

Monday September 14, 2020

Alyssa
Adam's Rib
1st incarnation

Recall:

Felt connected to myself and my circumstances were alive for me. Words felt like my own 99.8%. Where she'd get specific...she says, so I says...the place was real, was in my sister's room and I don't want to be in there. Being in a prison. That became very real for me. I was kind of in that state of I can't believe I'm in this situation, I don't know what I've done. An out of body experience, going into it that's what I was feeling overall, this is not real. He's real, the kids are real, him beating on me and cheating was real. Affected by Heather. I think it took me a sec to really want to ask for her help and engage with her in that way.

Critique:

Your process is going well it seems. (I know people going down this rabbit hole...if I can't have him no one can, even though he's beating me and cheating on me.) Open that up and see where else it goes. Your exploration seems very free, opening discoveries in play. And now we're talking about givens. This is kind of a fun one to think about. 14 months he's been abusive. This is a woman who remembers dates. (She was a very proud housewife) You're taking your kids to Coney island tomorrow. (didn't think anything bad was going to happen) So let's talk about building a cumulative effect. I'd like to explore and deepen two things. One is 14 months. We've been in lockdown for 6 months. 14 months of this. And hiding it from your kids and what it's doing to them. And what it's doing to you and how you see yourself in the world. How does one explore 14 months. In being a battered wife, is 14 months a different experience than 2 months? One week. All of these are different. How do we differentiate 14 months in our exploration? (That's a long time to be abused) I think we can spend more time with 14 months. One way is certainly saying It's been 14 months that he's been abusing me. But that isn't necessarily telling me about how it's fucking up my life. The abuse has sunk into every single part of your life. It's touched people that you know. Your family, your kids. What do your friends think about you. How does your community see you? I was this and now I'm this. (On the stand he kept calling me fat) Open up to this and see how it's affected everything. I think getting the gun will feel a bit different.

One little thing I think you've touched on. Is he ever right in staying away? Is it ever your fault? (they say I attack him) Even if you don't attack him...what I do know is sometimes we can blame ourselves for things that aren't our fault at all especially if you've stayed this long. Just remember that a lot of this is your fault, then it isn't, then it's his, then it's his mom and his job, then it's yours.

Heather

Adam's Rib
1st incarnation

Recall:

I was connected to the circumstances and to Aly, I think I was feeling self conscious. I was aware of myself talking. (Was it listening to yourself, watching yourself?) Sort of a judgement, like I'd say a line and go ugh. Very much listening to myself and judging in the moment rather than be in the moment. Not crazy connected to my words. (has this been happening?) I thought I had beat it. The first we rehearsed definitely not, I thought by the 3rd rehearsal I was done with that. (first rehearsal you feel similarly?) No back at the second. (Insecurity about the line itself) The ughs and I sees and then what. The lines are very similar. I still need work on my absorption. (Let's figure this out a little more) Felt connected by the last time we rehearsed. (after the first and second, feeling concerned about being memorized. Did you go back and absorb? Explore as well?) Yes, although I still might be mushing those together. (how's exploration?) Maybe it's the nature of the scene but in terms of resonating has stayed in an intellectual place. I am able to get under the need, the why I'm chasing after this case. My husband...that's why I scheduled this meeting. (Why do you want to go up against your husband) I think she should have a fair trial and I know he's good and he'll win. I want to put a stop to that. Not to him, I know he isn't bad or sexist but I don't want this to go as other cases have gone.

Critique:

I've spoken quite a bit about the busy brain vs flow. We're talking in paradigm about busy mindset vs fluid and it seems like there's understanding there. Exploration on its own might have value. How it affects absorption and play. When you go to exploring in this scene...this is where I'm a little fuzzy. Are you having a good arrival and taking the time and maybe starting to be fluid or is maybe the arrival not as meaningful, are you thinking at it? What's going on there? (Specifically for this scene, the exploration before absorption which was not something I did purposefully before) Fluid? General is fine (For this scene it stayed more in academic.) Looking at ways for a fluid mindset to be more available for you. Are you recognizing that it's staying analytical? When do you recognize that? (I guess for this scene I staying in analytical but I might have mistaken that for exploring who Amanda is. I understand the passion for the case). This is going to open doors for your art. Your resistance is gonna be sneaky, you're gonna find reasons Well for this piece it doesn't need to...rushing arrival. You need to write the word arrival wherever you're working. Top of your script definitely. It's gotta be what happens first (I rolled around on the floor in my room and arrived) That's great. And I want you to treat every time that you explore or play or absorb. I want you to spend some time in that theatrical real world warmup. We're gonna do that before you go in and play for real. Before every time you explore. We're gonna see what happens when it's a little more open and fluid and loose.

A few more things in the givens. Is she gonna be a good witness or lousy? (I'm not finding a good one. We made some cuts once we placed it in the zoom call) She's gonna be a lousy witness and that has to be there. Let yourself go to extremes in your exploration. It's not about thinking the thoughts you think you need to have for the scene. Following where you are and

allowing your mind to go wherever it goes. I just don't want to aim at thinking correctly. There's real value in just letting it go. Don't try to write a final draft in exploration. I'm giving you that reminder that you're free.

With the "and then what" and "what did you do" very different statements. "What did you do" is leading a little bit. You're not in the court of law. That's where we really want to understand when we have a lot of little lines that are similar, what makes it particular. The deeper your exploration the more effective your absorption.

I think it's living more in the exploration.

Q: When you make a discovery in a scene, explore FROM it. You aren't aiming, it's going to evolve. It'll open you up to more discoveries. If you explore from it it'll be different.

Alex
Primal Fear
1st incarnation

A: This is my first time doing a zoom scene with a partner and super self-conscious. I'm having a dual conversation with him and in my head.

Craig
Primal Fear
1st incarnation

C: I got in my head.

S: When did you get in your head?

C: fairly quickly. It's odd to be in the breakout room not knowing when you're going. I was trying to get back in. This scene could be easy and I made it difficult for myself.

S: We did such a deep dive in the paradigm class, I feel like I know your work as well as people I've been working with for 15 years. You were so honest in that class that it gave me a lot of insight. I'm clear on what this is.

S: I'm giving you both a like critique.

Both of your knee-jerk when you're thrown is to go analytical. Your brain starts firing and you want to think your way out of the situation. That is much more difficult than taking a breath and stopping for a moment and taking the other person in and then follow. You don't need to do a full on arrival but take a breath and take the other person in. The scene is about the other person and when you take in the other person, all the exploration has an opening. You're kind of cock-blocking. You're not letting all that work to come through. Just take them in sitting across from them- kinesthetically, a physiological awareness. You open up to that physical awareness.

Even through screens, you can clock each other. After the exercise, the connection you had was due to all the work you had done.

C: It's acknowledging that I'm out in the scene and allowing myself to get back in. Maybe it's years of conditioning of thinking "Oh shit".

S: fortunately it's not going to take 25 years for this to take hold. You both got so much out of the paradigm class. You can see how things can change in paradigm. It's a theory class and here we put it in application. It's already happening really quickly. Your understanding to stop and receive from her. The theories behind it already there.

A: Doesn't the thought to do that still have to happen.

S: I saw you take him in. I'm being specific on how to take him in. Look away, take a breath and then look at him across the table. I need you to exit the spin you're in. We can't move away from a problem but you can move towards a solution.

A: I thought I was disconnected.

S: Did you think about stopping or did you actually do it. I get that 5 seconds on stage can seem like an eternity and I'm saying do it anyway. It will give you gold. Just you becoming connected to each other - we all saw it. Watching 2 people be together in a moment, someone really involved is in and of itself compelling. Actors say they want to be interesting. Be interested. Trying to be interesting is boring. You can have the purest approach and a monkey wrench can still come up. You can get in your head but what do you do with that? Either fold it in or resync with the other person. That's really it. This is one of the simplest things to deal with but it takes a veteran to really be able to do it. Just to be able to take a breath to take the other person in. It says a lot about freedom to just stop. It leads to discoveries.

Q: Being in the breakout room for 45 minutes. You said how long does it take you to get in and walk around for that amount of time.

S: We don't get to control time. You will have to wait in your trailer.

A: I played with different lifts and found that challenging for this scene. "I'm hoping to see him here" or seeing him by surprise.

S: Would another one be you've been waiting for him to be free? Is it that you had a hard time thinking of things in this piece? Let's explore that in paradigm class and open that idea and see what's there.

Karen

Before Sunset

2nd incarnation

K: I think I was connected to myself.

S: It took a second with the technical stuff but then you got back in.

K: I was pissed and tried to use it to be pissed at him.

S: you rolled it into circumstances.

K: I was affected by him. The circumstances were playing on me and the words felt like mine.

S: Were you about to surrender to

K: It was stronger as the scene went on.

S: That's how it is in the story. By the time you got to "stop the car" you were really in. It took a while for your anger to open up into other things.

K: What can I do next time when I'm in the anger for longer?

S: I wouldn't judge it. It might be a coincidence but it fits the circumstances.

K: In exploration, being mad came up.

S: That's how you work too. If you're pissed at someone it's going to color everything until it moves into other things. It mutated when the circumstances lead it there. Because you had to mess with your camera, you accepted it and played with it. It didn't enter your mind in play.

When you were in play, you were in play.

K: The breath and arrival are really key for me, really good for me now.

S: you took what was happening and rolled it into what was happening really well.

S: most of what I said about the anger and holding on to it is my critique. The place where I want to continue to create consistency, I'd like

BREAK

S: In exploration, in play there is a willingness that is very consistent. Even if the anger has more of a hold, you still folded it right in. I want to continue with text analysis. If you're up for it, continue to do a texting, there's benefit in choosing material that scares or intimidates you. All that matters is that you feel challenged by it. At some point, I'd like you to look at Madea. That doesn't have to be next. Don't just do it because I tell you to. Maybe we'll do a casting for you.

Rich

Before Sunset

2nd incarnation

R: That felt good. In the breakout room we sat with each other in silence. When she was frustrated with the technical, I tried to make things better. The words were good. I invested so much into Karen. I felt in flow. Most of my work this week went into my wife and life at home.

S: and still exploring her.

R: oh yeah. I'd have thoughts come throughout the week.

S: Sometimes, and this is for everyone, there is so much value in surrendering when you feel worn out. You just have to drop everything. All of your thoughts and you have to arrive to where you are and surrender to the story, yourself and everything else. When you feel like you're hanging on by a thread, that's when the art comes. Whenever we drop into it and say "this is really happening" it adds to what you're doing. Rich, I've seen you go different ways, to control everything. This was a surrender and taking care of the girl you're with, the fodder for fantasy for years. You let yourself surrender and be empathetic to her pain. What I'm really enjoying, I'm watching acting experience, when the control happens, you catch it, monitor it. Your flow and acceptance in the moment is getting more consistent and we're going deeper because of that. The conversation is going to change. You surprised yourself a couple of times with how much it was affecting you. You're starting to get deeper and lost in it. That "lost" is such a part of this scene. They do get lost in the dreams that are dying or dead. I'm seeing you move from that control to a surrender to your partner and yourself. You're trusting that care will drive you

through. I think your exploration is changing too. There's still some fight about control in exploration.

R: When I give myself a solid 30 minutes to daydream, I can get into flow.

S: it's growing.

R: I had an audition and it was a self tape for monday, I did a little exploration and then quickly absorbed and it fucked me because I created patterns. I'm realizing the trap of my old ways. There is a trap of going too quickly to absorption. I couldn't break the patterns.

S: Part of being in this community, If you're in that circumstance, call or text. If I can break that pattern for you I will. If I know what's happening I can break it up. If I can I will. Because to me what makes an acting class powerful is our willingness to be there for each other. Not for a student film or commercial, no. I can't promise that I will get to you. If you're on set, it will be a higher priority. I have boundaries, I can say no. If I can be there for you, I will. We take care of each other.

Stuart: I'm trying to hold on to the raven but because of hours of class vs how many people are there. I am going to do a webinar on Saturday. I think we talk about acting differently than most and our community is different and unique. I won't just let anybody in. I will send out emails and facebook. If you believe in the integrity of the studio, forward the information. I need about 50 more students. The first webinar will be about acting on zoom and tape and where the industry is now. Get the word out. I know that losing the raven in the scheme of things is a small thing. I might have to cut it because my overhead is high and I'm not making what I was making in person. It's a chance to talk about our approach. I need to hit people all over the country.