Uta Hagen Vocabulary

Week 1

**Actions/Intentions** – The action verbs the actor uses to fulfill the Objective/Driving Question.i.e. to possess.

**Activity** –A specific physical task that may or may not be connected to an action, such as a character loading a gun or packing a suitcase.

**Affective memory** – (Or “Remembered emotion”) Memory that involves the actor personally, so that deeply rooted emotional experiences begin to respond. His instrument begins to awaken and he becomes capable of the kind of living on stage which is essentially reliving.

**Authenticity** – the actor being honest with themselves, with the character they are playing, and with the other actors in the ensemble. Compelling acting is having the courage to be open, vulnerable, and truthful, performance after performance. Your given circumstances aren't imaginary.

**Beat** – **1.**A component of spoken material with a single action. A new beat occurs when the character changes what he is doing to attain his objective. **2.** In blocking, holding for 1 second=1 beat.

**Central conflict** – The oppositional force between characters that directly affects or motivates the action of the plot.

**Concept** – an actor’s design of a character based on text analysis, director input and research

**Conditioning** – the consideration of the consequences or environment about a certain event.

**Conflict:**An essential and vital element of acting that involves the obstacles and struggles (inner and outer) that a character must overcome to reach their objective.

**Driving Question:**Always beginning with “How can I…?” It is the rephrasing of the actor’s objective in the active and very specific form of a question that needs to be answered in the scene, i.e. “How can I rip the blinders from her eyes?”

**Week 2**

**Emotion** – The agitation of feelings such as: sadness, power, fear, love, hate and joy. These can be followed by responses such as: rapid heartbeat, crying or shaking.

**Endowment** – To give physical or emotional attributes to your character, to create more reality and meaning to further the needs of the story. Objects can also be endowed with physical, emotional, or historical attributes: shaving without a blade, removing wet clothing when it’s not wet, drinking water as if it’s vodka.

**Framing** – Crafting and sculpting individual moments for the purpose of highlighting them.

**Given Circumstances** – The background and current circumstances of a character, ranging from who you are, where you are, and why you are doing it. The costumes, sets and lighting—all the circumstances that are given to the actor to consider as they create their role.

**Identity** – learning who the character actually is, finding a sense of self

**Indicating** –Showing what your character is feeling or doing without really feeling or doing, leading to a false and shallow performance.

**Immediacy** – learning to prevent anticipation in a response, treating the action of the scene as though it is happening now.

**Preparation** – the analysis of script, character and physicality of a character, knowing how your character will respond to any situation

**Particularization** – The process Uta Hagen taught, making each event, person and place (down to the smallest physical object) as exact as possible. These details are explored in great detail to discover how they are relevant to the character.

**Physicalizing** – To express with the body. Showing as opposed to telling. Externals of a character, such as how they eat, walk and talk.

Week 3

**Relationship** – the different feelings a character has for each character in the play, every character has relationships and complex feelings for others

**Objective** – A character’s pursuit of a specific goal in a scene. Also referred to as the intention or driving question.

**Obstacle** – The conflict and stumbling blocks to a character’s struggle in pursuit of an action or objective.

**Organic** – A natural response that comes (organically) from deep within the character/actor.

**Sense Memory** –refers to the recall of physical sensations: sight, touch, taste, smell, and sound.  These physical sensations surround an emotional event, instead of the emotions themselves.

**Substitution** – The recasting of people, objects, and events in the script that the character must react act to, with real people, objects and events that the actor has known or experienced in their own life.

**Specificity** – Hagen taught that an actor knows what to do and how to behave on stage by interacting with objects that would realistically be in the environment of the scene.

**Spontaneity** – A free unplanned impulsive moment.

**Stakes** – The heightened consequences for each character of achieving or failing to achieve their objectives.

**Tactics** – “How” a character goes about achieving their goal. Also, specifically the way a character “masks” their inner action or intention, on the outside: i.e. to alarm (inner action) by freaking out (outer tactic).

**Week 4**

**Tasks** – Pieces of work or functions that need to be done, the total of which comprises an overall activity.

**Transference** – Uta Hagen’sterm for the actor’s process of making transferences from their own experiences to those in the play until they become synonymous with them.

**World of the play –** What happens. Where it happens. When it happens. The circumstances affected by the society, economics, culture and politics of the time. What we learn from the setting of the play.