

# RealPlay Guidelines

- In RealPlay Performance classes, structures are given as portals to fertile realms of expression. This is a laboratory of contemplative, expressive and compositional skills, -- of exploration, innovation and play. What's it all about? Play, therapy, performance or what? Yes, and...
- My intention is for each of you to acquire movement and theater skills and develop a group connection as we hone this innovative art form. In the beginning of class, we are attuning to ourselves and to each other. We are getting into a playful state, more deeply in touch with our physicality and our subconscious creative sources. Then we progress towards skills, performance scores, and constructive feedback.
- We develop skills for communicating to an audience . Though it isn't therapy, this work/play is therapeutic – many of us are come for the self-discovery, catharsis, completion and self- mastery we find here.
- Guidelines create a container that supports safety for fellow players and for the audience. If we all did these things naturally we wouldn't need the guidelines. We are all in a process of learning and developing these habits.
- Respect your fellow players. We are all taking some risks here, breaking common social confines to allow for more creative states.
- A group field is being created. We are all dropping in to contact our muses and meet in this rich zone. Your coming on time really contributes to this in a positive way. Please let me know if you need to be late or leave early.
- Your emotions are your pallet of colors. Create fictional contexts. Look for a balance of sensitivity and exploration, of containment and risk in your emotional expression within the improvisation. Storytelling is often enhanced by leaving emotional expression out, and communicating through descriptive narrative.
- Sometimes we draw on autobiographical material. Choose material you are ready to move and play with. Do not choose something that makes you all blubbery or that you feel extremely unresolved about. (A little unresolved, could work well.)

- If your character is expressing strong emotions of aggression, or lust, give yourself the parameter of not touching your fellow players.
- What we express towards each other within an improvisation is not intended to be personal. Do not use the improv to get feelings out about other players, or make comments about them. Best to address other players with fictitious names within the improvisation. Make it about your character or about the “me-not-me”.
- The “me not me” is the self you come from when using personal material- it is you, yet you have enough distance to be able to self-witness, play with, and make art out of your stories or truths.
- Make statements rather than asking questions. Questions? Ask the other players to create the improv.
- Do not actively denying a reality another player sets up. In general, avoid saying to your fellow players, “No it's not” or “shut up” or “stop”. However, in this style of improvisation, you do not need to adopt the reality for yourself.
- Minimize the use of second person—it defines the reality of your fellow players. We will use it at times, but develop use of first and third person.
- Minimize the use of "it", and "and". Leave out filler words such as "sort of", "you know", etc. Better to pause, and tune into your body, or just wait in those moments.
- In general, avoid pantomiming objects. This is the mind directing the body to move in a certain way in order to get an idea across, rather than a communicative, integrated mind and body state.
- Keep walking/pacing to a minimum. It is usually a movement that supports thinking more than really tapping body intelligence.
- I often coach during improvisations. If it's not working for you – you can let me know.
- Let the inner (and outer) judge take a vacation! We are all here to learn, play, explore, and create! After the improv, your opinions are welcome. We speak of what worked for us and what we wanted more of.

- Take care of yourself physically and emotionally. Try to handle a situation within the improvisation or exercise first, but if you are at or over your edge of comfort, speak up, sit out or call a time out during an exercise or improvisation.
- If you are concerned about something in class, you may speak up in class or after. Naming and addressing issues briefly can really help. Please speak in “I statements”.
- Wear comfortable clothing you can move in. Dress in layers for temperature comfort. Please attend to personal hygiene before class, since we are working in such close proximity.

*Enjoy!*



***Julie Oak***

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