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Study of Composition and Prescription of Gymnastics

By *Takashi Morishita**

Unlike all other physical movement, the unique purpose of gymnastics is to promote the value of health, and therefore, due consideration should be given to gymnastic composition and prescription so that gymnastics may be applied to all people, strong and weak, healthy and unhealthy, and young and old.

From the above, gymnastics may be defined as "Gymnastics is a bodily movement, which systematically uses all sport outfits prepared purely based on all basic sciences, such as physiology, anatomy, psychology, physics, etc. with a direct objective to acquire bodily and mental health."

In order to achieve the character and objective of gymnastics as stated above, consideration should be given to kinds of gymnastics and composition thereof.

First: In order to make the general function vigorous and improve the state of health, a harmonized development of the whole body must be emphasized. A systemic movement as well as a movement of every part of a body are indispensable. Every kind of movement which can give a good result to every muscle and every organ should be taken up.

Second: All movements should be practiced as the law of physics orders for a human body is a substance. However, since a human body cannot exist as a lifeless substance, it, related with spirit and nerves, has concern with good abilities and good senses, thus a movement develops into a rhythm and then into a movement in which reciprocation and replacement take place among tension, relaxation, vibration and resistance.

Third: Movements must be composed of according to the nature of frames, muscles and joints, in other words, in what way they move. An autonomic and physiologic consideration should be exercised in composing the movements of muscles, frames

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and joints.

Fourth: Composition of a movement must be made so that flexibility and strength of muscles as well as the harmony among the nerve and muscle will be increased. Also, kinds of movements should be selected in the same manner.

Fifth: However theoretically movements may be composed, such movements cannot be called perfect unless they are composed by taking instinct to move (mentality) into consideration and in such a way as to make people forget themselves in pleasure while moving.

To enumerate conditions for gymnastic prescription:

1. There must be movements of all parts of a body.
2. From the functional viewpoint, the characteristics of each part of a body must be displayed.
3. An organic and overall function must be displayed.
4. A balanced basic physical strength must be obtained.

In composing and prescribing gymnastics, the above-mentioned conditions should be considered duly of course, however, a further consideration should be exercised concerning assignment of movements and methods by which movements are made.

If movements are just arranged in a row, with each of which having no relations with others, such movements can never demonstrate their objectives perfectly.