ADD 3M1: Motivation, Objective, Intention, and Tactics

Once a character’s superficial profile is understood and developed, the actor turns his/her attention to the task of portraying the character in a scene and honestly/believably. How will the actor make this particular character come to life in a believable way? By discovering her motivation for an objective/intention, the character is communicated to the audience.

Four “Internal” Stages in Playing a Character – “Method” Acting (Using a fictional play involving an adult woman who’s mother attempts to come back into her life)

1. **Intention/Objective**
   - more detailed than motivation
   - if motivation asks, “why does the character feel or act like this?”, then intention asks “what does the character then intend to get/do?
   - although unconscious in real life, must be a conscious decision in the drama

   **Example**
   - “Anna” has always resented her mother for walking out on her when she was twelve (motivation), so she intends (objective) to punish her mother for this

2. **Tactics**
   - used to accomplish intentions/objectives
   - answers “How will the intention be accomplished in the scene?”
   - 2 kind of tactics
   a) **induction** (to draw the intended response out of another character)
      confirming (nodding, agreeing), disarming, lulling, amusing, inspiring, flattering, seducing, persuading
   b) **threat** (to impose an intention on another character)
      intimidating, frightening, taking charge, over-powering, observing intently, implying strength, screaming, attacking (verbally, physically, psychologically)
   - although unconscious in real life, must be a conscious choice in the drama

   **Example**
   - Anna disarms her mother by treating her kindly (to induce guilt)
   - Anna frightens her mother by attempting to abandon her too

3. **Obstacle**
   - the character is faces with an obstacle that must be overcome in the carrying out of an intention and objective
   - three kinds of obstacles:
     a) **physical** (limitation)
     b) **psychological** (phobia or characteristic)
     c) **situational** (given in the play’s situation)

   **Example**:
   - Anna stutters (physical)
   - Anna’s sadness (psych.)
   - Anna and her mother are snowed in by a storm (situational)