

## Preliminaries, Regarding Voice, Movement, and Gesture (Part 5)

Vajra Music

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*NOTE: The five talks in this series were recorded by Rob at his home. Being preliminary practices for Soulmaking Dharma, the exercises offered in these talks can be worked with before a student engages the full scope of the Soulmaking teachings. However, some of the material presented here will only be properly comprehended and contextualised once a student already has some basis of preparatory experience and understanding of A Soulmaking Dharma.*

Okay, here's another exercise. And remember, it's only an exercise, like some of the other things we've done. It's reminiscent, or reminds me of – in a way, it's a variation of – something we did on the retreat, some of the exercises we did on the retreat, on movement (I've forgotten what it's called; anyway, it's on Dharma Seed), where we just moved the body, almost micro-movements, held a posture, and saw what that did to the energy body, to the emotions, to the soul-sense, if images arose or if not. Just an exercise. What we're doing here is training sensibility, training sensitivity. There are many possibilities. You can start with an image, and then let the body, let the voice move – from the image, move into the voice; express, manifest through the voice, through the posture or the movement. We can start with the movement, and see what happens in the soul. It's two ways round to do it. So there are all kinds of variations. We're going to combine voice and gesture or posture.

This is just an exercise. I don't think we've done it before with this combination. But you can get to think in a certain way about exercises. It's not a big deal. Like I said, it's a screw on an airplane. If it's missing, it might be a big deal, but in terms of the bigger sort of structure of the aircraft, how it works, it's not such a big deal. It's not a central component. But if it's missing, it might be a big deal. So these exercises, occasionally, for a while, emphasizing them or whatever, filling out cracks that haven't been filled in the soulscape.

[3:02, **exercise six** begins]

**(6.1)** Okay, so there are two elements. There's a sound element, sonic, a voicing element, and a gesture or posture element or movement element. So for this, if we start with the sound, with the voicing, it goes with a little melody. [voices higher and lower notes: *naaa-ah-ah-ah-ah-uh*] It's just repeating. I'm singing it, enunciating it more clearly than you need to necessarily. So that's part of your variation, how you sing it. *Naaa-da-da-da-da-da-da*. It's just that fragment repeating, with the syllable for instance, "ba": *baaa-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-uh*, *baaaaaa-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-uh*, *baaa-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-uh*. It doesn't have to be exact; something like that, something rhythmically close to that. If you know music, I'm holding roughly the long note for a count of three or six, and the rest is one each, of six. I'm thinking six eighth notes, or six – what are they called in English? I've forgotten what they're called! [laughs] Six [quavers], maybe they're called. Anyway, so that's the vague thing that you voice, with the syllable "ba," just to start.

(6.2) And as you do it, you can do it standing up. What are your arms going to do? You can open them wide, like spread your arms, down to the tips of your fingers, to your side, parallel to the floor. It's a very open posture. You can sing it like that. Maybe there's a slight movement, like a rotating – just very slightly, slowly, side to side, so that the angle your arms make with the body, with the feet which are stationary, it changes slightly as you rotate, slowly and slightly. And really your job is to feel into this, feel into what that combination feels like, that movement, that gesture, that posture, and the sound, sounding. Maybe you have another posture/gesture: your hands crossed, one hand up by one shoulder, right hand up by the left shoulder, left hand up by the right shoulder, and then hanging down from there so they're crossed over the abdomen, over the torso. The same melody repeating: *baaa-ah-ah-ah-ah-uh*. You don't have to sing it like I'm singing it; I'm just trying to make it clear for you. And you do that together. What happens if you fold your hands? It would be a common posture to fold your hands across your chest – cross your hands, cross your arms across your chest.

Play with different postures of your hands, different slight movements, same-sounding melody. Maybe you want to vary the syllables, so it's not “ba” but it's “pa,” or “ta,” or “oo,” or “ee,” with the vowels, different vowels. So all kinds of combinations you can do with this, with what you're sounding, and with your gesture/posture/movement. So go slow. Take your time. But really repeat one for some minutes, so you really get into it and get a feel for what it's doing, if it's doing anything. Some of that might be very, very subtle.

So you can vary your posture, your position, your movement, your gesture. That's number one. You can vary the pitch and the range at which you sing – the melody at the moment, roughly what I'm singing. But it could go much higher in your range if it's more comfortable. It could go higher so it's stretching your range, or low, low in the body so it's stretching down there. Play with the register of what you're singing, the pitch of what you're singing. This is another variation.

A third variation is how loud. All the way from really loud, to not so loud, to a whisper, to internally – only you can hear it, internally. You keep playing with the other aspects, the gesture and the pitch. This is a lot of variation here.

This is really an exercise in sensitivity again, so your job is really to feel into it. How does it feel? What happens in the energy body? The wide meaning of ‘energy body’ now. What happens in the emotions, in the emotional body? What happens, if anything, in image or soul and soul-resonance? Very simple, lots of variations. It's really about sensitivity. It's an exercise. Not to expect too much. Just your job is the sensitivity. And you could do the whole thing – almost like another exercise – with another melody that you come up with, that occurs to you, that you want to sing, or a fragment that you know from something that touches your soul. What happens when you sing it, when you voice it, when you sound it in these different ways, and your body moves, and your body gestures in these different ways? Put them together. It's just an exercise in sensitivity. It's to add to the collection of little exercises that we have. I hope that's clear enough.