



Takeaways from Actors' Think Tank, December 8, 2022

Amy Brenneman - Actor/Writer/Producer/Collaborator

Rich Henkels

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“Where is the new idea? It is in your dreams”. You have to give yourself time off for creativity to come to the surface. Put away your “to-do-list” and give yourself time to just do nothing, get some R&R and let your imagination take over.

Dina Laura

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The ego is all about our “To Do” lists, but being an artist is not always about being productive. Sometimes you just need to sit and let your psyche have some downtime and allow yourself to dream. Thank you so much, Amy, for your wisdom and insights, and for giving me a great use for my dormant yoga mat!

Mike Provenzano

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Great session today!! For me I love your talk on creativity and discipline. As an artist things aren't always about productivity. It's also about your dreams, pleasure, etc. Love the thought of taking time each day to focus on your creativity and not just getting things done. Everything isn't always about being productive and getting things done.

Luca Cundo

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"Learn to be word perfect"

Thomas M. Harding

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My favorite takeaway was collaboration. Normally when one here's it in acting it's synonymous with networking. What a refreshing pleasure to hear it in a context of actually working together to make a better project. I loved your stories of Jeff Bridges reaching out to others, a legend in the field, for suggestions and inputs. Even more so your appreciation of it as you yourself have had a career before and behind the lens as well as on the boards few of us could dream of. I've been fortunate to be on a few sets and don't often see as much input solicited as power guarded. It makes an enormous difference in the experience and final product. Thank you for sharing that and your generous time.

Shelley Brietling

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Some excellent advise from Amy Brenneman was definitely expected. It was such a pleasure to have the opportunity to learn from her experiences.

What stuck out the most for me was, "Let your psyche have some time to clear itself."

When we are constantly worrying about our "to do list", we need to take time out to clear our mind. Whether it be on a yoga mat, taking a walk, folding the laundry, anything to give ourselves a chance to breath, regroup and reprocess our thoughts so we can get back to creating and believing in ourselves.

Shauna Hurley-Hansen

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Being in today's session of Actor's Think with Amy Brenemman was a gift. Amy is kind, generous, warm, intelligent, funny, curious and real. My biggest takeaway amongst so many was Amy saying that she has a lot of love for herself. This is huge. Amy talking about being an empath and having to be protective of her own self in the business and in her life. It's a gift and an honor to be present as an Actor and it's also vital to know how to look out

for yourself when you're in a business where your emotions are hard at work. Very grateful for today.

Sandra Bulk

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Amy, thank you so much for all of your insights, especially into self-care and self-love, areas that can fall by the wayside in our busy lives. One thing in our discussion that really struck a chord for me was your story about working on a project in which your co-star was drunk and you felt really unprotected. You said that often, projects become about the "director's vision." You noted that this is a collaborative art form and that "Your [the director's] vision doesn't come to life unless I [the actor] feel safe." That is such an important point to remember. We can't truly be present and free in the moment if, in the back of our minds, we feel unsafe. Thank you so much for driving that home.

Shelby Hightower

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What stuck with me was to nurture your inner creative child. Can't forget that, that's the whole thing!

Mariel McIntosh

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I really loved what Amy had to say about self-discipline. Redefining your discipline as an artist doesn't always mean being productive. Sometimes just taking a moment to relax is equally beneficial. As actors, I feel we can often forget to recharge because we're chasing the next opportunity. That's why this hit home with me.

Paul Blumenthal

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Amy, who claimed that she doesn't have a lot of discipline, does collaborate with others and has sessions and has dreamed together with those who she values their ideas. She says you must have time to "space out" for at least 20 minutes for yourself and deal with your own ego and psyche to be able to get new ideas which don't always come from others.

Roz Jamal

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My takeaway from Amy is that she uses life events to create art. I loved the show, "Judging Amy" and Amy was able to use events from her life to contribute to writing, starring in and producing the show for six years. Amy stressed that actors must remain creative and not overly disciplined.

Gabi Faye

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So many lessons learned in our hour together. My favorites were to create a practice for imagining and let your psyche have some time. Your to-do list is not a creative way to let your inner artist come out, so add creative time/mental breaks. Being an artist is not always about being productive! I also loved your advice on successfully producing a project- find a cheerleader who believes in you and gets it. I will start thinking in these terms and see what it does for my project.

Jamie Vaughan

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She was such an incredible and insightful guest. There were so many things I took away from her but the importance of creating your own content and that good content always wins, stuck with me the most.

Victoria Stevens

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There are days when all I feel like I'm doing is following my check list and trying to think up new things for that check list so that I can move to the next step. Amy was right on point when she said sometimes the things on our check list should be "Take care of yourself, meditate, and do things to help yourself out in this industry". I really resonated with this and definitely going to follow that advise. I am also thankful that Amy told us her personal story of when she was on set of Judging Amy and what she had to go through as an actress on that show. It takes a strong woman to keep going when everything around you seems to be falling apart. A true role model!!

Justine reiss

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“I came from deeply collaborative work. Tv and film I found didn’t have that. I’m drawn to this work because of collaboration- I don’t want to sit in my trailer, I get lonely. Your vision doesn’t come to life unless we feel empowered and safe. Whether we are the composer or the director or whatever.”