Charlie Sandlan ([00:00:03](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=tI1qB5DBY6bRXxmAT02ja5SRE7MbaRaQa7OH_W5jby8bJ0uQz-fsYpov3p9FExgVR7nigFHi5txDitoLRUs2v3NGh00&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3.16)):

The great painter Degas has this quote that I share with my students. He said, "I never paint what is. I paint what could be." And to me, it's just such a wonderful way of describing how important the imagination is for the artist. I think it's the most important part of what you have to offer. Yes, as an actor you need a pliable body, you need a resonate voice, you need craft and technique, but man, if you just hang out in the prison of conventionality, if you are an actor that works in a very pedestrian, practical way, you are not interesting to watch. Period. Full stop. And today, we're going to talk to another mentor of mine, a master teacher, Lenard Petit, author of the incredible book, which is an essential part of your library, The Micheal Chekhov Handbook for the Actor. We're going to talk about the imagination and how the work of Michael Chekhov can help make you more interesting. So, put the phone back in your phone. Creating behavior starts now.

Lawrence Trailer ([00:01:18](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=-9OsTwH0ZZACjZc92qlSrIzxiAmCSqdFV3D-N4oremoV4Wq-99b2KfKP55l-Vj_unmhawxdd8X39wceeupNlqskbMjg&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=78.16)):

(singing)

Charlie Sandlan ([00:01:40](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Dhf3zAfYQKE16ShcW90dbxfVI70e1HeicLC8mBDxDkNFBedTJ4uTHrjfnOQe2L1cyWYDEj_jPhwNE1XWm3uN47y6RK0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=100.66)):

Well, hello my fellow daydreamers. Today is a conversation really about the imagination and the love of theater. The love of creating behavior for a living. Now, I've been very lucky. Very, very lucky. I've had three really serious artistic mentors in my life. People that have been in my life really since the day I met them, and have become, for me, very, very important relationships. Maggie Flanigan, of course you guys know about, right? You had a chance to hear her talk last season, episodes 12 and 13. Rich Rand, who I brought to you, I think it was episode 15 of last year, Rich Rand, who was my first real teacher in undergrad when I was at Purdue. And the third, just as important to me, really, is Lenard Petit. Lenard is one of the best teachers I have ever had. Period. He's one of the most compelling, interesting teachers that I've ever had the privilege of learning from. I have been profoundly changed as an actor on how I view what's possible as an actor, because of him.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:03:10](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Y_RJWXoGwMdFifXLod8JCOlfPphWuiSW5fUKXaD8sp39ElTJaCxsWzkplAGHrCdh1CGslUnvob4gzJ7X-U7SV0m6fBg&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=190.65)):

He is a master teacher, he is absolutely brilliant. He has been working with the Michael Chekhov technique, I don't know if you'd even call it technique, but the work of Michael Chekhov and his approach to the actor, for, Jesus, 40 years? And I met him at Rutgers. And the way Bill Esper set up the grad program at Rutgers, is, we had, two of the three years was the full progression of Meisner's work, right? Technique. But what he did is he had us track that with two years of Chekhov and clown, and Lenard was our teacher. Man, you know what he did? Personally, for me, and I know for anybody that's worked with him, he took me out of the prison of conventionality and showed me how powerful the imagination can be, how powerful our life body is, if we can just imagine it, will it, do it, what can happen to you as an actor? What can change? And it's an incredible companion to Meisner's work. And that's why I've just been very lucky to not just have him as a teacher, but as a resource, someone that I can talk to. He's been coming into my studio for 20 years. With Maggie, with me. He's been teaching my students in Chekhov work, clown.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:04:50](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=sOOekmBxd-72tJycE6Qid7WZbWW5X1Mebl_ziCqCQaaetQgBfcC8EXRy-fhEmojV3KCG7pnkgUJ5_uICUpPiWwAIaBc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=290.3)):

We've taught together, which was an incredible experience, pre-pandemic. We created a class together. We co-taught. Kind of trying to use what I was working with my students in the Meisner technique in second year with his work, and it was just this kind of collaborative effort. It was incredible. I sat there, I said, "I can't believe I'm actually teaching with Lenard." I didn't feel worthy, because he's so good. So good. When I interview perspective students or I talk to actors, I've always just been taken aback, slightly put off, when I hear, "Yeah, no. I'm not really into the theater. I just want to do film and television. That's really all I care about." And I always just think to myself, "Really? Really? You're not my type of actor then." The best actors that I know, and I've been hanging out with actors for 30 years, they love all of it. And most of the really successful, working actors... and I'm not talking about just celebrities... and there are certainly a lot of really good actors that have never done a day of theater work in their entire life. But many, many, many started in the theater.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:06:21](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=7KThEwBlLEKnq-bQByYAMW3odgG85klgeW1l7s3jdBTexqdMEZs7qVK_ePBIMFxn8w2Xstt_Q1O0_QDZkI3cgiuabh8&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=381.9)):

They came out of school, out of a training program. They start doing regional theater. They're all around, throughout the country. They're in New York, they're doing off-Broadway, off off-Broadway. It doesn't pay that much, it's not a lucrative job, just I just have always thought if you're an actor, you'll do anything. You love it. You love all of it. You love the history of theater. You love really good plays and playwrights. You love film, you love television, you love it all. I want to do everything. There's something magical about being in the theater, about being on a stage and taking this collective group of people, this communal experience through something that's vital and in the moment, and is experiential. It's ritualistic, it can be profound. Some of the most searing experiences I have had as an audience member have taken place in the theater, where I have just been left rocked. And I mean rocked to my core. Changed in some way.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:07:38](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=nD0-A5EKR_8hqadt0JDzOn2gcyIErYPjI5hhuTMTxhj1MMCDMZCehjgl4m6GYyRb4f3K-YLuqNexg8_zJLOsn1081oo&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=458.95)):

Two right off the stop of my head. I remember sitting in the audience and watching Danny Glover do Master Harold and the Boys. And I couldn't leave the theater. It took me 10 minutes after it closed. I was just sobbing. I was so moved. It was so good. And the second time, right off the top of my head, mind you, that I can remember, is watching Jez Butterworth's play, Jerusalem, with Mark Rylance. Shattered. I was just shattered. Sat, sobbed, tears running down my face. I was one of the very last people to leave the theater. I couldn't move. I saw that play three times. I was so taken by it. So, the theater is very, very, very special place. And so today, we're going to talk to a man of the theater. An incredible teacher. He's going to talk about Chekhov's work, how it helps actors, how is it possible to use, and some things to just ponder and think about. It's an incredible conversation. He's a very dear friend of mine. I have a tremendous amount of respect for him.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:08:59](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=fNKZauI0WT9Y8-aFhiO-KZ23l5nG54bgHo9sdW6xG3d0j5a_7wqMRtIjIxciVrDpGFpsoCC5i2LjKx0AsdeuI7SfBTM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=539.71)):

And at the top of the conversation I was... I just thought I'd ask him, "How do you describe Chekhov? How would you... what is it?" And we just talk about what it is. Because it does seem a little elusive to me. So, this is how we started our conversation. Here's Lenard Petit, everybody.

Lenard Petit ([00:09:18](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=NTdBkkH-CDyd5yN37Ueo0lQv-WZEUbOFYVkLOn-FVcOkr8vSY8IjB0cuB17a9eZzyB1PD_wUkuJs9z_B0RtJ9hBqO4o&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=558.08)):

Intangible means of expression lead to tangible results. And so, you look up the word tangible or try to figure out what the word tangible means. And really basically means something you can touch, something you can put your finger on, something that's clearly what it is. But we have concepts like inner gesture, radiating, things like this, atmospheres. What is that? It's very difficult to talk about it and make any sense of it, because it has to be experienced. Once it's experienced, the body understands. But it's difficult for the mind to understand. And maybe that's one of the reasons why people don't know so much about it, because nobody could really talk about it.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:10:00](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=B0hUMUPVgVUIZHDxBczMBwLpQ2fqU8JG53fc8Jk9A2HFbHrAccyLVxvBEdzSapDTrm7DGVh3U_EiS60RbN3mBqZXBJg&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=600.49)):

Yeah, I think anybody that maybe knows a little bit about it or has heard about it, will mentioned the psychological gesture. That's what Chekhov means. The psychological gesture.

Lenard Petit ([00:10:07](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=3aSj86VI5piTsyC3fWIhw46ZiMGXovpidXqVKabe-IlZWqS64hiIOiHdWJPNjyN-uDvav5c2Pp2DYh94c5vf9LsXmCU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=607.34)):

Yeah, the psychological gesture. But then there's, "What is a psychological gesture?" I knew a very famous Meisner teacher, she said, "Well, what is the psychological gesture?" I said, "Well, what do you think it is," first? And she said, "I think it's this." And she started demonstrating a person with Tourette's Syndrome or something, having a kind of tic. And it's just like, "This says something about their psychological makeup." I said, "No, that's a tic." When we start to work in our Chekhov technique, we work on a psychological gesture maybe on the first day. We say, "This is a psychological gesture." And only to say that you see how much of the body's involved in it. You're using your entire body to make this gesture. And it's nothing to perform. Nothing to be seen by the public. Nothing to be demonstrated to anybody. It's really your work. It becomes an energetic thing that produces impulse to act, impulse to do, impulses to be, even. It depends on the application of it. Yes, but it becomes an inner gesture. But this is like, "What's an inner gesture? What could that possibly mean? What do you do? Do you think about it? Do you remember it? What do you do with it?"

Lenard Petit ([00:11:21](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=8Xnd6E1xqI_lZmbgGxv1rPQvizet7o3oeQW_mDLhn7B8o6KVoq06p-TrVzRD5WzYYhSCr8h7t6UWJ2qzCRKqXpxwLQU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=681.82)):

And so, you have to come to this place of, "No, no. You have to do it. You have to do it and nobody sees it." And so, what's the point of doing it? But that's for people who don't know it or work with it. As soon as you start to work with it, you know what to do with it. You know how to make it work. But it is an inner thing.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:11:38](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=wbgqDpKKNYtz_ow_4OL7D8UclDX_kAmYA8Gm-Cejz-ywm_gsTU5jozy5J5hr-cSCpMGzkHVVuD7j7P6khF0o2HIR9bQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=698.37)):

It just activates the entire body. You are immediately producing behavior.

Lenard Petit ([00:11:44](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=5SMNfaGmtXE3CjIuayDNHvulg2FS5SH7j6RZqmgPCIxaxK6CJuJwUv3_ULregNctSrKNzRNbpSMHHezTIDqbwKAQ2u0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=704.05)):

And it begins with the imagination, also a kind of intangible thing. Like I said, this idea of radiating. Just sending out something beyond the physical body. Just like the sun radiates heat or a hot object radiates heat. There's a heat in it that's just coming off of it. But this is something that can be learned how to do, but it's like you can't... you look at the actor and you say, "He's doing something. He's doing something there and I don't know what it is. I can't put my finger on what it is." But it's interesting. I was reading this thing the other day. It was kind of an interview with Michael Chekhov and one of his benefactors. He said, "What we do is interesting and that's a really important thing for artists, that it's interesting. We think it's much more interesting to be on the stage and radiate, then to just be on the stage and do your lines and do your blocking and stuff and make sure that I have the right feelings and the right actions and the right objectives and all that. That's all good and that's all correct and all necessary. But we find it much more interesting and rewarding and valuable for the actor to radiate at the same time. And that's what makes us different from other actors."

Charlie Sandlan ([00:13:04](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=M4uTRaOjai19R17h9A3mQhZA5PzayouvB5lnX7gMb5jmTIeAn_8VcECRMHNpwFNvlx9WqGFGyLrRKMpmV48obPBn-R4&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=784.76)):

And what would he mean by radiate? I mean, because it's such a good word, but just taking up space? An energetic thing that's kind of, again, intangible?

Lenard Petit ([00:13:11](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=L1kBtGz5ySCEOBoMviUmaKZbziJ06WcFtqt-uUy7Z0QYvBLisJstLvcIgCnMmdhH0W29JQSGOPuuF5MFYPEBTI7O35A&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=791.58)):

It's like, I mean, we practice it in a very simple way. I mean, if you're in a room, for example, a larger room, or even a small room, you stand there and you look at the opposite wall and you say, "Touch the wall. Don't move from where you are. You can point... yeah, point your hand, point your arm and your finger at the wall, but imagine that you're touching it. Really work at touching it. Now, maybe you're going to wipe the dust off of the top, where the ceiling meets the wall," or something like this, right? So, this is an active thing. But what you realize you're doing is you're reaching beyond yourself, beyond your physical self. And so, this is fundamentally what radiating is. It's sending out what's inside. So, then we learn that we can radiate anything. We can radiate our feelings, we can radiate the feelings of the room. This is an atmosphere. This is also intangible.

Lenard Petit ([00:14:08](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=h6vXHTTBVDvUl7m7q0gik16feCNdnZ_pRWnz5rztyqbsjzeRZn7w9UdO8WMrDuCe639UN1BlMLl5x4DoLi3NB0ux4Fo&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=848.46)):

See, I'm starting to sound like an idiot, a babbling idiot, talking about it, because it's a really difficult thing to talk about. So, it's an interesting exercise to talk about it. It's like, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, you know?

Charlie Sandlan ([00:14:21](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=djhu4eZL7TYUb60or_MIzZMjCojR9lXBc0q4XxCkLgdb8wYxl5h1qBgEQQif9dcFCy0IVgERtC3dgRHcNiN1KXop-rE&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=861.58)):

Yeah, I would think that once... and I know this from my own experience. Once you understand it, then when you're reading a script and you've got these ideas coming to you, you're like, "Oh yeah, he's a closed system, he's an open system. He contracts, he's bitter, he's sour," he's all these things that-

Lenard Petit ([00:14:42](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=EbYObRIWKN0kDEf42cyyUbZMvDcdWRqR4VddPc2IlRswVqrzs-Z5EH1vm5GNiQI1RHDblX4FXuFh8Z7ClZxily46lEs&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=882.27)):

He's an orphan, he's a love, he's a tyrant. I mean, we work a lot of archetypes. Yeah, everything. Everything is actually... revolves around that idea of archetype. Everything that we work with is bigger than it actually is. And we understand that it's being fed by bigger energetic connections. And so, it's more universal, but we got to understand that we have to create the specifics. So, instead of going directly to the specific, in term of behavior or understanding or action or whatever, we don't go to the specific immediately. We go to the larger archetype, the more universal understanding, the big brush strokes. And then, in the rehearsal process, you start bringing it down into the particular, so that you're creating very individual character. I mean, if you take an archetype like a hero. There are often hero in plays, characters, say, "Oh yeah, this guy's a hero." And you just work on psychological gesture for the hero, and then you just go out and say, "Oh," and you feel all this stuff coming in you from the gesture and say, "Okay, I got it. I have the character. This is not me. This is hero."

Lenard Petit ([00:15:53](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=-D0YlLbTaW-SvRSDrT8LnmhXuMBmtwHDCyCG2vKmr-MBCFijoyKSLZPdkVQI0qBviqOyHjpsAXU_7UDt-ifpuSqOcnE&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=953.06)):

And you go out and you do the hero, it's interesting for about a minute. It's too big, to universal, to general. It's not particular enough to sustain interest of the necessary development that you would have in a character's life that's in a play. They develop. And that's what makes it worth staying to the end of the play. To watch this development and hopefully big change in the character. And so, what we do, instead of just playing archetype of a hero is that we just say that we're fed by this archetype of the hero. And what we wake up, which is a very, very interesting thing with Michael Chekhov. We wake up what he calls quality of the will that belongs to the hero. And that's how this character is a hero, is that he does things with his will or her will, that a hero would do, that only a hero would do. But they're particular people. But in the play they do this, and they do this, and they do this. And oh yeah, heroes, that's what heroes do. Heroes take up the quest. Heroes go save Princess Leia from whatever, you know?

Lenard Petit ([00:17:08](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=mUjLi0g_kV07DTvtwcmyVF_wUSRivVjbk_Y6J5LwF-p1MBLoy-WCg3D0E34XvMfZpEagkslYzOfxAmJdy-SBDOSkA7g&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1028.3)):

And this is this job that they have to go. And they refuse or they say, "I can't do this, I don't know how to do this." Then they meet somebody, like who's that guy in the Star Wars? Yoda. And Yoda tells them, "This is how you do it. This is what it's all about." And they learn how to do it and they say, "Okay, I'm going to go do this thing. I'm going to go get Princess Leia back." "I'm going to go slay the Medusa." Or whatever. "I'm going to do that, now that I've learned who I am and what it takes to do it." And this all belongs to hero, which you can see in a play if you look for it.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:17:43](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=m1DMHfYNdepxDvomO8jILg4P0OTWH916rA5mwM8TYzbXT1y9qHRukd-cbGmzyohBZV615XIEuRuPc8SaixI1QMV4vrg&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1063.42)):

Or you have to be able to read a play and have kind of a creative way to read it.

Lenard Petit ([00:17:50](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=toqYW4Go3_-UDEDdsiYJ58xtCHndSJ-r-nhMfef7ARqYYgyL-IeUXYgaBuERtetPnNDSBdr3IB9mIbtF2G-8Bwrx0Hc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1070.22)):

Yeah. I mean, I know certain actors who just read the play for their part. "I have how many lines? How many lines? I'm not in this scene." I've seen that happen. I've seen actors going through scripts that way. That's a different kind of thing all together. Right now I'm teaching a class on archetypes. I'm working with this woman in the class and she's a director. She's in Athens. She'd came to this class about archetypes and so now we've developed a kind of email correspondence and I'm presenting her with these problems to solve with archetypes. And then I say, "Well..." she brought up Uncle Vanya, by Anton Chekhov, his play, Uncle Vanya. And I said, "Well, you want to talk..." and she said the character Astrov is a hero. And I don't know, I forget exactly what she did. She named all these possible archetypes for all the characters. And I said, "Yeah, yeah. That's possible. Sure. I could see how he could be a hero. But what if Yelena were a Sphinx and all the rest of the archetypes, they revolve around her and they have to fit into this family where there are sphinxes?" So, there has to be a high priest, there has to be a disciple. So it's kind of a religious almost kind of a thing. So, what's this family?" And called it a constellation.

Lenard Petit ([00:19:19](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=feKicKyJ9xWCq3so9KCmJP6s5GIlhidX-fwjp4Kzx_XPdJR0WxqQtjgqfUhGUUI6oCo9m83493cyaDQPOabzpByltfg&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1159.71)):

And she wrote back and said, "Wow, my mind is completely blown, I can't even sleep, what this is doing to my imagination." And then I said, "Great, now let's look at the play again and say, 'What if Vanya is a fool? What are all the characters who live in the world of the fool?' Where a fool could exist? That are in a particular family or constellation?'" And she's like, "This is a completely new interpretation of this play, for me, what I understand now." She said, "Thank you so much for this. What a tremendous lift for my imagination and for my understanding of things." And it's just coming from this idea of big energies, these archetypes. And there are, well, they're in the mythology from Greece and in the mythology from Native America. They're in the Bible. They're in the zodiac. They're in the tarot cards. They're in all these old things.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:20:20](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=MjHZPCz4z8LePSSumXnA2q7JRQYM4JPR5aCMIoYRv2eBFv4hV7nYj2GdtENCpiJuIewoSS3B_nGtHpCvMNloIxeFe7k&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1220.6)):

Like the jokester, the witch, the wizard.

Lenard Petit ([00:20:24](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=kxvbAE3LGxKUWDFyJHmarE7a5pO6K8DsRIzc1tXVo7Tl4MIK9X7MuKOjfQtc168XGUefO0q800biODc4MIwiHS8X6sU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1224.39)):

The magician.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:20:24](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Q5rFZ86I1GsdwupM3InqwZoGfUlPzfPY3UOOpGdSiaF2UE7we5YdhhtJJ26HWeQDVI_lrFnVIi5RxpTUoDjARrectmo&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1224.98)):

The magician.

Lenard Petit ([00:20:25](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=GRuCpOzBDff1qP-xXk0Ysts5obLGx7SPBIv8C1FHa_xBwkvq3qPvc4Y2-aqC8gl6HO2MJ4sY1riJ8SdS9Y3zV0aGh98&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1225.7)):

The healer, the teacher. It's a really interesting...fairytales. Grimm's fairytales. That's all archetypes.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:20:35](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=QAc9nZTJEqcsMoouoe9DqdGAlYpG04LrcM_uGeVH3edVQdBQXIWIeWhRARhzQHRESN9ql7dEwKxlSHlkSWX4Zg_Kcz4&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1235.81)):

Yeah, but now if someone's sitting here going, "Well, how the fuck does that help me as an actor, when I'm working on a script to think about, 'I'm a jokester, I'm a wizard, I'm a high priest, a sphinx,'?"

Lenard Petit ([00:20:43](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=eIVAQ3mxA9MbyxJFEIcoGt1M3-j-XqxSUZbqxqI6NVAcxqP5UuqQiR5KvaCnH4sgJcthvN_gVEykvvP-SsakYphjMz8&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1243.7)):

Yeah, I eman, why wouldn't it help. You're not going to play the sphinx, you're not going to play the jokester. That's playing the archetype. That's not interesting. You're going to be fed by it. You're going to wake up through the gesture, through the connection. Because all of these things are living in us, absolutely they're living in us. We all understand the hero. In fact, you ask people to make a gesture on the very first day, say, I usually start with a witch, for example. That's one to start with. And I suspect that Disney has something to do with it, somewhere along the line. But it's like, can you make a big psychological gesture, the whole body involved, that is expressing a witch? They all make the same gesture more or less.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:21:32](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=r0Y8B8Aq-Ku70fvusaSB-MNM0-I1aNcjqhjwaDa-AuviFYPXegxljekleGeW_tGBY34xxi1G7TTTs8GngxP5XwoYo9o&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1292.62)):

Right. It's universal. Everybody shrivels up, there's just-

Lenard Petit ([00:21:34](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=4uD1dmC4hkYLK4Pu_7lXb9UX4zA7vYn1DDUG1cwkdYAeQlJpQRZYzf1AThlhrHTjlKes4ulDGELDGfbP28A2ITIMp7I&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1294.69)):

They also move down. They move down, towards hell, I suppose, or down into the earth. And they move forward. And mostly everything, the hands, the chest, the face, is facing downward. They're all individual people with individual bodies and they all make it slightly different. But we do it and I say, "Do you like it? If you don't, change it. If you like it, make it better." We work on that for a few minutes. And I ask them all to be looking in a different direction. Facing in a different direction. So, we make a circle and face out when they make these gestures. And it's like, "Okay, just turn back now and let's see what we have." And everybody's just... I'm not any longer, but everybody's just blown away. "We're all doing the same thing." What does that tell you?

Charlie Sandlan ([00:22:22](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=wLZpCnrWixA-wXtPc3eCN5LE-ZgkqIavCf45Q_OA3Q3xiZhAo_GQVNBam1Mx-dfORDQIEYzDHdAuhjR2YmQ_4Ceiay4&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1342.93)):

So, why is that the case? Because you look in a room, you got 15 people. Everyone's approaching kind of the same idea. I mean, you're going to play the hero, everybody's chest expands.

Lenard Petit ([00:22:33](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=0tZGS05C7jme_FohoHE-MIaXaTDO8Dn80y9vo1YHG8kpKOf1bO9aJsT1usMWu76yDcGnxiimcUBcp0BQ11dD9s0VPWU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1353.99)):

Yeah, you move forward and up is the direction for the hero, where the witch is down and forward. Defining it in that way, which is the dominant direction, is really what it is, because it's a kind of... I mean, the only way I can describe it is like it's a vibration that happens when you just name it. Just name it and be quiet with yourself. And then you feel, you feel an impulse to move, either forward or down or up or back or to grow, as you said, the chest expands, to expand, or to contract. These six things are lines or direction in which the energy flows within us. It's a human thing. And it's all tied up with psychology and biology and survival and whatever. And so, we become connected with that. So the human energetic system begins to vibrate as soon as you name it, the hero or the witch or whatever. It wants to move in that direction.

Lenard Petit ([00:23:39](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=1MiHGtQVr5TZQcGZiAPl_o0J5_NvJ-G2pz-ZAlJTsy1BxQQ4Sh8M4BxG1jOKcsAxu4V_R262flUQ0v0GrHl2YOdwmmY&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1419.32)):

And I say, "Okay, well you know that. You know that." And so, before we work on the gesture, we just work on that. I name maybe 15 different archetypes, 10 different archetypes. And I say, "If you just be quiet with yourself, if you have an impulse to move forward, please just point forwards. If you want to go backwards, point backwards. Up or down or whatever. Not make a gesture. Just point in the direction." And they're all pretty much all going in the same direction. Their eyes are closed so they're not, "Oh, I'm going forward and he's going down." Everybody's eyes are closed and I say, "It's all good, whatever happens is good. It's all right." But 90% of the people were going to be pointing forward. And maybe the other 10% point... maybe be growing or some kind of thing. Usually it's not so different that one person goes up and one person goes down. Usually that doesn't happen.

Lenard Petit ([00:24:33](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=qSfg1UgJepMWzg2Bn_cbd0QjxSDzCPi5m22v44kXnE5A0g0EBATxoULCA3mw2Yrtr-qvBZRayiXbyt5Ku-4uX-pfaYc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1473.09)):

It's like, "Okay, so now you know that. You know that things move this way. That's 85% of the gesture right there, is the movement and the direction. Now bring the rest of it to form. You got to form it with the body." So you got to be involved with your hands, you have to be involved with your arms, you have to be involved with your head, your face, even your voice. Your legs, your feet. The whole body has to be involved in it. But it is really there only to activate a particular quality of will. Because that's a major consideration for Chekhov actors, in terms of solving the problem of the character.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:25:13](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=QoobgQ0BU8DN4USTDDczvmkwz1lJ_JrP8H6nftGFqE6U5aC-5FozjhYyZmMwDqUwmZLXGw9PrBkfGTZCohIoMF4tYTo&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1513.47)):

Yeah, the will. And then you talk about stick, ball, veil. Which is also a great, great... oh, man.

Lenard Petit ([00:25:20](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=da85LKi-gqZzv2fxGODgSmkN0FKJ-3ZH7p1ph7c-cfJO7dA4g0dHsPkpxyJugaa8oIePGEuGYRo5C8MVJKUpbpspLJE&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1520.28)):

It's a whole other thing, but the whole organism working around thinking and feeling and willing. These things have to be understood.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:25:27](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=ZVKqKZStLfjMD82KwXlFb2Ua27dDoCMPuKM-xZxr3DTjhJLICln01vLQfHOoQxmIcG1uXNOsqpPe6_uNAw5kwQ_mGSg&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1527.85)):

And this is before you're really even getting into the script. Maybe you read through it, right? And you put it away and some ideas have come to you. And then you start exploring. This is where this work starts.

Lenard Petit ([00:25:38](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=A9r8t6Y0UKPp7gxnGc_I_f_mx3yOiTf0wD2vWH6hJRrEMRTiLvGHsNdrjLJ5przb2ALeQnEL2OgJqbGQeho_65TOROc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1538.45)):

Yeah, exactly. Or you say... the stick, ball, and veil thing, that's a whole kind of work. But it's really connected to thinking, feeling, willing. And so you say, "Well, these are not archetypes. These are types. Feeling types, thinking types, willing types."

Lenard Petit ([00:25:56](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=I15umME0q96mTb6Xg2wNZqbX9vDBmo4Hc9aZ9CVmSsbUlcn1TRVQhwygw2SajLHxHY2jCWqBHUPoTviy44d66nBYOIU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1556.62)):

What type is Romeo? Say, "Oh, well he's a feeling type." "Why? Because he's in love with Juliet? Is that why he's a feeling type? Is he a thinking type? Could he be a thinking type? Could he be a willing type?" And then we find out he's a willing type. He just does shit, before he does anything. He does. Then he thinks. No, then he has all his feelings about it, then he thinks about it. But the doing comes first with him.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:26:20](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=W0brF9FQJvc5NAwUcVuYZlQ14jGcWCdY6kQmARvu0rIQvwPBzvlnyJKcZ2EzQDG-q5rbEEai8LD6XEJ8HeIjCV_L7TQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1580.98)):

But the doing comes first.

Lenard Petit ([00:26:21](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Q5zauc7OXEuDg8ZhwFEUsh-UYm59GKxZsQ9J6u9IVP7ElRdLjM5kSQjX4N147HaxIyax4QwQUoPhzm5BgIpcGChCtCU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1581.18)):

Right. And then we find out what his archetype is and we say, "Oh, well this is the quality of the will of his doing. And so we go in this direction. All of it is with the body. I remember talking with people about movement versus whatever, or outside versus inside. People say, "Well, if it's movement like that, then the work is outside in. And when we work in Method or we work in Meisner, when you think this stuff through, it's kind of inside out." And it's like, "Not really." It's a funny way to talk about things and judge things. A lot of people don't want to really think about movement. They think about movement as, "Oh, you have to study dance. You have to study fencing. You have to study period styles of movement," or this kind of a thing. But nobody but Chekhov says you have to study the body, because that's the instrument and that's where everything is. Everything that is known, everything that needs to be known has to be put into the body. And everything that has to be expressed has to come through the body. So, he said that's the tragedy of our profession, actually. I just read that the other day.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:27:40](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=j_cbLDSEsMyBFRY3nvpDckxHj8hOpPhcCW5e--8TTUDxEDFmmW5xZDfTmx005P0EQapsRwizRrAUA6OakJU1uNmoVTc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1660.08)):

It is. Even just getting my students who are coming to me because they want to be seriously trained. You have to talk them into understanding, "You need to develop your body. You need to develop your voice if you really want to be able to create interesting-"

Lenard Petit ([00:27:52](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=u514OIs-unLrT0PgupYdCkbYF3j2_RWUHNIkGq3PPO6A3fPuIN94Ud9QWRnzBK_ADtCg8JMSGHdGKEFlFTYQ9GSLOUw&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1672.27)):

But the attitude that you have while developing the body, that's an important thing. And that's really what the Chekhov thing is very special, because what's called psycho-physical. So he says, "Of course we have to work on the body as actors. And of course we have to work on the human psychology." But when we start to do that, we find out that it's in the body. When you work on anything, it's in the body. So, working on dance classes, that's good. Working on fencing and combat classes, that's really good. But that doesn't develop... I mean, if you had the right attitude about it, that could develop the psychology, but that doesn't develop the psychology. That doesn't develop the heart, really, of the actor. That develops their muscles. So you have a fit body. So, that's not our aim. Those are his words. "This is not our aim in developing and working with the body, to have a fit body." It's a consequence and result of working with the body. It's a benefit. Great, my body gets in shape, or my muscles are fit, because I'm working with the body. But my attitude is, "What does it mean? What does this movement mean to my feeling life? What does it mean to my thinking life? What does it mean to my willing life?"

Lenard Petit ([00:29:13](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=No55jOaKHuwA0qZf9Ir-L_V4_F9iqxH5KLC5voiHJzJ9hnRNW3lTZCZuD3gUF1gk-hSgIj_lqQsM7djMV2GjQjet2GM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1753.91)):

And so, we find out that certain movements, they very definitely mean certain things, in terms of what has to be expressed or what is expressed. And that's a distinguishing element in a Chekhov actor, is their body, their use of their body and the ease with which they can manage things. Very difficult things.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:29:39](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=9PL2bWq5c-UvrJizSFwYm3o-Wh4LJv4VE3VVDb4pPfPtSldzQpsA6sbRLPlNttGN_Jxltdg3OsDc-wkVKT5oyr1TQn0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1779.04)):

That's a lot of hard work to be that simple, yet clear and do things with ease and grace.

Lenard Petit ([00:29:46](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=nHqc21KMn-axfP0bSimJvfLarjCRD4ILa4T2pLXrq1YO7DkQ7vNIOpXr_4WT6ENFy_oWd2Nr2UdtRQZ0zq2vhRWWlTE&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1786.44)):

But it all has to be worked into the working. All of those attitudes and ideas are continually being put forth to the actor as they're moving. As they're moving their bodies, there are different aims that we're looking for.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:30:02](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Dk3ci_r93V7uZDzZWuR2-dQDzAyau1UL1DCtdgkrYXmapZRbA41lh-kRcAXtndcb41wVtvAf8NO2IjaSFevzJoMVmwU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1802.87)):

And you're training, you started with Meisner's work, right? I mean, that's where you started?

Lenard Petit ([00:30:08](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=XIhFkmmDcTJzD2lc4PH5AAG-l_an1KClbg_u96uYoxhNQ2v0dB6GLA6uLhXhEays8vp78Sq6fkZ-bhxQHS9JeUG6BtI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1808.41)):

No, not at all. Not at all. No, before that I came into the theater in the 1970s and it was mine. Pantomime was a very popular thing. White-faced mime. It was like hippie kind of thing in a way. And people were performing on the street. So, I don't know. I got interested in that and then I just got swept up into the theater. But it was a physical thing. I came in through movement. Then I found Chekhov's book. And his first chapter in his book is about movement. It's about the body and about movement. And I said, "Oh, this must be what you've got to do to be an actor." So I studied it. No, I studied Chekhov before I studied Meisner.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:30:49](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=vZXCOm3Q2Ejd7MwB5U2Toe4pQ1B0vM---yLOJkAtvZiDJ0HOoHwj1N3iEsWVpnknJ84LtcEjcfKZVUmFNyKnQHp3K48&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1849.95)):

What made you jump into a Meisner class?

Lenard Petit ([00:30:51](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=WWzFx0LQn7vwqQBl59AwmizIPWIOncfMBZsblmwbPP6WKW5PkknC3LTOaQke2C8jIvWCdw4mo8uHn3M-6dx1LWcpgOw&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1851.65)):

A really good friend of mine was studying with William Esper. And she was a great actress. And she just was getting better and better. And her understanding of things and her approach to rehearsals. We worked closely. And she was just getting better and better. And so I said, "I'm going to check this out."

Charlie Sandlan ([00:31:08](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=d4aYWdxvQWos6OHSRVE6By696TMLCTMXWJZS0pWYsZMhZi43j99dMoJeo_v4ROrhStdlIbXQCJRUAyCKsDWxfxA8pfg&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1868.92)):

What do you mean by better and better?

Lenard Petit ([00:31:09](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=RjDFpULLaRUSpGuBo0mwy6i3Pccsj2MCB_g8_u5CyCEvp156_hiZ5DUYmDnylRcK_4F-ZFKEW8cuwzDzBwARSo0UwJ4&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1869.98)):

More proficient. More expressive. More efficient, in a way, in terms of rehearsing and making things work. It spoke to her. Bill really spoke to her. So I went and studied with Bill. And I put all this Chekhov in my pocket and just went and did that. I learned a lot from him. A lot. And I'm really happy that I studied him. And he liked me and he hired me, also, to teach and Rutgers and be your teacher, you know? Because I asked him for a job, he said, "I'm sure you're an expert in what you say you're an expert in." And it was movement that I wanted to go and teach there. Eventually I just started doing Michael Chekhov. At first I was doing Michael Chekhov, but I wasn't saying what it was. I was just saying 'some movement'.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:31:58](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=RKvsb0PkfvDKAIYKnBe1aklEJE2jNgMbD-LSwh0nvXwAVhlJjowSAuqkvW-3mWECD-d_aR0xUz3-oSEJn2vlIqpciXc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1918.43)):

Well, why do you think that Meisner and Chekhov are so compatible with each other? Because they are.

Lenard Petit ([00:32:03](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=29e9v7j2iwdIGp62SYgfQEZhKj-dNA8reEAkhb85IjZeKAhiywGaqZktSEFsfzpwJ4xgide7X6fIU54xZ0o98m5zAdM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1923.51)):

Well, I think that... I don't know. I studied Chekhov with people who studied with Michael Chekhov. And Chekhov had certain attitudes and ideas about the rehearsal and about training and about technique. And he had come from Stanislavski and they did a lot of this... it's called internal work. A lot of think-y work, table work, that kind of stuff, script analysis. But he abandoned that. He said, "We used to spend months back in Moscow at the table. Months at the table, getting more and more clever about our characters and what we would do. But as we're getting more and more clever, we'd better getting more and more cold, because we weren't up on our feet, acting. We were in these cold rehearsal rooms. Just getting cold and being clever. And then when we'd get up to act, we'd forget a good portion of what we had been so clever about, and we started acting and then things started happening." So anyway, he didn't teach that business of analysis and-

Charlie Sandlan ([00:33:07](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=gunxpN7B7fK0CLzB0bdstxIji5fg4sbiGBxNxqLg3FkJJ-4tejIxx8orIfFu7m8slOM_515P7T4hMmwdngCO5F_9plw&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1987.78)):

Like, breaking things down into beats and actions and-

Lenard Petit ([00:33:10](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Kjr-w2wYVCwGddSFVIRDnP8jFZ3J5yvqFhWC7ub3iMtik2Y1HVN3OvpuRe8onOPOrDl-Vn_OmNiavW558SElsn0hVr4&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1990.37)):

Well, no. We're talking about archtypes. We're talking about large things. We're talking about very generalized ways of moving and then finding the particular in that for yourself and the character and being... the question is never, for us, why? Who, what, why, where? All these questions that the actor's supposed to... the why question is not for us, he said. We probably will need to answer that. If we start there, we'll never get anywhere else. Our question is how? How does this take place? How does Uncle Vanya take place? Well, if Uncle Vanya is an acolyte towards the sphinx, for example, that's going to take place in a certain way. He's going to have a relationship to the sphinx. He's going to have a relationship to the high priest, who's the professor. He's going to have a relationship to the nun, who is Sonya, and this kind of a thing. But we say, "Well, he's a fool." Well, and then you build all these other archetypes around... it's going to be a very different... how it happens is going to be really different.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:34:05](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=NVYoqIo8LSHs8b-GnT7rcYT9khQA0RuVOHaR8v3bivH2JEwHKbe6tH5M45sQ5xKyPTVCe_WT4BkuBylzQmoheJcfS6Q&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2045.31)):

Is that important? That sounds like it's more important for a director approaching the script, than for the individual actor playing Yelena, let's say.

Lenard Petit ([00:34:14](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=l_iUrKWf8VwwkZ2O14j-NRBTnTVttYO7GUyh96Mt9OfEjO6xnauLOuAmrvkkYCKThfJ7oBBhnTJ9sL24c_718csgQFQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2054.13)):

I mean, that kind of a thing, that's so specific as that, it would benefit from a group agreement, indeed, that's generated by the director. That's why this woman in Greece is so excited, because she's a director. But that doesn't mean that I can't think along these lines for myself. It doesn't matter. So long as I have these certain lines I have to say and this certain business I have to do, and I have to be good, right? That's really what's required. So, however I come to it, it's my business, you know? So anyway, getting back to your question, it was all this business of how. I was all involved with how. And how different from myself could I really be, beyond the stage? And I remember being on stage and friends of mine coming to see me in a play and saying, "Wow, it took me a good 5, 10 minutes to figure out it was you. You really left yourself. You were somebody else." So, "Oh, I'm a big success," to myself.

Lenard Petit ([00:35:17](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=PhWT7SbBgB4i-gNTELh_A-P4Z_pBHlul03l8tXwZRDfRMwrbJBLnYoNxHsVT3OQq9uPnYaLH_og7tsL9e7B5-NPSC5Y&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2117.8)):

But then, as I said, I was watching my friend develop in another kind of way. And so I went and studied with Bill. And what I think happened is a learned a lot about analysis. I learned a lot about what is actually necessary for the actor to be in a play, or to realize a script, same would be in the film. So, what I've figured out was, in Meisner you are taught what you have to do to be an actor. And that was really very thorough and wonderful with Bill Esper. He really taught me what I had to do. But they don't really teach you how to do it.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:35:56](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=BYaP4jwMJUrkv1kUpK292zUurW7lHwrMxX-YNHU0Pk7UA5TMlpLYlQxAzVX8NmEpRL6CnVfYGK8O8d_lncwtGOUdMAk&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2156.09)):

That's where I think his work stops.

Lenard Petit ([00:35:58](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=8uLNyKD7AQpTvAIHHIBrma4VYesjWcwEEGZfr6g0QW_S3lAtBiaMkHPoAbOf7acl-ygwAVrbEMJdgt3eS9Q1b8E-rvM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2158.99)):

Yeah, so that's why these things go together very well, because we learn the what about acting from the Meisner and we learn how to do it through Chekhov.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:36:09](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=dggzXqqI62tqaKG6tJZrpKGWq3t8NfowaSaiKEyHM9023am1Ei1qmZL09uEYLgvmzQz3EQcX1tuo9jdCyK-DQ1Blg1A&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2169.72)):

Well, I always use this analogy when I try to tell my students the importance of what you do. I say, Meisner built the frame of the house, gives you a foundation, but there's nothing inside of it. And Chekhov is a great way to just furnish the house. Put in some good furniture, hang the blinds, paint it these wonderful colors. But you've got to be able to find a way... whether it's Chekhov or something else, you've got to find a way to be able to add more to what Meisner provides you or you're going to be boring. You might be truthful, you might be organic, really listening and grounded, and have a good reality. But you're not going to be interesting.

Lenard Petit ([00:36:49](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=VAZkrDSQY5LItn2-CCNAwD6wBeVqHTt-3R4URSLiK326vy3wUV1C0X30BSFKgSIa3hqKADvr8YdWNOxtycJASh70hpI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2209.85)):

No, but that's a great way of talking about these two things. I think it's lovely. Lovely picture. Because that picture immediately requires you, if you're going to into that picture, to use your imagination. In the Chekhov work, the most celebrated of all the functions that we human beings have, is the imagination. And he's always, always, always asking us to engage the imagination. Try it this way, try it that way. Look at it this way, imagine this, imagine this impossibility. I was told he would give his actors impossible things to do. I mean, one thing I remember was, "Take this letter over there into the dark corner of the room and read it." You wouldn't do that. You'd go to where the light is. You'd go to where you have a light. But you've got to do it. It's what he's suggesting you do. so, how is that going to happen, where you can legitimately read the letter, but you're in the dark? And then there's all this interesting behavior and interesting thing to look at kind of comes out. And that all could only happen with the imagination.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:37:55](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=2UEsquYUJ8hxHqjaUBCJhSQNez7jR1b_RbCueXBK0qa1nfOKgl4m1T9B8FRD-jnZsizEJrqEnMizw1S8bzckVhy17DY&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2275.89)):

And then if you end up reading that letter with that idea, in a brightly lit room or under a lamp, it's like, "What's this guy doing? What's he doing?"

Lenard Petit ([00:38:08](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=HRb85MuITaQR5RUswZiJ6BMQLSlD7CqrL46XL1dmuydK-ep6TgWqIA29IhjTSgj3XF13iP_rT_0Q1BISHT75kOrVEzw&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2288.61)):

I remember I directed a play at Rutgers called The Fox. But I gave the guy in the play, Paul was his name, I gave him this direction at one point, because he had a line, which was, "Well, what are we going to do? Why don't we go out?" Something like that, right? And this took place in this old farmhouse, which didn't really have electricity and stuff. And so, the scene opens up and there were three people in it. And one woman is sitting by a lamp and she's sewing or something like this. And another person is sitting by a lamp doing something else. He's wandering around not knowing what to do. He's sort of a guest in the house and he doesn't really know what to do. So, he picks up a book, there's no lamp anywhere for him to read by. And so, he's walking around with this book, and sitting here and sitting there and trying to open the book and then his line is, "So what are we going to do? Let's go out." He just slams the book shut, because he can't read it. And says, "What are we going to do?"

Lenard Petit ([00:39:06](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=FIDwqVsW6UGs9exEwD9XzekLIGuFfFrFfdTK3BC3catMqjXwWwN5WOuqP89_eOUGy-SWgt-3ux6wIBcQxu5Nh8ySsf4&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2346.83)):

It is so beautiful. It was just such a... the line was necessary. He brought himself to a point where he had to say only that line.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:39:15](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=LcJwVKpbm3_lWzfFdgE-abvAy0qi6fF6Gfzz187lQ8P57syjwLIx6KDsgd3rXZXWsnETCuWHN52rx1DksUjkZ2FMZ18&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2355.35)):

And Meisner teaches you to try to figure out how to do that. That's why nursery rhyme work and all that stuff about justifying text. But Chekhov gives you how to do it in a really interesting way.

Lenard Petit ([00:39:25](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=AjBx1DfI6lTaWImFOPN_bJRcrGFRexvZ2V4FMHNv6hLshI_Iz8oGtRx4z_64zh9fXLsuVm84ysFxe1aukCpoFYt4SGQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2365.78)):

In a fun way, very playful. Very, very, very playful.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:39:28](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=kRUK-c0h2PGDyVFmrvdltHvxw6Q0O58S9bOSLvLbBxwtYVXsL5rsFEEPoNkAK4effKUMfAYdFy_TMA4hzyaAa43A2UM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2368.87)):

Yeah. Yeah.

Lenard Petit ([00:39:29](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=D-JLXrq35Q-6oEEJuJ01_T7FnqcZtN3Bu_XdjPqTXeX1PNzwrz5Q5IYs58onFt1p4wBRxjyuLgvrKqOwiC1DeJiKR7U&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2369.86)):

But always the imagination. And some very difficult exercises for the development of the imagination and they're really worth doing. Kind of crazy. One of them was like, "Imagine a horse, a big horse. And take some time to sort of construct that in your imagination and now, ask the horse to walk backwards." Which is something that you don't normally see, a horse walking backward. You see a horse walking forward. If you can see the horse, that's great. Now you're going to make it do something with your imagination and do it so that it's real enough for you to see.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:40:08](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=4huVOKK2AfsfbbM9L96du_Nd7E-pR3-bVIgFzsoEv6OS2ZLPguuWfePsAtt564KyLwS0ThT7YnacwJ0VmtWOGbslGh4&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2408.4)):

Well, it's interesting you said about backing up, because you were the first teacher that I had that made me aware of how important backspace is, above, below, I mean, the 360 degrees. There was, I'll never forget this. We were working on entrances and you gave one idea. You said, "I want you to enter as if you are bringing along with you the entire lineage of human history trailing behind you."

Lenard Petit ([00:40:37](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=N_DWzDiZxlHe0WkXa_VmCauHmGUdQWYatCKl7PPh1CL70RlK1dCuzgpAUYTAdpEJdMZgRh06WAyZMxotgtpPVmAySoo&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2437.05)):

Fantastic walk.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:40:39](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=SKJtu20Uil9KTSotnFc1Kmi7cXzU2ar4-1_puteRi9BXiGqcE-PUd510NZtyeoIJTzQw4An-HCMYVrP8mBbVLXEjImE&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2439.29)):

Oh my God. It changed me, immediately. And that was one of the moments where things started to unlock for me. I was like, "Oh my God. This is possible."

Lenard Petit ([00:40:49](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=bsya6-G7deQqilC-pRFTvN3EashAvbbVE0itPKTGgd9UkOptLshio050xJWbUUGevBaiAP-fwqYgAquWR09VLEh12mY&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2449.28)):

Yeah, and if you have that imagination and you do it, then I see it. I see it. Yeah, I remember part of that is like, lift your arm and 100 years just fall out of your arm as you lift it up. And then, you do that with a group of people, a whole class. Wow, what an entrance that would be, in a play where a whole town sort of enters like that. It's impressive. And there's, again, this sort of intangible thing that's going on. Nobody knows what it is you're doing, you know? I'm very interested in the theater and I'm very interested in the fact that the audience is interested in the theater. And the audience knows they're in a theater and the audience knows that they're looking at somebody on the stage. And that the actor should also know they're looking at an audience. They're facing an audience. And of course, we all know that. But a lot of actors, they work with this fourth wall business. That's all fine. That's all fine. But it's so small and private in a way. And it's difficult for me, actually, to be in the audience and to witness that kind of theater now, where there's no acknowledgement of me in the audience.

Lenard Petit ([00:42:01](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=IrgMvjwjWHFy9ph_4up3pamMfaxmbn0R6bG2XLG3mprOqIhZHDd3_0o_KtZduw7-uT0u3buk-NS-FBXnlS-qgCjrBYM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2521.32)):

Not me personally, but just as being, these people are on a stage, performing in an play. And I actually remember working at Rutgers, getting involved with some students in a discussion about this word performance and how they said, "Well, in our acting classes, if they tell us we're performing something, that's not good. That means that I'm not doing it right, that I'm not being real and I'm not being truthful, and I'm indicating," and all that whole list of other words that are used, which are connected to the performance. And I said, "Yeah, but when you are in a show, when you are in a play, and you're eating dinner, what are you thinking about doing? You're thinking about going to your performance. You think, 'Oh, my performance starts at eight o'clock.' And the producer is paying you for your performance and they're paying you because you can perform well. Because they could have hired somebody else who could perform better than you. But no, you're the person who can perform this thing. So, performance is an important element in being an actor. Because you can believe whatever you want to believe, but in the end, if you just did it for yourself it wouldn't be interesting, would it?"

Charlie Sandlan ([00:43:26](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=YgAPrzJYLUaqfwdDUAu7VSrtpxTr-5u82WvzkBA6AmhmNRVeQs32w9WaPLfpwqF1AOM8t3WBYT3k01JPwDUcpkZRs6Q&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2606.64)):

Well, so when you read a script, are you just constantly seeing the how and behavior being played out?

Lenard Petit ([00:43:33](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=DNAPr9qG-GZPLPV7z0hbeXj7_-zfPlFSYRCfvLAeIedW1I_Dk1VgkoMoB6HmkWZbndxoV9XhefDzAr1XBT4vXlGauYI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2613.5)):

Yeah, I want to love it, right? I want to love the script and so I want it to be as active and alive and magical and colorful and bright, because I love the theater to be like that. So I, when reading the play, I read it imaginatively. I don't read it to figure out what to do. I don't-

Charlie Sandlan ([00:43:54](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=CBVPn2IqIi_fDFSH3kgcYchQc-o4GrbJreEKbhgEY7uGFwu1Lc0Zt3AiKeikcHvd_HzgzHVO8v_M9CLCu9sj7voQQ0w&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2634.2)):

What do you mean read a play imaginatively?

Lenard Petit ([00:43:57](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=ysC20LIYcOTapi8SAmH5EPiCgLqvB0QodVKBo7Y5tHbNdoXmx7GnMQWRoP-1LTfY4AIytPLxGrdm8TqgbKSyVt2qfeM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2637.17)):

I read it, first of all to enjoy it. This is the first reading. I'm in the play. I know I'm in the play, that's why I'm reading the play, but I have to separate myself from that and live only in the desire that I would like to do this play, I really want to be in this play. Not that I'm in this play, but I really want to be in this play. And from that point of view when you read the play, then you're filled with a lot of ideas. When you come to it and you say, "I'm in the play," and then you read the scene, it's like, "Oh shit, I don't know what to do. I can't see it. I can only see the struggle of it. And hopefully the director will have ideas, hopefully the professor will have ideas," or whatever, right? No, no. You cannot bank on that. you cannot bank on that. You have to come fully alive in your imagination. So, we read the play from the point of view of desire and enjoyment, and not work.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:44:50](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=aMPrI9kMdIc4eDKo7OEwrGuerDWDLAbUIgbcogWi3lt6Vy1XiqfCAzrGRSWYl7fF_SVxn2kwVlun7wgM7JiViz567lk&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2690.81)):

How does that change the experience?

Lenard Petit ([00:44:52](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=elkaESOoMN53ALPeG_Jid7lAuDNz4biRTK4OSX0-fqc6XTpGjP_jOomBwQqVjnnsetIfxMxf2pxv7XVpkiPDmXJtKQs&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2692.2)):

Because you're able to see things then. You're able to see things happen, as opposed to wonder what it will be. "Oh, it could be like this, it could be like this. Oh, what do I see here? Oh, I see this person jumping up and down when he's saying this line." And maybe I'll never do that, maybe the director won't let me do that, but it doesn't matter.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:45:15](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=vGjz_yNGEMLzTdR7-btPW2cv09vnSVYqLEf11HYqgsSw8W6lZXL8faaC9wyxi-jZfVMlLaSlLMDVcHQuXUU1mG3vGUY&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2715.68)):

It doesn't. And I try to tell my students all the time, "It's not about the lines." Everyone gets caught up about the lines. You got to get behavior first. Let the lines run through the behavior and then-

Lenard Petit ([00:45:24](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=N9RoLQN5WFC1HEoLnanis-F2bQ8e-6_3xVI1GKtT88nmtz7JkIlghWFTW0JuvXB9xYNzuNfQgPNA1Ovp0VPxG5A9vlo&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2724.15)):

Yeah, yeah. Chekhov suggested just really whisper lines for the longest time.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:45:29](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=ymQH05pX7DHqA_D5stb029Pdv8WrtbJeKMUe_nKiPVWTSM_4lTV0qc2h0Ae-FDGZESCbYL24hlXtOWZ8e3yiAs23K7Y&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2729.65)):

Whispering? In rehearsal or as you're working?

Lenard Petit ([00:45:32](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=KsuGOOo3OC6NblcT1p7GFmKY8-_-L2zvZeqERaVfFhWqB3KYmAXf87GZodRm5Epv3PhOyhwjZ94vUfcYMGF2Lnw60oo&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2732.77)):

Yeah.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:45:32](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=auAYjgeOQhjrZzExyenci4rTWJPSDvJJzHNR_vBhtddx3hHu9fkh5jUgCFzFoGxNCN2YmhQ4cc4Nog6B8sa-Pd9ygpU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2732.83)):

What's the value of that?

Lenard Petit ([00:45:33](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=6DpHMtG77VZdobJ_l_TbjStHKMPrFxG5iLY0cl72Qcd2jAn0YSiEqzcU-od_5jdY31W4xSJUOX4ZibC7eXh992BCDFk&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2733.73)):

Not getting fixed on a reading in the very beginning, trying to get something. If you whisper it and it's not acted out so much, then you can receive something from that. You could receive the other person. I'm interested in living and the possibility that actually it could be a little bit different night by night. And that can only happen if you work on the how. If you work on the why, you're just going to be stuck in the world of reason.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:46:06](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=_Iwv6Hf7wNac6Ik8pUT7EM4Lu1eTg5QpzdWQopck-HWVTBTNam8OtlvwPIl1kaVB_k-2mN1YcGaaC-MHc63b2claiB0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2766.62)):

In the intellectual.

Lenard Petit ([00:46:07](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=pOwZEtLBQmwWWkcXNCSK9mzxftBR3HMleu9x3Y-ThzbzYCMFhbAq6cjPKCJFz83KC0T8n78yHmMi1xY4dS0ZH-uXFIg&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2767.16)):

Yeah, it's rational. One of the ways to describe Chekhov is to say that it's a completely non-rational way of working or rehearsing and then performing. But it's not irrational. So, when you say non-rational, people automatically assume it's irrational. It's not irrational, it's just not rational. One plus one doesn't always equal two. One plus one can equal five sometimes. And it's like, "Wow, well how can that be? How can that be?" Just let it be, let it be. It's really, really quite fascinating what you can do. Because I'm teaching about the human experience as it's physical experienced. So I'm teaching about the human body and I'm teaching about being a human being and just the mere fact that we stand up on two legs. We're the only creatures on the earth that do that. That makes us people. That's one of the things that makes us people. And that we have a head, and that we have a neck, and that we have all these things.

Lenard Petit ([00:47:08](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=fph4EAuvCXetLhpbD7FaWu_vf-5S7x0bB82sWA7V-Y2mLNggA9nfdSkFoJlGHNBFUYqvGmEGOz80byy2iHArtpqSOWI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2828.18)):

This is what I teach, so that's all the same for everybody. So, in the Meisner work, for example, I know, because I did it with Bill and also studied with Maggie and sitting in classes and stuff, and there's this connection of being quite personally connected to what you're doing. And this is a kind of place of measurement, in a way. You can measure the actor by how personally related. And you can say, "Well, you're not personally related to that, so what are you going to do to make yourself more personally related? Or to make another choice in which you can get personally connected to it," right? Is that true?

Charlie Sandlan ([00:47:44](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=eABhGghytrZQlcvZ5rYP47culEenfCtjofIgtPiqCfseNd91QFk6hcVInmHnSQiEtjVUxISrfUtv2L69TjVARI6hWpU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2864.53)):

Absolutely.

Lenard Petit ([00:47:46](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=37Y7qIiA9K4dgIp2skLb7LUE0PhpGhFI1B2ctXcCEHQOeGNZ0-g7p45D13-CK7qWRjeaDpAH414x-768pg-Lb-vRUjc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2866.36)):

What happens to the body when I'm sad? What happens to the body when I'm happy? What happens to the body when I'm jealous? I don't have to recall the time when my girlfriend was taken away from me by some asshole and how jealous I was. I don't need that. All I need to know is what my body does with it. And my body will do something really, quite specifically. All I have to do is ask for it. When you're sad... how do you know that you're happy? How do you know that you're sad? You say, "I'm sad. I'm tortured," and whatever. I mean, how do you know when you're hungry? You could answer that one, right? "My stomach is telling me. My stomach is saying something to me. My stomach is saying, 'Feed me. Put something in here that I can work on,' because I'm losing my energy, I'm losing my strength. I need to sit down. I feel so weak from hunger." The body's telling you that, right? It's the body. And the body also is the... it's the only... how can you say that, "I'm happy"? What makes you say you're happy?

Lenard Petit ([00:48:55](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=ncEgUfC5njXFkQjdYnRBUkC1CMdBoSTMv8bIYpPp3z2Gun6pDcJ2V0eqxAJB-qpMA06PEapFTSd2JsnJw8_PcwzwkFo&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2935.74)):

It's not because you're thinking about some friend of yours. I mean, they might be part of that happiness in some way, but they're not the reason that you can say, "I'm happy. I'm happy because I'm having this conversation with you." I'm happy, maybe because I'm having this conversation with you, but I don't know it unless my body's telling me that I'm happy. And it's quite specific how we experience these things. And conversely, how blocked we are to these things. And that's a really sad thing for actors who are really blocked. They have the desire to act, they have the knowledge. They take all the technique, they take everything else. But they're blocked in their bodies. They're blocked in, what, biofeedback, basically. So, we are always looking for connects with biofeedback. "What was that? What happened then?"

Lenard Petit ([00:49:52](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=me5B_YzYM3aeqX9Yo_mmgk5rcjYJUQSSSljtBGKnrm1tFTEII_GSVatyBICu42n5gynSg0smqBIgvE36ykiKl7xhWck&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2992.7)):

I remember working with some guy, I don't know, he was doing some Shakespeare thing. I said, "Can you just ask yourself to experience the physical sensation of defeat?" He said, "What do you mean? Am I defeated? Why am I defeated?" I said, "No, I won't tell you why you're defeated, I'm just going to say that I want to experience the sensation of defeat." And he was standing up, his knees kind of buckled a bit, right? I said, "Oh, what happened?" He said, "I don't know, what happened?" I said, "Did something happen just then?" He said no, I said, "All right, stand up, start again." So, he stands up straight again. "I want to experience the sensation of defeat." And his knees buckle, right? And I said, "What happened?" He said, "I don't know. I'm trying to experience the sensation of defeat as you asked me and I'm trying to think of what would defeat me or what would make me defeat." And I said, "Don't you see you're already in that? Your body did that and spoke and actually gave you a signal and a cue?"

Lenard Petit ([00:51:00](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=sY7lGCahLXNUjxRvzQVFE0bSSGzlFZVzZXTsxumhq0-9ZGE6953B23hKKo7kl0vgSutN95Eo5K0O8HbfhF6P7YaNBt4&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3060.47)):

You're going to go down, the defeated have fallen. They fall in defeat. You go down. Yes, you go down. It took half an hour or something, no so long, in times of a person's training. But it took a half an hour of a session to make him realize, or help him realize that something was happening in his body. And then once you can experience that, you can experience all things.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:51:23](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=yZVggD7OLGizsGIYUwj6Ou0lIcYCOjQOqvAtguYImD3l7Sbn7H9UEUkLJMyhHQK0NsaUz-s9nSRUkCWTPHqaMKrbdQU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3083.57)):

When we have all these sayings, when you really think about, not think about it, but put it into a physical gesture, like, "Oh, the agony of defeat."

Lenard Petit ([00:51:32](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=RyDERwok4wlBkexYqMfRK0wNQItQN9Qn7WEmQznZb2h9ET-qjnHDpKdaqPSPI_ArKxr6H3-nbUWwLndzeI1hRDRARXM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3092.4)):

Yeah, even, "I fell in love, she fell in love, he fell in love, they fell in love." Did they? But don't you fall asleep? Yeah, you do, too. All these things are just real. They're completely real, but we have said them so much that they don't really mean the real thing anymore. They mean the metaphor of it. To have fallen in love, that's a fact. You fall in love. And the special thing about that fall is that you don't give a fuck. You don't care if you're going to fall and smash your face on the ground, and that's true about being in love, the first love, it doesn't matter. "Oh, nobody can understand my love. Nobody can understand this person that I'm in love with and I'm so in love with this person." "It doesn't look like it's real." "Oh, it's so real. It's so real. You don't know. You don't know." And what they are is in a free-fall that they're falling into each other. They're going to save other some how, these people that are falling in love. But they're in a free-falling. Which is different than falling asleep, is-

Charlie Sandlan ([00:52:40](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=9hny-pVMlgFWIdNxI168Rw3A8o4a0TWuGhyEaCeyMdpvD0Vjg9bLjwtObrMX_upC4rvo1Uc5rasqrJoC2phio7cudbE&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3160.49)):

Or being lovesick.

Lenard Petit ([00:52:41](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Qjp9FieUcdtV4sYbYbCW_mEcn4tSPFDghmh2R6_0_aReMUxBJOkoJUakRkCvMNkPZPlAiUrMN9pDx29B7U9VoD98zgM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3161.81)):

Yeah.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:52:42](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=7DqMjzZkAJU2pkm0IpB89B5cNTI_SQusgWceIeAZsAWwKBZBkFvGN7FHb6PUo7rJIrCznPsehh7NC0JLO8UslK2QZiM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3162.12)):

You know? What's that?

Lenard Petit ([00:52:44](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=7cYkENZz7gwA-JeXyfC4pqcZWaZYyu_mGKbyzfkXJ3Kvip2N7zSL77LZlFSqDruEGPo3_6Ucgq1J7upLaijSgU31zsg&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3164.82)):

Look at it. Look at it. The body is talking. Everything is all this kind of feedback. But this goes back to what Chekhov said about the tragedy. The biggest tragedy for the actor is that they have to use their body, because they also have to use their body to live with. We develop all these different kinds of mechanisms, and they're called habits. They're called the ways people how their bodies. Some person cannot be around another person or can't even be in life without folding their arms, or putting their hands in pockets, or crossing their legs when they sit down or all these kind of things. They're all these kind of coping mechanisms which help us to numb this sense of the biofeedback. So, we try to undo all that stuff.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:53:33](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=MFaktie0m4KVanYtkZh0oly1AKxn7qExvKW6NX39IAsWhsmUQhkQjp9wwTbmJWks0eZS7tluL0AGQJf4WrbFs23CllQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3213.34)):

So, when you're working on a script, you're directing actors, let's get the behavior first and then figure out what the emotion life is? Or does the emotional life come out of actually putting your body in a physical state or a physical position?

Lenard Petit ([00:53:50](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Ag8JGxVBCNE1YMUQVXWZlqBA9bbwJftlCvA7tX2dNmxCMohddDPj5XdWui-w6vtjgYUIFlwVMp1nbgcM1LeXAJo3uDI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3230.96)):

Let's tell the story in the most interesting, vibrant, vivid... that's a term that you guys use... way that we can. That's how the rehearsal takes place. So, if you have ideas, lets go for it. Lets see them and we'll make them work.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:54:07](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=koyZrrV7oboLWfrs3ogdSzr696h9u4G3zXWiUFwNZbU5g9Ba6uyPwnnI4hQscXNsxKbHkdvRlS0L7vGyFpRt4uPH858&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3247.31)):

So, how important is emotion? How important to Chekhov was emotion?

Lenard Petit ([00:54:11](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=t5wxL8pDd2rbeJA-5XBfUzwAoeoQ4IC_T4s8i0q1DSgJAvBGqX1iesigLdxn2xnHJl0kwlnKkH7SPLW7lBsMPKTEu7M&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3251.62)):

Hugely important. I mean, he calls it feelings, but he said, "Feelings is the language of the actor." Which is direct conflict to someone like David Mamet who says, "Feelings are fickle, leave them be. Action is the fundamental thing. Is the language of the actor." Action. They're both true, perhaps. But we have a means to invite our feeling life to come to us and come through us. We have ways of doing that. So, for people like David Mamet he says, "Well, the feelings are fickle. They come when they come. And if they come, great. And if they don't, you don't need them. Just get up there with courage and say the lines and do the actions, the tasty actions that you've chosen to do. And the feeling will be there or not. But it's not necessary."

Lenard Petit ([00:55:06](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=emRR1YYbCnhU_LUW4-OR1RaPCqze0-pFZOkfkyhqSat0NnaCnTMMRAqtRuPBiOEnqwAEvQQMOsDEqeMj0TyXYkPNiLw&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3306.32)):

With Chekhov, it's like, we can invite our feelings. And you read plays, like Anton Chekhov plays and it says, "She says, through her tear, laughing, 'Dah, dah, dah, dah, dah.'" And so it's like, "Okay, so I'm crying, because I'm sad? But I'm laughing because I'm happy? What is it? And I have to speak at the same time? That's an interesting challenge, right? That's a really interesting challenge. It must be necessary for the story it the playwright himself has written that." Right? I mean, if the stage manager from the production from 1937 writes, "She cries and then she laughs," that's something different. But if Chekhov says this should happen, it's like reading Arthur Miller in The Crucible, and I'm sure you know the scene when John and Elizabeth meet. He's been in prison and she comes and said, "Just do the confession." Miller writes, it's as if they're in a spinning world." What the hell is that? What is that?

Charlie Sandlan ([00:56:13](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=lxO0gUyD1Fv2JeObF8RM_KDI2lraqRsOUvYfdZDPlK7LtQq1800COmMHPmFPDDkFauuXpYbtVL1NWIin2IidgUyD3rw&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3373.69)):

Let's investigate it. Let's investigate it.

Lenard Petit ([00:56:14](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=lagoSIWk9qLVbUI-jBcESyd2hP85m_L1xAyk-_U52wfiLni9CJjyPftsLCKM-u76wZKF83-xttOcTGVoqb7NfuX9xD8&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3374.47)):

Let's investigate it and see what that is, right? So, you get the world spinning, get the physical space spinning, as an imagination, so that what happens when that happens? You have absolutely no sense of balance and groundedness right? And they're both in this world. It's fantastic.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:56:33](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=wvCUyv_ePqmeoCfhRxHIzTjQNchOhsOL2WQLhlcdIxvPns9MYITXkrDzfW3DvtKBFVt8r5gRuaU3HO7UbBPF9sl5yHs&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3393.03)):

It's a little disorienting, where they find themselves in this position. He's going to die.

Lenard Petit ([00:56:37](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Er4HccWZC0WvHA257HpSqZQUR3MlzXKH5ydEqt9oQodloUU_9TWC0c-Rv8JKYbl7y2_MQ9n4AyxsQj1JjohMnOCK3nw&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3397.88)):

Right, if only-

Charlie Sandlan ([00:56:38](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=gJPab90vW9_MyEKNJwwhno0CbWEzUoD_QkJZBxcTm7kBH2d3fInHPeasAOc3jjfx_6mQyLD5HkclGMgu5YcTSw6glTE&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3398.6)):

Just confess.

Lenard Petit ([00:56:40](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=lDncXvei-26fwiJesAFHz26-J17ZSu-6xPF5K8FfEQE6gEc8BB1Y2ptMkze9klmrHMguSq4nfgbNDUHn2K9N1IXqZV0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3400.82)):

Right. And then you.. or you lose your integrity, right? Or whatever, right?

Charlie Sandlan ([00:56:43](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=nJtyc5Jn2wu-HmPTL3su_VGW8tzgBMcfiqAS9_nm3xP6eyBycTsAFqJAxRvMX3Cb4J-98cS3c_IqFZC7JBvjfTAwG6M&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3403.89)):

Yeah. Right.

Lenard Petit ([00:56:45](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=l1EH2L7ekKHxB9m0tJ07I1g93J4Nk8hR4zF_mRgI2uJuM9c9qDWRmNXlzefwYUCRwOgUhlExVtDXmUnyzTb50ZZU2Ts&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3405.95)):

And so, there's nothing to hold onto in this spinning world. So, it's beautifully put, but difficult. A lot of people would say, a lot of acting teachers would say, "Just cross that out. Just cross that out, do the text." But we say, "No, no, no, no, no. That's just the world that he wants them to be in. It must be in this world if it's going to be the way that it should be to tell this story."

Charlie Sandlan ([00:57:07](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=RmGP0WQ_sFDJ2A09fgA4SsGzPQwsBll6E1MxC0vumqqH2-5OekA8cAlxXB5Ge5Dz9pzUxJ22RzyyxGtQH8sYgU4E2ik&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3427.5)):

Because he sort of may have had something going on in his mind, in his imagination, or he wouldn't have written that.

Lenard Petit ([00:57:13](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Fhk0ohrnntghZ_QuRvpSptx0ngiZXA_2OJ_WKw8Bzw8b3Ybq_ynOnehJJlsHiHv9GoKpnLjT8ljUuK9k_2bWyT4e90U&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3433.61)):

Exactly. That's what he saw and that's how he was able to convey it. It's very impressionistic, but at the same time, much fuller than people would give it credit for.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:57:25](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=sFKbesaQvfqBj8xlsA2XIfC91MT-oV8KJh8fjxhNUBnK68_Hbus7aDiyliWJdxx4sl5OIc4xvps3Yx8aAmGwOkb099Q&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3445.32)):

It's important. It's like looking at a piece of poetry and saying, "Well, those last few words, I mean, not that big of a deal."

Lenard Petit ([00:57:32](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=w1ZJLIQ5eok-tc33KD1KFOHNUPaX9lzQlWmlWfsMLXlU4EcPhiFT6BpYLIZ0q90hCG8jhQfHaHxfQDlHRo7fPAdcDA0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3452.46)):

Yeah, much like in Amadeus when the emperor says, "There's too many notes." And he says, "Well, which notes would you have me take out?"

Charlie Sandlan ([00:57:40](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=O5FhQc7ib3NP7YVkQB1_FTEL7SiYC-DvN5tkZJb2d8cM7utCdnZZDgLsHkrNUTvs36GLO_Bmg4uc_vBwQcbPChAgfQw&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3460.19)):

Yeah, yeah. For young actors out there, actors that are starting out, do you have anything to offer them in terms of advice, or way to think about themselves, or way to kind of reimagine or contemplate what it means to be an actor?

Lenard Petit ([00:57:59](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Ssq7Sl5j7U2XENqqQHO9zNh749BZS51ZJ4lixNO-CCjJzghYIeW1TXk9GiOqZG8b10P59_-s0eJiq1aeB3E-_82SOVY&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3479.18)):

If you don't love it, don't do it. You have to love it. Because it's so difficult. And it's not that it's difficult to do, it's difficult to be. You have to love it. And obviously, you're not getting in it to be a star or getting in it to make a lot of money, because that's going to be a huge, huge disappointment. I mean, actors make a lot of money. Julia Roberts makes a shit-ton of money. Most people don't. Most people make... some people make a living. Some people make a living for themselves and their families as actors. But those people love it. Love's a huge thing. And there's a beautiful, beautiful lecture from Michael Chekhov, an essay called Love in Our Profession. And he talks about all these kinds of love that exist, and puts them in sort of categories and on levels and stuff. And he does this whole thing. He ends it by saying, "Now, we've talked about love, but I want you to notice I did not say, 'An actor must love his profession. I said, 'An actor does love his profession'."

Lenard Petit ([00:59:10](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=-1b4fhp6bjfkQ6JyKFMiwwC3caBcg9e3LdhzTDbszw79OWkOmalSiD-6hyrafE8UY48u_Ho4tSl8c8MS0frBi8PKgfs&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3550.96)):

So, if you don't already love it, you're not going to come to love it. And if you don't love it, it's not going to happen.

Charlie Sandlan ([00:59:19](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=rqSemZWe1nUnQUTq9_oQh_iahlGOz-HhDGzwHpVOlWT17Uq2Za3hUQNnfq2XLx5x-ZFrDdZ9o6NrFsYYxVH8Txkl29s&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3559.97)):

Well, my fellow daydreamers, thank you for sticking around and keeping that phone in your pocket. Please, do yourself a favor and get into Lenard's class. Go to michaelchekhovactingstudio.com and make that happen. You can subscribe and follow this show wherever you get your podcasts. If you have a few seconds, drop a review on iTunes and tell all your friends, "There's this amazing podcast Creating Behavior. You got to listen to it." Go to the website, creatingbehaviorpodcast.com. You can book me on private coaching, you can leave me a message. If you are interested in training yourself as a professional actor, go to maggieflaniganstudio.com and get in my classroom. You can follow me on Instagram @creatingbehavior @maggieflaniganstudio. Lawrence Trailer, thank you for the music my man. You guys, an actor does love what they do. And if that is the case, you've got to play full out with yourself and don't even settle for your second best. My name is Charlie Sandlan. Peace

Lawrence Trailer ([01:00:34](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=UI_z-E1QklvflcwQlLZermcS2Q3iJfOiHlFqoKXJaU8r-QDYfQhZHbG48q_zptltC48HTPN3drLb-i2vpyDZdqDipXc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3634.91)):

(singing)