

IDEA vs UNDERSTANDING

Idea - a thought or suggestion as to a possible course of action: a concept or mental impression: an opinion, conclusion or belief: aim or purpose: objective, object, goal, target.

Understanding - comprehension: abstract thought: perception: perceive intended meaning: interpret or view. sympathetic awareness: tolerant and forgiving: grasp, awareness or impression.

Before going any further, let's take a look at these definitions once again. Go ahead, spend a few minutes with them and see if you can distinguish their difference. [What did you notice?]

When the actor works with choices, they will more often than not create **IDEAS**. An Idea or a pre-thought is where the actor holds onto their mental impression(s) during scene work. When doing this, they tend to negate what's going on or being created right in front of them. They're in their thoughts as opposed to being in the moments. Their relationship is now with their own idea(s) and not so much with their fellow performer, together, alive in the created world.

Ideas are masculine by nature. They're strong, grounded, committed and don't allow for being effected by the other actor or the environment. Look again at how strong the words are that define idea. They're solid complete, not very flexible nor tolerant of input.

An **UNDERSTANDING** on the other hand is more effeminate. It's softer, ethereal and lends itself to being influenced. It's easily effected and open to input. When the actor has an understanding of a scene, they have a *grasp* of what they've chosen, however they're not overly committed to it and therefore open to what transpires between them-self and the other actor.

The relationship is now not so much between them and their own thoughts, but more a relationship between themselves and the other actor(s)... as well as the environment.

So, when you or fellow actors are being corrected with, "*You're in your head*", you might think of translating that as, "*You're functioning out of an idea*". And, visa-versa. When this happens, the actor must let go of the relationship with the thought(s) in their head and connect more with their scene partner and the outside world they're in. The longer an actor works out of an idea, the more confident they become with the *false sense* of strength the idea gives them. Therefore making it more difficult to let go and simply *trust* the work. As the actor works with the loose-grip of an understanding, they become more confident with the true strength of their operable vulnerability. Do your work... then let go of it. Be more like water, not so much like ice.

Study your copy. Know your **WHO, WHAT, WHERE**. Work out of your best **UNDERSTANDING** of the characters intimacy level, **FAMILIAR, UNFAMILIAR** and the vast levels in-between. Then move through what happens in the *moment-to-moments* that will follow.

Operating out of an idea is a riskier way to work as you won't be in full control of everything that's going on in the scene — and you shouldn't be! You have to trust your scene partner and the natural process of synergy that results from working properly. That being the final product... the scene... not just what you're doing in it. — Get it?

So, be open (flowing) minded — not thick (ice) headed!

Synergy - two or more *agents* coming together, produce a stronger agent greater than the sum of their individual effects.