

## SESSION 3 – THE INSTRUMENT PART 2

### Voice, Wind & Nerves

#### HOMEWORK REVIEW:

- 1) How did your sensory exercise go? You should be looking at the world a bit differently now. Can you sense that you're more emotionally available...even a little bit?
- 2) Continue to work on these exercises.
- 3) In "Improvisation for the Theater," Viola Spolin states that an actor's talent level is based on the actor's capacity to experience. Is your capacity to experience that of a thimble or more of a barrel? These exercises (as well as the exercises to come) will help you to increase your capacity to experience -- making you a better actor.

"It is highly possible that what is called 'talented behavior' is simply a greater individual capacity for experiencing. From this point of view, it is in the increasing of the individual capacity for experiencing that the untold potentiality of a personality can be evoked."

~ Viola Spolin

#### THE ACTOR IS AN INSTRUMENT - A WIND INSTRUMENT



Actors are wind instruments, so it's important to be in tune with your breathing, as your breathing directly affects your voice and delivery. Take a look at the following resources to learn more about breathing technique:

**You Can Find a Link to a Complete Lesson on Breathing:** Under the Resource Documents for Download section for this Lesson.

1. **LUNGS & DIAPHRAGM** - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mf8xTqfspp4>

#### 2. EXERCISES

**A. Breathing Exercises** - Your ability to drive dialogue will grow exponentially as you increase your ability to breathe deeply and expand your lung capacity. You can do these exercises anywhere.

- Take a deep breath in through your nose, hold it for a beat, and let it out through your mouth, allowing the sound to escape.
- Take another deep breath and let it out through your mouth, changing the pitch of the noise.
- Take a third deep breath and let it out with compression, noise, and sustain it.

1) What is compression?

2) What does it do for on-camera acting and dialogue?

3) What does sustain mean?

- Hum - change your pitch, keep moving the pitch around.

**OBSERVE:** When the demonstrators breathe, how do the different amounts of air affect their ability to sustain the sound?

## B. Voice/Articulation Exercises

- Ongoing voice and articulation exercises will help you to control your breathing and enunciate better when you speak.
- I encourage you to do these exercises often. For example, in the shower, in the car, on your way to an audition. Making these facial movements and sounds will help you get past your insecurities and self-consciousness.
- A video demonstration of a good breathing exercise is available at:  
<https://youtu.be/kJXImnyogU8>

### 1) Alphabet Exercises - A, E, I, O, U (oo)

- a. When you make the vowel sounds, where does the energy come from in your mouth and body?
- b. How do each of the sounds change the shape of your mouth?

**Example:** Put consonants in front of the vowels in alphabetical order. (phonetic spelling)

**The letter B** - BAY, BEE, BY, BOW, BOO

**The letter C** - CAY, CEE, CY, COE CO

**The letter D** - DAY, DEE, DY, DOW, DOO

- c. Go through the entire alphabet like this. Until you have this memorized, the best way to practice this exercise is to grab a piece

of paper and write down the vowels on one line and the consonants on another.

- d. Difficult consonants: H, Q, W.
- e. Skip the letter “X” or consider it as you would the letter “Z.”

## 2) Additional Articulation Exercises

- a. Here’s a link to an additional articulation exercise:  
<https://youtu.be/gUrVT84x174>
  - o **Example 1** - What a to-do to die today at a minute or two till two. A thing distinctly hard to say yet harder still to do. For we beat a tattoo at twenty-to-two. Ratatatatatatoo. And the dragon will come when he hears the drum at a minute or two ‘til two today, at a minute or two ‘til two.
  - o **Example 2** - To sit in solemn silence in a cold dark dock. In a pestilential prison with a life-long lock. Awaiting the sensation of a short, sharp, shock from a cheap and chipper chopper on his big black block.

You can find a lot of articulation exercises out there if you do a Google search. My advice to you (once you’ve got the hang of it) is to do the ones that you find to be more difficult. With discipline, your speech will improve and you’ll be more effective at smoothing out any of the “speed bumps.”

### DEMO: Leaks & Compression

You will see Danielle and Chrysta doing a scene focusing on vocal exercises, exploring leaks and compression.

1. **BREATH CONTROL** - When you speak, your air is driving the line of dialogue, while your emotions affect the sound. The more you’re able to control your breath, the better you’ll become at controlling your dialogue and communicating emotional meaning. Power Breathing and other exercises enhance focus on the movement and control of the breath.

As you watch the demo take notes below:

**A. Normal Version -**

**B. Yelling Version -**

**C. Power-Whisper Version -**

### D. Emotional Leaks -

- It's important not to leak air when you're expressing emotions and speaking because it weakens and detracts from the performance, making it less impactful. Leaks cause you to "lose power." Compress to keep your power. Take the energy and drive the line with the air, instead of letting the air go around the dialogue.
  - Observe the leaks. How does it affect the dialogue and the scene?

### E. Compressed Version -

- There's power in compressing your breath/emotion. You can drive a line of dialogue because there aren't any leaks. You can power through and crunch a line all the way to the end and not take a breath.
  - How is the performance in this version different than the leaky version?

## NERVES

There's a common misconception that when you become a more experienced actor, your nerves will go away. This isn't necessarily true! You may get a better handle on the nerves, but they may never completely leave you.

- 1) What are nerves, really, and what can they do for you?
  - 2) How can you think about and/or process nerves to turn them from a negative to a positive asset?
  - 3) What is one thing you can do in an audition to harness or redirect your nerves?
  - 4) If a casting director asks you how you're feeling and you feel nervous what should you say?
- Controlling Nerves: When your nerves show up, don't suppress them as they'll only get worse. Channel them instead.
  - Ground your energy by curling your toes and driving them down inside your shoes.
  - Breathe through the dialogue - nice, big, calm breaths. Don't hold your breath! Put yourself in a comfortable place to manage your energy.

- If you find yourself in a live situation (i.e. casting office, showcase) and a piece of furniture is available, you can ground yourself by leaning on the desk, gripping a chair, sitting on a stool.
- You can also squeeze or grip the copy.
- If you have a propensity towards nervousness, I don't encourage you to wear dangly things (such as big dangly earrings). Doing so will make your nerves more visible.

"Act with the intention of being remarkable."  
~ Timothy Ferris

**BONUS:** If you want to learn more about Neves, Fear and Anxiety watch the replay of this 3 hour intensive Coach Banks streamed live on Facebook: <https://bit.ly/2xrKrZ8>

### **HOMEWORK: Breathing**

#### **1. Sit alone quietly and connect with your breathing for 3 minutes, 5 minutes, then 10 minutes.**

- Gradually work up to 10 minutes of focused breathing, starting from 3 minutes. During that time, don't use your cell phone or interact with anyone or anything. Keep focused!
- Go into a meditative state. Be present and become aware of your breathing. Visualize the air moving in and out of your body. Become aware of your pulse (heartbeats). Put your fingers on your wrist to feel your pulse and take your pulse if you'd like. For 15 seconds, count how many times you feel your heartbeat. After 15 seconds, take the number you counted then multiply it by 4. That's how many heartbeats you have per minute.
- Make yourself aware of your body from your toes to your head. Become aware of your thinking. What are you focusing on -- one thing, many things? Be aware of it all, but don't judge yourself. Observe how you're feeling. All of this will become the baseline for your emotional work in acting.

#### **2. Work with your breathing, then work with adding sound.**

- Do the Alphabet Exercises. Write the vowels out on one line, and the consonants on another. Then work through all the consonant and vowel combinations.
- Practice the Voice Exercises (ex. "What a to-do"). Do your voice work every day. Don't let the Survivalist take over your creative time. Begin carving that time out for your Creative Artist.

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## COMPLETION OF 1ST MODULE!

This marks the end of the 1st module (Sessions 1-3). Go over your notes and prepare for the Session 3 Quiz. You'll find Quiz 3 by clicking the Blue Session 3 Test button under this Lesson on the main menu bar to the left.

You must complete and pass the Session 3 Quiz before proceeding with Lesson 4.

## TIME TO SCHEDULE YOUR 1ST PRIVATE!

The next Lesson (Lesson 4) is not a video lesson. It is actually your 1<sup>st</sup> PRIVATE COACHING SESSION. You are NOT permitted to set up your first private coaching session until after you pass the Session 3 Quiz. We recommend you complete this private coaching session before you move on to the next "video" Session 4 (aka Lesson 5)

To set up your private coaching session you must first make sure you have a Skype account. If you do not you can download the app and sign up for one here: [www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com) Once you have skype all set up you must fill out the Private Coaching Request form in the next lesson's display page.

Once you fill out the form you will be contacted within 24 hours. If you do not hear from us within that time please email **ACTCOACHING@CLAYBANKSSTUDIO.COM** with the subject line "Request to Schedule Act Private Coaching Session #1" In the body of the email please include your Time Zone and 3 time slots that work for you. Take note, our coaches are located in Los Angeles, (Pacific Standard Time) and our normal business hours of coaching are between 10:00 AM and 6:30 Pm.

In this private coaching session, we'll be checking in with you on how you're doing on your Building Block work, Voice & Breathing exercises, as well as your Survivalist Pie Chart.

In this private coaching session, you will also be led by your CBSI coach through a variety of voice, breathing, and articulation exercises.

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