

Arica. Week One.

450 Riverside Drive
New York City 10027
May 20th, 1972

Mr. Richard H. Nolte
Institute of Current World Affairs
535 Fifth Avenue
New York City 10017

Dear Mr. Nolte:

On Monday the Fifteenth of May, the Arica Insitute began its third New York training. Today, Saturday, is a day of rest during which we practice an exercise called "The Objective Silence" which lasts from Friday evening to Saturday sundown. Although we are supposed to speak only when absolutely necessary (a more difdicult task, they say, than observing absolute silence), other forms of verbal activity, such as writing, are permissable. And since this is the only day of the week that we are not completely immersed in the training, it seems like a good time to collect my first impressions.

In July 1970, seventy-three Americans, mostly from the Esalen Institute in Big Sur, traveled to Arica, Chile in order to undergo an extensive and extremely intensive ten-month training with Oscar Ichazo, a Bolivian in his middle forties who had spent many years studying under a variety of masters around the world and had begun teaching some of the techniques he had learned to South Americans. Out of the original seventy-three who underwent the ten-month training in Chile, forty-three became trainers in the Arica Institute and have now given two three-month training programs in New York and one in San Francisco. They are, as they have repeatedly explained, not gurus themselves, but merely the transmitters of certain information. Right now we are involved in learning the basic vocabulary. We are not being given the theories, the whys and wherefores, and the most frequent response to the question "why?" is, "just do it. It works."

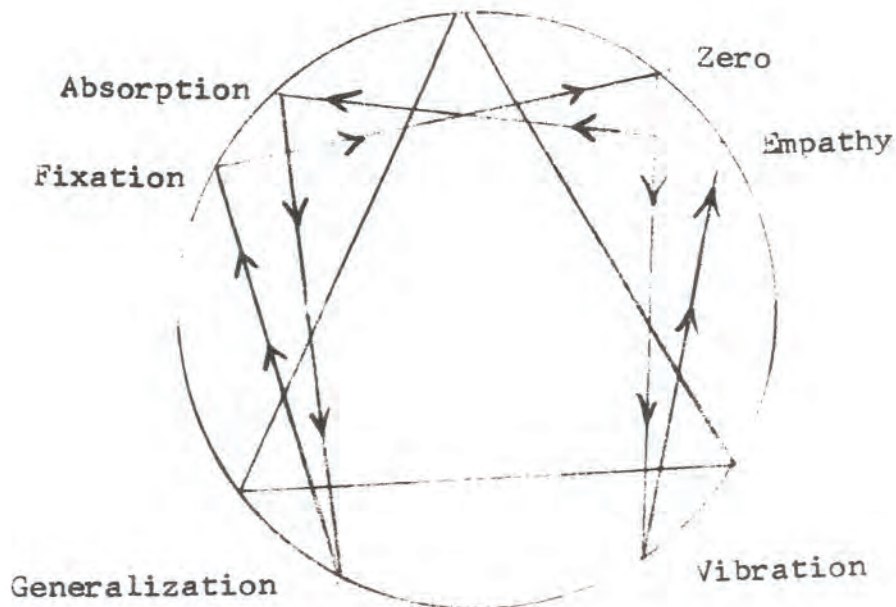
The training is a twenty-four hour a day, seven day a week commitment. During the first week we have been on a "light" schedule of nine hours a day. Next week, instead of ending at seven-thirty, we will be working until eight or nine. Thereafter, we may work as late as midnight or one in the morning. Each day begins with a brief ritual bath called "woosoo," performed under the covers in bed. This is followed by a more complete Woosoo in a cold shower, beginning and ending with the salutation, "Om." Upon arriving at the school we formally open the day with another salutation, and do twenty to thirty minutes of a special kind of chanting during which a column of air is made to resonate in the head so as to activate the pituitary gland. The sound is difficult to produce, and until I began to get the hang of it on Friday,

its potential significance eluded me.

From the chanting, performed sitting cross-legged or in a half-lotus on the floor, we move directly into a meditation on the color and spirit of the day. The week is broken down in this, very traditional, manner:

<u>DAY</u>	<u>PLANET</u>	<u>COLOR</u>	<u>SPIRIT</u>
Sunday	The Sun	Deep gold	Regeneration
Monday	The Moon	silver	Assimilation
Tuesday	Mars	Red	Strength-vitality
Wednesday	Mercury	Lemon yellow	Communication- intelligence
Thursday	Jupiter	Deep blue	wisdom
Friday	Venus	Green	Love
Saturday	Saturn	Grey / Black	Gestation

The meditation consists of a series of steps beginning at "zero" during which the color is observed. The specific vibration of the color is then experienced in the body; one empathizes with the color; absorbs it into oneself; generalizes it out into the room, the city, the cosmos; then brings it back into the body and fixes its vibrations in the bones and blood, and finally returns to zero.



After the meditation: Gym. This consists of approximately forty separate physical exercises supposed to cover all the major muscle groups in the body. The gym begins with a headstand in the middle of the floor, and utilizes an eclectic series of movements from yoga asanas to calisthenics and ballet. Great attention is paid to the breathing. The gym takes about an hour and a half and, now that we have assimilated all the "indications" (directions), is done to music (e.g. Ike and Tina Turner). After gym we break for lunch, remembering to observe various dietary proscriptions (e.g. low carbohydrate intake, no pork or crab) and suggestions (high protein, especially lean meat).

"Audition Plantar," or, "Listening with the Soles of the feet" opens the afternoon session and is an exercise which we have been performing to some very strange music indeed--a sort of electronic melange filled with weird dissonances and incalculable rhythms. The first section is called "Absorption" during which the energy of the music is felt to be traveling through the soles of the feet, up into the body and out the top of the head. After perhaps six or seven minutes of this the position is changed slightly and we perform a fascinating exercise called "spiral relaxation" in which an imagined point of light is taken from the tip of the nose on a very complicated course around the entire body, ending up in a spot four finger widths below the navel known as the "Kath." This exercise takes approximately fifteen minutes and would seem to have two functions; to clear the mind of all thought and to attune oneself to and sensitize the body. After the "spiral relaxation" the concentration is placed in specific areas of the body for intervals of perhaps three minutes. This part of the Audition is called "Mentations." The areas are:

Hands and feet
 Calves and forearms
 knees and elbows
 Thighs and upper arms
 Genitals
 Colon and kidneys
 Liver
 Heart
 Mouth and stomach
 Nose and lungs
 Eyes
 Ears

After the Audition comes Movement Class, perhaps the most exciting period of the day thus far. We have been working mostly with movements associated with African dance, as well as doing some rather rigorous work at the bar in the ballet studio we are temporarily occupying. All the work is done to live drums, performed by several musicians who were part of

the original Chile group.

"Ana Loma Viloma" is a yogic breathing exercise performed while seated in half-lotus (or, if your knees and ankles are up to it, in full-lotus). The thumb and ring-finger of the right hand are used to alternately cover the right and left nostrils. The breath is inhaled to a count of six, retained for a count of three and exhaled to a count of six. The procedure is a bit complicated and involves visualizing a column of air traveling up and down the spine in coordination with the breathing. This exercise alternates with more head-resonating chants, and is followed by "water-music" which is supposed to clear the central cortex. Our cortexes cleansed, we then resume our half-lotuses and sing a mantram called "Artana" (which is an evocation to our essences) anywhere from thirty to sixty times.

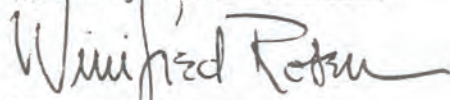
ARTANA
MARTIHAM TARAM
BISANAM
BITINASANAM
VISHATAM
KALANDAM DAM TAM
SRIRAMACHANDRAM
NAMA MIA HAM

Tomorrow, Sunday, we gather at Orwell House on Central Park West (Arica has an office and several apartments for trainers and non-New Yorkers) and head out to the park for the "Pampa"-- a series of ancient ritual prayers involving hills and mantras ordinarily performed in the desert. (The weather forecast here is for rain.) Then, from four to seven we'll be at the N.Y. School of Ballet for a Zeeker (spelling uncertain) or party to which everyone friendly with or interested in Arica is invited.

The final hour of each day last week was devoted to doing "Entre Vista." The fifty-five of us (white Americans between the ages of twenty and fifty from highly diverse backgrounds) broke down into groups and tried to get to know one another. This is said to be an essential part of our work at this stage of the training. The more the group comes together, we are told, the more energy it will have to work with.

We're going to need every amp we can get.

With my best wishes,


Winifred Rosen

Received in New York on June 8, 1972