

# OBLIQUE STRATEGIES

Over one hundred worthwhile dilemmas

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(Organic) machinery

A very small object – Its  
centre

Abandon desire

Abandon normal  
instructions

Abandon normal  
instruments

Adding on

All that happens is good

Always give yourself credit  
for having more than  
personality

Always the first steps

Back up a few steps. What  
else could you have done?

Be less critical more often

Bridges – build – burn

Call your mother and ask  
her what to do.

Change ambiguities to  
specifics

Change specifics to  
ambiguities

Children singing

Children speaking

Children's voices – speaking  
– singing

Consider transitions

Consult other sources:  
promising

Consult other sources:  
unpromising

Credibility of Intentions

Define an area as “safe” and  
use it as an anchor

Describe the landscape in  
which this belongs.

Destroy nothing

Destroy the most important  
thing

Disconnect from desire

Discover your formulas and  
abandon them

Display your talent

Distorting time

Do something sudden,  
destructive and  
unpredictable

Do the last thing first

Don't avoid what is easy

Faced with a choice, do both

Feedback recordings into an  
acoustic situation

First work alone, then work  
in unusual pairs.

From nothing to more than  
nothing

Give way to your worst  
impulse

Go inside. Shut the door.

Go outside. Shut the door.

Go to an extreme, move  
back to a more comfortable  
place

Go, make a demo about it

Honour thy error as a  
hidden intention

How would someone else do  
it?

How would you explain this  
to your parents?

Humanize something free of  
error

Humility of Intentions

Idiot glee

Imagine a caterpillar  
moving

Imagine the music as a  
moving chain or caterpillar

Imagine the music as a  
series of disconnected events

Instead of changing the  
thing, change the world  
around it.

Intentions – credibility of –  
nobility of – humility of

Into the impossible

Is the style right?

Is the tuning appropriate?

Is the tuning intonation  
correct?

Is there something missing?

It is simply a matter of  
work

Its centre

Krawall!

Left channel, right channel,  
centre channel

List the qualities it has.  
List those you'd like.



Listen in total darkness, or  
in a very large room, very  
quietly

Look closely at the most  
embarrassing details and  
amplify.

Lowest common  
denominator check – single  
beat – single note – single  
riff

Magnify the most difficult  
details

Make a blank valuable by  
putting it in an exquisite  
frame

Make it more sensual

Make what's perfect more  
human

Mechanize something  
idiosyncratic

Move towards the  
unimportant

Nobility of Intentions

Once the search has begun,  
something will be found

Only a part, not the whole

Pae White's non-blank  
graphic metacard

Pay attention to  
distractions

Picture of a man spotlighted

Remove a restriction

Remove the middle, extend  
the edges

Retrace your steps

Short circuit (example; a  
man eating peas with the  
idea that they will improve  
his virility shovels them  
straight into his lap)

Shut the door and listen  
from outside

Slow preparation, fast  
execution

State the problem in words  
as clearly as possible

Steal a solution.

Take a walk and study the  
architecture

Take away as much mystery  
as possible. What is left?

Take away the important  
parts

Tape your mouth

Think – inside the work –  
outside the work

Try faking it

Use “unqualified” people.

Use an unacceptable color

Use cliches

Use something nearby as a  
model

Use your own ideas

Voice your suspicions

What are the sections  
sections of?

What are you really  
thinking about just now?

What context would look  
right?

What do you do? Now,  
what do you do best?

What else is this like?

What is the simplest  
solution?

What most recently  
impressed you? How is it  
similar? What can you  
learn from it? What could  
you take from it?

What to increase? What to  
reduce? What to maintain?

What were the branch  
points in the evolution of  
this entity

What were you really  
thinking about just now?  
Incorporate

What would make this  
really successful?

When is it for? Who is it  
for?

Where is the edge?

Which parts can be  
grouped?

Who would make this really  
successful?

Would anyone want it?

Your mistake was a hidden  
intention