

**BACKSTAGE**



**Actor's Toolkit**

# **Cultivating a Confident Mindset To Get Cast**

**with acting coach Joseph Pearlman**

# Introduction



**In this episode of Actor’s Toolkit, Los Angeles–based acting coach Joseph Pearlman dissected how to bring confidence and joy into actors’ lives via manifestation, visualization, and practical advice to achieve the careers of their dreams.**

**We answered your questions, offered feedback, and more—all recapped in this workbook!**

**A graduate of New York University’s (NYU) Tisch School of the Arts and the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) in London, Pearlman is an acting coach for Hollywood celebrities, musicians, and comedians. He helps actors launch their careers faster and reach Oscar potential on set. He works with artists like Zooey Deschanel (“New Girl”), Eugene Simon (“Game of Thrones”), Skylar Grey (five time Grammy nominee with Rihanna and Eminem), Iliza Shlesinger (comedian, Netflix’s “Elder Millennial”), Alex MacNicoll (“Transparent”), Sherri Shepherd (“30 Rock”), Michael Welch (“The Twilight Saga”), Julian Sands (“The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo”), and he also coaches presenters for all the major award ceremonies, including the Oscars, Emmys, Grammys, Golden Globes, and Independent Spirit Awards.**

**He is the owner and founder of the Pearlman Acting Academy.**

*Actor’s Toolkit, focused on keeping actors in tune with the business side of acting, is part of Backstage’s The Slate Watch + Learn Video Programming. We’re taking you directly to acting and casting industry power players through Instagram takeovers, Q&As, live-streamed seminars, and interactive group classes to ensure you’re hitting all the right marks in and out of the audition room! For more from The Slate, visit [backstage.com](https://backstage.com).*

## *How do you cultivate a confident mindset?*

It all starts with how you feel in your own skin. “Mindset is everything. You get how you feel,” Pearlman says. “How you’re feeling now is what you’re going to get.”

Pearlman encourages actors to think of the things they really want, and get specific about the details of their desires. Whether it is a milestone you’d like to achieve in your career, or your personal life, Pearlman says it’s important to let your dream play out in full in your imagination—that way, you can begin to understand how achieving that dream would make you feel.

Once you have imagined the feelings of achieving said goal, you now own that feeling, Pearlman says, and can stay in that mindset for however long you’d like. And when you find that positive mindset, the confidence you feel is self-sustaining. And as an actor, it’s important to understand that it’s not the directors or the producers standing in the way of you getting a role, but rather yourself. “The gatekeeper is you,” Pearlman says.

“The journey to your best selves, your best versions of you as actors, your best career, is always a journey back to yourself,” Pearlman adds. “It’s the inner work. It’s always a journey back to your lit up, confident highest version of yourself.”

### **Try this exercise:**

*Grab a pen and paper and write down your biggest dream for your career. List all the specific feelings achieving that goal would inspire in you, and where exactly in your body you’d feel that expression—would it be in your face? Your chest? Your hands? Now that you’ve got that picture clearly defined, what would that future version of yourself say to you right now?*



# Pearlman's Top 3 Tips for Auditioning

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## **Be Brave**

"There is bravery in being fully yourself," Pearlman says. "Your personality is your secret weapon, both as an actor and in your career."

And surrendering control of the audition—understanding that people are going to like you or not, no matter what you do—is part of that process, so you might as well have fun while you do it. Pearlman says that an actor's goal should be to "stand out without screaming," and to be confident enough to not back off from their authentic self.

## **Stop Looking To Please**

Actors often assume that casting directors know exactly what they're looking for in the audition room. That's not the case, Pearlman says, and it is the actor's job to bring themselves to the work in order to show creators what is possible for a role.

"You can't create and please at the same time," Pearlman says. "Cut the chord of thinking: 'I wonder what they want.' They don't know what they are looking for. They are looking for you to be the solution to a problem."

Learn more about curing audition room anxiety [here](#).

## **Learn What Great Acting Feels Like**

When you feel awesome about your acting, that's when you know you are doing good work, Pearlman says. And the more times you find yourself in that creative space, the easier it will be to determine when you've reached it again.

Great acting should:

- Feel fun
- Feel effortless
- Have emotional impact
- Be your version of the material, and not anyone else's
- Be motivated by your desire to achieve a great performance not land a job. Leave your own needs at the door

**READ: [How To Teleport Yourself To an a-List Acting Career](#)**

# Advice From Working With Backstage Members

Pearlman suggests that inner-work to determine your goals, what brings you joy in life, and what brings you joy while acting is the blueprint for everything an actor does: from auditioning and performing, to presenting themselves on social media and to producers and directors.

He suggests that the skills that actors need to cultivate are the one's within themselves, and that working on confidence and vision will help performers bring an authentic understanding of the work back into their body.

Above all else he stresses the importance of having fun. He says that when an actor is lit-up with a sense of fun, it creates the energy for the performance, and the actor becomes someone that creators want to work with.

**[READ: An Acting Coach's 5 Tips for Achieving an Audition Win Every Time](#)**



# Pearlman's Best Advice for Backstage Actors

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- 1** Trust that you're interesting enough
- 2** Understand that you can't control what people think of you
- 3** Get rid of anxiety by finding the "fun" in what you're doing
- 4** In order for casting to love you, you must love yourself
- 5** Don't focus on effort, but rather on what you choose to leave behind in the room
- 6** Try to be three things when entering an audition room: fun to play with, someone casting would want to hang out with, and someone without desperation

**READ: [7 Keys to Your Best Booking Year Ever](#)**

# Additional Resources

[3 Strategies for a Successful Acting Career](#)

[How To Make Bold Audition Choices According To a Casting Director](#)

[Tips for Making a Genuine Connection During Your Next Zoom Audition](#)

[What Actors Should Know About Neural Pathways + Character Development](#)

*For more from our Actor's Toolkit series— including upcoming sessions— [click here](#).*

*For more on our casting director advice series **Audition Insider**—including upcoming sessions— [click here](#).*

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