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Super Bowl MVP Nick Foles on the importance of failure

In a [press conference](#), Most Valuable Player Nick Foles of the Philadelphia Eagles had the following to say about failure, when asked what inspiration he wanted people to take from his journey :

Don't be afraid to fail. I'm not Superman. We all have daily struggles in our life. Embrace the struggles and grow.

Instagram, Twitter- it's all a highlight reel. Failure is part of life.

It's part of building character and growing. I wouldn't be up here if I hadn't fallen thousands of times, made mistakes. We all are human, we all have weaknesses. Without failure, I wouldn't be up here.

Such a profound message. Actors get told that they need to have the courage to fail, and they might think "Yeah, I get that", but actually doing it, actually failing, sucks. But it's through that painful, disappointing process of failing that we are invited to confront our limitations and transcend them.

Being in a class in which everyone is patted on the head and told that they did good work will not afford you the opportunity to experience this kind of productive failure. This is not to say that acting teachers need to administer feedback in a harsh or cruel way. Not at all. But teachers do need to hold students to a high standard, a standard that

is high enough that they will not always be able to meet it. It's only in this kind of environment that people really grow.

As another wise man once [said](#):

We learn wisdom from failure much more than from success. We often discover what will do, by finding out what will not do; and probably he who never made a mistake never made a discovery,

If you're in a class where you're not being told when you're doing strong, fulfilled work and when you're not, and further, what you can do to make work that is lacking better, then it's time to find a new class.

By [Andrew Wood](#) | February 8th, 2018 | Categories: [dedication](#), [failure](#) | Tags: [Nick Foles](#) | [0 Comments](#)

**free things you
can do for your**

acting

Everybody goes through times when there isn't a lot of broccoli in the crisper, for whatever reason. But that's no reason to stop doing work to develop yourself as an actor. Here are some terrific things you can do to feed your creative soul or hone your craft while you're waiting for the financial picture to change.

1. **Read.** Acting is about bringing the word to pulsing, transfixing life. So getting to know said written word better is never a bad idea. Read books about acting, read biographies of actors. read great novels, read pulp novels, read poetry, read the newspaper. There are plenty of options. But in our media-saturated world, spending some time reading is never a bad idea, and if

helps you develop your sensitivity to the extraordinary expressive power of language, that's even better.

2. Study the Alexander Technique.

Wait, what? I thought you said this was a list of free stuff? The Alexander Technique is pricey high-end body-mind integration training. How do I get it for free?

Well, it happens that there is an [Alexander Technique Training Institute](#) in Los Angeles, where people train to become teachers of the Alexander Technique. And such institutes often need people to serve as subjects for the teachers-in-training to practice on. So give them a call, and offer them the use of your body for their pedagogical purposes.

There's a good chance you'll learn invaluable things

about said body, for a song.

3. **Meditate.** Practice the fine art of paying attention.

There are all kinds of places to learn to meditate in Los Angeles. [Here](#) is one of my favorites, but there are many others.

4. **Study Pilates.** What does Pilates have to do with my acting? Well, acting as I teach it involves what Pilates people call core awareness. The actor's awareness should rest in the abdominal core, in order to achieve true visceral activation and the radiance that comes with it.

Pilates is a great way to work on that, because Pilates is about learning to use your abdominal core muscles in everything you do. Literally: everything. There are lots of how-to videos on Youtube, such as [this one](#).

5. **Journal.** “It’s so funny, you go to acting school thinking you’re going to learn how to be other people, but really it taught me how to be myself. Because it’s in understanding yourself deeply that you can lend yourself to another person’s circumstances and another person’s experience.”—Lupita Nyong’o

So get going!

Writing a journal is a great way to develop intimacy with yourself, an invaluable asset for an actor.

6. **Read aloud.** Pick up some Shakespeare.

Pick up some poetry that speaks to you.

Read it aloud. Read it to yourself. Read it to your dog. Read it to your roommate.

Read it to anyone who will listen.

Savor the sounds of the words and the rhythm of the

sentences.

7. **Improv.** Look on [Meetup](#) for an Improv group near you, and join in the fun.
8. **Make a game out of being rejected.** Like [this guy](#). There will never be any shortage of people to reject you. If you have the nerve to do this one, your future as an actor looks bright.
9. **Go to the zoo.** Ok, this one isn't quite free. But if you can scrape together \$20, there are worse ways to spend it.

Studying and learning to imitate animals is a hallowed form of actor training, and is wonderful for shedding inhibitions and exploring physical possibilities.

I'm sure there are others, and I'll add them as I think of them. But there should be some things here to get you started.

By [Andrew Wood](#) | July 8th, 2017 | Categories: [acting](#), [Alexander technique](#), [craft](#) | Tags: [Lupita Nyong'o](#), [Pilates](#), [Shakespeare](#) | [0 Comments](#)

on acting in comedy, according to Michael McKean

Came across this gem in [a Slate interview with Michael McKean](#) of *Better Call Saul*:

I don't think that a comedy performance—You know, it's essentially the same job, no matter what. You find out what your character wants and then you go for it. That's really how to do anything. They're just going to write more jokes for you if it's a comedy.

And he should know:

*Like Odenkirk, McKean is best known for comedy, with a career that stretches from *Laverne & Shirley* through his roles*

in This Is Spinal Tap, Waiting for Guffman, and Clue. But his dramatic talents are on full view at the moment, both on TV and on stage, where he's appearing in the Tony-winning production of The Little Foxes at the Manhattan Theatre Club.


The defense rests.



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--Michael McKean

 ANDREW WOOD
ACTING STUDIO

By [Andrew Wood](#) | June 12th,

2017|Categories: [acting](#),
[acting technique](#), [comedy](#),
[objective](#)|Tags: [Better Call
Saul](#), [Michael McKean](#)|[0
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an invitation

In 2015, I received a commission from the [Goethe Institut Los Angeles](#), which is the cultural wing of the German consulate, to translate a play by the writer [Peter Handke](#) that had never before been translated into English. The English title of the play is Subterranean Blues, with a nod to Bob Dylan. I'll be reading the play aloud with two other actors on June 13th at 7 PM. Full information [here](#).



By [Andrew Wood](#)|May 29th,
2017|Categories:
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putting points

on the board

AWAS alumni have been doing some incredible things lately. Here are some of them:

- [Evan Bittencourt](#) shot a major role in a film called [Ideal Home](#), with Paul Rudd and Steve Coogan, debuting this spring. He also did a guest star appearance on the late Bill Paxton's series [Training Day](#) on CBS.

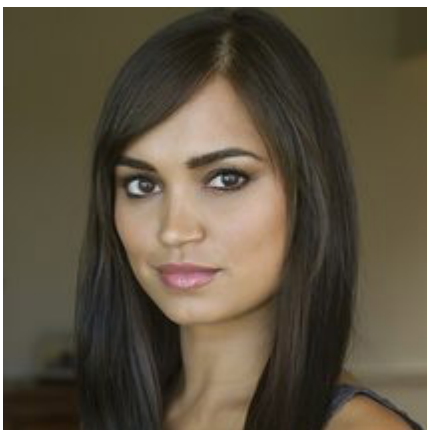


- [Cris D'Annunzio](#) has done two guest star appearances on the TNT series [Animal Kingdom](#) with Ellen Barkin, and a guest

star appearance on [Survivor's Remorse](#) on STARZ.



- [Antinomar Murphy](#) did a spot on Larry David's [Curb Your Enthusiasm](#) and on [Training Day](#) on CBS. She also did a guest star appearance on [13 Reasons Why](#) on STARZ.



- [Steve Olson](#), who has been a commercial booking machine for eons, recently had

his theatrical breakthrough with the lead in a dramedy feature film called [Fishbowl California](#). They got a write up [here](#) (he's playing 'Rodney'). It's got [Kate Flannery](#) from [The Office](#), and [Quinton Aaron](#), who played opposite Sandra Bullock in [The Blind Side](#), and several others.



- [Katelyn Rydzewki](#) appeared in a leading role in an Amazon Streaming series called [Finding Miles](#), and did guest star appearances on Tru TV's [You Can Do Better](#).



- [Eddie Shin](#) has done recurring roles on Amazon's