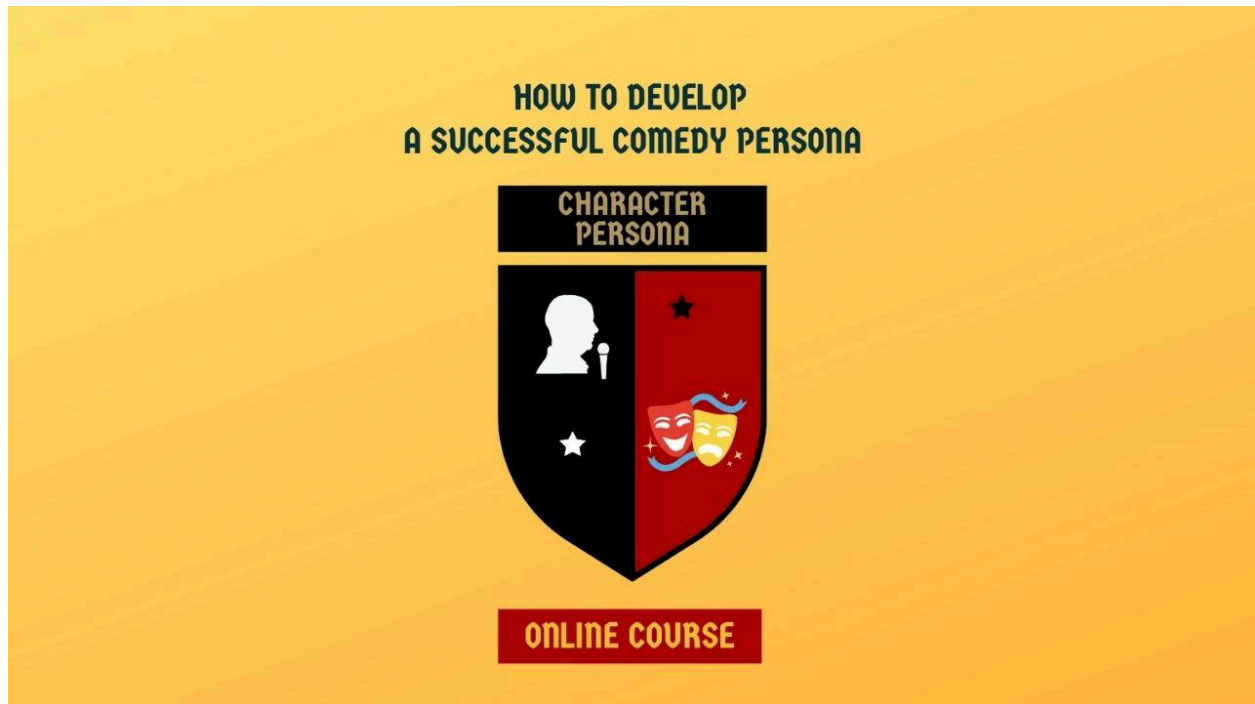




# Finding Your Comedic Persona



## How to Find Your Comedic Persona

Self Guided Course Worksheet

Comedy Writing A La Carte 1.5

### Introduction to Comedic Persona

Your comedic persona is the consistent filter through which you interpret and present the world. It is rooted in who you are—your attitudes, emotions, psychology, upbringing, experiences, flaws, fears, passions, idiosyncrasies, and recurring points of view—but it is usually a clearer, more concentrated version of you. A strong persona helps the audience quickly answer two questions: Who are you, and why should I keep listening?



Persona is not the same as a single point of view. You can have different opinions about relationships, work, politics, family, or culture, while a recognizable emotional throughline connects them. Persona is also different from a character, which may depend on a costume, dialect, physicality, or invented identity, and from shtick, which is a repeated device or gimmick. Your persona may use either one, but it does not require them.

A mechanically sound joke can work in several voices. Other material depends on the performer's emotional commitment. The goal is therefore not to force every joke into one narrow personality. The goal is to discover the perspective that feels authentic, heighten the most useful parts of it, and test it repeatedly in front of an audience.

### **What a Strong Persona Does**

- Gives your writing an angle, making it easier to generate premises and choose material.
- Lets the audience recognize your dilemma, feel superior, and begin caring about what happens to you.
- Creates emotional connection instead of relying only on joke mechanics.
- Makes you easier to remember, describe, follow, and recommend.
- Supports a recognizable brand without trapping you in a single topic or emotional note.

### **A Useful Starting Formula**

**AUTHENTIC SELF + CONSISTENT FILTER + HEIGHTENED TRAITS +  
AUDIENCE TESTING**

*Do not wait for a magical moment when your persona suddenly appears. Treat this as an experiment: observe yourself, write from several angles, perform the material, and let audience response provide data.*



## Exercise 1 Build Your Persona Inventory

*Persona begins with honest observation. Complete the inventory quickly, using concrete details rather than labels you think sound marketable. The bigger your usable flaws, fears, and dilemmas, the more opportunities the audience has to recognize itself in you.*

| Prompt                                | Your Notes                                                                         |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>What drives you crazy?</b>         | <i>Pet peeves, hypocrisy, behavior, institutions, daily irritations</i>            |
| <b>What confuses you?</b>             | <i>Things that make you say I do not get it or somebody explain this</i>           |
| <b>What makes you curious?</b>        | <i>Subjects you keep researching, noticing, or questioning</i>                     |
| <b>What are you passionate about?</b> | <i>What you protect, defend, celebrate, or cannot stop discussing</i>              |
| <b>What are your flaws?</b>           | <i>Habits, blind spots, insecurities, contradictions, recurring mistakes</i>       |
| <b>What are your biggest fears?</b>   | <i>What you avoid, dread, conceal, or feel embarrassed to admit</i>                |
| <b>What are your idiosyncrasies?</b>  | <i>Odd routines, speech patterns, gestures, preferences, rituals</i>               |
| <b>What shaped you?</b>               | <i>Family, upbringing, culture, work, trauma, status, place, major experiences</i> |



| Prompt                    | Your Notes                                              |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| What dilemma follows you? | <i>The problem you repeatedly try and fail to solve</i> |

### Find the Repetition

Circle or rewrite the three answers that feel most emotionally charged or most recognizably you.

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Complete this sentence: Wherever I go or whatever I do, I keep encountering...

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Write a possible recurring line or mantra that captures that dilemma.

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## Exercise 2 The Cliche Reformation Test

*A familiar cliché creates an immediate expectation. Your new ending reveals how your mind responds to that expectation. Do not chase a random punchline. Finish each line from a definite attitude: hopeful, suspicious, sexual, practical, defeated, superior, literal, rebellious, scientific, mischievous, or another attitude that feels natural to you.*

**If at first you do not succeed...**

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**The best way to a man's heart is...**

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**When life gives you lemons...**

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**Good things come to those who...**

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**You cannot judge a book by...**

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**What does not kill you...**

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**Read Your Answers as Evidence**

**What attitude appears most often in your endings?**

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**What do the endings suggest you believe about people or life?**

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**Which ending sounds most like something only you would naturally say?  
Why?**

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## Exercise 3 Use the Audience Mirror

*You are too close to yourself to see everything an audience sees. Ask three trusted peers, classmates, or comedy colleagues to watch a short set or a two-minute unscripted introduction. Do not ask them whether you were funny. Ask for neutral observations about what they saw and heard.*

| Prompt               | Your Notes                                                                                                          |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Immediate impression | <i>What did you assume about me before the first punchline?</i>                                                     |
| Emotional state      | <i>What feeling seemed to drive me: frustration, wonder, anxiety, confidence, mischief, fatigue, innocence?</i>     |
| Status and role      | <i>Did I seem like the victim, authority, outsider, rebel, caretaker, know-it-all, underdog, or something else?</i> |
| Visible traits       | <i>What gestures, expressions, voice qualities, pacing, clothing, or physical habits stood out?</i>                 |
| Recurring dilemma    | <i>What problem did it seem I was trying to solve?</i>                                                              |
| Three adjectives     | <i>What three words would you use to describe the stage version of me?</i>                                          |



## **Compare Perception with Intention**

**What did two or more observers independently notice?**

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**What surprised you or conflicted with how you see yourself?**

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**Which observed trait could be heightened without becoming false?**

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*Reminder: perception and optics arrive before your backstory. If a joke depends on information the audience cannot see, establish the dilemma or context early enough for them to interpret the material correctly.*



## Exercise 4 The Persona Stress Test

*Choose one ordinary topic and perform it through three plausible versions of yourself. The purpose is not to invent three unrelated characters. It is to test which emotional filter unlocks the strongest and most authentic material.*

**Choose one topic: dating, work, family, money, aging, technology, food, travel, pets, or another shared experience.**

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**Write the simple truth or problem you want to discuss.**

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**Filter A Your most natural response**

**Emotional attitude and role:**

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**Opening line that establishes your dilemma:**

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**Two observations or joke directions:**



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**One physical, vocal, or pacing choice to test:**

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**Filter B A heightened flaw, fear, or idiosyncrasy**  
**Emotional attitude and role:**

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**Opening line that establishes your dilemma:**

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**Two observations or joke directions:**

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**One physical, vocal, or pacing choice to test:**

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## Filter C A contrasting but still believable side of you

Emotional attitude and role:

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Opening line that establishes your dilemma:

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Two observations or joke directions:

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One physical, vocal, or pacing choice to test:

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## Perform and Score

*Record each version for 60–90 seconds. Watch once with sound and once without sound. If possible, test the strongest two versions for a live audience. Score each from 1 to 5.*

| Version | Authentic | Clear | Funny | Expandable |
|---------|-----------|-------|-------|------------|
| A       | / 5       | / 5   | / 5   | / 5        |
| B       | / 5       | / 5   | / 5   | / 5        |



|   |     |     |     |     |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| C | / 5 | / 5 | / 5 | / 5 |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|

**Which filter created the most energy and strongest connection? What evidence supports that choice?**

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**What should you keep, reduce, or eliminate before the next test?**

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## Your Working Persona Blueprint

*This is a working hypothesis, not a permanent label. Revise it as new material and audience responses reveal more about you.*

**On stage, I am a heightened version of someone who...**

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**I tend to see the world through the filter of...**

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**My recurring dilemma is...**

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**The emotions that most often drive my comedy are...**

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**The two or three traits I can heighten are...**

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**The audience should feel superior because...**

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**The audience should care because...**

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**The topics that best fit this persona are...**

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**Material that does not feel authentic to this persona includes...**

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**My one-sentence persona statement is...**

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## Seven Day Action Plan

- Observe and record at least five honest reactions to daily events.
- Write three minutes from the strongest persona filter.
- Perform or record the material at least twice.
- Keep what the audience responds to; adjust what feels forced.
- Repeat. Persona becomes clearer through action, not contemplation alone.

**Be true to your nature. Then heighten what makes your nature funny.**

Get personal 1 on 1 Coaching with Jerry just follow [this link](#) to learn more!

