

# *Acting Can Improve Your Life – Vanessa Tai*

DECEMBER 12, 2013 VANESSA TAI ACTING, ACTING CLASSES, BEING A GOOD LISTENER, CLASSES IN SINGAPORE, COURSES IN SINGAPORE, FREELANCERS IN SINGAPORE, HCAC, KAMIL HAQUE, KNOW THYSELF, LEARNING TO PUT YOURSELF IN OTHER PEOPLE'S SHOES, MATERIAL WORLD, SELF DISCOVERY, SELF IDENTITY, VANESSA TAI

You're probably thinking, "How can acting ever apply to my everyday life?" Like you, I used to think acting was confined to professional film and stage performers, and it's just a career profession for them, just like being a writer is mine. Truth is, all of us are actors, whether we realise it or not. As Shakespeare eloquently said, "All the world's a stage and all the men and women merely players."

It's true, isn't it? At work or at home, we play different roles, and show different sides of ourselves wherever necessary. During office hours, we project ourselves as serious and diligent but while at a gathering with friends, we may be the rambunctious life of the party. Does that mean we're being hypocritical? Not at all. Every person comes with limitless dimensions; it's impossible to confine anyone into a set "type".

So, if we're already effortlessly switching between these dimensions, why do we still need acting classes? Kamil Haque, founder and acting coach at [Haque](#)



offers his insights.

**You've mentioned that acting is not about putting on masks. Instead, it's about *removing* them. Can you elaborate?**

“When approaching any role – whether on stage or in your personal life – you need to be aware of which aspects of your personality or your own values you're bringing to the table. For example, if you're giving a major presentation which you have very little knowledge about, here's how you can approach it: first, find out what are the objective facts about the subject matter. Second, bring in your subjective opinions, your experience with the topic. That way, you'll always bring your authentic self into any role.”

**How is acting relevant to the everyday woman?**

“Acting allows you to discover who you really are, and helps you think on your feet. Acting also helps you to be a better listener, because while acting, you often have to react to whatever the other actor is doing/saying. You also learn to be more



empathetic to others, because when studying a character, you'll learn to put yourself in their shoes to understand why they'll say and do the things they do.

All these skills help you strengthen your professional and personal relationships. You'll be able to build a stronger rapport with your co-workers so as to reach the desired objectives. You'll be able to better understand where the older generations in your family are coming from, which in turn, helps improve your communication with them.

In short, acting helps awaken your senses to the things around you that you may have taken for granted, or glossed over in the busy-ness of everyday life. Instead of going through the motions, you start to experience everything with fresh senses, and notice the finer details of life.”

*[Author's note: Midway through the interview, Haque proved this “heightened observation” by asking about a miniscule mole on my lower lip, something so insignificant that even I've forgotten about it.]*



*There I am, attending one of Haque's workshops. Can you spot me?  
(Image credit: Marc Chang)*

**I want to take acting classes, but I've zero interest in becoming a performer. How does that work?**

“A lot of corporate professionals take my acting

classes not because they want to be actors, but because they want to learn how to better relate to people. I've also coached parents who want to connect better with their children, as well as men who find it hard to talk to women. As I mentioned, acting is not about putting on a show; it's about discovering your true self-identity so as to move confidently throughout all aspects of your life."

***To find out more about the classes offered at HCAC, click [here](#).***

*About The Author: Vanessa Tai is a founder of Material World who has previously worked on magazines Simply Her and Cosmopolitan Singapore. Now a freelance writer and a full-time contributor to this website, the 26-year-old dreams of attending every single major music festival before she turns 30. She's always harboured dreams of being a professional actress. Follow her on Twitter [@VannTaiTweets](#).*