

Notes March 10, 2021 Keller Wortham kellerwortham@gmail.com

Bilingual Actor (Spanish, French, Portuguese) & Doctor (wellness clinic Optimum Wellness in Glendale, CA)

Keller Wortham and Mel Mack are great friends who go way back. They knew each other before Mel was into Casting. They were audition partners in LA who throughout the years have traveled together and remain close friends. Keller talked about fate, destiny and synchronicity. One of his favorite Marcus Aurelius quotes "Accept the things to which fate binds you, and love the people with whom fate brings you together, but do so with all your heart." He also truly loves the book *The Alchemist*, by Brazilian author Paulo Coelho, so much so that he reread it in Portuguese so he could learn the language. Keller emphasized that we should embrace the things the universe gives us, and we will find a euphoric path in which life is more pleasant.

Since a young age, Keller has been attracted to acting, performing and entertainment. He writes in a journal daily and rereads past entries. He recalls reading about his 5th birthday party when the theme was *The Muppets*. He remembers loving the *Rainbow Connection* and watching Kermit the frog maneuver through his world to become a famous actor. This made him, at the age of 5, want to seek bigger things in life.

Keller did community theatre and high school plays. After high school, he went to medical school to follow in his father's footsteps and become a doctor. During the late nights dealing with trauma, he decided that being a doctor at this time was not for him. A friend gave him the book *The Alchemist* as a gift, and Keller truly believes it changed his life. He said "if your journey takes you back to where you started you will have changed and been enriched." He has been able to successfully balance being a doctor and an actor.

Keller learned to speak Spanish in high school (neither parent spoke Spanish). He continued to study in college, studied abroad in Spain and graduated with a double major in medicine and Spanish. He believes being bilingual has been a huge asset and in fact it launched a lot of his career in acting. He also transitioned his medical career as a doctor in LA in a medical office where he could communicate and serve Spanish speaking patients.

While being a doctor, he continued with his passion of acting. He received a call from his agent asking if he really spoke Spanish **well**. The agent had an audition for an authentic Spanish speaking role. Keller told us to be honest about our skillsets and use them. He was hosted in Bogota, Columbia to audition for a lead role in a tv show. He won the audition and lived in Columbia for 1 year while filming 225 episodes. Risk did not come easily to him and he always needed a safety blanket, but he knows this experience helped him become a better actor. "It was a lot, but it was a magical experience." One of his goals is to go back to Columbia and act in another tv series.

Keller highlighted, "Know yourself and what motives you." When thinking about acting, he said to make sure you **enjoy the day to day**. If it is too stressful then it is not worth it. Keller enjoys his every day to day. He feels he has had a meaningful career as an actor and still strives to be a

full-time actor. However, he does appreciate his job as a doctor. He has been able to meld the two and being a doctor is a unique skillset of his. It has allowed him to portray a doctor and host medical programs. He is now developing a travel show about alternative medicine. It is similar to Naked and Afraid, with no reservation style.

Keller encouraged us to develop our own material highlighting our unique skillsets. "Shoot a scene with your skills if you need material for a reel." During the pandemic, he made a music video with his iPhone in LA. It is a comedic play on "My Sharona" called My Corona. He also made medical videos about mask wearing and Covid safety. He also wrote a comedic web series which is scripted telemedicine highlighting crazy patients during the pandemic.

Keller continues to study acting and is currently studying Meisner. He emphasized the importance of listening to your partner and letting them affect you. He said it is very obvious to Casting Directors when you are not listening! Casting Directors are looking for real humans not robots, so focus less on the text and allow yourself to become the character. Embrace your mistakes – they make you more human. He suggested we convey this in our slates. "Don't just say a fact, make the listener care." Know how you feel about what you are saying. "Be unique and do what you need to do to be confident!

Keller follows Casting Directors on Instagram and believes it is not insulting to comment on their posts. He encouraged us to share our talents and successes (no matter how small) with them as well as post them on social media. He also keeps in touch with the writers on his projects. He said they are more powerful than producers and are flattered when they receive recognition.

Keller believes much of his success was luck and the universe was conspiring. He looked for lessons in his setbacks and embraces them all. Looking back he noticed his successes and failures happened at the same time. He quoted a play called Failure, "Just because it ends, it doesn't mean it wasn't success." Keller constantly evaluates himself and goes back to his journal entries.

When Keller auditioned for the tv series Jane the Virgin, again they wanted a Latino actor. He auditioned with an accent and stayed in character throughout the interaction with casting. He wasn't sure of his choice to portray a Latino, but wound up booking a costar role in the first episode. He told us not to assume what casting wants. Casting loved him and were so happy with their choice that he booked 2 more episodes. He worked hard and networked with the writers during filming. He actually pitched a storyline and ended up working on the next 5 seasons! Keller urged that we can take a genuine interest and be grateful when on set but don't be a pester.

Keller shared with us his memorization techniques. He often memorizes poems to exercise his brain, and he uses mnemonics. He encouraged us when memorizing to have a technique for large scripts. We should read through the entire script, figure out the character, and create a roadmap. Once memorized, film multiple times and work with someone on zoom or in-person. We should be free to act during an audition and not concerned about the text!

In summation, Keller urged us in relation to improving our acting to embrace our uniqueness, look at our past and use it in our acting, have more experiences in life and enjoy the day to day 😊