

# UTA HAGEN - THE SIX STEPS

## 1. WHO AM I?

- A). What is my present state of being?
- B). How do I perceive myself?
- C). What am I wearing?

## 2. WHAT ARE THE CIRCUMSTANCES?

- A). *What time is it?* (The year, the season, the day? At what time does my selected life begin?)
- B). *Where am I?* (In what city, neighborhood, building, and room do I find myself? Or in what landscape?)
- C). *What surrounds me?* (The immediate landscape? The weather? The condition of the place and the nature of the objects in it?)
- D). *What are the immediate circumstances?* (What has just happened, is happening? What do I expect or plan to happen next and later on?)

## 3. WHAT ARE MY RELATIONSHIPS?

How do I stand in relationship to the circumstances, the place, the objects, and the *other people* related to my circumstances?

## 4. WHAT DO I WANT?

What is my main objective? My immediate need or objective?

## 5. WHAT IS MY OBSTACLE?

What is in the way of what I want? How do I overcome it?

## 6. WHAT DO I DO TO GET WHAT I WANT?

How can I achieve my objective? What's my behavior? What are my actions?

## TERMS

### From Respect for Acting by Uta Hagen

1. SUPER OBJECTIVE – The purpose for which you carry out your physical actions and scene objectives. What does the character want in the course of the play?
2. SCENE OBJECTIVE – To realize a clearly defined SUPER OBJECTIVE through a logical sequence of actions. (“I need”, “I want”)
3. BEAT – A beat begins when under a different set of circumstances when “an immediate objective” sets in. It ends when that objective has succeeded or failed and new circumstances set in.
4. SUBCONSCIOUS OBJECTIVES – The “motivation” or “why” of the conscious need or want.
5. OBSTACLE – What's in the way of what I want?
6. THE FOURTH WALL – To build a private fourth wall anchored to something that can really be seen and is really there and is secondary to everything else on stage.
7. CIRCUMSTANCES – The obligation to find everything given you by the author in the stage directions about time and place, as well as in the dialogue of the play or hidden underneath the words of the characters, to find out not just what happens, but under what circumstances it happens.

NOTE: Don't confuse an obligation with a desire. Actions which result when I have to clean house are totally different from those when I want to clean house. Always define your real objectives with needs, wants and desires. What you have to do may be an obstacle to what you want.