

The ADHD social media actor

a few first stumbling steps to create a work-, and
artistic research-, plan for the now and future work

by

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during the master program in Acting at Stockholm University of the Arts' course

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3.) The What and Why part

This is the section where I explain the work I want to do and why I want to do it.

In this section I also lay out different hypothesis' that I come up with along the way and that I want to test practically via artistic research but also by doing talks, interviews and questioning researchers and other artists in the field about ADHDacting and Social Media Acting and other methods.

The end game here for me is "the neurodiverse (ADHD, to begin with) social media actor": So, I'm trying to deneurotypicalize acting technique and find out what a social media actor is, does and can be - and from these perspectives I am trying to decode and formulate my questions, methods, artistic research, and also maybe a critic of the acting schools and performance research of today. And I'll just see where the pursuit takes me.

3.1) The Neurodiverse Actor

How to and why and if we should deneurotypicalize acting technique:

What is a neurodiverse actor and why is it important to talk about and maybe even to find some new acting, rehearsal and teaching techniques to help these students better?

This is what I will try to answer by finding the right questions and hypotheses and answering them and/or proving the hypothesis false/correct - in this section of the "What and How part" I'll try to ask questions and briefly lay out what is already known.

Here is a question that I started out with that got me going:

**"20% - Is that how many persons we don't really play
for in the Audience?"**

**20 % - Is that how many persons we don't fully include
in the acting technique?**

Just talking about neurodiverseness"

3.1.1) Deneurotypicalize

So, I was only to research screen and social media acting, and then I had a workshop with Ellen Nyman about decolonisation... And we had to do something for ourselves that kind of did the same thing and Deneurotypicalize popped up in my head. First I thought it was a bit too much but then I tried doing some floor work where I tested to de-mask¹² myself in a selftape and that was such a relief - so I couldn't possibly stop there. And here I am trying to lay out a much bigger work about ADHD-acting and social media.

Here are some ways the word can be used or thought about³:

“Decolonizing” the mind: healing the effects of neuro typicalized oppression on the mind-spirit and constructing an identity that allows one to be self- defining and self- naming.

Decentering the belief that all minds work the same way and that that diverseness is normal (and also an essential part of being a big societal organism) - without diverseness - no change or differences...

Making oneself or others aware of that something might work different than for someone else because of a difference in how our minds work - and that a large portion of the human race have another kind of operating system - and that that is normal.

I started a Social Media Account on Instagram called Deneurotypicalize⁴ and also the hashtag #Deneurotypicalize. I'm hoping to get a few more likes and followers down the line (currently 20 followers)... Or come up with a better account name.



¹ de-mask is used by Autism persons about safe spaces where they can stim and be their normal selves without thinking about fitting in.

² INSERT VIDEO LINK HERE

³ These are modified sentences from other oppressed groups and peoples' fights for their rights

⁴ [instagram.com/deneurotypicalize](https://www.instagram.com/deneurotypicalize)

3.1.2) What is a neurodiverse actor/audience

I'm going to focus on the ADHD-actor in my work but ADHD is part of a bigger whole called neurodiverseness - which basically means being outside of the social and medical norm for how a normal mind works.

And ADHD is part of a set of neuro development disorders where ADHD, ASD⁵, Tourette's and a few more is part of.

It's easy to confuse these disorders that usually (not always) are genetically inherited with diseases that comes with the untreated diagnosis of ADHD along the way (almost always)... Such as: GAD, Depression, PTSD, CPTSD, Utmattningsdepression, "Bipolar disorder" etc.⁶

Other closely related diseases and other diagnosis' that has a close relationship with ADHD and especially untreated ADHD are: OCD, ODD, APD, Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, WPD, Working memory, anorexia, bulimia, orthorexia... (PDA, HSP, RSD...)

ADHD stands for Attention Deficit Hyper Activity Disorder and those letters are very confusing because ADHD is more like a 'dopamine deficiency and executive function variability and attention/emotion/energy/time/regulation variability developmental diversity thingy'. In other words: ADHD-persons don't have a deficiency of attention nor are they suffering from a Hyper Activity Disorder. What an ADHD-person have difficulty with is regulating attention, energy, emotions, etc. because their brain is built differently.

You could say the brain is operating on another OS than normal people. The ADHD-brain doesn't prioritise by importance like the normal brains does. It prioritises novelty, deadlines, excitement, fun, personal passions, hyper-fixations and interests and prioritise by proximity not importance.

3.1.3) The car and dopamine or the on/off switch analogy

So imagine you are sitting in a sports car and everyone around you is sitting in a Volvo 740.

You have the same amount of gas in the tank as all the other persons in the lane but your ignitions and gas pedal doesn't really work together as the other cars - the ignition either doesn't connect the gas to the gas pedal and your car just jumps 1m ahead OR you get the gas but the gas pedal just gives full throttle ahead.

What this means is that you either doesn't get any gas and your car makes small jumps head by head and drains the battery after one or a few blocks OR if you're on the highway and get the full throttle ahead your car goes faster than any other car and arrives much much faster to the destination.

⁵ Autism Spectrum Disorder

⁶ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5567978/>

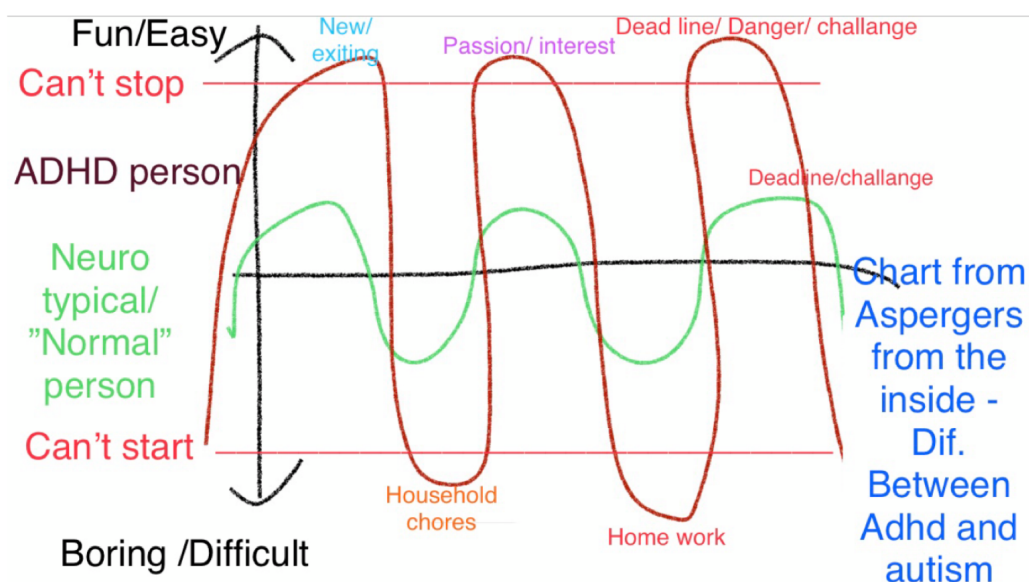
But there is one more problem the car has bicycle breaks and if the highway has to sharp (boring) curves you end up in the ditch and can't get up for awhile... Or for a very long while.

Also your fuel meter doesn't work so you might just run out of gas anytime if you forget to (or can't) stop and refuel.

This can make it seem like an ADHD person is either on or off and they also might be on or off different things each day making them seem very consistently inconsistent⁷

If we talked about hunting, stunting or acting a well rehearsed role on set this is no problem because the excitement, deadlines and personal interest and passions are built into the task and there is a well deserved rest afterwards. But if we talk about the information society and open desk landscapes and 9-17 work hours a day 5 days a week doing something that is not your interest but of importance - now we can talk about a disorder... Especially if you don't know about it and try to act normal... Hitting your head against that normal wall for a couple of years until you run into it... And then get your diagnosis... Or you decide to follow your interests and become an actor because it's a thrill standing on stage, but what you don't realise is that the acting system is built mostly by neurotypicals and you just don't understand why some things are impossible and completely energy draining to do when you love being on stage actually working on something.

This is a home made chart about ADHD and Neurotypicals borrowed from the Youtube channel "Aspergers from the inside"⁸ - that also explains it in a way.



⁷ Saying from the ADHD rewired podcast network with Eric Tivers.

⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xQc5Feyl2GE&t=428s>



Utforska

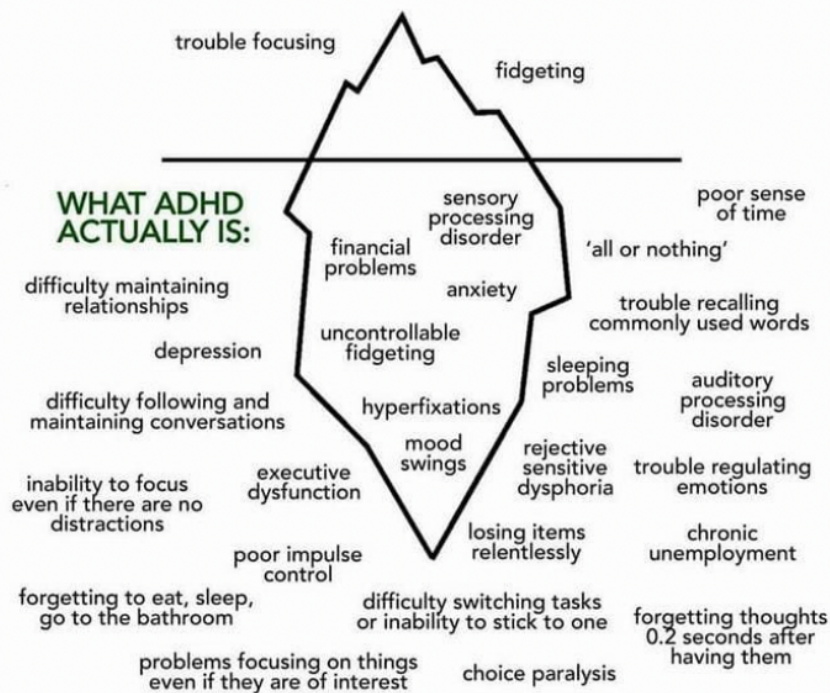


adhdhustlers · Följ



THE ADHD ICEBERG

@FINUCCINIALFREDO

WHAT PEOPLE
THINK ADHD IS:

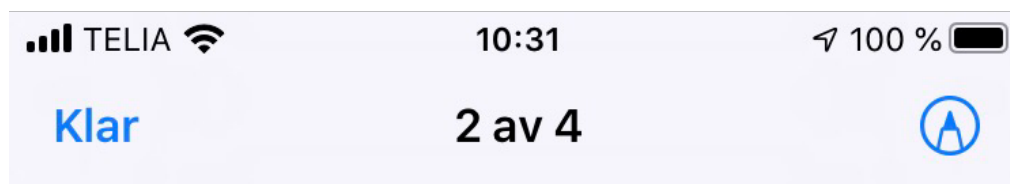
2 565 gilla-markeringar

adhdhustlers The ADHD Iceberg.



These, or a similar charts, are a common thing to post among ADHD-instagram accounts⁹, because of the lack of understanding about the diagnosis.

⁹ www.instagram.com/adhdhustlers, www.instagram.com/adhdeverything, www.instagram.com/danidonovan



ADHD SPECTRUM GRAPH



BECAUSE ADHD IS A SPECTRUM DISORDER,
YOUR TRAITS CAN CHANGE OVER THE
COURSE OF YOUR LIFE - EVEN DAY TO DAY!

SO HOW ARE YOU FEELING TODAY?

Created by Tyler Bacon for ADHDEverything - Donations accepted at PayPal.me/ADHDEverything
Content is for reference and informational purposes only and is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment.





Liknande inlägg



theneurodiv... · Följ



7 193 gilla-markeringar

theneurodivergentnurse Who has #ADHD... mer

30 juni · Visa översättning



Other sayings about ADHD:

- Ferrari with bicycle breaks - Russel Barkley (famous ADHD researcher)
- Walking in a up-down changing stream when everyone else is on land - ??
- A fish told to climb a tree instead of swimming in the sea - Albert Einstein¹⁰

My own modified versions and counter arguments for ADHD being a super power:

- Being superman/woman but almost all places and situations has built in Kryptonites
- Being one of the X-men but the societal norms makes everyone hate or pursue you because of your differences and unability to fit in properly...

3.1.4) Why research this in the field of acting?

Well "This" was a very vague thing to ask of me. Why research ADHD in the field of acting? Might be a better question and why artistically research ADHD-acting an even better, maybe?

The words 'ADHD' means you have a deficiency in focus - which is plain wrong - but that is what it says and that is what the major part of the population thinks ADHD is, or more accurately: "A scatter focused 8 year old boy who has real problems with school and can't sit still".

Now that framing doesn't paint out a good picture for an ADHD-actor or an ADHD-audience now does it... Having an actor that can't focus, learn their lines or stand still on stage or an audience that can't focus on what is being said and sit still in their seats disturbing everyone around them... Is not the mainstream idea of an actor or an audience...

That is why it is so good that it partly is incorrect and I believe there are tools for us to find as actors to deal with acting, audience and various forms of teaching situations to come out a little bit the wiser and a little bit better than before.

One of the parts about researching ADHD-acting is just to spread awareness about ADHD, what it is and how it affects the work in both really good ways and ways that craves a bit extra knowhow and work to get around to not get on the wrong foot with others and yourself and the work that has to be done.

Another is to deneurotypicalize acting technique to make it more accessible to everyone and maybe also make it better for everyone - Because if there is something I've learnt with ADHD then this is the best part: Making something better for an ADHD person almost always makes it better for everyone (Ex: Taking away the blinking lights in the ceiling and having more short breaks in school and more physical workout - makes it easier for everyone to concentrate - but might be essential for an ADHD person to be able to focus at all...).

And yet another is to understand myself and how I work and what I need better. Win-win-win, right?

I hypothesise that a lot of actors, like me before my diagnosis, aren't aware of their diagnosis and that the schools and teachers aren't aware of there students either. And if they are aware they don't always know what it means .

¹⁰ real quote: Everyone's a genius, but if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid

Also having a neurodiverse perspective of the audience and the performer might change how we perceive acting technique and how it is perceived and performed in the long run.

Not knowing can also create a lot of harmful/abusive situations/spaces/assignments that doesn't need to occur with the right knowledge and tools to include the neurodiverse perspective.

3.1.5) The DMN TPN and Hyperfocus vs/ magical flow hypothesis - introduction

First I like the idea of attention as something more fluid as "George Home-cook" tries to explain in "Aural Acts"¹¹ but I think it still lacks substance, and I think as a neurodiverse person myself with ADHD I really can and can't relate to the fluidity of attention. As I understand the neuroscience behind the DMN (default Mode Network) and the TPN (Task Positive Network) as described in research¹² and commented by ADHD researchers such as Edward (Ned) Hallowell¹³. I believe there is a difference in how a neurotypical actor and a neurodiverse actor behave on stage in relation to attention and how we behave in class, during rehearsals and even on stage sometimes because of it. And not knowing the difference I believe can be damaging for neurotypical students of a neurodiverse teacher but especially for neurodiverse actors acting and learning through a neurotypical acting system...

Just taking the DMN/TPN in to consideration a neurotypical person going into the TPN shuts off (or significantly decreases) the DMN and can pay a more undivided attention to the task at hand whilst a neurodiverse person with ADHD going into the TPN can't shut off the DMN or control the on/off switch so it is always humming in the background or taking the foreground if the task isn't enough challenging, fun, interesting, novel, dangerous to name a few dopamine inducing verbs that helps the focusing of attention. Instead the only time the DMN shuts off is during hyperfocus a very intense type of focus that is hard to break out off. And my hypotheses is that actors and acting students with ADHD needs, or at least feels like the need, to be hyperfocused to achieve the same goal as a neurotypical person going into the TPN and at some rare times goes into the "magical flow" the "No mind" the "mushin" as "Zeami Kyūi" centuries old Noh theatre scribe describes it... in Philip Zarrilli - The actors work on Attention, Awareness and Active

¹¹ George Home-cook: "Aural Acts: Theatre and the Phenomenology of Listening" in: Kendrick & Roesner 1 (2011). Theatre Noise: The Sound of Performance. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

¹² <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0925231220312066>

¹³ <https://www.additudemag.com/default-mode-network-adhd-brain/>
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Imagination¹⁴

“Shelly Fenno Quinn describes Zeami’s treatises as constituting “a nuanced and comprehensive phenomenology of the stage informed by a lifetime of artistic practice” (1).

Zeami’s *Kyūi* (“A Pedagogical Guide for Teachers of Acting”)—written when Zeami was approximately 65 years olden probably after he had become a Zen monk—describes nine different levels (*kurai*) of acting (Nearman 301). The highest three levels Zeami associates with the actor’s ability to hold the spectator’s attention through a process of actualizing ever subtler modes of bodymind concentration. At the highest level of embodied practice the actor attains the type of consciousness or state of “no-mind” (*mushin*) described in the epigraph at the beginning of this essay. In his commentary Zeami’s text, Mark Nearman explains how this optimal heightened state of “no-mind” is “open, perceptive awareness” that contrasts with “the analytical-conceptual intellect” (301). Attaining this state of “no-mind” the actor’s technique per se disappears or is burned away completely. Zeami himself metaphorically describes the actor’s inhabitation of this state as “The Mark of the Miraculous Flower” where “In Silla, at midnight, the sun is bright”—a level of accomplishment and mastery that “Transcends praise,” is “beyond [...] critical analysis and judgment” and where “it’s external mark is No-Mark” (Nearman 324).

For Zeami one of the most important beginning points for the young *noh* actor to progress toward this subtle, heightened, extraordinary state of optimal consciousness was to learn how to become attentive, in other words, how to channel and focus the vibrant energy (*ki*) of the young actor that is like a tree squirrel—excited but as yet unfocused and uncontrolled (Nearman 307).

Although separated by vast cultural and historical differences, Stanislavsky shared some similar concerns with Zeami when he attempted in his own way to address acting as a phenomenon and process. Jean Benedetti in his recent translation of Stanislavsky’s *An Actor’s Work* entitles Part I as “experienceing” (*Perezhivanie*) and Part II as “embodiment”—a reflection of Stanislavsky’s fundamental concerns with addressing acting as an embodied/experiential phenomenon/process of living a role (*An Actor’s Work*).¹⁵

I believe that this flow is and is not the same as Hyperfocus¹⁵¹⁶¹⁷ ... It has the same affect but since magical flow is something creatively magical, illusive and somewhat circumstance (and maybe achieved easier after many years of practice)... hyperfocus is something that can happen a lot for the neurodiverse actor.

Let me explain why I believe this could be harmful to students and ADHD-actors: If you believe that you must have full focus to rehearse and practice an acting task to be believable and also to project the right level of attention to the characters perceived will/action from a director/audience perspective - let say it is ‘to get your partner to stay so you could be together or the relationship is lost’ - then rehearsing that scene for theatre for 4 hours “demands” hyper focus from the ADHD student/actor but only that the TPN is activated for the Neurotypical actor. And after 4 hours of Hyperfocus, or 8... the ADHD-actor is exhausted and there might not be any room for socialising, or any other kind of life around the theatre/school after such a rehearsal.

Hyperfocusing during show for 30 minutes up to 2,5 hours a day is much more tolerable but even here, if we take me as an example, I’m so tired after meeting the audience and performing so between two 50 minute shows on a tour the best thing I can do is to sleep for 30 minutes.

It’s going to be very interesting to see if there is a way to break away from that hyperfocus as a ADHD-actor creating a space to mentally breathe without losing the

¹⁴ Phillip Zarrilli: “The Actor’s Work on Attention, Awareness, and Active Imagination: Between Phenomenology, Cognitive Science and Practices of Acting”, in: Bleeker, Sherman et al. (2015). *Performance and Phenomenology: Traditions and Transformations*. London: Routledge. Page 77

¹⁵<https://www.additudemag.com/understanding-adhd-hyperfocus/>

¹⁶ <https://www.additudemag.com/hyperfocus-adhd-study-news/>

¹⁷ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7851038/>

perceived awareness/attention/focus of the character from an audience perspective Or the actors real attention/awareness/focus/action on the acting task. How? I don't know. And, maybe it is not a technique I want during shows - but I know I need it in class and during rehearsals!

Another easy example is the difference of learning text during rehearsals on stage and trying to learn them yourself at home. "Just" learning text is usually boring and with a, usually, dysfunctional working memory with Neuro diverseness¹⁸, it can be very challenging to just learn text to be able to do the fun stuff later on the floor. It takes a lot of energy and willpower just to stay with the text and can take a very long time (or it is learned the last minute when the deadline gives you enough dopamine to hyperfocus, but then you won't know the text as well as your peers by heart)... This can be perceived as laziness from the teachers/directors and co-students/co-workers and also can feel, towards yourself, like you are being lazy if you don't know about your own challenges.

I myself learned to memorise over 100 decimals of Pi an evening in upper high school because my brain hyper fixated on it and thought of it as fun, but learning 3 pages of text, for an acting assignment in drama school over night (or worst case scenario, over lunch) was like knocking my head against a wall. Now I know why... but I didn't then and I don't think students and teachers at acting schools or directors and actors take this into consideration when choosing ways to learn and rehears a text. And it can cause a lot of frustration - A director getting angry at the actors for not learning the short text during coffee break or the teacher sending of students one by one into small rooms with a monologue for 30 minutes and not getting any results what so ever or getting a student with a headache that goes home for the day because they just lay on the floor trying, and failing, to learn the text - instead of maybe asking them to jump around, trying different actions and learning the text by playing with a scene partner shouting out the words and different actions - as an example of a different fun method to learn and rehears the text (from the top of my mind).

The DMN and TPN is super interesting and I find it very fascinating that Zeami kind of mentions DMN/TPN half a millennia before neuroscience hand also kind of hyperfocus in "no mind" "the highest state of attention" as described in the earlier quote¹⁹ - also that he mentions "Tree squirrel"²⁰ that still today is a derogatory word for an ADHD person²¹... Makes me wonder if he himself actually had ADHD...

¹⁸ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7483636/>

¹⁹ On page 15

²⁰ Also in quote on page 15, at the end of the quote.

²¹ Just search for "ADHD Squirrel Meme" on google and you'll get the answer...

3.1.5.1) DMN/TPN: A few first tries to hypothesise

Hypothesis 1

I hypothesise that actors and acting students with ADHD needs, or at least feels like they need, to be hyperfocused to achieve the same goal as a neurotypical person going into the TPN.

Ways to research this?:

- 1 Ask ADHD-actors about it
- 2 Read and co-lab with a neuroscientist and ADHD-expert to dig at the truth of it
- 3 Other?

If this is true, this could also be an answer why the term “Even if it felt bad for you [the actor] it might not have felt bad to the audience” is used so frequently in the arts. Because the Artist is doing the task in the TPN and doing it well it’s just that the DMN is on and the artist is self-aware at the same time at an equal frequency and is able to use negative self talk and be aware of what is happening at the same time as they are performing the task (When they are used to the hyperfocus keeping them out of the DMN) - This should happen way less if the actor was able to shut of the DMN and go in to the TPN at all times.

Ofcourse theatre can be interesting to see without actors playing and feeling truthfully in the moment, using other means to capture the audience’s and there own interest: music, poetry, choreography, rhythm, tension, words, movements, clown-, circus-, magic-, dance-, mime-, song-, stunt-, stage fight-, space-work- techniques, tricks, video, scenography, costume, lights, sound, pyrotechnics, mask, the audience, the room, different forms of liveness, novelty, shock, etc... And therefore the saying is more truthful to everyone because you can feel bad and do something that is appreciated by the audience because your skill, technique or other function trumps the truthfulness of your actual thoughts and feelings. I’m just saying that to the ADHD-actor this might hold extra truth because of the possibility to be in the TPN and the DMN at the same time... And since Theatre and the arts seem to draw a lot of people with neurodiversness to itself, we might be overrepresented here and the saying might hold even more truth (there is research talking about ADHD and heightened creativity but it’s inconclusive²²), but as theatre is also perceived of many as a safer space for otherness I don’t think its far from the truth, also if the arts is a special interest/passion to the neurodiverse actor, the neurodiverse actor might thrive in the art environment for many ADHD-reasons²³²⁴²⁵²⁶²⁷.

“In the present studies, we showed that people with ADHD generate more original ideas when competing for rewards with others than when such competition is absent. Although the exact mechanism underlying this effect remains to be uncovered in future studies, our

²² <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7543022/>

²³ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0165178119304846>

²⁴ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1053810021000829>

²⁵ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7543022/>

²⁶ <https://www.additudemag.com/benefits-of-adhd-crisis/>

²⁷ https://www.additudemag.com/adhd-creativity-brain-health/?src=embed_link

findings suggesting that goal-directed motivation may drive the enhanced real-world creative achievements of people with ADHD. Moreover, we found that people with ADHD report enhanced creativity in specific domains, indicating that people with ADHD may excel in specific creative tasks that match their preferences and abilities. Encouraging them to engage in such tasks and rewarding their creative work may help both themselves, as well as the people around them, to benefit from the positive side of ADHD.”²⁸

Another side hypothesis: If a neurotypical actor is able to use negative selftalk during a scene this actually means they are outside of the TPN and actually are not performing the acting task at hand and therefore is not present in the moment and that's why neurotypical actors and teachers have the saying “If you're in your head you're not with us [the audience]” - this doesn't mean that for an example the meisner technique's “take the focus away from yourself and put it on your scene partner” is bad advice. It's excellent advice because that helps everyone understand the acting task it's just that for 80% of the students its the truth and for 20% its a half truth... (because it only happens with hyperfocus for them).

For an example: In the meisner technique you need to put yourself away and focus on something that you actually can do and achieve on stage for real, trying to create an ounce of truth and behaviour on stage that the audience can use as an anchor to fully emerge themselves with the actor in an imaginary, but truthful, world. It's a technique built for in the moment acting, picking up on the absolute truth of the moment on stage, and being in it and

“act on it reactively like you were covered in gasoline”²⁹

For an actor to be able to do this they need to understand the action played, they need to have fun playing the action; it has to be something that can actually be done and the easier it is to do the better; it has to be, or seem to be, in the line with the character and play; it should be focused on something the actor needs from the scene partner and really understand when they have achieved it/got it/understood it/etc...

Now for the average students these are boxes that can be checked of, it can take some time to get it right or you can understand the situation instinctively and just be able to play and have fun with it right off because of personal history, acting experience or the relation with the play/scene partner/situation. There might be some bumps on the way and you'll need to adjust the action played because life changes and it doesn't mean the same thing for you anymore, but it is pretty straight forward and that's why it is such a good acting technique used by many actors.

For the ADHD-actor I think it's very much the same, and here I need to gather some data, but I hypotosise that It's super important that the action played is super fun and maybe even in line with a current hyper fixation och personal passion to be able to use the same action many times - because as with many things ADHD, repetition is boring, the novelty of things gather a lot more dopamine in the brain and can give us the hyperfocus that we need to feel that we are doing a good job.

Side note: This might be why so many film directors don't want to rehearse or do rehearse but in low key so that when you actually shoot it for real the excitement and novelty gives the actors a boost and keeps them more focused and present in the

²⁸ The Conclusion of this research <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7543022/>

²⁹ Said by Meisner teacher Mathew Allen at Stockholm University of the Arts

moment. You can say a lot of things about this approach as an actor from an artistic point of view but looking at it from this perspective I understand it scientifically and why it can be very affective - especially in a fast moving medium where the actors don't have much time together to rehearse before the shoot.

If the fun action isn't in line with something the ADHD-person loves and the scene partner isn't giving them new stuff to react to and they don't have some extra tools to spice up the action in the moment I think this can take the ADHD-actor out of the hyperfocus, still being in the TPN, but being self aware and feeling like a bad actor having the DMN feeding them all kinds of other information about the past, present and possible future. This can be bad if the actor acts on these impulses rather than the impulses that are given to them truthfully for the audience on the stage or in front of the camera by their scene partners.

This is why I think ADHD-actors crave more challenging roles, roles that are larger than life, roles that are pure fun to play and experience. And if they are not these roles the actor has to play them as if they are these roles. This is a general truth for most things theatre told to me by many teachers through the years in many different formats but the essence is the same "Theatre can't be played in general" in other terms "Theatre can't be boring" it has to be larger than life, even if it is not. And this I Hypothesise is even more true for ADHD-actors and neurodiverse actors with special interests, hyper fixations and passions: They really need to find the most truthful joyous way into the character so that the action doesn't lose its hyperfocus grip on them during the scenes. And this can really take some time to achieve if the play/situation/scen/work environment/etc is boring in itself (to the ADHD-actor that is, it might be the most thrilling thing to someone else or the general population but to the ADHD-actor it might have been fun only for the first read through... and when the novelty wears of the brain gets bored and starts looking for an out or a greater/more fun/exiting challenge).

Hypothesis - 2

There should be a way to break away from hyperfocus as an ADHD-actor creating a space to mentally breathe without losing the perceived awareness/attention/focus of the character from an audience perspective Or the actors real attention/awareness/focus/action on the acting task. Especially during rehearsals, so not to burnout. In other words be in the TPN with the DMN on but not go into DMN only or Hyper focus.

Ways to research this:

- 1 Artistic research on the floor - staying present in the TPN - with the DMN on simultaneously and trying to stay away from Hyperfocus or the DMN without the TPN...
- 2 Co-lab with neuro scientist actually see what happens in the brain when different types of actors act and act in different ways with and without the DMN on?
- 3 Artistically research acting tasks that needs or allows the adhd-actor to be scatter-focused instead of Hyperfocused.

This might not be a preferred end goal for theatre performance but might be excellent tasks to rehearse with and not get mentally exhausted from the hyperfocus. But who knows it might give room for another type of stage awareness?

Hypothesis - 3

Hyperfocus is and is not the same thing as "magical flow".

Ways to research this:

- 1 Talk to actors about magical flow
- 2 Talk to ADHD-actors about hyperfocus and magical flow
- 3 Read up on previous research on magical flow
- 4 Artistically research the difference between magical flow and hyperfocus
- 5 Talk to or co-lab with neuroscientists to get brain data
- 6 Talk to professors in acting about it and co-lab

Hypothesis - 4

Just knowing about the differences of minds makes it easier to taking precautions to be inclusive in the handing outs of assignments and lowering the ADHD-actors' stress and anxiety in school and during rehearsals?

This I hope isn't a hypotheses at all but a general truth already known to everyone, but it should be performed and tested anyhow - if so just for the activism part of spreading awareness, which can't be bad, right?

Ways to test or do this:

- 1 Open seminar for the teachers and students at school about ADHD and how it presents itself in adults and how it can be used creatively and how it in the less nurturing circumstances can become at the very least very time and energy consuming.
- 2 Open seminars for all actors and creatives in the business.
- 3 Test and research different inclusive assignments at school for learning lines, for studying character, coming up with playable actions and being in a state of rehearsal and not a performative state with an audience.
- 4 Finishing my research and handing it out to as many people as possible :)

So with such an easy thing as the DMN/TPN we could possibly understand how some students might struggle with negative self talk where others don't with the same energy and engagement to the task. And also that the same students when performing at their best will exhaust themselves much quicker than their peers at their best. Also that easy and some what boring tasks can become impossible for some students and actors to overcome and if they do overcome the struggles they will be exhausted for pushing through the wall of boredom/or the broken ignition and gas pedal jumping a few decimetres ahead until the battery is empty...

A short brainstorm of inclusive ways to rehears text at a very early stage

- 1) Never rehears alone (especially in school)
- 2) Play the text and gamify the learning of lines: shouting them out for the other actors to perform; record the lines and do different stuff on stage hearing them played out on syllables, verbs, information or other³⁰, play the actions with what you remember from the lines to get at the truth of the scene...
- 3) Play and gamify the coming up process of active verbs and playable actions: Use two list and shout the different verbs and actions to maybe get a weird jackpot or deepening the understanding for the texts possibilities; Do an Impro theatre exercise with different squares or places up and down stage that changes the playable actions, verbs, tools, settings etc by either defining each space before or letting your scene partner(s) give you new ones every time you cross a line; have a dance/movement competition to space work out the whole scene as much as possible on the nose whilst talking (maybe something pops up that just has to be in the show later on).
- 4) If you have to do a quick (or long) solitude scene breakdown by pencil, do it in groups or at least with a couple of persons in the same room (It's called having an accountability partner

³⁰ Got the recording rehearsal practice from a text immersive course with John Wright - author of "why is that so funny" - at Teateralliansen.

and works great for everyone and especially ADHD-persons) - Do I have to say no windows, screens or phones, nope didn't think so.

- 5) Or: Do Meisner assignments where the text should be learned under 5 minutes but the scene partner gives you different playable reasons not to learn the text (but enters after like 2 minutes :)).
- 6) Most important: Set aside time in school/during rehearsals/lessons for textual play in group. Don't assume everyone can learn 20 pages of text over night, because even if they can it's a very not nice thing to do to everyone - because everyone has different qualities of learning environments at home but in the rehearsal room we can at least work to have an inclusive equal learning space. Professionally this is a different saga, but we can work to have the best work situations there too - And ultimately its up to the artist what they can and can not sacrifice during none work hours (even if they shouldn't need to).

3.1.6) Working memory and the Shakespearean arena theatre as an example

Working memory is usually impaired having ADHD. This with the DMN always being on creates a constant arena theatre in your head pulling at your attention and forgetting your last thought/action

Shakespeare's plays are written for a arena theatre where the audience is shouting, fighting, drinking and talking - so all lines, even if poetic, they are repeated so that you can get the play even if you get into a fist fight for a while

So I've always had a love hate relationship with Shakespeare because on the one hand I can think of other stuff and still get the play.

But on the other hand if played

Stressing every syllable as if it is important with out speed, as if the play was written for a black box theatre - I can't hear a thing and a fall into my brain or to sleep...

This I think is equally important to know as an actor/ director/audience that some percentage of the audience will perceive the performance differently because their brain works differently.

And we need to address this when we make the play and when we choose for whom it will be performed - Not choosing is especially here choosing.

3.2) The Social Media Actor

3.2.0) What is the actors role in a multimedia age

“When everyone is an actor - what is the actors role?”

Stanislavskij said something like that the theatre's function is to hold up a mirror towards the audience and tell them a fictional story that is more true than that of the one being mirrored - truthfully, as if and not in anyway 'in general'.

Today the society is being mirrored by every social media account around the world with instant access - and with stories bigger and more true than we can make on any stage. What then is the actors role in a social media age?

- To mirror the mirroror?

- To remirror the mirrored?
- To look for nuance or problems of the already mirrored?
- To compete for the narrative of stories?
- To compete for the best telling of an already told story?
- Re-act and re-tell?
- Re-create or still try to find new stories and perspectives?
- Or, what..?

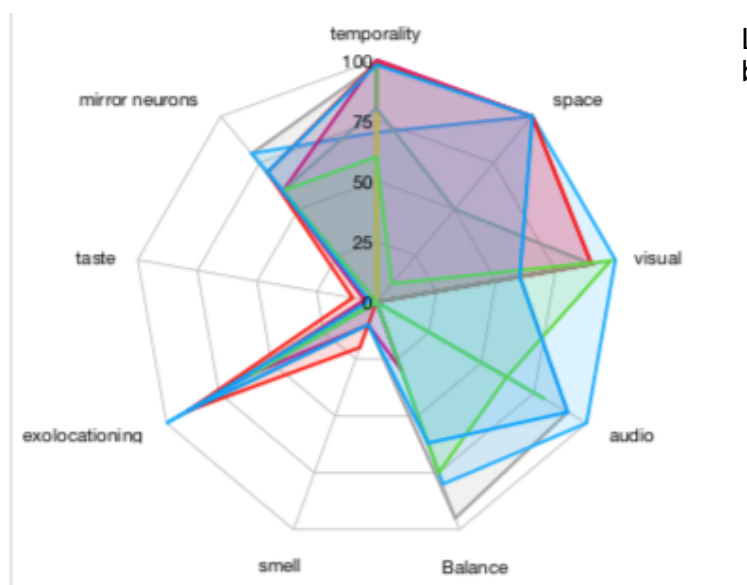
3.2.1) Liveness: what is that on Social Media?

3.2.1.0) Live/Liveness what is that and why is it important?

What is live/Liveness?

To research/understand:

- Extended understanding of what is live through phenomenology
- Extended understanding of live/ liveness through breakthroughs in science
- The augmented actor and human being in an ever evolving digital society
- The missing information/languages of performance - what senses don't we take into account talking about liveness/live.
- Temporality space, vision and audio is what we usually talk about and measure liveness through is it possible to make a liveness chart (scientifically and subjectively through the perceived liveness from a phenomenological point of view)? To get a more specific language for what is live? Something like this³¹ but more intricate:



Liveness chart
by Alexander Lindman

³¹ Liveness chart by Alexander Lindman

where the different colours represents different art forms. The lonely yellow line for Earth Hour³², one of the blue theatre the other one 3D film and the green line for cinema, red for street theatre, etc. for an example.

3.2.1.1)

3.2.1.2)

3.2.1.3)

3.2.1.4)

3.2.1.5)

3.2.2) Acting technique for social media

- Is there specific techniques required for social media acting?
- If so: do we need to address these in our education system - if a large portion of the students will work there at one point, or a lot, in there careers?

Here I go through different techniques and hypothesis about what I believe I need to research further or that I already believe works or is done.

3.2.2.1) Screen acting (for all sorts of screens) p

3.2.2.1) Augmented acting p

3.2.2.1) Social media norms for acting p

3.2.2.1) Acting for entertainment, a cause, a story
or seemingly not acting what is the difference? p

3.2.3) What is and what could a social media actor be and do

Now and since Corona a lot of actors have been more active on social media than ever

- Some are using Instagram as a CV
- Some use tiktok/Instagram as a way to directly communicate with their fans and create hype for up coming projects, which they are also more hired for by the producers to gain more views, clicks and buys
- Some actors use social media as a bridge between the actor life and the social/family life.
- Some Actors create flashy videos about their own life as if their slowly filming their own video-biographies taking control over their own image or by proxy/manager.
-

And some are actively creating stuff, as performing actors, on their own platforms: These are the ones that I currently find most interesting for my research and what this means for our entire field - because they are using their trained craft on their own platforms not for a director, theatre or other third part:

- Social media platforms created by actors as actors
- Using it as a tool to act.

³² A global climate change event set and shared only in perceived time

This I believe creates, or can create, a space where the hierarchical order of theatre and film is upended

- A space where the actor works and the other functions comes in to help - when there is money - like the autonomous actors in theatre. But already with a space, direct following, patreonship, tools in the apps to create etc...
- And visionasing: maybe the state can re-instate longer statefundings for these kinds of artists
- Maybe having 20% funding for creating and 80% on social media patreons or commercial money - like theatres getting paid for rehearsals but not the actual period of playing the piece

3.2.4) Platforms ("Son of man, where to are you gonna run to...")

p

3.2.5) State funding, patronage, commercial money, professionalism

So how is, should or can a social media actor be paid to work professionally?

There are a couple of funding forms I can think of directly:

- crowd funding
- Pay per view
- pay per thingy
- Patreon
- by an actual mecenat or patreon
- state funding
- commercial money/ pay per click/minute/second/view on platform etc
- product placement
- product endorsement

From where?

- Own homepage/platform
- research catalogues
- commercial platforms
- non profit platforms
- couch surfing platform/pop up-theatres/cinemas?

And what is professional artistry on social media:

- State (pleased) funded?
- Crowed (pleased) funded?
- Private (pleased) funded?
- Own pocket funded (between other jobs)?

Is this more accurate?

- Professional = paid for specific work

- Artist = creates and maybe gets paid
 - Working artist = funded to create “freely”
 - Commercial Artist = sells to be able to create
- Maybe??

If so: how do we/I create/choose working environments on social media that moves between these or a specific form that I feel is right for me/us at any specific time for different artistic works?

3.2.6) The augmented actor or the multi competent actor p

3.3) The Neurodiverse Social Media Actor p-

3.3.1) Introduction: Finding a home or walking into a trap? p

3.3.2) Why research these together p

3.3.2.1) The omnipotential, vs the dysfunction, of ADHD p

3.3.2.2) Hyper fixations, hyperfocus and the steep and deep valley of boredom p

3.3.2.3) Change as a method p

3.3.2.4) The dopamine trap and future blindness (now-/not nowness) p

3.3.4)

4) The How part - Research methods and the way forward

4.1) Asking the right questions

“Trying to deneurotypicalize acting technique and understand what a social media actor might be and do and if there is or should be a difference between a neurotypical and neurodiverse way of applying oneself and communicate with said audience on said platform(s)?”

Is this the right wording? I don’t know, but this line is what I start my work with and from and we’ll just see what changes on the way :)

In this part I’ll try to lay out how I could work with the different things I’d like to research. This section might become redundant and self explanatory as it might be enveloped in the other sections as time goes by. But for now here I will try to explain and brainstorm about how I could work and play around with finding the right kinds of questions.

4.2) Artistic research

So what can I artistically do as an artistic researcher?

- Using my own body and experience as a tool to research neurodiverseness in the arts
- Creating film/clips for social media and analysing myself and other’s clips looking for technique and understanding the medium and techniques used and put them to work.

- Creating together with others to get their thoughts and input.
- Testing different knowledge from psychology and neuroscience about neurodiverseness and applying that to acting technique or problematise it.
- Trying to stay in what's uncomfortable to know and research but also what feels liberating
- Researching together with other researchers
- Create a lot of researching clips and learn and evolve on the way
-

4.2.1) Solo works	p
4.2.2) teacher lead learning and research sessions	p
4.2.3) Artist collaboration	p
4.3) Neuro science and psychology	p
4.4) Interviews and conversations	
4.5) Seminars	p
4.6) Activism part: open seminars in school, teater Biennalen and where ever it is needed. And talking and acting on social media.	p

5) The expected results: Goals and continuations p

6) Ethics/problem shooting - What could go wrong? p

6.1) Ethics about Neurodiverseness	p
6.1.1) Ableism, IQ and who's voice	p
6.1.2) Autism and other kinds of neurodiverseness - ADHD the convenient posterchild?	p
6.1.3) ADHD depicted as a creative superpower?	p
6.1.4) Gender differences	p
6.1.5) Ethnicity	p
6.1.6) Culture	p
6.1.7) Morbidities alongside ADHD (a brief problem shooting)	p
6.1.7.1) Eating disorders: (anorexia, Bulimia, Ortorexia, Binge eating disorder, etc...)	p
6.1.7.2) GAD	p
6.1.7.3) Utmattningsdepression	p
6.1.7.4) CPTSD	p
6.1.7.5) OCD	p
6.1.7.5) ODD/PDA	p
6.1.7.6) RSD/HSP (non-DSM5)	p
6.1.7.7) Audio/Word processing disorder	p
6.1.7.8) Fast/slow processing speed	p
6.1.7.9) Sensory processing disorder	p
6.1.7.10) Other	p
6.1.8) Intersectionality in play	p
6.2) Ethics about social media	p
6.2.1) Artistic freedom vs censored commercial platforms	p
6.2.2) No commercial money for creations for children - The good, the bad and the ugly	p

6.2.3)	Ideology and consumerism	p
6.2.4)	Climate change	p
6.2.5)	Privacy	p
6.2.6)	Change (every 5 years the whole market change?)	p
6.3)	Ethics about school	p
6.4)	Ethics about artistic research	p
6.4.1)	Peer reviewing creative chaos	p
6.4.2)	Artistic research and the "scientific" method	p
6.5)	Ethics about neuroscience and psychology	p
6.5.1)	The peer review scandal: 2/3 = bad science	p
6.5)	Ethics about Acting	p
6.5.1)	The actor's integrity	p
6.5.2)	The audience's integrity	p
6.5.3)	What stories and subjects to choose: Moral vs Ethical choices	p
6.5.4)	Food on the table	p
6.5.5)	Puppeteered or autonomy	p
6.6)	Should something go wrong?	p
6.6.1)	From Chaos to lightbulb the artistic way?	p

THE PRACTICAL PART

7) My own Experiments, Artistic Research, Papers, Exams...	p
7.0 Hypothesises to be tested	p
7.0.1) De-masking before masking	p
7.0.2) About DMN/TPN (or the actors focus and attention)	p
7.0.2.1)	
7.0.2.2)	
7.0.2.3)	
7.0.2.4)	
7.0.3) About Working memory	p
7.0.4) About the neurodiverse audience	p
7.0.5) About Sensory processing disorder (SPD)	p

7.0.5.1) Acting with SPD

So, acting with SPD³³ can be a really tough process for a neurodiverse actor like myself. Even the slightest stickiness or uncomfortableness in the costume can hurl me out of the hyperfocus and into the TPN with the DMN on - This might not mean I will do a bad work as an actor. But I will be self conscious and *feel* as if I'm doing a bad work.

This is because with SPD your brain can't shut off the information flow of the senses. This means for a neurotypical actor with a sticky costume their body will signal that it is

³³ <https://www.additudemag.com/what-is-sensory-processing-disorder/>
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sticky for a while but then act like its fine and stop telling the actor about it because the brain does what it does usually with smell (there is an easy experiment you can do - put cinnamon in one container, cardamom in another and in the last a mix: then ask two persons two smell the different canisters in different orders cinnamon-mixed and cardamom-mixed - If they are not suffering from an intense SPD they will tell you that the mixed container only smells of the other spice... Because the body/mind is so quick to acclimatise).

But for a person with ADHD and SPD the mind does not stop telling you about the sticky costume - it will be sticky for as long as they have it on!

As an ADHD-actor this is infuriating, especially as most other actors don't share the sensitivity and therefore a lot of people in the business don't know about it - usually the costume designers fortunately do. But director's and acting teachers usually don't.

The best scenario is that the sensitivity can be brought into the action played and into the character and then you might not be hurled out of the hyperfocus because it is included in the focus.

Worst case scenario the sensitivity brings you all the way out of focus and you shift focus entirely to it. Because, lets be real here: Acting isn't real and the brain knows it and if the brain thinks your hurting toe is more important than a made up action it's going to point that out to you, loudly.

Hypothesis 1

You can work around any SPD issue by including it or allowing it in to your playable action

Ways to test this:

- 1) With a bunch of neurodiverse actors with SPD in sticky costumes and two different actions (one that allows stickiness and one that don't).
- 2) On myself
- 3) Changing any given setting into an unforgiving sensory overloading one - and try to fix it.

Ways to disprove it:

- 1) Sensory overloading an actor might make them less attentive to the scene partner at hand over time and therefore a lesser version of their acting self. Ways to test this might be playing the same actions with and without the sensory overloading stuff be it: Lights, uncomfortable costume, a hurting body, a tense body, a loud or an unfocused audience member (in a focused black box room) - and just see what happens in the long run... This doesn't necessarily disprove the hypothesis because you should make sure that the actors can be their best selves on stage and that includes sensory issues so it's more of a quick fix theory than a long term workable solution.
- 2) The solutions might just make it so the actor can be focused in the TPN with the DMN on telling them about the sensory issue... And not really allowing them to hyperfocus (and forgetting about it) therefore making the ADHD-actor still uncomfortable playing the action: Ways to test this is to disturb the actor with stuff that shouldn't disturb them whilst hyperfocusing, like: dimming the lights slightly, someone in the audience scratching their face, other small noises, the scene partner doing something of main focus like moving their hand or feet whilst acting with eye contact etc.. stuff that a

neurodiverse person's wide attention span would pick up immediately whilst in the 50/50 TP/DM-network...

7.1) Experiments	p
7.2) Artistic Research	p
7.2.1) Solo works	p
7.2.2) Teacher lead learning and research sessions/labs	p
7.2.3) Artistic collaboration	p
7.2.3.1) Artistic collaboration with other artists	p
7.2.3.2) Artistic collaboration with other scientists	p
7.3) Social Media Clips	p
7.4) Social media acting	p
7.4.1) Screen acting for social media	p
7.4.2) Augmented acting	p
7.4.3) Social media acting	p
7.5) Social media entertainment clips	p
7.6) Social media ADHD and other activism clips	p
7.4) Exams/papers on the way	p
7.5) Other Papers/pieces of information	p
8) Interviews	p
8.1 Other researchers	p
8.2 Other ADHD actors	p
8.3 Other ADHD Social Media Actors and Social Media Actors	p
9) Floor work	p
9.1 Acting coach 1 (2022 spring 1? week)	p
9.2 Acting coach 2 (2022 spring 1? week)	p
9.3 Acting coach 3 (2022 autumn 1? week)	p
9.4 Acting coach 4 (2022 autumn 1? week)	p
10) Seminars	p

Results and possible findings

11) Results, findings (?), techniques and stuff left for the world to find	p
11.1) ADHD Acting technique and findings (a start for short handbook?)	p
11.1.1) Denuerotypicalized acting technique or ADHD acting technique?	p
11.1.?) De-masking before masking	p
11.1.??)	p
11.2) Social Media Acting techniques and findings (a start to a short handbook?)	p
11.2.1) introduction	p
11.2.?)	p
11.3) List of my Social Media Clips:	p
11.4) List of other peoples Social Media Clips	p
11.5)	

11.6) Other Conclusions

p-

11.6.1) Conclusions about ADHD acting

p

11.6.2) Conclusions about Social Media Acting

p

11.6.3) Conclusions about ADHD Social Media acting

p

12) Afterword (to be written after everything is done)

p

13) Other Attachments

p