ADVANCED CBPRO: THE MASTER PLAYBOOK

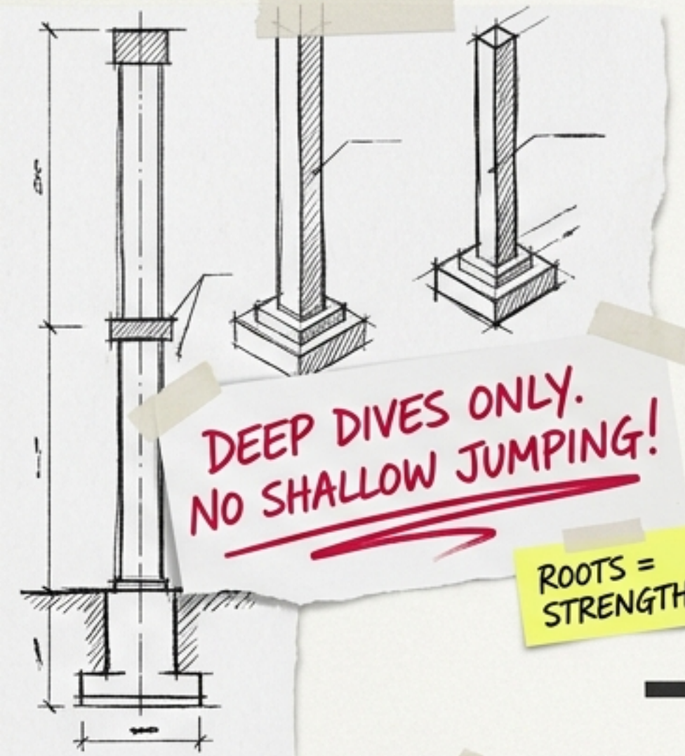
Your post-class reference guide.



A working comic's blueprint for stagecraft, the architecture of misdirection, and commanding the room.

NotebookLM

THE COMIC'S COMPASS

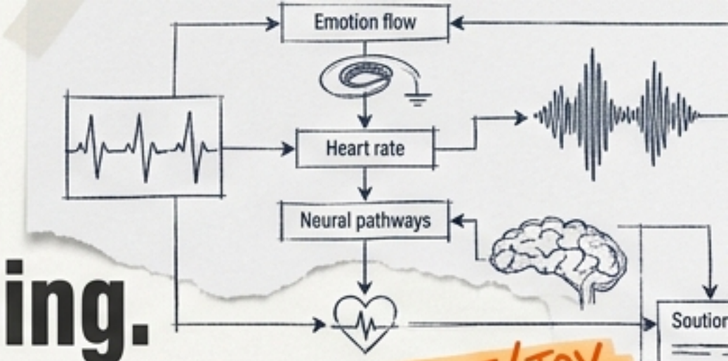


DEEP DIVES ONLY.
NO SHALLOW JUMPING!

ROOTS = STRENGTH

Be Grounded.

Don't jump frantically from idea to idea. Plant your feet and expand deeply on a single topic.



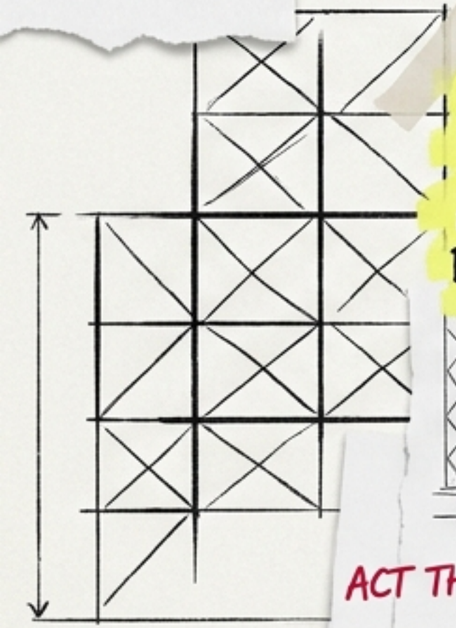
Find the Feeling.

Stand-up requires genuine emotion. Whether it's anger, joy, or frustration, your material must stem from how you actually feel.

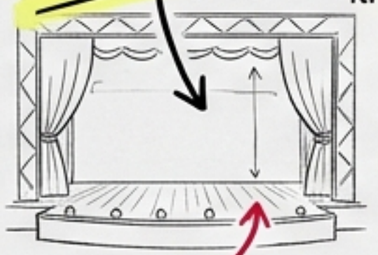
TAP INTO REAL RAGE/JOY.
AUDIENCE KNOWS FAKE!

GENUINE

EMOTION = FUEL



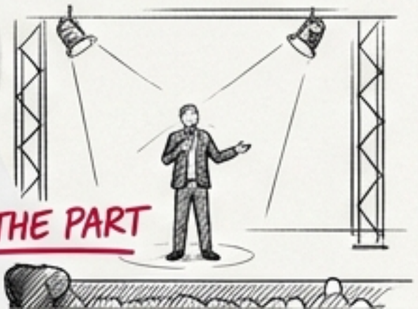
PROJECT STRENGTH.
AUDIENCE BLUFFS EASILY.



ACT THE PART → BECOME THE PART

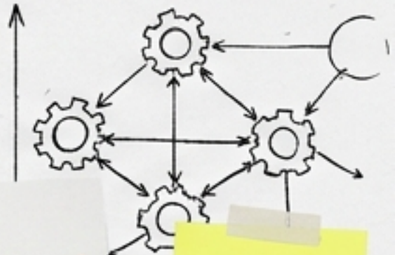
Fake It 'Til You Make It.

If you don't have the confidence yet, manufacture it. The audience only knows what you show them.



Protect the Team.

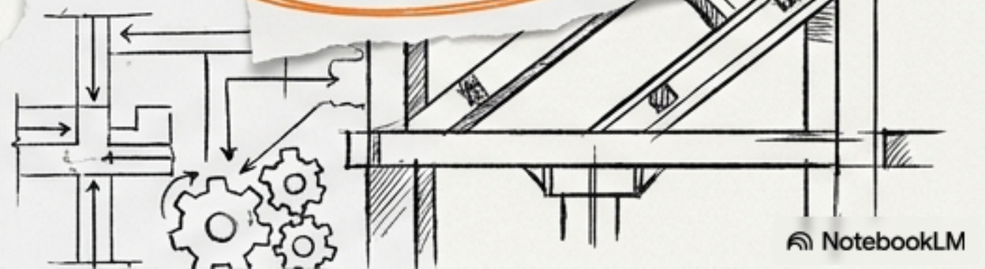
Comedy is a solo act played in a team sport environment. Be supportive, helpful, and watch the other comics.



RISING TIDE LIFTS ALL BOATS!

SUPPORT SYSTEMS = SUCCESS.

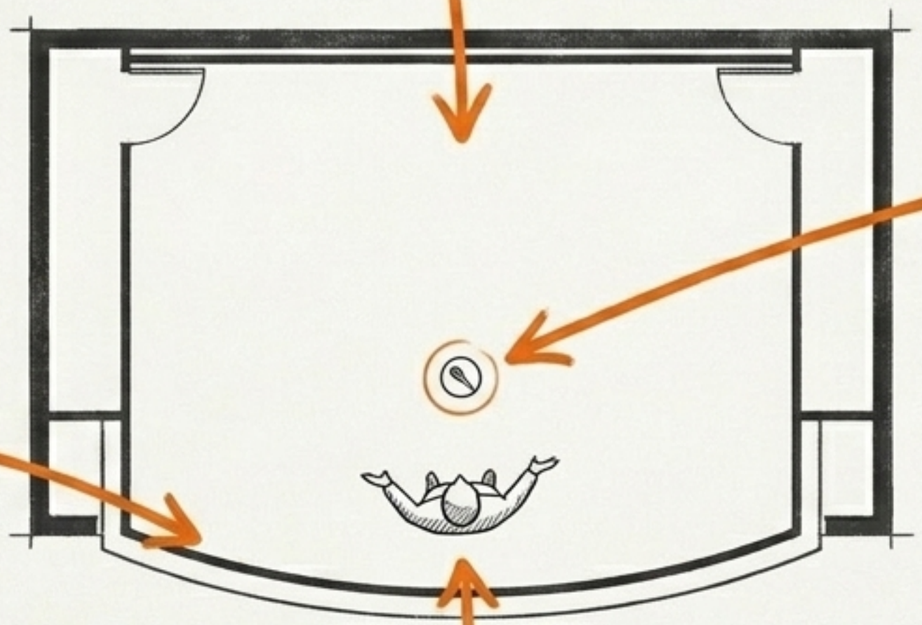
WATCH & LEARN FROM OTHERS



NotebookLM

The Focal Point.

Pick a home base for your eyes in the back of the room. Keep coming back to this spot. Make eye contact, and never look down.

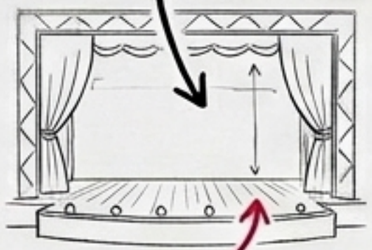


The Magnet.

Pretend there is an actual magnet in the mic stand. Keep coming back to it as your home base. Do not pace aimlessly unless planned.

The Edge.

Stay close to the front. Bridge the physical gap between you and the audience to build intimacy.



ACT THE PART → BECOME THE PART

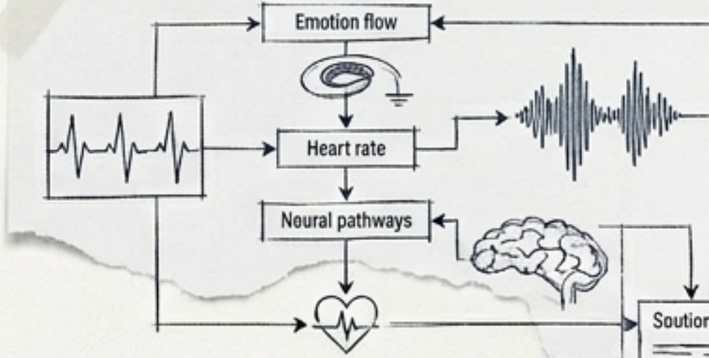
Self-Awareness.

Understand how you are perceived. What do you look like to them? Does your posture match your premise?



DEEP DIVES ONLY. NO SHALLOW JUMPING!

ROOTS = STRENGTH



RISING TIDE LIFTS ALL BOATS!

SUPPORT SYSTEMS = SUCCESS.

WATCH & LEARN FROM OTHERS

NotebookLM

THE ARCHITECTURE OF MISDIRECTION

THE SETUP (Voice A)

Creates momentum. It is the familiar phrase or assumed scenario. It contains two possible interpretations, but the audience only hears the obvious one.

THE PAYOFF (Voice B)

Interrupts the flow. The comedian abruptly shifts the audience to the unexpected second interpretation.

Misdirection creates an expectation... and then walks out of the club never to be seen again.

NotebookLM

TAXONOMY OF MISDIRECTS: PART 1

Expectation vs. Reality

Setup leads one way, punch flips the motive entirely.

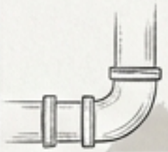




> *"I saw this guy with a hammer and thought he was a construction worker...* **turns out he just hates vending machines."**

Assumption

The audience automatically fills in the contextual blank, and you subvert it.





> *"My girlfriend and I tried roleplay... I was a plumber, and she was my landlord wondering* **why I haven't paid rent *in three months.*"**

Perspective Shift

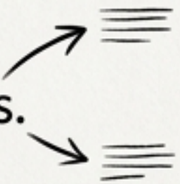
Told from one angle, revealed to be another entirely.



> *"So I'm yelling at this kid to get off my lawn...* **then I remember I don't have a lawn. I'm just in a Starbucks drive-thru line."**

Ambiguity

Exploiting words with double meanings.



> *"I met a girl at a bar, took her home... she was so into roleplaying. She* **pretended to be asleep the whole time."**

NotebookLM

TAXONOMY OF MISDIRECTS: PART 2

How onlances

Timing is everything!

Subvert expectation

The List / Rule of 3

Build a pattern across two beats, break it on the third.

> *"I love Italian food, French wine, and* **punching myself in the face while crying.**"

Childlike Logic

Play naive. Set up a basic concept, then fundamentally misunderstand it.

> *"I thought 'Netflix and chill' meant watching a show. Now I have three kids and no idea what happened in Stranger Things."*

Timing is everything!

False Analogy

Compare two unlike things as if they are identical, then twist.

> *"Dating is like Amazon. It takes forever, you forget you wanted it, and when* **it arrives it's not what you pictured at all.**"

Invisible Punchline

The anti-joke. The audience braces for a punchline, you go dry.

> *"I don't have a drinking problem. I just really like drinking* **and it's ruining my life.**"

Subvert expectation

Subvert expectation

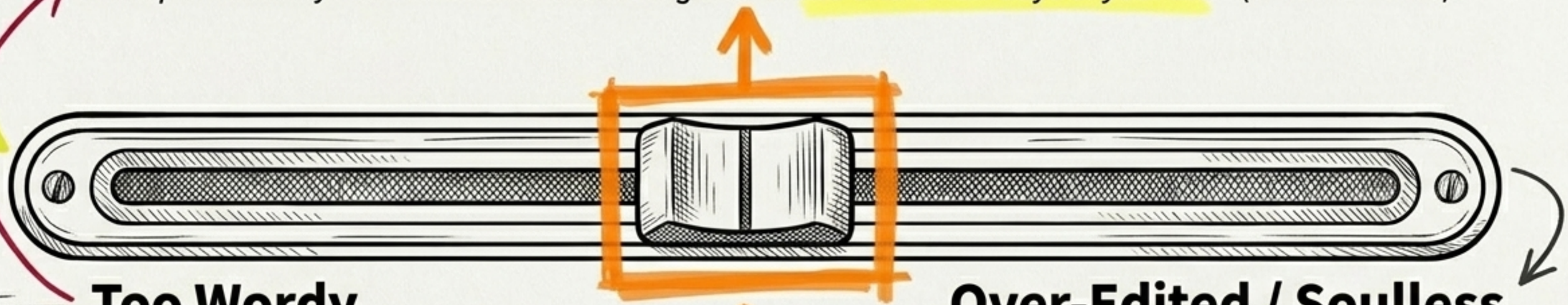
NotebookLM

THE ART OF EDITING

The Sweet Spot: Specificity & Attitude

The goal is the fewest words without losing the speaking style or telling detail.

Example: "When you're in love it's the most glorious two and a half days of your life." (Richard Lewis).



Too Wordy

Slows the gag down and blunts the effect.

Over-Edited / Soulless

Taking out so many words that it becomes staccato and depersonalized.

Example: "When you're in love it's the most glorious two days of your life." (Loses the attitude).

Beware of Telegraphing! Giving away the twist too early ruins the rhythm and kills the surprise.

NotebookLM

“A great host is always looking out for the show to shine and not themselves... Ultimately you’re hosting a party. Make sure it’s not boring, loser.”

— Brian Moses, Creator & Host, Roast Battle



NotebookLM

Diagnostic Matrix: The Anatomy of a Host

The Hack (Selfish)

FOCUS: THEM



- Relies on “Anyone celebrating anything?”
- Does 10 minutes of their own material between comics.
- **Gets drunk**, talks loudly in the back of the room.
- Makes the entire show about themselves.

The Good (Functional)

FOCUS: THE SHOW

- ✓ Gets all comedian names and credits right.
- ✓ Warms up the crowd and establishes a comedy baseline.
- ✓ Keeps the show running on time.



The Great (The Point Guard)

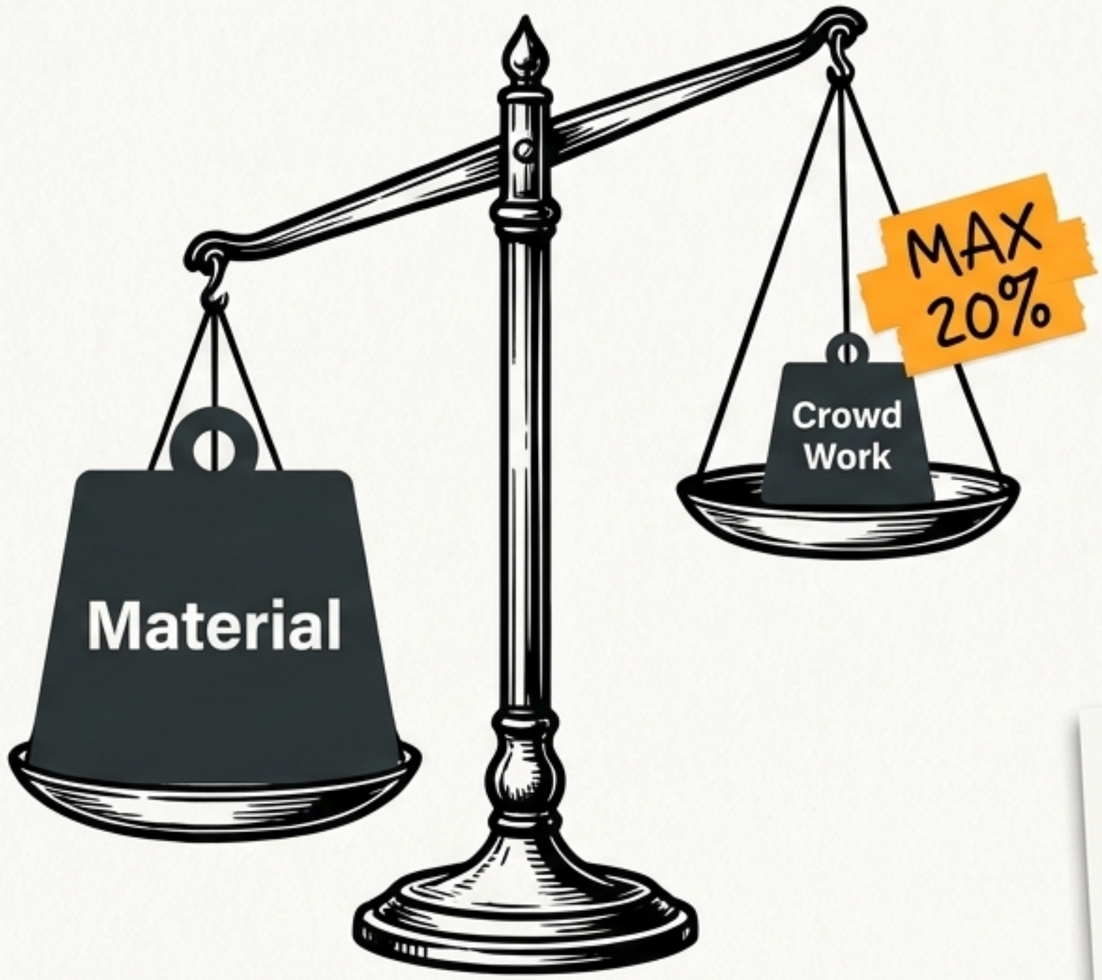
FOCUS: THE ROOM



- Adjusts their set dynamically based on the exact energy of the room.
- Watches the entire show to catch callbacks and momentum shifts.
- KEY!
- SACRIFICES THEIR OWN laughs to set up the next comic to do better than they did.

NotebookLM

Crowd Work: The Double-Edged Sword



The Purpose

Your job is to take the bullets. Get the “me me me” energy out of the audience early so the actual comics don’t have to deal with it.

The Danger

Doing 100% crowd work is lazy. It sets a bad precedent, teaching the audience that the show is a two-way conversation. Keep crowd work under 20%.

The Execution: Ask questions that elicit APPLAUSE, not shout-outs! (“Who’s here for the first time?” instead of “Where are you from?”)

NotebookLM

Reading & Resetting the Room

IF the crowd is low energy...

→ Go positive and smiley. Accept it, be conversational, and do your job. Do not lash out or blame the audience. !

IF the previous comic murdered...

→ Don't suck the air out of the room. Bring up the next comic quickly to let them ride the massive wave of momentum.

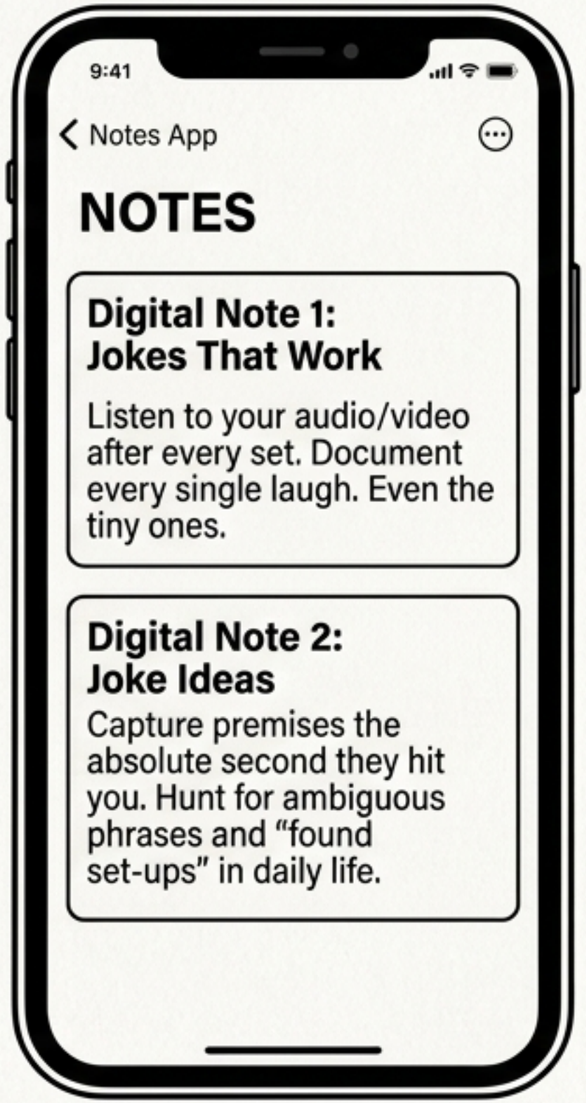
IF the previous comic bombed...

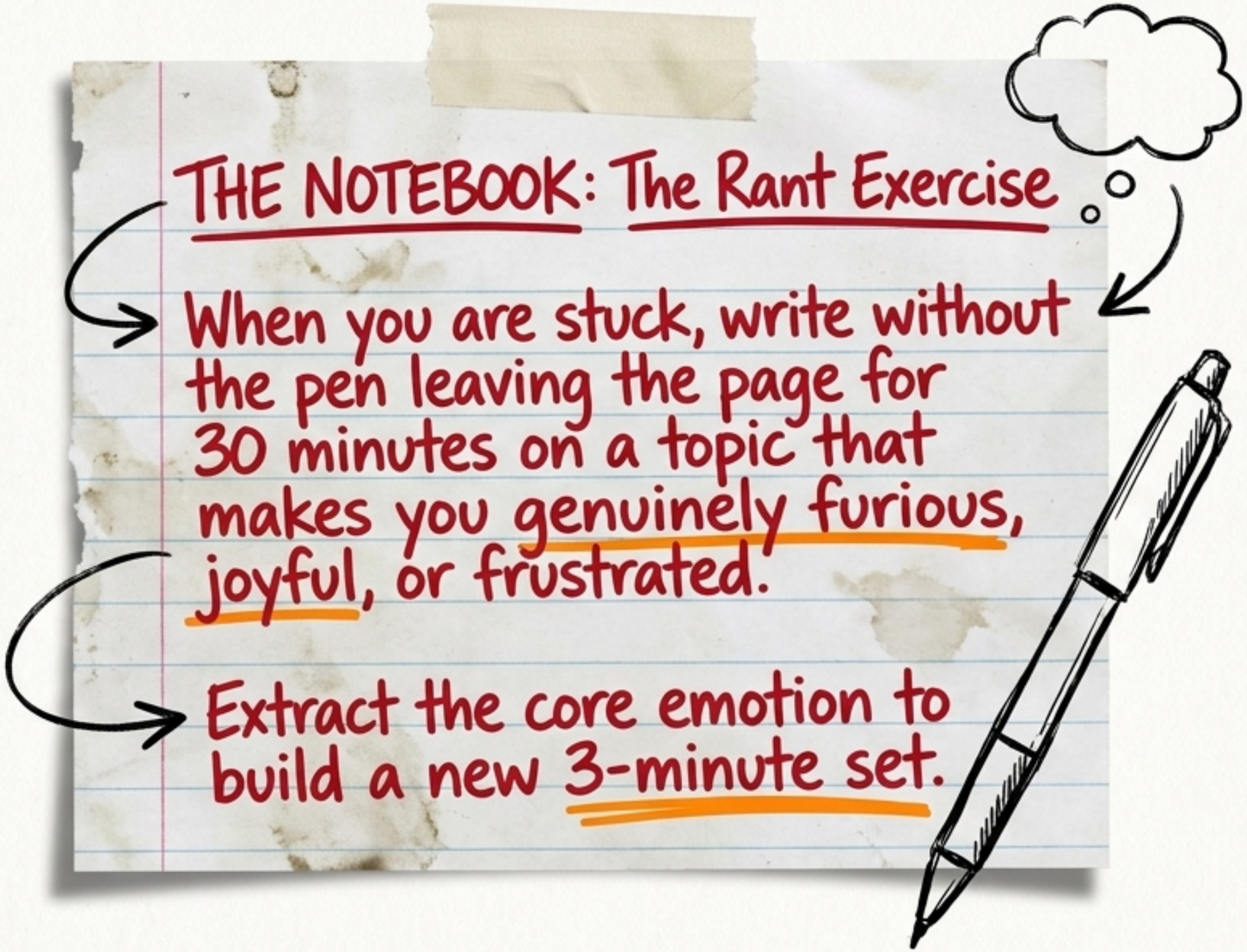
→ You must do a quick bit as a palate cleanser. Reset the room's rhythm and cadence so the next act gets a clean slate.

KEY!

NotebookLM

The Working Comic's Daily Regimen





NotebookLM



Stand-up is a craft of contrasts. You must fake confidence until it becomes real. You must use strict architectural structure to appear spontaneous. And as a host, you must crush your set so that others can shine brighter.

Great work.
Keep hitting the mics.
— Dan

NotebookLM