

Does the thought of Improv give you sweaty palms? Maybe it reminds you of the show *Whose Line is it Anyway?* You're not alone in those reactions!

AND YET, IMPROV IS SO MUCH MORE THAN A COMEDIC PERFORMANCE.

Improv is about using the skills of listening, spontaneity, creativity and curiosity to collaborate and create stories with others.

What is Applied Improv?

It's taking these same skills off the stage and applying them to our lives, both personal and professional. To strengthen those skills, we play the games and exercises that theatrical improvisers use to build connection and trust. Applied Improv is not about performing. It's a fun and impactful way to build skills for personal development and collaboration.

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How is it useful in the workplace?

Applied Improv is used in a variety of organizations and institutions around the world. It can help a community service agency innovate new ways to meet client needs or assist a sales team to land a sale; it can help train doctors in patient-doctor relationships; and it can provide a creative



outlet for folks living with memory loss and their caregivers. The potential stretch of Applied Improv is endless. And the benefits are multifold.

Exploring beyond “Yes, and...”

You’ve probably heard the most well-known Improv principle of “Yes, and...”. At the core it means acknowledging an offer or idea, and then building on it. Isn’t this what our everyday conversations should sound like as well? I hear you, and now I will build on what you said. (Rather than the common “Yeah, but...” response, which basically negates the original idea!)

Here are three more principles that top my list of favourites:

1. **Make your partner look good.**

Imagine how different interactions would be if this was everyone’s goal. We’d all look amazing! This principle is about considering the other person, taking a moment to put ourselves in their shoes and asking, “What do they need right now? How can I help?”

2. **Actively listen and respond.**

There’s a difference between listening and really hearing. Improv games help us to truly hear what our partner has said before we respond and build on what they’ve said.

3. **Choose curiosity over judgement.**

This principle is my favourite, and one that I weave into every part of my life. When I feel those judgemental thoughts popping into my head, I try to flip them into a moment of curiosity. “Hmm... I wonder why... ?”



I'm sure you can see how these principles can be applied to our lives, leading us to change our mindset and ways of being in relation to others. Improv skills help us notice and appreciate the big and small things in life, the opportunities, the moments of change – all that enriches our lives.

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An Applied Improv workshop is a fresh approach to skill building that merges laughter with learning in a way that lasts well beyond the end of the workshop.

BRETT MACDONALD is passionate about bringing people together. She is an educator and workshop facilitator. Her work, rooted in improv, brings teams together to connect, collaborate and drive workplace performance. Working with social impact organizations, Brett leads corporate team building, uniting employees and executives alike, all with an improv mindset, an approach proven to boost creativity, communication, and collaboration.

Are you ready to schedule a call with me?

Allow me to create a customized workshop experience, and witness your team find connection and build collaboration.

