

[JOIN](#)[LOG IN](#)[Casting Calls](#)[Find Talent](#)[News & Advice](#)[Resources](#)[Actor 101](#)[More](#)[Post a Job](#)

# How to Revitalize When You're 'Phoning It In'

er | Posted June 3, 2016, 10 a.m.

[ACTING ADVICE](#) [ATLANTA ACTING COACHES](#)

[BACKSTAGE ATLANTA](#) [BACKSTAGE EXPERTS](#)

[COMPANY ACTING STUDIO](#) [LISINA STONEBURNER](#)

Share: [!\[\]\(3342c215b2a8b663596a81468d5dc314\_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(5e22d44aef1f9548ca8274cbfb388e9d\_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(b011182daf5a0527ed818f91dc4cf8f7\_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(e021942709a217cfed2f781c62feb09c\_img.jpg\)](#)



Creating truthful performances is an actor's goal. The preparation, the work, the journey is all about delivering a believable performance that transports the audience somewhere new and emotionally stimulating. It is the responsibility of the actor. It is his job, and therefore one that should have proper time spent to ensure it happens to the satisfaction of the audience.

This tall order demands that the actor has a strong knowledge of technique and skill that works for her consistently. Even with her skill set in tact, there are times when an actor can feel disconnected. And with the demand to perform still looming, actors often resort to performing without the same connection they expect to have. The occasional "phoned in" performance—essentially performing without a genuine connection, but rather creating the illusion of this connection for your audience—is not something

to worry too much about. Most actors have been there, especially when a role is particularly emotionally demanding.

A larger problem occurs, however, when an actor is unaware they are doing this. The actor has either become disconnected somewhere along the way or never was connected to begin with and doesn't know it. Being able to have a sense of when you are missing the connection and not being truthful is important for your career and the longterm. Here are two ideas to consider that can help you achieve a greater truth more consistently.

## AUDITIONS & OPEN CASTING CALLS

[NYC Auditions](#)[Los Angeles Auditions](#)[Auditions for Movies](#)[Backstage Guides](#)[More Auditions for Actors](#)

**1. There is truth in doing.** The action is the way to achieve the character's objective. The emotional truth of your character lives in what your character needs. What he wants is what drives your moments. Your connection to what you need is what will give you a more truthful performance. To connect stronger to what you need, you need to connect to what you are doing. Concentrate on the action in each moment and commit to playing that action and you will be led truthfully to the next one. If you feel that you have nothing to do, then you will not be able to connect to why you are there, and then not connect to what you need from being there. Without the connection to what you need from being there, you will not feel engaged enough to deliver your moments truthfully.

**2. When you can listen, you can react truthfully.** If you have to act like you are listening to someone, you are not listening to them. If you are planning how you are going to respond to someone, you are not listening to them. If you are already aware of what will happen after the moment you are in, you are not listening to the moment you are in. Acting like we are listening and actually listening are two very different things. Every time you listen to someone in a moment, or listen to any stimulus in a moment, you need to listen for something new that you have never heard before, a word, a tone, a meaning, your heartbeat, the wind—something that makes that moment new and reminds you that you are listening. That new thing will make it truthful.

These two ideas are particularly helpful because they are grounded in the foundational techniques we all use. To consistently achieve truthful performances (including truthful auditions), you must develop a rehearsal process that promotes these skills. Truth and believability cannot be flukes, they should not be rare occurrences. The occasional "phoned in" moment does happen, but with a well developed preparation process and a sense for what you are doing and how well you listen, you can keep them to a minimum and know how to remedy them when they occur.

*Inspired by this post? Check out our [audition listings](#)!*

**Lisina Stoneburner** is an Atlanta-based acting coach, founder of the [Company Acting Studio](#), and Backstage Expert. For more information, check out Stoneburner's [full bio](#)!

The views expressed in this article are solely that of the individual(s) providing them, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Backstage or its staff.



backstage



## Join the Graduation Party!

Get Backstage for less than \$10 a month

JOIN TODAY!

### POPULAR ON BACKSTAGE:



10 Plays With Great Audition Material



Why the Acting on 'Outlander' Is Parallel to None



The 'Outlander' Men on Auditions and Adaptations



SHARE



TWEET



PIN

### READ ALSO:

*Backstage Experts*

4 Steps Toward Defining Your Process

*Backstage Experts*

What to Expect on Your First TV Job

### CASTING & JOBS:

With our new submission process, applying has never been easier!

*modeling*

Polaroid Lifestyle Shoot

Hiring adults and teens for work in Summer 2016

**EMAIL**

## What did you think of this story? Leave a Facebook Comment:

**1 Comment**Sort by **Top**

Add a comment...

**Dave Breslow** · Founder at Performance Success Strategies

Listening--truly listening remains of optimal importance and the challenge of actors at all levels. I prefer "believable" more than "truthful"--just more semantics--as a director I want to believe what I'm seeing. Same as an actor--I seek believability.

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 9 hrs · Edited

Facebook Comments Plugin

*commercials*

### Tylenol, 'Family Tree'

Seeking NYC talent for the #HowWeFamily campaign

*commercials*

### VA, Home Renovation Loan Commercial

Casting real veterans for a TV commercial featuring a new government-backed VA home loan program

[SEE MORE AUDITIONS >](#)

## TODAY ON BACKSTAGE:



3 Tips For Creating Your Own Solo Show (and Why You Should)



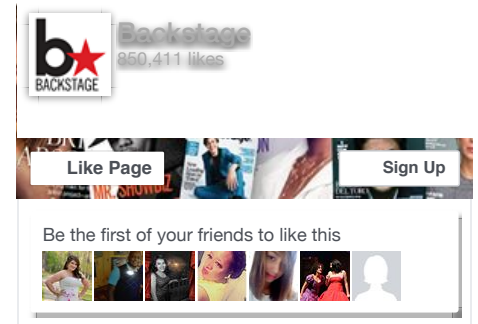
Get Lost in 'A Wrinkle in Time' and 3 Other Acting Gigs



Megan Hilty on the Secret to Playing (Dumb) Blondes

## STAY ON TOP OF THE LATEST INDUSTRY NEWS:

**Follow us** on Twitter:[Follow](#)



## INSIDE BACKSTAGE

AUDITIONS CALENDAR

THE MONOLOGUER

BACKSTAGE EXPERTS

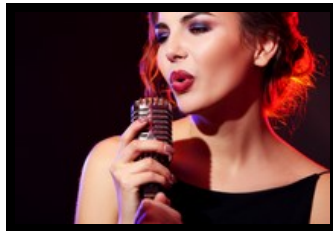
SECRET AGENT MAN

News



Upcoming Auditions at a Glance

Advice



A Breathing Exercise Every Singer Should Do

Advice



Great Audition Songs for Sopranos

Advice



7 Books Every Actor Should Read



© 2016 Backstage. All rights reserved. [Terms of Use](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [About Us](#) | [The Team](#) | [Partners](#) | [RSS](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Newsletter](#) | [Affiliate Program](#) | [Careers](#) | [Help](#) | [Advertising Information](#) | [Sitemap](#)