Charlie Sandlan ([00:03](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=ssSZU_ubGDLdNUXS8KXIzqDWsu23Iw6HkHZC7zB4gw_YIDWyH_bN2Y5N9wpCtTGoOaK27gpVk7qgtjjzCKWb1knBjTo&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3.05)):

I've been training actors now for almost 20 years, and if I had to pick the one area, the one topic that actors struggle with the most, that can be the most elusive, the most challenging, the scariest part of the craft, it's emotion. How do you handle it? How do you use it? How do you access it inside of yourself? How do you function from your joy, your grief, rage, shame, embarrassment, humiliation? How do you allow it to ebb and flow through you without pushing? It's a big deal.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:45](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=jd6erLh45gwQzvOF-fb1pzOROqqV1Z9j4-QgZErrl2983KaNtae3iPeYxcpM2l_DsRnN4fK-JgSanVneGbDrNDn-Jns&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=45.56)):

The only time as an actor that you can really control your emotional life is what you do off camera, off stage, in order to relate to the previous circumstance. It's called emotional preparation. There's a way to do it, there is a technique that will allow you to be able to harness your ability to daydream and fantasize to your craft as an actor, and today that's what I'm going to talk to you about my friends, how do you emotionally prepare? So put the phone back in your pocket. Creating Behavior starts now.

Charlie Sandlan ([01:22](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Zzr6WSYVYoH89VC_LnL-z627mgAxpanR50Fb5EqrFrKNaPurMPpIWshuHRAen4BrVxH0Xt3K17FIO7aRDSZ7mbOZtAs&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=82.51)):

(singing).

Charlie Sandlan ([01:44](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=grl2Fkl98H_qRfnyTgd9KDhqG0G6wqH5UsB6_HGG6zfLoTZpRm2ng-hles3THSm4WS5UqA5NEw8yr0evs7erXNyKe9E&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=104.71)):

Well hello my fellow daydreamers. We're going to get right to it today, all right? No fucking around. Emotional preparation. It is a big part of acting. What is it? The simplest explanation, it's what an actor does to prepare off stage to relate to a given circumstance, self induced emotion really is what I'm talking about. Now, when you read a scene, you get a piece of material, it is just assumed, it's a given that you're coming from some place, you don't just show up out of nowhere. Something's happened to you that has propelled you into the scene. You're coming from some place.

Charlie Sandlan ([02:33](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=wBDbHpfnWdPF6GvISMunzvG8sT8hua3bPaHd0DQnqXVVk3NMLae6antP-hsLTf3B8cfi0Fubhq6bTb1bgrInIubfAyo&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=153.45)):

If I am in the living room having a party with my close friends and the phone rings in the kitchen, I go offstage, or off camera, and in the kitchen I get a phone call that says that my wife has been killed in a car accident, and I come back into the living room, I better be emotionally related in some way to what I just found out. That's emotional preparation. If an audience believes the emotional life of the actor, they're going to believe the circumstance, right? You guys know that, that's self explanatory. It is a very sensitive area in acting, as we're talking about altering your emotional life.

Charlie Sandlan ([03:25](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=zGIOHpTNE4_5syFeblV9yua2ktO_sUVnxWH44ahIw6y-pwWZJkRdKl3enb22sM2UNA0G9j6j595PMD0CVF3q0p1TL-I&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=205.17)):

Now, in acting there are a few ways that you can come to life, emotionally, and I use the term come to life because it just sounds good and it makes sense to me. The first way that you can alter yourself emotionally is by actually listening and taking in working off another human being. If you're able to be permeated, played upon, changed, in the contact you can come to life, right? That's obvious. The second way that you can come to life emotionally is by really doing. If what you're doing is important, if it has meaning, and you're really trying to achieve something, it's going to change you, depending on the scene and circumstance. And the third way is emotional preparation.

Charlie Sandlan ([04:14](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=SpNa6iP5kEX2FQlXY1cScT6S7G2KnFaGiFEKhKDQOa9LFJrXqHUPLr1-urw15p6690JXHVJ8V5O5HVUdsO1jkXgzu1k&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=254.45)):

Now, let's talk a little bit about the nervous system. Our body does not know the difference between fantasy and reality. We daydream all the time in life, and you guys know this, if you have a very vivid personal daydream, it can change you. It can change you emotionally. It will change you physically. It's something that we do that's spontaneous. We don't control them. And Freud said that we daydream in order to shape reality in a way that's more favorable to the ego, and our daydreams are potent. I call it the daydream condition. Have you ever been sitting in the subway, driving a car, you're lost in a daydream and the next thing you know you missed your stop, you missed your exit? How many times were you sitting in that classroom and the teacher said, "Oh, hey, can you join us please? Where are you? Back in the classroom here." You're off thinking about what you're going to do this weekend.

Charlie Sandlan ([05:21](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=N6KfdDJFbIfNrHCSzM5WRqH-2sDptW7pd6a25Agy36IH8F3gPl6DdWIEc3Kcf54_VqMfPAqu6cI9-Ng2jLIFk1AzMpA&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=321.83)):

So daydreaming is something that we already know how to do. We're really good at it. Now the simplest explanation on the daydream and it's potency is the sexual daydream, which okay, I don't need to get into the details about that, but you guys know, a pretty specific sexual daydream is going to change you. Something's going to happen to you. They're vivid. And there's always a departure point. There's usually something that happens that will trigger a daydream in you. And we daydream about things that have real meaning to us, the things that are important to us, those things that are attractive to the primitive unconscious. Now, if you can harness that to your craft as an actor, then you've got something.

Charlie Sandlan ([06:14](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=QMp9zShUE1si5yfNu1dU6s3TaKUWcy7XIiFq9czp_Zrc3OZPRlThIuaAeS414yG93dVjFx0ycjR_x6VzOw8BaXi0R9k&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=374.8)):

Have you ever been, and I do this all the time, I'll be standing in Whole Foods and I'll hear some song being played in the store, and let's say it's a sappy kind of sentimental song, the next thing I know, there I am at my father's funeral, and I'm singing that song to hundreds and hundreds of people that are gathered to pay tribute to him and of course my voice sounds incredible and I look out and everybody is just weeping and looking at me with just awe and admiration, and tears running down my face, and the next thing I know, the lady behind me is like, "Hey, come on. You're up, let's go." Like oh, "I'm sorry, I'm sorry. I was daydreaming."

Charlie Sandlan ([07:02](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=jaSLXYk6YFJBG4GGXY6kYpa8DtAaiD7f1qOVZ_Rs9hHejhvY-KMmeer1pSF7ZgP7VMog64MF6Plc7y6KrcA4sSYd7Xs&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=422.05)):

If you're an actor, you do it all the time, right? So the primitive unconscious, Freud said that we really daydream about two things, ego and sex. They're very primitive and they're very private. Those daydreams, we don't walk around sharing those, right? When's the last time you were out with friends and said, "Hey, oh god, you guys, listen to this. I had this daydream this afternoon." We don't talk about them. Not like our night dreams. Our night dreams, listen, we have no problem talking about it. My wife, Trish, jesus, she'll talk about every single dream she has, and she talks to me as if I'm waiting to find out about them. So I sit, I listen, I nod by head, and she goes on and on in excruciating detail about her dreams, her night dreams.

Charlie Sandlan ([08:04](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=CDAtn_wep0vEQLc8OOvfefEFPZ2fIdfY9MG08z9tUYZ5kFmR8_tz4kXlnvdQSQRgYkKLdTSUQ0-iJzcIpOBjBpNWI-g&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=484.6)):

You see, we have no problem talking about those because we're not in control of them. We're at the mercy of whatever our mind is doing to us when we sleep. Now the daydream, that's within our self control and that's why we keep them to ourselves. Now your primitive unconscious is formed around the age of, I don't know, two, three years old. Up until that time, if you ever lived with children, it's all about wants. Primal wants. Food, warmth, love, affection, it's all out there. There's no subconscious.

Charlie Sandlan ([08:49](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=KPdMX9j01O82y0QdD-8kmcFd5ATjvdQlsGsULx9iEmWaQG3-rPgi_1NXenvJISjyYTgumHpWCX3VhZxDjpKPsIWMFCI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=529.2)):

Now, when your two year old, your three year old, starts to develop one, it's not the most sophisticated, and oftentimes they'll say what's on their mind, and when your ego has been slapped in the face a little bit, the only thing that is going to suffice is utter annihilation, especially when your ego feels rejected. I remember hanging out, I was with one of my good friends, he had a two year old kid and they had a new baby. So I was over visiting to see the newborn, and everybody was fawning over him and he had all the attention. And Peter, the young kid, he was standing there staring at his little brother and he started just pointing at him and he would say, "Garbage. Garbage." We're like, what? What is he saying? "Garbage. That needs to go in the garbage." He wanted to throw his little baby brother in the garbage. And the reason why he wanted to do that is because he was no longer the center of attention. His ego has been bruised, and so the only thing to do to solve that would be to destroy the source of the rejection.

Charlie Sandlan ([10:20](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=vy5XRpIsd9s_x50smI4KDTVn9O943Ouz4V9I479QMbqWG_7S2QLYAanLf8lCoSMiUlXh2z_DZJzrh0ZrGPYtijrkXRs&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=620.23)):

Now, to get back to daydreams, we only daydream about things that have real meaning to us, which means there's a well of material inside of you. And daydreams are always fresh. Go back to the sexual daydream. You'll use a good one until it dries up on you, and then you'll go onto something else, somebody else, right? There's always something else that you can turn to, and this comes out of your life experience, and it's going to dictate to you what's important or not. And all of us have these thematic or chords inside of us, these overriding life issues that can bring you to life, if you craft around them, whether it's rejection, abandonment, injustice. So it's good to know what yours is as an actor, because you can use it.

Charlie Sandlan ([11:17](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=ayJF6-JlW_7aH33GsCscZcRtw9Mm6i8MeAVORsH2QCPqhOsI1PU21nOEdhjj55h--exYIX6Ild1w-2rJ9vCZuE5MAQ8&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=677.31)):

Now, because daydreams are secret, because they're private, we don't restrict ourselves. We don't edit them. We do things in our daydreams that we would never, ever fucking do in life. Ever. We kill, mutilate, we prostitute ourselves, you know? They're healthy ventilators for our unconscious, and there are good ones, there are bad ones, I mean, shit, how many times have you been in your bedroom listening to some really great music and the next thing you know, there you are in the middle of Madison Square Garden with 20,000 people screaming your name and you're on top of the world and you are doing things in your bedroom, behaving in a way that if anybody saw, they would laugh their ass off, right? We all have those.

Charlie Sandlan ([12:10](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=AUYoTKgTGrcnFXH1T1a3-kYyllVPuLAyH5Y6yJn6d8kKietTXXkgWjV2MIekGh93HWDhC6pOquB0kUtyQEc9xqKVbbA&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=730.05)):

Now, if you can harness that, your ability to alter your inner life, to your craft as an actor, then you've got a process. You've got a way of working that's going to really help you. So what I'm talking about here is developing your ability to daydream at will, to be able to steer them without controlling them, so that you alter your inner life, so that you can trigger them at will. That means you've got to really know yourself and you've got to know the material that reaches down inside of you and brings you to life.

Charlie Sandlan ([12:46](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=SjpAaSIlLRrBTeXMPZ63FOgwxoIoicqjfpkXx_Bqa9HT3VhlyLYKnuShJMN5cXzFuvLg_hNc_1A3dpM3VlHEaHTdD7c&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=766.29)):

Now, this is where Strasberg and Meisner really kind of diverged. Strasberg was all about sense memory, emotional recall, going into your past, using the actual shit that's happened to you in life and using that to manipulate and alter yourself. Meisner thought that was bullshit. Didn't think it was healthy. And so he just thought the power of the imagination was a far more creative and a far more fertile area for an actor to mine. So how do you do it? Well, let's talk through it, all right?

Charlie Sandlan ([13:28](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=l7pvnVRolrlR2kEentUv522fYNmPLxp2S9UBvma59RPK2snvnQQ5nnJ4gTvzTbMqKcU7Hw9J60ZlXpPLk5HEeg56A3w&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=808.38)):

The first question you've got to as yourself every time you get a piece of material is what's the previous circumstance? This is fundamental, 101, basic acting. So let's say I'm doing a film where I'm the owner of a hardware store, and it's a business that's been passed down to me from my father and his father, it's been in the family for 80 years let's say. And because of a couple of really stupid business decisions, the bank is getting ready to foreclose on me, going to take the business, and let's just say I found that out. Okay. And the scene that's going to be shot right now has to do with me walking into a bank manager's office to try to get her to agree to loan me some more money and to give me an extension. Right? I know, it sounds really compelling, but just go with me here, okay?

Charlie Sandlan ([14:39](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Wxo9HICQG7Q1oYiDB8besorQPTmLHgNjbAj-2aiImRrYUmO2mK0WuouC7dvCQ0QYJ4cqATajLCqrHMaA0Cd8ax3NDbc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=879.53)):

So the previous circumstance, I've just found out that the bank is going to close on my family business because I've seriously fucked up and I'm going to lose everything. Okay. This takes us to question two when you craft, how would you feel about the previous circumstance? Which means you actually have to sit with it, you have to daydream on that circumstance. Put yourself in it. And so if I'm playing that part, I sit and I go, fuck. Man, I would be scared shitless. I would be scared shitless. 80 years of hard work, my family, they entrusted me with this store and now I've fucked it all up. Yeah, I would be terrified walking into this bank manager's office. Okay. Terrified, that's the emotional life I want to access within myself.

Charlie Sandlan ([15:45](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=qNAxbbVt1WvmXp4qra2dP23QUGmFl_4NVzrtR6rRBEdxUkwA-w2eCRRrVLM82hi6DQaQzp4SfXBaq8QmozIZAL8a1Cw&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=945.75)):

Now, this is where emotional preparation comes into play in order to deepen the response, to fill it out, to make it rich. Now I can sit off camera and tell myself that I'm scared shitless because I am losing my store, and nothing really is going to happen to me. I can understand it. But I want it to be really deeply alive in me. So this is where I get lost in a daydream, that is essentially the same thing. So there I am, in the daydream. Now this could be going on while makeup is putting powder on my nose and dusting me off as I close my eyes and I'm sitting there. I start getting lost in a daydream.

Charlie Sandlan ([16:40](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=LX9bHD363zGhzTEHpbumch7oJ7yHxv6tT4THOTu43pBSq-fg28Ca64kYTmCmzf9YAx96l1U-48o2Sz0BH0aJpgNONAM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1000.85)):

What's going to scare the shit out of me? Maybe I'm walking down the street, it's late at night, there's not a lot of people around and I see somebody behind me, maybe it's two or three guys, and they're laughing and they're getting closer to me, and next thing I know they grab me and they take me down a set of stairs and they pull out a gun and they're robbing me. And one of them pulls out a gun and puts it right to my head, and they're laughing, and they're a little drunk, and all it's going to take is just one stupid move and I'm dead. Now that's a vivid experience for me. If I get lost in that daydream, if I allow myself to give over to that, in the same way that you would allow yourself to give over to a sexual fantasy, I give over to this, I'm going to start to come to life.

Charlie Sandlan ([17:35](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=5QQfeQkF65ptplIyQ17rex5FEvPp45rad1vPwRQIh70uDx7MHpJe3_QrpTWsi9m-YjLgEesozv5fJsOJfbC7PHwXTJ0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1055.11)):

I might start to sweat a little bit and my heart will start to beat, and I'm getting scared, because I'm living through that daydream. And when I'm alive, me, the actor, I say to myself, and this too is also true, I've just lost my business and if I don't get this bank manager to give me an extension, I'm going to lose it all. And I bring that emotional preparation to the scene, to the previous circumstance, it'll attach itself to that, and then I walk in. I hear action, boom, I'm alive. Now, what does losing your family business and getting mugged on the street corner in the middle of the night have to do with each other? Literally, nothing. But essentially, they're the same thing, and that is what you learn how to work with. The essential emotional response.

Charlie Sandlan ([18:36](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=3cUyJCGcxTYAhYxIVNUPY31UeZcDBE-_6VzsA2gdgTjBbzE3Rh6xiwiG8RuFNaarjp0yjVIC6Hs9WcTaWUSi3hob4sA&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1116.45)):

Now, I'll give you another example. Let's say there's a scene an actor is working with, and the scene is the actor walking into his boss's office and quitting. Okay? A shitty job. And the reason why he's quitting is the night before he just found out that he inherited a million dollars from a great aunt that he didn't even know he had. And so the scene is about him storming in and telling off this motherfucker who he's been working for for 20 years, shit job, just awful. Okay. So that's a previous circumstance. I just inherited a million dollars and I get to quit my motherfucking miserable job. Okay. An actor can sit offstage and say to themselves, "I'm rich, I'm rich, I'm rich, I just won a million dollars, I'm triumphant, I'm triumphant."

Charlie Sandlan ([19:28](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=eD9sbeaniUHJyqMJzQ7UQklsO6fSDlN2Lb1_QRDK3F6mKSGUv4Ndc2nuYFDIIEliHr-GpxBDcQvd7FNX0G3TniW1DRY&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1168.17)):

Nothings going to happen to you. You're not going to walk onstage fully alive. You're just not. So this is where emotional preparation comes in, where can I go inside of myself, the actor says, to really feel triumphant? This is where you have to know yourself. This is where you have to have a real good sense of what has meaning for you and what doesn't. So maybe for an actor who's playing that part, he knows that sexual triumph is something that does it for him. Now he could be sitting there offstage, moments away from coming on, lost in a daydream about I don't fucking know, fucking a herd of sheep for all I care. Bedding one woman after another, right? King of the world. But as he sits there lost in that daydream, what starts to come to the surface in him is triumph, conquest, sexual conquest, and he starts to come to life, and then when he's really alive, feels really triumphant, the actor says to himself, this too is also true, I just inherited a million dollars and I get to quit my fucking job.

Charlie Sandlan ([20:45](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=i3DnRRc4WbS0959uo34PvYBFpWO9oMjTRdPIJiGam0Mf8mDjEHuwAoHR_g7ETuNvVnTBnNsG2A2U_Ud7u3HjxoWyHDQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1245.34)):

The emotional life is going to attach itself to that previous circumstance, if you've done homework on it. And he walks onstage, walks into his boss's office fully alive. Now, nobody in the audience is going to know that that actor was offstage fucking a herd of sheep. Okay? Nobody's going to know that. All they're going to see is an actor fully alive, coming in to quit, and they're going to attach all of that to the circumstance and they're going to believe what they're watching.

Charlie Sandlan ([21:19](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=dM2gWzAVSYYkI4Hb04I1ZABcxr1DHI6qW0IvmhOZGZyxzrzFrXHD7WFlJQowWk5f3C7045m2AtkzQisUPKcJ-hps15k&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1279.95)):

So if we look at what the actor was working with there, to get triumphant, what does sexual conquest and quitting a horrible job have to do with each other literally? Nothing. But essentially, it was the same thing, and that is what you have to be able to get really good at working with, your essential understanding emotionally of the previous circumstance, so that you know exactly what it is you want to work with. Now you cannot prepare for two things. You can't say to yourself, well I'd be so fucking angry and I'd be scared shitless. You can't prepare for anger, and you can't prepare for fear at the same time. It's one or the other. So when you're emotionally preparing off camera, offstage, you can only work with one emotion. You've got to be able to boil that down. You've got to know what that is, because that's what you're working with.

Charlie Sandlan ([22:22](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=IwcR004NyCTdufRvTUTqydIGl2BgX47kY8Pyzcrram5foOXhH2N_XBUbKp2HRozaLoQvsTE-vybuSm1RtJKwF_reAXM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1342.61)):

Then once you come into contact, once you come on camera, come onstage, it's going to ebb and flow. You can't worry about it. So this is really the only time as an actor that you can have some control about what it is you're doing and working with emotionally. So you're always looking for the meaning of the circumstance. How do you understand it, essentially? A good word that can help link you and get you to that essential point is the word because. Because I've been working 20 years in this miserable job, because I can barely pay my fucking bills and I've been going paycheck to paycheck because this motherfucker has been a tyrant to me the entire time that I've been here, because this, because that, because that, how would I feel if I was able to come in and tell that guy off and quit? The word because can help get you there.

Charlie Sandlan ([23:27](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=KM9lG-lmY7Jpv5H3j3wCSUrwsedNEhsD9MYcGECRn7mHe1_UpPJF1NuhGWtbwqmbnrIyEhncmYxB7jCi0cFQZ6D3KsY&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1407.72)):

So the thing to remember about this is that no one's going to know what you were doing and what you were using in order to bring yourself to life, that's what's private. And at the end of the day, it doesn't really matter what you use in order to come to life, off camera, offstage. The daydream is wonderful. Music is also a really great tool to help you. You can sit off stage, off camera in your trailer or on set there, put on your headphones. When I was working, this was when I first started trying to work with a process, I don't know what it is, you can't explain it sometimes, your connection to music, but I knew that if I wanted and needed to access heartbreak, devastation, I would just start playing the soundtrack to Schindler's List.

Charlie Sandlan ([24:32](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=TAuLgrb9P6UfOOoPLOMoaYFU-4cBdIh06nXVRK-m1HV_jt-nkTMs871tDCtjCdT-Z-6SPmN0VrSOl0pQgEj-_5Ml_S4&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1472.36)):

It was a movie that absolutely rocked my world. I thought the music was absolutely just gut wrenching and beautiful, and I could put that soundtrack on and just sit and get lost in the music, in the images from that film, and I would come to life. Tears could start streaming down my face and once I was alive, I'd take off my headphones, attach myself to the previous circumstance of the scene I was working with, and come on, and no one would know the difference. Joy and triumph are difficult areas for actors for many reasons, but man, haven't you ever put on some just great, fun, happy music, and there you are dancing in your room and you're on top of the world? Sometimes that's all it takes is some really good music.

Charlie Sandlan ([25:35](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=W-3-63mxrcepba-22iBSdHq1mMNGsRYEMQiglvvdpXKY_irlpd37GYd899kdozqHl8oHgZF4_BEgAvPOY-X8cP4mEus&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1535.25)):

I have gone so far as to lay in the fetal position on the floor and just hum to myself and that has brought me to life. That has broken my heart. For what reason? I don't know. I'm not going to analyze it, I don't give a fuck. It works for me, right? And so as an actor, you're going to find what works for you, and you're going to use it. But what I don't think you need to do is go back into your past, go back to when your girlfriend broke up with you five years ago, and how horrible that was. If I go back to try to connect to how I felt in 2016, when my girlfriend of seven years broke up with me, the rage and the pain, I don't feel that anymore. And why would I want to go back to that? It's been worked through. I'm happily married now. So I don't need to do that.

Charlie Sandlan ([26:37](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=BNo0-4zk4xr_GMXfDLaNHvGk4bdbTfOv02Pwnav4fEfAbumCHNf9UH5D6doOYqeSNIxReeEiZCLG0BAqp9apchpX3KU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1597.72)):

And the big thing to remember here, you guys, when you're working with emotion, is do not worry about how much you have. It is not about the quantity of your emotional life, it is the quality, and when you're preparing off camera, you go with what you have, and this is what's really difficult, most actors aren't going to feel like they have enough, so when they get in the contact, they start pushing. They start squeezing emotion out of them, like juice from a lemon, and it's hard to watch. It looks forced. It looks strained. It's unappealing and nobody is going to really live vicariously through you when you're pushing like that. So you go with what you have. And oftentimes you're going to be surprised. You're going to be more alive than you think you are, and you just can't worry about it.

Charlie Sandlan ([27:36](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=UhozXns2ztwSAspZgDqO5vVROJq4u0cqDPImXzEuiuWX8rOUT1IoZK7QpGGJonWmFxw6a5LBIj3KW53X-zeLt3LukxM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1656.11)):

Now, I will give you some advice on daydreaming, because it is a skill that you have to get good at, certainly when you're working with it in acting. There's a difference between watching your daydreams and living your daydreams. And so my advice to you is when you're daydreaming, don't get caught kind of watching what you're doing, like it's a film playing out in your mind's eye. So let's say I'm trying to access heartbreak, I know that's where I need to be at the top of the scene. So I'm lost in a daydream where I'm walking into a hospital room and I'm with my father who is on his death bed dying from cancer, and I'm watching it and I say well there I am and I'm sitting on the bed with him and he looks frail, I'm kind of observing that that's not going to really hook you. What you want to do is live it.

Charlie Sandlan ([28:40](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=9raO8uc8ACOyLvPV0G7a4i1U9Hh33CCbxX7qBg_FtiVHNCvvU4AlplnYHiafjsi8a6KT5VpZWtvytkWQdY-k_Ds9vnE&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1720.18)):

So put yourself right there, there I am, sitting on that bed with him, I'm holding him in my arms, cradling him like he cradled me when I was a baby. And he's so frail, he's so light, he's down to, I don't know, 90 pounds. And I've got a washcloth and I'm wiping his forehead and telling him that it's okay to go, and I can tell that he's trying to say something to me, but he can barely speak and I'm leaning into his ear and he's telling me that he's proud of me. See if I lived that, if I put myself right in that daydream, my heart is going to start to open up. I'm going to start to break. So the key to the daydream is to make them vivid, to make sure that you're putting yourself right in it and not watching it from a distance, all right?

Charlie Sandlan ([29:49](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=xwpkbNp6nK1kT4x25Bm0_DF34RwWHNxFhWrWonRTaS4Cn2QHvV0ehmu5M5i3wWaGqc_DGLxXT9sE9dajJORGqLmeqgI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1789.46)):

And the other bit of advice about daydreaming is that you want to be able to steer them, so to speak, without actually controlling them. So for example, let's say I want to access, I don't know maybe level four irritation. Really pissed, not enraged, but think just fucking pissed off, right? That's what the scene calls for. Well let's say I'm off stage and I'm lost in this daydream about this cop that just pulled me over for doing 27 in a 20. Okay, and I'm sitting there and he's lecturing me about putting children at risk and I'm late for a fucking appointment and I mean I'm coming to life.

Charlie Sandlan ([30:40](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=W6q7rQBIqc_zeFEQfzKLajJl1LVFJk1CH8oXwBCaWHX-TgIVJWdA8G32DEkY8wGLhIaclaYJ_SpRI8zV5jTQodoFDKE&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1840.46)):

Well let's say all of the sudden that cop, in my daydream, turned into my father. Okay. I go with it. I'm not going to freak out, I'm not going to stop daydreaming, I'm just going to go with it. That's my unconscious really saying to me that my dad has more meaning and I go with it. Now let's say I'm lost in a daydream where I'm in my dressing room and it's opening night and I just got off stage and one of my friends is in my dressing room, stopped backstage to give me notes about my performance. Well let's say I'm lost in that daydream and all of the sudden 20 pink bunny rabbits start bouncing through my dressing room, I'm going to gently try to push those bunny rabbits out of my mind so I can continue with the daydream, so that I can really get myself nice and alive. That's what I mean. Learn to steer them without controlling them. And every time you live through a daydream they're going to go a little bit differently, and you might find yourself using a really good daydream that just hooks you every single time, you get lost in it, and that might work for you for quite some time. And then one day it's just going to dry up on you, it's just going to go dead.

Charlie Sandlan ([32:08](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Zua-Q1kV7TNJhb68m-6IPGfW43RfNA4rAVl_BIOxPJE73a7YR2iu89wIHEt1icLmcOHMiENZjAPTKgCs4VQ-Z0VWFms&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1928.8)):

It doesn't bring you to life anymore. This is how and why this way of working is so wonderful. Just get yourself another daydream. That's all you've got to do. Fuck it, I'll go onto something else. That's what's great about working this way. You have a wealth of material inside of you. And as you become more seasoned, as you really put together a real way of working, it's going to get a little bit easier, and you're going to get really good, hopefully, about being able to tailor your emotional life to really fit the previous circumstance, to really illuminate it.

Charlie Sandlan ([32:57](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=6axPlC1Cj7u6zGyfCNKa_iF-RDZVrabmLfJprgd9Mw-UwYxCFHGIYGCbdJTUbCz3bfGAWEgTHKDO3ID4gLpHY3DWp-U&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1977.11)):

At the end of the day, emotion is emotion. You take what you have and then you put your attention on the other person and go from unanticipated moment to unanticipated moment. Because very rarely in acting is the circumstance that you're given really going to ignite you. If you're lucky enough to read a scene and just the sheer circumstance that's written there brings you to a full, rich life, wow, good for you. Lucky. But I wouldn't be banking the rest of my career on the ability to connect to material that way. You're going to have to find your personal way into it. And I will just warn you against one thing that can sabotage you and that's magical thinking. And what I mean by that is, well fuck if I really daydream about my mother getting hit by a bus, fuck, she's going to get hit by a bus. I'm going to get a call next week that she's dead. Of if I'm daydreaming about my father having cancer and dying, I'm going to get a call next week.

Charlie Sandlan ([34:07](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=uxTvVJTMI90QviKTDytAQf61w9uE-ry35BzNW9IsDFRSohR6XtVHW7eZqTdlA7owAWITHThO4HyMv731kFSb5sAgSY0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2047.14)):

It's almost like I can will it to happen. It's magical thinking, and it can keep you distanced from being very vivid with yourself. It will cause you to dry clean, so to speak, your daydreams. It's not true, right? We can't make shit happen that way. If that was true, my ex-girlfriend would have been found in 20 different dumpsters around New York City. That didn't happen. She's thriving. So, so much for magical thinking. So allow yourself to be as vivid, to be as visceral, to be as graphic as you possibly can. The more detailed you are, the more specific you are when you're daydreaming, the richer your emotional response is going to be. And one thing you can do to practice, to help you, is to emotionally prepare once or twice a week, whether you have an audition or not.

Charlie Sandlan ([35:11](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=X0D3YeNMqw9uwUWdhyQOt-c8cRRCb8ykf7jDNfQK1WTtca2W_HX8AlF3PPmfXk8DSL_hgefPZuLetb8cXMUl_i-6cdA&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2111.72)):

If you get to the end of the day and it's been a really shitty day and you're in a foul mood, don't go to bed until you've emotionally prepared and you're laughing so hard and feel so happy that you just want to dance the night away. Conversely, let's say at the end of the day you're in a great mood, it's been a wonderful day, you're happy, don't go to bed until you're crying yourself to sleep. Get yourself lost in a really good, vivid daydream. Do it once or twice a week and get good at it, because your ability to be nuanced and specific with emotion is what's going to allow you to be really revelatory.

Charlie Sandlan ([35:58](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Gmjg_eRM4JcF-_hxQxQBAmkpWm2g4YKxHyoQo_pDOooVlMxbgTiVF198hS1XaoREzrGKaxambHhKg9EMtHzkqGN5riI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2158.4)):

I mean just look at happy. Happy is so general. Angry, so general. The happiness that comes with finding out that you just booked the series regular on an HBO show is different, really different, from the happiness of someone who after five years of IVF treatment is finding out that they've conceived a child. That depth of joy is different and so as you grow as actors, as you learn how to handle emotion, it's being precise with it and tailoring your daydreams, tailoring your fantasy to really illuminate what's being written there. That's skill. That's an artist. And the thing about acting, your palette, your canvas is the entirety of who you are. So how you work with yourself is incredibly important. And that means you need a body that's open and pliable, that's capable of processing emotion, that's really free of tension, so that when you come to life, it doesn't look like the veins in your neck are going to pop off or that you're going to die from an aneurysm, or every time you get upset your face crunches up and just looks like a dried up raisin because there's so much tension.

Charlie Sandlan ([37:39](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Z9AQ95BL-iFPdJ_6BnjRoYi0AQdut4gWiLiYLuczVEA55qCygjHUO23z8PdLXGBLNJszvpzJ_iWP3REY-mTSdUhMdOg&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2259.19)):

When you watch the really good actors, they're so released. They have ease, and their voice stays in their body. If you find yourself getting upset and when you speak you go up two octaves and you're squealing like a mouse, how are you going to put that on camera? How can you put that on stage? So that means you have to practice, you have to work, you have to train yourself. And I'll just finish with this, you need at some point in your career, in your life, to spend some time in a classroom working on your instrument, and if not, how serious are you? How serious are you if that doesn't appeal to you?

Charlie Sandlan ([38:28](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=DcUBJR7-p1T8NgWudzVwj1-v9PyWAE8RWHL9QlF51eagIDqzifhHLy8X7s0U_OBcaVKnGFDhiDCjVxpeEb38YRq1yNo&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2308.77)):

So you can be given a process, I can talk to you about how to emotionally prepare, like I just did. But unless you are in a space where you can really apply that over and over again, where you can really work to access the full gamut of your emotional palate, what are you going to do when the time comes and there you are with five pages of sides because your agent just got you this incredible audition for a casting director that you've never been in for before, and you're reading and you go, "Fuck. Oh my god, this is really emotional." And you end up putting together some really half assed, hack bullshit. That casting director's not going to call you back.

Charlie Sandlan ([39:14](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=mH9EVKf5-_pA0_U8ro2byI2CLuk6fQtKTO2ieIbb-CpOdViyhxIZwfPRLsFV4NqDadm5tASZLD8GFvREULx5zGTuChQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2354.97)):

So hold on to whatever vision it is that you have of the type of actor you want to be and really go after it with everything you have. Bust your ass, figure out how I can do what it is I want to do at a high level. And if you're willing to do that, if you're willing to put the time in, you can turn yourself into a first rate professional actor.

Charlie Sandlan ([39:40](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=wZCZySwxATiFWDTerDFEgM6JVW0QFEIH_BXr5wJpg53bWggZm3fWY8BXV1rbdKHkj9IUPL9fgbPnY04AHuVwzW3rx3k&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2380.99)):

(singing).

Charlie Sandlan ([39:45](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=soYBKAxz285ySVnqcSLLuzpMRcsunSj8gJNWC1vYA4ngSP9vtog2ogfIaIHQRcxoUSn0ztYAaw8XfNx8pcKVSHVmuaU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2385.36)):

Well my fellow daydreamers, thank you for sticking around on this one, keeping that phone in your pocket. You can subscribe to the show wherever you get your podcasts. If you have a few seconds and you can leave a review on iTunes, that would be fantastic. You can go to my website, creatingbehaviorpodcast.com For the links and content to every episode, you can book me for private coaching, read the blog, sign up for the newsletter. If you're interested in seriously training yourself, whether that's online or this fall in my New York City conservatory, go to maggieflaniganstudio.com for more details. Follow me on Instagram. Lawrence Trailer, thank you for the music, my man. You guys, stay resilient, play full out with yourself, and don't ever settle for your second best. My name is Charlie Sandlan, peace.

Charlie Sandlan ([40:39](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=cf2cdIy7gNlu9Hc1MIVq8hlBIpYGao3ZpVf4bu2M48gegDRzPpDs7Xv2bRxUUOra5ruyFFWYCPUkQCyT1_njTAkHSUM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2439.61)):

(singing).