

sources available. I need energy to acquire skill, energy to practice, energy to keep going through the inevitable setbacks, energy to keep going when things look good and I am tempted to sit back and relax. I need physical energy, intellectual energy, libidinal energy, spiritual energy. The means to tapping these energies are well known: Exercise the body, eat well, sleep well, keep track of dreams, meditate, enjoy the pleasures of life, read and experience widely. When blocked, tap into the great block-busters: humor, friends, and nature.

The specific preparations begin when I enter the *temenos*, the play space. In ancient Greek thought, the *temenos* is a magic circle, a delimited sacred space within which special rules apply and in which extraordinary events are free to occur. My studio, or whatever space I work in, is a laboratory in which I experiment with my own consciousness. To prepare the *temenos*—to clear it, rearrange it, take extraneous objects out—is to clean and clear mind and body.

Even creative blocks and their resolution may be seen as one of the preparations. We will have a great deal to say about blockages later in the book, but for now, look at blocks not as a disease or anomaly, but as part of the starting procedure, the tuning up. I am, in the beginning, an object at rest; I have to come up against some big laws to get off that immobile place. Attempts to conquer inertia are, by definition, futile. Start instead from the inertia as a focal point, develop it into a meditation, an exaggerated stillness. Let heat and momentum arise as a natural reverberation from the stillness.

When the demons of confusion and the sense of being overwhelmed strike, they can sometimes be cleared out by clearing the space. When really wrought up, try this: Clear the work table completely. Polish the surface. Get a plain, clear glass, fill it with clean water, and put it on the table. Just