

## That's Using the Old Noodle!

### Your Mind & Imagination

Can you train yourself to think faster or more imaginatively? Of course you can! "Warming up" your mind opens pathways to certain methods of thinking that are controlled, yet spontaneous. In this course, you will learn to do two things: focus and react.

#### 1) Focus

What is "focus"? In theatre, **focus** is the ability to pay extremely close attention to your character and the events of the play taking place at any given moment.

Why is focus so important? Well, to answer this, think back to a school play you've seen where small children are involved. You are watching, but notice that several of the kids aren't really paying attention to what is happening on stage. What are they doing? They are swaying back and forth, perhaps, or looking for their parents in the audience. For small children, this lack of focus is acceptable. However, by the time you reach this grade, the audience is hoping to get "caught up" in the action of the play. Not focusing takes you out of character. Further, because there is an audience in front of you during performances, and perhaps there will be activity backstage that you can see and hear, you must learn to tune those things out and focus on the scene you are playing.

Focus is also necessary to successfully perform the next ability we practice during warm-ups: Reaction.

Here are some activities you can use to focus your mind:

*Focus walk (all levels)*

*"Honey, I Love You"*

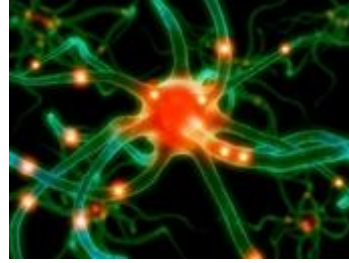
*1-2-3 Game*

#### 2) Reaction

There is an old saying in the theatre world: Acting is reacting. What does that mean?

In every day circumstances, if someone comes up to you and says, "I love your new haircut" or "You better watch out! The principal is looking for you", you don't

### Vocabulary



Words to Know:

Focus

Reaction

Spontaneous

---

think about your reaction...you just do it! Well, in a play, you need to be focused on the character enough that you allow yourself to **react** to what's happening on stage as though it were really you and whatever is happening is occurring for the very first time. As simple as this sounds, it takes lots of practice to allow yourself to get to that state. "Warming up" your mind daily with a series of reaction-based activities will help get you to that level of **spontaneous** performance.

Here are some activities you can do to help increase your mind and imagination's ability to react quickly:

*Focus walk (levels 3 - 6)*

*Zoom, Schwartz, Pafigliano, Jones*

*1-2-3 Game (levels 2-3)*