Meisner/Adler vocab

Week 1

**Action –**  something one character does to another character to elicit a specific desired response. First, the actor must identify ways to convey the play’s circumstances by completing an action. Second, the actor’s actions must honestly reflect what the actor has observed from life.

### ****Awareness** –** Acting training does not exist in a vacuum alongside your life, but that it *is*your life. Your work as an actor comes from your relationship to life — your contact to humanity and nature, your relationship to yourself, and your relationships with others. This keeps you present in the world and asks you not to make assumptions or judgements, but rather to observe the world around you.

**Discipline –** actors to maintain their health, stand by their commitments, and strengthen any weak points—from a quiet voice to a bad back—that could limit their performance.

**Emotional preparation –** doing whatever is necessary to enter a scene “emotionally alive.” Actors could use imagined circumstances or real personal memories. But the prepared emotion was only to be played in a scene’s very first moment.

### ****Given Circumstances** -** circumstances are dictated by the play, an actor needs to have an imagination that can match the play’s demands: “If you need a lemon tree but have never seen one, you will create some kind of lemon tree for yourself, and the more details you give it, the more you’ll accept that you’ve seen it.” The more detail you can feed your imagination with, the more you will be able to ‘de-fictionalize the fiction’.

### ****Humanity**** – An emphasis on an actors’ connection to the greater world, and the social responsibility that comes with that. An actor must be interested and engaged in culture, history, politics, and society and doing work that is meaningful.

### ****Imagination** – An** actor must place themselves in the world of the play and actually see the world around them with full detail.

**Improvisation – An** actor should not make any choices until something provokes them, thereby justifying their behavior. To react to justified and organic stimuli improvisationally, actors must be fully connected to the other actors, so they don’t miss meaningful actions or reactions.

### ****Independence** –** Actors must bring their own point of view, and their own mission to their work as an actor. An actor can only achieve success when they can think for themselves and pursue meaningful, good work.

### ****Justification** – T**he ‘why’ of everything your character does; it is the underlying *cause* of everything.

**Week 2**

**Moment-to-moment –** The acting process concentrating on the present, not what’s going to happen in the future.

### ****Personalization** –** how an actor interacts with your own past, and how you work off the past to bring to life a character in the present.

### Pinch and the Ouch – performance context, actors can be inclined to react disproportionately, or create a response instead of reacting naturally.

**Reality of Doing** – An actor must actually do an action, it will always be more effective – and simpler – for the actor, than pretending to do. Do not just demonstrate the external appearance of what that may look like, but actively strive to do so in the moment.

**Repetition –** develop actors’ skills of observation and instinct. Allows an actor to get out of their head so they can rely on their organic instincts. Authentic instincts, as provoked by another person in the live moment, capture realistic human behavior.

**Script Analysis –** The close study of a play or screenplay. This incorporates all of the dialogue and stage directions to find the answers necessary to create a full and rich character and to craft a performance that serves the script. The exploration of the script may include the questions of theme, story, character, and overall elements of the play and characters.

**Size** – Actors need strong bodies and voices so they can bring size to their actions. Actors must bring more meaning to all movements and lines.

**Spontaneity –** A free unplanned impulsive moment.

**Subtext –** The character’s complex thoughts, feelings, motives, etc. created and layered under the actual words and actions of the character by the actor.

**Text analysis** **–** key elements that dictate the character’s nature. Actors must learn history and have an ability to understand many time periods, languages, fashions, and geographic locations.