



The Actor's Secret: Techniques for Transforming Habitual Patterns and Improving Performance

Betsy Polatin

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Offering revolutionary new training for the actor, *The Actor's Secret* teaches actors and performers how to incorporate the fundamentals of the Alexander Technique, Somatic Experiencing®, and Breathing Coordination in order to reduce performance anxiety and stress; improve stage presence, breathing, and vocal production; and restore well-being and healthy functioning. These three kinesthetic disciplines are designed to lead to profound change and healing through body-mind reeducation.

Part I explains in detail the principles of the three techniques. A practical method for self-improvement and neuromuscular reeducation, the Alexander Technique focuses on changing inefficient habits of movement and patterns of tension that inhibit the ability to move easily. Breathing Coordination helps increase breathing capacity and awareness. A method for resolving emotional trauma, Somatic Experiencing® follows a process of tracking bodily sensations to restore vitality and health.

Enhanced with over 100 instructive photos, Parts II and III present explorations and exercises that draw on elements of the three methods. Topics covered include the importance of presence and non-doing; the proper mechanics of vocalization and singing; the understanding of character and role; and the actor's journey from auditions to performance, including initial script preparation, rehearsal, monologue, and scene work. Developed by Betsy Polatin, a movement specialist and master lecturer at Boston University's College of Fine Arts, the book's exercises provide the actor with simple tools for exploring his or her acting work. Most techniques and self-help books teach a new way of "doing." The secret of this book lies in "non-doing." When the actor learns to first recognize and then suspend habitual patterns, he or she opens the door to deeper artistic choices.

"I have worked with many fine Alexander Technique teachers over the years and Betsy Polatin is far and away one of the finest. Her touch, her instincts, and her knowledge are miraculous."—Andre Gregory, actor and director, *My Dinner with Andre*

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