

Liberate the Body and Mind through a Mental Exercise

The Grindea Technique

This exercise requires several minutes of concentration, demanding total stillness of body; only the mental directives are at work. I recommend doing it in front of the mirror so that one can observe the subtle changes in posture and how a perfect alignment of the head, neck and back is achieved:

- (a) Standing at ease, with feet slightly apart, concentrate attention on the spine, *commanding it to lengthen*, not through a movement but through mental directive. One should experience that the head is being lifted gently and placed on the last vertebrae, bringing head, neck and body into perfect alignment. Any imbalance in the posture is corrected.
- (b) Exhale very slowly, whispering “haaaaaaa” as long as possible; be aware of shoulders lowering, a state of relaxation in the diaphragm area (the solar plexus where we all experience fear and emotion), the arms getting longer and heavier, a great deal of arm-weight flowing into the hands.
- (c) Concentrate attention on knees and ankles and imagine them very supple and flexible. One should experience the strange sensation of lightness as if the body is floating. This is the *perfect state of balance of the body*, which is totally liberated of any tensions.

To achieve this exhilarating state of body and mind is easy and anyone can learn it in a few minutes. But to maintain this state while practising or performing for hours, sometimes with no interruptions, demands a very specialised study, slow practising and constant awareness of muscular freedom.

The Grindea Technique works on several levels: *physical* and *physiological*, by liberating the body of any negative tensions; *psychological*, by bringing stillness in the mind during those several minutes when practising the *Technique*. Thus not only the body but also the mind are free of any tensions.

This is the state of body and mind when a player experiences the flow, that magic moment, when music takes over and the player reaches his highest potential in performance, oblivious of anything else but the music to be communicated to the audience.

Performer, music, instrument and audience become one.

The posture is now correct, there is a perfect alignment of head, neck and back and the body is in an ideal *State of Balance*. There cannot be total relaxation in performance when the music demands great emotional intensity and physical involvement. The aim is to achieve a state of well-being, with the right balance of tension and relaxation, and this has to be maintained throughout practising and in performance. (Fig. 1).

Teachers and students *should be aware of the position of the shoulders and shoulder-girdle*. Very often one shoulder is higher than the other or both shoulders are brought forward, a position which hinders free movement of the arms along the keyboard. To correct this, gently raise the sternum; there is a broadening of the chest, and the shoulders fall in their right position.

Correct Posture – Fig. 1

- (a) *perfect alignment of head, neck, back*
- (b) *shoulders, elbows and wrists in correct position*
- (c) *arms hanging loosely on each side of the body, in state of balance*
- (d) *hands correctly placed on the keys*
- (e) *fingers, elongated, the thumbs playing on the edge of the keys, while fingers 2, 3, 4 and 5 are placed higher on the keys.*

