



## The Official 2023 Actor Survival Guide Vol 4 Part 2

### TRANSCRIPT

*FYI: Timestamps listed here are not correct, but know that all of the content from the interview is here.*

**BRIAN:** Well, hello and welcome to part two of the Actor Survival Guide, volume four. I am having conversations with superstar coaches who help actors. Well, it's not even conversations. Actually, we did it really differently this time. We decided to ask these superstar coaches one question. What is a strategy actors can apply when things are just slow? Now, I had Emily Grace, Christine Horn, Sarah Gaboury, Tony Rossi, Jodie Bentley, and Moniqua Plante on part one. And in this episode, you're gonna hear from Elise Arsenault Jo Kelly, Sam Valentine, Anthony Meindl, Shannon Bills, DaJuan Johnson, and little ol' me. Now, if you wanna take notes on this, put your pencils down, I got you covered boo. Head on over to [actorsurvivalguide.com](http://actorsurvivalguide.com) and grab the download. Let me tell you something, that download, she is so cute. We spent some time on this, so please take a look.

The reason why I made the guide tangible is I want these strategies and these processes to be tangible in your own career and in your life. Because look, even the most busy actors in the world have times when things get slow, and after coming through these two strikes, it felt like we should at least have a plan to move through those moments with a little more grace, a little more generosity of spirit to ourselves.

**SAM VALENTINE:** The strategy I'd like to share is letting go of the idea of balance. This is not going to resonate with some people because we've been sold the idea of finding balance for so long, finding balance in our creative career, in the business side of acting, in our money jobs, in our family life, in our mental health, in our self-care. And there is just not enough time in the day for this to exist. So my way to counteract that is to understand that if balance doesn't exist, how can I even out the scales over a longer period of time? Because anytime you give your energy to something, you are taking it from somewhere else. There is not an unlimited amount that you have to offer. And let's be honest, some days we have very little to start with. So let's say it's getting real quiet in the actor corner and you feel like you need to do things in your creative career. Great. Maybe you can spend some time and energy deciding what those few goals are that have nothing to do with someone else's subjective opinion, a k a booking. And what can you do to advance yourself in those areas?

Let's say you spend two or three weeks working on a self tape. You film it, you wanna add it to your reel, maybe you coach it. It's all a process. You get that done amazing, you get it posted, don't forget to finish the step. And then you realize, you know what? I haven't actually cleaned out my email inbox in those three weeks because

**TRANSCRIPT**

I've been giving my free time to this task, and frankly, I'm exhausted. So then you pivot for the next week or so. Your acting creative bucket might not get a lot of you, but your business bucket might get more of you. So you put the energy in there.

And having finite bars that you set for yourself in terms of goals will help this a lot because if you don't set those as the bar, you can do a lot of work, look around and feel like you have nothing to show for the work that you've done. So instead, I suggest creating your own bars. And when you accomplish them, amazing, now you have a bird's eye view coming up out of that task or project of what needs your attention next. And you know what? A lot of times it might not be acting. It might be time to call your grandma that you haven't spoke to in a few months. It might be time to actually clean out your closet. And I'm looking at mine right now, and there are some things that need to be folded for the past few months. And I know for a fact I'm gonna get to it, but right now it's just not in my balance bucket. Maybe it's a time when you want to focus on learning a skill that has nothing to do with your career. Yes, it might feel like you've taken away from the career bucket

For the time being, but when you come back to it later, you're going to have more things to offer. So if I were you, I would make a list of all the areas of your life that require energy from you. Maybe it's family, friends, social outings, pets, your acting career, your reps, your creativity, social media, your email inbox, whatever all these things are, and only focus on one or two at a time. And if you can make them focus in conjunction with each other even better. I am such a big fan of this concept that balance doesn't exist, but you can still keep a strategized life where you take care of things in the long run. Also, keep this communication open to those you're closest with because they will love knowing that although you might not be good at texting during the week on Saturdays, they're gonna get a full hour of your attention. Let this be a process and let other people come in on it. Thanks for having me, guys.

**ANTHONY MEINDL:** Oh, hi everybody. So the strategy that I'd like to share with actors that you can apply wherever you may be, you know, experiencing a lull or some downtime in your career, is to have no strategy at all. Strategies are for bankers, for economists, strategies are for mathematicians or for real estate agents. Strategies are for a flight path. And figuring out where you have to go and where you have to be at what time strategies are for winning a war or graduating from college. I don't think a life in the arts is about having a strategy. I think it is about finding new ways to work or create or become attuned to, uh, the vessel that we all are and what it wants to show us or help us find another way of creating.

**TRANSCRIPT**

When we think strategies for a career, I think we get too caught up in the linearity of things. One plus two equals three. If I do this, it will equal a booking or, uh, a, you know, I was gonna say a promotion, but we don't look at our creative lives that way, but sometimes we do. When we get into that strategic left brain part of ourselves, and I think we wanna, um, sort of keep training ourselves out of that way of thinking. I think the artistic expression, the artistic flow when we are in flow comes from some other place. It's, you're tapping into universal consciousness, the source, your own godhead, divinity, whatever you wanna call it, um, sort of a transcendental ephemeral place. It's very difficult to locate.

And when the mind gets involved and does try to locate it, it goes away. And so the, the challenge is, of course, I'm not suggesting you just sit at home all day long and you don't take action, because we do have to move out into the physical world with ideas. But that's different than getting stuck on, if I do this, it will equal that. But then if that doesn't happen, we give up, or we, we see it as sort of confirmation bias, like, oh see, it's not gonna work for me, or, that didn't work, or, I've tried everything and has never gone the way that I thought it would go. So I think staying out of, and, and I also think strategies sometimes get stuck on and results or outcomes. And that can be very detrimental to the artist because

When you're on your path, all you have to do is just kind of keep lighting the first or the, the next 200 meters in front of you. That's it. You don't have to see where the entire path is going. Also, it kind of takes the fun of the adventure, uh, out of it. So just keep lighting the next hundred feet on your path and then things reveal themselves. And then I think it also shows you a way like, oh, come this way, or go try that or call this person up. You know, I think that the strategies that I rely on, and I guess I always have, but I'm really trying to articulate more and more for young people, is when you have an aha, an intuition, a hunch, sort of a quiet prompting within yourself, that oftentimes can bring up, uh, nervousness, fear, a little bit of trepidation around it, because it may mean you're taking a risk.

That's really the creative strategy you wanna follow. You wanna call up that person. You can ask for help, you can get some guidance. You can do the thing that you've been putting, you know, on the back burner for a long time because you don't think you have enough time, or it feels like it's the antithesis to acting. So, uh, I guess my advocacy is for us to think a little bit more creatively and with a wider touch and not get so bogged down that if I do this and get all these things, all these ducks in the right row, it will equal success. I don't think success looks like that or works like that. Also, success reveals itself through many different modalities for each person. So I want you to trust that the best advice I could ever give, and I would never give advice, is just to trust your own method. And your own method is what you're making up as you go along on this journey. That

**TRANSCRIPT**

is, your path is beautiful. One life you have just have a little bit more faith, a little bit more faith that it's all working out, but get out there but have faith. Okay? I hope that helps. I'm always here to help in any way that I can. Blessings.

**JO KELLY:** So when downtime is happening, there is an opportunity. And in the work I do, I like to call that life is happening for you. It is not happening to you. So as an actor, if you're experiencing downtime, it is happening for you. And that might be paradoxical. 'cause you may be feeling feelings of fear when there's downtime. You may be feeling angry, you may be feeling anxious. You may be experiencing a lot of doubt about the future, about what's gonna happen to you, um, about the fact that you're losing control, that it's unsafe. And you may even feel like you're wanting to quit acting altogether because it's too unsure. And so it's very understandable that you would have those feelings. They're not wrong.

Humans don't like change. And so if your circumstances are changing, you don't know what's gonna happen. It's unpredictable, and that's scary. So it's totally understandable that you would feel all of those things. The problem comes from the fact that usually what you may have tried to do until now is to not feel those feelings, to bypass them, to repress them, to get back to a place of confidence, to feel in control, to keep moving, to keep doing the same thing that feels safe. 'cause you think that if you're still gonna be doing the same thing, and if nothing changes, then you know what's gonna happen and therefore you're safe. So you might be looking for a strategy to just, you know, not feel the downtime altogether. You might be looking for a strategy to not feel anything at all to completely repress it or to beat it.

There's so many strategies that you can come up with to actually not be at the effect of this downtime, to not be a victim of it. The problem is it's delusional for you to do that because you're not being present to what is. So there is a downtime and you are experiencing it. So if you are experiencing it, you are having those human feelings. So the root of the discomfort that you're feeling is not the downtime, it's actually the resistance to feeling, the feelings to living it. And the reason you're not feeling the feelings is because you've been conditioned not to feel. You've been asked, not to be sad, not to be afraid, not to be

Angry since you were little. So you might be asking, but Joe, where's the opportunity? So here it comes. What's really possible in the opportunity when you are feeling your feelings, is that you are feeling your experience. And when you're feeling your experience, rather than what you think you should be feeling, because figures of authority have told you, you should always stay confident when you are feeling your feelings. You get to hear your guidance, your need, your wisdom, your possibility, your next step. So let's take downtime in this example.

**TRANSCRIPT**

If I'm an actress and downtime comes and I do not wanna feel all the scary feelings, and I bypass that, and I look for a strategy to move on to something else right away, to numb the feeling, well, I will not hear how the downtime affects me. I'll just deny it. I'll neglect my feelings, I'll abandon myself.

And so there is no way that I can hear my intuition, my wisdom, my guidance, my choice as to what do I wanna do inside of this downtime? How do I choose to navigate this? So I'll quote Viktor Frankl, if you haven't read Men's Search for Meaning, it's probably one of the most important books of all time. Um, Viktor Frankl writes about what wisdom he got out of having unfortunately experienced concentration camps. And so what he says is many things, but I'll try to dilute it to one sentence, is that when all is taken away from you, the opportunity is to go inside of you and to find your inner freedom, where you're still having the freedom to choose what you do with the circumstance, how you perceive it, how you react to it, how you navigate. And that's where you find yourself. Your meaning, the meaning about your life. That's when you are being you. So I hope this was helpful and um, that if you are experiencing downtime, it gets you closer to your soul, to your heart, and to your artist. Thank you.

**SHANON BILLS:** I had like to share a concept I've incorporated into my day-to-day recently that has completely changed the game for me in terms of my productivity. It's something I now do on my good days, my bad days, slow days, busy days. And it's called the 212 degree approach. Before I get into what that is exactly, being an energy healer, I feel I would be doing you a disservice if I didn't mention an energetic law of energy that has to do with creating momentum in your life. And that law is called the law of rhythm. It's a simple law that's always on like gravity, and it's here to remind you that there are seasons, cycles, and stages in your life, and a lot of those cycles you can't control.

Everyone's season is going to look different, which is why you might see some friends booking nonstop. You might see some friends in a bit of a holding pattern, and all of it is normal. Release that control. Trust the season of life that you're in, and focus on what you can control, which is your mindset, your effort, and your actions. Now, the two 12 method is going to help you with all three of those things. Your mindset, your effort, your actions. It's going to allow you to feel more in control and gain more traction in your life and in your acting career. And it starts with this basic principle. You are currently living your life at 211 degrees, and what it took to get to 211 degrees was a lot of effort, a lot of hard work, dedication, hustle. I see it 211 degrees gets water very, very, very, very hot. But at 212 degrees, water boils and produces steam. Steam creates enough energy and enough force to generate machines. It has massive power. That small difference in degrees is what creates massive change.

**TRANSCRIPT**

So to receive beautiful high vibe, exponential results that you are desiring in your acting career, in your life, it needs to be met with exponential effort. Now, if you can really, really root to this idea that you're already doing beautiful work, seriously, great job, you are already at 211 degrees, you're just one degree away from this major shift from producing steam. And if you're just one degree away, what does life look like at that extra degree?

Maybe that's getting up 30 minutes earlier every day. Maybe that's stepping out of your comfort zone even once a week. And if you only do once a week, that creates 52 new opportunities a year. Maybe it's 15 minutes of less social media a day, which is the equivalent to more than two weeks back of your life a year. Maybe it's pausing and reflecting on what you know versus jumping into every new thing. Maybe it's just listening. Knowing that you've created this awareness, you don't have to change anything else up. All you need to do is that one small step, one tiny extra degree of effort to get to the results that you're desiring. So the task I have for you is I want you to write down your current routine. Go through all areas of your life, ask yourself what's feeling good, what's not feeling good? And then I want you to ask yourself, how can I, two 12, every area of my life, how can I two 12, my self-care routine? How can I two 12, my acting performances, how can I two 12, the way I view money, how can I two 12, my audition routine? How can I two 12, my gym routine? How can I two 12, my mindset, how can I two 12, being a friend or a partner, this simple concept has changed the game for me, because whatever state the world is in externally, it does not affect what I can do 12 in my life.

You get to control what this looks like for you, what this feels like for you. So if you're looking at a how-to, on how to uplevel your acting career, any area of your life, my advice is you two 12, it.

**ELISE ARSENAULT:** So here's a strategy that you can apply whenever there may be a lull or some downtime in your career. You can also use this if you are aiming to reach something and it just hasn't quite been working for you. There's just a different way to approach your goal. So first, I want you to think about what it is that you want. What are you desiring? This can be something that you want in the near future, like the next few days to a month or a longer term vision, like the next few months to a year or two out. So choose which one you'll focus on. Is it gonna be a near future moment that you'd like to experience or a longer term ideal scene? Something you'd really like to experience in your career? Once you've decided that, close your eyes and imagine what you'd like to experience in this future moment.

What are you doing in detail? Really imagine this. Where are you? Who are you sharing this moment with? What do you see in this moment? What do you hear? What do you smell? Is there a specific taste that you have in this moment? And how do you feel? What are some feelings that you have? And let's go deeper there. Let's zero

**TRANSCRIPT**

in on the feelings in this near future or further into the future moment. You are imagining right now, what are some feelings that future you experiences? Name one or two or three feelings. Now open your eyes if your eyes are closed and write those feelings down.

These are the core feelings you'd like to experience, the feelings that you imagine you'll experience when you reach a future goal or a future vision. Now the truth is you can actually practice experiencing these feelings right now, and that will help you get into alignment so that you can actually attract that future scene and you can start experiencing what you think that future goal will help you experience. So next to each core feeling right now, I want you to write down one or two actions that you could take to help you feel that core feeling that you're after. So let's say for instance, um, one of the core feelings that you want to experience is connected. Let's imagine in this future goal you are feeling connected.

So what are some actions you can take on a consistent basis to feel connected? I'll give you just one example for me. Uh, when I feel connected, uh, one of the action steps that makes me feel connected is to spend time with friends. So that could be an action, and that's actually something I practice, is to spend time with friends at least once a week. So you'll write one or two actions down for each core feeling. And once you've done that, you have your very own personal prescription to help you feel your core feelings more and get into alignment with that future self. You can start feeling the way you want in that future scene right now. So when you are experiencing your core feelings, you cannot help but attract the right opportunities for you. You cannot help but be your authentic, your your highest potential self. So give this exercise a try, and please, please, please let me know how it goes for you. I am cheering you on always, Elise, our snow signing off.

**BRIAN PATACCA:**

And now I got something to say, of course. So Sam Valentine touched on this a little bit and I wanna take it a little bit further. You know, I was talking to a client the other day and she was saying, I really wanna get organized in my career. And I was like, huh, let's dig a little deeper there. And what we found was something that didn't surprise me, but something that might surprise you, which is we often pay little attention to our physical environment.

You know, you might clean your bedroom or fold your clothes or get things sorted once in a while or maybe you're even taking care of your kids and your family and doing all that heavy lifting of getting things put in place. But I think there's also this space to take when things have slowed down a little bit, to take a step back

**TRANSCRIPT**

and say, what about my physical surroundings is serving me and what about it might want to shift? One of the ways that I look for this is like, for example, I'll give you a little story for me. Every day,

When I'm going to the gym, I don't go to the gym every day, but when I make it to the gym, I usually take a water bottle with me, right? I've got these, a Yeti bottle that I fill up with water. And I put usually half of a lemon in it or something. It's dented and old and I've been using it forever. And they always go in the same spot, in the same cupboard. Well, I have to tell you, for a long time, I could, the sp— the freaking straw was getting separated from the top of it all the time. I had to go digging in every single drawer in the world. And let's be real here, like, I'm getting up early in the morning, I'm already like half-not awake.

So I finally, after being frustrated with this by, I don't know, three months, finally was like, why don't I make a spot for the straw to go so that I'm not always randomly looking for it at 7 a.m., scrounging around in the half darkness? So here's the strategy that I want to give you when it comes to elevating your physical surroundings, because let's be real, finding that straw in the morning and giving ease to me finding that straw is actually a form of self-care.

Because otherwise, I'm getting a little anxious, I'm worried about making it to the gym on time. If I don't get there on time, I'm not gonna get a spot for the class. Then I'm gonna drive on the road anxiously, and then I'm probably gonna call my mom on my drive to the gym, which I almost always do, and I'm not gonna be able to be who I wanna be because I'm a little stressed about getting there on time. Like, there's such a, avalanche is the word I'm looking for. Avalanche that comes from just having to scrounge around to find this dang straw.

So here's the strategy that I wanna give to you. Notice, notice around your abode what gets in your way, what's annoying, what just needs to be put somewhere else. And some of this stuff might be really easy. It might be as simple as, oh, I need to put a dish by the front door to drop my keys in. That's a trick that I created for myself. It might be more heavy lifting, like, you know what? These shelves need to be organized differently. I need to put all my gym shorts on this one shelf and put this over here. I'm not saying you need to do it all right now or to try to rehaul your whole house, but notice the one thing that and get stuck in your craw. The thing that's a little bit annoying, and it's a little bit annoying every day, because that adds up. And the truth is, you are smart enough, wise enough, resourceful enough, and capable enough to shift that. And to me, this is a form of self care where you're parenting yourself. You're taking good care of yourself. So my wish for you in that downtime is to build the creature comforts that make living just a little bit easier.



**TRANSCRIPT**

**DAJUAN JOHNSON:** You know, one of the things that I don't think they tell actors or that even actors of like that I've been working for a very long time, that the biggest thing that you're gonna have in this career, the for sure thing that will, you, will have is downtime. There will be moments when the, um, work stops, when there might be a strike. There might be a covid, a pandemic. There might be less auditions that come along. But the biggest thing you're gonna have is downtime. And I always say that I believe a lot of what actors or that burns actors out pretty fast, or actors that make them wanna leave the industry, um, one of those factors are they are not preparing for the journey. And part of the journey is embracing and understanding that there is a lot of downtime. So one of the things I always try to, uh, share with my actors, you know, my podcast or whatever we're on social and stuff and stuff like that, is to really, really, really understand this principle that I heard from, um, it was an agent at Innovative is that actors need to learn how to float.

They need to learn how to float. What do you mean by that? DaJuan, when you are out there, and I think the picture has C right? You're out there at sea and you are, you swimming, you're doing a triathlon, triathlon. Think about your triathlon is going out there, going out there. You're doing all those things and swimming. I, I, you know, I'm not really good at that metaphor about triathlon, but what you do is like, there comes a time where you just have to float. In our career, we have that same time where we've already updated all the resumes, we've already, you know, got our amazing self tape set up together. Uh, we've already gotten our team together, we've already done all the things, and now we're just in a waiting period. We're just in a holding period. We just need to float. We don't need to call our reps to see if they need anything from us.

We don't need to go out there and maybe, um, um, audition with a cla. We don't need to do all those things just float. And when you're in this float state, you can just be, what do you wanna be in that? That's up to you. You could diversify your income and go work on something else. Maybe a project outside of the industry. You can, um, you know, pour more into your family during that time. You can work on self-care. You can do whatever you want in that floating time. That floating time is not for you just to fill it, it is just to float. And I truly believe with all of my mindset experience right here, that if we learn how to float better and we learn how to calibrate and get our minds in alignment during that period, we come back out of that into our swimming state, better, fuller, ready for the world. So inside of a downtime.

That's what I wanna say to you. That's what I wanna say. Remember that this is all part of the journey. This is normal. It's nothing you did. It is part of the journey. So give yourself that permission to float. And I just wanna say one more thing. You also get to give yourself permission to be great during this time. Give yourself permission to work through whatever you wanna work through. You know, I think everyone isn't doing that.



## The Official 2023 Actor Survival Guide Vol 4 Part 2

### TRANSCRIPT

More people are giving themselves the permission to be in avoidance, to play small, which is the very opposite of floating. Because in floating you are taking control of the situation, right? And you are saying, this is what I am doing during this time. So don't play small. Don't avoid anything.

Give yourself permission to be great, to just float in that time and just know on the other side of that, that one you'll be okay. Your self-worth isn't, isn't, uh, measured off of your productivity that you do get to stop and enjoy this moment.

#### **BRIAN:**

Whoa, Brian here, look, I don't know about you, but these strategies, these coaches have blown me away. And I wanna thank you, my Brian Breaks character listener, because this doesn't happen without you and all the thought that they put into those strategies and that we put into this episode means nothing unless you're here listening along. So I wanna express my gratitude to you and of course to Emily Grace, Elise Arsenault, Jo Kelly, Christine Horn, Sam Valentine, Sarah Gaboury, Tony Rossi, Anthony Meindl, Jodie Bentley, Shannon Bills, DaJuan Johnson, and Moniqua Plante. So thank you to these coaches. I know these coaches to be incredibly conscious, incredibly thoughtful about the work that they're putting into the world. And I am so grateful to be on the planet with them and with you at the same time. We know that stepping into your purpose isn't always easy, especially when things get slow. And I also know that you might not be feeling that right now. Today, you might be feeling high on your horse and feeling good about things.

But just so that you can make this tangible for the certain times when things might slow down, because we know that's a natural part of an acting career, grab the guide, [actorsurvivalguide.com](http://actorsurvivalguide.com). Because I don't think you can put all 13 of these strategies into place right away, and this way it'll be there for you when you need it. Again, it's [actorsurvivalguide.com](http://actorsurvivalguide.com), where we've collected all of these coaches' strategies so you can put them into practice when it's the right time. And if you're getting really jazzed up by like this actor survival guide idea, this is our fourth volume. So you can certainly go back to listen to the other volumes. Those are episodes 56, 75, and 106. And while it may be like, oh, those are dated, they are not dated, because inside of those episodes, those coaches give you incredible strategies to use at any time in your career as well.

So...Before I sign off, I want to say thank you again for tuning in. Look, I know you have a lot of podcasts to choose from and a lot of different ways you can spend your time. And I think that giving your attention to someone is one of the greatest gifts you can give. So I am grateful for the attention that you gave to me and the time that you spent with me and that you spent with this podcast. So thank you again. Like I said, I'm



## The Official 2023 Actor Survival Guide Vol 4 Part 2

### TRANSCRIPT

grateful to be on this path with you, on this planet with you at the same time. And whatever you believe your function is, whatever purpose you're fulfilling on this day, in this moment,

I hope that you feel the resolute peace of mind, joy, celebration, and alignment that I wish this podcast can provide for you. So, if I've nudged you along in your inspiration today, if it's pulling you a little bit closer to what it is you want to accomplish in the world, then we've done our job over here. And I'm going to guess you know a friend, an actor, a creative out in the world who could use a little nudge in the same direction. You know who you just thought of? That's probably the person who needs the nudge. I really believe that...the universe can bring us those inspirations and we should follow them. So if you thought of an actor who might need a little support right now, tap that share button on the phone or wherever you're listening to this and share this episode so they might also feel some of those good, that good juju. Alright, thank you so much. I look forward to seeing you soon. Right here, same place, coming soon to you.

Take care.