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Teaching Philosophy

The classroom is not where students come to learn- it is where they come to be inspired to pursue learning. It is not the fount of information for which students come to drink- the classroom is a launchpad. My goal as an educator, whether in the classroom, theatre, or workshop, is to cultivate a balance of three essential actions: Work, Love, & Play. This balance creates well-rounded artists and, more importantly, exemplary human beings.

Work, Love, & Play

When focusing on *work* I assist students as they develop skills that enable them to set goals, acquire content to accomplish said goals, and self-advocate for their success. Self-awareness is key as they discover their place in the broader world. Embracing *love* means connecting with others and fueling their love for knowledge, creativity, and one another. Arts and humanities have a unique opportunity to enable students to accept themselves and the diverse beliefs and histories of others. The flame that ignites curiosity is the ability to *play*— adapting the world to fit into our imaginations. The imaginative power of possibility is endless as we use it to craft a love for creation, learning, and exploration which is vital to every person's growth.

Process over Product

To achieve these goals, Active Learning techniques are integral to my practice. With active learning, I reinforce that *process* takes precedence over *product*. Whether teaching improvisation to script analysis, I want to illustrate that we are gaining knowledge, but more importantly, also understanding *how* we acquire knowledge. Connecting the excitement of applying new knowledge to future studies is essential for growth in process and product.

Pedagogical Techniques

Key elements of my teaching practice include Cooperative Learning, Constructionism, and Inquiry-based instruction. Cooperative Learning emphasizes teamwork, social awareness, and communication. I design projects that leverage the diverse skills of small student teams each bringing their perspective to the task. Constructionism encourages student-centered discovery by

utilizing individual information and creating understanding through social interaction. Students should uncover their place within a community for the highest level of self-discovery. Answers should rarely be provided, but instead using inquiry-based instruction and questioning, students make real-world connections to the content.

Assessment & Reflection

In the arts, assessing knowledge can be a task. While quizzes can measure memorization, deeper understanding comes from reflective practices. The journaling process provides a physical assessment of experiences, emotions, self-awareness, and analysis. Encouraging students to journal not *what* they did, but instead *why* tasks were tackled and *how* the undertaking affected them emotionally provides a greater level of critical thinking. This process allows me as an educator to gauge the level of comprehension for each task.

Continuous Growth

To accomplish all these goals I recognize that *my* quest for learning is always incomplete. Revisiting familiar techniques, and seeking out new theories and practices is essential for my growth. Conferences and workshops allow me to enhance my knowledge which can be passed along to my students. Most importantly, as a theatre artist/musician, I believe it is necessary for the soul to be creating which increases my skills as a playwright, composer, performer, and theorist.

Ultimately, when completing the congregation of Work, Love, and Play in my practice it is clear, that that is the goal for my students as well. *Work* is vital for cultivating drive and skill, *Love* nurtures the soul and fosters a passion for learning, and *Play* brings joy and creativity to the process. When the balance of all three is in harmony, students excel, creating the greatest potential to lead an exceptional life, which is my mission as an educator.