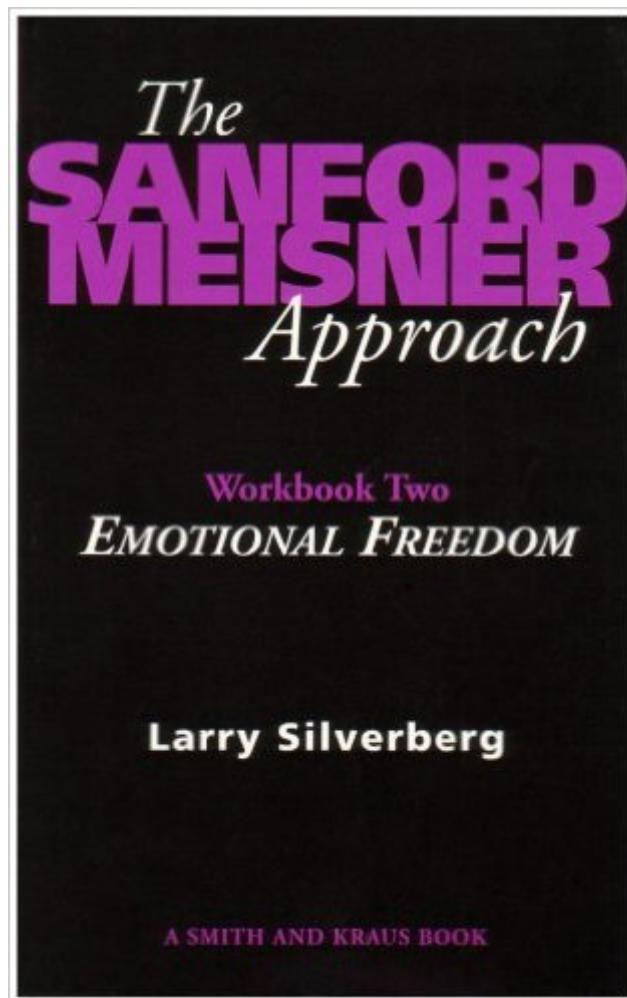


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The Sanford Meisner Approach Workbook II : Emotional Freedom



Synopsis

Shortly before his death, Sanford Meisner arranged for Larry Silverberg to create a written legacy of his teaching techniques. This book is the second of four books in the Sanford Meisner series. In this extraordinary new book, Silverberg demystifies the emotional demands of acting and leads the actor through a process aimed at tapping into and deepening his own emotional instrument. Not only will actors gain insight into the whole realm of the emotions, they will see very clearly the traps most actors fall into when it comes to "being emotional" on stage. A healthier and more effective way of working will be taught -- a way of working which brings the actor powerful and unique creativity to every part.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In my opinion, Lee Strasberg's indefatigable attachment to "Emotional" or "Affective Memory", a technique that Stanislavski later disregarded as unusable, has done more to harm the training of an actor than it did good. This misconception was the basis for "The Method". Both Sandy Meisner and Stella Adler knew that Strasberg got it wrong. This was partly the reason for the rift in The Group Theatre. Sandy knew from his experience as an actor, that using memory to re-create emotion on stage would disconnect the actor from his environment, and done night after night, would lead the poor fellow to madness or a nervous breakdown. Dustin Hoffman's performance in "Death of a Salesman" on Broadway are living proof. While "The Method" might sometimes work for the camera, it doesn't work for the rigor demanded of the stage. Meisner's approach relies on and

nurtures the actor's imagination to put him or herself into the appropriate emotional state for the imaginary circumstances of the drama. Silverberg's book is practical and essential. It is a workbook, not a textbook. It contains practical exercises, frank anecdotes and the underlying theory behind the exercises. Great work, Larry. I am certain that Sandy would be very proud of his star pupil.

I have a MFA in acting from the University of Central Florida, and I teach acting at Christian Brothers University in Memphis Tennessee. I studied with Larry Silverberg for two summers. He is as remarkable a teacher as he is a writer. Even though one might think it is extremely difficult to explain the Meisner technique in a book, Larry has accomplished that. Like many, I believe you need to study acting in a class to learn the craft, but these series of books are a rare exception. Not only do they teach the technique using a step by step process which allows the actor to really understand what s/he is doing, but they reveal the essence of the Meisner approach which is to specify a role until it has ULTIMATE MEANING for YOU! Also, if you didn't know by now from reading the other reviews, "Meisner gave Larry and Smith & Kraus written permission to publish these books.

Larry Silverberg clarifies his mentor's theories and provides us with a systematic, effective approach to acting's emotional component. Gone are the exercises dealing with the actor's personal emotional trauma--no more teacher as therapist. Meisner's approach is in the "now" and works in the fertile field of the actor's imagination. With practice it works every time. Larry Silverberg has crafted a treasure.

I was lucky enough to spend a year with two of Larry Silverberg's students who now have a studio of their own. Over four sessions of 11 weeks each, we followed Larry's interpretations of Sanford Meisner's teaching in a very caring and trusting environment. I can't say enough good things about this experience. It really changed my life as an actor and as a person. I see that a reviewer here has said that you can't learn acting from a book. Well of course you can't, but that doesn't mean that great books can't be an immense help. How many have poured over Stanislavky's books and found inspiration there? And these books are wonderful. They lay out paths to follow without anxiety or fear, in a straightforward, simple and productive manner. I mentioned the atmosphere of trust in my classes; I'm sure that began with Larry. Find a teacher who knows this work, get hold of the books, and enjoy!

I have been a professional actor for 30 years. About fifteen years ago I was very lucky. I picked up Larry Silverberg's first book on the Sanford Meisner approach. It changed my life as an actor, and as a teacher. I know of no finer book on acting, and I have read a lot of them. It is the clearest, the most step by step, and the most inspirational book on true acting that has ever been written. This also holds for the other three books in his series. Did reading his book make me a better actor over night? Of course not. And Larry Silverberg never said that it would. Let me repeat that - he never said that it would! So what did it do? It opened a path that I could begin to follow - a long and very difficult path, but a wonderous and life changing journey. It showed me where my training was lacking, and what real actor training could be. It inspired me and gave me a map to use to begin exploring with fellow actors the craft of acting. And it lead me to seek out new teachers. I am a better actor because of this book. I have used Larry Silverberg's books in many university acting and directing classes. When I started using his first volume, teaching became fun and exciting again. I have seen his approach work with so many students, and it is miraculous. I can not recommend his books highly enough as either an introduction to what true acting can be, or as the beginning of a wonderful journey.

As both a professional actor and an acting instructor I cannot recommend Larry's "The Sanford Meisner Approach Workbook" series highly enough. Having studied and applied the Meisner technique as an actor for 14 years and having taught it now for 4 I find Larry's series to be the most straightforward and accessible breakdown of Sandy's technique. I teach acting in the BFA program at Central Washington University in Ellensburg WA and we currently offer a total of 50 weeks of Meisner training over a two year period. Larry's "Workbook One" is one of the required texts in the first year and the remaining three books in the series are required in the second year. I, and my students, have found that their experience is enhanced by reading the chapters, or sessions, in the book that correspond to the work we are doing in class. I have seen their connection to their others, their art, their community and themselves strengthen and deepen as we work on this technique and the exercises together. As an actor and/or an acting teacher you cannot go wrong with The Meisner Technique and you cannot go wrong with Larry Silverberg's "The Sanford Meisner Approach" series. I highly recommend it!

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