BETTER MEETINGS ONLINE

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OUR HOPE WAS TO LEAVE YOU WITH...

- Best practices for fostering online engagement

- Creative ways of stimulating energy, focus, and relationship-building online

- Strategies for embracing curveballs when leading online

YOUR MISSION WAS...

- Have fun.

- Accidentally learn something.

PROGRAM TAKEAWAYS

WHAT WE DID BEHIND THE SCENES

- Entrance atmosphere
(play music, model energy, offer something to do while waiting for others to arrive)
Here's our playlist on: [Spotify](#) and [Apple Music](#)
- Greet everyone by name and use names often
- Set or make a list of online operating principles as a group
- Consider having a check-in so participants feel heard and seen
- Explore variety in how you are engaging others and how they participate
- Try visual scans to gauge understanding and encourage embodiment
- Start with low risk/involvement for interactivity, scale to higher interactivity
- Offer sequencing instructions for breakouts, who starts
- Use the "Waterfall" approach for Chat responses, so people aren't biased by others answers
- Perform a "Curiosity Check" part way through. Perhaps the group has questions or peeked interest.
- Explore co-facilitation for technical ease and the benefits of variety/attention
- Copy/Paste instructions in the chat
- Create your own pre-flight checklist

OUR PRE-FLIGHT CHECKLIST

Tech Check
- Test video
- Test audio (mic, speakers, sharing music)
- Test lighting
- Test links
- Test WIFI (do you need Ethernet?)
- Breakout rooms set up (warnings, auto-join)
- Prep / Confirm polls

Personal Check
- Water
- Snacks
- Stretch
- Is your background set?
- Are your pets in a mood?
- Review the curriculum
- Prep any necessary materials for the day
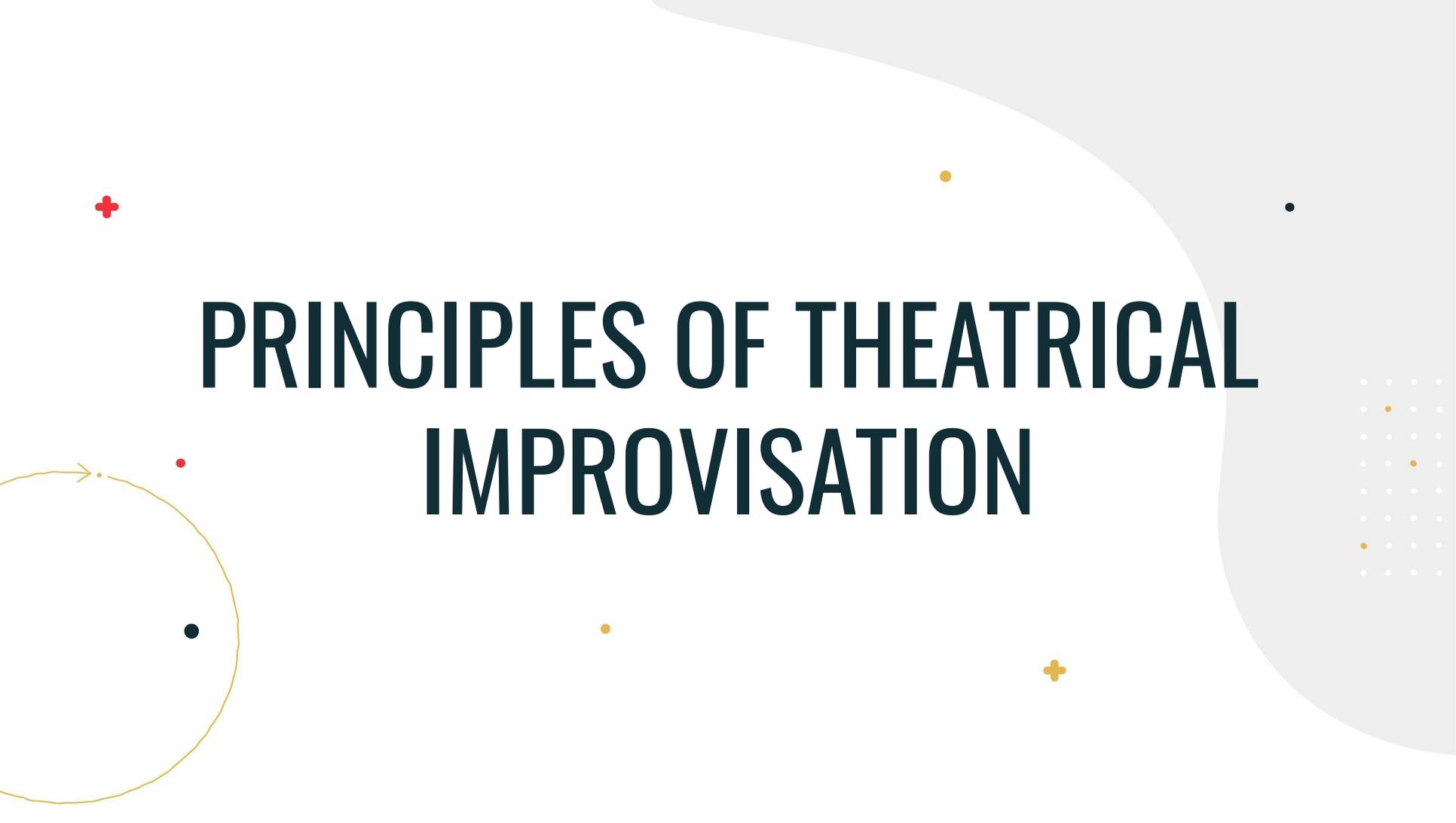- Copy & paste set

PRACTICING IMPROVISATIONAL EXERCISES CAN...

👆 **INCREASE**
- Adaptability (Rocco and Whalen, 2014)
- Creativity, psychological well-being (Dshemuchadse et al., 2020)
- Interpersonal confidence (Seppänen at al., 2019)
- Tolerance for uncertainty (Felsman et al., 2020)
- Group collaboration (Mourey, 2019) and online participation (Lavik, 2020)

👇 **DECREASE**
- Anxiety associated with perfectionism (Krueger, 2017)
- Depression in adults (Krueger et al., 2017)
- Social anxiety among adolescents (Felsman et al., 2019) ➕

PRINCIPLES OF THEATRICAL IMPROVISATION

LET GO

Being willing to be changed, putting trust in others, accepting new and diverse perspectives without compromising values, accepting reality as it is (not what we thought it would be), delaying immediate evaluation

When you let go you are likely to...
- reduce the "bias of loss aversion"
- activate the authentic parts of your neural system

NOTICE MORE

Heightening our situational awareness, listening deeply to self and others, seeing core needs and opportunities (when we get stressed out, we stop listening well, relaxed alertness)

When you notice more you are more likely to...
- overcome "confirmation bias" and engage in better perspective taking
- when you share what you noticed about others, you're more likely to acknowledge and validate them
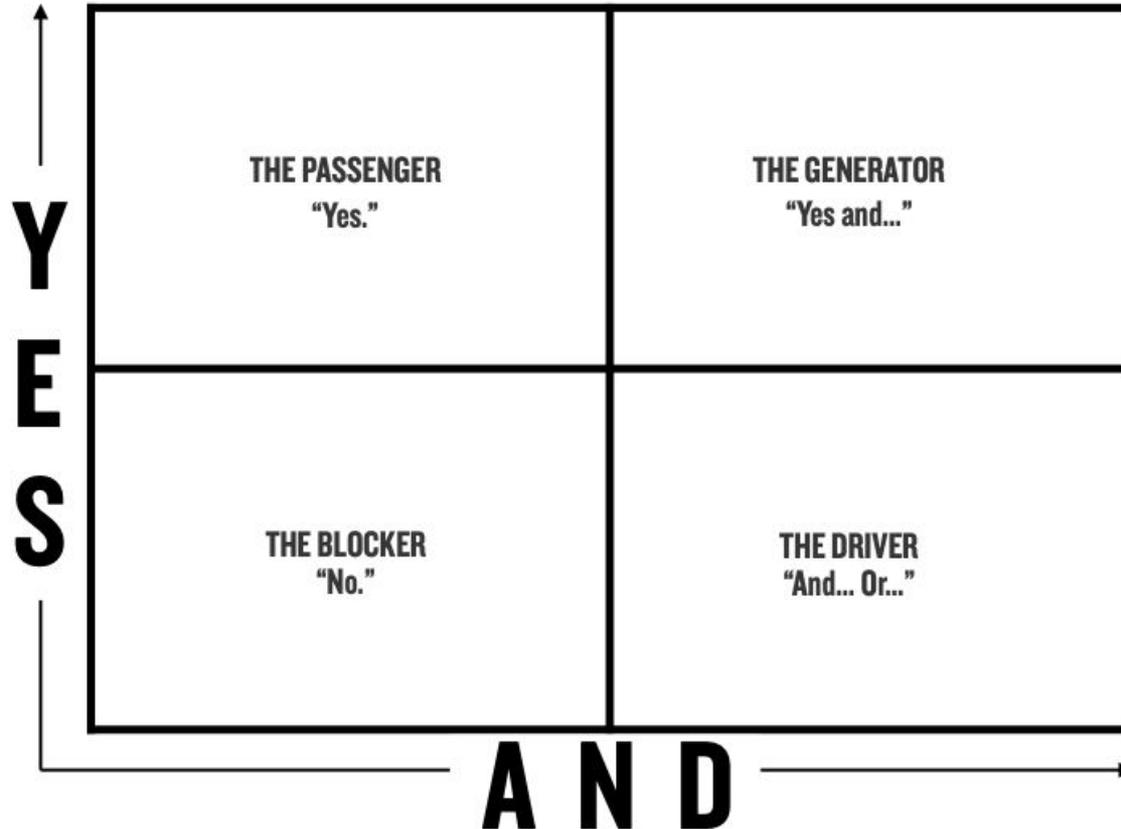
"YES, AND..."

Framework for courageous collaboration and a compass for navigating the unknown, building on other's ideas, disagreeing without being adversarial, making your partner/team look good, responding to curveballs with greater agility, harnessing challenges as opportunities

When you "Yes And..." you're more likely to...
- use others' ideas which increases trust and reciprocity
- create collective flow states

WHICH ROLE IS RIGHT FOR THE SITUATION YOU'RE IN?

A 2x2 matrix with the Y-axis labeled "YES" and the X-axis labeled "AND":

- **Top-left:** THE PASSENGER — "Yes."
- **Top-right:** THE GENERATOR — "Yes and..."
- **Bottom-left:** THE BLOCKER — "No."
- **Bottom-right:** THE DRIVER — "And... Or..."

TRY USING THESE ALTERNATE "YES, AND" FRAMEWORKS

- "It sounds like you care about ____ and…"
- "What I like about that is ____ and…"
- "It seems that ___ and I want to help / know more."
- "You've shared ___ and that makes me curious about ___."

TOOLS & ACTIVITIES

EVERYONE SAY HELLO

Everyone unmutes and greets each other all at once in whatever language and fashion they like.

Why do this? To wake people up at the beginning of a meeting. To start a path towards greater engagement.

TRY THIS: HELLO PASS

Everyone unmutes and greets each other all at once in whatever language and fashion they like. Alternatively, pass the hello around the group until everyone has been greeted (ie. Jay: "Hi Amora!", Amora: "Hi Tundi", Tundi: Hi Jay")

Why do this? To wake people up at the beginning of a meeting. To help everyone feel seen and heard. To start a path towards greater online engagement.

HATS / COSTUME PIECE

Turn off your camera. Make a hat or costume piece in 60 seconds out of things you normally wouldn't wear. Turn on your camera and enjoy. Afterwards, ask people to describe their hat/costume piece and how it might represent a personal superpower they possess. After you've shared, remove your hat and pick the next person to share.

Why do this? To spark some physical and emotional energy at the beginning of a meeting. To learn more about others in a playful way.
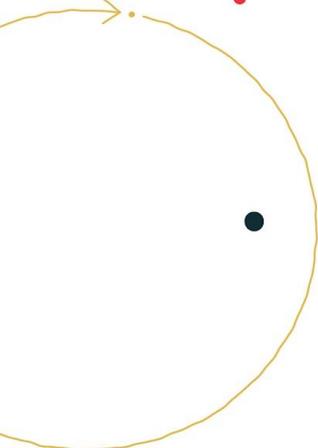
MIND MELD

Two people select one random word each, then say "got it". They count down and say their word at the same time. The group tries to find the overlapping word between the two established words. Iterate.

Why do this? To spark focus, to prime people to seek connections, and reduce the fear of the first step. Research shows that five minutes of group improvisation can lead to greater participation and focus online, when compared to 5 minutes of open conversation. (Lavik, 2020). Research also shows that 20 minutes of improvisation can increase tolerance for uncertainty (Felsman, Gunawardena and Seifert 2020)

CURIOSITY CHECK

Pause to check in on the curiosity of the group.
Ask them what they have noticed or what they have questions about.

Feel free to create a Jam Board for their thoughts.

Here is the one we made together:
[Click here](#)

FIRST LETTER / LAST LETTER .

Have a conversation where the first letter (or word) of one sentence is the last letter (or word) of the prior.

Why do this? Practicing this allows us to remove interruption, break away from ingrained patterns of behaviour and develop comfort with uncertainty. 96% of people think they are good listeners while we typically only absorb half of what others communicate.

CARE

One person speaks about something that bothers them for one minute. Their partner responds with "it sounds like you care about …". Our speaker continues for another minute, diving deeper into their topic. Their partner responds again with "it sounds like you care about…". Then we switch roles.

Why do this? Practicing this helps us tap into the principle of Noticing More while seeking to understand the core of what people are saying without applying immediate critique.

ONE MINUTE OF NOTHING

Take a one minute break away from your screens. An intentional moment where no one has any tasks or responsibilities.

THANK YOU FOR THAT

One person shares, the other offers disconnected words (using a random word generator) for the speaker to incorporate (using a "Yes and..." Mindset).

Why do this? To practice giving up control. To practice affirming and incorporating unforeseen contributions, rather than immediately blocking or evaluating them. To get to know each other in an engaging way.

REMEMBER WHEN

The group recalls a made-up vacation they took together. After establishing the destination and activity the group adds information starting with "Yes but...". Repeat the activity with "Yes and..."

Why do this? Exploring the tools of Yes And... and Yes But... can help us better understand our ingrained reactions to unforeseen information and how to better collaborate in rapidly changing environments.

[Watch this video to learn how to play](#)

A FEW THINGS YOU COULD TRY THIS WEEK...

✅ Start your next meeting with a few rounds of *Hello Pass* or *Mind Meld*

✅ Try to say "Yes and…" three times in your next conversation

✅ Explore one of the resources linked in this deck

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES