

THOUGHTWASP
HAND WRITTEN NOTES
by Naina

NOTES FROM AUSTIN KLEON'S 'STEAL LIKE AN ARTIST'

The back cover of the book summarizes what it contains but the contents of the book are far more entertaining and wonderful.

I was transported to my early days as an artist and had I come across this book then, it would have been a keepsake that I would have used to remind myself with.

All is not lost though as I had a slightly similar book that I clung to. 'IT'S NOT HOW GOOD YOU ARE, IT'S HOW GOOD YOU WANT TO BE' by Paul Arden. Indeed, Austin's book is different but both are helpful.

One of the things that Austin advises in the earlier part of the book is "CLIMB YOUR OWN FAMILY TREE". What he means is, "...chew on one thinker - writer, artist, activist, role model - you really love. Study everything there is to know about that thinker. Then find their people that thinkers loved, and find out everything about them. Repeat this as many times as you can."

This is something I have been thinking about for a while. But have not started for fear of being "influenced". Well DIIH! Also because I am not sure whether I can do justice to the research. Conveniently, within the next few pages, I find this, "DON'T WORRY ABOUT DOING RESEARCH. JUST SEARCH." Is my work studio bugged?!

"Whether I went to school or not, I would always study." - RZA

"It is better to take what does not belong to you than to let it lie around neglected." - MARK TWAIN.

Austin goes on to say, "You might be scared to start. That's natural. There's this very real thing that runs rampant in educated people. It's called 'imposter syndrome'."

I guffawed loudly when I read that because I feel that way on a daily basis and even Vincent LaFond (whose book I recently reviewed) talks about it in his book. Countless times when I've thought to myself, "I hope they don't realize I'm a hack."

Austin goes on to ~~clearly~~ clarify that he is not promoting plagiarism. He also clearly lists what qualifies as GOOD THEFT and BAD.

"Whenever you're at a loss for what move to make next, just ask yourself, 'WHAT WOULD MAKE A BETTER STORY?'" Oh my goodness Austin, big hug.

The author then goes on to make a case for working with your hands. Digital has its place but so should analog. I can attest to that. I have recently started this blog THOUGHTWASP because typing just wasn't cutting it anymore. The feel of pen on paper is therapeutic. I feel a lot calmer and collected and I am doing more. COINCIDENCE.

That's two brownie points to the book. Two hooks that I instantly identify with. That's excellent score and I am happy I have this book in the library. I turn a few more pages and now I'm really thinking that the author's reading my mind.

Austin talks about, "Don't worry about unity from piece to piece - what unifies all of your work is the fact that you made it." and BAM! I'm no longer worried about what to show in my first exhibition of photographs.

Can I also interrupt from the review here and say that I love the paper used for the cover of *Steal Like An Artist*. Die put it against my cheek dozens of times and it's stained with 'face-oil' now, but still velvety and buttery. The book's aroma is awesome too. Stuck my nose in it multiple times.

The 'secret' of success as a creative is summarized as, "DO GOOD WORK AND SHARE IT WITH PEOPLE." Amen to that. I love the Internet and its people. I ignore those who hate / troll.

"Don't worry about people stealing your ideas. If your ideas are any good, you'll have to ram them down people's throats."
- HOWARD AIKEN

"Your brain gets too comfortable in your everyday surroundings. You need to make it uncomfortable. You need to spend some time in another land, among people that do things differently than you. Travel makes the world look new, and when the world looks new, our brains work harder." (Explains why I love getting out so much even when I'm only stepping out for a walk!)

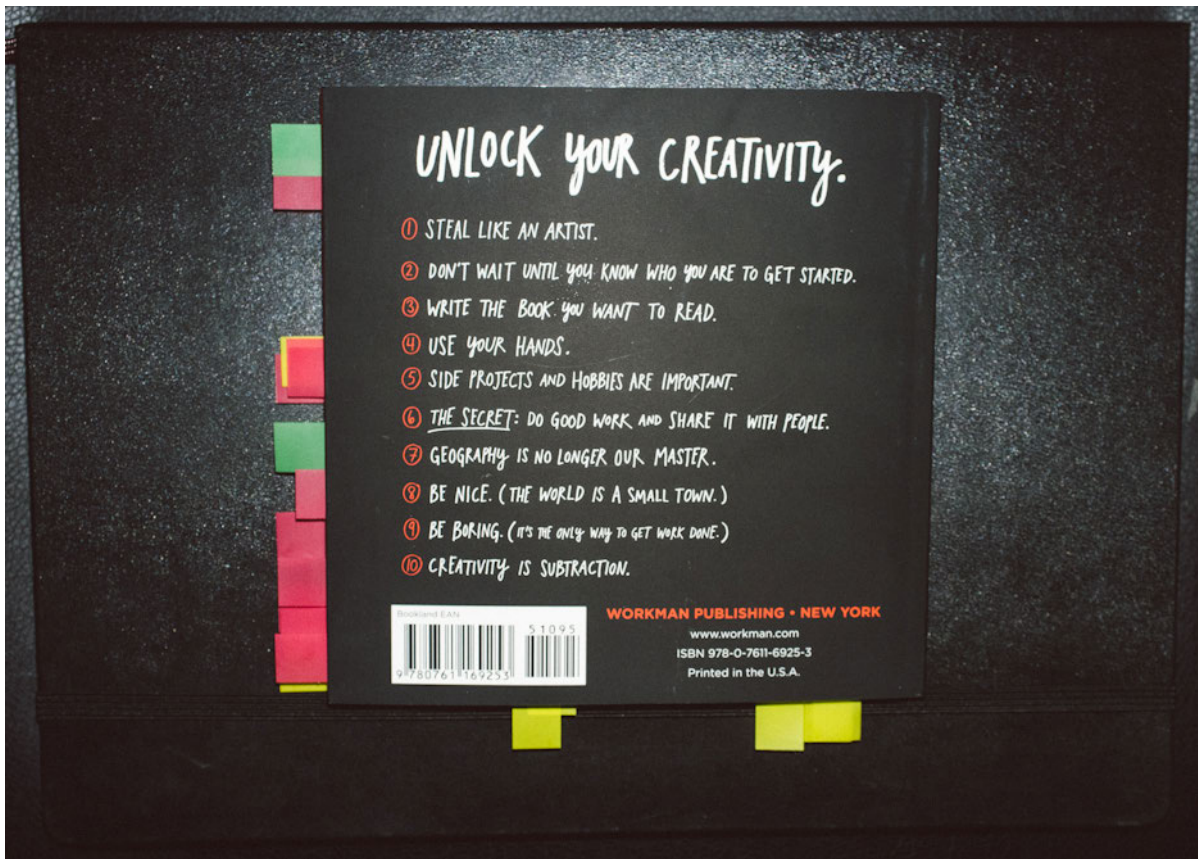
"You have to find a place that feeds you - creatively, socially, spiritually, and literally."

"Complain about the way other people make software, by making software" - ANDRE TORREZ

"Modern art = I could do that + Yeah, but you didn't." - CRAIG DAMRAUER.
(I say that in my head to in response to pretty much anyone whose criticisms of my work sounds like 'I couldn't do that')

"Not everybody will get it. People will misinterpret you and what you do. They might even call you names. So get comfortable with being misunderstood, disparaged or ignored - the trick is to be too busy doing your work to care." (I consciously tell myself that I need to be more comfortable with being misunderstood. As with everything, it's hard in the beginning but I think I am fairly adept at it now.)

"Nothing is more terrifying paralyzing than the idea of limitless possibilities. The idea that you can do anything is absolutely terrifying." (I know what Austin is saying here but I use the opposite approach when I need a morale boost. I tell myself I am so good that I can be good at anything I want but I choose to focus being good at what I like / love.)



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