

FUZZY IMPROV

Lessons 101-xx

THE GAMES

101-01 Confidence and Acceptance

101-02 Attention and Memory

101-03 Playing in Space

101-04 Playing from Emotion / Character

101-05 Gifts Active Endowments for
Emotional Reactions

101-06 Fun with Games

Games: 101-01 Confidence and Acceptance

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1.0 Warm-up exercises:

[HD] **Stretch:** Get Centered, focus on Improv! Instructor (I) and 3 teammates (TMs) lead a short stretch.

[G pg8] **Crazy Eights:** To get the blood flowing.

[HD] **Zip, Zap, Zop:** ATTENTION, see and hear, work together.

- Stand in a circle.
- A TM claps, points at a TM2 and says "Zip."
- TM2 claps, points at a TM3, and says "Zap."
- TM3 does the same, saying "Zop."
- The pattern continues. The goal is to keep a steady rhythm and focus.

Yes, And: Build the essential Improv! skill of ACCEPTING and building on ideas.

- Stand in a circle.
- A TM starts by making a simple statement (e.g., "I went to the store today").
- The next person responds with "Yes, and..." adding more details to the story.
- Continue around circle.

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[G 8] **ACTION PASS, the game –**

- In a circle, a TM turns to his left and executes an action, any action – without sound.
- The next TM sees that action – head to toe.
- Turning to the TM to their left they try to recreate it EXACTLY.
- Continue around circle.

Progression:

Do it once through. Discuss what the group experienced and saw.

- What changed? What was dropped? Call out the little things.
- What made them laugh? – straight repetition, embracing something “accidental.”

Do it again focused on slowing down. Notice all the nuances of a TM’s action and work to repeat the action *exactly*.

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PASS “YES” AROUND, the game–

- A TM points at and makes eye contact with another TM who *accepts* by saying “Yes.”
- The accepted TM walks across the circle to stand in the place of the TM who said “Yes.”
- The TM who said “Yes” points at and makes eye contact with another TM who says “Yes” so they can exchange physical position.
- Repeat till all have played.

101-01 p 6

Good, Bad, Indifferent AWESOME!, the game –

- Around the circle,
- TMs share something they’ve done that day (ex: “I ate pancakes,” or “I got a parking ticket”) .
- To which the rest of class enthusiastically (regardless of implication) responds, “Awesome!”

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CAFÉ SCENES, the game –

- 2 TMs sit in chairs facing each other.
- They have a conversation as THEIR ACTUAL SELVES – not characters.
- Do not ignore the people watching you!

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SELF CONTAINED EMOTIONAL STATEMENTS, the game –

- TMs give Self Contained Emotional Statements around a circle.

Core Emotions			
Happiness	Joy	Sadness	Anger
Fear	Surprise	Disgust	

Expanded	Emotional	Palette		
Excitement	Nervousness	Confusion	Curiosity	Embarrassed
Pride	Shame	Guilt	Hope	Despair
Love	Affection	Jealousy	Envy	Relief
Determined	Resentment	Awe	Wonder	Frustration
Contented	Regret	Suspicion	Playful	Sarcasm
Vulnerable	Confident	Lonely	Empathy	Indifferent

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EMOTIONAL CACOPHONY, the game – All TMs take part simultaneously (but can choose different emotions), so don't worry about what you look like.

- “On the count of 3, I want you all to feel a feeling.”
- “Happy. Sad. Angry. Excited: 1,2,3 Feel.”
- “Feel more.”
- “Express your feeling *physically* not just louder.”
- “New emotion. 1,2,3 Feel.”
- “Bigger, but quieter.”
- New emotion. 1,2,3 Feel.

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SELF CONTAINED EMOTIONAL STATEMENT CASCADE, the game –

- TMs stand in a circle.
- TM1 says a SCES (I love the beach).
- TM2 agrees with that SCES and **adds to it** with their own SCES (I love relaxing on the sand).
- TM3 does the same and so on.
- TM1 is the last to build a new SCES on top of the original (Pink sand? I love it).
- And then TM2 starts the next cascade with a brand new SCES.

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TWO LINE LAY-UPS, the game–

- Create two lines on either wing.
- One side is the initiation side, tasked with entering the stage with a SCES.
- The other side is the Join side, tasked with **agreeing with TM's perspective and providing more details to feel about.**

Example: TM1, *"I hate this painting."* TM2, *"Yeah, it looks like a 5-year-old painted it."*

101-01 p14

TWO TM LAY-UPS with ONE LINE EACH, the game – Here TM2 is tasked with entering stage and contributing **their own SCES** which can **agree with the initiation, relate to it or not relate to it.**

☠ But it **CAN'T contradict** to the reality of the initiation.

Good Examples:

- *"I hate this painting."* *"Yeah, it looks like a 5-year-old painted it."*
- *"I hate this painting."* *"I like the way it makes me feel."*
- *"I hate this painting."* *"Damn dog won't stop barking."*

Bad Examples:

- *"I hate this painting."* *"It's a sculpture."*
- *"I hate this painting."* *"You're wrong; it's impressive."*

101-01 15

TWO TM LAY-UPS WITH MORE LINES EACH, the game–

- Create two lines, one on either wing.
- One side is the initiation side, tasked with entering stage with a SCES.
- The other side is the Join side, tasked with entering stage and contributing their own SCES.
- The Joining player's SCES can agree with the initiation, relate to it or not relate to it.
- 🌀 All it CAN'T be is in contradiction to the reality of the initiation.
- **The players continue their scene by heightening the emotion and details of their first feeling.**

Example: "I hate this painting." "I like the way it makes me feel." "It's just three stupid black lines and one dumb red circle." "I see a happy clown face."

Games: Lesson 101-02 **Attention & Memory**

2.0 Warm-Up exercises:

Revisit names, build energy and concentrate energy.

[HD]

Stretch: Get Centered, focus on Improv!

Instructor (I) and 3 teammates (TMs) each lead a short stretch.

[G 15]

Crazy Eights: To get the blood flowing.

21 –

- The TMs huddle in a tight circle
- TMs contribute one number at a time.
- Taking turns in random order, TMs count to 21.
- If any TMs speak at once, the group must start over.

Lessons:

- **Breathe;** Don't rush to speak; Share focus.
- **Don't rush to 21.** Make each step based on the trajectory laid down ahead of you. Just build each move on top of the one before it.
-  **Don't emphasize failure;** there are no "mistakes" on stage, only what happens.
 - The audience only knows you've "messed up" if you tell them you have.

2.1 Concentration: A lot can get lost on a crowded improv stage. Ensure you HEAR and ARE HEARD – listen and project.

RED BALL, RED BULL, BREAD BOWL, the game– [G15]

- TMs form a circle.
- A TM starts by saying, "TM's name, Red Ball" then mimes throwing to that TM.
- TM2 catches it, says "Red Ball, Thank you" then throws it, saying "TM's name, Red Ball."
- Add more pretend balls/objects and try and keep them all going.

Variations: "Green Ball, Purple Ball, Bouncy Ball."

"Thread Ball, Party Hat, Smart Cat."

Games 2.1 Concentration (continued):

[G 16]

CIRCLE OF SEQUENCES, the game –

Sequence 1

- A TM points to another and says any word.
- That TM points to another TM and says another word inspired by the first.
- Continue until every TM says a word and points to another TM.
- The final TM contributes and points back to the first TM.
- Repeat Sequence One until the group is comfortable with it.

Sequence 2 & 3

Establish Sequence 2 & 3 the same way.

When TMs are comfortable with each Sequence, keep all three going simultaneously. Start with Sequence 1 and then tap the TM starting Sequence 2 on the shoulder, then tap the TM starting Sequence 3 on the shoulder.

2.2 Listening to Build: Build collaboratively, hear so you can accept. Show you accept your fellow TMs' contributions by heightening them with our own. [G 17]

YES, AND IT IS ____, the game –

- TMs are in a circle.
- The first TM investigates the empty space inside the circle and says, "I see a ____."
- The next TM around the circle says, "Yes, and it is ____."
- Play continues with each TM building in turn on top of *all that came before*.
- The first TM is the last to contribute a "Yes, and it is ____" (their first description).
- then that second TM begins a new "I see a ____."

2.2 Listening to Build (continued):

PHRASE PASS, the game –

- In a circle, a TM turns to his left and says a Self-Contained Emotional Statement (SCES), any SCES.
- The next TM sees and hears the SCES – head to toe.
- Turning to the TM to their left they try to recreate it EXACTLY.

Progression:

- Focus on exactly what was given to you.
- Pick just *one thing* (one word, emotion, inflection, character) and heighten it by 2 notches.

2.3 Memory: listen and *retain* so YOU can return to and heighten established information. Memory is muscle exercise. [G18]

STORY STEALING, the game –

- ~ 6 TMs form a backline.
- One at a time, TMs enter centerstage and tell a true, personal, 30 second story.
- It can be as simple as “Something that happened today that you cared about.”
- Once all TMs have told a story, each TM enters the stage and recreates another TM’s story.
- Every story should be revisited once by another TM.

2.4 More than Words: Share focus with the group. Be aware of your physical position in relationships with one another. This is a critical part of hearing and being heard. [G 19]

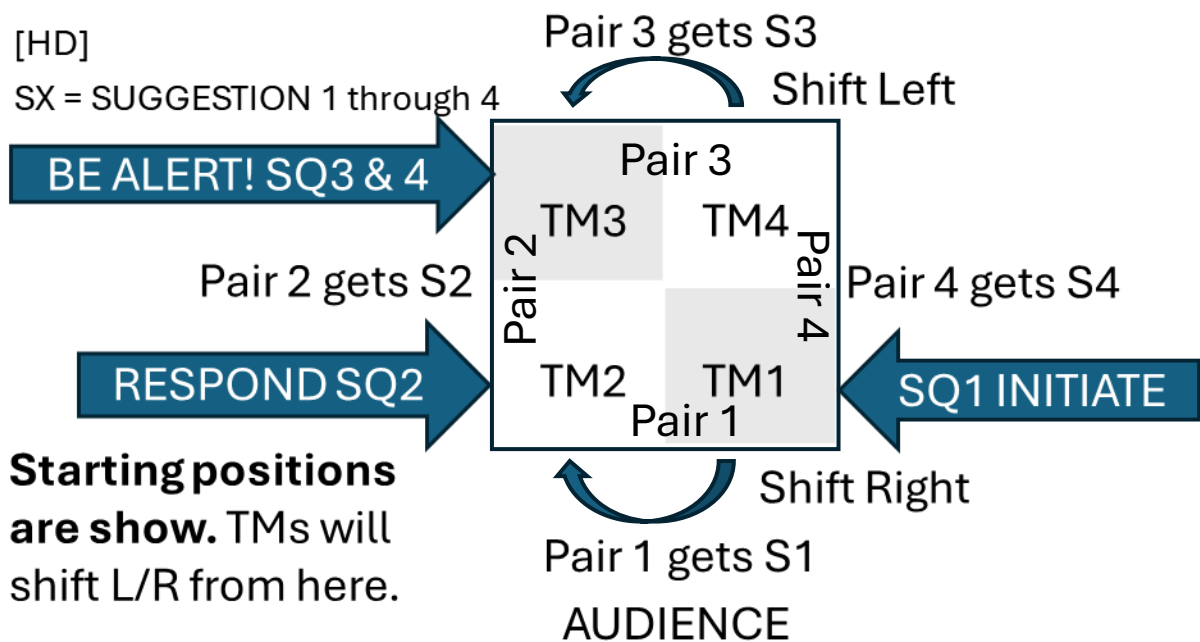
ONE PERSON WALKING, the game –

- TMs spread out through the room.
- One TM starts walking around the room. All other TMs stay frozen in space.
- Without talking – with one TM walking at any given time – TMs take and give the power to walk. One TM starts, the other stops: one TM stops, the other starts.
- See each other to know when to trade the power to walk.
- Now *two TMs* walk at a time. Now three. Build to where half the class should always be walking and then work back down to one person walking.

2.5 Rhythm and Pacing: You can use pacing to evoke audience reactions if you can find the rhythms. Short Form game mechanics have an inherent rhythm you can use to ramp up, slow down or otherwise oscillate pacing.
[G 19]

FOUR CORNERS, the game -

- Four TMs stand in a square, two facing the audience with the remaining two behind them.
- Each pair gets a suggestion to inspire that pair's scenes (Suggestions: Relationship, Period in Time, Object, Occupation, Location.)
- When I shout, "Shift Right/Left" TMs rotate and switch to the scene of the pair front stage.
- The TM now in SQ1 initiates with a stand-alone scene with a SCES and her partner in SQ2 joins with an emotional reaction of their own that can be anything except contradictory .



[G 19] A Pair's suggestion stays with them throughout the game.

The "Shift Right/Left" directions help pace the collection of scenes

- I will allow each pair more time for dialogue at the outset and then make switches more quickly.
- As the game proceeds I will change the direction and order of switching. Be ready to oscillate energies according to scene.

2.5 Rhythm and Pacing (continued):

SPACE JUMP –A sequence of changing scenes based on TMs physical position. [G 20]

SPACE JUMP, the game -

- TM1 initiates a physical scene based on the audience's suggestion of a "chore" like doing laundry, raking leaves, etc.
- TM2 enters, signifying a new scene and takes TM1's physical position but transports all to a new place (Ex: *TM1 was bending down to pick up a dollar, TM2 makes them both field hands with hoes*).
- TM3 enters and sets up a *new* scene based off the poses of TMs 1 & 2.
- Repeat with a TM4 & TM5.
- TM5 leave stage. The remaining TMs return to the fourth scene.
- TM4 leaves, returning the scene to the third environment.
- Repeat until the first TM is back in the first environment.

Lesson 101-03 **Playing in Space**

3.1 Object Work G22 : Weight, Volume and Tension are the key characteristics of an imagined object. Express these characteristics to help TMs and the audience “see” the object

Game: MAGIC CLAY: practice Object Work –

- TMs circle
- TM1 builds a mimed object “out of clay” and then hands the object to TM2.
- TM2 interacts with that object and then molds the “clay” into a brand-new object. TM2 passes her object to TM3 and so on. All TMs get to play.

Progression:

- Care about the thing you give – Show how you feel (without words) about the thing you crafted out of clay.
- Care about the thing you receive – Show how you feel about what you’re given.
- Think about oscillation of reactions – An extreme example: I receive your clay tiara joyfully, mash it into a wad and then angrily force it on the next improviser like its garbage.

Lesson 101-03 **Playing in Space**

Game: BUILD A ROOM – G22

Lesson: remember **Weight, Volume and Tension**

BUILD A ROOM, the game –

- Enter and exit the stage by 2 doors on opposite sides of the stage.
- TMs are the audience
- TM1 enters the stage through a door Consider these factors: Does the door push in or pull out? What is the doorknob height, the door's weight?
- TM1 creates one mimed object somewhere in the space and then leaves through the door.
- TM2 enters, interacts with TM1's object, creates their own new object, and then leaves.
- TM3 enters, interacts with the TM1 & TM2's objects, creates their own new object, and then leaves. Etcetera.

Game: DO SOMETHING TOGETHER APART, the game –

- 3 TMs up at a time.
- Each thinks of a manual task to engage in.
- I say, "Go," the TMs each silently engage the action they thought up: Paint a fence, fix your spaceship, save your favorite zoo animal, build an instrument from scratch, etc.
- As the activities are mimed, there is little to no interaction between the TMs – act like you are in your own world, like a split screen.

Lessons:

- **Leveraging your personal life will make being specific easy.**
- **What you do / objects you have inform your character –**
- **"Sense Memory"**

Lesson 101-03 **Playing in Space**

INVISIBLE TUG-OF-WAR the game –

- All TMs play tug-of-war with an imagined rope.
- The rope must act real; it can't stretch or be elastic. Mime the **Weight, Volume and Tension** of the rope.
- The point is to have a scene where we look like we are having an actual tug-of-war.
- BUT we aren't on opposing teams; we're all on the same "doesn't this look like a real tug-of-war?" team.

Lessons:

- **Give and take** – Follow the TM in front of you. In Tug-Of- War, the sequence of following looks great – it's really a two TM scene with the two TMs facing each other in the lead for making decisions (though they also must follow each other).
- **Funnier when you lose** – Giving way is funnier than forcing someone to your will.

Lesson 101-03 **Playing in Space**

The WHAT ARE YOU DOING? loop, the game – G24

- TMs form a back line. 2 TMs enter stage. I get an audience suggestion of an action/activity (“Milking a cow.”)
- TM1 mimes that action.
- Going against the general Improv rule of not asking questions, TM2 asks, “What are you doing?”
- TM1 say something that is **not** what they are doing and **not** what the action could also be construed as doing (“Flying two kites.”) Anything different works: “I’m rinsing rutabagas”; “I’m wrestling sea monkeys.”
- TM2 mimes that action. TM1 asks, “What are you doing?”
- The **TMs repeat this loop** until I call scene. Then that pair steps out and another TM pair steps in.
- As rounds progress, the rhythm should get faster and the judging of TMs’ contributions should get more critical.

Lessons:

- **Activities gain weight from your dialogue –**
- **Stage pictures make scenes more interesting –.**
- **Engage environment, rest your tongue –**

Lesson 101-03 **Playing in Space**

OBJECT WORK / DIALOGUE SEQUENCE – G25

The game –

- Two TMs on stage are given a suggestion of location.
- TMs - *without interaction or telling a story*- each define multiple objects in space.
- TMs go back to their starting positions and go through their sequence of mimed interactions adding *dialogue and reaction to one another*, **but without talking about what you are doing.**

Lessons:

- **Activities gain weight from your dialogue –**
- **Stage pictures make scenes more interesting –.**
- **Engage environment, rest your tongue –**

Lesson 101-03 **Playing in Space**

3.3 Beyond Objects: G25

SOUNDSCAPE and more, the game –

- TMs in a circle.
- Define a location by the sounds you hear.
- Take turns around the circle building out the noises of the location.
- Explore all the different types of sound: words, mechanics, organics, ambiance, etc.

Lessons:

Environment is about more than objects.

- What sounds fill the space?
 - Ambient noises?
 - Loud music?
 - series of unexpected explosions?
- What about the atmosphere?
 - Is it hot?
 - Raining?
 - Low gravity?

Lesson 101-03 **Playing in Space**

3.4 More Rhythm and Pacing: G26

BIOSPHERE, the game – G26

- TM1 enters stage, miming their reaction to the Zones atmosphere (temp, precipitation, pressure, etc.) – ex: shivering and saying, “It’s so cold in the arctic zone.”
- TM2 enters and changes which Zone of the Biosphere they are in – ex: trying to cover her head while saying, “Stupid rainforest area.” TM1 must immediately accept TM2 new reality.
- TM3 enters and establishes a new Zone whose atmosphere all three TMs accept and react to.
- Repeat with TM4 & 5. Then have TM5 leave stage to return the remaining TMs to the fourth atmosphere/environment. Then the TM4 leaves, returning the scene to the third atmosphere. Repeat until the initial TM is back in the initial atmosphere/environment.

Lessons:

- **Atmosphere is the least utilized active element in improv** – engage it.
- **Explore the options** –
- **Feel it, just don’t speak to it** –
- **Silence is fun** –
- **“Yes, And,” is improv’s superpower**
- **More TMs people on stage requires more agreement**
- **Agree to each other’s perspectives and mirror each other’s physicality.** This adds focus to the scene.
- **MORE PHYSICAL THE BETTER**

101-04 **Playing from Emotion / Character**

Objective for this session: Focus on getting to and relaxing in emotional reactions. This is what scenes are about.

Word Association: Encouraging quick thinking and LISTENING.

Stand in a circle.

TM1 says a word,

TM2 quickly says the first word that comes to mind in response. The exercise continues around the circle

101-04 **Playing from Emotion / Character**

4.0 Emotion should be the core of our improvisation.

CACOPHONOUS CIRCLE OF EMOTION, the game –

- I will give you an emotion.
- Here's a list of emotions commonly experienced:
 - **Happiness:** Joy, excitement, contentment, love, amusement, gratitude.
 - **Sadness:** Grief, disappointment, loneliness, melancholy.
 - **Anger:** Frustration, resentment, irritation, rage.
 - **Fear:** Anxiety, nervousness, worry, panic, terror.
 - **Surprise:** Awe, shock, amazement, bewilderment.
 - **Disgust:** Contempt, revulsion, annoyance.
 - **Neutral/Calm States:** Serenity, relief, peace, mindfulness.
- The TMs all physically and verbally express emotion. You don't need words – just make an emotional sound.
- When I say a different emotion, you change your emotion.

Lessons:

- **Emotions affect your relative distance –**
- **Heightening doesn't mean volume –.**
- **Emote like no one's watching or judging.**
- **Sometimes people struggle with emotions, and that's okay – But improvisers must emote.** You don't need motivation.

101-04 **Playing from Emotion / Character**

4.1 Emotional Heights/Depths: Go for the low and the high of each emotion.

G29

EMOTIONAL CASCADE, the game –

- TMs in a circle.
- **TM1 starts with an emotional reaction, any emotional reaction.** It doesn't need to be verbal. It can have words, but they should be minor.
- **TM2 repeats that emotion – at LEAST hitting same level if not heightening it.** Then play continues around the circle, with each TM heightening the emotional reaction.
- When it gets back to TM1, they also must heighten their emotion.
- **Then TM2 can start a brand-new emotion, and the cascade goes again.**

Lessons:

- **Push past comfortable** – Being vulnerable enough to share big emotions can be hard, but you must trust each other and this class is a safe place to “go big.” Support each other with applause.
- **Being bored or unaffected is hard to heighten** – Care.
- **Exude the emotion physically** - sadness can be sitting with head in hands and weeping.

101-04 **Playing from Emotion / Character**

4.2 Emotional Context: Committed emotion is all the “what” and “why” a scene needs. Emotion can add/change the meaning of our words and heighten the depth of our scenes. G29

EMOTIONAL NURSERY RHYME, the game:

A source of [Mother Goose rhymes](#) Also, see below. HD

- Around a circle, a TM **recites a common nursery rhyme with an emotional filter.**
- The next TM does the same nursery rhyme, **further heightening the same emotion or trying on a new emotion.**
- Repeat with different nursery rhymes.

Lessons:

- The **details gain weight with our emotional perspectives.**
- **Acting is emoting** – understanding a motivation can be hard and grueling. Committing to **an emotion without regard to “sense” is easy and fun.**

Little Jack Horner sat in the corner,
Eating a Christmas pie;
He put in his thumb, and pulled out a plum,
And said, oh! what a good boy am I.

There was an old woman
Lived under a hill;
And if she's not gone,
She lives there still.

101-04 **Playing from Emotion / Character**

Diddlty, diddlty, dumpty,
The cat ran up the plum tree,
Give her a plum, and down she'll come,
Diddlty, diddlty, dumpty.

To market, to market, to buy a plum cake,
Home again, home again, market is late;
To market, to market, to buy a plum bun,
Home again, home again, market is done.

Jack Sprat could eat no fat,
His wife could eat no lean;
And so between them both,
They licked the platter clean.

Jack and Jill
Went up the hill,
To fetch a pail of water;
Jack fell down
And broke his crown,
And Jill came tumbling after.

Little Bo-Peep has lost her sheep,
And can't tell where to find them;
Leave them alone, and they'll come home,
And bring their tails behind them.

Little Tommy Tittlemouse,
Lived in a little house;
He caught fishes
In other men's ditches.

Goosey, goosey, gander,
Where shall I wander?
Up stairs, down stairs,
And in my lady's chamber:
There I met an old man,
Who would not say his prayers;
Take him by the left leg,
Throw him down the stairs.

101-04 **Playing from Emotion / Character**

4.3 Emotional Matching: If you agree, you can just be; you don't have to explain or defend. Have fun just being emotional together, trusting that your commitment to the same emotion is all the context for your relationship that's needed. G30

CARPOOL, the game: Driver is picking up friends, not strangers. Use Improv's accepted props of 4 chairs as the car. Remember, the car has doors, windows, controls etc.

- TM1 starts driving a car, **expressing a self-contained emotional perspective** ("I love the South").
- TM2 enters the scene, entering **with their own emotional perspective** ("The South scares me").
- **TM1 immediately embraces TM2's perspective**, and you come into agreement, heightening the perspective you now share with additional details supporting that perspective ("Oh, my god, look at all the shrimp and grits!").
- **TM3 enters the car with a new emotional perspective** ("I think Mississippi's beautiful"). **TM1 & TM2 immediately accept and embrace this new perspective.**
- **If you have more than 4 TMs, when the TM5 enters the car TM1 is bumped out and TM 4 takes the wheel. Everyone shifts seats. Repeat till all TMs have played.**
- **Note: Assume you know each other.** Do not spend time getting to know one another. You KNOW each other's patterns of emotional reactions, so you can quickly elevate a scene by boldly sharing your feelings.

Lessons:

- **BEING AFFECTED IS AWESOME – Allow yourself to change with another's perspective.**
 - **If you agree, you can just be, you don't have to explain or defend.**
 - **Trust that your commitment to the same emotion is all the context for your relationship that's needed**

101-04 **Playing from Emotion / Character**

CARPOOL, the game Variations:

- **BUS STOP:** TMs mimic and heighten each other as they add themselves to a Bus Stop environment. TMs can leave by bus.
- **ANY LOCATION:** When each student enters that location, all the students already in that location adopt the emotional perspective of the joiner.
- **CAR JACKER:** For big groups, split in two. Have the groups replace each other in mass. Quick, collective agreement is key.

4.4 EMOTIONAL PERSPECTIVES MADE EASY: Great improvisers can immediately decide upon an emotional perspective and become characters that react with heightening emotion in-the-moment.

CHARACTER WALK, the game:

- TMs **walk around the space as themselves.**
- **I give prompts** which TMs make choices from: (see Progression below).
- **Once you have embraced the prompt,** I will ask, **“How does what you’re doing make you feel?”**
- You can make **emotional noises** (ex: [sigh], [growl], etc.) and/or make **SCES** to express how you feel about what they’re doing.
- Then **reset** and return to walking around the space as yourselves again.
- Repeat.

Lessons:

- 🧒 **Don’t let starting a scene be intimidating** – ★ all you need to start is **one choice**; you can find your emotional perspective for the scene by building on and diving into the decisions you have already made.

101-04 **Playing from Emotion / Character**

Character Walk Prompt Progression: G31

- **Change your rate** – speed up, slow down
- Walk with a **different body part** pushing forward.
- Walk like **someone you know**.
- **Make a sound**.
- imagine **active elements on stage**. **What** feelings do these cause?
- Decide what **the atmosphere** is around you (e.g., raining, cold, hot). How do you feel about it?
- **Grab an imagined object** from the air, decide what it is. How do you feel about it?
- **Engage in a repeatable action** (e.g., “chopping wood”). How do they feel about it?
- Take on **an emotional perspective** and let it affect you physically. Find a positive emotional feedback loop that heightens the emotion and effect.
- Now **speak in your character’s voice about your emotional state**.

101-04 **Playing from Emotion / Character**

4.5 No Pressure Initiations:

ANNOYANCE-STYLE SCENE STARTS, the game:

TMs form a line across the back of the stage.

- I call out TM1. TM1 immediately take the stage and “takes care of themselves” with a choice:
 - grab an object,
 - engage an action,
 - make a sound,
 - assume a posture,
 - “see” something and react to it, etc.
- I call out TM2 who also enters on stage .
 - TM2 “takes care of themselves” with a choice. TM2 can **choose AGREEMENT – it’s both the easiest and most satisfying choice – or not.**
 - In additional rounds, TMs take lines back and forth based on their prior choices, adding details and heightened reaction.
 - We will run through this several times, building confidence that all TMs will take care of themselves right out of the gate and, eventually if not at once, get to emotion.

Lessons:

- Agreement is awesome – 🤝 Don’t negotiate an imagined reality.
- You don’t need motivation to have a feeling.
- A scene needs information. But expand on what you’ve already got. Commit to it.
- The sooner you can get to emotional perspective the better, but don’t feel any pressure to start there. All you need to start is anything.

101-04 **Playing from Emotion / Character**

4.6 Trusting Emotion Over “Sense”: **4 SQUARE EMOTIONS:** take on the emotion assigned to each square.

4 SQUARE EMOTIONS, the game:

- Divide the playing space into **4 quadrants**. **Each quadrant is given an emotion** – they should all be very different.
- TMs 1 & 2 take the stage.
- **A Location** is suggested to you. TMs start a scene.
- Each TM starts in different quadrant. Each feels according to their quadrant’s emotion.
- At your discretion, move **between quadrants, changing your emotion as you move through different areas**.

EMOTIONS Best Practice:

- Establish yourself in each quadrant, **focusing more on objects/location than on your partner**.
- As the scene progresses, **transition between quadrants faster**.
- **Push emotions as the scene progresses**, make bold emotional reactions the moment you move into a new quadrant.

Lessons:

- **Just feel** – You don’t even need words, just make and repeat an emotional sound.
- **Imagined objects can trigger our emotions** – Use location. Imagine an object in each quadrant that brings on that quadrant’s emotion.
- **Focus on reactions over conversations** – conversation will cloud each quadrant’s emotion. Commit to just reacting, the scene will flow smoother.
- **Emotion can propel you** – Use the stage space! Leap into the same quadrant as your TM as you feel “love.” Put distance between your TM as you explore “fear.”

101-04 **Playing from Emotion / Character**

4.6 Trusting Emotion Over “Sense” continued: G33

GIBBERISH TALK SHOW - TMs express emotion in an unknown language.
(PATRICK GASKILL’S “GIBBERISH” – Inspired by training at The Annoyance Theater in Chicago.)

GIBBERISH TALK SHOW, the game:

- **I will start speaking only in gibberish.**
- I set up 3 chairs and **mime** that students should form an audience, and three TMs should join me on stage.
- **I Interview each TM** in gibberish. Do not be emotionally flat. **Draw an emotional reaction from within.**
- I take **questions from the audience** as we **play out a talk show**. Play up emotions and reactions from the audience.

Lesson:

Language is not needed to initiate a scene.

GIBBERISH SCENE STARTS, the game:

- Through mime, I explain that TMs should line up on both wings and do layup scenes.
- You are encouraged to remember object work, emotions, moving in space, etc.
- I will call scene with "SHHUH!" A TM from the left and right wing enter and initiate a scene, and so on till all TMs get to play.

Lesson:

Language is not needed to initiate a scene.

Lesson 101-05 **GIFTS**

Active Endowments for Emotional Reactions

BOOM, DROP SOME KNOWLEDGE: purpose is for the group to find the rhythm of the exercise.

- I'll start with the mantra,
- **“Boom, drop some knowledge. [Call on a TM], drop some knowledge.”**
- When called on, TM shares something they know personally to be true. Then they repeat the mantra calling on another TM, etc.
- Continue until all TMs are called on.
- Repeat.
- Speed Up!

As an improviser, your script is your own, so it's fun to share yourself with the audience through your knowledge.

5.1 Imagined Endowments: Focus on giving and receiving gifts and endowments with which to build your scene.

MIRROR, ACTION, OBJECT, the game –

Three TMs take the stage and space them selves apart.

- **Position 1 - MIRROR:** TM1 is tasked with looking into a mirror and feeling about what they see.
- **Position 2 - ACTION:** TM2 is tasked with engaging in an activity and feeling about what they do.
- **Position 3 - OBJECT:** TM3 is tasked with defining an object through mime and feeling about that thing.
- (The Action position can use an object, and the Object position can engage an action.)

These are three separate vignettes explored in silence (though any **emotional noises *felt* are welcome**). Play continues until I point to each TM and say, “**Emotional Sound.**” Each TM makes a noise that indicates their emotional state. Then I point to each TM and say, “**Statement.**” TM says a [Self-Contained Emotional Statement](#) defining how what they’ve imagined makes them feel. Examples: “I love my hair,” “This job is killing me,” and “Silly putty gives me the giggles.”

ROTATE: TM1 exits, TM2 moves to the Mirror, TM3 moves to Action and TM4 enters to the Object. Rotate till all TMs have been in each position.

- **Remember Weight, Volume, and Tension** are the three keys to engaging object work!

5.2 Endowing Your Scene Partner: *You* have your TMs to gift and react to. But don't *focus only on your TMs* – *remember the other tangible presences on stage.*

SCENIC ENDOWMENT CIRCLE , the game-

- One by one around a circle, each TM turns to the TM to their left, **engages in an emotion and makes explicit what it is about the TM's character that is evoking that emotion.** The endowed TM has no role but to stand there.
- *Example reactions:* I love your hat. / I hate how smug you are. You dead-lifted 200 pounds? Impressive. / I'm proud you're my son. / I'm afraid of your confidence. / I'd like to be friends.

5.3 Setting Up Multiple Endowments and Reactions:

💀 Too often scenes start with two TMs meeting center stage and having a conversation about something. **We want to see characters emotionally engaged in multi-faceted worlds. All TMs must strive to bring endowments and emotional perspectives to the stage that can be played with over the course of a scene.**

Suggested Exercises:

SINGLE BLIND SCENES: practice caring and having an emotional perspective towards your TM.

SINGLE BLIND SCENES, the game –

- TM1: starts engaged in the environment (with an action, object, atmosphere, etc.) without words.
- TM2: starts with their back to the action, giving TM1 time to engage in the activity / environment and feel about that activity / environment.
- TM2, with their back to TM1, chooses a way to feel (without any context). When I say, “Go,” TM2 turns toward TM1 and speaks through the filter of their chosen emotion – he can react to TM1 OR he can react to his own activity / environment.
- Note: TM2 needn’t be literally entering the scene every time. He turns to the scene but remains a bystander. But, having turned, he can (and should) act as though he’s been facing the scene the entire time.

DOUBLE BLIND SCENES – both TMs are blind, being on stage back-to-back.

Lessons continued:

- **The choice is yours - If you're trying to “figure out” a scene, so is the audience.** Everyone's waiting for something to happen, but ***you and your scene partner*** are the ones with the power to make something happen. You don't have to wait to react. Feel something about something. The sooner you do,

DOUBLE BLIND SCENES, the game – is like the SINGLE BLIND SCENE but both TMs are blind, being on stage back-to-back. TM1 starts his wordless initiation. After a bit TM2 starts her wordless initiation. They turn to face each other and can engage in dialogue (though they don't have to rush to speak). They should act as though they could see each other the entire time.

5.4 Juggling Multiple Endowments and Reactions: In every scene each TM has the power to make a choice about how they feel about themselves, their environment *and* their scene partner. Finding the **rhythm** between all those endowments and reactions can help make for sustainable long-form improv scenes.

SWITCH – TMs engage themselves and then switch and engage with their TM. This oscillates back and forth.

Switch, the game:

- TMs 1 and 2 are on stage facing the audience.
- When I say, “Go,” both TMs engage in endowing and feeling about themselves or their environment.
- Then when I say, “Switch,” the TMs look at each other, endow each other and feel about each other.
- Then every time I call, “Switch,” TMs oscillate between their personal thing and engaging their TM.

The object is to feel the rhythm in playing with different patterns of emotional behavior.

TWO PERSON SCENES – practice enter the stage and initiating a scene.

TWO PERSON SCENES, the game –

- TM1 initiates from stage left. TM2 initiates from stage right.
- You can start the scene with anything. You can react to one another but be sure to have some environment as well.
- **Each needs some reason to be in a location that doesn't involve the scene partner.**
- Given more lines, **invest in what you initiate** with more detail and/or emotional reaction.
- **Decide BOTH how you feel about yourself and your TM.**
Engage in an active endowment about yourself AND about your TMs.
- After a few lines back and forth, an off-stage TM calls “Scene” and two new TMs start the exercise.
- After a run where everyone has been through the exercise, talk about what you liked – whether you were in the scene or just watching.
 - What felt fun and easy?
 - When were you uncertain of what to do next?

101-06 Fun with Games

NEW CHOICE, the game –

- TMs initiate and build scenes by expanding on / committing to emotional reactions.
- When the Host says, “New Choice,” TMs must redo their last line of dialogue – heightening details, changing emotions, etc.

FOREIGN DUBBING, the game – This game adds extra levels to your patterns of emotional reaction.

- Two TMs on stage
- Two other TMs on the wings.
- The TMs on stage act out a scene using foreign gibberish.
- The TMs on the wings provide translations. TMs need to share the air to ensure everyone can be heard.
- Both sets of TMs approach the scene like they would in a regular Two Person Scene. Neither set should be worried about “making sense.”

GENRES, the game –

- Host has a list of Movie/TV Genres (Ex: Horror, Disney, Western, etc.)
- Two or Three TMs get on stage and engage in any short scene.
- Host will give a Genre. TMs repeat their original scene in the given Genre. Repeat a few times with different genres.
- Host calls the edit.

ADVICE PANEL, the game –

- Host calls 3 TMs onto the stage.
- With audience help, Host assigns each TM a topic in which they are an “expert” (Ex: The middle ages, insects, sleep, etc.). •
- Then Host gets the audience to ask for advice (Ex: “How do I get a girl to like me?” “How can I control my anger?” etc.).
- TMs then give advice through the filter of their assigned expertise.

FREEZE TAG, the game –

- TMs 1 & 2 **start a scene given an audience suggestion.**
- From the wings, **TM3 says, “Freeze.”**
- **TMs 1 & 2 freeze as they are positioned.**
- **TM3 confidently tags out the TM** they want to replace and assumes the physical position of the tagged TM.
- **The tagged TM exits** to the wings.
- **TM3 initiates a new scene** transporting the TMs physical positions to a new location/situation/relationship/etc.
- This **new scene continues until TM4 shouts, “Freeze!”**
- **Repeat** until all TMs get to play.