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How to Know if You're Resisting Your Acting Training

By [Lisina Stoneburner](#) | Posted March 1, 2016, 3 p.m.[ACTING ADVICE](#) | [ATLANTA ACTING COACHES](#)[BACKSTAGE ATLANTA](#) | [BACKSTAGE EXPERTS](#)[COMPANY ACTING STUDIO](#) | [LISINA STONEBURNER](#)

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Learning requires a willingness to change on behalf of the student.

Teaching requires a commitment from the teacher to not abuse their position when a student agrees to be available and vulnerable in order to learn.

As any relationship can, the relationship between student and teacher can hit obstacles. When that happens, an actor can resist their training. Here are some very common situations where that happens.

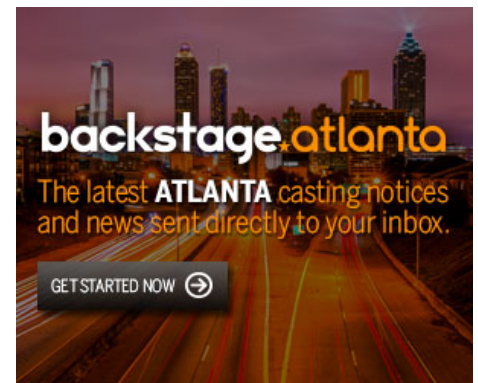
1. The actor preferred their last class or instructor. The relationship between acting student and teacher can be very intimate and personal at times. A longterm group class can provide a safe place to work, fail, and learn. Deciding—for whatever reason—to switch training options can be frightening and cause an actor to take a step backwards in terms of vulnerability. They don't often know they are doing

that. Typically the actor will like to explain themselves and their choices to the instructor instead of being willing to try a suggestion. They tend to defend themselves to their new teacher, as if the teacher might be judging them rather than guiding them towards a new idea. Assuming the instructor is not coming from a place of ego, the student needs to notice their own fear and adopt the mentality that they simply need to be willing to try and see where it leads them. While it may be unfamiliar territory for the actor, there will be something to be learned from the experience.

2. The actor is going through something in their own life. The actors instrument is their own body, voice, heart, mind, and spirit. Assuming they can, or even should at times, separate that from who they are as an actor doesn't really make sense. There are skills the actor can and should learn for clearing their slate and having a neutral place to work from. However, everybody has days when they just cannot remember to put those skills into action. When you don't start from neutral, you can have a hard time accepting new ideas from someone. You can even view new ideas as offensive or ridiculous or useless. Not necessarily because you really believe that either, but because you are going through something else that is affecting your perspective.

3. The actor is not training for the right reasons. We hope that an actor chooses an

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instructor and class because they are truly craving the educational experience it can provide. However, there are times that actors choose training situations for other reasons. Choosing a class because of its reputation and wanting to have it on your résumé can cause an actor to enter a class not invested in learning, but rather just putting in the time to earn the ability to claim they did it. Choosing a class because your agent or manager suggested you take it can make an actor feel like they didn't have a choice in this or that they are only doing it to please someone else, and therefore they can even become resentful of the teacher. Choosing a class when they are used to teachers who praise them can cause an actor to have a shocking reality check.

There are many reasons an actor might resist training. Regardless of the reason, it is important that an actor learn to have a gauge on when they are not moving forward, when they are not growing, when they are not inspired or progressing. The first thing they should do then is look at themselves first to see how they might be contributing to this feeling. Then take a look at their relationship with the instructor to better understand the dynamics of the relationship so they can make their best effort to fix it.

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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!](#)

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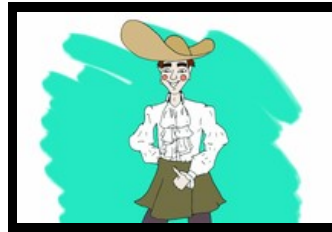
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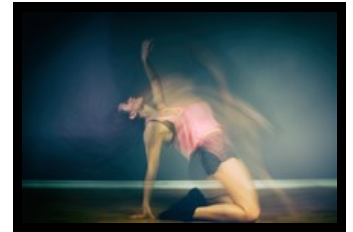
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