

Replicating Moments of Reality

Acting is an art. Great Acting is the art of replicating reality.

The performance shift from *Theater* to *Multi-Cam/Commercials* to *Feature Films/1hr Dramas* requires the same intensity of feelings (the stakes are not diminished) but more subtle.

DO NOT 'INDICATE'

When the Greeks invented theater, they used giant masks to display character feelings to the entire amphitheater. Then silent films needed to indicate how characters felt without much dialogue. Every generation of actors inherits the burden of audiences who don't want to see "pretending". Reality TV and YouTube stars are the pinnacle of non-acting. The modern actor must be both compelling and real.

LISTEN FOR REAL

Being too fast to respond is a common indication that you're not really listening (looking) and internalizing the information. To make the scene feel as if it is "the first time", practice observing yourself and others when important new information is received, then use what you learn about pace and processing time in your on-camera work.

When listening, try to dissect something new about the other characters line or body language. Have you ever been listening to one of your favorite songs and suddenly discover a lyric (or it's meaning) for the first time? Just because you've rehearsed the scene, doesn't mean real discoveries aren't still available if you really pay attention.

STILLNESS

Wasted movement waters down the choices. Be brave enough to turn let your internal monologue rage on while your outward facade presents "Stillness with Leaks".

Limited movement (especially in close-ups) will show your technical control to Directors on set. The camera exaggerates every head turn. Less is more.

Going from MOVEMENT -> STILLNESS can be powerful for discovery moments.

EFFORTLESS SUBTEXT

Use Japheth's "LISTEN > COOK > SERVE" Technique to take the fake out of subtext choices. Be patient. Casting Directors, Directors, and Editors will not mind if you sacrifice pace to get to the truth. Do not speak until your character is ready.

DO NOT BE POLITE

Great writers create scenes about situations and circumstances that are intimate, hostile, repulsive, vulnerable, socially inappropriate, and extremely high-stakes. When in performance mode, there is no room to feel demur about offending others or looking foolish. We all live by social rules: too much eye contact is weird, we don't cry in the open, falling in love happens in private. Be brave enough to break those rules!