explicitly and clearly as a means of understanding compassion and the unity of all people.

This is a brief summary of some very difficult material, and really it is not something that can be easily talked about. It is something to feel through practice, but perhaps it will help you organize your thoughts about the exercises in this book as you do them. On the other hand, perhaps the material will become clear only after you have worked with the exercises enough.

Think back to the exercises you practiced in the second group of exercises. They involved learning to relax and keep yourself stably concentrated in the face of confusing or uncomfortable events, and the next group of exercises will continue in this vein. Now you can understand what frame of mind would prompt someone to focus on this kind of exercise as important and as a foundation for further exercises. It is the frame of mind developed by a system of self-discipline that arose out of the necessities of combat, and it is based on the idea that all proper action must proceed from an inner source of calm, easy strength and stability. As we go on to exercises emphasizing sensitivity, proper body use, proper movement patterns, and applications of these in various situations, you will be able to see how all of the exercises are based on the martial approach to life that Aikido takes.
Section 5

[A] STEAMROLLER

Walking over the stick and keeping your center open and stable can be quite difficult, but another order of difficulty is introduced when a face-to-face interaction with a partner provides the opportunity for you to become tense. This exercise involves standing still and having one partner walk up to and over another. He should walk up to and right through his partner as though the partner were a ghost or a wisp of fog. His walk should be firm and at a normal speed, but he should take care to walk in such a manner that the impact will not hurt the person standing still (especially if that person is much smaller than the walker). Both people should turn their heads to the side just before impact so that nothing but the flat, soft surfaces of their bodies bump.

What is this exercise like for you? What do you feel? What does your partner feel? What do the other people in the class feel? In most cases, the walker will tend to slow down or draw back or veer away just before he hits. And the person standing still will generally tense up, stiffen his breathing and draw away just before the impact.

What is the purpose of this exercise? The basic purpose is to arouse some reactions in you and your partner, to make you react to a stressful situation. Once you are reacting, you have the opportunity to learn to focus on body, breathing and posture changes and learn how to notice what your reactions are.

Many people, when they are asked "What did you feel when your partner bumped into you?" will use words like "angry," "afraid," "nervous," etc. But these are secondary level concepts, and it is important to get down to primary sensations. What does "anger" feel like, and can you describe it by saying what
you felt in your body? Can you notice sensations which are changes in your breathing, muscle tension, balance, attentional focus, and so on?

Once you notice what your reactions are, you can evaluate their appropriateness and change them if you wish. People usually feel that their reactions are a natural, logical consequence of the external events that impinge on them. It is easy to say, "Of course I tensed up. He was going to hit me." Well, hitting you is something that your partner is doing, and tensing up is something that you are doing. And if tensing up is something you do, it is something you can refrain from doing.

The practice for both of you in the Steamroller exercise is just to relax and observe the process of the bump. You won't get hurt. And it isn't really all that terrible coming face-to-face with another human being. And yet this is such a strange thing to do that you will tense up. Try the exercise again, and this time pay attention to your hara and work on keeping it open. When you succeed, you will find it very easy to walk squarely into your partner or stand and let him walk squarely into you.

It is very important to do this and other similar exercises with the right attitude. Walking over someone in this way is really a clear attack, both mentally and physically. It is important to realize that the pressure you put on your partner does not involve any animosity but springs from your respect for him and your wish for him to have the opportunity to test himself and learn. An attack done this way is a gift, and the practice is a cooperative endeavor between two partners. Part of the practice is for you to learn how to attack with this kind of attitude.

[B] BASIC BREATHING EXERCISE

This exercise is an extension of the Sitting Open exercise. In the Steamroller exercise you learned what it is like to tense up and react, and here you will have the opportunity to work a bit more with the process of letting go of tension and incessant
activity. This exercise is done in the same sitting position as the Sitting Open exercise.

Before beginning to work with the breathing, you should have an idea of the various ways that people sit and breathe. There is a direct link between how you hold your body and what you feel like, so certain ways of sitting will be much more conducive than others to the state of calm alertness that proper breathing will produce.

As you sit in the cross-legged position (or whatever position you have decided upon), take a deep breath and let it out. Do this again, and pay attention to where the greatest amount of movement is in your body as you breathe. Put your hand on your belly as you breathe in and out. Then put your hand on your solar plexus, then on your upper chest. Put both your hands on your sides so that you feel your floating ribs and the small of your back. Where do you feel the movement and where do you feel the air going? Frequently people freeze the lower back and don't let it move with their breathing, and frequently people confine most of their breathing to the top of their chest. But breathing this way requires a constant, "deliberate" tensing of the muscles of the back and belly to prevent them from participating fluidly in the process of breathing. Don't worry about whatever patterns you may find or try to change them by direct force. Just notice them and notice what you feel like as you breathe.

Another aspect of your body use will also influence how you feel as you breathe. As you sit, let yourself slump way down. Let your chest cave in and your head droop. Then when you have reached your lowest possible slump, rotate your head so that your eyes look horizontally out in the room (but don't raise your head back up to do this). Now try to take a deep breath. Feels terrible, doesn't it? There is no room to breathe and you feel suffocated within yourself. This is the extreme of a depressed way of being in the body, and though this extreme is
rare, many people do slump this way to some degree, and it feels normal and right to them.

The opposite extreme is just as uncomfortable. Sit up as straight as you can. Throw your chest out and your shoulders back. Suck in your guts and tighten your stomach. And try to take a deep breath. You might try talking a bit to see how your voice sounds when you sit this way. Notice what it feels like to sit in this tense, hysterical posture. Of course this is an extreme, but any degree of this kind of tension will have an effect on how a person feels and on how he feels about the world around him/her. People who feel this way will sit this way (as a generalization), and people who learn to sit this way will come to feel this way.

As you find an easy, comfortable way to sit, you can begin to pay attention to your breathing. With your eyes closed, breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. As you breathe in, do not breathe high in the chest and let the shoulders rise up. Breathe low in the belly and, as you inhale, feel all the air settling down into the hips and expanding that part of the body (as well as the chest). As you exhale, it is almost like a sigh and the air settles down as it is breathed out. Don't force the breathing in any way. Breathe in your natural rhythm without trying to hold the breath or time it. In order to feel freer in the chest and throat, you might imagine that you have a hard boiled egg lodged in your throat and you have to relax and expand your throat in order to breathe around the egg. You should feel that the breathing takes place in the back and below the solar plexus as well as in the throat and upper chest.

Breathe this way for three or four minutes the first time you do it, and gradually over a period of a few months you can work your way up to doing it for fifteen minutes or more. If you feel that as you do the exercise your breathing gets softer and calmer, you are doing it right. If you feel uncomfortable and that you aren't getting enough air, you are holding tension
somewhere. If you were with a teacher, he/she could help you find it quickly, but if you are working on your own, the best way to proceed is just to relax and let yourself be uncomfortable. Don't push the exercise but just do it for a few minutes at a time until you happen to notice where the tension is that is the source of the difficulty. If it remains uncomfortable, don't feel that you have to keep on working with the exercise.

As you work with this exercise (and others, too) you may find that it begins to change for you. Don't feel that you must do it in just one way, but let your intuition and your sensitivity guide you to new ways of doing it and using it. As you continue to play with this exercise, you will find that you can use the breathing pattern while you are moving around with your eyes open, and you may find that a few breaths done this way in the midst of some stressful situation will let you react in new and useful ways.

[C] SOFT EYES

Aikido teaches people to employ soft eyes. This is a way of seeing in which the attention is evenly spread throughout the visual field rather than being concentrated in the center as is most usual. The importance of this skill is that it enables one to watch a group of attackers all at once rather than darting one's attention from one to the other. Personally, I have never used Aikido in a fight, but when I come to a four-way stop sign, I use soft eyes to keep track of the three other cars all at once so that they can't surprise me in the middle of the intersection. Soft eyes is also a manifestation of and a test of one's ability to maintain center. It is the visual equivalent of relaxing the belly.

Stand up comfortably erect. Pick a point on a wall in front of you and at least twenty feet away. Focus your eyes on that point and don't move them for the rest of the exercise. You should not feel any strain at all in your eyes when you focus on
a point. If you feel strain, it means you are doing something to force your eyes to work. Just let your eyes settle naturally on the point you've chosen.

Without moving your eyes from the focus point, notice the area on the right side of your visual field. Now notice the area on the left side. Then the top. Then the bottom. Then, still keeping your eyes on your focus point, let yourself become aware of the total visual field, the right and left sides, the top and bottom and the center.

Now blink your eyes, move them around and relax. Then try the exercise again once.

If you watch someone doing the soft eyes exercise, you will probably see a far-away expression on his face. Many people would interpret this as being a blank expression, but that is only because they are used to looking at people who are clutching at bits and pieces of the perceptual environment. Someone who is perceiving in a more open manner will have a much smoother expression on his face.

Soft eyes is the visual equivalent of opening up hara, and you should be able to maintain that mode of vision as you engage in various activities. Of course, there are times when you want to concentrate your vision, but you should have access to both ways of seeing and be able to use whichever is most useful at a given time.

Many of the exercises in this book are things that you can work with while you are doing your daily activities, and the soft eyes exercise is one that you can do as you walk around during the day. If you are walking down the street, see as much as you can and pay attention to your whole field of vision. (What about soft ears, by the way?) Keep track of the people around you, of the cars and trucks. Notice what is in the store windows as you pass by, but don't forget to pay attention to what is not in the store windows. Use your imagination and find new opportunities to practice with soft eyes.
CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

How many of us really see the people around us? This exercise is a way of looking at a partner with soft eyes.

1. Stand opposite a partner about six feet away from him/her. Open up your vision and see him completely. Focus on his chest and let your vision radiate out from there. Can you stand in front of another person and see him totally? Stay concentrated on him. Don't let your thoughts become a wedge between you and the person in front of you. Keep your perception clean and unwavering.

This is a strange way to look at a person, isn't it? Many people feel that it is a depersonalizing way of seeing, that it treats a human being as just another object. Again, this is a matter of interpretation. This way of looking at a person sees a different aspect of the human being than the one we usually relate to. It sees the impersonal aspect, something that is more fundamental than the particular emotional patterns that we usually treat people as consisting of. And the person seeing another in this way must unavoidably be seeing himself in this way as well. This way of seeing comes, of course, from the requirements of the combat encounter, for two fighters must relate in a very different manner than people normally do. Needless to say, neither the personal nor the impersonal mode of seeing is the one and only right way to see. Each has its value and its time and place.

2. When you find it comfortable and easy to maintain a complete and soft vision of your partner decrease the distance between you. Stand close, with no more than an inch or two between you. Obviously at this short distance you will no longer be able to take in all of your partner in your visual field, but maintain your soft eyes and hold a short conversation with your partner.

Remember to relax your belly, your breathing and your vision. Find a way to stay open and stable in yourself. You can maintain
your space inviolate in spite of whatever happens to you.

Most people become very uptight about interacting with a non-intimate acquaintance from this short distance. We all define a personal space around ourselves and feel a threat when it is entered by anyone except really intimate friends. Notice whether you are stiffening your body and drawing away. Notice whether you are maintaining the same gross physical position but feel as though you are trying to crawl away.

[E] SLAPPING EXERCISE

1. This next exercise is one that I have found especially effective in helping people to see how they react to pressure and in helping them learn to deal with it. I will describe the exercise in the form in which I use it in teaching self-defense classes and include instructions for a modified form that will be more appropriate for this movement awareness class. The form in which I teach it in self-defense classes is much more stressful than is appropriate for an awareness class, but I include it here because reading about it might help you understand your reactions to the previous exercises more clearly. In addition, if you wish to try it in the harsher form, you can do so; but since this form can be extremely threatening to some people, no one who feels he or she cannot face it should be made to try it.

Stand up facing your partner. Then have him/her slap you on the face a few times. In order to make sure that there will be no actual injuries, he should slap you on the lower cheek and stay well away from the eyes, ear and throat. He should slap your face smartly but not so hard that there is any danger of real injury.

To lessen the stress of this exercise, instead of the slap have your partner deliver a firm shove with one hand into your shoulder. If this is still more stressful than you feel you should deal with, a smart slap on your forearm will suffice.
What are your reactions to this? What are the reactions of the other people in the class? Do you or the others have different reactions to slapping and being slapped?

Most people react to being slapped on the face by gasping and drawing away. Some people react by stiffening up and getting angry. However, if your partner was slapping you correctly, and you take a moment to reflect upon it, you will realize that there was no real physical pain or risk of injury. It may have stung a little, but the same slap and the same stinging on your forearm would hardly even make you blink. The pained or angry reaction you felt was really just your own creation. The stress of the slap was your own psychological response to the invasion of your territory and the "insult" to you. Since the slap was really quite light, there was nothing objectively awful about it and no reason to be very disturbed by it.

Many people find that it is easier for them to be slapped than to slap another person. In other words, they find it easier to be passive, to let someone trespass on their space. This again is a trick you are playing on yourself. There is nothing wrong with slapping your partner. There is no reason to feel disturbed by it. After all, you are not doing it out of malice but to help him/her learn. Yet all of our usual habits of social interaction prevent us from taking a calm, objective view of the situation, and we get disturbed by it. I know of numerous instances where people were mugged or raped because they couldn't bring themselves to hurt another person. So they let themselves be hurt instead. Being kind and gentle is certainly admirable, but being chained by habits so that one cannot act in appropriate and necessary but unaccustomed ways is not admirable. Learning to understand one's automatic reactions and learning to let go of them is part of the process of becoming a free person.

Now try the slapping again, but this time work on keeping relaxed. Stand up comfortably erect, relax your hara and focus your breathing there. Breathe as you did in the Basic Breathing
exercise. Have your partner slap you a few times. He/she should pay careful attention and stop slapping you as soon as he sees you tense up. When your partner sees you settle down and regain your concentration, he should slap you a few more times. He should grade the force and timing of his slaps to your ability to relax and concentrate. Within a few minutes as you work with this exercise, you will find that the slaps really do not bother you at all.

One caution is important. Don't make the mistake of spacing out or dissociating yourself from the situation in order to deal with the slap. You should be fully present and in that state of alertness find a way to become calm as well.

The basic idea underlying this exercise is that pain and discomfort are something you create, not something that just happens to you. Obviously there are some things that hurt. I'm not meaning to suggest that this is not so. But your reactions to pain are something that you do and something that you can learn to control. To a great extent, we all make things more painful than they really are because of our ideas about the nature of pain. The pained reaction you felt to the slap at first was really just an inner projection that you applied to the external event. Once you let go of your idea of how bad it is to be slapped, you found that the actuality was not all that bad and that you could deal with it calmly. The slap and your reaction to it are two separate things. Imagine a self-defense situation in which someone was trying to slap you. If you poured all your energy into feeling afraid or angry about the slap, you wouldn't have enough concentration left to do anything practical to avoid getting slapped. If you stayed calm under pressure, you would be able to deal with the situation much better. Feeling upset is something you do, and you don't need to do it. It is uncomfortable and of no utility.

2. Another version of this slapping exercise is to stand with your eyes shut. This time your partner can take his time
about slapping and let your expectations build up and make you tense. You will find that the uncertainty of when you will be hit will throw you off balance. Try to just be there, just waiting, without letting the future drag you away from the present.

[F] **RUNNING THE GAMUT**

If you have over nine people in the class, another soft eyes exercise is running the gamut. Have them form two lines about three feet apart. As you walk between the lines, they will reach out to touch you on the shoulder. There is no plan to this, and each person reaches out or not as he feels like as you walk by him. Your job is to pay attention and spot the touch coming at you. Here is where you will be especially aware of how tensing your hara narrows your vision. Walk through the gamut in a relaxed, expansive state of being, keeping your eyes soft and your breathing open.

[G] **BUMPER CARS**

Bumper Cars is another exercise for learning to keep your breathing relaxed, but this exercise involves much more movement and uncertainty than the Slapping exercise. You need a room absolutely clear of furniture and obstacles. Have each person in the class hold his/her arms out in front of him about waist high, and have him clasp his hands and hold his arms as though he were hugging a barrel. Have everybody shut their eyes and walk slowly around the room. There will inevitably be collisions, but the interesting thing is how people will tense up waiting for collisions and how they will react when they happen. The exercise is to open center and try to minimize the build-up of tension. It is important to keep the arms about waist height so that there will be no danger of people getting poked in the face.
The last two groups of exercises have dealt with learning to become aware of and release the constrictions that are our usual responses to pressures and threats. Most people are not aware that they are tense even when they are, and these exercises in letting go and opening up can give people a first glimpse of just how tense they are and how rigid and channelized their behavior is. For a while, as they begin to practice these exercises, many people will have only a diffuse knowledge that they are indeed tight, but they will not be able to detect that tightness at any particular time, since it is, after all, their normal state, the baseline from which they measure themselves. They will notice being tight only when they are very much tighter than normal. As they practice these opening up exercises, they will find it easier and easier to let go of constriction and more and more customary to be opened and relaxed. As this happens, they will be able to detect much more readily that they are tense. As time goes on, they will become sensitive enough to notice as they are getting tensed up, but they will be carried away by the situation and not really able to prevent it. Later on, with more practice, they will notice when they are about to become tense, and they will be able to nip it in the bud.

The progression is from "I don't think I'm tense" to "Yes, I guess I am tense" to "Damn! Here I am getting tense again" to "Oh-oh! I was just about to get tense again."

This process of learning about yourself includes becoming aware of what your reactions are, of what situations make you react, and of how you can control your reactions. As this process makes you more objectively aware of your reactions to various situations, it puts you at a distance from them. As you
become more of a witness to than a participant in your getting upset, you will notice that you will start to shed many of the habits you thought were part of your self. You start to find a more Centered way of moving and being.

"Center" is a key concept in Aikido. The practice of center is the cultivation of a general state of being, and this is expressed very nicely in a passage from Durckheim's book, 

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\text{One speaks of a 'master'—whether of an outer action or inner work—only when success is achieved not only now and then, but with absolute certainty. Certainty of success presupposes more than perfected skill alone. What is this more? It is the state or condition of the performer which makes his performance infallible. However well-performed an action may be, however well controlled a technique, as long as the man using it is subject to moods and atmosphere, unrelaxed and easily disturbed, for example, when he is being watched, then he is a master only in a very limited degree. He is master only of technique and not of himself. He controls the skill he has but not what he is in himself. And if a man can do more than he is his skill often fails him in critical moments. Real control over oneself can only be achieved by a special training, the outcome of which is not just technical skill, but an established frame of mind . . . which ensures the required result.}
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\text{This is practice. . . . Its purpose is not an outer visible result but an inner achievement. In practice of this kind the person developing, not the deed or the visible work as such, is what matters. And as surely as genuine mastery of performance or skill presupposes a certain personal inner quality so, conversely, the preparing of oneself for performance or skill can be used as a way leading to inner mastery. . . .}
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\text{Understood thus, every art, every skill can become an opportunity to develop 'on the inner way'. . . .}
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(Durckheim, 4:35-36)

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\text{Non-attachment}
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Center is a state of equanimity and composure, of non-attachment. Center is the state of being in which a person can act without identifying himself with or being anxious about the results of his actions.
Anxiety about results is a waste of energy and a distraction and is based upon a fear of failure and a desire for success. Naturally, if you perform some action, you want it to succeed. However, if you get wrapped up in your desire for success rather than focusing full concentration on your actions, you will not act as effectively as possible and will very likely not succeed. As an example of this, there is a technique in Aikido which is a defense against a knife thrust, and the first part of the move is almost identical to the movement used in reaching out to shake a person's hand. Everybody who studies Aikido can easily and casually shake a person's hand, but when the same movement is demanded of beginners as part of a defense against being stabbed, almost everybody shies away and loses the ability to move smoothly. The movement is the same, but it is the anxiety about performing the movement correctly which blocks their ability to execute the move. It is precisely because they feel that it is very important to do the move correctly that they cannot do the move well.

The anxiety a person feels about the results of his present actions is due to the memories of past pain. An uncentered person, remembering the results of past experiences, focuses one part of his energy on memories of past actions, one part on worries about the future results, and one part on the present actions themselves. At best, this division of his thought and energy is a waste of effort. At worst, it renders the person completely incapable of effective action.

You felt in the Elevator Button exercise how wanting to do something was the actual beginning of doing it. What kind of messages will be sent to the muscles when a person is indecisive and wants to perform two conflicting actions (for example staying and winning and running away and being safe)? This kind of disorganized thinking and intending cannot lead to well-organized activity.

In a centered state, a person pays attention to what he is doing and does not get distracted by worrying about the results
of his actions. The results will take care of themselves and work out as well as possible if the actor simply concentrates completely on the task at hand and does it to the best of his ability. This does not mean that the centered person has no goals and gives up acting or that he doesn't care about doing things properly and achieving his goal. What it does mean is that he has enough insight and self-control to make a decision as to what he should do and then do it with full concentration and no indecisiveness. You don't give up having goals. You give up being anxious about attaining them. Once you do this, you will become calm enough to act effectively and reach your goals.

Center is arrived at by emptying out the mind. The mind gives up all its concepts, judgments, preconceptions, desires, angers and fears, and there is nothing inserted as a wedge between the actor and his actions. He just is. This state of simply being is a state of finding the center of the self. It is the state of being at home in the self and not being distracted by externals.

The man at home in himself, that is the rightly centred man, lives in that undisturbed state where the eternal out and in of breathing goes on peacefully, in which he gives himself to the world without losing himself in it, abides there a while without being swallowed by it, withdraws himself without thereby cutting himself off from it and remains alone without ever hardening himself. (Durckheim, 4:82)

A story can serve to illustrate this state of autonomy. There were two Aikidoists in Japan who were leaning on a bridge railing and talking. The bridge railing collapsed under their weight and fell into the river. The two men did not fall. They had been leaning on the railing, but they had not surrendered themselves to the railing.
Learning not to be distracted by attachment to action is the same as learning to act correctly. The essence of learning to be centered is learning to intend correctly. Most people simply act, but they are not aware of all the subtle mental and physical processes leading up to the action. Intending is the meeting place of the emotions, the mind and the body. The emotions define a desire, the mind draws upon its stored knowledge to determine how to fulfill the desire, and the body acts to achieve the desire.

The reason that movement is a way of understanding the whole person is that movement is a concrete expression of the desires, perceptions, beliefs, emotions, intentions, etc. in a person's life. Watching our movements, we come to understand the conflict and confusion in our intentions, and that shows us the lack of clarity in our lives. The attack-defense situation in Aikido functions as a high-pressure test of our capacity to intend clearly. If we give in to panic or confusion or surprise in that situation, it is very evident because our defense technique lacks clarity, smoothness and power. The mind/body awareness exercises presented here are ways of illuminating our intentions and revealing how we live.

All the imbalances in our lives manifest on the physical level in imbalances in our posture and our movement. The human being is a unity, a whole, and there is no separation between the mind, the body, and the spirit.

The way leading to this condition is by the transformation of the whole man, i.e., a unit of body, mind and soul. What keeps man estranged from Being consists not only in his being fettered by psychological complexes and by the rigidity of his thought patterns, but also by the fact that they are fixed in his flesh and set fast in wrong bodily habits. So any renewal can be achieved only through the transformation of the whole man, and implies not only an intellectual and spiritual conversion, but also a transformation of the body and all its postures and...
movements. Without this bodily transformation all inner experience of Being comes to a standstill when the experience has passed, and the man inevitably falls victim again to his old, familiar fixing and classifying consciousness. Therefore practice must inevitably include practice of the body.

Just as the right inner state is clearly expressed in the symbolism of the harmoniously functioning body, so inner malformations appear as bodily malformations. These have one thing in common: lack of centre.

(Durckheim, 4:168-169)

Balance

In Aikido, this assertion of the unity and wholeness of the human being is not a mere philosophical dictum or belief. It is a very concrete, practical observation. We say in English that a person inclines toward a given choice, that he has a leaning towards it. Or if he is inclined to avoid something, we say he is biased against it. As you experienced in the first group of exercises, these are not figures of speech but literal facts. One does tend to move physically toward an object of desire and away from an object of aversion. By becoming aware of our movements and examining them minutely, we are forced to become aware of our real thoughts and feelings. Words lie. Thoughts can be covered up. But movements are concrete and inescapably apparent. Of course we can deny the meaning of our movements, but if we continue to practice movement awareness, we shall sooner or later come to recognize everything contained in our movements.

As we give up our imbalances, our inclinations, we come into a center line in our movements. This center line runs through the physical movements in an obvious way, and it also runs through all the non-physical facets of our movement. To return again to the wisdom embodied in our language, finding the center line means learning to live an upright life and to attain a state of grace.
Center is a state of perfect balance. It is obvious that a defender must be able to dodge an attack and exert a counter-force without losing his balance. The foundation for this physical balance is mental equilibrium, that is, the spirit of non-attachment and calm alertness. If the defender is inclined to feel aggression or fear, he will not be maintaining his ground but will be sucked into the attacker's territory or will be shying away from the attacker. In either case, he will have lost the stability necessary to deal with the attack. Calmness and alertness are the essence of center and the essence of balance.

This balance of Center is a perfect balance. Normally balance is conceived of as an equilibrium among a number of forces, and thus balance implies both multiplicity and the possibility of a loss of equilibrium. Where there is unity there is not usually said to be balance. However, a unity cannot be unbalanced because there are no parts to it, no forces which can be in disequilibrium. Center is a state of unity and might be termed pure or perfect balance, Balance which transcends balance. This unity is a result of remaining at home in the self while performing actions. The opposite of this unity is the state of fragmentation, the state in which pieces of a person's attention are scattered and attached to externals so that he has forgotten his own self. Center is the state of impregnable equanimity which allows one to operate from a position which has no hint at all of attachment in any direction.

In Aikido we perform difficult movements. The movements are not difficult simply because they are complex or quick or demand physical dexterity. They are difficult because their successful performance demands that we have solved our quandaries about who we are, how we intend to live, and how we intend to relate to other human beings. When a person grabs you by the throat and starts to squeeze, your feelings of self-worth and your habits of interpersonal relationships determine how you will react. As in the Slapping exercise, your territory has been invaded by another person and in a very drastic way. Performing
a defense technique is not a simple, mechanical thing. If you know the right movement, but you are overwhelmed with resentment that someone should touch you in that manner, then you will be incapable of performing the defense technique in the smooth concentrated manner required. It is difficult to let go of all the emotional reactions to such a confrontation, but that is what is necessary in order to perform the technique effectively.

Effective Action

As soon as the state of center has been reached, then all constraints upon your actions fall away. As soon as you discover the position of pure balance, you can act effectively. The centered way of moving is based on the experience of the warrior in combat. He had to be able to deal with the incoming force of the attack and at the same time exert force upon his opponent, but he had to do this while remaining physically and mentally stable within his own sphere of balance. Non-attachment and pure balance are to the mover as impartiality and disinterestedness are to a judge. In this state, the judge has nothing biasing him towards a particular decision, and he is capable of seeing all the facts and seeing them in a proper perspective. He will take the proper action. Likewise, in a non-attached state, the mover has nothing to gain or lose, and so there are no concepts, judgments or desires coloring and narrowing his perceptions. His perception will naturally take in everything that is happening around him because he will not be overly concerned with just one part of what he perceives. And he will naturally notice what is important for him to focus on. There is an inner intelligence which will automatically and spontaneously direct his movements into the appropriate, effective and efficient patterns. The actions will well up from inside the actor without his having to do them. When the self is calm and collected in the state of center, then every movement will be casual and precise, natural and effective.
This is not really as strange and unfamiliar as it might sound at first. Everybody has either seen or experienced moments of this way of functioning in such things as sports or dance. There is a click and then you're in the groove and everything you do is smooth and right. The purpose of Aikido is to learn what this click is and learn how to live inside it. Rather than being content just to repeat one movement over and over again until we get good enough to click in when we want to do the movement, we want to be able to extend this to our whole lives. In such an awareness practice, it is not enough to learn skills by rote, but one has to take an active, intelligent creative approach to one's movement by learning to focus on the basic experiences and principles that underlie the actual skills being practiced.
ENERGY PROJECTION

Section 7

The last two groups of exercises were concerned with learning to maintain openness, both when you are under pressure and in normal circumstances. You worked on becoming sensitive to the changes you make in your body as a result of feeling pressure, and you began to learn how to control your reactions. These next three groups of exercises will focus on projection of intention. The basic point to keep in mind is that any movement we do is done as a result of an intention to do it, and (for the purposes of this awareness class) we will say that this is so even when you are not consciously aware of having intended the move. We will also use the terms "energy projection" or "ki extension" to talk about the things that go on when we project an intention to move, and these terms will be used almost interchangeably with "projection of intention."

[A] PROJECTING A SPOT

1. In this exercise we will start to work on controlling the direction and placement of our energy/intention projections. The process of intentional projection is what you felt in the Elevator Button exercise. You projected an intention to move your shoulder toward the elevator button you imagined floating near it. Or, speaking in terms of the sensation attendant upon this (as you will learn to perceive it), you projected a stream of energy from your shoulder toward a particular point, and this process is what we will be practicing here.

Work with a partner. Have her/him touch a spot on your body and specify some direction that you should intend it to move. For example, he might touch your left collarbone and suggest that
you project an intention to move it forward and down. To make the suggestion more specific, he might even trace with his finger the line in the air that he would like your collarbone to follow. As you remember from the Elevator Button exercise, this intending is a subtle but natural and easy process and should not be confused with either a gross level voluntary movement or with an abstracted, ineffective thinking about moving.

Having the spot that you should intend to move touched physically will produce a strong and clear sensation there, and this will help you focus your awareness on that spot. Later on as you become more skilled at discriminating various spots of your body, your partner can simply point to the part he wants you to move, or even just specify the part verbally. In addition, it will be easiest to start off by working with spots that are on the front of the torso and intending to move them in simple, straight lines. Curves are more difficult, and most people do not have much awareness of their backs, so practice easy projections before you practice hard ones.

When you project your energy from the point your partner specified and in the right direction, you will both notice a distinct and specific change of balance in you. To test that you have actually projected as he meant you to, your partner can gently push the part that he specified in just the path that he meant you to project. If you are projecting where he is pushing, you will easily and almost suddenly fall into the direction of his push. Note that your partner's push should be very gentle. Obviously he could shove you hard enough to make you fall, but that would not teach either of you anything. You are trying to sense how the subtle force of intention moves the body, so you need an equally subtle push. Close your eyes and press on one eye with a finger. How much force can you comfortably endure? Not much, right? It should not take much more force than that for your partner to move you if you are projecting in the manner he asked for.
If your projection is not correct—that is, if you are not really projecting at all, or if you are projecting from the wrong spot or in the wrong direction—then your partner will not feel you fall in that sudden, slippery way. He will feel that you feel doughy and resistant. You may fall, especially if he pushes hard or if you are projecting nearly correctly, but it will not have the right easy feeling to it.

2. An interesting variation on the exercise will necessitate greater discrimination in the energy projections. When you project an intention to move one spot, you are really affecting the whole of the rest of the body. After all, it is impossible to move just a shoulder forward. The shoulder is connected to and supported by the rest of the body, and movement of a shoulder really is a readjustment of the body as a whole. And, although it is much subtler and harder to see, it is just as true that moving one finger affects the attitude of the whole rest of the body. So, when you project an intention to move one particular spot on the body, it will affect the body as a whole in a noticeably different way than would an intention to move a second spot just four inches away. If your partner suggests a projection and then tests you by pushing in the right direction but on a spot four or five inches away from the spot he specified, that should not easily disturb your balance. If you do move with just the same feeling as when he pushes on the exact spot he specified, then you are projecting from a general area rather than from a specific spot. This is a difficult exercise and demands very precise discrimination in your body awareness.

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[B] MOVING WRIST

1. In the last exercise, your partner instructed you where to project. In this exercise, your partner will project and will make his/her own choices of where to project. It will be up to you to detect the stream of his energy projection.
Have your partner grasp your wrist in one hand. Then have him decide to push, pull, twist, etc. Again, there are two mistakes for him to avoid. On the one hand, this decision should be a ki projection and he should not move in a gross physical manner. On the other hand, he should really project a stream of energy and not just fall into his own head and think about pushing or pulling. In other words, your partner should really want to move your hand in some direction.

As he projects the stream of intention, you should tune in to it and feel where he intends to move you. What you will be feeling is the very slight readjustment his body makes to prepare for the actual physical movement of taking your hand where he wants it to go.

The crucial thing in this exercise is what you do in yourself. If you are trying to receive a radio signal more clearly, you do not put your attention on the transmitter. Instead, you work on tuning your radio receiver, and when it is adjusted right, it will pick up the signal clearly. There is a special way you must feel in yourself in order to perceive another person clearly. Your arm (and the rest of you, of course) must be neither limp nor stiff. It must be neither wispy nor heavy. It must be light and full of life, open, and gentle as well as strong. Later on we will deal much more with the relation of gentleness to strength, but for now it is enough to say that you must be able to feel yourself before you can feel another person. Tense muscles are insensitive and limp muscles are uncaring. It is important that you relax and open yourself up as we practiced in the second and third group of exercises. If you are trying too hard to be sensitive, you will freeze up and feel nothing.

One thing that may help your sensitivity is to cut down the distractions by shutting your eyes. However, don't get into the habit of closing your eyes to become more sensitive because that is an artificial pattern that is not functional in normal activity. The trick is to be able to concentrate in the midst of distractions, and it is a cop-out to run away from them to
concentrate. It is a useful practice occasionally, but it never has been a good idea to close your eyes in the midst of combat to tune in more sensitively to just how your opponent intends to hit you.

As your partner projects his intention to move your hand, feel where he wants to go. If you cannot feel anything, it may be because your arm is too tense. Imagine putting your hand into the end of a horizontal pipe. If you hold your arm up tensely, it will pull up against the top of the pipe. If you let your arm dangle limply, it will fall onto the bottom of the pipe. But if you hold your arm just right, it will hover right in the middle of the space in the pipe without touching the pipe itself on any side. You should position your arm within your partner's grip the same way, neither pulling up against his hand nor pushing down on it. When you neutralize your own intent to hold your arm in some particular position (which, of course, will be your spot and not your partner's) and find the spot where your partner really is, you will have the sensation that you have found a calm, still spot. Once you are in that spot and that way of holding yourself, you will be able to feel your partner. Once you have put aside your own intentions, you will be able to feel his.

You can test the accuracy of your perception by very gently moving your arm in the direction you believe your partner chose. If it is the wrong direction, you will feel some sluggishness and resistance instead of slippery ease of motion. If you are really not sure which way he is projecting, you can find it by trial and error by moving your hand just a bit in various directions until you do find the direction in which it moves easily. Once you have moved in the direction you believe your partner was projecting, he/she should tell you how close you came. Of course, when you do it just right, you will know it.

2. If you wish to try an interesting experiment, repeat this exercise with your partner not quite touching your wrist. Have him put his hand near but not on your wrist while he concentrates on pushing or pulling you. It is best for him to use the
same hand position as though he were grasping your wrist but simply leave a gap of an inch or so. How are you picking up information about his intention? It is possible to see a lot of the changes created by intentional projection that you felt before when you were in physical contact with your partner.

Try doing the exercise without touching and with your eyes closed. What can you pick up now? Stay relaxed and open, and just wait to see if you do pick up any feeling about which way he would like to move your hand. Give yourself time to get into feeling your arm. Any information you do pick up may come through in a very subliminal way, and you may find yourself with a faint inexplicable sense that you would like to move your hand in some particular direction. Move it there and let your partner tell you whether that was the direction he was intending.

[C] FROZEN PARTS

In the last two exercises, we concentrated on feeling how intentions to move are projected. One of the purposes to which intentional awareness can be put is the correction of ineffective movement patterns. A good exercise for beginning to learn this and also for learning to perceive the ramifications throughout the body of an intention applied to one part involves deliberately producing exaggerated defects in our movements and seeing what effects they have.

Choose any simple activity to work with. Just walking around is fine, or picking a pencil up off the floor will do. Decide upon some body part to focus on, and then hold the part either too tight and stiff or too loose and gangly. Perform the activity and see what the effects of the energy defect are. After you are clear about the feeling of performing the activity that way, do it normally and note the differences in feeling.

In addition to doing this exercise yourself, you will find it interesting to watch someone else do it. The whole class can gather and share their observations as they watch different people
move. To begin with, you can specify for the person the spot and the manner of using it that you would like. Afterwards you could allow each person being observed to choose his/her own spot and manner, and the class can see if they can discern which part the person is concentrating on and what the effects are throughout the person's body.

[D]  **RAMIFICATIONS**

The body is really very much like a wool sweater: if you snag one thread, it pulls on the sweater all the way across it. If one part of the body is used incorrectly, it affects the whole body. If one part of the body is used at all, it affects the whole body. Another exercise for learning to feel the ramifications throughout the whole body of movement in just one part is to touch your partner while he moves and feel the shifting readjustments of the body in response to his movement.

Touch your partner on one spot and then have him move some other part of his choice. You can touch anywhere, but laying your hand on his shoulder is a convenient way to begin. It is important to touch him correctly in order to feel him: your touch must be light but firm, in solid contact with him but very gentle. Any small movement on his part will do, perhaps lifting a foot, raising an arm or dropping his head. As he moves, notice whether you can feel some corresponding movement in the part you are holding.

After you find it easy to understand the relations between one part and another, try the same exercise with your eyes closed. First just try to determine when he moves. After you find that easy, try to sense what part of his body he is moving and in what way. If you are reading him well, you will have the feeling of touching him on one spot but feeling him all over.
When we discussed Center and dealt with the concepts of Intention, Balance and Effective Action, we were really talking about the experiences these last four exercises have focused on, that is, the nature of intentional projection. The concepts of Center and such are really very abstract, but there is a more practical set of ideas that serves as a bridge between the general, abstract concepts and the specific, concrete exercises that constitute practice of movement awareness. These ideas have to do with the experience/concept of the energy field.
Section 8: The Energy Field

The energy field is both a way of experiencing the human being and a way of thinking about what you experience. Energy is a convenient way of speaking about intention. As you have felt, it is faithful to our experience to speak about attention as being directed in a beam at some object. And in the same way, it fits our experience well to talk about intention as being projected in a flow toward some goal.

You can attend/intend/move to the right or to the left. Forward or backward. In straight lines or curves. Hesitantly or decisively. Urgently or languidly. Thus we can imagine the person as a center from which there are many possible directions of focus with each focus having many possible qualities it could assume. The sum total of these directions is an intentional field which can be pictured as similar to the field of gravity around a planet. In order to make the processes of intending more concrete in our thinking, it is convenient to reify the beam of intention and talk about it as energy, and thus we can talk about the field of intention in which a person operates as an energy field. It is helpful to give the field a visual image, and this can be the image of a cloud of light or mist. After one gets used to this way of perceiving, mind, body, feelings, attention, intention and movement are all seen as just the same thing, that is, energy.

Another way of thinking about the energy field would be to say that it is a metaphor for the person's total pattern of muscular tension and relaxation. Thus intending to lift the right hand begins to engage the muscles in a slight actual lifting of the hand. In the Projecting a Spot exercise you practiced observing the changes that go on as a person projects an intention to move some part in some direction. It is convenient to be able
to talk about these changes succinctly by saying that you saw energy flow into his right hand. As you get better at observing, you will be able to see how it affects the energy (attention/intention, muscular set) in the rest of a person's body when he focuses his energy on just one part.

In a centered person, the cloud has an even, spherical shape. (Later on we will talk about some more interesting shapes, but it is convenient to begin by considering the spherical energy cloud.) The physical center of the sphere is a spot midway between the hips, about two inches lower than the navel, and in the center of the body. The center of the mental aspect of the sphere is the person's consciousness of Self. The centered person maintains his/her regular, spherical shape in action; that is, the cloud maintains its smooth, even symmetrical shape no matter what action it undertakes. It moves with all the balance and calmness it would have if it were standing still, and whatever it does seems to occur naturally and effortlessly. When the centered cloud moves, all movement originates at the center of the sphere, the whole sphere participates equally in all the movement, and every movement is harmonious and graceful.

In an uncentered person, attachments distort the shape of the cloud. When the cloud is anxious about what is happening to it, it reaches out after things or shies away from them. As a result of fixing unequal amounts of attention on different parts of the environment, some parts of the mind/body become too heavy and some too light. The energy center of the cloud moves away from the spot it occupies in the centered person's body, and the center of the person's consciousness is dragged away from Self and he loses himself in anxiety about externals. In action the uncentered cloud is full of turmoil. It is a network of forces going off in every which way, and it wastes energy in inner conflict and lack of focus. Whatever actions the uncentered cloud undertakes are done with tension and effort. When the uncentered cloud moves, it is fragmented, disorderly, discordant and uncoordinated.
Energy Qualities

The even sphericity of the centered energy field or the irregular shape of the uncentered energy cloud both extend to all levels—physical, mental and movement. Speaking in terms of the energy cloud as being a metaphor for the person's total pattern of tension and relaxation, when we look at an uncentered person moving, we see the parts of his/her body that are too tight or too loose. We see how the tension affects his movements, and we see how the tension is related to his feelings about whatever the situation is that he is moving in.

The tension pattern manifests itself in both gross and subtle ways. A person may reach for something he wants, and this would be a gross manifestation of muscle tension. Or the person may make no real movement but still betray the desire for the object by a subtle shift of balance and tension.

In addition, the tension pattern can be specific or habitual. When a person reaches for something in front of him, that is a specific action. But if a person generally moves as though he were, for example, shying away from something, that is an habitual pattern, and this cringing demeanor would be seen as an habitually maintained shape of the energy field.

Actually, the quality of tension/relaxation is just one of the qualities that can be seen in the energy cloud, but it provides a clear example of the way a person who has been trained in viewing the energy cloud sees movement. There are many other qualities that can be seen. These qualities can be most easily described in terms of posture or emotions, but they really refer to the state of the energy cloud as a whole and not simply to physical position or state of mind. It is the inner essence of the movement that manifests as centered energy, and center is not simply a posture to be held at all times. For example, a person in a wheelchair or a person with a limp could maintain a centered way of moving even though his/her movements would be physically different from those of a person without a disability. Center is a way of being, a feeling that underlies all movements.
Centered movement is symmetrical and open. A centered way of standing is erect and well-aligned. As we shall see when we get to the exercises involving body use, all of the body parts in a centered way of standing fit over each other well so that no undue amounts of energy are expended simply in keeping the body from sagging and falling over. There is a full awareness of the whole body so that all the parts are integrated into a whole. Power originates in the contact with the floor, is created by the legs and hips and is channeled throughout the rest of the body to be applied to whatever task is at hand. Every part of the body participates equally in every move. An uncentered stance will be misaligned and unintegrated. Some parts will be too tight and some too loose, and the parts will act separately instead of in unison.

The feel or flavor of centered movement can best be described in terms of energy qualities. The energy qualities of center are unions of opposites, but they are not mere balancing or joining of separate elements. Rather, they form a true union or a pure balance of the qualities. As separate elements, the opposite energy qualities are incomplete, extreme and unbalanced. As an example, center has the quality of being both gentle and powerful. If the quality of gentleness is not truly united with the quality of power, it is not really gentleness but weakness. Likewise, if power is not united with gentleness, it is really brutality rather than power. A person who has either quality without the other will tend to go to extremes in his or her reactions and be either a pushover or overly aggressive. A person that has both qualities as separate elements will alternate from weak to brutal. In fact, it is often the case that a person who feels weak will overcompensate with periods of brutality, and a person who is brutal will frequently have periods of guilty weakness. Only when the two qualities fuse with each other will they become complete, and then the person will act with gentle power and powerful gentleness.
TABLE 2
ENERGY QUALITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overly Soft</th>
<th>Centered</th>
<th>Overly Hard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>limp</td>
<td>relaxed/firm</td>
<td>rigid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weak</td>
<td>gentle/powerful</td>
<td>brutal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fearful</td>
<td>careful/determined</td>
<td>angry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wispy</td>
<td>expansive/concentrated</td>
<td>constricted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spaced out</td>
<td>all-embracing/focused</td>
<td>clutching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dull</td>
<td>calm/alert</td>
<td>keyed up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>naive</td>
<td>innocent/knowing</td>
<td>cynical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>submissive</td>
<td>flexible/resolute</td>
<td>fixated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sloppy</td>
<td>casual/precise</td>
<td>stiff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leaden</td>
<td>rooted/light</td>
<td>flighty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are any number of qualities that could be added to the list. Center has within it all qualities and can manifest any of them without the process of self-identification and judgment forcing it into the limitation of being or being only the qualities manifested. The qualities spring from center, but center is itself devoid of qualities and limitless.

All of this can be summarized succinctly. The centered energy cloud moves in a manner that is at once calm and alert. The uncentered energy cloud is either doped up or keyed up. The centered energy cloud moves in a manner that is both sensitive and powerful. The uncentered energy cloud is either so sensitive that it forgets to maintain its power or so powerful that it forgets to maintain its sensitivity. It will generally alternate between the two, attempting to correct too much of one by a sudden, excessive burst of the other. The centered energy cloud will be fully aware of itself and its environment, while the attention of the uncentered cloud will lurch from one thing to another like that of a juggler trying to remember too many balls at once.
Effective Energy Use

Looking at movement as energy also includes looking at movement tasks as energy flows. The motions involved in performing some job (whether throwing a pot on a potter's wheel or throwing an attacker on the street) will have a flow to them, a direction and rhythm and sweep. Imagine watching someone in a dark room twirl around a little light on the end of a string. Or imagine the photographs of busy city streets taken at night on long exposures. In each, the lights form visual trails. These trails give an impression of the shape of the total movement and its speed and rhythm. Looking at a job as an energy pattern means seeing its total shape in terms of its energy "trail." The movements that are part of the job can be seen as energy lines rather than just a bunch of disconnected applications of force.

The centered way of doing a job will involve fitting into the natural sweep of the job's energy lines. The centered energy cloud will fit itself to the task and go along with its environment in the smoothest, simplest and easiest movements. Naturally, this fitting into the task will not interfere at all with the preserving of the centered shape of the cloud. Here too there is a balance between two qualities, surrendering to the task and preserving one's autonomy.

The uncentered cloud will attempt to do the job, to force it to get done. The uncentered cloud will try to do the job its own way, the way it feels best; and in paying too much attention to itself and not enough to the task, it will be moving inefficiently and with great difficulty.

Aikido movement patterns are all natural ways of using the body. Frequently it is not necessary to correct a student's poor technique by specifying where the hand or foot should have been placed. Instead it is often easier just to say, "Relax. How do you feel? Do you feel at ease in that position, or are you contorting your body trying to get to where you think you should be?" When students direct their attention to their bodies, often they
will notice how tightly and unnaturally they have been holding themselves. As soon as they notice that and let go of the strained quality of their movements, their bodies settle into a comfortable position and one which is, in fact, technically correct. By moving in a natural, easy fashion, the centered energy cloud creates/manifests the proper way of performing the task at hand. By paying attention to the process of moving and not getting distracted by anxiety about the end results of the movement, the centered person stays in the movement and moves well.

The energy field and the energy qualities are not just disembodied ideas about movement. They are experiences. After practicing intentional awareness exercises, people find that these ideas are very good ways of expressing what their experiences felt like. Energy and energy qualities are actually experienced in practicing centered movement, and when they are experienced, the student feels them as aspects of his self. In doing an Aikido wrist twist, for example, a student could feel that his treatment of his partner was harsh and unloving. He has to abandon the brutal quality of his technique, but if he simply gives up brutality he is liable to become weak. Instead he has to keep the strength he has and coalesce it with gentleness so as to perform a technique which is at once strong enough to defend him but also kind and aware of the attacker as another human being. Movements serve the student as a mirror, and he sees in the energy qualities of the defense technique what kind of qualities there are in him as a person. Through understanding and changing the technique, the student comes to understand himself and change himself.

**Energy Breaks**

The key to learning awareness of energy in movement lies in learning to perceive the attachments and imbalances that pervade one's movements. By observing a movement closely, you can
determine how efficient and effective your movement is and
discover the strategies by which you organize yourself to get
things done.

There are various forms of energy imbalances. These are
breaks, blocks, clods, and gaps. A break is an angularity, a
distortion, something other than a smooth, firm, even line of
energy. A block is a tight spot which does not allow energy to
flow past. A clod is an overly dense or heavy area in the energy
field. And a gap is a weak or vacuous spot in the field. These
all go together and are not really separate things. A block in
one part of the energy field means a gap in another part, and a
break is the distortion present around a block or gap. Imagine
a pipeline with energy flowing through it. Any crimp in the pipe
will lead to energy piling up at one point in the flow pattern
and dwindling at another point.

Any particular break in the energy really exists as part of
a web of imbalances throughout the whole energy field. It is
rare to find a single, uncomplicated lean in some direction.
Usually a distortion of one part of the body produces waves of
reaction throughout the body and leads to a series of related
distortions. For example, if the shoulders are not level, that
affects the way the spine is held, and that affects the hips,
and that affects the knees, and that affects how the weight is
placed on the feet, and that affects how power is delivered to
the arms, and so on. Any break or imbalance is generally a part
of a complex web of interrelated imbalances spread throughout the
energy cloud. This web is not merely the sum of the individual
breaks. It is a total, coherent pattern which means what the
person is.

In correcting the web of breaks, we find ourselves cognizant
of a particular break at a particular time. A given person at a
given time will not see or focus on every energy quality or break
present in his/her energy field. The ones that he will notice
and work on will be those that his perceptions are developed
enough to recognize and that are personally meaningful to him at the time. As time goes on, he will perceive his energy field more clearly and more deeply.

A break is corrected by paying attention to it in the movement and then correcting the state of mind which produced the mistaken movement or by moving correctly so as to correct the state of mind. A break is not corrected by fighting against the error but instead by accepting it and working with it. Since an error is performing some other action than the correct one, and is a manifestation of the desire and intention to perform that action rather than the correct one, correcting the error involves letting yourself discover why it had made sense to you to do the move as you did it. Once it really makes more sense to you to do the correct movement, you will find a way to do it. Straining at preventing the incorrect action is unnecessary and ineffective. Learning center is a process of constantly losing center, noticing it, making a correction, letting the mind stray again; going back to center, and so on. As one continues to practice, it becomes easier and easier to approach center, and one stays centered a little bit longer each time he approaches it.

**Partners**

The ability to perceive and understand the human being as an energy field applies equally and simultaneously to awareness of oneself and of those around one. Here again is a dichotomy which is really an aspect of the unity. There is no real separation between one person and the people around him. We all affect each other. Just as the energy field is more than the physical body, so the boundaries of the energy field extend beyond the boundaries of the physical body. One way to think of this is in terms of attention and the process of taking in information. As two people face each other, what one person feels and does is observed by the other person, and that will produce an effect on his feelings and actions. That effect will in turn influence the
first person, and so on back and forth. Our energy state is broadcast around us and affects the people who come close to us. The stronger and more centered our energy—that is, the more clearly we can concentrate, intend and act—the stronger and more harmonious will be our effect on the people around us. On the other hand, the stronger our own energy is and the more centered it is, the less susceptible we will be to disturbances caused by the energy sent forth by other people. As we eliminate imbalances in our own energy fields, we also eliminate imbalances in our interactions with other energy fields.

Part of practicing intentional awareness is learning about ourselves by watching other people and learning about others by examining ourselves. Practicing perceiving ourselves as energy fields and practicing perceiving other people as energy fields are two halves of one and the same practice. Frequently it is much easier to see breaks and the interconnections of breaks in other people than it is to feel them in ourselves. So we sharpen our perceptions by watching how people move and by examining how they respond to events. What we learn in this way, we can apply to observing our own movements, and this will help us take a more complete, objective view of our own actions. On the other hand, often we will find it nearly impossible to perceive in another person how certain breaks are linked together until we have mimicked the breaks and felt their interconnections in our own bodies. Then we can look at our partner with greater perspicacity.
In the exercises we have done so far, we have been working on how to become aware of what our minds and bodies do as we act. However, learning to sense the energy of your movements is also the beginning of learning how to control your movements on the level of energy. In this group of exercises, we will start using energy to direct and create movements.

The point to keep in mind as you practice here is that the process rather than the goal is the focus of your attention. Later on we will be working on ways of making movement more efficient and effective, but if you focus on the goal of moving right, you will move wrong. What we are trying to achieve here is not some particular way of moving but an understanding of how to learn to move. Generally, in order to get good at some skill, people practice it over and over. And then, to get good at another skill, they practice it over and over, and so on. Certainly practice of the skill you want to learn is necessary, but learning is itself a skill. By focusing on the nature of your movement and how you go about learning to move, you will be learning something that will apply to all your movements. The movements we are working with have no particular intrinsic importance. They serve only as examples of movement to study.

There is an intelligence deep within us that is more fundamental than our conscious mind. Certainly no one can understand on a conscious level all the processes that go into a simple movement like raising one arm above the head. There is something within us which directs that and does it very well. The exercises we are working with give that something some new experiences, which will allow it to do its job even better. Perhaps what interferes with the functioning of our inner intelligence is the learning our conscious minds have absorbed, much of which is
really mis-learning. As you will experience, there is a delicate balance between conscious direction of your movement and surrender to an "intuitive" flow of movement.

[A] PALM PUSHING

In doing a movement, the energy/intention precedes the movement and draws the body after it. This exercise will help you feel how the ki is focused in advance of the body.

1. Stand up comfortably erect. Put your two palms together in front of you. With your favored hand, say it's your right, push on the other hand. Push back with your left just enough to impede your right as it moves forward. Don't use too much pressure, just enough to feel that the movement forward meets some definite resistance. And feel your concentrated intention to push the left hand back.

The ideas of resistance and concentrated intention should be discussed a bit more here. When you are neck deep in water and trying to walk through it quickly, there is a resistance to overcome and a feeling of clear intention in your muscles. It is very different from the aimless freedom of moving through the air. There must be a real, conscious commitment to moving in a certain direction through the water because the resistance forces us to pay attention to what we are doing and the fact that we intend to do it. The resistance provided by one hand here functions the same way. It is a way of turning up the volume on certain very faint sensations. However, it would be definitely wrong to hold a sense of resistance to your own movement in normal activity. That is something we are doing here just for the purposes of this exercise. Letting it become a habit would lead to nothing but constant strain.

Now separate your two hands by about eighteen inches. Hold your left hand in front of you and your right off to the side. Start moving your right towards your left in a focused fashion intending when you touch your left hand to push it towards the
left. As you get to within three inches or so of your left palm, feel that there is something between the two hands, something of the consistency of a soft sponge. Your right hand will still move your left but by using the "sponge" as an intermediary to transfer the force to it rather than by actually touching it itself. Do this a number of times and play with the sensations you will feel a few inches away from your right palm. You might try building up the sense of a larger sponge and seeing how far away from your left palm you can sense the ki projecting from your right and pushing the left.

2. Once you have felt the ki projection clearly, you will find that the left palm is not really necessary as an external focus to help you tune in to the energy. You can do the exercise with an imagined focus. Imagine that there is a marble floating in mid-air and you are going to brush it away. As you move your hand to brush the marble away, sense its position in front of your hand in the air, and sense that you are touching it with your energy four or five inches before your hand actually gets to the spot. Feel that you exert an actual push on the marble with your energy before your hand gets to it, and feel that you are able to push the marble over a few inches by the push you exert with your ki.

[B] SNAIL TRAILS

Have you ever seen the dried, glisteny trails left on the ground by snails as they crawled around? Using an image of a silvery, smooth energy track can help you do physical movements as energy flows.

We are all familiar with the reflexive and voluntary ways of moving. We know what it feels like to touch a hot stove and have our hand catapulted away from it by reflex. And we also know what it feels like to think out a movement and then do it voluntarily. Reflexive movement is quick, "slippery," and without thought; voluntary movement is deliberate and kind of "chunky."
There is a third movement experience which, in some ways, is midway between the two. Directing a movement by projecting an intention and then letting the movement do itself results in a movement that feels simultaneously voluntary and also silky smooth. Though we usually consider thought to be an affair only of the intellect, projecting intentions in order to direct movements is a way of thinking with the body as well as with the mind.

The exercise for learning this is very similar to the previous exercise. Again you will be moving to brush something away from in front of you, but in this case it will be your partner's arm. The exercise is derived from a way of learning a defense against a knife attack, as you will see.

Have your partner stand in front of you and hold his hand one quarter inch from your chest. He should keep his fingers straight as though the hand were a spear point or a knife. Your partner's job is to stab you as soon as he sees the slightest indication that you are going to move. Just to make sure he is on the ball, twitch your shoulders a few times and see if he does stab you each time you move. Needless to say, he should stab for the breast bone and not the solar plexus.

You should stand comfortably erect with both arms by your sides. When you decide to move, you should raise one arm, your preferred arm, and slap your partner's arm away from your chest. Make sure to raise your arm in a smooth, even, direct line towards your partner's "knife hand," and be sure not to hit your partner's elbow or you might hurt his arm. Do the move a few times and see whether you could push his arm away before he stabbed you. The chances are that he will have poked you before you could parry his thrust. Voluntary movement is too slow, and he could pick up the preliminary "quiver" that is part of getting the body into action.

Most likely as you have done the movement, you have been paying attention to the result of the movement rather than to the process of it. Let's repeat the movement slowly, paying attention
to the inner feel of it. For this part of the exercise, your partner will not attempt to poke you and will just stand there calmly with his fingers by your chest. Now, very slowly, with full attention on the movement itself (but without straining at this), brush your partner's hand away from your chest. Do this a number of times, until you are satisfied that you have really felt the movement.

Now turn away from your partner and try the movement again a number of times. As you do this, feel the movement as a projection of energy. That is, each time before you actually do the movement itself, sense the feel it will have. This should be easy for you because you have repeated the movement a number of times now and because it is just the same thing that we were doing in the Projecting a Spot exercise.

The next stage in the exercise is to stand still, with your hands by your sides, and run through the sensed experience of the movement, but without doing it on the gross physical level. Don't make your body rigid, but just relax and re-experience the full course of the movement as a projected intention.

Now go back to your partner. This time he will attempt to stab you as you move. Don't try to do the move voluntarily. Open up as much as possible and just wait. You know, of course, that you wish to block his hand, but just let that goal subside into the depths of the ocean of your being. Just be alert and calm and focused on the instant of your standing in front of your partner. If you have attained just the right balance, at some instant you will find the block erupting into existence and brushing away your partner's arm.

After long practice of this way of intending/creating a movement, you will find that you do not need to go through all the preliminary steps. You will be able to project an intention and the body will carry it through smoothly and quickly. Naturally, for a long time you will be able to do this only in very limited ways and only irregularly, but if you watch the
masters of any of the martial arts, you will see a way of moving
that goes beyond what we all think of as the limits of the human
being. In many martial arts, there are masters of seventy and
eighty years of age who easily run rings around young students in
their fighting prime. There are many films of Morihei Ueshiba at
the age of seventy-five or eighty controlling many young attackers
at once.

[C] FEELING A PUSH

Becoming sensitive to and learning how to use your own energy
in movement is really not different from learning how to perceive
someone else's energy in their movements. This exercise is simi­
lar to the second part of the Moving Wrist exercise and is an
extension of the last two exercises.

As your partner stands in front of you within easy reach,
close your eyes and relax. Whenever he wants to, your partner
should reach out and push you slowly but firmly on your chest.
He should move his arm slowly and with clear intention to push
on you, and as he does this, he should focus his energy at a point
five inches or so in front of his palm. It should take him three
to five seconds to complete the whole movement so that you will
have plenty of time to sense what the projected push feels like
as it comes towards you. He should move silently so that you
won't be depending on your ears to tell when he's moving. During
the time that he is waiting before pushing you, your friend
should look away and dismiss you completely from his mind so that
there will be a distinct difference between when he focuses on
you and when he does not. You should wait in a calm, empty state.
Don't try to pick up or interpret anything. Don't feel pressured
to determine whether you are "really" feeling something or just
think you are. Just stay with whatever you do feel and record it
as a disinterested witness.

When you feel something that you believe might be some kind
of awareness of the push coming, raise your arm and parry the
push, just as you did in the last exercise. Keep track of what you feel in relation to whether or not you do succeed in parrying the arm, and try to discover whether there is some non-visual way you can get information about your partner's movements. As you practice this exercise, perhaps you will have an undeniably clear experience of something.

[D] CATCHING A BEAN BAG

These next two exercises involve movements that are very similar to those in the last three exercises we've done. This exercise consists of trying to catch a bean bag as your partner drops it. If you are comfortable sitting on your knees in a kneeling position or sitting cross-legged, then the best way to do the exercise is sitting on the floor. Otherwise, do it standing.

Have your partner hold up a small bean bag or anything else that is soft and easy to catch. You keep your hands on your knees (or by your sides if you are standing). Your partner can release the bag at any time, and you should try to catch it. He should start off holding the bag about a foot over your hands, and he should decrease the distance with each drop until he finds the distance that you have trouble at. Your job is both to tune in to your partner's energy field so that you can tell when he is about to drop the bag and also to set up your own energy field to be ready to make the correct movement to catch the bag. Your partner's job is to refine his energy so that there is no preliminary quiver which will alert you to his intention to drop the bag.

Run through the same sequence of practices as in the Snail Trails exercise to set up the ki projection for the catching movement. Then settle down and open up as much as possible. Don't watch your partner's hand. Focus on his lower chest and soften your eyes so that you see all of him. Just be.
The difference here is that rather than initiating the action and letting your partner try to catch up, as in the Snail Trails exercise, you are waiting for him to initiate the action. So you not only must have the energy flow ready to erupt physically, but you must be in a special state of absolute stillness coupled with readiness to move. You can neither get antsy nor fall asleep. Just be.

[EN] SNATCHING A BEAN BAG

Sit on the floor in front of your partner and put a bean bag on the floor between you. Adjust yourselves so that it is equally far from each of you. Have a third person call out "grab," and when he calls out both of you try to grab the bag first. This exercise will sharpen your concentration and timing.

You must remember, however, to do this exercise as a way of learning about movement, both yours and your partner's. If you do it simply as a game or a contest, you will put all your attention on whether you win and will pay no attention to the process of your movement. Whenever you feel strongly that you can't afford to lose, you will put all your attention on your goal and move in whatever way happens to be most natural and familiar to you, and of course this will be your old, habitual way of moving, just the thing that you are trying to go beyond. You must be willing to lose, or at least you must not care about winning, so that you will be able to afford to put your attention on the process of your movement and find better ways of moving.
Section 10: The Nature of Practice

In the last group of exercises, we started using energy projection methods as a way of learning to control our movements. In introducing the group, I commented that the process of the movement rather than the goal of it should be the focus of attention during movement practice. This is an important idea, but it contains within it another very important concept and that is the distinction between practice of movement and real life use of movement. In practicing movement awareness, you must get a grasp not only on what movement is but also on what practice is, so we will spend some time considering the nature of practice.

There is one obvious and basic difference between practice and real use. In practicing movement awareness, we choose some movement task to perform, but the task itself is not our real concern. It is just an excuse to move, and the nature of movement is the real focus. We practice movement in order to examine how we move and what we are, and the purpose of this examination is to perfect ourselves and our movement. In using movement in real life, we move in order to perform some task, in order to get something done, and the movement itself is just the means by which we fulfill our purpose.

Most people do not examine their movement. If it is good enough to get the job done, it is good enough. Their movements may be inefficient and even, in the long run, physically destructive, but if they are good enough for the immediate task, they are good enough. And their movements may reveal an off center way of moving through the world, but if it isn't immediately painful, then it can be ignored. And when it is painful, they usually are too busy dealing with the job they are trying to get done to waste any time paying attention to how they feel and move.
(It reminds me of the old joke—when it isn't raining you can't find the leaks in the roof. And when it is, the weather is too bad to go out and repair them.)

The point of practice is that it is time taken out from "real life" to pay attention to ourselves and our movements. By taking time to pay attention to and practice movement, we will eliminate dysfunctional patterns of movement and build up habits of correct movement so that when we move in real life, we will automatically and instinctively move correctly.

Notice that there is a distinction between what we do as we practice movement and how we should move as we normally use movement in daily life. In practice, we artificially split the process of movement by paying separate attention to the movement task, to the movement process and to the moving self. We do this so we can examine the nature of the movement. But in real life, when we are doing some job, we should simply do the job with full concentration on the job itself. In Aikido practice we pay attention to the form of the defense technique, our manner of body use, our breathing and balance, etc. Can you imagine how disastrous it would be to dwell on fine points of your movement while you were trying to prevent an attacker on the street from cutting up your face with a broken bottle? In real life we should put all our effort and attention into the job. Practice is an artificial situation in which we can afford to put our attention on ourselves rather than on what we have to get done.

In practice we look inward, dissecting what we find, isolating certain parts and manipulating each part to determine its effect on the whole and to learn how to use it well. However, isolating the elements that make up our movements must be followed by putting together everything we have examined and creating a unity in ourselves. The point of all this is to find within ourselves a centered way of moving in the world. But this centered state is not composed of parts and attained by deliberateness. It is a whole, a natural, effortless state. No matter
what task we must perform, centered movement should be easy, free and spontaneous.

In a way, then, practice is a paradox. We work with parts to attain the whole, and we use deliberate control to attain spontaneity. We cannot practice being centered. We either are or are not. What we can do is set up the conditions under which spontaneity can arise and then step back and let the flow take over. Letting go of tension, making our energy field equal and even, moving in good alignment, learning efficient patterns of movement: these are things that we can do and practice. When we hold tension, move poorly and maintain breaks in our energy, everything is so effortful and hard to do that we know we cannot afford to step back and let go. We have to keep doing. We can't trust ourselves to do such hard work in an effortless and spontaneous manner. As we refine our ways of moving, we get to a point where it is easier to let go to the flow; even if it is just for a few seconds, we experience that the flow will accomplish what is necessary, and that makes it a bit easier to let go the next time.

Practice is a paradox. We work at doing to attain non-doing. What we can do in practice is set up the conditions where non-doing may come through. You can do the stepping off of a diving board, but you cannot do the falling into the water. It just happens. Do your part and then let the flow do its part. This two-part sequence is what you worked with in the Snail Trails exercise. First you built up the way of moving you needed, and then you stepped back and waited for it to come of its own accord.

Practice is a paradox. We are practicing to do something right of course. If we could do it right, we would not need to practice. But what do we do and repeat in our practice? Not the right movement but the wrong one. How is it that by repeating the wrong move often enough we can learn a different move, the right one? Clearly it is not the move itself that we are
practicing but our doing of the move. If we repeat a move often enough, we shall start to notice the points within the move where we make wrong decisions, and we shall begin to have enough awareness of what we are doing as we do it that we can make changes at those decision points.

But what do we learn when we once make a change for the better? We learn to make a new decision each time we come to that decision point, and we learn to make that new and better decision automatically. However, the chances are that that new decision itself is not really perfectly correct but only an improvement, and it itself will need to be corrected eventually. We are trying to learn to be free and perceptive in our movements, but each new thing that we learn is just another way of locking ourselves into a pattern.

There is a feeling of paradoxicality that underlies all of the practice, and it is much like the paradoxical union of opposite qualities that underlies centered energy. It basically comes down to the paradox of maintaining a state of being which is simultaneously innocent and controlled. You have to be diligent and disciplined and work hard on what you are practicing, but you also have to be innocent and quiet and open so that you let the practice talk to you and guide you. If you lack the former quality, you will get nothing done. But if you lack the latter, you will close yourself off to new perceptions by forcing your mind to focus on what it already knows about. Unless the two qualities of control and innocence are made one, you are struggling to reach a state of unity through a dualistic practice, but of course there is no other way to proceed. We all start with this duality, this lack of unity; it is the very reason we need to practice. People are often overwhelmed by the feeling that the path is impossibly difficult and infinitely long, that in any given movement there are an infinite number of elements to remember all at once in order to do the move correctly. The only solution is not to worry. It is simply a question of proceeding
with your practice on a day to day basis. Each day you practice is one more day that you have practiced, and one hour of practice confers one hour of understanding.

Sometimes practice seems like an impossible task. But somehow, over the years, changes accumulate and you become different as you move through life. There is a sense that you are contacting a deeper layer of yourself in practice, that you are contacting an inner intelligence and learning how to cooperate with it and allow it to function. This inner intelligence seems to learn better and function better than that small part of ourselves that we usually identify with, and it seems to work with an easy wholeness that makes everything it does right. However, learning to allow yourself to work with this part of yourself is a very delicate process, and you must attain a delicate balance in your practice.

It is essential that the awareness exercises be approached with the right attitude. There are many ways of going about practice of movement awareness exercises that would be counterproductive. The key to learning to use movement as a discipline of awareness is to learn to perceive your movements fully by staying in your self and in the practice. There are many distractions, and if you surrender to them you will wind up going through the movements of the exercises in a vacant or tense way and learning nothing.

To begin with, many people feel that hard work is the best way to get the job done. And if they find the job is hard, then they try harder. However, this hardness is completely out of place in learning movement awareness. Even when we work on strength and power in our movements, we work softly. But many people will resist the gentle feeling of just being and will continue to feel that they must work hard to achieve results, and they will try to maintain a tense control over themselves and their partners in the exercises. This attitude will produce a narrowing and a brittleness that is just the opposite of the quality which is the goal of the exercises.
Another problem is that people tend to evaluate new things on the basis of what they already know and then reject the new things because they don't fit their old ideas. It is natural and reasonable to use your past experiences as a guide to present possibilities, but on the other hand if a person clutches at what is familiar to him rather than letting go of it, he will never experience anything beyond what he already knows about. If someone withdraws from movement awareness practice because it does not fit his preconceptions about what practice and its results should or should not be, then he will certainly never discover whether it has anything of value to offer him. Thus it can often be productive to approach new experiences with an attitude of willing suspension of disbelief. This is important because there are a number of differences between intentional awareness practice and the types of activity that most people are used to, and these differences could confuse some people and prompt them to give up practice of awareness exercises.

To begin with, it might seem perfectly obvious to a person who is practicing mainly to improve his external performance that working on inner feelings and processes has nothing to do with the movement skills he is trying to improve. For example, if hitting a ball is the external skill one is interested in, the inner method of practice for it may include sitting and touching the ball and exploring one's reactions to it. If this is not perceived as being related to hitting the ball, one might simply drop the idea of trying the inner practice. Instead, the attitude of a willing suspension of disbelief would suggest that one ought to wait and try the practice on its own terms and then see whether it does in fact help with hitting the ball.

Again, a person who is practicing mainly to improve his external performance might find that paying attention to the inner processes of his movements distracts him and interferes with his performance. She/he might immediately decide to give up intentional awareness practice and never realize that it takes some
time for a person to learn how to achieve improvement in performance by working on the level of intention. And in a similar way, someone who is used to examining the external results of his practice might be so unused to perceiving inner phenomena that even when significant inner change and improvement start to take place he fails to notice it. He might give up the practice even when he is getting close to being able to use it for his external purposes because he doesn't notice that there have been any changes in himself. In all these cases, it is important not to be limited by one's habitual ways of doing things.

However, a particularly sneaky trap and one which will also severely limit what you learn has to do not with old ways of looking at things but with new ways. Many people click in to some exercise and begin getting exciting results and insights, whether in terms of inner awareness or external performance results, and they get so excited that they feel they've discovered the One and Only Right Way of Doing Things. They work hard on this new insight and get good results from it but don't notice that there are still lots of areas they've never even noticed. It is important to maintain a willing suspension of belief (as well as a willing suspension of disbelief) so that you allow yourself to go on to the next stage instead of getting trapped by being satisfied where you are.

Another similar problem arises when a person successfully focuses on some inner event and thereby produces a significant improvement in external performance. Often the person becomes so excited about the new external achievement that he/she forgets to keep concentrating on the inner elements and as a result loses both the inner and the outer results.

The attitude that underlies proper practice is a delicate balance of innocence and responsibility. You must be willing to approach the practice in a state of emptiness so that you can take in whatever happens and let it guide you to the next step. If you are willful rather than innocent, you will go where you
know you wish to go and will not go where you could have gone if you were able to see beyond your own desires.

On the other hand, the way to keep yourself focused on yourself in the practice is to assume responsibility for everything that occurs. For example, in self-defense classes, I tell students that if they get hit by their partner, instead of thinking, "Oh! He hit me," they should think, "Oh! I failed to block his punch."

The first attitude puts the responsibility for one's being hit on the attacker and suggests that it was beyond the defender's control. The second attitude makes the defender responsible for what happens to him/her. Once the person assumes responsibility for getting hit, he automatically begins to think in terms of what changes to make in himself so that he does not get hit next time.

The attitude of responsibility means to look at yourself as the cause of everything that happens in the practice. Naturally there are some things that, realistically speaking, are beyond your control, but adopting this attitude is a strategy for learning to pay attention to your own actions. If you take the attitude that you are not responsible for what happens to you, you will keep your eye on external events and other people and very likely wind up seeing yourself as a helpless victim of circumstances. If you take the attitude that you are responsible for whatever happens to you, you will examine yourself whenever anything interesting happens, and every situation will teach you something about yourself.

However, there are two traps to avoid when you take responsibility upon yourself. To begin with, it is important that you do not jump from taking responsibility to fighting yourself. If you notice that you are doing a movement incorrectly, work gently with what you are doing to find a better way, but don't strain to avoid the wrong action. Trying to delete a wrong move means trying to create a hole in your movement. Don't put more energy into the error by fighting against it. Instead accept the error
and work with it. Learn to see errors as opportunities for fresh learning rather than frustrations. If you try to suppress an error in your movement, you may succeed to some extent, but in one way or another the lack of awareness that is the cause of the movement error will keep coming up in different situations until you come to terms with it. Somehow the inner intelligence will keep putting you in situations in which that lack of awareness will keep coming up, and this will continue until you allow yourself to notice what is wrong with your movement. And actually, as you begin to notice what you are doing that is getting in your own way, your movement may get worse and worse. As they say, the darkest hour is just before the dawn. It often happens that just before you break through into a new level of understanding, it feels as though all your skill and awareness in movement is lost. To change something is to destroy it as it was. In order to make way for the new, the old must be discarded, and this can be a confusing experience. People often feel that they are constantly getting worse instead of better in their practice because they are always giving up what they already can do in order to move on to practice what they cannot yet do. There are cycles of disintegration and integration, breaking down and consolidating, that are part of the process of working with movement awareness. Taking responsibility for your movement can lead you to feel that every movement you make is wrong and that the whole process is hopeless, but it isn't necessary to get trapped in that way of thinking.

The other trap is to especially enjoy taking responsibility for those things that you do right. If you do something right and become puffed up about it, you will certainly not be able to do it right again. It is an interesting paradox in Aikido that we take responsibility for anything in a defense technique that does not work, but anything that is done right we identify as just being part of the flow that moves through us. What we do, what we feel we own, comes out wrong. It doesn't match the
circumstances. And then we feel pushed out of shape. At those times we try to remember to assume responsibility and determine what we are doing that is interfering with the flow. But when we do something right, it feels so free and spontaneous and unbounded that we cannot really feel we own it. We aren't responsible for what is right. There is a spirit of innocence in correct movements. There is an inner intelligence that is larger than we are, and if we are quiet enough, its delicate energy will be enough to put us into motion and into the right motion.

As you practice you will go through stages. In the beginning everything you do will be natural but artless. When you move, you will just move, but your movements will be clumsy and inappropriate. As you begin to learn what to do, your movements will be more refined and more appropriate, but they will be strained and a bit late because you will be concentrating on how to do them. The last stage is the one in which movements are correct and also natural. One of the experiences that keeps us all practicing is we generally do a move like this once every few months. That two or three seconds of clarity shows you that you already have perfection within you, and it is just waiting to be let out. As you practice, you will feel that the intelligence within you learns much faster than you do, that in some way it already knows the goal, and that becoming quiet allows you to contact this intelligence more and more. As you learn to be in the practice and in yourself as you practice, it will talk to you and point out new possibilities for your practice and development. The exercises will change and grow and proliferate and draw you into new and unfamiliar territory. The basic attitude of practice must be one of quietness and concentration.

As you practice, you will see changes in your movements and yourself, and you will notice rhythms and stages in your practice. You can look back and see how far you have come from where you started or you can look ahead and see how far you have yet to go and how much you have yet to learn. The second view is by far the
more interesting and productive. I have practiced all of the exercises in this book for years, but there isn't one that I feel I really understand. The simplest movement, however many times you have practiced it, has more to teach you the next time you come back to it. The right attitude for practicing movement awareness is simply a real interest in the practice.
In this exercise we will work with fast, large movements, the kind of movements that people do in ordinary life, and we will examine the intentional projections that are part of these movements. The exercise itself is quite simple, but describing it and doing it are both very difficult.

Work with a partner. Have him/her choose some large, definite movement and then do it. The movement should have some specific goal which involves applying some force or speed in some task. Examples might be snatching a pencil from someone's hand or slamming a door shut. Your partner should do the movement, but the movement only: that is, he should move as though he were snatching a pencil from someone, but he does not actually have to snatch a real pencil from a real hand, just mimic it. And just as he grabs the (imaginary) pencil, he should freeze still. What we are creating is a snapshot of someone caught just as he grabbed a pencil. Your partner should not stop the movement and then readjust himself into a static, relaxed position of balance. Instead he should hold himself still in exactly the position he was at the time he stopped. If he has trouble in getting this, then you can have him do his movement a number of times and carry through without stopping. Then have him do it again and yell "Stop!" and he should freeze exactly as he is when you yell.

Your job in this exercise is to find the energy projections which form the underlying organization of the movement. This is a practice in perceiving the delicate components of a person's balance and how the body parts are knit together by the intention to move toward the goal of the action. It is a practice in
learning how to see what the mover's idea of his job is and what his strategies for carrying it out are. The important thing to keep in mind as you do this exercise is that the focus of attention in it is on the mover's intentions and not just on his sheer physical movement. You can think of the tableau presented by your frozen partner as being one frame you are examining out of a movie film. The question you are asking is not "Where is he?" or "Where is he going physically?" but "Where does he want to go next?" Can you see the projections of intention which express his idea of where he wants to go and which organize his physical going?

The process of discovering this is the same process of testing a person's balance/intention that we used in the Projecting a Spot and Moving Wrist exercises. If you can see right off where the person is projecting and how he/she will topple, go right to that spot and test it with very gentle pressure. If you aren't sure, use some trial and error experimentation and push gently at various spots and in various directions. As you get close, you will begin to move your partner slightly. When you zero in on the correct projection, your partner will fall. Remember, when you have tuned in correctly, the most minute amount of force will make your partner lose balance, so don't just shove him over. Also remember that this is not merely a mechanical exercise. Obviously your partner will be physically weakest in the direction perpendicular to the line drawn between his two feet (assuming that he is standing). If you simply push him in this direction he will fall, but then you are working on a physical weakness of his posture rather than tuning in to the stream of his energy/intention. The important thing to keep in mind as you do this exercise is that you are not trying to find out what direction the body is falling in (due to momentum and lack of proper support); you are trying to perceive what direction the body wishes to move in, where the person intends to go. The same physical position can be weak in very
different directions depending on whether the person wishes at that instant to go in one direction or another.

Remember that how you touch your partner is the basis for what you will come to know of your partner. Whether you are looking at, listening to or touching another person, you must feel them to know them. If you are afraid to really touch, then you are tensing your muscles to form a suit of armor around yourself, and you won't be able to feel past your own boundaries to feel your partner. There is a sense in which you must be able to love in order to perceive.

Paying careful attention to the different aspects of an energy projection will help you identify where your partner wants to go. There are five components to an intentional projection: the origin, initial direction, shape, amount, and quality. In this exercise, just the first four components are important in being able to topple your partner gently and easily. You must start by seeing the spot in your partner's body from which the projection originates. If you soften your eyes and get an overall impression of your partner's energy field/body, you will often find your attention drawn to some important area. It will always be involved in some way with the movement he is doing, but it may not be apparent just how. Frequently the point which has the greatest amount of energy will not be obviously involved in the physical momentum of the movement. Often the point you notice will be involved in a way that obviously relates to the purpose of the movement your partner is doing.

Once you locate the point in his body that your partner is most interested in moving, you must find the direction he is interested in moving it. The initial direction, however, is just the beginning of the total energy flow. The energy may leave its point of origin in one direction and then shift direction. For example, your partner may wish to move forward a bit and then move to the right, so the total shape of the flow will trace a shape in the air that goes forward and then curves to the right.
The distinction between the initial direction and total shape is the same as that between the immediate direction of a bullet as it leaves the muzzle of a gun and the total shape of its trajectory before it comes to rest.

The shape of the energy flow is the shape of the total movement that a person wishes to accomplish and it exists in his mind even before the physical movement is initiated. In a sense, it is a timeless movement. Rather than seeing the movement as the sequence of locations that a person occupies in successive instants as he performs an action, we see the whole sequence as occurring simultaneously in one present instant. When a person intends to do something, the whole shape exists for him as he sets out to do it, and this is what we are looking for when we try to identify the shape of the person's energy flow. (This is not to say that in real life people are always clear and determined about what they are going to do. Frequently their intentions are muddy and confused and so are their movements. But ideally, and for the present, we can talk about the clear shape of movement intention being present in a person's body/thoughts before its execution.)

Once you have the origin, the initial direction, and the shape, you must identify the amount of energy in the movement. Two movements with the same origin and initial direction and shape will be very different if different amounts of energy are involved. It is important to remember that movements do not occur in a vacuum, even when they are done only as practice in a class. They have a goal, and the mover has some feeling about the importance of attaining that goal. This will affect how the person moves, and the degree of importance the person attaches to the movement will be evident in examining it. To some extent the strength of intention can affect the shape of the movement. Although the same movement shape can be done with a lot of intention or with much less, it is also true that a high degree of intention will often mean a much greater amount of energy
focused in the direction of the movement and a consequently
greater amount of lean towards the goal (or away from it). Thus,
if your partner is reaching forward without much energy, he may
topple towards a spot close to his feet when you push him lightly.
But if he is reaching forward with a great deal of energy, and is
pushed off balance, he may fly forward and fall farther away from
where he is standing.

The quality of the energy projection refers to the tone of
the person's movement. It refers to the "emotional" color of his
movement and his feeling about doing the movement and accomplishing
its goal. It also refers to his feeling about himself as the
doer of the movement. Is the person's feeling in the movement
nervous, calm, noble, confused, urgent, languid, etc.? For this
particular exercise, looking at the quality of the movement will
not be very important. We can stay with the other elements to
discover where the energy projection is.

In this exercise we have been talking as though projecting
an intention is necessarily related to being slightly off balance
and vulnerable to being tipped over. However, if you think back
to the discussion of center and the energy sphere, you will recall
that I said that the origin of a centered person's movement is
always his center. It is clear that all of the exercises which
emphasize the movement of one part of the body and the consequent
off-balancing of the stance are exercises in feeling projections
which are not anchored to center. These exercises are basic ways
of identifying particular energy patterns. In these exercises
we are looking at the effects of specific energy projections and
working with parts rather than the whole. Before the whole can be
made into a real unity, it is important to experience it clearly
in its parts. First we isolate energies to gain awareness of
their action, and then we integrate and unify them. Later on we
shall work on maintaining center as we project: a centered pro-
jection from one part involves the whole and does not produce any
off-balancing.
In this exercise we are really learning to read energy imbalances. It is appropriate to start with reading imbalances because we need to learn about that so that we can start working towards correcting our own imbalances and also because we could not hope to be able to read balanced energy until we ourselves have experienced that state. In any case, there are so few people moving around in a balanced manner that the sheer unavailability of perfect specimens leaves us with mere mortals as our subjects.

In this exercise you must see the bodymind as a whole and interpret the whole web of energy. Imagine a wool sweater. Pulling on one strand of yarn at one spot will affect the shape and tension of all the other strands. The mindbody is the same way. Each part is related to the other parts. If one body part has too much energy/attention/intention/feeling, then less attention will be paid to some other part. Physically, if one part leans too far forward, some other part must lean too far backward to preserve an equilibrium. If you hold a heavy package to the side by one outstretched arm, you will lean with your opposite shoulder to the opposite side to keep balance. If you pay too much attention to one part of the world, there will be a corresponding neglect of some other part. It will frequently be the case that for a break in one part of the energy sphere, there will be a corresponding but opposite break on the point exactly opposite it on the other side of the sphere. This would be a simple case, but there may be a series of compensatory breaks rather than one single, equal but opposite break. Almost always there will be more than one spot at which to touch your partner to topple him, but generally there will be one especially obvious spot. Thus there is more to this exercise than identifying the components of your partner's major energy projection/break. It often happens that there is a hierarchy of intentions/breaks operating in a given moment, and each break must be satisfied in turn before the person will topple easily when you nudge him. You
must move your partner the required amount in the direction of the first intention, then the second, then the third and so on before his body will fall in that slippery way which signals that you have indeed pushed him just where he wanted to go.

Over the years that I have been working with this exercise, I have gained more and more skill in seeing. I have presented it here in a very systematic, analytic fashion precisely to make it more accessible for those people who are having as hard a time as I did getting in touch with this whole realm of experience. It took me many years to realize that I (and many other people) had a hard time even beginning to understand Aikido because many things that seemed obvious to the more—how shall I say it?—"intuitive" or "athletic" or "embodied" people who formed the majority of people attracted to the art were completely opaque to me. I functioned primarily with the intellect, and I found it hard to go from my normal way of processing to the manner of being which is involved in Aikido. This exercise, although it was presented in a very intuitive fashion, was my first clue. I remember the thrill when my instructor had us do it. I had known I was supposed to be blending with the attacker, rather than opposing him, but I could never figure out what to blend with. And all of a sudden I had a clear experience which was an equally clear idea: go with what he is doing/wanting to do. Over the years I traced back to the experience/idea of intention and pinned it down in the Elevator Button exercise, and at the same time I worked forwards to the more complex aspects of intention and pinned them down in many of the other exercises in this book.

A while ago I read an interesting statement by one of Ueshiba's early students. In an Aiki News article, the Reverend Genyu Sogabe was quoted as having made the following comments. (Sensei is the Japanese word for teacher, but because of the position of the sensei in offering moral guidance to his disciples, the word has overtones of respect that are lacking in our word "teacher.")
For the first time I felt I had found a clue to Sensei's incredible divine technique. My selfish desire, which must be called my "karma", was perceived through Sensei's deep insight as an opening and became the beginning of his technique. Finally, my body was tripped up by my own brute power which lay exposed, and I was turned around and thrown on the spot according to my will. Startled, I had an insight into that level of workings of Aiki (Pranin, 20:Issue 30, August 15, 1978).

[B] OBSERVING PROJECTIONS

In this exercise we are going to turn down the volume a bit. Instead of having your partner do a large movement that is related to an obvious goal, ask your partner to think of something he/she wants to do and project that movement intention. Actually it takes no more sensitivity to do this than to do the previous exercise, but there are fewer large clues here to help you out.

In order to see someone else clearly, you must be in your own center. Before going on, take some time to practice the Basic Breathing exercise. Spend a few minutes on it. When you finish, take a moment to rest before standing up, and while you are sitting and resting, open your eyes and practice using Soft Eyes.

Now pick a partner to work with. Simply stand there and watch while he projects. He should pick some type of projection on his own and do it. You should see if you can identify the projection purely from watching without touching or moving him. To get feedback on your accuracy, you can either push your partner very gently as we did in the previous exercises or you can describe what you are seeing and ask if it is correct.

[C] FEELING ENERGY QUALITIES

In this exercise we will focus on movement qualities. Energy qualities manifest in the feeling or tone of the mover and his movements, and, as usual, one aspect of energy awareness has to do with our ability to feel our own movement and the other aspect
has to do with our ability to observe other's movements. In this exercise we will work with our own awareness of how we feel as we move with different energy qualities.

Have all the people in the class stand in a circle. This way each person can not only work with his/her own body feelings but can also occasionally glance around to see what other people are projecting. Stand in a comfortably erect posture, with your hands by your sides and your feet spread a few inches apart. This part of the exercise will involve projecting pairs of qualities and discovering the differences between them. Take some time, a minute or so, for each quality projection.

First, imagine that you are royalty. Assume an air of great nobility. You are a queen or king with all the breeding that a thousand years of royal ancestors confers. Now imagine that you are someone putting on airs and acting very snooty and stuck up, someone who has no right to act any better than anyone else.

For the next pair, imagine that you have witnessed a really unethical act by someone who really should know better: project a feeling of righteous indignation. And then project the feeling of a spoiled brat throwing a temper tantrum.

For the last pair, start off by imagining that you are standing in front of someone you dearly and tenderly love. And next imagine that you are a sycophant, a toady, and you are standing in front of the person whose favor you wish to curry.

What are the projections involved in these pairs? Have the people in the class share what they felt as they projected each element of the pairs. Remember to pin down the feeling in terms of changes in muscle tension, breathing, balance, stance and so on. Don't just mention verbal labels and assume that that actually specifies what people were feeling. The same label can cover a multitude of different things felt.

An interesting and helpful exercise is to have three people stand up in front of the class and project one of the pairs. See if you can describe the projections in terms of their origins,
initial directions, total shapes and strengths of intention as we practiced in the Movement Snapshots exercise. Then compare the projections and try to discover the similarities and differences among them.

Most people will experience that there are commonalities and differences in and between the pairs. Expressing some of these patterns rather generally, each of the pairs is composed of two energies that are related, two types of anger, two types of "nobility," and two types of "love." Most people find that nobility is very high in the body as even the verbal expressions like "stuck up" or "snooty" show. Anger is hard and comes from the top of the chest, love is soft and comes more from the heart and solar plexus area. These commonalities refer to how different species of emotions within the same genus are similar.

However, there is another kind of commonality, one that relates to how species of emotion in different genera are similar. Three of the emotions are feelings that would generally be regarded in a positive light, and three would generally be thought of as negative. The positive feelings (nobility, righteous indignation and love) are generally experienced as making the body more solidly grounded, more expansive and more straightforward and open. The three negative projections are generally experienced as making the body unstable, small, constricted, twisted and oblique. (It is interesting to note that many things said to be wrong or "immoral" are things which result in constriction and tension. How do you feel when you have to stand before someone knowledgeable and powerful and tell a lie that you aren't sure you'll get away with?)

Note that these generalities I've described do not necessarily hold for all persons. But they are common patterns. What exactly a person does when he/she projects some feeling quality is a good clue to what specific meaning he attaches to the name we refer to the feeling by. As people gain skill in sensing the particular quality patterns they project, they begin to learn interesting
things about what the words mean to them; and by the sharing of experiences in the class, people learn how other people experience these "same" feelings.

To extend this exercise further, you can pick out any of the myriad words that people use to describe emotions and have the group members discover the projections that seem to embody those words for them.

[D] MOVING WITH QUALITIES

There are other ways of describing or focusing on intentional qualities than by the use of emotion words, and we can also begin to combine qualities and movement. Have everybody in the class walk around the room. People should not just amble aimlessly but walk in the way they normally do.

1. Now, as you walk around, imagine/sense/think/feel that you are pervaded by a clear, bright, spring sunshine color of golden yellow. Feel that you are surrounded by a cloud of the color as you move.

Try walking around drenched in and suffused by a deep, rich, cobalt blue (the kind of color we often see on old dark blue glass vases).

What changes do you feel? What parts of your bodies does the energy flow to? How is your walk affected? How does your body feel in general? Have the people in the class gather and describe what they all feel.

Generally people feel the yellow as high, expansive and light, and they feel the cobalt blue as low down in the feet, condensing and heavy.

Try walking around feeling a very soft, clear, gentle sky blue color. Try bright, sharp violet. Try a clear, brilliant white, the kind of white that you see in a field of new fallen snow glittering in brilliant sunlight. Try deep, dense velvety black. And try projecting a field of perfectly transparent energy. People have very similar reactions to the various colors.
Colors are particularly handy as a way of practicing energy projections because they form clear primary groups and can be systematically shifted towards light and dark values. In addition, there are interesting effects of visualizing color mixtures. Working with sequences of colors is really very similar to practicing the scales that musicians play. They form basic exercises for learning to hit various notes throughout the whole range of possible qualities.

Ask people in the class to walk around while they project some color and see if you can observe how the projection changes their movement.

We will be doing more work with color visualizations in later exercises.

2. In addition to colors, we can use shapes as ways of varying energy qualities. Actually we already have been working with this by talking about the centered energy field as a sphere and by looking at the shapes of intentions to move. Shapes are not quite as easy to work with as colors because it is hard to keep anything more than a simple shape clear in one's mind, but it is interesting to work with some of the simple shapes.

Have the class walk around in a neutral, ordinary way. Now, as you keep walking, imagine that you are a triangle. Keep the plane of the triangle flat and parallel to the floor, and have the point of the triangle facing forward and the base behind you (so that the base line is parallel to the line from shoulder to shoulder). It will help to have a sense that the triangle is located about waist high. As you walk, really feel the sharp point of the triangle cutting through the air like the bow of a ship.

Now go back to walking in your ordinary way. And then imagine that you are a square. Feel how you have four right angle corners and how you have four flat, equal sides. Notice how squarely you move.

Now let go of the square, and go back to walking in a neutral way. Then imagine you are a circle. Feel the edge of the circle,
how round you are, how it projects out about six or eight feet from the center of the circle (which is where your body is). As you walk, feel how round you are and notice how it feels for the circle to move through space.

What were your feelings as you did these projections? How did others in the class feel? How did the projections affect your movement in space, your body feeling and so on? In Aikido it is said that we meet the attack like a triangle, we maneuver like a circle, and we throw the attacker like a square.

3. Another modality that we can use is that of tactile sensations. As you walk around, sense that you are made of granite, very dense, solid, strong, unyielding, immovable and not subject to disturbance.

Imagine that you are mist, very soft, fluid, flexible and changeable, light, and completely incapable of being broken or disturbed.

Imagine that you are silk, elastic rubber, springy steel. Find other materials to work with.

Again, the tactile mode is not quite as useful as the color mode because it isn't quite as easy to vary its qualities in a systematic fashion, but it does run a good second, and some people may prefer it. The shape mode is obviously very cognitive and hard to keep hold of. The color mode is visual and a cross between the cognitive and the experiential, and the tactile mode is clearly quite feeling oriented and not very cognitive at all. It is useful to play with each and find what suits your interests.

[E] ANALYZING PHOTOS

It is a help to be able to spend time looking at a posture/energy flow without having it wavering and changing or to be able to return for a second look after a while, and you can do this by looking at photographs as examples to analyze. Any full body photograph of a person can be analyzed, but obviously some are clearer or more interesting than others. If you watch for them,
you will soon begin to find numerous interesting photographs to analyze. Of course, magazines are an excellent place to find such photos.
We have been working on being able to project energy patterns and being able to perceive others' patterns. These skills are, of course, not ends in themselves. They are means towards being able to use energy projection, and the first use we will make of this knowledge is in finding more efficient, effective and comfortable patterns of body use.

[A] **UNBENDABLE ARM**

In sections Three and Five we worked on releasing contraction and opening up. That in itself allowed us to deal with pressures in a more comfortable way, but there is more to life than just opening up and relaxing. It is also necessary to be able to apply power effectively.

In this exercise (as in the Dropping Arm exercise) we will work with one arm because it is easiest to focus on one small part to begin with, and we shall learn how to fill up the arm with energy rather than tension to make it strong. This energy will produce a strength that is firm and resilient like a steel spring, not resistant and brittle like glass. The exercise for helping you experience this quality is, in a way, a trick. We will use various images to help you do something that you may never have noticed you could do all along, and once you have felt how to do it, you can dispense with the imagery and simply do it.

1. Have your partner stand by your side and support your arm by holding it up underneath the wrist, and have him place his other hand behind the shoulder blade of that same arm. Your arm should be long and open, but relaxed and with a slight bend in the elbow rather than straight and rigid. When the time comes, he
will push inward trying to bring both his hands together along the straight line of your arm, and you will avoid letting your arm bend at the elbow. It will be important that he increase the power of his push gradually and without any sudden jerks. You will "avoid" letting your arm bend, but you won't resist his push.

How will you do this? Through what Aikidoists call "extending ki." There are a number of images that may help you find the right feeling. If one image doesn't work for you, perhaps another will. You can imagine that your arm is a fire hose and that there is a forceful stream of water pouring out the nozzle. Note that the hose is uninvolved in the whole process. It just hangs out and lets the water do its thing. Make sure that the water is hitting a spot far away from you. If you feel that it is just dribbling out the end of the hose, imagine that someone is turning up the water pressure, and really get into sensing how far away the stream of water reaches. Really be interested in the far away spot where the water hits, and don't let your attention dwell on your arm or your partner's pressure.

Another image is that your arm is a flashlight. Let your attention be the beam of light and really get into the spot that it illuminates far away from you.

Another image is that there is something floating just beyond your fingertips, something that you want. I'm sure at one time or another you've tried to reach a package on a shelf that was just a bit too high. Do you remember the feeling of trying to be longer, just a bit longer, so that you could grasp the package? That is what you want here. Don't tighten or move the arm or shoulder. Just let the fingertips grow. Pinnochio's fingertips.

Another image may help. Imagine that you are chained to the thick, stone walls of a castle dungeon. Your arm is stretched out and each finger is tied by a cord to a rope which is attached to a winch. The winch gradually turns, the rope tightens, and your arm is drawn out long. Keep in mind that this is a magic and friendly castle, and that rather than being some form of torture this lengthening feels good, as good as a nice stretch.
after waking from a nice sleep.

Another way of learning this projection is to dispense with images and simply feel longer. When you do this in the right way you will have the sense that there is an immaterial but solidly real part of your arm that extends out beyond the fingertips. As long as you keep your concentration on this, your arm will be firm but relaxed.

Note that it is not just dwelling on some merely mental image which will produce the results of this exercise. You must do a subtle lengthening. If you get too caught up in your head, you will only be repeating words or watching pictures and not really being in your body. There is just as much difference between saying the words "I love you" and really feeling love as there is between simply thinking about feeling distance in the arm and actually intending that distance. Remember, however, that you must not simply make your arm long in the ordinary, voluntary, external way we all usually do things. The point of this exercise is to help you discover a subtler, more fundamental aspect of mind-body interaction and a way of controlling it.

You will know when you have clicked in to the right way of holding your arm. It will have more life in it. When you feel good about your arm, ask your partner to start trying to push in and bend the arm. Don't get distracted. A simple nod will be enough of a signal to him to start pushing. As he pushes, keep your attention far away in the distance and keep reaching for that distance. If you maintain this state, your partner will be unable to bend your arm even though you will have no sensation that you are specifically resisting his pressure. In fact, you will not be resisting his pressure. You will be doing something else entirely, trying to touch a flower on a far away hillside. When your attention flows outward in a concentrated and unwavering stream, you will not be fighting an inward push, you will simply be exerting all your power outwards. If you think about it for a moment, the concept of "resistance" carries two messages: first,
what you mean to do, and second, the fact that there is a force opposing you which may win and force you to do something else. The more emotional energy you put into resistance, the more you are focusing on the action you mean not to do. And when you start thinking about that action, you send small messages to your body to get ready to do that action. Or at least you send messages that the action you don't want is inevitable and your body may as well stop putting so much work into the action you do want somewhat.

Try the Unbendable Arm exercise with each arm. And once you have felt it clearly, you may wish to play around with how you are concentrating. Try shifting your attention to your elbow and concentrating on the realization that your partner is strong and is attempting to force your arm back and that you have to resist him. Try building up a sense that he is inevitably going to succeed in forcing your arm to bend but that you are going to resist with all your might. Or ask your partner to startle you at some point by blowing in your face or shouting in your ear, and see if this has any effect on your energy extension.

2. Another way to test your Unbendable Arm is to have your partner stand right in front of you and facing you. Put your arm across his shoulder, right arm on left shoulder or vice versa, and be careful that your elbow points straight down so that you do not injure your arm when pressure is applied. Have your partner put both his hands on top of your elbow and lean all his body weight into trying to force it to bend. He should be careful to pull straight down and do so gradually so that he does not injure your elbow. Once you have mastered the first part of this exercise, you should find this variation no harder.

It is interesting to speculate on why this phenomenon works. We are utilizing some muscle action process that is very different from that which we normally use. Perhaps it is that in our ideas about our own abilities we set very low levels on what we believe we can do and never allow ourselves to do much more, and the
Unbendable Arm exercise is a way of bypassing our conceptual limitations. Or perhaps it is simply that we ordinarily waste a lot of energy fighting ourselves in tension between the agonist and antagonist muscles, and this is a way of engaging only the muscles that we really do want to use and of completely relaxing the others. Certainly we have all experienced how much energy we waste in internal tension. If we can apply one hundred pounds total but we waste fifty within ourselves, something that allows us to stop wasting our energy will make us feel twice as strong. It would not be that we are stronger but simply that we can for the first time fully use what we have got.

I had a student a number of years ago who had extreme difficulty in learning to maintain the unbendable arm. I worked with her for about twenty-five minutes before we unravelled her problem. When I held her wrist and pushed her arm inward, she could build up the correct energy extension, but it always took a few minutes and some coaching. She couldn't learn what it was that she was doing and then maintain it after I let go of her arm, and without learning to maintain it, she could never use it on just an instant's notice. Finally, trying to communicate the difference between a steady state and a specific task, I told her to hold her arm out and then I asked her if she could feel her arm. I was trying to point out that her arm had some feeling or other at all times, and we were just trying to learn to put a new feeling into it. And she said, no, that she could not feel her arm.

That was a surprise, but it made sense. She thought that the unbendable arm was something you do in response to something that someone else was doing to you. Well, that is not the case. The unbendable arm is a state of being, something that you are. The whole point is that it is not some tricky form of resistance. But the student had no sense of her own existence separate from her responses to what other people did to her. She had no ground of her own, no center. She didn't really exist. I wish I could say that she eventually learned the unbendable arm, but that was
the first time I had ever come across such a thing, and I didn't realize that this simple exercise could be touching on such deep things. If I had known that, I would have taken a much more gradual and circuitous route to getting her in touch with her center. Instead, she realized very abruptly how out of touch with her own power she was and her response was to stop coming to class. The easy way to deal with the problem was to avoid it.

Real gentleness is inseparable from power. Letting the arm relax goes together with making it strong. This is a way of being, and if you could move your arm perfectly and with full awareness, gentleness and power, you would have nothing left to learn. If you could do any one small thing perfectly, it would mean you had found the state of being from which correct action comes and could use it in any activity.

[B] BODY BREAKS

It wouldn't be much help to walk around with one unbendable arm, would it? Even two wouldn't do a lot for you. We have to learn to have the whole body in a relaxed and strong state. The beginning of this is to start feeling just how you are working with your body. What are the customary breaks you maintain in your alignment? Using some pressure on the body in different ways can help us begin to figure this out.

1. Have a partner push straight down on top of your head. He/she should push down firmly enough that you can feel the pressure but not so hard as to make it uncomfortable. It is important that the power of the push be applied on the top of the head and in a straight line perpendicular to the floor. The body is a very cleverly constructed tower. If it is aligned well, the power will be transmitted through the bones to the floor, and you will not have much sensation of resisting weight.

But what will you feel if it is not aligned well? There are many different breaks you could have, but the common feeling among them all will be that you are bending and buckling under the
weight. Let's try a few experiments:

Stand up, but stand with a slouch. Let your chest droop down and your head hang forward. Don't look down at the floor, but keep your eyes roughly horizontal. This is a bit exaggerated, but it is not really an uncommon posture. Now ask your partner to push down on your head—not too hard—and feel how your body responds. Notice that the line of power does not go straight through the body to the floor. Your body folds and sags. The letter A could hold up a nice bit of weight because of its construction, but the letter S would get squashed if you put a load of bricks on top of it. Can you feel how, when you hold your body like an S, the line of power forms a chord between different points on the curve and can even pass outside the body in some spots?

Try another stance. Stand up straight, even a bit too straight. Hold your head high, and lift your chin. Arch your lower back, and throw your shoulders back. How does this feel when your partner pushes down on your head?

Now go back to your normal stance and have your partner push down. Do you feel breaks and bucklings in your body?

2. Another experiment will help you perceive a different aspect of how your body is knit together. Have a partner stand in front of you and put his right hand on your left shoulder and his left hand on your right hip. Then he should push to his left with his right hand and to his right with his left hand. That will create a shearing force against your body. As we shall see soon, if your way of being in your body is clear, that push should not disturb you or distort your stance. If your way of being in your body is disjointed and without proper ki extension (an Unbendable Body, so to speak), the shearing force will arch you sideways.

It can frequently be very startling to have objective information about how you hold yourself as you move, and you can discover many things you were totally oblivious of. There are two
aids which you may find useful in this process of discovery. The first is the kind of triple-paned mirror that tailors use to let you see yourself from all sides. The second is a posture grid. This is an opaque backdrop or a transparent plastic sheet, either one having a regular grid drawn on it. You stand either in front of or behind the grid and are photographed from the front, side and back. Using the mirror or the grid gives you the opportunity to note habitual breaks in your posture.

[C] POSTURE AND ALIGNMENT

"Posture" is not the best word to use, but it is the only convenient and available one. We usually think of posture as being static and a thing. Properly speaking, only a corpse really has a posture, a static way of holding itself that remains exactly the same for a while. Here we will look at posture as a flow of movement, as an ongoing process. Posture is a behavior not a thing. It is a flow of behavior, the ways a person moves. Of course there are specific postures held for just a short time and also general habits of movement that a person manifests frequently or all the time. The body is very important. Movement is the concrete manifestation of thought and being. Posture is not just a physical happening, but it is also a mental process. How you move is what you are. Learning to move differently changes what you are.

This last idea is the key to movement awareness practice. Since the mind and the body are reflections of one another, changing one changes the other. Since the body is easier to get hold of than the mind, it affords great opportunities for penetrating the self in a clear, forceful way.*

*Here we are dealing with movement as an impersonal awareness practice, but it can also be dealt with on the personal, emotional level. Those people who might be interested in this would do well to look into Bioenergetics psychotherapy. Two good books on the subject are: Lowen (39) and Lowen and Lowen (40).
It is important to realize that just as posture is not a merely physical process changing posture cannot be merely a physical process. It is possible to give exercises to strengthen lax muscles and stretch tight ones, but that in itself will not change a person's posture. The body is not just a series of mechanical linkages the overall position of which can be adjusted simply by loosening some wires and tightening up others. To begin with, a person who has been physically adjusted this way will not feel that the new position is correct or be able to recreate it for himself if he loses it. Our kinesthetic self-images do not distinguish between "normal" or "customary" and "correct and well aligned." What feels normal is felt as right. When a person is placed in a new position, he or she will feel it as abnormal and therefore wrong. In order to accept the new position as correct, the person must consciously understand and perceive the new position as correct. He/she must identify which "wrong" feeling is actually correct and learn to maintain that wrong feeling until in time it comes to feel normal and therefore right. If exercises to strengthen and loosen muscles are all that is given, the person will never reform his body image and will continue to move as before. Of course, it takes outside help for the person to achieve this body image reform since an incorrect kinesthetic sense cannot itself identify the right position and learn to maintain it.

It takes a conscious awareness of this whole process not only to reform the body image but also to change habitual patterns of performing daily tasks. A new posture will place a person in a new positional relation to the objects he manipulates. As he goes to do a customary task, if he does not consciously review and correct his position to conform to his new posture, he will automatically stand in the same old place and be forced to adopt the same old posture to reach and use the object.

This whole process of learning to feel different takes a great amount of motivation and interest. The person has to be
interested enough to recollect himself many times a day and check over his state of movement. Movement must be pervaded by feeling and awareness, and when it is, all movement becomes a practice, a way of learning.*

The particular posture that serves as the basic Aikido way of moving can easily be described physically. Of course, it is really the quality or feel of the movement that is important rather than some one basic position. Obviously you will not remain in this basic posture much of the time, but once you discover its feel, you can carry this feel into all your movement.

The head is erect with the eyes level and vision expanded. The back is straight, and the whole spine to the top of the head is lengthened. The shoulders are relaxed and even. The belly is relaxed and the hips are level. The arms are held in an open curve, slightly away from the sides of the body, and the hands and fingers are open and relaxed. The knees should not be locked, and the feet should be in full contact with the floor and with equal weight on each. In movement, power comes from the legs and the hands function to guide the power to whatever task is at hand. Every part of the body is equally involved in every movement (even though for some things this involvement is primarily on the level of energy and awareness rather than on the level of gross movement).

It is important not to think of posture as something that is held. That produces stiffness and binding. Posture should be loose and free. But it should also be as firm and powerful as the unbendable arm. A manner of body use which is powerful and ready

*Those people who are especially interested in the topic of body use and alignment would do well to look into Alexander work. A student once gave me a book on the subject and commented that some of what I was working on in Aikido seemed very similar to Alexander work. I read the book and began taking lessons. The material has been very helpful in my movement and my understanding of movement. What I am presenting here, of course, is not Alexander work, though some of the ideas are similar and undoubtedly have been influenced in their expression by the Alexander work. Two good books on the subject are: Barlow (35), and Jones (36).
for action cannot be maintained simply by letting go of constrictions and smallness. That is the negative aspect of correcting mistakes, letting go of attachment to them. But there must also be a positive aspect and that is extending ki throughout the whole body.

The negative aspect of correcting your posture and body use has to do with letting go of twisted and constricted ways of holding and using the body, and it is probably nearly impossible to convey specifically what this means by printed information in a book. The readjustments that are necessary in letting go of habitual constrictions are generally so subtle and uniquely individual that hands-on help from a teacher is the easiest way of learning how to let go of incorrect holding patterns.

The positive aspect of postural readjustment may be a bit easier to convey here. As you are standing, feel the top of your head gently drawn upwards as though a rope attached there were pulling you up off the ground. Feel your whole body get a bit lighter. There is an active projection upwards. When you feel this clearly and comfortably, ask a partner to push down on the top of your head as we were doing in the last exercise. Don't resist the pressure by pushing up against it. And don't give in to the pressure by getting pushed down. But simply feel a line of energy moving upwards in an open and non-resistant fashion. Send your attention past the weight on your head, and don't be concerned with it.

Of course it is important to keep your feet on the ground and not get lost in the clouds. So, without losing the upward extension, feel your feet sinking heavily into the ground. This is not a limp sinking, but the kind of powerful sinking that a massive iron bar standing on soft earth would do.

Imagine that there is an iron bar inside of you, one that runs from the top of the head, down through the neck and spine, and down into the ground. Feel how deeply it penetrates the ground. Now, as we did before, have a partner stand in front of
you with a hand on one shoulder and the opposite hip and push inwards. If you have really sensed the proper ki extension throughout your body, you will not sway or bend but will effortlessly remain standing straight.

In many ways the subject of alignment and body use is the most difficult one to be touched on in this book. Certainly it is hard to grasp what one is actually doing and hard to change it. This section gives no more than hints about the subject, but as we go on with other related exercises, you will get a clearer idea of what is involved in working on body use and alignment.

[D] HUMMING UP AND DOWN

This is an exercise which will help you work with the sensation of energy extension in your body and which you can do as you walk around during the day. It uses a hummed note to help you place your energy. As you walk, hum a very deep note, and as you hum the note, let your weight/energy sink down, down, until it is focused about a foot below the ground. You can use one or two breaths to hum this.

Then shift to humming a very high note. Focus the note and your energy about a foot above your head, and feel your body get lighter and rise up as you do. You can keep alternating the high and low notes as you walk. If you are out for a walk alone, you can make the notes as loud as you please. Otherwise you may wish to make them soft and quiet and avoid getting funny looks.

[E] BOBBING BREATHING

Stand with your feet about shoulder width apart and your arms down by your sides. Lift your arms just a bit so your hands are in front of you, and turn your palms so they face each other. As you breathe in through your nose, bend your knees a bit and sink down just a few inches. Simultaneously move your arms away from each other. Let your elbows bend a bit and your arms get a bit round, and as you move them to the sides, feel how this brings a
feeling of spaciousness in your ribs and breathing.

As you exhale through your mouth, straighten your legs and let your arms move back toward their original position.

Keep on with this movement, breathing and moving slowly and comfortably. Breathe into hara and keep your belly relaxed.

Feel the lengthening of the spine, the sinking of the legs, and the opening up of the body.

Continue the exercise for a minute or so.
There is an interesting problem which you will encounter soon, if you haven't run into it already. The best way to pin it down is to let you see it in operation. Have everyone in the class gather round and watch one person walk across the room. Have that person stop and think for a moment before walking. Ask him to think about his posture and make sure it is as correct as he can possibly make it; once he is sure that his posture is correct, he should walk across the room, walking as correctly as possible.

What you are sure to see is someone adopting a stiff posture and then walking along rigidly trying to maintain what he considers to be a correct way of moving. We all recognize what looks stiff, awkward, poorly aligned, and unnatural and what looks full of ease, well aligned and natural. So why do we use ourselves in such distorted and uncomfortable ways?

The basic reason for the poor ways in which we move is attachment: we are anxious about performing some task so we tighten up. We feel that we have to work hard to make sure of getting things done, but what does "working hard" really mean? As you watched the person walk across the room, you saw that the hardness that is part of working hard consists of keeping the body hard and stiff. Someone who is thoroughly comfortable with and skilled in some task may exert a lot of energy in performing it—for example, digging a five-foot-deep trench in the earth would demand a lot of energy—but there would be a rhythm and ease to the manner in which the effort was expended, and you would never see the person tighten up against him or herself.

The paradox here is that the task we asked the person to perform was to walk across the room in a correct manner. Correctness certainly includes ease, yet in the effort to be correct,
stiffness was introduced. The basic problem is that in trying to move according to some set of principles, we use force on ourselves and strain to match our conceptions of how we should be moving. If we have some idea in mind of what we want to do, then we may well not have the idea in our bodies, and we will act in a deliberate, mechanical, unspontaneous way.

Another aspect of this same problem results from the fact that we first practiced exercises for opening up our movements and then started working with ki extension to direct and strengthen our movements. Now that we are working on ki extension in particular, there is a tendency to forget that we began by learning how necessary it is to open up and relax. However, either element without the other is incomplete, and if you stiffen up and lose the quality of ease, you will cut off your ki flow as well.

There is more to moving correctly than simply moving with ease, but any movement done without ease is incorrect. It is necessary to focus on and practice one quality of movement at a time simply because we cannot pay attention to every facet of our movement at once. But how can we work on one element without forgetting about and sacrificing the others? How can we work on ki extension and correct placement of our movements without losing the quality of ease? At first, when the practice is altogether unfamiliar, we do tend to forget one element of movement as we focus on another. But the point of practicing one quality at a time is to get so familiar with each that we can eventually practice numbers of qualities simultaneously in the more complex exercises that will be dealt with towards the end of this book (and in the even more complex patterns of our daily lives).

What is ease? It is not something totally unfamiliar to us. Every athlete or performer occasionally drops into a charmed space in which every movement is effortless and every decision is correct. That is the culmination of the state of ease. When all of a sudden some task becomes easy for you and everything fits
into place, it is you that have become filled with ease rather than the task that has acquired an extra characteristic. What stands between us and this way of acting and being? We know we have it within us already, but why can we not go directly to it and always live within it? It is something that we are doing that is incompatible with the state of ease, and we must give up doing that thing.

What we are doing is compressing ourselves. Recall the Opening Belly exercise. In that exercise you experienced that there is some holding in and tensing of the belly that you maintain habitually and without being aware of it. We do the same thing in the body as a whole, and when we are under some kind of stress, anxiety or compulsion to perform well, we tend to tighten ourselves even more than usual. Naturally this tension interferes with our ability to function well, so we discover that the situation "really is" difficult to deal with, and we then get even tighter. The films of Ueshiba doing Aikido show a person who could deal with the pressures of a group attack without in the least tightening himself and interfering with his natural ease of movement. Aikido techniques depend for their effective execution on staying open, both in body and mind, and this opening up is the way to reach the feeling of ease in movement. Ease is opening up, and opening up means to let go of the holding in. It is no more than that. Any actual doing something to the body in the name of letting go of doing will produce strain. Of course, opening up is just the first step in mastering movement since positive qualities of strength and such must be added to the ease to make the movement more total. But ease is the beginning.

Ease is the quality of freedom and fluidity in our minds and bodies. It is the quality of being in the flow and simultaneously being in charge of the flow. Performing any activity is like swimming: if you fight the water, you will tire and drown. The water will resist you precisely as much as you fight it. (When was the last time you did a belly whopper?) But if you think of
swimming as a process of harmony and unity, you will relax in the water, let its embrace support you, and slide through it with grace and ease. A good swimmer surrenders to the water and by doing so is in control of where he/she goes in it.

How can we find the quality of ease? It begins with opening up, it includes strong ki extension, and it includes correct performance. If you are no more than open, you will be perfectly relaxed but incapable. If you are relaxed and filled with strong ki, you will be ready to act, but if you don't know what to do, you won't get anything done. Only if all three elements are present will you be able to act with real ease.

That implies that there are two routes to practicing ease. First, we could pick a simple movement in which ki extension is not necessary and there is no particular task to be done, and we could use it to practice the quality of ease. This would be a relatively quick way to get the sensation, but we would then have to spend a lot of time learning how to apply it to difficult, complex movement situations. Or, second, we could pick a complex task, one with many different requirements, and work on all the different requirements, one at a time, over a long period of time, until eventually we were ready to put it all together.

Aikido, of course, is a discipline which works in the second way. From the first day of practice, we have to learn how to relax while we are being attacked, and we have to learn to move well and with good ki extension, and we also have to do the particular defense technique we are working on. Because there is so much to do, we put in only a fraction of our practice time on any one element. Because we are working on a balanced development of all the elements, we do not get a quick and easy command of any one of them. This movement awareness material, being derived from Aikido, takes the same approach. Thus, as we work with a number of different elements throughout the book, you will get a better and better idea of how to approach the complete quality of ease in your movement.
How can you find the quality of ease? Just as a fish doesn't notice the water it swims in, everything you normally feel feels normal to you, and right. The exercises in this book function as a series of tests to help you discover what you are doing and how you are doing it, and they also serve to help you discover better patterns of movement. Aikido defense techniques serve the same function—in a more intricate and high-powered way. To return to where we started, there is a delicate balance between relaxing and exerting control in your practice. Even though we do not want to arrive at a tightly controlled way of moving, perhaps we do need to work at controlling ourselves simply because we are out of control. As you continue to practice, you will fall into the right way of moving by accident one day. You won't know quite how you got there or why you drift away from it again, but it will be the start of a new level in your practice.

However, it is probably inevitable that we all go through a period in our practice when we strain, and it is probably even inevitable that we all go through a period when we strain at preventing ourselves from straining. A sense of humor and a sense of acceptance helps us to get through those periods. So as you do these exercises, don't worry about trying to be more than you can be at the moment. Just do the moves at whatever level of awareness you find yourself at now, and enjoy them.

*As I was in the final stages of completing this book, I began studying Feldenkrais' work. Much of this system of movement education is derived from Feldenkrais' training in judo and Alexander work, and many of the ideas underlying it are similar to the ideas presented here. However, the exercises he uses are altogether different. They are slow, gentle, repetitive movements that allow one to focus specifically on the freeing-up aspect of the quality of ease in a marvellous way. Anyone who is especially interested in working with this aspect of movement would do well to look into Feldenkrais' work. Three books by Moshe Feldenkrais concerning the work are: Body and Mature Behavior (31), Awareness Through Movement (32), and The Case of Nora (33).
Section 14

[A] POSTURE AND CENTER

A firm and stable posture is the same as an impregnable mind. A firm and stable posture depends both on the body alignment and the ki extension you maintain. The way you "position" yourself and the way you extend your ki will determine how an external force pushing on you will be routed through your body.

Take a deep T-stance (forward stride stance). That is, place your feet so that both ankles lie on the same line and they are at least shoulders' width apart. Point your front foot nearly straight ahead, turning it out five degrees or so, and turn your rear foot out approximately seventy-five degrees so that you will not have to lift your heel off the ground. Hold your arms out forward at shoulder height with a slight bend in the elbows and the palms facing each other. Now have a partner grasp both your wrists and push straight in towards your torso (down the length of the arms). The push should gradually build up power, and when it is strong enough, you will rotate up and over your rear foot.

If your back is arched, then you will feel all the power coursing through your shoulders and out behind you, and that will force you backwards. If you hold your lower back in the right way, that will stabilize your torso. Play with rotating the pelvis forward and backward until you find a position that allows you to withstand the push more comfortably.

When you find that position, feel that all your partner's power is directed through your arms to your torso, down through your hips and legs, and into the floor. Feel that the stronger he pushes, the more he forces your rear foot into the floor and the more strongly he braces you.
To help gain this sensation, extend your ki outward as we did in practicing the Unbendable Arm. However, extend from your whole body and not just from your arms. Relax your belly, feel your feet in contact with the floor, and feel that energy is surging up from the floor through your legs to your hips, up your spine and out your arms.

Now, as your partner pushes on you again, alter your energy placement by tightening your neck and shoulders slightly. Shrug your shoulders about a quarter of an inch. Feel high, literally up tight. As soon as you do this, you will start to be forced backwards. Do you have enough concentration to reverse your energy as you are being pushed back and settle into the ground again?

This practice should show you the difference between the center of gravity and the energy center. When you stand up in a normal position, your center of gravity is in the area of your hips. But the center of gravity moves around as you take different positions. If you fold at the hips like a jackknife, the center of gravity can even be outside of the body. On the other hand, the energy center is a "psychological" center and can be held in the same spot no matter what physical position the body is in. Aikido teaches people to move from hara. (Of course, in more advanced practice localizing a center spot gives way to absorbing the whole into the center.)

Rather than looking at the body as an inert object and conceiving of its balance in terms of where the center of gravity is in relation to the base of support, Aikido looks at the body as a living, fluid process. If a person has an energy break in some spot they will be weak there, and they can be most easily bowled over through that spot. If a person has no energy breaks, then even the spots that would appear to be mechanically weak, say by being too far out beyond the edge of the base of support, will not be weak. As an example, about seven years ago a Japanese teacher, Koichi Tohei, who was at that time the head instructor of the
main Aikido school in Tokyo, visited the school where I was studying. In one demonstration I watched, Tohei stood on tip toes on one foot, extended one arm, and challenged anyone to push him over. One friend of mine tried. He leaned into Tohei's arm the way you'd lean into a car you were trying to push. My friend's face turned red and his feet slipped on the floor. Tohei stood straight upright and grinned.

[B] WALKING

Everybody walks differently, but frequently we aren't aware of whatever peculiarities we may have in our walk. Although the fine points of centered movement are awfully hard to convey through writing, getting feedback from people in the class will help you become more aware of how you move.

Pick a partner, and watch him walk across the room. Then mimic his walk as clearly as you can and let him watch. Needless to say, this is good practice for you in sharpening your observation skills and your command of your own movement. Your partner should be able to pick out some elements in your mirroring of his walk that he can alter as he moves. Let him try that and give him some feedback about whether it makes his walk look smoother and more comfortable. Then it will be your turn to have your partner mimic you.

Of course, if you have access to videotape equipment, that would give you excellent information about your movement patterns.

You can enlarge the scope of this exercise by mimicking other movements than walking. One thing that you may find is that people tend to move in much the same ways no matter what task they are performing. There is a constant sense of their intentional shape that underlies whatever particular thing they may do.
Have the whole class walk around the room. One person should stand aside and, whenever he wants to, clap once. That clap will be the signal for everyone to freeze in his tracks. The next clap will be the signal for people to start walking again. When you freeze, scan your body and determine how "correctly" you were moving. How did it feel to stop? Did you have to readjust the maintain balance? If you were moving in a centered way, you should have been able to stop easily and comfortably. How does it feel to start moving again? Do you lurch or tense up as you start?

If you pay very careful attention, you may discover that just before you begin to move, there is a "quiver" in your energy field. That quiver is a setting or tightening up, and if you can dispense with it, you will have a delicious floating sense of ease. Don't start to start to move. Just move. Just be, then just do. In Aikido we often practice to be able to throw someone without that preliminary quiver since by it a skilled fighter can read a person's intentions and be able to counterattack. It is very hard to find just the right "direction" to look in to see that quiver. And if you can find the quiver and let go of it today, that is no guarantee that you will be able to tomorrow.

This same stopping and starting exercise can be done with almost any movement pattern, and you may wish to try it out with a number of the exercises that we will be practicing.

Walking is a good example of a common movement, and it is a good example of how the movement ideals that we are working with here are very much tied to particular ways of looking at movement and life. I know of at least two disciplines of movement work which prescribe that in walking one should move one's center of gravity forward close to the front edge of one's base of support. The effect of this is that one floats a bit in his walk and tends to fall into the forward step as though he were walking down hill. In one exercise in a workshop I attended, the teacher instructed
us to walk around the room and then stop walking the instant she clapped her hands. After we had done this, she explained that anyone who could stop on a dime when she clapped was walking wrong, whereas those people who had to take a couple of steps before they could emerge from their forward motion pattern were walking correctly. The justification for this manner of walking was that it was much more effortless and proceeded along with a rhythm of its own due to the falling into it. And she was right: when I tried it, I felt as though I were being carried along in a flow of water down hill. The problem was that it was, by my standards, an out-of-control manner of walking. In Aikido we wish to be in full control of our motion at all times and be able to stop and start on the instant. It isn't so much a question of which way of walking is right as of what each way of walking is right for. There is always a trade-off between stability and mobility. In Aikido we want an overall balance between the two so that our movements will be most effective. Practically speaking, we don't want to fall into our walk and be unable to stop or change direction instantly because we want to be able to respond to whatever attacks may occur at whatever instant and from whichever direction. Psychologically speaking, this manner of body use both creates and is the reflection of a state of mind which is steady and not off balance but which is also alert and ready to adapt and change with ease.

[D] SIX DIRECTIONS HUMMING

1. This is a continuation of the Humming Up and Down exercise. As before, walk and hum a low note downward and a high note upward. Next hum a middle range note. Hum to focus it a few feet in front of you, then a few feet behind you, then a few feet to your right, then a few feet to your left. The middle range hum should place your energy about waist high around you (or chest high to start with, since that will probably be a bit easier).
It is easiest to use at least one full breath for each direction. After you have projected in each of the six directions, then there is one more projection left. Breathe out without humming, and as you do, project energy in all six directions at once. Start from the hara center, and project out in an expanding bubble as though the energy were a balloon being blown up.

This exercise is a rhythmic and systematic way of learning to project in all directions at once. It is obviously related to the Elevator Button exercise, and as you project in each direction you will feel a leaning toward that direction. As you project forward, you will fall forward slightly. As you project backward, your forward movement as you walk will be inhibited, and when you finish your backward breath, you will find yourself lurching forward as though some physical restraint had suddenly dropped loose. As you project left and right, you will feel yourself tipping in those directions as you walk.

As you breathe silently outwards from center, you will not feel any tipping in any direction. This should point out to you that the other six directions are really incomplete in the sense that you are projecting outwards but have forgotten the stable center which is the source of the outflow. Humming in one direction at a time is a way of learning to project strongly in any given direction, but you must go on to anchor your projecting at center.

2. When you feel comfortable with the Six Directions Humming, you can change the exercise and project pairs of directions. Project down and up simultaneously, then do left and right, and then forward and back. Follow these three projections by breathing out in all six directions at once. This way of doing the exercise will give you more of a sense of centered balance.
The Two-Step is a basic Aikido exercise. It is very simple but it is very deep. I've been doing it for years, and the more I do it, the more I discover in it. The exercise starts from the T-stance (which was described in the Posture and Center exercise). Start in the left T-stance, that is, with your left foot forward. Here we will not use a very deep T-stance so your feet should be only six inches or so apart. Your torso will be almost, but not quite, facing straight down the line; it will be turned somewhat to the right.

Slide the left foot forward a few inches. Then step forward with the right foot; this begins to rotate the torso counterclockwise. Continue this rotation by swinging the left foot around behind you so that it winds up back on the line, and simultaneously pivot your torso around. Slide your right foot back an inch or two and rotate it a bit to allow it to face comfortably forward. You have made a one hundred eighty degree turn. You have finished up on the same line you started on having switched directions and having switched to the opposite foot forward T-stance.

Repeat the movement pattern in reverse, and you will wind up back where you started. Continue doing the movement back and forth.

The movement itself is very simple, but there are many, many things to work on in the movement. To begin with, you have a move to do, and it obviously demands more of you than standing still does. Can you maintain a proper energy extension as you move through the pattern, or does the stepping around distract you and distort your energy?

Your movement should be casual and precise. Every part of your body should move together with no lagging, disconnected parts. Your arms should work with your center line, that is, they should swing firmly and in time with your whole body. Your head should be erect, and it should turn together with your torso. Your feet
should move smoothly on the floor, and your hips should stay in one plane as you move with no bouncing up and down. If you are bouncing as you pivot, try relaxing your legs and thinking of your feet as dough so that they mold themselves to the floor rather than fighting it.

You should not move aimlessly around. Move precisely and efficiently. Make each bit of movement count for something. When you start the move, you should not rock backwards before sliding the forward foot forward. Don't prepare to go forward by moving backward. Just go forward. You might feel awkward with this movement. If so it is because you are not committing yourself to the forward motion. To make this plainer, take a very wide T-stance position and try to lift your forward foot off the ground without leaning back onto your back foot. Some people try this and decide it cannot be done. But it can be. All you have to do is lift your front foot quickly enough. Of course you will then fall forward onto that foot. That sensation of falling is what makes people decide they should rock back before sliding forward, but falling forward onto one foot is a normal part of walking and shouldn't frighten anyone. However, when people are in a new situation, they hesitate about committing themselves even in something as simple as sliding forward on one foot. (Technically speaking, the reason Aikido uses the T-stance is that just lifting the forward leg off the ground a bit is enough to initiate an instant slide which can be used to evade a punch or thrust. In a stance in which the feet are side by side, there must be a redistribution of weight before forward motion can be initiated.)

As you finish the Two-Step, you may find yourself wasting energy by rocking back and then readjusting forward to find an equilibrium. Imagine that there is some job in front of you which you have to deal with, and there is also something behind you to deal with. You must take care of the first job, then pivot around and take care of the second. When you pivot, you must dismiss the
first job from your mind and concentrate all your attention on the second one. You pivot, face it, and direct all your energy to it. If you have left some of your mind on whatever you dealt with first, when you have pivotted, some of your attention will still be focused on the first direction and you will tend to rock back in that direction. Instead use the Two-Step as a way of learning to focus all your energy on one thing and then shift it easily to another thing. When you have finished with the first thing, it is over, altogether done. Don't let your mind stop on it. Make sure that each movement finishes in a precise and controlled instant of cessation.

There should also be no rocking from side to side as you do the Two-Step. Feel the center line running vertically through your body/energy sphere. You should not waver or wobble around that line, and the line should proceed straight forward as you move over the ground in the Two-Step.

[F] **ROWING EXERCISE**

The Rowing exercise is another of the most basic and important of the Aikido movement exercises. It is an exercise in learning to focus power and a way of grounding yourself.

Stand in a left T-stance, and make the stance a rather long one. Start by working on the hip movement alone without using your arms. Start moving your hips back and forth. On the forward motion, your left knee should not go beyond your toes. Try moving it farther forward and see what that does to your balance and to the ease with which you hold yourself in place. On the backward motion, you should have the feeling that you are sitting down: that is, you should feel the motion in your hips and buttocks rather than in your shoulders. It is especially important to sense a lot of power in the legs and feel how the feet are rooted to the ground. Don't rock back and forth loosely or let the toes or heels detach themselves from the ground.
Plate II. The Rowing Exercise
Once you have the body motion down, you can add the arms. This is an exercise in transferring power from the legs and hips to the arms and hands, so the hips begin moving slightly before the hands. The exercise is a way of practicing pushing and pulling, and you must think of that as you do it and not just rock back and forth aimlessly. The hips move forward, and then both arms move straight out and down. The movement is done with both hands folded so it is as though you were pushing with the back of the wrists. The body motion and the hand motion come to an end at the same point. Once the forward motion is completed, the hands open up. Then the hips start the motion back and the arms follow. The hands are drawn back to the bony points that people usually consider to be the hips. Again the arm and hip motions end at the same time. Then the hands fold over in preparation for the next movement forward.

Do each movement as a projection of energy in the direction you are moving; intend to push when you go forward, and intend to pull when you go back. The hips push or pull some imaginary object into motion, and after the motion is initiated in this way, then the arms take over and guide the motion. The power is transmitted to the arms via the spinal column: it is important that the torso remain upright and move as a unit. If the hips move an inch, then the shoulders move an inch. If the shoulders move, it is because the hips move. Be careful to stay upright and avoid leaning.
A question that is frequently asked is, "What is good posture?" In talking about principles of correct body use, there is no absolute boundary between what is good and what is not good. That is because "good" does not stand by itself: we have to specify good for what and good for whom. What makes a movement good depends on what the purpose is of the mover who is doing the movement, and this is not a simple thing. The mover's purpose can include both an objective task which the movement accomplishes and a subjective feeling which the movement allows the mover to experience. In addition, the mover's purpose may be shaped not only by his individual goals but by cultural imperatives as to what he ought to do, the style with which he ought to move, and what he ought to wish to feel through movement. Thus it may well be that there are entirely different ideas of what good movement is, and I don't think it is profitable to try to argue that one standard of good is better than another. Instead, I think that the most useful course of action is simply to make as explicit as possible what is being prescribed and why it appears to make sense at least to the person prescribing. Then people can make an informed decision as to what they will do.

However, what we are dealing with in this book is a way of learning about movement as well as a way of moving, and the elements which describe what movement is, how it is learned and how it can be taught can be separated from the prescriptions of how one ought to move. The core of the method of teaching movement described here is the idea that intention is the key to movement. An idea about what is going on in some situation plus a desire to attain some particular result leads to an image of some movement which will accomplish the result and that culminates in an intention to move in some particular way. The intention is
where the mind and body intersect: that is, the intention to move leads directly to the faint muscular beginnings of the movement itself.

The basic point is that the mover must feel him/herself as intelligence-that-is-body. The mover must feel how the body is a solid manifestation of intent and that every movement is, essentially, an intent to move. The implication of this is that learning about movement must include tracing movement back down to the intentional and pre-intentional stages of its creation. This way of looking at movement and working with it could be applied independently of the particular standards of good movement that we are working with here. What would be necessary in such an application would be an explicit identification of the purposes in one's movement and then the use of this method of intentional clarification in learning how to fulfill the purposes. However, no matter what standards of movement you ultimately wish to utilize, the process of working with the explicit set of standards described in this book and the comparison of these standards with your own can only help clarify your thinking.

So, let us go back to the question: what is good posture? Webster's second unabridged dictionary defines "posture" as the "relative arrangement of the different parts of anything, especially of the parts of the body." This sounds too static, too thing-like. A living person is in constant movement, even if the movements are sometimes small, and there isn't any exact "relative arrangement." However, we have all had the experience of recognizing someone by his walk even when he is too far away for us to be able to see his face or any other features clearly. There is something then which stays roughly constant in a person's movement, and that is a style or manner of body use. There is some holding pattern or relative arrangement which does to a great extent carry through from situation to situation in a person's movement patterns. Looking at it on the intentional level, this constancy is not so much a position that the body is put in as an
intentional shape that is constantly being projected. It is a general self-image that stays roughly the same and which is the starting point for any other particular intention that the person may project.

This idea of intentional shape, however, is not quite what it sounds like. It sounds as though it could be just a more rarified equivalent of physical shape and, as such, be just as static a way of thinking about movement as the more customary concept of posture. In fact it is not, and this is because energy projection is clearly a process, a doing, and as such is more like a fluid than a solid. It is easy (even if inaccurate) to think about the body as a solid thing that has a static shape, but once you learn to experience and think on the energy level, you will feel that shape is a process, not a static thing. (Actually, as we shall see, bad posture is a commitment to some particular, limited, static form of energy.)

What is important is that posture is not a thing but a process. It is not a position that one is in but the desire to be in that position. It is really a strategy for dealing with movement and the world. The implication of this is that posture cannot be adjusted in a merely physical way. Instead, the person's sense of his self moving in the world must be dealt with and his sense of what he is and what he wants to do and what he wants to feel. If you try to adjust someone's posture by moving only his body, his underlying sense of where he ought to be will remain the same and this, in the long run, will prevent any physical change. If a person tries to change how he holds himself simply by forcing himself to stand differently, he is pitting a new intention against an old, established and continuing intention and whatever change he creates will be difficult and hard won.

It is helpful to speak in terms of choice and the subconscious maintenance of old choices. It is helpful to look at movement as being deliberately chosen action. You can get a handle on any movement that is of interest to you by thinking of it as something
that you are doing deliberately rather than as something that is random or unplanned. This is not to say that the choice to do the movement was something that you were consciously aware of, but the point of this way of thinking is to emphasize that on some level of your mind you are in charge of the movement. Thus, once you find the intention that created the movement, you can then change the movement.

Every deviation from the perfect balance of the centered state is something that you do. Any overemphasis on a quality or a body part or any neglect of a quality or body part is a deliberate choice to do that, and the choice is made because it seems reasonable to you. The set of choices or style that underlies all your movement patterns is not something that was implanted into you at some point in your learning and which is now passively maintained as the physical structure which is your tool for dealing with the world. Your personal style of movement, your personal strategy of moving, is recreated from instant to instant and constantly maintained as the foundation for your movements. We all have the ability to make great changes in our structure and ways of functioning, if we choose to. We are not like cement, that once dried stays rigid in its present form. We are more like plasticine, that holds a shape only until it is remolded. Any deviation from centered movement that you notice in yourself is a challenge and an opportunity for learning not just an evil to be borne with resignation.

There are three parts to the process of improving your movement: letting go, filling up, and testing. Letting go we have also called "opening up," and it is the process of releasing your hold upon an incorrect intention. Whatever the error is that you are working on, the first step is to relax and let go of the sense that it is what you really do want to do. The next step is filling up, that is, projecting a correct intention. Once you have made yourself clear and empty, it is then time to learn to shape a correct intention and act upon it. And the third step is
testing, putting the intention into use and seeing how well you really have mastered it. Testing implies the idea of difficulty, the idea that you have to apply in real life what you learned in the protected space of the classroom. It is all very well to be able to move well when nothing depends on your performance, but when it is crucially important to do the job right, will you still be able to intend correctly or will you clutch up?

All three of the elements must go together for real learning to take place. If you do no more than let go of errors, you will probably experience a free and comfortable sense of smoothness in your body, but you won't be able to do anything with it. You will know what not to do, but you won't know what to do. If you work only on trying to do the right thing but without letting go of your desire to do the wrong thing, you will have a hard time making the right choices easy and natural. And if you work on the first two elements but don't ever bother to test yourself, you will never know how much of your new knowledge is really stable and internalized and how much is just superficial. Whenever we are under pressure, we always react according to the patterns that are most normal, comfortable and natural for us, and these will most likely be our old, familiar patterns, the wrong ones. You must give yourself the opportunity to react according to your old patterns in order to solidify your intentions to react according to your new ones.

What underlies these three aspects of the process of improving your movement is your experience of some standard against which to measure your movement. You must have something to compare your movement to to determine whether it should be corrected and how it should be corrected. There are three types of standards, conceptual, observational and experiential. Conceptual standards are those that are expressed and accepted as ideas about movement. Observational standards are those that are derived from observing someone who moves well. And experiential standards are those feelings you have had which go to define for you a better, more
effective, more comfortable way of moving. Clearly all three
types of standards interact with each other in your practice. It
is not terribly important for our purposes here to be utterly
precise about how these three types of standards operate in your
learning, but it is enough to point out that you must have some
sense of what you are actually doing and what you would like to do
instead in order to accomplish anything at all in your practice.
This is not to say that your sense of your goals must be precise
and unchanging. It can be hazy, and it can develop as your level
of understanding develops. But you must have some sense of what
you are after in order to practice.

This is where the idea/experience of intentional shape comes
in. Even though we have taken care to say that an energy shape is
not some static thing, nonetheless it can be helpful to use a
somewhat lumpish position-concept as an ideal or checkpoint for
movement. Having a feeling or idea of how certain positions
ought to look or feel can be a help in working with movement.
Having a picture or kinesthetic image of the "correct position"
can be a useful reminder of how to scan the body/movement for
energy breaks, and it can suggest alterations to try which might
help improve the movement.

Naturally, both the idea of the error and the idea of the
correct pattern are attained little by little as you practice.
A simple idea is enough for a beginner even though it is so simple
as not to be really accurate. And an advanced student develops
a sharper and more comprehensive idea of what he/she is working on.

The basic process involved in working with this image is
that of scanning yourself and comparing how you feel or how you
are moving to your sense of the image. If you wish to change a
pattern, you must be aware of what the pattern is. You must
become aware of what you are doing while you are doing it in order
to change it. If you place all your attention on the goal you
wish to reach and none of it on the movement you are performing,
you will have no idea of what to do to get to your goal. You will
be like a traveler who is completely lost: you know where you want to go, but you don't know where you are, so you cannot consult the map to figure out how to get from where you are to where you want to go.

When you do an exercise, and especially as we reach more complex exercises later in the book, practice scanning yourself before, during and after each movement. If you practice the movements in the vacant, external way that we often practice, you will find it hard to work with them. Instead, before you move, create in yourself whatever quality or shape of intention you are working on; then move, and to the extent that you can, pay attention to the intention during the movement; and after the movement, scan yourself to see how well you stayed in the intention, and reset yourself as you ought to have stayed. If, after you move, you simply walk away without taking the time to check how well you moved and create in yourself the intention that you should have finished the move with, you will find it very hard to make any progress in working on the energy level.

This may seem like the long way around, but we are now back at the question again of what good posture is. However, now that we have all this material concerning the nature of posture as a background, we can talk about what good posture is in a way that will be useful and meaningful. To begin with, the idea of good posture (as opposed to good posture itself) is a tool for helping us focus our attention on how we move and on how we ought to move. I find it convenient to talk as though there were some perfect form that we could attain even though it may be that no mere mortal could actually move perfectly.

Good posture is a manner of using the body that is effective, efficient and comfortable. We have dealt a bit with the alignment and use that leads to proper utilization of the structure of the body, and you will experience this more clearly as we do more exercises concerning it. For the moment, it is enough to say that good posture is symmetrical and expansive. Any form of
constriction and smallness has a negative feeling to it. Being committed to some rigid form of intention--caving in your chest or throwing your shoulders back, for examples--has to do with tightening yourself against yourself or with shutting off the flow of your own vitality. That kind of intentional projection involves clods and gaps in the energy field, and these are really uneven distributions of the person's awareness of himself. Moving with more awareness of one part than another, the person will naturally use one part more than another, in a lopsided, assymetrical manner. This assymetry will extend to the structural, intentional and functional levels.

The first step in correcting movement is releasing one's commitment to constriction, but this is a negative element. The next step, the positive element, is expansion, a radiant way of being in the body. Letting go is ceasing to pull in. Expansion is positively moving outward.

As we shall see, good posture is symmetrical and expansive. Although such things as injury often make it impossible for an individual to attain high levels of structural symmetry and expansiveness, to the extent that it is possible, good posture would involve physical symmetry and expansiveness. However, even when there are physical limitations, it is possible for a person to cultivate a symmetrical and expansive sense of body awareness, and this is the real basis of good posture. On the functional level, it is clear that good posture would involve being able to move evenly in any direction that is necessary and being able to move out to deal with one's environment well.

In the end, good posture has to do with being able to feel all of yourself clearly and distinctly all at once. It means to be able to grasp yourself as a whole.
Section 16

[A] SINE WAVE

This exercise will show you how the body is unified in correct movement, and it will also show you how we perceive and interpret movement on the basis of our previous experience. Once you understand the exercise, find a few people who do not know what the exercise is and demonstrate it for them.

First, by yourself, without anybody watching, extend one arm in front of you and raise it to forehead height and then lower it to waist level. Do this a few times until the movement becomes familiar. Next keep your arm held out stationary in front of your chest and spin in a circle (staying in the same spot you're standing on). Now if you combine the two movements in the right way, you will notice that your hand describes a wave pattern in the air. Turn around and simultaneously raise and lower your arm. You should be turning at a speed that will allow you to do two complete revolutions in about three or four seconds, and you should be moving your arm so that it is raised about four times in two revolutions. In other words, in a one hundred eighty degree turn you should move the arm up and down once.

Now have some people watch the move as you do it. Don't explain anything, but just have them watch. Then ask them to repeat one part of what you did: ask them to stand still and not rotate their bodies but do the arm movement that you had just done. It's hard to phrase the request in just the right way, and this is as good a formula as I have found. Almost invariably, people will wave their arm from side to side. They will almost always fail to notice that what your arm did, speaking in terms of the movement you created with your arm muscles, was to go up and down and only up and down.
In Aikido we move our arms sideways by rotating our bodies, and we usually do not move our arms out to the side more than forty-five degrees or so (from straight forward). The reason for this is that the arms function in the strongest and most stable manner when they are in front of us. When the body is integrated into a whole, every part of it participates in every movement; in particular this means that the arms are joined to the torso and don’t flop around on their own. Thus if we want to handle something to our side, the most centered way of doing so will be to turn to face it with our centers and to use our centers in handling it. As we do more exercises involving body use, this will become clearer to you.

There is also a more philosophical implication to the sine wave exercise. Most people orient themselves relative to the external environment. Thus when they perceive what the arm is doing, they see it as moving in a wave because it does in fact describe a wave relative to the floor or walls. It is in relation to the torso that the arm actually describes only an up and down line. The purpose of movement awareness practice is to teach us to measure and define movement in relation to our own centers rather than only in relation to the external environment. It is important to be able to define yourself for yourself and not need to depend on external evidence of what you are.

[B] HIP SWINGS

Stand with your feet a little less than shoulder width apart. Turn your toes out a bit. Bend your knees a bit, and let your arms relax by your sides. Now start turning back and forth, left and right. Turn your hips to move your body rather than initiating the motion from the shoulders.

How far can you turn to each side and maintain firm, comfortable contact with the floor? Notice that if you turn more than forty-five degrees to the right or left, your knees will begin to buckle, your ankles twist, and the weight shift on the soles of your feet.
Keep turning smoothly and not too quickly. As you turn, feel how the muscles and joints slide smoothly from position to position. Keep turning in a steady, even rhythm. Give yourself time to feel the motion.

As you keep turning, relax your arms and extend energy through them. If you keep your arms relaxed yet alive, they will swing rhythmically with the movement of the hips. Don't swing the arms by using the arms to initiate a movement. Just let the swinging come from the hips. Gradually turn faster and harder, and notice the motion of the arms. If you are extending properly, they won't flop about but will have a firm, rhythmic swinging action as they wrap and unwrap themselves around you. Now slow down again and let the movement become soft and slow again.

[C] PIVOTING

1. Do the same hip swinging movement as in the previous exercise but with this difference: as you swing your arms, let your feet swivel on the floor and your body change directions. When you swing your arms to the left, pivot so that you turn your whole body to the left. And then pivot to turn to the right as you swing your arms right. Build up a rhythm as you turn from right to left. You should be pivoting through a one hundred eighty degree turn from left to right and back.

2. Continue with this movement and kneel down on one knee each time you pivot. You may want to spread your feet a bit wider than shoulder distance apart to make the kneeling and getting up easier. As you turn to each side, keep your feet roughly in the same place and just allow them to swivel on the floor: then you will have one foot placed well in front of the other, and you will be able to kneel easily.

This movement is more complex and strenuous than most of what we have done so far, and it will give you a good opportunity to scan your body and discover whether the difficulty of the move disrupts your manner of body use. There are a number of things
to check, if you feel that a checklist will help you remember what to look for. Notice your feet. They should feel firm and grounded, alive and in contact with the floor. In general, except when it is clearly inappropriate, the feet should have even weight on each. Notice your legs and hips. Do they feel like strong conduits of power? Much of the power in movement comes from solid connection with the floor, and this power is channeled up the legs and distributed in the body by the hips and spine.

Notice your belly. Is it open and relaxed? How is your breathing? Is it free and open and full? Are your ribs moving freely? Pay attention to your shoulders and the set of your neck and head. Is that area of your body open and relaxed, or are you tightening and pulling your head in? Do your arms feel energized, and is there life in your hands? Is your vision open and soft? Or does hard work make you forget about all these things?

[D] **FIGURE EIGHTS**

Stand up and raise one arm up in front of you to about eye level. Did you stiffen your neck or raise your shoulder to do this? As you move, imagine that you are a puppet and your fingers are being pulled forward and up by a string attached to them. If you move in this way, your shoulders will stay relaxed and open as you use your arm. There should be almost no difference in the position of your shoulder whether your arm is relaxed at your side or held up.

Now, starting in the same position as the Hip Swings exercise, turn back and forth to the right and left, slowly and smoothly. When you feel comfortable with this movement, you can take the motion into a more complex pattern. Lift your arms and hold your hands in front of you about waist height. As you turn, you will form a figure eight with each hand. When you turn to the right, turn your right palm up and your left palm down. As you change to turn back to the left, turn your palms over. Allow the motion to have a flowing circular shape. Keep your hands roughly in
front of you as in the Sine Wave exercise, and create the figure
eight circularity by moving them up and down as you turn the palms.
The movement will have a flowing quality as though you were
stroking something smooth and silky.

As you do the movement, allow your whole body to feel soft
and smooth. Let your breathing settle. However, if you begin
to feel spaced out and groggy as you do this or any other exercise
involving softness and relaxation, you are doing something wrong.
Relaxation should feel comfortable and pleasant, never groggy and
weak.

[E] HIP SWINGS INTO TWO-STEP

This exercise begins with much the same movement as the Hip
Swings exercise. The one difference is in the feet position:
instead of standing with your feet side by side, stand in a
T-stance with the right foot in front. When you swing, you will
turn farther toward the left and only somewhat toward the right.

When you feel comfortable with the swinging movement, let it
take you directly into the two-step. You have swung to the left:
now, as you swing your body and your arms back to the right (in a
clockwise direction), let the momentum of the arms and left hip
draw the left leg into a forward step. Then just continue that
movement with a step around and back with the right foot, and
there you have the Two-Step exercise. Once you have done one
two-step, stay in the reversed stance and do the hip swing a few
times again. Then when you feel its rhythm, let it swing you
into another two-step. And so on.

As you do the two-step, allow the arms to move in a wide and
free circle, with the centrifugal force helping them to fly open.
And as you get into the rhythm of the movement, you can dispense
with the hip swings between the two steps. However, keep your
awareness of how the movement begins with the hips, and move as
though you were still doing the hip swings between the two-step
moves.
SIX DIRECTIONS BREATHING

Begin by sitting comfortably erect and doing the Basic Breathing exercise for a minute or so. Now, continuing with the same breathing pattern, you can begin directing your exhalations. As you exhale, imagine that you are blowing the air down through your spine and out the end of it towards the ground. Imagine that you are blowing to a spot eight or ten inches under you. If you are sitting on the ground, you can feel a spot eight or ten inches under the ground to which the air is going. Don't change the timing, or depth or rhythm of your breathing. Just imagine that the air is going down to that spot. Don't strain to maintain this image or feeling. Don't try to force the air down. After all, you are not a tube of toothpaste and do not need to squeeze to force your energy to flow out.

Do a few breaths in the down direction, and then shift to an up direction. Feel your breath being exhaled straight up from the top of your head to a point eight or ten inches above you. Stick with this direction for a few breaths, until you feel clear in it. Then go back to the down and keep alternating. When you find it easy to project in each direction, change to using just one breath per direction.

This is an exercise you can do at home for a few minutes every day. When you feel comfortable with these two directions, you can add the other four basic directions. Start with the down, and then do the up. Next, exhale to a spot eight inches or so in front of you and at about waist height. Then exhale to a spot about eight inches in back of you and also waist height. Exhale to a spot eight or ten inches to the left of your left hip. And to a spot eight inches or so to the right of your right hip. Then, on the final exhalation, exhale in all six directions at once. As you find this last exhalation easier, also concentrate on maintaining an awareness of the point in your hara from which all six directions radiate.
You will find that if you practice this exercise for ten minutes or so every day, you will begin to be much more aware of a number of aspects of your intentional projection and your body use. Most people find it harder to concentrate clearly in one direction or another. This exercise will serve to help you discover how evenly and completely you are aware of your whole self, and it will also help you begin to be able to maintain a clear focus on yourself as a whole.
Section 17: Some Energy Exercises

This section is different from the others you have looked at so far. It is a group of exercises, but the exercises are not necessarily to be done in the movement awareness class as such. They are extensions and variations of some of the energy exercises we have already done, but they are provided more as hints of where some individuals might wish to go in their practice than as suggestions of what the class as a whole should do right now. I feel that it is best for people to stay with the very basic and simple energy practices and not make a conscious decision to move on to more complex practices. Some of them could probably be very uncomfortable or even unsafe for someone who willfully pushed his/her way into them. Flowers bloom at their own time. It is possible to pry them open with a crow bar, but it isn't good for them.

If you practice the movement awareness exercises in this book in the right way, you will find that they will change and grow and suggest new possibilities to you. In the same way, if you practice the basic energy awareness exercises in the right way, you will find yourself drifting into new ways of doing them, and you will find that your practice will evolve and lead you on to new things. There is no way of saying at what level people will start in their practice or what the course of their practice will be, but you may find yourself moving through some of the patterns laid out in this section.

[A] OPENING BELLY EXERCISE

[B] BASIC BREATHING EXERCISE
This relates to a number of exercises we have already done, but there are some variations you may wish to play with.

When you are comfortable with the Six Directions, you can begin to exhale in pairs. Breathe down and up at once, then right and left, and then forward and backward. End by exhaling in all six directions at once. This will allow you to begin working with projecting from center in a balanced manner.

In doing the Six Directions Breathing, you can imagine that there is some force pushing in on you and resisting each outward projection. Without straining, project more strongly and overcome the resistance.

We have all seen the picture of the atom with its electron orbits. Imagine two orbits around you with your hara as the center point. To begin with, it will help if the orbits are perpendicular to each other and symmetrical with respect to the basic six directions. Put the orbits a comfortable distance away from yourself, say four or five feet to begin with. Later on you can work single orbits, lopsided pairs, and greater distances. Project a breath to one point on an orbit, and with each succeeding breath, project to a point an inch or two down the line until you have gone all the way around the orbit. Then do the other orbit.

As you project your breath out in either a single direction at a time, or in paired directions, or in the six directions at once, you can work on the distance of your projection. As you get comfortable with the basic pattern, increase the distance of each projection. You might start by projecting out a foot or so, and you can aim towards feeling clear projections at five or ten feet, to begin with.

It is important as you do breathing exercises to treat yourself gently. Don't try to force yourself to do something you're not ready for. Don't force anything. Don't strain to force a sense of projection. If it is hard for you to experience some
direction clearly, then just accept that and very gently and persistently sit and caress the direction. Sooner or later you will begin to feel it more clearly. If you have blocked off sensation in some area of your body, it will take time before you will allow yourself to regain that sensation. Give yourself all the time you need. I have spent as much as six or eight months of daily practice on some small point in an exercise before I felt comfortable enough to go on. And that didn't mean that I had mastered the exercise, just that I felt comfortable with it.

[D] SPHERE

As you project all six directions at once, start to feel that the points you project lie on the surface of a sphere. Then, keeping a sense of your hara as the center, project along any radius of the sphere to its surface, and build up a sense of all the points that go to define the skin of the sphere. When you feel comfortable with this, go on to project the basic paired directions as diameters across the sphere; later on you can also project any of the other diameters of the sphere.

As you work with the sphere, you can practice sensing it as larger and larger. You may experience that there are natural "shells" around you, distances at which it is intuitively proper to locate a practice sphere. You can also begin to work with the sense that you are tuning in to a sphere that is already there rather than creating one by your own efforts. Remember to include the volume of the sphere clearly in your awareness. Can you feel the whole space equally and clearly? If there is any sense of contraction, feel the whole space letting go (just as we did starting with the Opening Belly exercise). And also work on expanding the whole space.

Feel the vertical line running through the center of the sphere. There are a number of interesting points along that line: the points about four feet above and below the body, the points
about six inches above and below the body, the base of the spine, the hara, the solar plexus, the heart, the throat, the center of the head, and the top of the head. You can do the six directions breathing originating the projections from each of these spots, and you can build up a sense that each of these spots forms the center of a sphere.

You can give the projections you work with a color, and each color will change the quality of the practice. White is the color that includes all the colors, and it is interesting to visualize/feel a bar of clear, white light running along the vertical line through the sphere. Transparency is the color that goes beyond color. You will find that the different points along the vertical line will respond differently to different color visualizations. You can use a sequence of colors at each point and note the different responses, or you can tune in to each point and discover what color it already has. Clear colors and even shapes go together, and as you work with this material, you may find muddy, distorted spots in your habitual energy field, spots which should be clearer and more even.

To correct an imbalance, you can use breathing and ki projections. If, for example, you feel that some spot is caved in, tight, lopsided or whatever, you can focus your breath there and project a shape and quality which is just the opposite of that which you are trying to supplant. If you feel that some spot has too much energy and another not enough, you can imagine inhaling and sucking air/energy away from that spot and channeling it to the second spot as you exhale. You can use this pattern to change physical holding patterns as well. If, for example, one shoulder is low and the other high, you can imagine inhaling down through the high shoulder, collecting the energy in your center, and exhaling up through the low shoulder. If some spot has a dark, muddy color, you can gradually clarify the color by breathing it into greater and greater clarity. You could then increase the brightness and power of the color, or if you feel that the color
is not complete, you can balance it out with some complementary color. Of course, there are many other patterns to work with.

There is another way of working with imbalances, and that is to go into them rather than trying to correct them. An off-center manner of holding the body is a desire to be that way projected on the energy level. If you tune in to that projection which is shaping your body, often you will feel that it hasn't been fully satisfied, and this will especially be true if you have been working hard at correcting the way you move and denying yourself the right to move poorly. If you just go with the flow of the energy, you will often find whatever mistake you are trying to correct increasing, even to the point of exaggeration. When you reach the most misshapen manner that your energy takes you to, examine the feeling and see what it is like to be there. Discover whether you do in fact need to be that way. Very often as you go through this process, the part of you that has wanted to be in that poor shape will begin to feel that it is all right to be more open and centered, and your energy will automatically assume a more centered form. This is a very delicate process, and it can be a very powerful one. One caution is that it may take you into levels of yourself you are not prepared to deal with. Also, this kind of exercise is obviously very personal and not at all appropriate for a movement awareness class.

The material relating to the energy sphere can be boiled down to a few concise ideas/feelings. This will make it easier for you to scan your energy field for breaks and re-collect yourself when your energy wanders.

Your energy should be symmetrical. You should project equally and even outward in all directions.

Your energy should be expansive. Contraction is a negative, alienated quality. Even when you make small movements, you should feel large and vigorous.
Your energy should be light. It should be alert and receptive to what is going on and able to move and respond freely and easily.

Your energy should be solid. It should have an immovable, adamantine strength and be able to focus and concentrate.

As you practice a given movement exercise, you can scan yourself for energy breaks. Although there is no limit to the number of patterns and qualities you can work on in a move, this list of four things to check provides a convenient and concrete way of coming to grips with your energy. As you scan your energy before, during and after a move, you may find that you were paying more attention to one part of your body or the environment than to the other parts. By working with the various projections, you can balance out your energy field and then try the move again, attempting to keep your energy more balanced as you do it.

One way of taking these projection exercises out of the class and into "real" life is to pay attention to your energy during the day and discover what situations and events tempt you to project your energy in unbalanced and misshapen ways.
Section 18

[A] HIP SHOVE

The power in Aikido defense techniques comes from the hips in two ways: the linear rocking back and forth of the Rowing exercise creates part of it, and the rotating movement of the Hip Swings exercise creates the other part. There is a very similar feeling to the two movement patterns: they are both firm and planted on the ground, fluid and expansive as well, and there is a clear sense of how the power is generated by the legs as they thrust against the ground.

In most uses, the two motions blend into one. Stand in a left foot forward T-stance. Have your partner stand in front of you and put his left palm on your right hip. (Actually, though people speak of the point as the "hip," what I really mean is the Anterior Superior Iliac Spine, the point of bone on the top side of the pelvis.) Have your partner brace his arm firmly. Then, you rock forward and simultaneously turn your hips counterclockwise. This movement will combine the rocking and rotating motion of the right hip, and if you are doing it correctly, the power should push your partner back. Feel how the hips create the power.

To make this more difficult, have your partner push against your shoulder. Now the power must travel from the hip to the shoulder, and if you don't keep your body knit together and firmly integrated, the power will leak out in twists and wobbles.

[B] TESTING THE TWO-STEP

When you complete the two-step movement, you should be relaxed, have your ki extended, and be firm and stable on your feet. In order to test how well you are doing the two-step, you
can have your partner push you a bit to test your stability. After you finish your movement, your partner should push you either forward or backward, pushing either on your stomach or the small of your back. If you finished the movement properly, you should be able to settle into your spot. The push will not disturb you, and it will even root you to the ground more firmly.

The higher up toward your shoulders your partner pushes, the more it will disturb your balance. As you get comfortable with the basic version of the exercise, you can ask your partner to push higher and harder. In addition, you can ask your partner to push as you are coming to rest instead of giving you time to finish and settle down. The push should not be jerky or rough, but should blend into the final instants of your movement. If you are not extending your energy into an anchored finish, you will you will either be toppled or you will have to actively resist the push. You should be able to shed the pressure without identifying with it and letting it affect you.

[C] ROWING AND BREATHING

As you do the Rowing exercise, you can incorporate the Basic Breathing exercise into the movement pattern. Do the movement very slowly and smoothly. As you move your arms forward, exhale through the mouth. And as you draw your arms in, inhale through the nose. Time the breathing and movements so that the inhalation and exhalation finish exactly as the movement finishes. As you do the exercise, scan your body/energy field and make it smooth, strong and whole.

What happens if you inhale while you are moving your arms out and exhale while you are drawing your arms in? This will feel like a contradiction at first because you will seem to be going in two directions at once. It is easiest to use an outward breath and movement to reinforce each other, but you can use the opposite pattern as well. The reverse pattern will give you the opportunity to stabilize your energy field so that you keep
your energy extended out even when you draw your arms in. The feeling involved in this will become clearer when you work with the variations of the Six Directions Breathing.

[D] **TWO-STEP AXIS**

There are many things you can use the two-step for. It is a basic movement pattern which lends itself to the practice of many different facets of movement awareness. One way of using the two-step is to focus your energy in different spots in your body and watch how that affects the movement. We have done similar things in earlier exercises, but the two-step is especially convenient because it is a clear standard pattern against which to contrast the altered patterns.

A particularly interesting energy pattern has to do with the axis of rotation for the two-step. Think about a record turning on a turntable. The axis of rotation, of course, is the center of the record. Notice that the record spins around while staying in place, and notice also that one side of the record moves towards you as the other side moves away. What would happen if the axis of rotation were moved to the right edge of the disk? The record would no longer spin in place: as it began to turn it would move to the right and toward you. Keeping the same direction of rotation, if the axis of rotation were moved to the left edge of the disc, it would move to the left and away from you as it began to move. (Of course in either case the record would describe a full circle around its axis point as it finished the move, but I want to emphasize the beginning.)

As you turn in the two-step, you turn about some axis of rotation. It is a complicating factor that the axis moves in a line across the floor as you step forward, but see if you can ignore that and feel where the axis is in your body. It should be a line running vertically through the center of the body. Try putting the axis on a line running down your face and chest and belly to the floor. And try putting the axis on a line running
down the back of your head and your spine down to the floor. You will feel the difference this makes in how you spin and how you cover ground.

**[E] Flamingo Two-Step**

There is a very good exercise for testing your balance at the end of the two-step and finding out how clean your finish is. As you finish the two-step, settle onto your back foot and raise your forward leg up in the air. Try to hold your thigh parallel to the ground, and stay in that position for at least five seconds. If you wobble and fall, you have some room for improvement. Ideally, your motion should be absolutely smooth and firm. There will be a joyous sense of a "nice ending" when you do it right, just like the sense of "nice ending" you get when the movie ends with everything being worked out just perfectly. You can stand there on one leg happily ever after.

**[F] Four-Step**

Another good two-step practice is to multiply it. You can string two-steps together to make a four-step or go on to six- and eight-step exercises. This will be a real test of your ability to stay in control of your movements. If you get dizzy, that is a good time to ground your energy more. If you maintain firm connection with your feet and the feeling of being on the ground, your dizziness will lessen and you will also be able to move well in spite of it. Don't spot with your eyes as dancers do. Keep your eyes forward and your head moving along with your torso, and control your dizziness by feeling hara.

**[G] Testing the Rowing Exercise**

If your movement in the rowing exercise is correct, you will be firm and stable at each end of the move. In order to test this, have a partner push you forward or backward after you finish moving (just as we did in testing the Two-Step). Have him push
forward on the lower back at both the forward and rear position, and also push back on the hara in both positions. You should remain comfortable and stable in all cases. Your partner should not push suddenly or extremely hard. He should take account of your present level of skill and push with just enough power to give you something to deal with but not with so much that you could not hope to stay firm.

As you become able to maintain a firm stance in this test, you can ask your partner to push you just as you are finishing your movement. That will be a harder test of how well you are staying stabilized. You ought to be able to remain motionless in the midst of movement, and you ought to be in movement even while you are standing still. In the end there will be no difference.
[A] **ROWING RESISTANCE**

The rowing exercise is a means of learning how to transfer power from your legs and hips to your arms and hands. To get a better feel for the actual use of the motion, work with a partner and have her or him provide some resistance for you to work against. You will have to discover how to move your partner and still stay balanced yourself.

It will be important for your partner to know his role. He should grasp your wrist and provide some weight for you. But it should not be dead weight. He has to give you enough weight to enable you to practice, but not so much that you cannot cope with it. He has to go along with your motion and keep his own balance so that he doesn't knock you over with his momentum. If he is limp and unbalanced, he will simply fall all over you and make it impossible for you to do the exercise.

It is important to move the hips just a bit before the arms. The hips push or pull your partner into motion, and then the arms guide the motion. If you get too much into the pushing, you will tend to fall over forward. If you get too much into the pulling, you will tend to fall over backward. In other words, your intention to go in some direction can get so strong that you will go farther in that direction than you should. This is an exercise in learning to intend strongly without losing awareness of the center, the place from which the intention and the movement start.

You can ask your partner to let go of your wrists at random times. If you are putting all your attention on moving your partner and forgetting to attend to your own center, when he lets go of your wrist, you will lurch off balance in some direction. It will be important for you to stay in touch with feeling both
yourself and your partner. Do not conceive of this exercise in
terms of duality, you against your partner. That will cut you
off from him and decrease your awareness of him. Instead,
conceive of moving with your partner in a spirit of unity. Join
his energy, assume control of it, and move it.

[B] BRACING

This exercise will allow you to feel how you are channeling
energy through your body to meet strong resistance. Stand in a
right foot forward T-stance. Extend your right arm out in front
of you, and hold your hand at eye level. Keep your elbow slightly
bent and pointing down rather than out to the side. Hold your
hand so that the thumb points up and the palm faces left.

Have your partner stand in front of you in exactly the same
position. Cross your arms so that the backs of your wrists are
touching. Now lean into each other and push.

Start off with a light push and gradually increase the
power you are applying. Make sure to use both physical power and
ki extension. Keep pushing for a minute or so.

This is a complicated pattern. You are channeling energy
in a diagonal curve from the left leg up to the right hand. And
there is a diagonal relationship between you and your partner.
Thus there is no simple, square solidity in your push and resis-
tance to your partner's push. It is only by knitting the body
together with a squarely integrated intention that you will
achieve physical stability and power.

As one of you gets more in touch with a squarely grounded
energy form and becomes able to push more powerfully, it will
provide the other with the opportunity and the necessity to get
stronger also. As you maintain the push, you will have time to
discover which parts of yourself you are not using well and in
what ways you can improve your use. And fighting against your
partner is really a gift to him in that it will allow him to
learn about himself.
[C] **ROWING AND RAISING**

1. The movement in this exercise is derived from a technique for parrying a strike to the face. The exercise will use much the same position and body feeling as the Bracing exercise, but will combine it with the rowing movement. Stand in a right foot forward T-stance and raise both arms forward and up in front of you to about eye level. Keep the arms rounded and the shoulders relaxed and down. Extend ki out of your fingers as in the Unbendable Arm exercise. And put your arms down by your sides again.

Now, as you raise your arms and lower them again, do this in time with the forward and back movement of the Rowing exercise. There is a bit of a modification, though, since power is extended on the forward raising action, but there is no pull back: don't sit back into the movement as we did with the Rowing exercise, but just return to your beginning stance. Bring your arms back down to your sides with a clear, relaxed intention each time. Don't just let them drop limply, and don't stiffen up.

As usual, you should practice everything on each side and not stick with one preferred side, so try the exercise in a left foot forward T-stance.

2. You can make this exercise more interesting by including a pivot action in it. When you have brought your hands back down, pivot one hundred eighty degrees so that you are in the opposite foot forward T-stance. This means keeping each foot at the same spot on the floor while letting them both rotate so that the body can reverse its direction. Once you have pivoted, do the Rowing and Raising movement again. Then pivot once more and do the movement again, and so on. This will allow you to work on refocusing your energy quickly and will let you find places in your movement that are not clear.

It is also possible to make this an exercise for dealing with four directions by including some ninety degree pivots. These will involve a readjustment of the feet to bring them into a clear T-stance. As you pivot ninety degrees from some direction, the
foot that was the rear foot in the original direction will have to slide a bit forward and into bring it onto the same line as the foot that is now to the rear. The full sequence will involve two repetitions of the four directions in order to bring you back to your original position. Starting in left foot forward T-stance, the sequence will have you face in the following directions: north, south, east, west; south, north, west, east. There will be a one hundred eighty degree pivot from north to south and a ninety degree pivot from south to east, and so on. One hundred eighty degree and ninety degree turns will alternate.

[D] SIDEWAYS ROWING

This exercise will use a hip movement that is very similar to that of the rowing exercise, but the motion will be to the side instead of forward and back. And again, as in the Rowing and Raising exercise, there will be force applied only in the outward direction and not on the return back to the starting position.

Stand with your feet spread apart a bit wider than shoulder distance and with your feet turned out almost forty-five degrees. Now bend your knees and sink down four or five inches. When you do this, make sure that you have opened up your hips so that each knee travels in the line its foot is facing. Don't direct your knees forward or you will tend to fall back as though you were sitting slouched in an overly soft couch. It may help you to keep erect if you arch your lower back slightly. Be careful not to exaggerate this though.

This sinking movement will be part of the full sideways motion. Stand up in the position you started from. Raise both arms out to your right so that the right arm is a bit less than shoulder high and the left is held across your body at about solar plexus level. Keep the palms up. Make sure to let the arms follow a relaxed pendulum trajectory up to that position. Now, keeping yourself straight upright, bend your left leg and sink a bit to the right. The movement will be as though you were using
your weight and the motion of your torso to put power into the under side of your arm so that you could press something down with it.

Now straighten back up and do the same movement to the left side.

As you get comfortable with that back and forth movement, you can include a slide in the exercise. As you move from side to side, your arms will be describing a half circle, just the kind of trajectory a pendulum would swing in. As your arms move from the outstretched position on the right to a neutral position down by your sides, bring your right foot in to stand next to your left. And as your arms continue in their motion up and to the left, slide your left foot out so that you assume the original straddle stance. Then do the sinking movement which puts the power into your arm movement. And so on back and forth.

[E] GRAPEVINE AND ARM CIRCLE

This exercise is a further elaboration of the Sideways Rowing exercise. In it the arms will do a full circle movement while you include a grapevine step to move you to the side. In the grapevine step, you cross the left foot behind the right and then slide to the right with the right foot. You could also cross the left in front of the right and then slide the right out. And to go in the other direction, of course, you just reverse the process. Try moving back and forth with this step.

Now stand in the starting position for the Sideways Rowing exercise and swing your arms around in a circle. The circle should be a vertical circle in the same plane as a clock facing you on a wall.

Now put the two motions together. Start with the arms down. Swing them up clockwise. As they reach 12:00, start to slide your right foot to the right. You should slide over about a foot and stop. Simultaneously your arms will be continuing the clockwise circle; they should reach 3:00 and stop there just as the
slide stops. Be sure to keep your shoulders relaxed and down and your arms extended with the palms up.

Now start moving to the left, placing the right foot in front of the left. The arms circle counter clockwise and reach 6:00 just as all the weight is placed on the right foot. From there, the left foot slides left, the arms continue to circle, and they stop at 9:00 at the same time as the left foot stops. Then reverse the whole process and go back to the right. Notice that there are four possible foot positions: right leg in front as you move right or left, and left leg in front as you move right or left.

[F] STEPPING AND SWINGING

1. Start in a right foot forward T-stance with your arms by your right hip. Step back into a left T-stance, and feel how the body orientation changes as you do. Notice that as you step you will have to turn your left foot in (forward) and your right foot out to arrive at a comfortable T-stance. Step back again, moving slowly, and, in perfect timing with the counterclockwise rotation of your hips, move your arms from your right hip to your left. Do this by raising them up and forward to about eye level and then lowering them to your hip. This will create a tilted semi-circle. Keep your arms relaxed, extend your ki, and let your palms face down as you move. It will be a long, open feeling.

Keep stepping back in this pattern, feeling the connection between the arms and the hips as you move. Then try stepping forward in the same way.

2. You can also do this as a Two-Step exercise. Take one step forward in the regular way, but let it serve as the first step in a two-step. To do this, raise your arms to the forward, high position on the step, and don't bring them back to the hip right away. Instead, step back around with the second foot, and bring your arms to your hip as you finish the two-step.
At this point we have done a number of exercises that concern our manner of alignment and body use. There is one component of the exercises that has stayed constant and which you have probably given no thought to: the surface on which you are moving. If you have been practicing indoors, then you have been working on a smooth, flat, level surface. But life is not flat, smooth and level.

It is not safe to assume that something you have learned in one situation will automatically transfer to another situation. Under pressure, we use those responses that are most deeply ingrained in us, and we may find that what we could do in a comfortable situation we cannot do in a more difficult situation. We started by learning to open up and relax, and then we worked with situations in which we felt pressure and a tendency to close down. It was by testing out our ability to open up that we gained fuller control of it. Thus it would not have been enough to attain a sense of ease and clear movement only in simple, easy exercises, and we went on to work with more difficult and strenuous exercises. However, beyond that, our exercises have all been done in the context of a class situation, and it is important that you begin to work with movement awareness outside the specific class situation. You could take some of the exercises, the two-step for example, and do them outside on uneven ground. If you do the two-step or the Rowing exercise on a hillside, you will have to make some interesting adjustments in your movement patterns. How will you find ways to use the basic principles of movement to readjust the practical specifics of your movements?

You could use any movement as a practice simply by repeating it a number of times while paying attention to what you do. You could pick up paperclips off the floor, or you could rake your lawn, or wash dishes, and all the while you could be interested in finding out how you go about doing these things.
One of my favorite practices is opening doors. Every time I open a door, I devote a second or so to this practice, and the time adds up. It is helpful to start by picking some particular door that you use frequently. As you work with the door, pay attention to three things: 1) the characteristics of the door that determine what it is like to move, 2) your initial movements/energy flows and how well they follow the principles of awareness and centering, and 3) what changes are necessary to make your method of opening the door more centered and the differences in the results you obtain by using this new pattern. As you observe yourself, pay attention to your feet, hips, hands, shoulders, head, and belly. And your breathing. And everything else.

If you want to find out how well you are observing what you do, write down all the information you can on all three elements of the practice. Then give the paper to a person in the class, and ask her/him to mimic all the movements you made. You may find out that you were taking things for granted and hadn't specially noticed or described many aspects of the process of opening a door. It really is very complex.
In 1899 Inazo Nitobe, a Japanese living in the United States, wrote a book about the philosophy of the Japanese warrior class, *Bushido: The Warrior's Code*. In it he commented on the samurai's feelings about knowledge:

A typical samurai . . . compares learning to an ill-smelling vegetable that must be boiled and boiled before it is fit for use. . . . The writer meant thereby that knowledge becomes really such only when it is assimilated in the mind of the learner and shows in his character. (Nitobe, 9:20)

What this means is that theoretical, intellectual knowledge was thought by the samurai to be useless. When life and death were the stakes, any merely intellectual knowledge would have been worse than useless to a warrior since it would have cluttered up his mind and kept him from acting decisively.

Intellectual categories are like border lines: they exist only on the map not on the territory itself, and one of their main effects is to produce conflicts and confusions. If you stay in the movement itself, you will be able to perceive clearly and move smoothly.

On the other hand, this is a book. It has lots of words and lots of ideas. Obviously I must believe that it is possible to learn a feeling awareness through the intermediary of the intellect. It is easy to get lost in head-tripping on ideas and lose touch with the body and movement. But it is also easy to fall into the opposite trap, that of taking an anti-intellectual position and doing the practices all unthinkingly. There is a time and a place for every human faculty and a way to use every ability to further your practice.

It is helpful to be able to think about both the ordinary level of practice and the meta-level. The meta-level is that
higher level of logic from which you can look down and discern the logical structure of ordinary practice. Thinking about how the practice is structured can give you a better grasp on how to practice and where to go in your practice. Thinking about what you experience in practice can give you a verbal formula to remember, something that sums up some exercise you did and points toward some extension of it to work on. An image of some kind can act as an analogy or model and suggest new feelings to watch for and work on, feelings that may otherwise have been overlooked. The basic point is that it is important to learn how to learn so that you will know how to be your own teacher, and to do this you must learn the principles behind the exercises rather than just the movements. Then you will be able to discover your own way of moving and practicing.

The function of the chapters laying out ideas about the nature of movement awareness is to familiarize you with a way of viewing the world. Then as you actually experience the exercises, you will have some way of beginning to organize your experiences in a coherent, meaningful way. Of course, in the end you must create your meaning for yourself and absorb the exercises into whatever framework seems best to you.

When we analyze the totality which is practice of movement awareness, we see that it has three aspects. First, it is a theory, a vision of a certain area of human life, an idea of what things ought to be possible for us and what methods ought to serve to realize these possibilities. Second, it is a collection of practical exercises and training methods for achieving what the theory describes. And third, it is the lived experiences of self and movement that are described by the theory and achieved by the practice.

These three aspects of movement awareness practice correspond to three different types of knowledge of movement, each type having its own unique functions and logic. Intellectual or
theoretical knowledge of movement is that knowledge which is primarily verbal and symbolic, which has to do with facts and theories about objects and events. Performance knowledge is that knowledge which is the ability to perform some action skillfully. Being knowledge is that knowledge which is the clear, reflective grasp of the quality or flavor of the lived experience of a movement.

Intellectual knowledge of a movement consists of such things as being able to state the purpose of the movement, being able to describe it in gross terms, and being able to analyze it in kinesiological and biomechanical terms. Intellectual knowledge is descriptive and verbal knowledge, and it is based upon a separation between the object that is known and the person who does the knowing.

Having skill in the movement, of course, consists of being able to do the movement effectively and efficiently. The movement can be described as a thing in itself separate from the mover, yet it really exists only in its embodied form; in this sense, skill in movement is more personal than intellectual knowledge.

Being in the movement is the most personal knowledge of all. It is the mover and the movement. To know being in movement is to feel both how the consciousness of the mover (feelings, attention, intention, awareness of self, body sense, ideas, information, etc.) shapes the movement and how the form of the movement itself shapes the consciousness of the mover.

What is the relationship of the knower to the movement and the mover in each of the three types of knowledge? And what are the relationships among the three types of knowledge? It is clear that in the first type, there does not need to be a personal relation between the knower and the movement and mover. The knower can be a different person from the mover and even be completely incapable of actually doing the movement himself.

In the second mode of understanding, there is obviously a personal relationship between the mover and the movement in that
it is only by doing the movement that the movement exists for the mover. Yet this relationship does not need to be a close, feeling one: one can perform a movement in an absent-minded though skillful way, or one could pay attention to the external performance factors and be uninterested in the feeling of the movement. A person who knows a movement in the performance sense may also know the movement in the informational sense, and this may help his ability to perform skillfully.

Knowing Being in the movement is the most personal knowledge of all. It is possible to know the being of another person's movement as well as one's own, but in either case there must be a close, aware, feeling participation in the movement. This kind of participation is not inseparable from skill in the movement, but having skill does sharpen one's ability to grasp the movement. And in the same way, it is not necessary to have an intellectual understanding of the nature of the movement to grasp its being, but having it may help one to get a clearer, more complete grasp.

A holistic view of the human being will emphasize that all three types of knowledge have a place in coming to understand oneself, but a given discipline or method will generally tend to emphasize one or the other element of knowledge.

Movement awareness practice is composed of many separate elements, but at the same time it forms a unity, a whole with no parts. You have read material on various concepts related to the practice. You have read descriptions of exercises and practiced them. All of these elements are really interconnected and cannot stand separate from one another. The ideas must be understood in the actual experiences involved in the exercises, but at the same time they guide and shape the development of those experiences. And each exercise must be understood in the light of all the others since each modifies and is modified by the ones you practice before it and after it.
Naturally it is impossible to practice every exercise and think every idea and all their interconnections and ramifications all at once. That is the goal of the practice not the path to its attainment. In practicing the material in this book, even though it is structured in terms of a flow from class to class, ideally there would be time for a lot of repetitions of exercises and mixing up of the sequence of exercises. By skipping around, repeating things in different combinations and juxtapositions, we would work towards perceiving and grasping the connected meaning of the whole. Since no "part" is complete or fully understandable in isolation from all the other "parts" that form the whole, the growth of understanding is an organic process that demands that you return again and again to material you have already practiced to practice it anew in the light of what you have learned since you last worked with it. Practice of movement awareness is a helix: you return again and again to the same point on the circle, but each time you have made a bit of forward progress. This book has something of a helical form too. There are references back and forth among the various ideas and exercises, and the same subjects keep coming up in different contexts and from different perspectives.

Although there are no parts as such to the practice, we can deal with the whole only a part at a time. No one will see or emphasize every possible energy quality in his practice all at once. The qualities that he will perceive in his movements and work on in his practice will be the ones that are personally meaningful and accessible to him at the time.

Although center is an infinite, unbounded ocean, each person practicing movement awareness will notice and understand just that portion of the practice that he or she is personally ready to deal with. Each person will use some part of the practice as a mirror to reflect those aspects of himself that he feels a need to see.
It is interesting to try to step back from your practice and try to see what elements you have chosen to notice and what elements you have chosen not to notice, and it is interesting to look around and see what other people have chosen to notice that you have ignored. But beware of the easy trap of seeing differences and interpreting them as mistakes. It is easy to believe that since what you know is correct, what you don't know is incorrect. I have frequently seen people who believe that the way they have been taught Aikido is true Aikido and that any style which is different from theirs is not really Aikido at all.

Movement awareness practice is like a circle. As regards the people practicing, we can say that each person starts out at some point on the circumference, and the radius through that point represents his/her path to the center. As regards the movement and energy qualities, we can say that each quality is a point on the circumference, and the radius passing through it represents the direction along which the quality develops as it is refined and made centered.

Two points on the circle can be very far apart, even one hundred eighty degrees apart, and the paths inward can run in opposite directions, and yet their goal is the same. In addition, all the points taken together are needed to describe the one whole circle. There is only one center point and all the radii run to it, and the farther the progress inward, the closer all the paths get to each other. At the center, all the radii merge in one point. In the end, no matter what aspect of movement one can perceive initially, one will come to grasp the whole. And in the end, every movement or energy quality includes and is the same as all the others.

However, it is interesting to note that two points may lie very close to each other, and the direction inward may be nearly the same, and yet they could be going to very different, even opposite goals. How? It's very simple—if the two points belong to the circumferences of two different circles. One is aiming at one center point, and the other at another center which
lies elsewhere beyond the first. This is just to say that there are differences and people may in fact be aiming at incompatible ways of living. As was mentioned earlier, the methods of practice and the goals of practice can be separated, and someone practicing the exercises described in this book may wish to use them in the service of some very different ideal of movement.

Whether you are going in the same direction as I have been describing or not, it is up to you to find your direction. You must discover what your own needs and purposes are and make the practice serve your own ends. However, in doing this it is important not to prevent yourself from realizing that there may be things in the practice that you are unaware of and which could open up new and desirable directions for you.

The most important task in movement awareness practice is learning to learn. If all you learn in one exercise is one movement to use in a specific situation, then you have learned only a limited piece of knowledge. But if in learning one movement you have really learned both a widely applicable principle of movement and also what the nature of your own learning is, then you have something that will continue to grow within you.

The real goal of learning is to learn to be your own teacher. If all you do is copy what you are shown and learn it by rote, you will never know more than what you are shown. If you just copy your teacher, you will never know more than your teacher. But if you find out how to discover more than you have been shown, you will eventually find answers to questions that you had never dreamed you were going to ask.

However, even though it is necessary to become your own teacher and pursue your own ends, you will fail in this if you devote too much energy to it. In Aikido we discover our path by working within the confines of a structured learning process. There are ways of performing the moves that are correct and effective and there are ways that are not. We must do the moves as our instructors show us, and not until we can do so will we
discover the real freedom underlying the structure. People who start by accepting what they are shown and practicing what they are told learn the material rapidly and they quickly get to the level where they must plumb new depths for themselves. People who resist the constraints applied to their practice and do only their own thing learn what they are willing to practice; but if they do not eventually become open enough to accept what others who know more than they are teaching, they will hit a dead end even in the material that interests them. One must find a balance between going off on his own and mastering what he is shown. The danger in going off on one's own is that the student may not know as much as he thinks he does, and his lack of knowledge may lead him into mistakes and traps. The danger in doing only what one is shown is that one may not be staying true to what he needs to create in his learning. (It is helpful to be able to ask one's teacher for help on his particular goals, and this means being able to identify and describe them clearly. Of course it also requires that one's teacher be willing to help him work on his questions.)

In the end, balance is the key to proper practice. It is helpful to be able to work both on the level of theory and on the level of experience. Intellectual knowledge and Being knowledge can meet in the realm of performance knowledge. Nonetheless, in comparing learning to an ill-smelling vegetable, the samurai did have a point. It is necessary that you stay in touch with your sensing of your own body and energy and not get lost in theory. A large part of our notions of what we want is willfulness and being stuck in ideas. Theory and intellectual knowledge are impersonal, detached kinds of things, and they can cut you off from the feeling of the flow. That feeling, if you work with it, will take your practice where it ought to go.
In this part of the book, we are going to be working on blending. Blending is a way of really being with your partner. Blending means to find a way to join into his/her motion without losing your own center. When you do blend well, there is a merging which allows you to follow and anticipate your partner's movement, to cooperate with it and control it.

[A] BLENDING

Stand facing your partner. Both of you raise your arms, keeping your shoulders relaxed. Touch the palm and fingertips of your right hand to his left, and your left to his right. As you move in this exercise, make sure to keep your palms vertical all the time, otherwise staying in contact will be very difficult.

Now ask your partner to start walking forward. It is important that the push on your palms come from your partner's walking forward and not from his leaning forward from the waist to push with his hands. And your partner should maintain absolutely the same pace no matter what you do.

To begin with, allow yourself to be pushed back, but keep some resistance to him as you walk backwards. (Remember that for both of you the push comes from the body and its movement and not just from the arms.) As you move back, gradually speed up your walk. Very gradually continue to speed up until you draw away from his hands. (Of course, it will be impossible to draw away if your partner unconsciously speeds up his/her walk to match yours.)

Doing this will allow you to experience two extremes in the way you related to your partner: you will feel resistance at one
end and a pulling away at the other. Somewhere in the middle between the extremes, you will feel a time of perfect togetherness when you were both moving at exactly the same speed. This is what blending should feel like.

Try the exercise again. See if you can go right to the blend and maintain that way of moving for a time.

[B] BACK AND FORTH BLENDING

1. This is a more difficult version of the Blending exercise. Have your partner lead. You should both move on a straight line with your hands in the same position as in the previous exercise, but the movement will not be a simple forward motion. Your partner should start and stop, reverse direction abruptly or try to trick you into thinking he will. He can trick you by setting up rhythms in his movement and trying to make you anticipate the rhythms rather than staying with his actual movement. Your job is to stick with him, fingertips to fingertips in that state of light and easy harmony which is a good blend.

It will help you tune in to your partner if you do not try to blend. If you try, then you will really be straining and making yourself more separate from him. Look at your partner's chest, and soften your eyes so that you can see all of her/him. Open your energy to your partner. Just be. After a while, you will find yourself stopping and starting right with your partner with no perceptible lag. You will allow his decisions to penetrate you and control your movements.

However, the only way to allow your partner to lead you is for you to maintain your center, that is, to be firm and open within yourself. You must maintain a balance between autonomy and surrender. You must first feel where you are and what you are doing, and then you will be able to focus your attention on what your partner is doing. You must pay attention to yourself in order to pay attention to someone else. If you aren't in your own center, you will not be able to perceive clearly enough to be
part of your partner's center. But if you allow your partner to absorb you and take over your center, your natural reaction will be to draw back and resist your partner, and then you will be unable to feel him. So the surrender involved in knowing your partner is a surrender that involves no loss. You must surrender without giving up any of your own autonomy and power.

2. Try this same exercise without actually touching your hands to your partner's. Place your fingertips about an inch from his, and see if you can maintain this distance without change as he moves back and forth.

3. Stand opposite your partner with your hands at your side. As your partner moves back and forth, can you keep the distance between you constant? Use your whole body to feel his whole body.

You might find it interesting to watch people in the class do the variations of this exercise. See if you can determine which body/energy patterns allow people to move well with their partners and which interfere. Pay attention to all the components of breathing, balance, attention, intention, etc. that we worked with in the earlier sections. What do you see?

[C] **DOOR BLENDING**

1. Stand up and extend one arm out at about waist height. Keep your shoulder relaxed and down, and let the energy to support your arm come from low in your body, from the hara.

Have your partner approach from the side and push on your arm with his hands, as though he were pushing open a revolving door. He can come from either inside or outside your arm. As he pushes, you should blend with his push and pivot in a circle. It is important for your partner to move smoothly so that you will be able to. He should follow your hand around in a smooth circle rather than whipping outwards, and he should walk from center rather than leaning forward as though he were attacking your hand. In all of these practices, your partner is helping you to learn, and you are helping him to learn. Any pressure he brings to bear
on you is a gift, not an attack. Naturally, your partner should be alert to notice precisely the form of the gift that will help you in your practice.

As you turn, imagine that you are a fine, jewelled Swiss door. You will turn exactly with your partner's push. Don't resist it at all, and don't run in advance of it. Just be with it. It is the same thing you were working on in the Back and Forth Blending, but here you are moving in a circle rather than a straight line.

One thing to watch is the direction of your pivot. Many people find themselves being pushed backward as they turn. Ask your partner to spin in place and watch his feet. Is he moving forward or backward? That is, are his feet gliding forward over the floor or backward? Do the toes or the heels lead the movement onward? It is important that when you turn you move forward, with your toes leading. If you have trouble feeling this, instead of turning on a point, walk in a circle of about two feet in diameter. Shuffle and keep your feet on the floor as you move. Feel how your feet treat the floor. Is the floor sliding back under your feet? If not, then you are not moving forward. Narrow the circle down until you are turning on a point, and that is how you should move in the blend.

Watch different people in the class do the blend. Why would someone walk backwards and draw in when he is being pushed by his partner? What does it mean that another person would walk forward and keep his energy forward? Notice that some people will turn in such a way that one foot moves forward and the other back. Where is their energy?

2. You can also do the Door Blending exercise with two partners. They can push either arm and in either direction. They can stop and start your motion, reverse it or keep it going in the same direction, handing control of your spin back and forth from one to the other. Can you continue to blend easily with all that input and pressure?
[D] OPEN GRASP BLENDING

1. Every increase in the complexity of the movements with which you are blending gives you the opportunity to increase your understanding of blending. Have your partner grasp one of your wrists with both his hands. Actually, it should be almost a grasp: that is, he should encircle your wrist with both hands and hold the fingertips of one hand to the fingertips of the other and his thumbtips together as well. That will leave some space between his hands and your wrist. He should move around slowly. He can move around as he wishes, turning, walking, lifting your arm or "twisting" it.

Your job is to keep your wrist neatly within his "grasp" as he moves. Of course you will unavoidably touch his hands, but try to move so that you stay right in the middle of that space without touching him. In any case, don't slip completely out of his grip.

Can you go along with his movements without sacrificing your own comfort and stability? Can you surrender to him and let him put you anywhere he wishes while at the same time moving in such a way that you stay centered and comfortable at all times? Or do you "blend" with your partner by contorting yourself and losing all sense of your own center?

2. This exercise is even more fun with two partners, one "grasping" each of your wrists. Of course, your partners will have to coordinate their movements so as not to force you to try to go in impossible directions.

[E] WALKING BLENDING

1. Have your partner stand next to you and grasp your arm just above the elbow with one hand. In this exercise your partner will walk in any direction he wishes, in any way he wishes, and you will have to move with him. Note that you are to walk with him. Don't just let him pull you around. Don't be passive. You must use your sensitivity and strength to feel his intentions to
move and to match them yourself. If you do it correctly, your partner will feel that he is pulling around a butterfly and not a rhinoceros.

2. Can you blend even when you are feeling pressured? As your partner pulls you around this time, keep your eyes shut. You will probably feel some anxiety about walking around with no idea of where you are or what is in front of you. What will this anxiety do to your breathing, your way of holding yourself, etc.? Can you relax and extend ki and move well in spite of not knowing where you are going? If you can, ask your partner to start running with you. Can you still stay relaxed? Of course it will be important for your partner to be careful and make sure you don't run into any obstacles. However, if he makes a mistake, will you then tighten up and constrict your movements?

Blending is not a matter of mere technical virtuosity. Granted, there is a certain amount of skill involved in knowing how to move to go along harmoniously with a person's energy, but there is more to it than that. In order to blend well, you must be comfortable with the idea/feeling of blending.

Movement is a concrete, external manifestation of our inner workings. All our thoughts and feelings and intentions are reflected in the shapes and rhythms and qualities of our movements. By observing how we move, we observe what we are. By changing how we move, we change what we are. In order to do blending movements, you must be comfortable with what it means to blend. And one way of getting comfortable with blending is to use blending exercises to track down those attitudes and gaps in awareness which prevent you from doing the movements smoothly.
[A] BLENDING WITH A STEAMROLLER

I frequently do Aikido or movement awareness demonstrations, and this is an exercise that I almost always include. It is so simple and yet so surprising to people.

In Section Five we did the Steamroller exercise, the one that involved having your partner walk right into you. Do that again once or twice to remind yourself of it, and see if all the practice you have done since then makes it easier to stay open and aware as your partner walks into you.

Blending with this is really quite simple. Stand in right T-stance as a preparation for the movement, and when your partner gets close to you, slide your right foot diagonally forward and right to take you off the line your partner is moving on. As your partner draws even with and passes you (still walking on his/her straight line), pivot around in a counterclockwise direction so that you are walking along right next to him on his left, shoulder to shoulder. At the same time as you pivot, raise your right arm and put it on your partner's right shoulder. And there you are. He intended to steamroll you, and you are walking along beside him with your arm on his shoulder in a position of friendship. And control.

People find this movement surprising when they see it for the first time not because the movement itself is in any way complex or difficult but because it is an unusual way to resolve a conflict. People see the situation as one in which one person is aggressing upon another, and their preconceptions suggest two possible responses: giving in to the aggression or resisting it. Instead another response is made and one which they associate with friendly situations not aggressive ones. Even more startling is the fact
that the friendly response puts one in a position in which the aggressor cannot apply power against him but from which he can easily apply power against the aggressor.*

The key is the body. As your partner bumped into you, what did you feel? Originally you probably felt some tension and anxiety and possibly some anger. Perhaps by now you have reduced or eliminated these constricting reactions. The important things to notice are just what reactions you do feel and the situation which prompts those reactions in you. Physical reactions indicate the intentions underlying them, and intentions are manifestations of even deeper levels of the self, levels having to do with how you wish to be in the world and with how you define yourself. In practicing movement exercises, the definitions and strategies that you apply throughout your life are manifested in the patterns of your movement. In the specific and concrete movement situation you can test out new definitions and strategies and determine how well they work.

What is the relationship between proper body alignment and blending? Is there a logical connection between the topic of proper body use and the topic of blending and harmony?

[B] TOUCHING QUALITIES

Walk along next to your partner with your hand on his or her closer shoulder. How are you touching him? How does it affect his walk? Most people will walk along somewhat stiffly and with their arms as dead weights on their partners' shoulders. This will impede and restrict their partners' movements and will decrease their own sensitivity to their partners.

As you walk along with your arm on your partner's shoulder, create a feeling of lightness and total being with. That means

*Terry Dobson, an Aikido instructor who is especially interested in the social applications of Aikido principles of conflict resolution, has written an excellent book on the topic, Giving In To Get Your Way (Dobson, 13).
you have to put some energy into your arm and lift it, but at the same time you should avoid tensing your arm and losing feeling contact with your partner.

There are many qualities which a proper blend can have. Try walking along touching your partner with a heavier, fatherly quality, a kind of "Yes, my son" feeling. It should not be heavy or burdensome, but enveloping in a strong and gentle way.

[C] SENSITIVE WALKING

This is very similar to the Walking Blending exercise we did in the previous section. Have your partner walk along behind you with his right hand on your right shoulder. Your partner is the leader, and he should guide your movement with a very delicate touch. He can turn you, stop you, move you in whatever direction he wishes. Most people are not as aware of the rear part of their energy field and cannot function as easily when something is behind them as when it is in front. Can you project your energy out behind you to envelop your partner and tune in to his being and his intentions? If you have been working on the Sphere energy exercises, can you envelop your partner in your sphere?

[D] ROWING BLENDING

1. Even though the rowing exercise is a means of learning how to use power on your partner, you can also practice blending in the exercise.

   Stand opposite your partner, and each of you assume a right foot forward T-stance. Now begin the rowing exercise moving in time with each other. As he/she moves in, you move out. As you move in, he/she moves out. Do the movements slowly and smoothly and feel a common rhythm that embraces you both.

   Do it as more than a physical movement. Project energy out as though you really were pushing your partner, and draw energy in as though you really were pulling him. Your partner should project as he moves also. Watch out for getting so much into a
single direction of projection that you lose your center and your balance. Does the exercise feel different as you and your partner both move with full projections? How do you affect each other in your movements?

2. You can also do the Rowing Resistance exercise as a way of learning about blending. Try doing the rowing movement a few times thinking of your partner as he holds on as just an annoying weight to be shoved around. Now try taking a different attitude. Think of him as a delicate and precious (but heavy) jewel that you must move. You have to exert strength to move it, but you don't want to jerk it around. Try to feel, before you move, that you are joining and enveloping your partner, cushioning him as you move him. Does this different attitude make the movement feel different?

[E] MIRROR BLENDING

1. Stand opposite your partner. Both of you put your arms out and hold your palms against each other's. One person should lead the movement. If your partner is leading, he should stay in the same spot and not walk around. He should move his hands around, slowly and smoothly, up and down and all over. You should simply move with him. As you become part of the rhythm of the movements, you will come to feel that you and your partner are polishing the opposite sides of the glass in a mirror. Often you will come to with a start and realize that for a period of time neither of you knew who was leading and who was following. That is blending.

You should reverse roles so that each of you has the experience of being the "follower." And if you wish, you can try this with your eyes shut.

Many people will find it easier to do blending/feeling practices with their eyes closed. Why is that? It is because we use vision as an outer directed way of perceiving and feeling as an inner directed sense. What do we see? Things that are out
there. What do we feel? What is inside us or in intimate contact with us. And when we use our eyes, we habitually turn off our feeling. Visual knowledge, like intellectual knowledge, is very often cold, distant and detached. (Of course, as the existence of visual art shows, vision can be a warm and feeling sense if one wishes to use it that way.) The point of a blending exercise, however, is to be able to feel as we see, to join the inner and outer sensing. It is fine to do the exercises with your eyes shut to focus a bit more clearly, but you should also be able to feel at the same time as you see.

2. You can do the mirror blending as you and your partner walk about. This is a bit harder because it means you have more different kinds of movement to keep track of.

3. And you can also do either of the first two variations of this exercise maintaining a distance of an inch or so between your palms rather than actually touching.
Section 23

[A] Driving Wheel

1. Stand opposite your partner and clasp his left hand in your right, and his right in your left. You should both stand in right foot forward T-stance. Notice, each of you will have your body turned slightly to the left, and your right arm and hip will be slightly forward.

Your partner should lead the movement. He should take one step forward, and you should take one step back. Feel how there is a symmetry of movement between you: it is as though you were opposite sides of one mechanism sharing a common motion, like the driving wheel on a locomotive and the wheel it drives. Keep walking, making each step clear and distinct, and feel how the motion is shared between you. You can also feel the interplay of your partner's body parts as they shift and turn while he moves. Blending includes being aware of the total motion as well as the body elements that go to create it.

2. A more sinuous version of this same exercise involves crossing hands with your partner. With your right hand, take his right as though you were shaking hands. And hold his left in your left in the same way. As you walk, this connection will emphasize the sinuous circularity of how the hips and legs create the movement and how the spine transmits it through the body to the arms.

[B] Partner Two-Step

Stand facing your partner, both of you in a right foot forward T-stance. If you imagine a straight line on the ground, each of you should have the outside edge of your right foot just to your own left of the line. Now both of you should do the two-step simultaneously.
The timing and spacing of your movement must be the same if you wish to blend. The best way to arrange this is to have one person lead, and he should determine when the movement starts and how long the steps and slides should be. You can change roles after every half dozen or so executions of the two-step so that you each get a chance as the leader.

When you both move in the same way, you will pass through the center point of the pivot together in a very smooth, unified fashion. There are distinct stages of coming together, unification, and leave taking in the partner movement. If you hold your hands down by your waist with your palms facing forward, when you both meet in the center, your palms will meet softly. The whole movement has a very sweet feel, and it is essence of the merging felt in any blend.

The leader should make sure to vary the timing and spacing of the move so that both of you stay awake and honest rather than going to sleep and doing the moves with a dull, mechanical lack of awareness. One way for the leader to test his partner is to do a series of two-steps with the same rhythm and then abruptly stop altogether or shift to a radically different rhythm. If the follower is not staying in each instant as a fresh, new experience, the change of rhythm will catch him off his guard and he will miss the start of the new rhythm.

[C] BARREL BLENDING

1. Ask your partner to stand behind you with his arms held out in a circle as though he were hugging a barrel. The back of one hand should rest in the palm of the other, and he should place his wrists in the small of your back. You should stand with your arms out in the same circle position.

Once you are both in this position, your partner should start walking forward and pushing you. No matter what you do, he should walk forward on the same line at the same speed. You should blend with his motion. When you feel comfortable with it, step
out to the side, perform a spinning motion, and fall into place behind your partner as he walks by. If you do it right, you will wind up putting your wrists in the small of his back in just the way he had his in yours when you started. If it is a smooth blend, you will neither push on him as you turn nor lose contact with him. It should be just like two gears turning against each other: keep the circle of your arms touching your partner at all times as you spin around.

One hint for the turn: if you turn to the right, start the turn when your right foot is stepping forward, and do so by stepping out and twisting your right foot clockwise. This will allow you to make the turn in as few steps as possible and will prevent you from twisting and hurting your knee.

2. You will find that if, just as you begin your turning movement, your partner also begins the same turning movement, he will spin around you as you try to spin around him, and you will both wind up in your original positions. In other words, this is a counter to your attempt to get behind your partner. However, in order to make this movement work, it will be especially important for you both to continue your movement at a constant speed forward and stay in continuous contact. If you hesitate, it will change the smooth curves into a random tangle.

It is possible for you to counter your partner's counter; but beyond this, any further countering of counters to counters gets very, very confusing.

Some people may have trouble coordinating this movement. They may find all the turns and steps confusing. However, when you look at it, there isn't anything particularly new or difficult in these movements. Certainly any person who is free of major movement limitations has turned around in a circle at some time in her/his life. It isn't a question of learning new movements but of allowing ourselves to do with ease all the movements that already are a natural part of our movement repertoire.
Very often if students are asked to identify the difficulty they are having in some technique, they couch their answers in terms of where their feet are going, or what they are trying to do with their hands, or what they are trying to accomplish in the move as a whole. And as long as they think of the move in those terms, they can't do anything about correcting it. If I ask them, "At the spot in which you are experiencing some difficulty, do you feel good?" They will usually say "No." Then I ask them to stop and feel and notice in just what way they do not feel good. Then they can find a way to feel comfortable at that spot. That isn't difficult. Most people do know what feels good and what doesn't, if they stop to think about it. And when the students move so as to be comfortable, they move correctly.

If each piece of a movement feels good, then the whole movement is likely to be correct. (However, there is always the possibility that we are so out of kilter that we identify something as feeling good which is really very bad, and this is something to watch for. That is why working with other people is a help: they can give us feedback when we need it. That is also why a conceptual standard is a help: it lets us know when something ought not to feel good to us.) If the turning and blending movement in this exercise felt awkward to you, rather than trying to correct the movement, you might stop for a moment, find a way to feel comfortable, and then do the movement in such a way as to continue feeling good. That will very likely help you move in a less awkward way.

[D] **CLAPPING BLEND**

Stand in a right foot forward T-stance, and hold both arms out in front of you about waist high. Your partner will come walking in and grasp both your wrists and push forward. As he does so, blend with his motion by stepping back on your right foot, and then perform a clockwise pivot on both feet. You will wind up facing a direction one hundred eighty degrees opposite
from your starting position and in a right T-stance. While doing this body movement you should also move your arms to blend. As you step back, open your arms wide. That will bring your partner in close to you. As you pivot, bring your arms together as though you were clapping. Time this so that your arms finish closing just as you finish pivotting. This will throw your partner away from you as you end the movement (assuming that he released his grip on you at that point). The whole blend should feel smooth and rhythmic.

[E] A STIRRING EXERCISE

Stand with your partner standing next to you on your right side, both of you in right T-stance. Both of you extend your right arms at about chest height or a little higher. Now, have your partner move his arm over and grasp your wrist. Next, you should slide diagonally left and rearward: that is, slide your left foot back and to the left, and then let your right foot follow it, moving so that you finish still in a right T-stance. At the same time as you are moving back, swirl your partner around: pull him forward and to the left, and that will start to turn him around. To finish turning him around, draw your right hand close across your chest to the right. The whole movement described by your right hand will be a complete horizontal circle in a counterclockwise direction. If you do this properly, your partner will be swirled around to wind up in exactly the position that you started in, and you will be on his right outside. One detail will be important: as you swirl him around, you will have to do a hand change so that you wind up gripping his wrist. This will happen naturally if you keep your thumb and fingers spread apart at right angles, your fingers pointing straight up, and your palm facing forward.

Once you and your partner have changed places, then he can swirl you around. Then you him, and so on. Be free with your movements and let your bodies guide you to the proper rhythms.
and placements. Can you pay attention to all the elements of breathing and energy and body use, both in yourself and your partner, that we have been studying?

Try the exercise on the other side, moving to the other direction as well. Is it different on that side? If so, why?

As you and your partner do the movement, concentrate on each of you blending with the other. Make the move as gentle, light and fluid as you can. You are both working together to create the movement you want. Of course, you will also have to stay clear and grounded: if you go too far into light energy and forget your grounding, you will not have enough stability to control your movements, and they will become confused and tipsy rather than light and fluid.
THE BLEND IS QUicker THAN THE EYE

Stand up in front of your partner. His job is to push you back about fifteen feet, and he will do so by putting his hands on your chest and pushing in a straight line to your rear. Your job is to prevent him from pushing you straight back to that point which is his goal. How will you keep him from succeeding?

Let us try another similar pattern. In this variation, your partner will grasp both of your wrists and attempt to pull you straight back about fifteen feet: How can you prevent him from pulling you anywhere?

Ask the people in the class to show how they dealt with these situations, and see what different solutions people found.

Now let's look at two solutions that are especially interesting. For the first case, don't resist his push, but move directly to your side. What happens as you do that? And for the second case, walk directly forward along with his motion. Raise your arms and hold them out. Extend ki from your fingers through your partner and walk decisively forward. He may want to pull you back, but you want to push him in that direction even more than he wants to pull you. What happens to him, and how does it affect the relation between the two of you? As you try these two possible solutions, it is important to remember that the movements are an exercise and their purpose is simply to make a point. If, in the first solution, the attacker starts jockeying for position in an attempt to push you back, that will make the point unclear. The same holds true if, in the second solution, the attacker pulls even harder in an attempt to regain control. Keep your practice cooperative. Don't set the situation up as a contest.
In both of these exercises the same thing happens. By not resisting your partner, you vitiate his attack. Just as in the Blending exercise, the key is to reinterpret what is happening. It is not so much a question of what is actually, objectively occurring as it is a matter of how you think about what is happening. How you interpret the situation will determine the responses you can possibly think of trying.

If you became fixed on the idea that the push was an attack, your natural response would have been to resist it, to push back against it. Instead, if you simply moved to the side, you discovered that your partner could push you straight back only if he could stay straight in front of you. If he was able to push you back, it was because you, by your response, had enabled him to do so. In other words, you got yourself pushed back.

Likewise, if you resisted his pull, then you created a situation in which you had a lot to resist. If you took over the movement he was attempting to force on you and made it your own, then you wound up controlling your partner. In both movements, by not resisting you forced your partner to readjust to you and thereby gained control of the situation. His desire to attack you made him vulnerable to being controlled by you. And your ability to reinterpret the situation allowed you to find a way to gain control.

This is what makes blending important. It is not merely a graceful meshing of movements between two people. Certainly that can be beautiful and satisfying, but blending is also a strategy for achieving harmonious relations with your opponents. It is precisely when you are faced with opposition that it is most important to be able to blend. And in working with blending, we bring to bear all of the material we have practiced concerning energy projection and body use, for we must perceive and control both our reactions and our partner's reactions.
[B] YELLING

In order to blend with an opponent, you must get in touch with your own power and with your reactions to power. We have been working with this in many ways already, and one more way involves sound. A good test of your power is the ability to yell strongly and clearly. Most people are so inhibited about making loud noises and being the center of attention that they squeak when they try to yell.

A real yell originates in the hara and is a product of an opened and expanded body. You can discover how the energy placement affects the breathing quite easily. Stand up and start talking. Recite the alphabet or the Three Blind Mice or whatever. As you do so, imagine that you are nervous and tight and that your throat is constricted. Imagine that all your energy is high at the top of your chest. You will feel how this makes you squeak and swallow your voice. Now direct your energy down into your belly. Feel your back, and feel the attachments of the ribs along the spine and how they move as you breathe. As you do this, your voice will become deeper and more resonant.

To yell, just let the voice come out and out and fill up the entire space around you. If you have trouble with this, start with just breathing. Breathe out. Now blow the air out (not through pursed lips but from the belly). When you have felt this, make a humming noise and then let the hum get louder and louder. When you feel comfortable with this sound, open your mouth and produce a continuous, loud sound. Then finish up by exploding into a yell.

A truly strong yell is inseparable from a strong way of moving. Try standing in a scared, small, pulled in posture and yelling. Either you will squeak or you will open up your body. It is practically impossible to yell strongly from a constricted state of being.

What is it like to apply power to another person? Try standing about two feet or so from your partner and yelling at
him. Yell right through him, as though you were thrusting a spear through him. How does that feel to you, and how does it feel to him/her?

**[C] HARD AND SOFT**

Stand in front of your partner, and have him put his right hand on your right shoulder. He should extend well and provide resistance against your shoulder. As you step forward with your left foot, your body motion will pivot about your shoulder. You will blend easily around the extended force of your partner's arm. This will put you in a left T-stance with your torso angled towards the right. As you step forward with your right foot, you will be moving directly into the line of your partner's resistance, and you will have to extend strongly to move smoothly. Keep walking forward this way, alternating the soft and hard movements. Rather than thinking just about his hand and your shoulder, make sure that you deal with all of your partner by using all of yourself. Can you alternate the soft and hard aspects of blending without getting confused? Can you do the hard movement without tensing up and bracing yourself? Can you do the hard movement with a soft openness?

**[D] WINDING UP**

In doing a blend, it is important to be able to move without taking time first to get yourself set to move. Moving is easy. Just moving is hard.

Stand next to your partner to his left and facing in the same direction. Put your right arm on his right shoulder, and begin to walk forward. You will find that when you tune in to his motion, your feet will automatically move in time with his. When you feel that your rhythms are joined together, step out into a two-step. That will mean that your right foot will take a step that will serve as the slide, your left foot will step forward and you
will pivot around in a clockwise direction. If you have blended with your partner and covered him completely with your energy, the hand on his shoulder will stay softly glued there and your pivotting motion will send him off into a backward spin. Covering your partner with your energy means enveloping him in your energy field and feeling all of him from head to toe. Naturally, this is a good opportunity for your partner to practice relaxing so that the motion doesn’t disturb him and to practice tuning in to try to tell when you are about to move.

If you are doing the move well, you will not feel a point at which you will be about to move. If you do feel that preliminary quiver, it will interfere with your movements. Not only that, but your partner will feel it too, even if subliminally; he will tighten up in response to that quiver, and that will make it harder for you to move him around. If you do the move without the preliminary tightening, you will move with great simplicity and ease.

[E] PUSHING ARMS

There are some games that you can play for practice in blending. They will help you learn to interpret an opponent’s movements and respond to them.

1. Stand opposite your partner and about two feet from him. Both of you raise your arms, keeping your palms facing forward. Then put your right palm on his left and your left on his right. The object of this game is to get your opponent off balance so that he has to move his foot or take a step. To do this you are allowed only to slap or push against his palms or to relax your arms when he pushes against you. You can break palm contact. But do not grab your partner or make contact with any other part of his body than his palms or with any other part of your body than your palms. It will help if you stand with your feet about shoulder width apart and one forward of the other. Keep your legs relaxed and your knees slightly bent. Keep your center low.
If you allow it to rise, you will become top heavy and vulnerable.

2. You can play this same game in a squatting position. If you are comfortable with it, you will find it much more stable if you keep your feet flat on the floor rather than staying on the balls of your feet.

3. If you wish to play the full combat version of this game, take the squatting position as before, but now you can move around instead of being restricted to staying in one spot. In addition, you can grab your partner's forearms as well as just touching his palms. Don't grab anything else, or the practice will degenerate into a real brawl. It will help to play the game on a carpet or other soft surface. Be careful.
Section 25

[A] CHEST PUSH

This movement will be quite similar to the Blending with a Steamroller exercise, but it will involve more contact. Have your partner put his left hand on your left shoulder and start pushing you backward. Notice that the push tends to spin you in a counterclockwise direction as you walk. Go with that spin and use it to pivot around to the outside of your partner's left arm so you can walk along beside him.

To increase the difficulty of the blend, have your partner put his hand in the middle of your chest when he pushes. Now there is no easy spin set up for you, but you have to create it. You won't be able to stay right on his line of advance as you spin. Instead, move off his line a bit and then do the spin.

[B] A DISTANT TWO-STEP

Stand facing your partner on opposite sides of the room, or at least with about twenty feet between you. Start walking at each other. When you get to the proper distance, without breaking the rhythm of your movements, do a partner two-step around each other. Can you coordinate yourself with another person in an easy and natural way even with that difficult distance between you?

[C] SIMPLIFIED BASIC BLEND

Blending with a person's power means merging into it. It does not mean getting lost in it. Merging means joining but keeping your center intact. Getting lost means letting the other person dominate you, and the difference is very important. Turning is the key to blending. Turning means being willing to redirect your own path to move in harmony with another person's
path. Turning, however, does not mean losing your own path since it is by turning that you maintain your own stability and your own power. It is by turning that you let your attacker’s energy waste itself and dissipate so that you can easily keep on with your own intended motion and even draw your attacker along with you.

We will start with an abbreviated and simple version of the basic blending exercise. Stand in front of your partner, you in right T-stance and he in left. Extend your right arm directly in front of you at about waist height. Have your partner grasp your upper arm just above your elbow using his left hand, and as he holds you he should push forward just a slight bit.

This grip and the pressure constitute the "attack." Most people feel immobilized and trapped when they are held. They focus their attention on the part of themselves which is held. They think in terms of resistance and either push back or feel helpless.

Notice, however, that you are perfectly free to move every part of your body except the upper arm which is held. You can use that held point as an axis of rotation and turn around it. Turn around one hundred eighty degrees in a counterclockwise circle so that you wind up standing next to your partner facing in the same direction. In order to feel your whole body more easily, finish the move by extending both arms out in front of you at about waist height. Keep them open and relaxed. Now that you are looking the same way, you can both go the same way. Your partner wanted to push you in the direction you are now facing, so why don’t you help him out and pull him a bit in the direction he wants to go? Of course, you must pull by walking forward from center. Naturally, adding your power to his will tend to disrupt your attacker’s balance.

It turns out that by wanting to attack you the attacker is making himself vulnerable. He believes that you will resist his attack, and he sets up his balance on the basis of that belief.
He leans in believing that your resistance will be there to support him. If you fade away, he will have nothing to support him, and his own desire to push will set him off balance. The attacker attempts to get you to play the game by his definitions: he defines himself as the initiator and you as the responder. However, if you refuse to play his game, it becomes clear that you can define yourself for yourself, and by doing so you can redefine the attacker in his relation to you. It is not that the attacker wishes to push you. He wishes to move himself in some direction. Rather than get in the way of his force and obstruct his movement, you will get out of the way and give him a clear track. Then he can push himself in any way he wishes. It is strange that many people wish to push themselves off balance.

The attacker may fall simply by virtue of his own attack, and the lesson he must learn is that it is he himself who sets himself up for a fall. Sometimes it is possible to protect the attacker from the results of his attack, but it is not always necessary to try to do so. To begin with, it takes considerable clarity and skill to be able to do this: if you are not that centered, you may feel that you are not skillful enough to afford to try to protect both yourself and the attacker. And beyond that, you have the right to decide not to interfere in the process in which an attacker experiences the results of his attack and learns from them.

One caution: this is not some tricky strategy for winning against attackers. That frame of mind will put you into the role of counter-attacker. You are not trying to impose a definition upon the attacker in the same way as he is attempting to do to you. It is only because he has forced himself into your space that you must impose a definition upon the interaction rather than allowing one to emerge cooperatively as in friendly interactions.
[D] BASIC BLENDING EXERCISE

1. The more difficult version of the basic blend begins with your partner grasping your wrist. Both of you stand in the same starting positions with the wrist grab being the only difference. You will execute the same turn, and the increased difficulty comes from the fact that you are held by a peripheral rather than a more central part. The farther out the held part is, the more complex is the coordination necessary for turning the whole body around it in a smooth circle.

Make sure that your palm points down as your wrist is grabbed. Then flex your wrist and point your fingers back and under your arm. With this preliminary movement, your fingers point in the same direction as your partner's extended arm, and some of you is oriented in the same direction as your partner's line of force. Now slide forward until your wrist touches your center point, the point in the middle of your belly. This means to advance the right foot in a slide rather than stepping forward with the left foot. Keep both feet on the floor and slide naturally forward: don't raise the back heel and shift all your weight onto your front foot since this will leave you completely unbalanced. Make sure to let your arm stay round and relaxed as you move. If you hold it stiff and straight, you will have to raise your shoulder as you get close to your partner just to make room for the length of the arm.

Once your center is touching your wrist, you are in position to make a pivot around that point. Take your back foot and swing it around you so that you pivot on the front foot and make a full one hundred eighty degree turn. Make sure that your turn is a full turn so that you wind up facing exactly the same direction as your partner. As you do this, bring your free hand up in front of you to the same position as your held hand. Hold them in a relaxed curve with the palms up. This will help you remember to extend energy evenly on both sides of your body rather than forgetting the side you seem not to be using.
It is important that you move around the point in the air where your hand and your partner's meet. Don't force his hand to move around. Leave that point undisturbed and move yourself around it.

One thing that will help you do the movement correctly is to think that there is a bucket of sand under the spot where your hand is held. Think that as you do the movement, you are reaching down, scooping up a handful of sand, and turning around to offer it to someone who was standing behind you.

And make sure that you spend some time checking over your posture and alignment when you finish. You should be firm, relaxed, extended and balanced.

2. One way to check on how well you are staying with your partner in the Basic Blending exercise is to have him or her hold your wrist in a slightly different manner. Rather than gripping your wrist, your partner should form a V with his thumb and fingers and place his hand so that your wrist just sits in the V. If you were exerting any pressure against him and forcing his hand to move, now with no actual hold you will find that your wrist moves away from his hand. Keep your wrist glued to his hand by sensitivity alone. When you can do this, you will really be allowing him his position in space and moving around him.

3. When the Blending exercise feels good to you, you can begin to practice it alone, without a partner. The movements will be the same with one exception. After you have finished the first blend you will have one foot forward, say the right foot. At that point extend the left hand out as though you were offering it to someone to grasp, and then go right into the clockwise turn to perform the next blend. And so on back and forth.

It will help to imagine a line through your center on which you will hold your hand and down which an attacker will come to grab you. When you are doing an exercise alone, it helps to visualize and feel an interaction with an imaginary partner; this
provides a rationale for the movement and keeps it from becoming just an empty dance.

The basic blend is an exercise in which you can work on tuning in to your partner and learning how to move around his motion. Of course, you cannot get wishy washy and let him push you wherever he wishes. That will indeed let you find out where he wants to go but at the cost of sacrificing your own movement. You must be sensitive enough to him to know him thoroughly but so well grounded in yourself that you preserve your own autonomy. This is a delicate balance. In practicing one quality, we usually forget the other for the moment. When we work on becoming utterly sensitive to our partner's energy, we tend to adopt a very indrawn, "listening" quality, which leaves us wispy and powerless. So then we remember about our own power and start to work from a strong, grounded position and get too stiff to perceive our partner. This swing back and forth is a natural part of practice, and practicing both qualities separately is normal. However, as we continue to practice, we discover that we become capable of maintaining a higher degree of one quality without losing the other. By alternating between power and sensitivity, we become more and more able to manifest both at once. Eventually, they become the same thing.

Sensitivity to your partner can be thought of in terms of signal-to-noise ratio. The more disturbances you have within and the louder your inner noise is, the harder it will be for you to hear the messages sent by your partner. As you find quietness, little things your partner does will become much more obvious to you.

**[E] TWO-STEP RAISING ARMS**

This exercise will combine the movement of the Rowing and Raising exercise with a partner two-step. Start off by reviewing the Rowing and Raising exercise. Then do the two-step for a while.
Once you have found a comfortable rhythm for the two-step, then incorporate the arm movement. This is almost exactly the movement of the second part of the Stepping and Swinging exercise.

Once you are comfortable with the movement, do it with a partner. As you both turn back and forth with your arms extended, they will cross. As they cross, if you both try to maintain your extension, there will be a confrontation in which the stronger extension will dominate the weaker. This, of course, is a gift for the person with the weaker extension. It offers him an opportunity to learn how to become stronger. As each of you becomes stronger, so will the other.

When you feel yourself brushed away by your partner's extension, strengthen your energy and come back stronger. However, being stronger does not mean using brute force or impact to overcome your partner. You should both take care to blend well and to exert power against each other in a soft and gentle way. The key to a stronger movement lies in feeling a larger, more open and exuberant spiral of movement and in feeling how that movement originates from center.

[F] BELT GAME

For this exercise you will need a strong strip of cloth about two inches wide and about six feet long. Stand about three feet away from your partner. Take one end of the strip in your right hand and hold it on your right hip. Pass the strip around behind you and over your left hip, and then give the free end to your partner. Have him pass it behind his left hip and around so that he holds the other end in his right hand and against his right hip. After you do the exercise in this configuration, you can pass the belt around in the other direction.

The strip of cloth now forms an S shape tying the two of you together. The object of the game is for you to try to make each other lose balance and take a step. You will do this by turning your hips to wind up the belt and pull on your partner. You are
not allowed to move your feet at all. You'll find it best to hold the end of the belt roughly in front of your belly, but you are allowed to let it move when your partner pulls. That will create a sudden slack and may disturb his balance. Don't let go of the belt, though. You will discover that pulling and relaxing your pull can both be effective in the game. Make sure that the pull comes from your hips. How can you tune in to your partner's patterns of force and relaxation and get him to fall?
Section 26: Harmony

We have seen that our ideas about a situation to a great extent determine our responses to it. How we interpret a social interaction determines what options we can conceive of for ourselves in the interaction. Since this is so, it will be worth taking some time to examine some ideas about the nature of blending and harmony.

The most interesting place to study harmony is in conflict. After all, anybody can be harmonious with his or her friends, but the purpose of studying harmony is to find a way to create harmony with one's enemies. Although, come to think of it, often times we stay away from our enemies and get into real trouble only with our friends. In any case, the study of harmony is the study of how to find peaceful ways to resolve differences of interest.

People frequently equate peacefulness with passivity, and they are completely different. It is a mistake to think that harmony means merely going along with what the other person wants and that being peaceful means being weak. In the blending exercises, we have emphasized that you must go along with what your partner wants but do so in a manner that is safe and comfortable for you. But even this going along is not a simple matter because, as you experienced, going along puts you in a position to do what you want and puts the attacker in a position in which he does not get done what he wants.

"Going along with" is an interesting concept, and there are many levels to it. The first three sections of the blending exercises emphasized a very gentle, light going along, almost a dancing quality. That type of going along is a good place to start studying blending because it gives people the experience of harmonizing movements in a very simple and non-threatening situation. However, as you have noticed, the last three sections of
exercises began to focus on the situation in which you must blend with a partner who is putting pressure on you. How can you unilaterally create harmony with someone who approaches you aggressively? In Aikido terms, it takes two to make a fight and just one to make peace.

As you will see, the pressure involved in the next few sections of blending exercises will keep increasing. One of the things that you will experience is that "going along with" does not necessarily mean moving along the path that is laid down by the attacker. "Blending" means more nearly "joining" than "going along with." Going along with an attacker is a possibility, but it is also possible to stop him dead in his tracks and take him along with you. The key is in avoiding a clash with his power but instead joining it and leading it harmoniously. The centered way of moving is to merge with an attacker's stream of power. The uncentered way is to stay distinct and separate, and when the two streams of power touch, they clash. This is something that must be experienced to be understood. It is not some airy, philosophical formula.

The point is that for a method of cultivating harmony to be of any value, it necessarily must be such that it will work unilaterally. You are the only person you have any direct contact with or control over. If you are to find a way to create harmony around you, it must be something that you can do in yourself and apply onto the disharmony you are faced with.

Actually, being peaceful is just the opposite of being passive. It takes incredible power and clarity to be able to blend correctly. You have to master your own disharmony and find your own center before you can blend. You must be very active and very strong to blend, not passive.
It may be that you are bothered by one aspect of this discussion: that the model it is based on is that of physical attack. Certainly not all conflict involves a situation in which there is a clear-cut aggressor, a clearly evil opponent. Much conflict involves opposition between people who are essentially well-meaning but who have different interests or different opinions. This discussion, however, is based on the Aikido principles of conflict resolution, and Aikido, being a martial art, clearly is based on an image of physical violence and defense. The point of the martial art is precisely that it offers a clear and concrete example of a conflict situation to work in. All the elements that are part of any conflict situation are part of the physical attack-defense interaction, and that situation gives people an opportunity to experience and practice in a concrete and well-controlled interaction.

The person as a whole—mind, body, and spirit—participates in the conflict, but the martial situation focuses on the body and on movement because they are the most solid and visible aspects of the person. The feelings, ideas and strategies that determine how a person reacts to conflict are all manifested in the person's body and movement, and working on that level gives us a handle on the harder-to-grasp personal elements. Thus the model underlying this discussion is that of actual physical conflict, and the blending exercises concentrate on movement and body use. However, there is more to blending than empty movement. Blending is an attitude.

Many people stiffen up when they are attacked. Their response—and it is a natural one—is to stiffen up in order to avoid being pushed over. However, as you experienced in The Blend Is Quicker Than The Eye, stiffening up actually makes you more vulnerable. It is only by having a stiff, static, resistant point to focus power on that the attack can function. By resisting the attacking power, you create it as power. You give it something to act upon, and by doing so create its power to act.
You can take a sledge hammer, aim a mighty swing at a block of granite, and crack it right in half. But that same swing aimed at a patch of mist would have little effect. In fact, the power of the resistanceless swing would throw the swinger off balance.

Why, then, do we stiffen up? We stiffen up because we feel that that is the best way to preserve our integrity. The attack is meant to dismantle us, and we react by holding all our pieces together as tightly as we can. On the physical level this tightening comes out in muscular tension and cramped movement. On the psychological level it comes out in feelings of fear and then, perhaps, anger.

You feel threatened by the attack, and that gives rise to fear. Perhaps you shrink back away from the blow, tightening up as you move. Or perhaps fear gives rise to anger, a desire to destroy what is threatening you, and you tighten up as you move aggressively forward. When you feel fear and anger, it is natural to want to destroy the person who is threatening you. Fear and anger harden you and make you want to hurt your attacker.

Fear and anger come from your feeling of being threatened. In other words, you want to hurt your attacker because you yourself feel vulnerable. Fear and anger stem from your own feelings of weakness. Certainly you would not stiffen up if a five-year-old with a plastic gun walked up to you and said, "Bang! Bang!" It is because you feel unable to deal with a situation that you are afraid of it. Then you stiffen up to try to preserve your integrity.

Blending is the study of how to reverse this whole process. You must get in touch with your own strength and learn how to use it. If you are acting from center, you will not feel vulnerable and stiffen up thereby creating real vulnerability and weakness in yourself. That is not to say that you won't have an intelligent appreciation of the real danger that certain situations bring; it simply means that you will react from feelings of your own ability rather than from feelings of inability. If you are acting from
center, you will not feel vulnerable, and you won't respond by wishing to hurt the person who is threatening you. You will be able to afford to react to the threat in a more harmonious way. Blending is a way to use movement to change your understanding of yourself and your relations to the world around you.

The body and movement awareness exercises that we have practiced have focused on increasing your sensitivity to both your movement and other people's movement. However, there is really very little difference between practicing to gain sensitivity to your own movement and to other people's. They go hand in hand. The exercises focus on sensitivity to the flow of energy in movement, but can sensitivity to other people be limited to how they use their bodies? We start with the concrete, but where do we end up? What effects will it have on how we treat people if we feel them more clearly? If we begin to feel other people, it has to change our willingness to hurt them. Greater empathy will come from releasing our physical and mental tightness and letting go of the barriers which prevent us from feeling what is around us. This is what happens in the practice of a martial art, if it is properly done. By acting both the role of the attacker and the role of the defender, a person is forced to realize the pain that other people feel. The goal of all true martial art practice is peace and compassion.*

This is the answer to the question of how the model of physical combat applies to conflict resolution in very different situations. In any conflict, people tend to react by feeling vulnerable and threatened, and that makes them stiffen up and resist the other person. Practicing a clear physical task in which to

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*Many times the practice of other martial arts is not so explicitly geared to this as is Aikido practice, but that does not mean that it is not part of their practice. As examples of how another art deals with this, you may wish to look at Karate-do Kyohan by Gichin Funakoshi (14), and The Essence of Okinawan Karate-do by Shoshin Nagamine (18).
learn about this process offers a way for people to train themselves to remember to look for alternatives for resolving conflicts. Resistance in an attempt to win is not the only way to deal with conflict, and it isn't the best way. If people relax and extend their ki in pressure situations of any kind, they will be stronger and will feel less threatened; they will perceive more options; and they will, ideally, be able to protect both themselves and their opponents.

Winning a fight is a strange thing. If you win, you may wind up with either a corpse or an enemy. Killing a person is bad enough, but in some ways it will be even worse if you wind up with an enemy, because you will have to keep watching behind you from then on. It is better to aim for not losing than simply for winning. Winning is indeed one way of not losing, but aiming for not losing allows us a broader range of options. The best way of not losing is not fighting, and the best way of doing this is to make a friend of your "enemy." If you can somehow find a way to make your opponent realize that he will get what he wants if and only if he helps you get what you want, then you have an ally rather than an opponent. Of course, this is difficult and often demands that you be able to perceive your opponent's deepest motivations and help him find what he truly wants. Nonetheless, real victory is not to win a fight but to find a way to achieve a reconciliation with a would-be enemy.

Having a practice situation which involves physical conflict is a way of making these ideas real in people's experience. It places people in a situation in which it seems reasonable to be competitive and aggressive and in which any tendencies to respond that way will be displayed. And in that situation people are shown that cooperative responses are more efficient and effective, that their natural tendencies are not cooperative, and that they can learn to act in new ways.

Whatever specific thing you wish to learn, you must provide a practice context in which you receive clear feedback about
whether you have, in fact, learned it. The movements that we are practicing in the blending exercises can be done well only if you have mastered the attitudes underlying them. If you find that some aspect of a blend is difficult for you, then you can work with that movement until you find out why you were incapable of feeling what it was to blend. It does no good to embrace some philosophy of harmony without the opportunity to test your actual grasp of what it is to act harmoniously. In practicing blending movements, you are put in a situation in which you will have the opportunity to choose either brute force or harmony as a strategy. And by working with your movements on the level of intention and energy projection, you can go below the surface of what you do and work with changing the subtle forces of your motivations.

Through working with the specific, concrete movement problems, people can experience that cooperative solutions to conflicts can work, and they will then begin to be willing to try them out on other kinds of problems. Once people have felt that cooperation can work in one situation, they will be willing to try applying what they have learned in other situations, in situations involving personal and social conflict. However, it is a real risk to give up—even for just a short experiment—one's habitual armor. Attempting to cooperate can leave one feeling very vulnerable, and a lot of trust is required to make the experiment.

Trust is another strange concept. People think that being trusting is being naive and innocent. They make the same mistake about trust as about peacefulness and feel that it is a form of weakness. Trusting, they think, means to leave oneself open by allowing someone else to be in control.

This is a very unbalanced idea of what trust is. It is much too soft an idea. It doesn't have enough hardness for balance. In Aikido we have to trust our practice partners. Many of our techniques could result in serious injury or death if they were applied wrongly, and we have to trust our partners with our lives.
as we practice. But this trust doesn't mean that we act passively and give over responsibility for our well-being to our partners. We are on the alert at every instant, and, in order to safeguard ourselves, we stay in control of our own movements. We give ourselves to our partners for their practice, but we keep ourselves for ourselves too.

There are two elements that are not usually distinguished in the ordinary idea of distrust or trust. The first element is that of watchfulness and the second is that of personal feeling. People normally assume that a high amount of personal feeling (love for, liking for, feeling good about a person) goes with low amounts of watchfulness (letting down your alertness and your readiness to respond to danger), and that a low amount of personal feeling (dislike, feeling danger from) goes with a high amount of watchfulness. In fact, the two elements can be completely separated. It is not necessary to hate someone that you are endangered by. It is possible to stay calm and centered and act effectively and not allow negative feelings to come into the situation.

Trying out harmony as a strategy of interaction can be scary. You can feel as though you are leaving yourself open and vulnerable. But the trust that is required to make that experiment is not a passive, weak trust. It is an intelligent, strong trust. You have to be willing to walk into a dangerous situation with your eyes open and try out something to see if it will work. You have to be aware that it may not work, that you may not know how to make it work or that the other person's negativity may overpower your attempt to be positive. You must be watchful and careful but without any hint of suspiciousness or animosity. Trust really is an expression of how well you are anchored in your own center.

I am constantly amazed at how everything ties together. Trust is an expression of how well you are anchored in your center. Being able to move a heavy object comfortably is an expression of how well you are anchored in your center.
physical, to the mental to the social to the ecological: all the facets of the human being are facets of the same jewel. How we treat our own body as we move shows how we will treat other people or the world itself. This is what is fascinating in the study of movement: the same principles that apply to one level apply to all levels. The effects of change on one level will reverberate throughout the whole. One person starting to think about the strategy of harmony will affect those people around him/her, and those effects will spread too. Any minute change somewhere affects the whole, and enough minute changes can add up to a major change. What would happen if the strategy of harmony were the fundamental strategy of our society?
[A] **GRIPPING**

Blending includes more than just going along with an opponent. It also includes taking him along with you. Or, to say it another way, blending consists of doing what the attacker wants, but you have the option of assuming control of his intentions and helping him decide what he wants.

Have your partner hold your wrist and squeeze as hard as he or she can. Clench your fist, tighten your arm and push against the hold on your wrist. Then, all of a sudden, relax your fist and arm completely. Almost invariably your partner will relax his hold. It is a natural reflex not to exert force against softness. Even when you alert your partner to what is happening, he will probably find it hard not to relax when you do, at least a little bit.

Try having your partner grab your wrist while you maintain it in a state of complete limpness. He will probably find it very difficult to exert any real pressure and will feel kind of silly trying. By your actions you have taken control of his ability to exert force. Of course, if he maintains his center, he will find it possible to focus his concentration and will be capable of squeezing hard no matter what you do.

[B] **DISSIPATING POWER**

1. Have your partner take a strong forward stride stance (a deep T-stance) so that he cannot be pushed over backwards. You stand in front of him. When he is ready, slowly extend your arms, and push against his chest, gradually increasing the force. Draw back and let him adjust his posture. Do this a few times, each time pushing more strongly.
When you feel that he has braced himself well, come up to push him as before, but this time don't push. Touch his chest very lightly, and right in time with his bracing, pull your hands back and away from his chest. If you do this with the right timing, he will lurch forward.

The point is that he has sacrificed his position and stability to you. He has defined his position by external events, and when the external event does not take place the way he expected it, he becomes unbalanced. He was equally unbalanced when you did push strongly against his chest, but it wasn't apparent because his lean forward was counter-balanced by your push to produce a momentarily stable situation. The practice for your partner is to remain rooted in his hara and find a way of standing that is firm in itself and not firm in relation to some external force. If he can do this, he will be very hard to push back and will also not lurch forward.

2. There is another test of your partner's posture. It can be done right after the lurching forward test before the settling is practiced or it can be done afterwards as a test of how well he has settled down. Run through the pushing procedure as before. This time when you touch his chest gently, do not draw your hands away. Instead, wait a second and then push forward strongly. Your partner will fall back. (This makes a nice parlor trick to show that you can push strong people over with ease.) What happens is that there is a timing to his resistance, and when you wait a second after touching his chest he loses the ability to resist. In order for muscles to contract strongly, they must have some resistance to push against. When you "push" against the air, for example, there is no resistance, and you cannot tense your muscles (except against themselves, which is different). For your partner to brace himself strongly, there must be resistance for him to push against. When you touch him gently and then wait, you activate the resistance process but it dies because there is no force against him. He relaxes completely and then you can push him over easily.
Again, the practice for your partner is to find center and stay in it rather than getting drawn outwards into your push. The kind of non-resistant, inner firmness that he will discover is the same as you felt in the Unbendable Arm exercise but applied to the whole body rather than just one arm. Needless to say, this total state of concentration is very difficult to find and maintain.

[C] GROUNDING BREATHING

This exercise is very similar to the Bobbing Breathing, but it will emphasize grounding your energy. Stand up in a comfortably erect position with your feet spread about shoulder width apart and your hands held low in front of your belly and your palms facing your body. Relax and let your energy settle downward. Breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth as in the Basic Breathing exercise, remembering to let your breathing be soft and all the air move gently into the belly.

As you inhale, raise your arms to just above and a bit outside of your shoulders. Keep your arms relaxed and slightly rounded, and let your palms face down and somewhat in. Keep your shoulders relaxed and down. The motion should have an even expansive quality to it that might remind you of a balloon being blown up. Feel that it is the expansion of the chest and belly that creates the raising of the arms, and vice versa.

As you exhale, drop your arms back down in front of you as though you were pushing down on a soft, fluffy bale of feathers. Push with your palms, but let the push come from the weight of your arms and the exhalation of breath rather than from any muscular tension.

As you get into the rhythm of this, you can begin to feel that what you are pushing down is your energy field, the energy on all sides of you not just in front. Keep settling your energy down so that you become solid, relaxed and firm.
**[D] WEIGHT UNDERSIDE**

Pick a partner for this exercise who could lift you without too much trouble. Have him stand behind you, put his hands in your armpits, gradually lift you straight up off the floor, and then put you down. As he lifts, concentrate on feeling your head and how it is getting closer and closer to the ceiling. Concentrate on feeling light and airy, and feel that your partner can pick you up easily.

After he puts you down, take some time to settle down, and start projecting energy down under the floor. Feel your energy settling into the ground as in the Grounding Breathing exercise. You can imagine that you are a large, old, heavy tree. Feel how your trunk is heavy into the earth. And feel how roots start to grow from the soles of your feet and grow down into the earth.

Or you can feel that you are full of warm, thick liquid which is heavily leaking out of your feet and getting soaked up by the earth.

Feel how heavy you are getting as you merge with the earth. When you feel ready, have your partner slowly and gently try to lift you again. It is important that he not be sudden and jerky about it because that will disturb your concentration and make you forget the energy placement. (Later on it might be interesting for you to try to maintain the energy despite distractions like noise and rough handling.) Are you as easy to lift this time? Try again and settle even more energy downward. Can you get so heavy that your partner cannot lift you at all?

**[E] PARTNER ROWING AND RAISING**

This exercise will be a combination of the Bracing exercise and the Rowing and Raising movement, and it is a further extension of the Dissipating Power exercise.

Stand opposite your partner, both of you in right T-stance. Very gently, begin the rowing and raising movements, and let your forearms touch as you come to the top part of the movement. As
you begin to feel comfortable with the movement, start putting a bit of pressure on each other when you touch. Make sure that you touch gently and without any bruising impact. Once you are in contact, push. Gradually increase the power you are applying.

At some point during the move, rather than applying power to your partner, fade away, just as we did in the Dissipating Power exercise. If your partner was using an off-center push, he will lurch forward when he meets no resistance. Part of the fun in this exercise is that either of you can do the fading away and at unpredictable times. You both have to stay alert. It will help for you to concentrate on grounding your energy and feeling your feet.
Section 28: More Energy Exercises

[E] STAR

As you work with expanding the energy sphere, the skin of the sphere becomes less and less of a hard boundary. The sphere is really kind of a dualistic image: it separates the inside and outside with a barrier. If you keep a clear sense of the center point of the sphere, you may begin to feel that center point radiating outward as a star radiates light. Rather than reaching out to enclose a space of its own, center can move out to touch whatever is in its path. You can practice directing a radius ray farther and farther distances. You can practice using any spot in the body as the center of the radiating field. You can practice radiating different colors and different combinations of colors.

At some point, you may find that the method of breathing we originally worked with, inhaling through the nose and exhaling through the mouth, drops away, leaving you breathing in a normal manner. The breathing takes care of itself while you take care of the energy projections. Or perhaps there is an equivalence between the breathing, your body state and the form of your projection.

[F] FIELD

At some time the star will feel dualistic and limited too. Even though center had to become more open to create the star, the star is still something center does, something in which there is a clear difference between the point that the light comes from and the space that it fills. At that time the center point may disappear, simply leaving a field of light, an infinite, homogeneous field.

The energy work goes through stages: first center is one point, then a sphere, then a star, then a field. Starting off
with a small, separate point is a necessary step in locating center and defining it clearly. This kind of smallness and separateness has nothing to do with contraction and alienation. Starting with a small, clearly defined point is a way of learning in a simple task the rules for operating in more complex tasks.

When the field becomes infinite, then every point in it is its center. Shape and color become the same in the field: transparency is the color equivalent of an infinite, homogeneous shape. You can go through the various points in the body or energy field and look at each to see whether it still exists in separateness: each point can be the center of the field and fade away.

Sound is an interesting medium also. If you return to the original breathing method and let a sound accompany the outgoing breath, you can feel the sound resonating in different ways in different areas of the body. One sound you can work with is aahhhhh-uummmmmmm, starting the breath with the first syllable and ending it with the second. How you feel the sound in you can give you clues as to how you are holding your body. Can you feel the sound evenly and equally through your whole body at once?

You can also do nothing in particular as you sit, just sit. The field has nothing to do and nothing to do it with.

Or you can work on particular qualities. Can you maintain a particular quality, which is after all something you must do to act in the world, without losing contact with the awareness of the level of transparency? Can you feel the solidity, weight and strength of a mountain as you sit without losing the sense of transparency? Can you hold any formed quality without losing the sense of the formless that underlies it? Can you feel the boundaries of your body without becoming bounded?

It is interesting to note that all of these energy exercises have really concerned just one thing, how the self can learn to
create certain states within itself. The next stage is entirely different.
[A] ADVANCE TO THE REAR

Make sure that you have a clear line of twenty or thirty feet to walk in. Have your partner stand in front of you and walk forward. You will face your partner and walk backward, keeping about a foot between you. Your partner should walk forward in a strong and determined manner, invading your space and crowding you as much as he can. You have to walk back and keep the foot or so of space clear. Make sure that everybody in the class walks in parallel lines to avoid collisions. And be careful that you and your partner don't begin to speed up your walking to an uncontrollable and dangerous speed.

How do you feel as you walk back away from your partner? Do you feel crowded? Do you feel as though you are trying to get away from him? If so, remember that walking backwards need not make you pull in your energy. Feel open and large. Ground yourself and keep your breathing in your hara. Rather than feeling crowded back, feel that you are advancing powerfully to your rear.

Try walking back in a deliberately scared and small way. How does this affect your partner? It will make it easier for him to walk forward, and will even tend to draw him in and suggest to him that he should be invading your space. Walk back in a large and strong way. How does this affect your partner's movement?

[B] SOLIDIFYING ONE POINT

In the section of exercises on opening up, you did the Opening Belly exercise and the Slapping exercise. There we were working with the idea that rather than contracting in the face of pressure you could relax and stay open. However, dealing with pressure is like weight lifting. You can lift only what you can
at the moment lift. You may have been pumping iron for a year and have doubled the amount you can lift, but you cannot lift anything more than you can lift. There will be some pressure situations that you will be unable to deal with by relaxing and keeping cool. We all have our limits, and any pressure beyond your limit will be more than you can handle by relaxing and staying open. You will know better than to tighten up, but you will be incapable of staying open, and you will get tight in spite of yourself.

However, there is a fudge factor. There is a way of forcing yourself to stay calm and under control in situations which are more than you can ordinarily handle. Have your partner hit you in the hollow of your right shoulder with the heel of his right palm. He should make sure that he does not hit you on the collar bone or on the shoulder joint itself but more on the chest muscle. You should stand in left foot forward T-stance, and as he hits you, let your body rotate to the right to take up some of the shock. Make sure that your partner is not hitting you so hard that it's dangerous for you.

Can you keep your eyes focused on all of your partner as he comes in with the shove? Or is there a break in your perceptions as you shy away from the power? Do you perhaps focus on his hand and forget the rest of him? It may be that simply relaxing your belly will not be enough to let you deal with this easily. (If you can deal with this attack easily, remember that there are far more threatening forms of attack, but it would be impractical and dangerous to try them in a movement awareness class.) If relaxing your belly will not help, then a certain kind of tensing it will.

Let your belly open up. Breathe deep into hara. Tense your belly, not by sucking your gut in but by dropping and expanding your belly. Feel as though you had swallowed a bowling ball and it was comfortably and heavily lodged in your hara. Push your lower belly out slightly, but don't distort your total alignment as you do so. If you do this in just the right way, you will find that your partner's shove will not affect your mind. You will
feel hard, sharp and clear in your perceptions. It will be as though you had taken the butterflies you felt in your stomach and nailed them to the wall temporarily.

Obviously you would not want to walk around in this tensed state normally. It is really a deliberate energy block, and it is useful precisely when you are not as centered as you could be. It is a stop-gap measure, one that will get you through a hard situation, but you should always return to your practice of being open and expansive when you can.

The lesson to be learned, however, is that sometimes just opening up is not enough. Sometimes you have to open up, extend your ki and then force it to stay in place. One of the effects of this practice is that it will let you stay clearheaded as you deal with the difficulty, and that in itself will lessen your reactions to it in the future. After you have experienced dealing with it well once, you will be "immunized" against it a bit, and more practice will make you even stronger. Thus you will not need to keep depending on this tensing but will get beyond it.

[C] SHOVED BACK

This exercise will make use of the same shoving attack as we used in the Solidifying One Point exercise, but here, instead of standing still and just turning the body, you will step back with the shove. Start in right foot forward T-stance, and your partner should also stand in a right T-stance. As he steps forward with the left foot and pushes your right shoulder with his left hand, you should step back with your right foot. Thus he will end up in left T-stance and so will you. Then your partner should step forward and shove you on the left shoulder with his right hand, and so on. He will keep stepping forward, you will keep moving back. The body relationship will be the same as that in the Driving Wheel exercise, but here you have to keep your energy solid against a strike.
As you move, concentrate on keeping the point in your belly strong and keeping yourself concentrated and clear. Can you keep that one point strong, or do you get scared or angry?

[D] STRIKING PARTNER TWO-STEP

This exercise is an extension of the previous one. Any time you begin to get comfortable with some level of difficulty, there is another exercise in the same vein that is more complex and harder.

Let's start by practicing the strike we will use. Imagine that your arm is a sword and that the little finger edge of the hand is the blade. The strike we will use involves using the blade of the hand to cut into the side of the head at about a forty-five degree angle. Try lifting your right arm up so that the hand is to the right of and above your head and your elbow is bent and pointing directly to your right. From there curve your hand down and around to hit your partner. Of course, you should not really hit him. Be careful and control your movement.

Now add this striking movement to the basic Partner Two-Step exercise. Whichever foot you have back at the start of the movement, that is the hand that you will use for the strike. As you do the two-step, you will each aim a strike at the other. Remember to be careful and to pull back if it seems that your partner is not moving well enough to get out of the way. The point is, however, that if you do the two-step movement in a clear and firm manner, you will not get hit. If you move from center and don't shy away, you will be able to control your positioning well enough to avoid getting hit. You will have to be willing to get in close under the blade, and then you will have to swirl far out to get away from it.

There is a lot happening in this movement. Can you do it without getting flustered and losing center? Striking may be just as difficult for you as avoiding being struck, but remember that the pressure you put on your partner as the attacker is really a gift. It allows him/her to work on finding center.
[A] BUBBLE

This is an exercise in concentration and in creating a strong protective sphere around yourself.

1. The first thing that you and your partner must do is find out how to get at the energy level in this practice. You will be dealing with an energy defense to an energy attack, so let us start with the attack. Have your partner push on your chest with the palm of his hand. You don't need to move around: a simple push with both of you standing in place will be fine. Your partner, however, should make sure that he is clearly intending the push and not just doing it lackadaisically. As in the Snail Trails exercise, he should first push on your chest, then turn away from you and repeat the motion physically, and then do just the intention of the push without actually moving the arm in a gross way. Then he should incorporate his whole body into the intended push: that is, he should feel with his whole body an intention to push, and he should feel that he intends to use his whole body to push.

Now that your partner has worked his way up to a total energy push, he should turn back to you and push you with his energy only. You should relax, open up and present no barrier to his energy. Let him in to do as he wants. What effect does his energy push have on you? How do you feel? Are there any changes in your breathing and balance? What kinds of subtle information are you picking up from your partner as he intends to push, and how do you think this affects you?

After you have tried this, then put up an energy barrier while your partner is pushing on you and see what effects this has. As you stand in front of your partner, relax, ground
yourself, and extend your ki in all directions. Make sure that you extend in all directions and not just toward your partner. Create a smooth, strong, flawless silvery sphere around yourself. Don't have the feeling that you are fighting your partner's energy. Remember that in the Unbendable Arm we didn't fight our partner's pressure, we just extended past it. Do the same here. Concentrate on your own effortless power in creating the sphere. How does this make you feel? How does your partner feel?

2. After you have reversed roles and have each acted as the pusher and the person being pushed you can try an interesting experiment. Stand opposite your partner with about four feet between you, and both of you attempt simultaneously to push the other. However strongly your partner concentrates, you will have to raise your own level of concentration to match and overpower his. Again, overpowering does not mean fighting. Fighting is an attitude that focuses on winning against difficult resistance. Don't fight. Just casually overpower.

3. For this part of the exercise you will need more partners. Have three people stand in front of you in a semi-circle and push on you with their intentional fields. How does this feel? Can you project out in an expanding circular wave front and deal with all three people at once?

Try having six people standing around you in a circle. Can you sense each one clearly and project to all of them at once? Try this with your eyes closed and open. Is it different with your eyes closed? If so, why?

4. This part of the exercise will be more like the Steamroller exercise. Have your partner walk up to you and right over you. As he walks up, feel the sphere around you, and, to begin with, feel it as soft and permeable. Know that it is there but that it is not an effective barrier and that your partner will move through it easily. After you try this a couple of times, change your feeling about the sphere. Feel that it is strong, clear, and impenetrable. Feel that it can easily deflect your
partner's intention to move in on you. What effects do these two energy states have, both on you and your partner?

[8] **ADVANCING FORWARD**

Advancing means moving with force and dignity. Many people split their energy when they move, that is, they move forward hesitantly, looking behind them in case they have to run that way. In this exercise we are going to practice advancing forward, committing our energy to a powerful advance.

1. Extend your arms in front of you and have your partner grasp both your wrists. His job is to stay firm and resist your push forward. Your job is to walk forward and push him backward. Of course, your partner should judge how much resistance will be helpful to you and give you only that much. This isn't a competition.

To begin with, try walking forward keeping your palms facing down. Then try walking with your palms facing at a forty-five degree angle forward, that is, partly facing each other and partly facing forward to your partner. And try walking forward with your palms facing your partner completely. Each one of these positions will produce different effects. A palms forward and a palms down approach are both different ways of closing a person out. Having the hands open is a much more welcoming attitude. Think about how people gesture when they are meeting someone they love or when they are scared and trying to keep someone away. There are natural body use patterns which plug into different emotional and intentional states. It will be important in pushing your partner back that you feel joined to him/her and not separate. You should not feel that you are in front of your partner. You should feel that you are exactly coextensive with your partner, that you form one large energy field. You will have to penetrate your partner to become him.

Another physical element to watch is how you hold your head. Many people when they try to exert strength forward will lower
their head and push with shoulders forward. Instead, keep your head up and your torso erect. Instead of using a top-heavy strength, work with your center and your whole body. You will find that the erect posture relates to how you are concentrating in the activity.

As your partner resists your motion, settle down and extend your energy into and through your partner. Extend through your whole body into the line that you intend to move forward on. Focus on the spot that you intend to move to, and extend to it through your partner's body. What you are doing is projecting an intention into your partner's energy system. It will feel like the Projecting a Spot exercise, but you will be injecting an intention into your partner's field. If you do it right, he will naturally be led by that projection and will move as though it were his own. When you accomplish a proper projection, you will feel your partner's resistance to your forward motion alter and soften a little, and then you will be able to walk forward. It will be important to keep your energy extended and focused. If you hesitate, your energy will dissipate and your partner will regain his strength and concentration.

2. As you get better at this, your partner can begin projecting his energy back down the pipeline you are projecting through. He can try to take over your energy as you are trying to control his. That will mean that you'll have to increase your energy to get any results. As you escalate your energy confrontation, you will both increase your power and control.

Often when people begin to work with exercises in which they must manipulate and control others, they object that it is wrong to do this. However, it is a mistake to think that joining into your attacker's energy is an aggressive or violent act just as it is a mistake to think that blending is a passive going along with. A completely moral person is one who has power and chooses only
wise ways to use it—not someone who is too weak or squeamish to have or use power. Practicing martial arts results in a moral attitude that is very unfamiliar to most people. Perhaps the best way I can get it across is by comparing it to the attitude that many people have about their food. Most people in this culture have no contact at all with the actual production of their food. They eat bread and have never seen, much less grown, wheat. They eat meat and have never killed their meat animals. If presented with a soft, furry, cute bunny rabbit and told, "Here's dinner. Kill it," a lot of people would be unable to do so. But life is sustained only by killing. Even if you eat nothing but lettuces and nuts, you are killing plants or killing living seeds from which new plants could come.

It is an interesting experience to hatch eggs and raise chickens. When they are old enough to eat, you have been a mother hen for each one, and you know them as individuals. Then you have to take them, look them in the eye, explain what is about to happen, thank them, and kill them. There is a peculiar sharp smell that summarizes this all for me, the odor that you smell when you open up the hot, fresh body of an animal. And yet this is all a necessary and natural part of life. It is not that it is right to kill, but that it is necessary, and the right way to do it is with compassion for the animals you slaughter, and with center.

In the same way it is a perfectly natural thing to have to control an attacker or an opponent. There is nothing wrong per se with using your power and knowledge to control another person. It is your attitude in using your power not just the fact that you use it which determines whether or not your use of it was ethical. Many people feel that any use of power on other persons is by its very nature wrong, but that is a squeamish attitude and one that ignores unfortunate realities.

If you are walking along on the street and you suddenly run up to a little old lady and push her down, is that wrong? Not if
you did it to shove her out of the way of an oncoming car. If you are walking along and you see some punk beating a little old lady, is it wrong to use force to stop him? Well, yes, it is. You should never use force on another person. But if you don't, you are allowing him to beat his victim, and, in a sense, you are even participating in the beating. If you allow a beating to occur, you must take responsibility upon yourself for allowing it. So the question is, which wrong would you rather take responsibility for: beating up a mugger or beating up a little old lady? If you are the subject of an attack yourself, which wrong would you rather take responsibility for: allowing one human being to get hurt or hurting the other one? I don't see much ethical reason to choose one or the other, but it seems much more practical to me to let the mugger be the one to get hurt.

Aikido is a non-violent martial art. We aim at being able to use the defense techniques in such a way that the attacker is spared an injury. However, one must be incredibly skilled to attain this level of proficiency, and it may be that an Aikidoist would be faced with a situation in which he would have to misuse his skills simply to protect himself. If he does so and hurts the attacker because he is afraid or angry, that is certainly a violent act. However, by the same token, he could use his techniques correctly and not injure the attacker but still be performing the techniques in a spirit of fear and anger, and that would also be a violent act. In the deepest sense, a non-violent act is one which is done in a spirit of compassion and center. Sparring the attacker or killing him will both be non-violent acts if and only if they are done in the right spirit.

However, a person who is not subject to fear and anger, a person living in his center, will not need to defend himself. It is due to the faltering of his own power that a person can even be approached by an attacker to begin with. A person who is centered will live and extend ki in such a way as to maintain a natural, effortless and thoughtless influence on his environment,
an influence which will make the strategy of harmony and cooperation dictate the normal, ordinary course of events. Speaking even on the practical level of street crime, studies have shown that muggers and rapists examine people around them and choose their victims carefully: they choose people who show through their movements that they are not likely to have enough power and determination to resist the attacker. Thus, as in all things, a person is part of the web of events that creates the attack he is the subject of. A centered person would not need to defend himself because no one would choose to attack him.

In the end we see that the use of power to control people is not in itself right or wrong, and exercises in which you learn to take control of another person's energy field are not in themselves wrong. They are ways of learning about one aspect of human existence. If we were all perfect, then a natural spirit of harmony would prevail. But since very few of us are perfect, it is necessary to learn to deal with attacks. And aside from this aspect of the Advancing Forward exercise, exercises in which we examine how to use our energy to control an opponent are part of the path of learning to be centered enough not to have opponents.

[C] BLENDING WITH QUALITIES

We have been working with the power and separateness of the sphere and of energy coming from the sphere, but here we will be working with higher levels of energy. Rather than doing anything to your partner, you will be working on entering different quality states yourself, and that will naturally affect the person you are working with.

Have your partner grasp both your wrists. You can both walk around, walking slowly but moving as you will. As your partner moves you around, blend with him and also work on assuming various qualities. To start with, try creating in yourself a feeling that you are separate from and distrustful of your partner. Then feel that you are open and calm, large, loving and welcoming. Try
assuming various emotion qualities and see how they affect your partner. Try working with various shapes and colors. These are various aspects of the star configuration of energy. If you simply radiate, your energy will affect your partner's field.

Can you work with the infinite field configuration? What happens if you assume the quality of complete transparency? How does this affect your movements, and how does it affect your partner's intentions?

You might wish to try this practice with various other movement patterns. You can use the partner two-step or any one of a number of other different partner practices.

Remember to stay in the qualities and not get distracted by the movements themselves. If you forget to work with the qualities and try to make the movement itself assume some manner, you will be forgetting the internal basis of the movement, the intentions from which it springs.

There are three levels that exist in movement interactions: either-or, both-and, and unity. Either-or is the level of antagonistic separation. Both-and is the level of harmony and cooperation between separate elements. Unity is the level in which the separate elements have transcended their separateness to become really one.

It would be interesting for the class to watch different pairs of people doing the various qualities. Many times people have individual interpretations of what the qualities mean, and it is interesting to compare what the different qualities mean to different people. It is often a good exercise to ask everyone in the class to try in their movements the quality patterns that are shown by various pairs; this lets people feel for themselves what other people associate with the qualities. Many times we find it much easier to see a given mistake in someone else's movement than in our own. This may be because we have been too ego involved in our own movements to see them clearly or simply because it is easier to step back and watch someone else's body
in motion. In any case, if you see a movement pattern that you don't feel good about, it is worth checking yourself to find out whether you are moving that way also. It is also worth moving wrong on purpose: if you cannot mimic a particular mistake, then you don't really understand and will not be able to control it or avoid it.

[D] **SHAKING HANDS**

Hold your partner's right wrist with your right hand, roughly the same position that you use in shaking hands. Hold his right arm just above the elbow with your left hand. Then have him start walking forward, and blend smoothly with his movement. When you feel that you have tuned in to his rhythm, take another step back with your right foot, and use that body movement to pull on your partner's arm and throw him past your right side to the rear.

Your partner should take care to keep his balance and not fall. Throw him smoothly and not with a jerk so it will be easier for him to skip past you as you pull.

Try doing this throwing movement with various qualities and see how they affect your movement and your control of your partner.
[A] **CHANGING DIRECTION**

This exercise is a combination of the Advance to the Rear and Advancing Forward exercises. As your partner holds your wrists and pushes you back, tune in to his energy and his movement, and then change directions. Stop his forward motion and push him straight back. This is much more difficult than the earlier exercises because it is hard to overcome his momentum forward and because it is very easy to get caught in your partner's forward intention projection. To overpower his energy, you will have to merge with it, absorb it and make it yours, and then direct all your energy forward.

You can try doing this with various qualities and configurations of energy.

[B] **SHOVED BACK AGAIN**

Have your partner shove you back with a straight thrust to the middle of your chest. Each time you step back, he will step forward and deliver another shove. Needless to say, he should not use so much strength as to hurt you, and he should be careful about where he lands his pushes. He should use the flat palm of his hand and shove against the breastbone. He should not hit your collar bone or your solar plexus, and he should shove you not strike you.

As you move back, you should open up your energy rather than condensing it into your One Point. Try using the full protective barrier of the sphere. It will help if you use your breath to shape the energy of the sphere. When your partner shoves, exhale as you did in the breathing exercises to project the sphere around you. Then try using the various qualities of the star, and try
using the field. What happens as you relate to yourself and your partner in these various ways?

[C] **INJECTING AN INTENTION**

Stand quietly with your partner. Put one hand gently on his/her shoulder and tune in to his body. Then choose some line of intention to project through him. For instance, project an intention for one hip to move slightly forward. This is just like the Projecting a Spot exercise, but it involves your intending where his body should go. In doing this exercise, it will be important for you to be fully with your partner. When you touch him, feel that you are extending energy out of your hand to touch deep inside him. Cover him with your energy and penetrate him, softly and thoroughly. You can project various lines of movement and see what you can most easily have your partner do. You can use various qualities and see which is easiest to get across. How is the message communicated from your body to his? What signals do you emit that transfer information to your partner? What do you do as you think of the projection you wish him to follow?

This exercise can serve as a hint about a whole area of investigation. If you have a person lie down comfortably and you spend the time to really tune in to his energy field, this method of injecting intentions can be used to help him investigate and refine his intentional projections. By working back and forth between the body and the energy levels, a lot of very interesting work can be done to help a person make his intentions clear. The basic process is that of guiding a person through various qualities and shapes that will provide a contrast to those he customarily maintains. By working with this process in one-to-one, hands-on lessons, a person will very quickly learn to become aware of how he creates the intentional patterns that are his normal way of being in the world, and he will then have the option of working to change these patterns if he wishes.
Naturally, this is a very personal and powerful form of education, and it is not something to play with carelessly.

By the same token, learning to see on the energy level does not mean that you have the right to look into or change everybody you meet. An attacker sets up a situation that includes an implicit invitation for you to deal with him as you see fit, but in any other situation you should be careful not to trespass on people's space by using your knowledge on them without their awareness and consent.

[D] BASIC BLENDS WITH POWER

There are a number of variations on the Basic Blend exercise that are good for testing your ability to project a clear path for your partner and yourself.

1. Doing the Simplified Basic Blend, when you turn around, immediately start walking forward and take your partner along with you. Most people will think that they are going to have to pull their partner, and thinking in this way they will leave a large part of their energy behind them. It will even be noticeable in the fact that the arm that is held will lag behind them as they move. If you notice that your elbow is being pulled back and you cannot get your partner moving, stop for a moment and check the relation of your arm to your center. As you turn, you should wind up with your center behind the point at which your arm is held. Then you will be able to put all your weight and energy projection into a clear line forward and "push" your partner forward.

A variation on this is to have your partner pull back on your arm just as you start to move forward. This is a very difficult exercise: the weight you have to overcome is augmented by the fact that your partner will be dragging your attention backward.

2. Shift now to doing the Full Basic Blend. Once you have made the turn, keep turning. Pivot in place and draw your partner around you so that you complete another one hundred eighty degree turn. To do this you will have to keep all your energy moving
forward and around. You will also have to draw your partner's energy around with you. If you allow your attention to move behind you to the weight you are trying to drag around, you will never be able to keep a clear, smooth flow around. Keep your hand out in front of you so that the point at which you are applying your power is in front of your center. The pull should come from your hips and body and not from your arm. Your arm serves only to transmit the pull. If you extend your energy properly, you will sweep your partner along with you, and you will feel that pulling him around in the circle is really very easy.

Once you have mastered this simple pivot, do the Basic Blend and turn around a full three hundred sixty degree circle. This will no longer be a pivot movement but will involve walking forward in place. Remember not to walk backward in place, as we discussed in the Door Blending exercise.

Again, in order to increase the level of difficulty in this, you can have your partner pull back on your arm just as you start the movement forward. Does that disturb your concentration?

3. Once you have the Basic Blend and the circle down as a smooth strong motion, you can add a change of direction to the process. At some point when you have the circle moving well, drop your hand down to the floor. Since you have been moving with your palms up, this means that you will touch the floor with the back of your hand. In order to do this move, you must place your ki on the floor before your hand goes down. If you are thinking of the resistance your partner's hand will provide, your ki will hover above his hand rather than extending down, and as you try to do the move it will be a great strain. If your arm stiffens and your shoulder rises, and your hand stays up while your center drops down, you have room to improve your concentration and extension. If you do this with the casual natural feeling you'd have if someone suddenly dropped a one hundred pound weight in your hand, then your partner will go down easily.
Extending your ki down will create a flow that will go to the floor. The flow will operate for both you and your partner. That means that you will move well in your predetermined path and that your partner's ki will be drawn into the path you have decided on so he will not be able to extend his ki in a direction which will make the move difficult for you. The more clearly you can create the path of ki before you move, the more determined your movement will be and the more absentminded your partner will be about deciding to resist.
[A] BACK AND FORTH DOMINATION

This exercise makes use of the Back and Forth Blending pattern but with the major difference that there will be no leader. Each of you will try to dominate the movement. You still have to stay in contact fingertips to fingertips and move back and forth in a straight line, but each of you will try to control the movement. You will discover that this becomes a sort of sparring as both of you try to dominate the energy but not lose contact in trying to do so.

[B] POSSIBLE BARRIER

Your partner will try to stop you from walking past him in the way that you worked with in the Holding Back exercise. Or possibly he won't try to stop you. As you walk past him, he has the choice of whether or not to raise his arm and try to stop you. If he does raise his arm, you must stop short and not touch it. If he does not raise his arm, you should simply continue to walk past him. Your partner should work on being able to make a choice without any quiver in his energy field so that his movement or lack of movement will be free and easy. Your job is to tune in to his energy and see if you can detect what he is going to do and move smoothly and easily with that information. Do you find yourself tensing up as you get close to the point where he will either pick up his arm or not?
[C] **CHICKEN**

1. This exercise is similar to the previous one but more involved. You will stand up, and your partner will walk at you. He should walk directly at you, holding in his mind an intention of either going straight over you, stopping right in front of you without touching you, or veering off to the left or right as he passes you. Your job is to tune in to his intention and not get hit. If he is going to walk over you, move to the side, as though he were an oncoming train and you were getting off the tracks. If he is going to stop, you can stand still. You could also move off the line, but that is unnecessary work. If he is going to slide to either side you can stand still. Again, you could get off the line, but you would have to make sure to move to the opposite side, and there is no real reason to move at all.

2. A version that is more fun is for you both to walk in simultaneously. You both have all the choices of motion, and this complicates the exercise. Tune in to each other and don't collide.

[D] **STRONG GRIP BLENDING**

This exercise is much like the Open Grasp Blending exercise, but the grip will be tight. Have your partner grip one wrist in one of his hands and then slowly exert pressure to move you. He can push or pull, turn or twist, move up or down. It should be slow but strong. Your job will be to blend with it without losing your own centered way of moving. A higher level practice would be not only to go along with the movement but to take it over and lead the attacker. If you are really leading the attacker, he will not be clearly aware that he is not in charge. At the very least, he will not have the sensation that he is being forced to go somewhere, and he will not have the desire or presence of mind to resist.

People often have the sensation in working with this kind of exercise that the more they merge with their partner the more
independent and free they are. When you are merged, there is no push or pull or resistance to constrain your moves. Everything flows naturally.

**HAND GAMES**

These are common hand slapping games, but they are interesting to do keeping in mind the idea of blending.

1. Have your partner hold both his hands out with his palms up. Put both your palms on his. He will try to flip either or both hands up and around to be able to slap down on the backs of your hands. Your job, of course, is to move your hands out of the way so they don't get hit. How does all the material we have practiced concerning centering and awareness apply here?

2. Hold your hands out in front of you at about waist height with your palms together. Have your partner hold his hands out about eighteen inches apart with your hands in the middle. His palms should face the middle. He will try to slap your hands with either or both of his hands, and your job is to move your hands out of the way.

3. You can also play both of these games in groups of three. For the first game, you would have each of your hands resting on a different person's palm. For the second game, you would have to separate your hands and put them between different people's hands. Keeping track of the extra information is difficult. What would be even harder would be playing one game with one person on one hand, and the second game with a second person on your other hand.
BLENDING WITH A GROUP
Section 33

[A] DICHOTOMY

Have two partners grab your arms and pull you in opposite directions. They should be careful not to pull so hard that they hurt you, especially if they outweigh you a good deal. What are you going to do about being pulled apart by two attackers? Are you going to fight them both? How are you going to resolve this pressure situation? The decision you make will reveal how flexible you are in finding ways to resolve conflicts. Let me give you a hint: the answer lies in reinterpreting the problem.

Most people will feel that they are being pulled apart by two inimical forces. They immediately think of resisting them both. That interpretation of the problem leaves you with a lot of power to overcome. A simple reinterpretation makes the situation easy to deal with. Instead of being spread-eagled between two attackers and facing in a direction perpendicular to the line between them, turn to face one of them by rotating your body. That is the one you will deal with, and you will do so by getting help from the attacker behind you. "Let's you and me pull on him, all right?" That is the solution: instead of pulling away from both of the forces being applied to you, ally yourself with one. Align yourself with it and pull with it, and then there will be two of you pulling on the single attacker.

Dealing with pressures from groups follows the same principles as all the other exercises we have worked with. It is a matter of staying calm and aware and centered, and then you can work in harmony with the flow of energy around you.
[B] IN GROUP

This exercise and the next one I learned from Terry Dobson, and they are both interesting ways of clarifying the strategies you use in dealing with group conflict.

Have four people stand up and form a tight clump. They should stand back to back and keep their arms touching. They should not, however, hook their arms together to increase the group strength. Your job is to become the fifth member of the group and assume the same position in it that the others hold. Their job is to keep you out. You are allowed to do anything you think will get you into the group short of causing actual injury. What are you going to do? There are many, many approaches; what is your approach?

When the other members of the group take their turns as the outsider, do they pursue different strategies than you did? What kinds of things do different people come up with?

Many people will use force and try to push their way in. Some people will ask politely or even make up a sob story to try to win group sympathy. Did anyone think of tickling a group member? What would happen if you pushed on a group member and forced him deeper and deeper into the group? What would his reaction be, and what would the group's reaction be, and how could you use these reactions? What other strategies can you find?

[C] TRAFFIC

You will need four partners for this exercise also. Pick a spot on the floor. That is home base. You are it, and your job is to touch home base with any part of your body. The four defenders will try to prevent you from doing so. None of you is allowed to use your hands, so it is only body movement that is permissible for you in getting to the spot and for them in stopping you. Be careful and don't allow any rough stuff.
What strategies will you use in trying to get there, and what strategies will the defenders use in keeping you away? What strategies will the different people use as they play the role of the person trying to make it to home base?

Most people will tend to start with brute force; this can work, but it may not be the best way. What happens to the energy of the defenders if you make no assault on their home but wander away or just walk around aimlessly? Can you control the movements of the group by using your own movements?

[D] GROUP WALKING BLENDING

This exercise is the same as the Walking Blending exercise with one difference: your partner will hold onto your arm, and you will hold onto another person's arm. How does the information get transmitted from the leader to you to your partner? What kind of lags or distortions arise?

This exercise can be done with both the followers keeping their eyes closed as they are led. And it can also be done with three or more followers. How do these changes in the exercise affect the movement of the group and the way information is processed by it?

[E] GROUP BASIC BLEND

Have a number of people line up with about five feet between them. They should stand in a column, that is, they should all face down the line towards the end of it. The first person stands in a right T-stance and extends his or her right arm, the next stands in a left T-stance with left arm extended, the next in right stance and so on. Have one person come in to grab the wrist of the person at the head of the line. Remember that if the person being grabbed has the right hand forward, the attacker must grab with the left, and vice versa. As he is grabbed, the person at the head of the line will perform the Basic Blend. As the blender pivots and finishes the move, the attacker will
Immediately move forward and grab the next person's hand (remembering to grab with the correct hand). Then that person will do a blend and pass the attacker on down the line. When the attacker gets to the bottom of the line, he takes his place on it and the person who is the head of the line acts as the next grabber.

**Balls Game**

Assemble a group of people, six at the minimum, and form a circle. Start passing a volley ball back and forth in the circle. And then add another one so that there are two balls being passed around simultaneously. The task is for each person in the group to keep track of the group as a whole and know where both balls are at all times. If one person gets passed both balls simultaneously, obviously he will not be able to catch them. How does the group keep track of where to send the balls so that they will be caught and kept under control?

You can start playing games with the ball passing, perhaps sending an energy message toward one person and then passing the ball to another. How does this sort of thing affect the group process? You can add a third ball and see what happens. Or you can let your imagination run free and see what other wrinkles you can come up with.
[A] CHORUS LINE TWO-STEP

Have a group of six people or so stand in a line side by side. Each person should put his right arm on the right shoulder of the person to his right, and everyone should stand in right T-stance. One person will be chosen as the leader, and the whole group will do the two-step in time with the leader. In this group two-step, on the turn each person will drop his right arm, and then as he finishes he will put his left arm up on the left shoulder of the person to his left.

How does the group as a whole move? How is the decision to move transmitted through the line? Does it make a difference if the leader is in different positions in the line? How are the inevitable false starts and mistakes made? How does the group find its rhythm?

[B] GRID TWO-STEP

Have a group of people stand in a square grid. Nine people can form a grid of three rows and three columns, and nine people is a minimum for this exercise. Choose someone on the front or back line to lead the group in the two-step. What makes this interesting is that as people in the grid turn around in one direction or the other they will no longer be facing the person who is leading. The first reaction of the group will be confusion and the feeling that they cannot stay with the leader if they cannot see him. But if people settle and concentrate, they will notice that there are many cues they can pick up that will tell them when the leader is moving. To begin with, the people right next to him will hear or otherwise sense his movement; once they move, people next to them will sense that, and the timing of the
move will spread through the group. The more relaxed everyone is, the less lag and the less confusion there will be in the group.

What other cues are present? How can you become more aware of the group as a unified organism? Can you sense your energy field opening up to include the group as a whole within it? How do separate individuals become integrated into an organic unit?

[C] GROUP BARREL BLENDING

1. The barrel blend can be done in groups of three just as it was done with two people. Again, it will be important that everyone keep walking forward smoothly and without hesitation. In order to keep the exercise simple and workable, you should stick with the basic barrel blend rather than also trying to do various levels of countering.

2. The barrel blend can also be done in lines with more than three people. The person at the head of the line should initiate the spin, and the motion will pass down the line from person to person. Naturally, constant forward motion is necessary.

[D] CROWD WALKING

For this exercise you will need a crowd of people and a bunch of towels. The towels are convenient boundary markers, and anything else will do. The crowd should be ten or twelve people, and even more is nice.

Demarcate a large area and have everybody walking around within it. They should mill around randomly. Then one person, who has been assigned the role of border patrol, should move the towels in and decrease the size of the area by about a third. People should keep milling around. They should move around freely and with soft eyes. They should try to see the crowd as a whole and fit into the flow of movement in the crowd. Rather than thinking about the solid lumps that they could bump into, people should attune themselves to the spaces that exist between and around the people in the crowd. The space is all around, and
there is always space for people to move into and through as they walk.

The border guard should periodically decrease the size of the area by a third or so. He should keep this up until people are packed together practically skin to skin. There will still be space for people to move, and the crowd will still have a rhythmic flow to it. People should still be attuning themselves to the spaces through which they can move and to the flow of movement in the group.

Then all of a sudden the border should be expanded back to about half the size of the original area, and people should walk through the whole space that has just been made available to them. They should walk faster and faster. And faster. They should not pay any conscious attention to where they are going or how they are moving. They should not bump into anyone, but they also should not be anxiously trying to stay in control of their own movements. They should just give up and move and trust to their inner computer to guide their movements.

People will usually feel a sense of ease and freedom and automatic guidance in their walk. The process of reducing the area down to practically nothing inserts into a deep area of the mind the goal of being able to walk around without bumping and also the knowledge of how to do so. When people open up in the open space, the program clicks into focus within them and allows them to experience a new and freer way of moving. This way of moving is based on feeling and merging with the rhythm and flow of the group as a whole.

[GROUP ATTACK]

In this practice you will be working with a number of partners. Their job is to walk right through you, and yours is to evade them. This is a basic practice in Aikido for learning to deal with the energy of group attacks, but in order to structure this as an awareness practice rather than a defense practice,
some ground rules must be observed. First, you must all keep your hands at your sides and not grab each other. Second, you must walk in a smooth and peaceful manner and avoid jerky motion and undue jostling.

Start off with just one person attacking. As he walks at you, you should slide or spin calmly out of his way. Try to avoid jumping aside, and try to avoid the feeling that you are escaping or fleeing. You should move with grace and dignity and leave. It will help if you keep your eyes soft and fill up the whole space with your energy.

As you pick up the rhythm of dealing with one person, a second attacker can enter the game. You will have to stay open to perceive both people at once. Their best strategy is to trap you between them and walk into you simultaneously. In order to keep track of them, you should have a feeling that there is a straight line of energy from your center to the center of each of them. These lines of energy keep you in contact with them.

If you want to, you could include a third attacker in the exercise or even a fourth. With more than one person around you, the lines radiate out from your center to form a web of energy, and you are in the center of the web perceiving and controlling the movement of the group as a whole. Don't passively accept the movements that the attackers apply to you. Reinterpret the situation. It is not so much that they are after you as that you are luring them on. Their desire to catch you puts you in control of the situation. If you move to the center of the crowd, they can converge upon you and trap you. But if you move around the edges of the crowd, you can draw the whole crowd along with you wherever you want it to go. What strategies can you come up with for keeping control of the movement of the group?

[F] Dowel Game

For this game you will need three or more people and a dowel for each of them. Use wooden dowels of about one foot in length.
Everybody should get in a circle holding his dowel. Each person should extend his dowel to the person immediately to the right of him, and the two people should then hold the dowel between them. They should hold the dowel by each pressing a flat, open palm against his end of the dowel. The dowel will fall, of course, unless both people maintain constant, even pressure inward at each end. Also, it is more complicated than this because everybody has two partners and two dowels to keep track of.

The game is to move around in various ways and keep the dowels from falling. Use your imagination and find different ways for the group to move.

If there is another group doing the same game, the two groups can interact in various ways.

What helps the group to move in a smooth and unified way so that the dowels do not fall?
Now you have reached the end of the exercises, but any activity can be an exercise. It is worth spending a few classes doing show and tell. Or another way to incorporate this into the end of the course is to spend some time in each of the last few classes doing show and tell.

The rules are very simple. People demonstrate for the class activities that they usually do and explain how movement awareness principles apply in those activities. In addition, the members of the class can analyze the performances and try to figure out how movement awareness principles could improve them.
What next? The end of the book is not the end of the practice, and there are two related questions that arise when we think about the material we have learned: How do we keep practicing with it, and, What do we use it for? You will find that it has many applications and that as you apply it you will understand it better and better.

The basic point is that your understanding of the material will keep growing only if you keep working with it, and you must have some context within which to practice it. The exercises in this book provide a convenient and orderly approach to the material, but working with them is only a beginning. You can also go on to find ways of applying the awareness work in broader realms of movement. I have done workshops for people involved in acting, dance, art, physical education, athletics, massage therapy, occupational therapy, psychology, and other disciplines whose concerns focus on self-awareness and movement. All of these areas offer interesting and useful situations for practicing and applying movement awareness principles and skills. Of course, these are not the only areas in which the material could be applied, and the task for you is to find out how you want to apply what you have learned.

One obvious context for further study is the art of Aikido. However, a note of caution if you do begin the practice of Aikido: don't enter it with preconceptions. The material in this book, while it derives primarily from my practice of Aikido, is not Aikido itself. On the one hand, Aikido is a martial art, and the movement awareness material presented here does not include the fighting techniques which are an inextricable element of Aikido and which form the basis for its spiritual rigor. And on the
other hand, most of the exercises presented here and the approach that underlies them came to me as ways of both simplifying and pinpointing aspects of things I had experienced during Aikido, but they are not part of the customary ways of practicing Aikido. Thus, though the material in this book stems primarily from my experience in Aikido, most Aikido instructors do not work with movement in anything close to the way it is presented here. It was only because I was fortunate enough to study with my instructor that I was pointed in a direction which enabled me to develop the outlook I have on the work, and yet it is also very different from his approach.

In other words, if you like the material and the approach in this book, and you go into Aikido expecting to find more of the same, you could be very disappointed. However, even if you do like what you have found here, don't let that stand in the way of your future learning. The material here represents just a small slice of the whole pie. Every teacher will have captured a different slice of the pie, and everybody will present what it is that he has been able to get a grasp on. Since every person is different, every person's understanding will be different. The material in this book is my interpretation of what I have been able to experience so far. Other people will have different experiences and different interpretations. Even the same person will grow and understand the material in new ways as he grows. I can look back at what I thought I understood of Aikido five or ten years ago and see how incomplete it was, and it is an exciting prospect to think that five or ten years from now I will be able to look back and see how incomplete my understanding was in writing this book.

The practice of movement awareness has no bounds. Once you begin to focus on movement as a practice, eventually everything you do all day long becomes not only itself but a practice too. It is exciting to have all of life to work with as a practice, and new insights and skills constantly develop.
People often ask, "How long does it take to get good at this?" All I can do to answer them is to compare it to learning to play the piano. How long does it take to get good at playing the piano? Well, that depends on how good you want to get. And it depends on your natural talents, and on how sincerely you practice, and on how much you practice, and on who you study with, and so on.

Everyone recognizes that in order to learn to play the piano well, serious study of the instrument is required. Many children take piano lessons, but most of us do not dedicate any deliberate, serious study to the most important instrument, one that we must all learn to play. And that instrument is the self/body that we are. We are vastly more complicated than a piano, yet how many people take time for movement lessons or even realize the importance of such a study?

Moving through life is an art. Like all arts it demands serious study. As in all arts, the more you know, the more you realize there is yet to be known. And as in all arts, the farther you progress the more meaningful and more joyful the art becomes.

This completes the description of the art aspect of Aikido. It is clear that Aikido corresponds very closely to Dewey's theory of art, and this will be elaborated upon in the next chapter.
CHAPTER IV
CONCLUSIONS
In this chapter we will address ourselves to three tasks. First, we shall examine the material presented in Chapter III to determine how well the movement awareness material fits the definition of art developed in Chapter II, and we shall find that there is in fact a very good fit. Second, based on the approach to physical education taken by the movement awareness material, we shall derive a set of principles which could serve as the basis for teaching any movement activity as art. And third, we shall discuss implications for future development and research in physical education that are suggested by an approach which emphasizes movement activity as art.

MOVEMENT AWARENESS AS ART

The simplest and most direct way to compare the material in chapters II and III will be to go through Chapter II proposition by proposition and examine how closely the movement awareness material fits each point in the definition of art. It will be helpful to reread each proposition in Chapter II as we refer to it here in this section.

Philosophy of Life

#1. It is important that if a movement form is to be used as an art, the essence of that movement form be something that is part of the activities of everyday life. There have to be some commonalities between the art form and everyday life so that the art form can serve as a concentrated example of what life is already about. It is clear that the movement awareness material does function this way. There is nothing in that material which is not to some degree already a part of people's awareness of
their daily lives. Everything from the concepts of proper body use to the idea that we all unconsciously influence each other by how we move and feel is to some degree part of people's commonsense understanding of life. What makes the movement awareness material art is the precision and refinement with which it deals with these subjects.

#2-5. Since the movement awareness material is derived from a martial art, it has a strong emphasis on the relation between the individual and his environment and a strong commitment to the idea that the individual must pay attention to what is around him in order to survive. The necessities for perceiving clearly and moving well are rooted in the fact that the individual can come under pressure from the environment, and it is clear that these pressures can be life-threatening. The individual must therefore find some way of dealing with the fact that the world is not a safe place.

#6-8. Both the exercises involving body use and those centering on blending start with soft elements and end up with hard, threatening tasks. Many people will shy away from these tasks and be unable to find it within themselves to face them, but there is another response that is possible. This pressure can be used positively as a way of growing beyond one's limits, and the result of growth and success in finding one's center is a sense of harmony with the world. The experience that students very often have in practicing the movement awareness exercises is that finding a comfortable way to do one thing that was originally difficult leads to a realization that they can move through all of life in a much easier fashion.

The Function of Art

#9-10. Considering such exercises as the Slapping exercise, it is clear that people react to stress by shying away from what is
causing the stress. This shying away prevents them from perceiving and reacting clearly. "Emotion is the conscious sign of a break, actual or impending" (quoted under proposition #10). In order to learn to act effectively, people must find a more orderly way of taking in stressful experiences.

#11-12. The order that the movement awareness material helps people put into their experiencing has to do with a feeling understanding of the rhythms of their reactions. Such exercises as the Two-step and the Rowing exercise show people how to use rhythm to make their use of their own power effective, but such exercises as the Slapping exercise or the Dissipating Power exercise make clear even subtler rhythms. The rhythms of how people respond to events determine how well they can deal with them, and the mistakes in their timing have obvious, direct results in weakening their ability to deal with pressure. By the same token, learning to perceive other people's movement patterns, as in exercises such as the Movement Snapshots exercise, helps students perceive general rhythms in how people respond to pressure.

It is important to keep in mind that the pressure provided by a partner in the movement awareness exercises is symbolic of any kind of pressure that life may bring to bear. The habits of perception and reaction that students learn in working with partners will carry over to situations in which they are faced with very different kinds of pressures. The beauty of the rhythms of movement practiced in such things as the Partner Two-step exercise is the same beauty found in any gracefully executed artistic production. "Man delights in rhythmic portrayals and presentations. . . . Ultimately the delight springs from the fact that such things are instances of the relationships that determine the course of life, natural and achieved" (quoted under proposition #11).
The purpose of art is to show us how to live in our experience instead of being frightened away by it and to help us organize our experience into a coherent form. The whole point of the movement awareness material is that it shows us how to use the movement we do as living beings as a window into our minds and our experiences of life.

The Process of Art

It is clear that the movement awareness exercises expose the essence of the experience of movement. Just as any laboratory experiment simplifies and orders events to make their inner structure more evident, the movement exercises select what is significant in people's experience and bring that out into the open. What stands in the way of living in a clear manner for most people is too much feeling or too little. Whether the task is blending with an opponent or finding a body alignment which will allow effective use of body strength, students experience that trying too hard and caring too much will interfere with their ability to perform. And if they don't care and don't try, they will also be unable to perform the required movements. Students experience that only when they keep their emotional energy under control and use it in harmony with the structure of their movements will they perform effectively.

The artist "has to see each particular connection of doing and undergoing in relation to the whole that he desires to produce" (quoted under proposition #18). In doing the movement awareness exercises, students realize how their present strategies of movement are a reflection of what has happened to them in the past and how they feel about it. Doing the exercises allows the students to begin finding a new perspective on their abilities. Exercises such as the Movement Snapshots exercise and the Partner Rowing exercise give people the experience that they can perceive more and do more than they had ever paid attention to before.
"Through resistances encountered, the nature of the self is discovered. The self is both formed and brought to consciousness through interaction with the environment" (quoted under proposition #19). Even more obviously than with many other forms of art, the processes of learning to move and move effectively involve acting, doing and making. It is especially obvious because the acting and doing and making do not revolve around some arcane area of action but focus directly on body use and movement, material which can apply directly to daily activities and interpersonal interactions. By examining how one moves, one is examining and forming the self that is the mover.

The artistic medium we are working with in the movement awareness course is that of body and movement. This is the most intimate artistic medium because it is the artist himself and not some external substance which is shaped and changed in producing the art. Dewey says that a work is art to the extent that the artist is changed by the process of shaping the material he works with. However, in working with movement as the medium it is not just that the artist is reshaped in consequence of his working in some expressive medium, but the artist himself is the material he reshapes. It is interesting that Dewey oriented his thinking almost altogether towards arts such as music, painting and sculpture, and there is very little mention of sports or dance as art forms. Nonetheless, the ideas Dewey advances about the nature of art media apply perfectly well to the medium of movement.

"What most of us lack in order to be artists is . . . the capacity to work a vague idea and emotion over into terms of some definite medium" (quoted under proposition #21). The use of movement as art means that a person will not let an emotion fly straight to its object but will put his movement in order and thereby put his emotions in order, a process illustrated clearly in many of the movement exercises we have dealt with.
"Each medium says something that cannot be uttered as well or as completely in any other tongue" (quoted under proposition #22). A particular medium has specific and unique principles of organization which make it appropriate for a particular type of message. It is clear that movement as a participatory experience (rather than as something to observe) affects the artist in a way that has a unique bearing on his experience of his own life. Every moment in which the artist is moving has the potentiality of being art, and the artist's life itself becomes his art product.

The artist has the knowledge of how to use his medium as art. This means that he knows how to concentrate and focus energy in the particular channel of his medium rather than letting it fritter away in many unintegrated channels, and the experience of working with movement awareness exercises is that they do indeed concentrate experience in a particular channel and bring it into sharp focus. Without deliberately using some channel of experience as an artistic medium, our emotional energy does not become focused and, ultimately, clarified. The point of the movement awareness class is to show students that they can use movement for just this process of focusing on and becoming more aware of their lives.

The Results of Art

The purpose of art is to unify the powers of the individual. Looking at the Unbendable Arm, or the Snail Trails exercise, or the Crowd Walking exercise, it is clear that the movement awareness exercises aim at giving the student access to powers that lie hidden within us all. It is precisely the doing away with the divisions that exist between the "parts" of ourselves—whether they exist in actual behavior or in our thoughts of how we can act—that is the goal of the movement exercises. Aikido, from which this material was derived, is the study of unification,
unification of the mind and body as well as unification of the individual with the world.

#25. The concept of mushin (no-mind) was discussed in the History section, and what Dewey is talking about in terms of the way art allows us to live is precisely mushin. When he talks about the animal grace of a fox or a thrush, he is talking about the perfectly appropriate, natural and whole way that an animal reacts to its environment, and this is the essence of activity done in mushin. This is related to the reverie in which we have access to deeper ways of thinking and to the state of mind in which we perceive precisely the object in front of us here and now. In many instances the movement awareness exercises pointed to the necessity of being fully in the present instant reacting to what is really there rather than being trapped in the past or future reacting to just our thoughts about what is in front of us.

#26. On the practical, experiential level "the sense of something that lies beyond" (quoted under proposition #26) is represented in the movement awareness exercises by the sensation of expansiveness. This expansiveness opens one up to a feeling of connectedness and harmony with the world around. It comes out in simple, mundane things like a better body alignment and use and thereby a better, more comfortable way of doing daily physical tasks; and it comes out in a sense of being the whole in such exercises as the meditation on Transparency. It is precisely the feeling of egotism that makes a person tighten up and shrink down. Armoring the body comes from feeling threatened and having to protect the self. Expansiveness in the movement awareness exercises is just the opposite of egotism. "Where egotism is not made the measure of reality and value, we are citizens of this vast world beyond ourselves, and any intense realization of its presence with and in us brings a peculiarly satisfying sense of unity in itself and with ourselves" (quoted under proposition #26).
It is not necessary to go through all the propositions in this section in order to examine the epistemological aspect of the movement awareness exercises. Although this section is longer and more logically intricate than the previous sections, its basic substance is much simpler. On pages 40-41 we stated that art leads to a sense of perceiving the world in a new way and that this perception is felt to be knowledge of the world. We also stated that the question of the validity of this knowledge is important and asked how we could test the accuracy of the knowledge derived from art. We noted that Dewey felt that the knowledge derived from art is non-propositional and cannot be specified in ordinary, rational terms, and then we turned to an examination of Polanyi's ideas to clarify the epistemological basis of artistic knowledge. We saw that artistic knowledge is a fundamental way of relating to the world and that its truth lies only in the experience of its being true. On page 49 we pointed out that by Polanyi's analysis this fundamental kind of knowledge is simply perceived as correct and that there is nothing which would count as a separate demonstration of it.

In the sections "How to Use the Book" and "Theory," we discussed the importance of being in the practice, and in the latter section we defined Being knowledge. Being knowledge is exactly the intuitive, feeling knowledge that is the essence of artistic knowledge. On pages 51-52 we stated that it is by the aid of artistic meanings that we see the world and that the function of art is to allow us to specify and change these fundamental meanings: "An artistic vision, then, has to do with the fundamental meaning/tone of the world as we perceive/create it." The essential point of the movement awareness class is that this approach to movement is specifically for the purpose of affecting the student's sense of being in himself and in the world.
In the end, it is clear that there is a very good match between Dewey's ideas about art and the nature of the movement awareness material. We compared Dewey's ideas and the movement awareness material piece by piece and found that in each area the movement material was in accord with Dewey's ideas. To sum it up broadly, we identified the essence of art as being the creation of a vision of the world, and it is clear that the movement awareness exercises do function to create an artistic vision. Since this is so, the movement awareness material can function as an example of a movement activity that is an art, and we can go on to use this example as a basis for deriving some principles whereby other physical education activities can function as arts.

MOVEMENT ACTIVITIES AS ART

In this section we shall develop a concise list of principles which will define how a movement activity can be made to function as art. This task is somewhat different from the one that Dewey is pursuing in *Art as Experience* (Dewey, 51). He is looking at activities that are recognized as arts and seeking to derive a set of statements of how they function as art. We are seeking to formulate requirements for art activities that would allow us to take some activity and convert it into an art by changing it to fulfill the requirements. The practical effect of the difference lies in the fact that Dewey's ideas about art and the procedures of art are, in a sense, general and theoretical rather than concrete and specific. Dewey could say, for instance, that an art strips experience down to its essence, but he did not have to specify how a new medium could be made to function as a means of stripping experience down to its essence and consequently as a medium for the artistic endeavor. Therefore, although we are basing our ideas of art on Dewey's philosophy, that philosophy
alone will not be sufficient to allow us to fulfill our purpose in this section.

We have established that the movement awareness material derived from Aikido does fit Dewey's conception of art, and it is by considering this material in the light of Dewey's philosophies of art and life that we shall be able to arrive at our list of requirements. The movement awareness material is a specific and concrete example of how a movement activity can function as art, and by extracting the principles underlying this function, we shall be able to develop a template which will allow us to structure other movement activities as arts.

Consideration of a simple diagram illustrating Dewey's philosophy of life will help in thinking about the way a movement activity can function as art:

![Figure 1. Dewey's Philosophy of Life](image)

It is along the path of the novel response that change and growth occur, and it is in this area that art functions. As we have seen, art functions to help the artist or consumer of art to organize his experience in new and clearer ways, and it thereby helps people to organize their behavior in new and more effective ways. The movement awareness material supplied a situation in which the students had the opportunity to examine their visions of the world relative to some performance task. The situation was structured to allow them to determine whether there were more effective and comfortable alternatives to their habitual action patterns, and
the material included methods whereby they could learn to create new response patterns. This is the core of the art function of the movement awareness class: it is a situation in which responses are elicited, evaluated, and changed, and the crucial point is that these responses are a direct manifestation of the student's vision of the world.

With this in mind we can state six points that will serve as the means of both evaluating and structuring the function of a movement activity as art:

1. **Purpose.** The purpose of the movement situation must be to manifest and change the student's vision of himself and his world. This purpose must be either the primary purpose or at least one of the primary purposes and a crucial one at that.

2. **Particular goals.** It is necessary that the movement discipline have a clear and explicit statement of what it considers the proper and improper ways of ordering one's experience and behavior. It is necessary to have an explanation of why the recommended ways are considered to be better.

3. **Medium.** It is necessary for the movement situation to be one in which a goal must be attained through performance of some movement tasks, and the goal must have some felt importance so that goal achievement will have some meaning. The movement situation must include obstacles to goal achievement and it must be structured such that the students will have the opportunity to choose either the correct or incorrect methods of achieving the goal. If these requirements are met, then the movement situation will be such that the movement will clearly reflect the student's understanding of himself and the world and will allow a clear discrimination between desirable and undesirable understandings. The situation must be such as to provide a clear experience of the greater appropriateness of the ways of understanding the world that have been identified as correct.

4. **Process.** The movement situation must focus on the self of the mover as the area of learning and change as well as on the
movement externals. The movement situation must get the student to see himself as the focus of the learning process. It must convince him that he is responsible for his own understandings and behavior, and it must convince him that he can in fact make changes in himself. The situation must convince the student that certain ways of ordering his experience are indeed better than others.

5. Method. There must be taught an explicit method whereby the student can perceive and control his movements and ideas about movement. The student must be taught how to perceive and control the intentional foundations of his movement. He must be taught how to discriminate positive from negative responses and how to utilize movement situations as vehicles for learning about himself. He must be taught how to utilize incorrect responses as reminders to scan himself for his intentional patterns and change them so as to respond correctly. The student must be taught how to perceive and understand the responses of the people around him.

6. Generalization. The student must be shown how to utilize his new vision in situations other than the movement teaching situation.

This is a brief statement of the elements that are important in the function of movement as art. It is very brief and is meaningful primarily as a summary of the extensive example provided by the movement awareness course. Each of the six elements identified here is clearly present in the movement awareness course. In addition, it is the experience of the movement awareness material—whether a vicarious experience from reading through the exercises or a real experience from doing them—that would indicate how one would apply these six elements in a movement discipline other than the movement awareness class. The ability actually to apply this approach within physical education activities must come from a person's ability to function as an artist within the activities. If the physical educator
naturally sees his students as bundles of energy organized by patterns of intention, then his teaching will go toward the purposes of helping the students learn to experience themselves that way and of helping them learn to create more effective and comfortable patterns of intentional organization throughout their lives.

Any movement activity can be taught in this manner. As one example, I once taught an advanced swimming class. I noticed that most of the people had a fairly good idea of the strokes at the beginning of the quarter but that what was lacking was a sense of awareness of how the water and the swimmer blend to form a flowing event. One clear instance of this was a woman who had been a competitive swimmer until she ruined her shoulders swimming back crawl. Her idea of hard work and trying hard involved tensing her belly, arching her back, tightening her jaw and inhibiting her breathing. Then she strained to reach as far out as she could on each arm stroke. She was wasting a lot of energy within herself that she could have been applying to the water, and the net result was that all that energy was absorbed in her shoulders and injured them. As part of helping her correct her stroke, I first had to convince her that she was more important than her swimming speed and that any method of swimming that sacrificed her well-being for extra speed could not be correct. Once she was willing to suspend her disbelief and see whether a style of swimming that she did immediately feel was more comfortable could eventually be more functional, she could start practicing in a very new way. I had her work with a new body alignment and with a breathing and relaxation exercise, and I tied that in with some ideas about what it meant to respect oneself in one's movements and feelings. It took only a very short time for her to begin to be excited about this new way of approaching an old skill and to find that it did give good performance results.
In some ways the movement awareness approach to physical education is very new, and in some ways what it deals with has been present in physical education for a long time. What is new in the movement awareness approach is the fact that the development of an artistic vision is an explicit, high priority element of the movement teaching situation and is supported by a concrete, practical method of using movement to affect being. Any activity from fishing to football can provide new experiences to an individual, experiences which will serve either to confirm or change habitual values and ways of seeing the world. What is crucial in the use of a movement form as an art is that the movement situation be deliberately and explicitly used as a means of developing the students' visions of the world; and though the work in a movement class must focus on the movement techniques per se, it must be clear that the focus of the practice is really the sense of being that is being learned in performing the movements. Thus in order for a movement activity to function as an art, it must not only affect the student's vision of the world, but it must be truly meant to serve that purpose, and it must function according to an explicit set of procedures for connecting movement and being. In the past, physical education pedagogy has not included a clear coupling of this clear purpose and clear methodology, even though the elements have been present in a rudimentary form.

There has been a lot of discussion in the profession of the use of physical activities to teach social and personal values, but very often values learning has only been paid lip service to while the real goal of instruction has been to teach physical performance skills. In order for physical education activities to function as arts, it is not enough for the being aspect of movement experience to be mentioned in passing while the instructor's real interest lies in the area of excellence of
performance. Whatever its other functions may be, an art is an activity undertaken for the express purpose of investigating the human condition and finding a way of understanding the world and one's life.

Not only has the vision element been to some extent part of physical education in the past, but so has the process of becoming aware of movement on subtle levels. It has been my experience in working on movement awareness material with athletes and physical educators that in a group of people, different individuals will recognize many different elements of the movement awareness material as something they have already experienced in their movement activities. What they generally agree is new is the clear, explicit, step-by-step training methods whereby people are given a comprehensive experience of the various facets of the movement awareness subject area. All the athletes and physical educators that I have worked with have felt that they developed their feeling awareness of movement in a purely intuitive fashion without a vocabulary or conceptual framework to help them understand what they were doing; and they have also felt that because they have not had the conceptual understanding of the material, they have not been able to transfer their intuitive understanding to the people they teach.

To sum it up, the factors necessary for structuring a physical education activity as an art are the explicit purpose to do so and the explicit method for accomplishing that purpose. To some extent these have both been part of physical education in the past, but in a very undeveloped way. I once heard a musician lead a discussion of what is or is not art. For any rule that could be brought up, counterexamples were found. He concluded the discussion by saying, "In the end, the only thing we can really agree on is that art is what artists do." By the same token, what is not art is that which is done by people who are not artists. Physical education activities do not presently serve as art because physical educators do not think of themselves as
artists and of their activities as arts. The activities are, in a generally undeveloped way, very close to being art activities, but they are not done with a clear, deliberate sense of their artistic import and a clear, explicit way of emphasizing and fulfilling that function. In order for physical education activities to serve as arts, it would be necessary for physical educators to become vitally interested in that and willing to work for their status as artists.

There are a number of different issues which would be important in considering the possibility of including the movement awareness approach within the teaching methods of physical education, and there are two different ways of approaching these issues. Some people will be interested in immediate, practical ideas that would offer suggestions for changes in the day-to-day conduct of physical education. Other people will be interested in doing systematic research to determine what results would arise from teaching physical education activities through the movement awareness approach. Both interests are valid and necessary. Basing changes in teaching procedures on the movement experiences of physical educators is valid and appropriate, but personal, experiential knowledge should be balanced by impersonal, objective studies. Pursuing both ways of dealing with the new approach to movement will offer a more rounded view of it.

There are many questions which would arise in considering the possibilities for the growth of the art aspect of physical education in the future. These fall into four broad areas: the domain of physical education, the methods it uses, the results it achieves, and how to implement changes.

**Domain**

First, if the art aspect of physical education activities is to be emphasized, what is to be made of the idea of physical
education? In other words, what is the proper domain of the department of physical education? Is it appropriate to be teaching such things as values, ethics, and vision in physical education? Is it appropriate to include moral education in the school system at all? And should there be a difference made between public and private educational institutions in this regard?

If physical education is to function primarily or to a great degree as an art in the sense in which "art" has been used in this dissertation, then where would the distinctions lie between physical education and the areas of psychology, philosophy and the fine arts? How will the different departments divide up the academic turf? What should be the relationships between departments in which very similar issues are dealt with?

Another question in this area has to do with the balance between artistic activities and simply recreational or physical ones. Certainly it is appropriate to include within physical education activities that are valued for other than artistic reasons; not everything has to be deep and artistic, but then how should the balance be maintained between these two types of activities? If resources must be allotted to either a recreational or artistic approach towards the same activity, which will be given priority?

**Methods**

The second area of questions has to do with the methods by which physical education is and could be conducted. To begin with, precisely what are the purposes and values that currently operate within physical education? What practical changes would be necessitated by the adoption of the purposes and values inherent in the movement awareness approach to physical education? Looking at the movement skills that currently form the body of physical education, what Being qualities are emphasized and created by the movement tasks themselves? Do the movements
involve postures, rhythms and qualities which create certain Being elements in the movers? Are the Being components of the movement situation desirable, and have they been chosen deliberately and explicitly? If the use of movement as art were emphasized, would it be necessary to change the structure of various sports to emphasize different patterns of body use and therefore different ways of being? And looking at the methods used to teach movement skills, upon what concept of movement and the mover are these methods based? Are they based on a view of the mover as being a responsible actor, a being who can develop and work with his vision of his life? Do the methods emphasize the use of self-awareness as a necessary component of movement control?

Another type of question concerning methods has to do with research into the processes by which the movement awareness approach to teaching movement work. The movement awareness exercises include a theory about the nature of the mind-body interaction and a number of exercises that purport to be achieving physical level effects on the basis of mental causes. It would be important to do research first to validate the effects of the exercises and then to investigate just how these effects are brought about. It could be that the exercises, derived as they are from a tradition with over two thousand years of practical experimentation behind it, could indicate some new and profitable areas of investigation and practice.

Results

The third area of questions has to do with research into the results of the movement awareness approach to physical education activities. It would be important to determine in an objective manner just what the results are, both in terms of physical performance ability and psychological changes. It would be important to find out just what is learned and whether this carries over to the rest of the students' lives. How does the learning affect
the students' visions of themselves and their worlds? Are the effects of the movement awareness learning long lasting? Are they desirable?

Implementation

The fourth and final area of questions has to do with implementation. How would the approach to physical education activities which emphasizes their function as art be implemented in physical education programs? It would be necessary for the people who create the physical education programs to be aware of and informed about the movement awareness approach for it to be adopted. Would the administrators understand and approve of this new approach, and how would information concerning it be communicated to them? Would the activity instructors understand the approach and seek to adopt it? What new skills would they have to acquire to teach in this new way, and what forms of training would serve to provide them with the skills?

This dissertation has sought to make a beginning in the area of implementation by providing physical educators with some basic information about the philosophy and methods involved in an approach to movement as art. It is clear, however, that the simple availability of this information would not be enough to guarantee successful implementation of this approach within the school system. Although the problems listed above concerning implementation have been partially dealt with by this dissertation, there is more to be considered in their solutions.

This brief list of questions and problems should serve to indicate the concerns that would have to be dealt with for physical education to develop in the direction of including an emphasis upon the artistic approach to movement within its teaching framework. We began this dissertation by asking why it is that students seeking higher degrees in physical education are
generally not allowed to count physical activities towards their degrees. The explanation that seemed possible was that physical education activities are not generally thought of as having any serious worth in themselves, and it was suggested that the solution to this problem lay in looking at physical education activities as arts. The first purpose of this dissertation was to examine this suggestion and discover how physical education activities could function as arts. The second purpose of the dissertation was to provide a practical method to help physical educators approach their activities as arts. Both of these purposes have been fulfilled, but this is just the beginning of any real transformation of physical education. The list of questions and problems is an indication of the various elements that will have to be considered if physical education is to change. There is a lot to be done. However, it is to be hoped that someday graduate students in physical education will actually be able to pursue physical education activities as part of their study of physical education.
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**OTHER MOVEMENT DISCIPLINES**

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**Bioenergetics**


**Inner Sports**


Miscellaneous


Miscellaneous


Theory of Art
