



The Accredited Principles of Screen Acting by Paul J Lane
Chapter One Character / Personality Traits

THE FILM ACTORS ACADEMY



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Chapter One



Character /Personal Traits (Archetypes)

Models of people; behaviour; or personal traits a perfect or typical specimen; an original model or pattern; prototype.

What is the significance of a Character or Personal Trait (Archetype) in Acting?

The real value of archetypes is that they provide a structure that the story can be built around.

The definition of acting (source Wikipedia).

Acting is an activity in which a story is told by means of its enactment by an actor or actress who adopts a character in theatre, television, film, radio, or any other medium that makes use of the mimetic mode.

Acting involves a broad range of skills, including a well-developed imagination, emotional facility, physical expressiveness, vocal projection, clarity of speech, and the ability to interpret drama. Acting also often demands an ability to employ dialects, accents, improvisation, observation and emulation, mime, and stage combat. Many actors train at length in specialist programmes or colleges to develop these skills. The vast majority of professional actors have undergone extensive training. Actors and actresses will often have many instructors and teachers for a full range of training involving singing, scene-work, audition techniques, and acting for the camera.

Introduction to the FACTA System:

The Film Actors Academy's Principles are designed for ease of access to gain insights into Film Acting at an advanced level.

The Accredited Principles of Screen Acting

The Accredited Principles of Screen Acting will help you rise above the competition and engage freely with your peers, knowing you have the appropriate skills to make your performances memorable, by simply engaging in the 7 Principles of our Award-Winning skill set. There are many more, but these create a strong platform to execute your performances.

To tell you more about the principles, it is also a motivational tool to assist in those moments where you might need it the most, as it will always be accessible via your pocket or handbag. Through your mobile internet phone, you can access what we call "Seeds of Confidence", which will help you tap into a more powerful mindset to achieve the full- and short-term goals that you most desire.

Considering the definition of acting listed at the top of this page, the knowledge required here is that we desire to create a character, which in the first place is as far away from us as possible.

Is the approach of being yourself (being as naturalistic as possible), in front of a camera, acting?

Of course, you can have the approach of being yourself (being as naturalistic as possible), in front of a camera, but is this acting?

To a degree it is because you would be pretending that you are in an unusual set of circumstances that you might not have experienced before, and even if you had experienced it, this would not be in front of a camera and crew with other people pretending that the situation is real too.

Some people are naturally gifted and skilled at this, however there is a limited amount of work available to an actor playing him or herself, or a specific character that is very close to themselves. It is referred to in the industry as Type Casting. Eventually film parts run out because there is not a big enough acting range for casting panels to get excited about.

Character creation:

So how do we understand accreditation of a character which isn't us?

Ironically the first thing to work out is what you are and then you can understand how to act away from what you are. Who we are: as defined by our behaviours and instincts, driven by the twelve original Archetypes, Personal or Character Traits.

Archetypes were a concept introduced by the Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung; he believed that archetypes were models of people, behaviours, or personal traits. Archetypes, he suggested, were inborn tendencies that play a role in influencing human behaviour and that they are the psychic counterpart of instinct. Jung was a psychiatrist that intended for archetypes to be a tool in psychiatry, to understand people and their drives better. Archetypal literary criticism helped influence numerous works of fiction inspired by archetypes hence the relevance of using them in creating characters in Acting.

Here at the Academy, we prefer to refer to the Archetypes as "Character / Personal Traits"

The basic "Character / Personal Traits" 12 in total:

There are twelve "Character / Personal Traits" that we focus on to quantify different types of motivational behaviour within a scene and overall film. (Scene Arch & Story Arch).

These can be used singularly or interchangeably.

Each Character has issues or things that drive their behaviour and thoughts. For example: a Core Objective; a Greatest Fear; a Weakness and Strength.

From these 12 we can firstly identify which 3 are closest to us personally, by identifying our own issues, so we can act as far away as we like from what we are normally in life.

In our opinion, here are the 12 most commonly used “Character/Personal Traits”.

You may say that you use all of these which is possible, however we are asking which 3 you would say are mainly dominant in your personal life right now.



1. Ruler

- Core Objective: control and to create a prosperous, successful family or community
 - Greatest fear: chaos, being overthrown
 - Weaknesses: being authoritarian, unable to delegate
 - Strength: responsibility, leadership.
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- The Ruler is also known as: The boss, leader, aristocrat, king, queen, politician, role model, manager, or administrator.

2. Jester or Joker

- Core Objective: to live in the moment with full enjoyment, you only live once.
 - Greatest fear: being bored or boring others.
 - Weakness: frivolity, wasting time.
 - Strength: joy and making others laugh.
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- Jester is also known as: The fool, trickster, joker, practical joker, or comedian.

3. Magician

- Core Objective: understanding the fundamental laws of the universe.
 - Greatest fear: unintended negative consequences.
 - Weakness: becoming manipulative.
 - Strength: finding win-win solutions.
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- The Magician is also known as: The visionary, catalyst, inventor, charismatic leader, shaman, healer, medicine man.

4. Lover

- Core Objective: intimacy and experience.
 - Greatest fear: being alone, a wallflower, unwanted, unloved.
 - Weakness: outward-directed desire to please others at risk of losing own identity.
 - Strength: passion, gratitude, appreciation, and commitment.
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- The Lover is also known as: The partner, friend, intimate, enthusiast, sensualist, spouse and team-builder.

5. Explorer

- Core Objective: the freedom to find out who you are through exploring the world on a journey, seeking out and experiencing new things, escape from boredom.
- Biggest fear: getting trapped, conformity, and inner emptiness.
- Weakness: aimless wandering, becoming a misfit
- Strength: autonomy, ambition, being true to one's soul
- The explorer is also known as: The seeker, iconoclast, wanderer, individualist and pilgrim.

6. Rebel

- Core Objective: revenge or revolution rules are made to be broken.
 - Greatest fear: to be powerless or ineffectual.
 - Weaknesses: crossing over to the dark side, crime.
 - Strength: outrageousness, radical freedom.
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- The Rebel is also known as: The Outlaw, revolutionary, wild man/women, the misfit, or iconoclast.



7. Orphan/Regular Guy or Girl

- Core Objective: belonging and connecting with others.
- Greatest fear: to be left out or to stand out from the crowd.
- Weakness: losing one's own self in an effort to blend in or for the sake of superficial relationships.
- Strength: realism, empathy, lack of pretense
- The Orphan is also known as: The good old boy, regular guy/girl, the person next door, the realist, the working stiff, the solid citizen, the good neighbour, the silent majority.

8. Caregiver

- Core Objective: to protect and care for and help others.
- Greatest fear: selfishness and ingratitude.
- Weaknesses: martyrdom and being exploited, always helping, and doing things for others.
- Strength: compassion, generosity.
- The Caregiver is also known as: The saint, altruist, parent, helper, and supporter.

9. Sage or Expert

- Core Objective: to find the truth.
- Greatest fear: being duped, misled—or ignorance.
- Weakness: can study details forever and never act.
- Strength: wisdom, intelligence.
- The Sage is also known as: The expert, scholar, detective, advisor, thinker, philosopher, academic, researcher, thinker, planner, professional, mentor, teacher, contemplative.

10. Innocent

- Core Objective: Free to be and to get to paradise.
- Greatest fear: to be punished for doing something bad or wrong.
- Weakness: boring for all their naive innocence.
- Strength: faith and optimism.
- The Innocent is also known as: Utopian, traditionalist, naive, mystic, saint, romantic, and dreamer.

11. Hero

- Core Objective: to prove one's worth through courageous acts.
- Greatest fear: weakness, vulnerability, being a "chicken"
- Weakness: arrogance, always needing another battle to fight.
- Strength: competence and courage in a way that improves the world.
- The Hero is also known as: The warrior, crusader, rescuer, superhero, the soldier, dragon slayer, the winner and the team player.

12. Creator

- Core Objective: to create things of enduring value.
- Greatest fear: mediocre vision or execution.
- Weakness: perfectionism, bad solutions.
- Strength: creativity and imagination.

- The Creator is also known as: The artist, inventor, innovator, musician, writer or dreamer.

We advise you to learn and know these archetypes in this order, so they are easily reachable in front of your mind.

If you relate to football, start thinking of them as a football team with the names of the archetypes on the back of their shirts.

HT Handy Tip

In goal is Ruler, Right Back is Jester and so on with the substitute as Creator

As an added mind visual to assist, with each archetype, think of a character in a film which you feel relates to it.

Creating originality away from cliché':

The 12 Character Traits can be used singularly or interchangeably

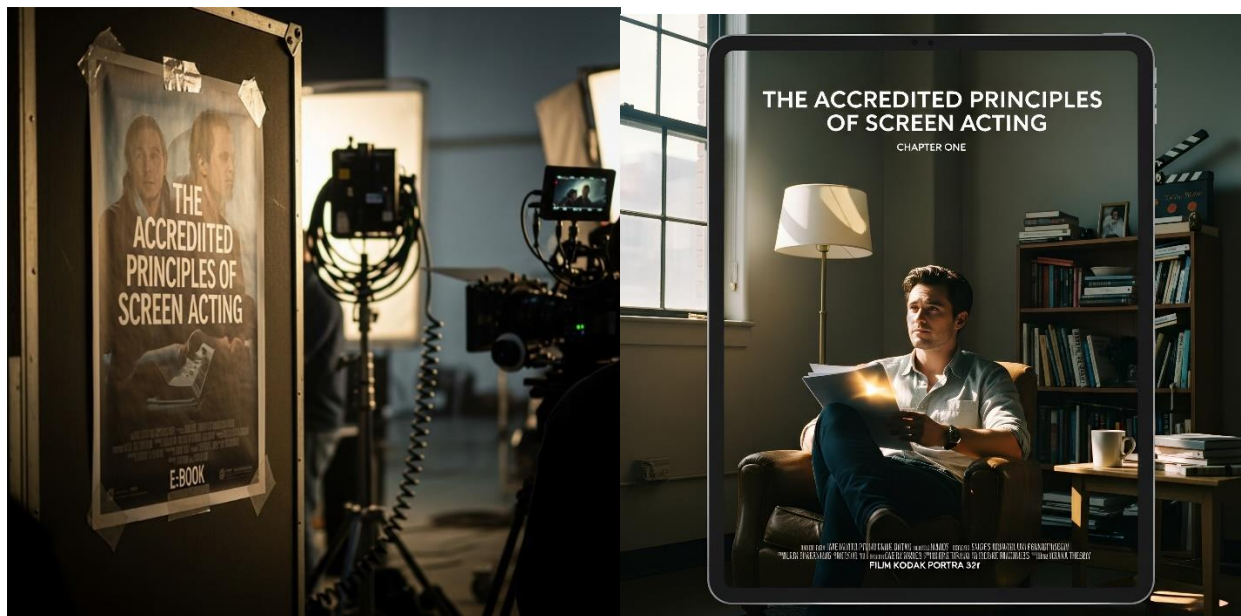
These can be changed as you feel appropriate with each character you create and we only use them as a starting point to engage with the chosen archetype.

Once you know the basic 12 Character Traits very well, we can start working on creating oxymoron (opposites) within the inner dialogue and emotional states, with regards to mood and energy placement, as we further explore in principle 2 Energy. This way of working produces unique and original performances.

Significance in Scene Arch, Character Arch and Story Arch

We can also use each one by mixing them up in a specific scene to quantify different types of motivational behaviour of a Character within a scene and overall film. (Scene Arch & Story Arch).

You have a beginning, middle and end in the (Scene Arch, Character Arch and Story Arch) and the characters can adopt various Archetypal Character Traits to drive various behaviours, inner thoughts and emotions in order to create original and interesting performances.



12 Examples of film productions

Here are 12 examples of film productions, where we can identify the Character Traits played out by the actors

1. Ruler - Gerard Butler in 300
2. Jester - Heath Ledger in Batman
3. Magician- Ed Norton in The Illusionist
4. Lover - Richard Gere in American Gigolo
5. Explorer - Ben Stiller in The Secret Mind of Walter Mitty
6. Rebel - Brad Pitt in Fight Club
7. Orphan/ Regular Person - Mark Lester in Oliver Twist
8. Caregiver - Angelina Jolie in Changeling
9. Sage - Judi Dench in Skyfall
10. Innocent - Steve Carell in 40-Year-Old Virgin
11. Hero - Uma Thurman in Kill Bill
12. Creator - Morgan Freeman in Evan Almighty

