

# show your work austin kleon

**Show Your Work** by Austin Kleon is an inspiring book that urges creatives to share their processes and creations with the world. Published in 2014, this book serves as a guide for artists, writers, designers, and anyone engaged in creative work, emphasizing the importance of transparency and vulnerability in the creative journey. In an age where social media and digital platforms dominate the way we communicate, Kleon's ideas resonate deeply with those looking to build a following and connect with others through their work.

## Understanding the Core Message

At its core, "Show Your Work" is a manifesto for artists and creators about the critical practice of sharing one's work and process. Kleon argues that you don't have to be a genius to contribute meaningfully to the world; instead, everyone can share their journey, insights, and progress. This notion encourages more people to embrace their creativity without the fear of judgment or inadequacy.

## Why Share Your Work?

Kleon presents several compelling reasons for why sharing your work is essential:

1. **Builds a Connection:** Sharing your work allows you to connect with others who share your interests or appreciate your craft. This connection can lead to collaborations, friendships, and a supportive community.
2. **Makes You Accountable:** When you share your work regularly, you create a sense of accountability. This can motivate you to keep producing and improving your craft.

3. Encourages Feedback: By sharing your work, you open the door for constructive criticism and feedback, which can be invaluable for your growth as a creator.

4. Documents Your Journey: Sharing your work helps you document your creative journey, allowing you to reflect on your progress and evolution over time.

5. Inspires Others: Your willingness to share your work can inspire others to pursue their creative endeavors, fostering a culture of creativity and expression.

## **Key Principles from "Show Your Work"**

Kleon outlines ten key principles that serve as guidelines for sharing your work effectively:

### **1. You Don't Have to Be a Genius**

Kleon emphasizes that you don't need to be a genius to share your work. You just need to be yourself and be willing to share what you know. It's about the journey rather than the destination.

### **2. Think Process, Not Product**

Instead of focusing solely on the final product, Kleon encourages creators to share their processes. This can include sketches, drafts, and behind-the-scenes looks at your creative practice. People are often more interested in how you got there than the finished piece itself.

### **3. Share Something Small Every Day**

Consistency is key. Kleon suggests sharing small snippets of your work daily. This could be a thought, an idea, a sketch, or any piece of your creative process. Regular sharing keeps your audience engaged and interested in your journey.

### **4. Open Up Your Cabinet of Curiosities**

Kleon encourages creators to share their inspirations and influences. By opening up your "cabinet of curiosities," you provide insight into what fuels your creativity, which can resonate with others who share similar interests.

### **5. Tell Good Stories**

Storytelling is a powerful tool for connecting with others. Kleon urges creators to share the stories behind their work, as people are drawn to narratives that evoke emotion and relatability.

### **6. Teach What You Know**

Sharing your knowledge and expertise is a great way to contribute to your community. By teaching others what you've learned, you can foster a sense of camaraderie and encourage others to share their work as well.

### **7. Don't Turn Into Human Spam**

While sharing your work is essential, it's also crucial to engage authentically with your audience. Avoid being overly promotional or spammy; instead, focus on building genuine relationships and connections.

## **8. Learn to Take a Punch**

When you share your work, you open yourself up to criticism. Kleon stresses the importance of developing a thick skin and learning to handle both positive and negative feedback constructively.

## **9. Sell Out**

Kleon challenges the notion that artists should suffer for their art. He encourages creators to find ways to monetize their work without compromising their integrity. This can include selling prints, offering workshops, or finding sponsorships.

## **10. Stick Around**

Sustaining your creative practice requires persistence. Kleon emphasizes the importance of being present in your community and continuing to share your work over time, as this builds trust and loyalty among your audience.

## **Practical Tips for Implementing the Principles**

To effectively implement the principles from "Show Your Work," consider the following practical tips:

- **Start Small:** If you're hesitant about sharing, begin with small snippets of your work. This could

be a quick sketch, a quote from your writing, or a photo of your workspace.

- **Use Social Media Wisely:** Platforms like Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok can be great for sharing your work. Choose the platform that best suits your style and audience.
- **Create a Routine:** Set aside dedicated time each week to share your work. Consistency will help you build a habit and keep your audience engaged.
- **Engage with Others:** Don't just share your work; engage with other creators. Comment on their posts, share their work, and foster a sense of community.
- **Don't Overthink It:** Sharing your work doesn't have to be perfect. Embrace the imperfections and be authentic in your sharing.

## Conclusion

In "Show Your Work," Austin Kleon offers a refreshing perspective on creativity and sharing. His principles encourage individuals to embrace their creative journeys and share them with the world. By opening up about our processes, we not only grow as creators but also foster connections with others. In today's digital age, the act of sharing is more important than ever, as it cultivates a sense of community, encourages collaboration, and inspires others to pursue their creative passions. So, take a cue from Kleon and start showing your work—your journey may just resonate with someone who needs to see it.

## Frequently Asked Questions

## **What is the main theme of 'Show Your Work!' by Austin Kleon?**

The main theme of 'Show Your Work!' is the importance of sharing your creative process and work with others to build an audience and foster connections.

## **How does Austin Kleon suggest artists and creatives should share their work?**

Kleon suggests that artists and creatives should share their work openly and regularly, using various platforms such as social media, blogs, and newsletters to engage with their audience.

## **What are the key principles outlined in 'Show Your Work!'?**

Key principles include being generous in sharing your work, documenting your process, embracing the 'amateur' mindset, and connecting with others by telling your story.

## **Why does Austin Kleon emphasize the importance of documenting the creative process?**

Kleon emphasizes that documenting the creative process not only helps to build a narrative around your work but also allows others to understand and appreciate the effort behind the final product.

## **What role does vulnerability play in 'Show Your Work!'?**

Vulnerability plays a significant role as Kleon encourages creatives to embrace their imperfections and share their struggles, making their work more relatable and authentic.

## **How can sharing your work lead to growth as a creative individual, according to Kleon?**

Sharing your work can lead to growth by opening up opportunities for feedback, collaboration, and community support, which can enhance your skills and expand your reach.

## What advice does Austin Kleon give for overcoming the fear of sharing work?

Kleon advises to start small, focus on the joy of creating rather than perfection, and remember that sharing is a way to connect rather than seeking validation.

## What impact has 'Show Your Work!' had on the creative community?

The book has inspired many creatives to adopt a more open approach to sharing their work, leading to a culture of collaboration and increased visibility for independent artists.

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