



Dear MA Actors,

I am so looking forward to welcoming you soon!

Many of you are keen to do some preparation and reading ahead of the beginning of term.

The most useful thing to do to prepare for the learning and growing you'll do on the MA Acting programme is to prepare your "ground" for learning – which is yourself.

The conditions for growth for plants and actors are pretty similar and you can be as playful with these as you fancy!

SPACE TO GROW

Ahead of beginning classes, getting used to walking in the open air will help you in a number of ways which will become clear as the course progresses.

Also getting your accommodation sorted soon – definitely before term starts – is going to be tremendously helpful to you. Taking time to create a pleasant enough living space (areas to work and relax in, gentle lighting etc) can be hugely self-supporting for the arduous work you will be undertaking.

Making sure you have somewhere to cook can be important for many (see nutrients below!).

THE RIGHT TEMPERATURE

The kit list is an attachment to this email. We spend Thursdays outdoors so you'll need footwear that can withstand mud and puddles and a waterproof coat with a hood. Definitely NOT trainers on Thursdays!

Also there's a useful "warmth" of temperament with which to approach the work! An attitude which is warm and open and is neither too hot (driven by anxiety, ambition, competitiveness) nor too cold (driven by circumspection, cynicism, skepticism or "cool") is useful. Have a think about this...

LIGHT

Daylight can lift mood and help ensure healthy sleep patterns. We recommend getting plenty of daylight into your life – a gentle walk is brilliant....see above.

We suggest you attend to how you light your room too. Dismal overhead light as the evenings draw in can be dispiriting. We suggest keeping it cosy.

WATER

Most folk don't drink sufficient water. You'll be working hard in all classes and hydration is *really* important. Hydration also helps your brain and cognitive functions.

AIR

Training as an actor includes learning new ways of breathing. It would be useful to become curious about noticing your breath before beginning the programme. Longer and deeper is the direction we are going in!

NUTRIENTS

Attending to your diet is a core professional competency as an actor. Cooking fresh ingredients will help your health and bank balance.

Approaching the training with as much health as you can muster will help you so much - so creating some healthy habits before you begin might be a great gift to yourself.

TIME

The way we negotiate Time is one of the first things we'll look at.

Beginning to notice your relationship with time will be helpful.

There are also some things which we would **ask you to engage with before you come....**these aren't too extensive and will take no more than a couple of hours:

REQUIRED PREP:

WATCH:

RSA Animate:

The Divided Brain -a talk by Dr Iain McGhilchrist (11mins):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dFs9WO2B8ul>

TED Talks/ YouTube – helpful to listen in this order:

- **Clint Smith:** The Danger of Silence (4mins):
https://www.ted.com/talks/clint_smith_the_danger_of_silence?language=en
- **Dr Brene Brown:** The Power of Vulnerability (20mins):
https://www.ted.com/talks/brene_brown_the_power_of_vulnerability?language=en
- **Dr Brene Brown:** Listening to Shame (20mins) :
https://www.ted.com/talks/brene_brown_listening_to_shame?language=en
- **Sir Ken Robinson:** Do schools kill creativity? (19mins):
https://www.ted.com/talks/sir_ken_robinson_do_schools_kill_creativity?language=en
- **Dr Sara King:** If you have a body you deserve wellbeing (11mins):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gGpREgLfPpA>

READ:

BLOGS & ARTICLES

Bayo Akomolafe: Lots to discover – here’s a thought about the notion of “self”.... a useful reflection for actors who create “character - <https://www.bayoakomolafe.net/post/you-are-not-a-self> (5mins)

OPTIONAL PREP:

BOOKS YOU MIGHT LIKE:

Then there are some books which you are **welcome to start exploring**....

There’s a very comprehensive reading list which, in time, you’ll be able to access but – for those keen to get started – here are some eclectic places to begin.

In no particular order, these are books which insistently call for our attention on the MA programme and contain wisdom useful to our endeavour.

You won’t be “tested”. The reading of these isn’t obligatory, but ... over the course of the year ...is advised!

Let your curiosity and appetite be your guide and explore the idea of reading any of these which take your fancy **for pleasure!** They each have gifts for you to treasure. We suggest you pick one and see what happens...

- **Women Who Run with the Wolves** - Dr Clarissa Pinkola Estes
- **Iron John** - Robert Bly
- **Impro** - Keith Jonston
- **Four Quartets** - T. S. Eliot
- **Shakespeare on Toast** - Ben Crystal
- **The Master and His Emissary** - Dr Iain McGhilchrist
- **Letters to a Young Poet** - Rainer Maria Rilke
- **Complete Collected Poems** - Maya Angelou
- **On Poetry** - Glyn Maxwell
- **Kith** - Jay Griffiths
- **The Wild Edge of Sorrow** - Francis Weller
- **The Inner Game of Tennis** - W. Timothy Gallwey
- **Courting the Wild Twin** by Dr Martin Shaw
- **All About Love** by bell hooks
- **Hagakure** by **Hagakure** by Yamamoto Tsunetomo
- **The Fervent Years** by Harold Clurman

Enjoy!

See you in October.

Warmest wishes,

Andrea

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