



is done on their body. There are no techniques just exercises, concepts and spontaneous work which develop a profound sensitivity and relaxation into a practitioner's movement and awareness. A student training in it is encouraged to teach the body to think for itself using natural reactions as a base rather than mechanical blocking, parrying and slipping skills. Out of this total freedom of movement and lack of a defining framework a student's consciousness, energy and physical structure learns how to blend and effect the consciousness, energy and physical structure of the opponent.

The system works on all levels of human ability, the psychological, the physiological and the psychic. I think the body can be considered to be constantly out of balance and only in 'balance' for an instance both mentally and physically on a moment by moment basis. It is dealing with a tremendous amount of internal and external information. It is quite an achievement for an animal to stand on two feet and deal with the information that a human does, this fact it seems can as easily work against us as for us. It seems that it is not difficult to control this balance when you work at a body's subconscious level. The subconscious, after all, is the level at which we naturally move. I think to contrive a movement such as moving into a pre-determined technique takes an logical act of will which guides the subconscious into a specific type of movement. This must imply that thought at some level is creating a logical sequence of events. This type of training can be honed to an extremely high level of spontaneity which can develop into a practical sequence of ideas that develop a system of martial arts. But it seems if you work slowly and very softly and with positive intention

you can teach your body to act and react extremely smoothly out of its own natural reactions allowing 'logical' intuition to guide your nervous system into action. Using your senses and 'energy' system to guide the body without a perceivable 'lag' time created by a conscious thought process. A practitioner of The System is never searching for technique to apply, instead they are taught to enhance the body's natural sensitivity beyond that of physical contact into more of a state of intuitive driven empathy to create spontaneous defensive (or offensive) movement. We are energetic beings and our energy fields reach out way beyond what we would consider to be our 'physical' body. I think the best way I can describe this is the feeling you get when you enter a room and know that someone is looking at you with an intention of some sort, instinctively you turn and look to see who it is because you want to rely on the senses most familiar to you in society, looking, touching, smelling and hearing, but if you allowed yourself to relax and 'feel' the intrusion you would possibly start to develop the innate human ability to be intuitive with your senses. The training methods are designed to develop your intuitive nature with and beyond what you would consider to be the physical senses. A practitioner of The System is encouraged to see an opponent rather than just look at them and allow the body to act and react intuitively. The body is instinctively designed for the best methods of fighting, but we generally train to fight by imposing 'techniques' upon it and relying on logic to apply these techniques at the appropriate moment. For this to become 'instinctual' takes many years of training and even then only a few are capable of achieving this level of freedom. Most martial artists train for the goal of freedom of movement and reaction but even for those who manage to gain this they are still maintained by the framework of their system in some way which possibly creates a level of 'blockage'. I hope this is not construed as condescending in any way towards any particular system or martial artist, it is certainly not intended that way, I am just making a conceptual observation.

The System seems to be designed to work out of a level of profound relaxation and total freedom of movement. By working at a level of sensitivity (by enhancing a practitioner's natural reactions) the Systema practitioner creates a state of neuro-muscular blindness in an opponent. This state is achieved when an opponent enacts some form of attack be it punching, kicking, grabbing or throwing. When an attacker attacks they are no longer in control of the attack, the movement is as instinctual as throwing a ball, once you release into the toss. I mean you could not stop yourself from throwing the ball half way through

the movement if you have committed to the action, the conscious part of the brain does not work that fast. Nor does it in a fight, when someone genuinely commits to an attack such as a punch then they only really react again once that punch is blocked or lands. The contact tells the body to do something else, if that contact never comes then the body goes into a temporary state of 'neuro-muscular' blindness. A Systema practitioner practices to develop a level of freedom with his reactions that create this sensation and produce spontaneous techniques based on moment by moment information being introduced to the nervous and psychic system. This leads to a very unusual and extremely effective defense system which capitalises on the opponent's tension, 'blockages' and anatomical structure and requires no real knowledge of the opponent's martial arts or combat background as the practitioner is only reacting out of what he or she feels. In fact the more unusual the defense the better as this also effects your opponent on a

