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# Improv Wisdom: Don't Prepare, Just Show Up

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Don't Prepare,  
Just Show Up

Patricia Ryan Madson



## Synopsis

In an irresistible invitation to lighten up, look around, and live an unscripted life, a Stanford University professor and master of the art of improvisation explains how to adopt the attitudes and techniques used by generations of musicians and actors. These secrets are currently being taught to entrepreneurs, engineers, and first responders in a crisis as well as housewives and Alzheimer caregivers. Let's face it: Life is something we all make up as we go along. No matter how carefully we formulate a "script", it is bound to change when we interact with people with scripts of their own. Improv Wisdom shows how to apply the maxims of improvisational theater to real-life challenges - whether it's dealing with a demanding boss, a tired child, or one of life's never-ending surprises. Patricia Ryan Madson distills 30 years of experience into thirteen simple strategies, including "Say Yes", "Start Anywhere", "Face the Facts", and "Make Mistakes, Please", helping readers to loosen up, think on their feet, and take on everything life has to offer with skill, chutzpah, and a sense of humor.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In Turning Pro, Steven Pressfield describes an exercise from Improv Wisdom and says that this book is on his short list of indispensable books. Of course, I got it immediately. Anything that makes that list is something I'm going to read. :) And, here we are. Improv Wisdom rocks. So does Patricia Ryan Madson. Patricia is an Emerita of Stanford University where she taught for three decades in the Drama Department. She integrates the wisdom of two primary, extraordinary

teachers/philosophies: Keith Johnstone's Impro goodness + David Reynolds' Constructive Living mojo."A good improviser is someone who is awake, not entirely self-focused, and moved by a desire to do something useful and give something back and who acts upon this impulse. My students wanted to know the password for joining the society of such people, to play fearlessly, and to work with greater ease. Here is the password--it is yes! Understanding the power of yes is easy; practicing that acceptance and affirmation in daily life becomes our challenge. I'm writing to encourage you to improvise your life, please. I want you to take chances and do more of the things that are important to you. I'm hoping that you will make more mistakes, laugh more often, and have some adventures...What is missing in your life? The paperweight on my desk challenges me to ask the bumper-sticker question: What would you do if you knew you could not fail?" What would you do? As improvisors we discover we don't need this unrealistic guarantee to begin. The only real failure is not doing anything. Why not explore, get moving on your life, kick-start your dreams, paint outside the lines? This book will provide inspiration and practical suggestions. Try them.

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