



Warm-Up Four: Extended Directions

Time involved: 3 to 5 minutes

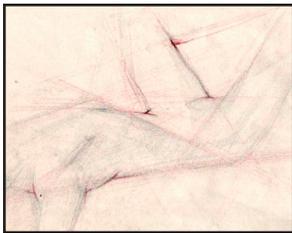
Materials: A piece of paper and a pencil or pen

The willingness to relax and flow with the directions you see, moving your pencil over and over again along the same edge is a huge step on your part toward mastery in drawing. I'm sure this has to do with *feeling* connected with what your eyes are seeing and *not thinking* about it much. It is important to hold your pencil or pen lightly and to loosen your wrists, elbows and shoulders. FEEL the direction. Place your pencil on the paper and move along the edge, completely unconcerned with controlling where it begins or ends.

FEELING is the key. I believe that forms are energy and if you move with the energy of the edge/direction that you see, your pencil actually evokes that energy on your paper. Remember, the urge to name and control the outcome of things is a left brain function. It can't draw. The right brain is interested in relationships. It also is visual and likes to feel what it sees. Your right brain can draw. So, be willing to let go of controlling the outcome.

In this lesson you are moving from drawing *things* to drawing *energy*. Your job is to evoke the form, not trap it, capture it and mount it on your paper. Think of the artist within you as calling forth a new form through the pencil and your unique point of view.

The Extended Directions Exercise



1. Sit still for one minute. Close your eyes and take in 3 slow breaths.
2. Open your eyes now and gaze softly at the world before you. Notice the edges/directions before you.
3. Select one edge/direction that feels accessible to you right now.
4. Gently place your pencil on the paper and move it the same general direction as the edge you are looking at.
5. Draw loosely and go past where the form ends and begins.
6. Don't just draw one line to place that edge/direction on your paper. Draw that same direction gently, repeatedly, at least ten times and more. Feel as if your pencil is caressing back and forth along the edge/direction many times.
7. Remember to relax your fingers, wrist, elbow and shoulder.
8. Now look at the actual edge. Notice it's nature. Is it vertical, horizontal or diagonal? Compare it to the direction you drew on your paper. Is it a match? If not shift it slightly so that it does match. Give yourself lots of room to shift and make changes.

That's it! Come back and do this exercise again and again. See pages 38-40 of my book, "Drawing as a Sacred Activity" for more about this exercise.

Final Note: One further idea that might bear fruit for you is to journal for a few minutes about how you feel extending yourself beyond your usual, familiar boundaries. Do boundaries, borders, laws, rules, etc. make you feel safe or inspire you to go beyond them?