



HYPE

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For the crew

Do you for the crew

Ditch the inner-hater

Just make stuff

Love

“Let’s sparkle baby.”

- J Dilla

HYPE is honoring what's possible. It's our gift to ourselves and the world. I hope this lil book helps remind you to stay in *your space* of deserved and accomplished joy.

HYPE is what helps us love life in this beautiful and royally f'd up world. Where it takes serious work and intention to just be. How can we go for a simple walk when the world feels like it's crumbling? What is the point of creating anything right now? Is it selfish for me to sit here drinking maté and writing?

What I intend to share in this book is *you doing you* is how you'll make your greatest contributions and be the most supportive person you can be for your community and crew.

My friend John once posted, “If you want to help the world, help your neighbor.” That’s what this is about too. Doing what we love, allowing our actions to ripple out and hype up our crew, and inevitably change our community.

I talk about crew a lot on these pages because my crew created me in so many ways. Your crew are the people who fuel and support you on your path. I hope reading this makes you think of the amazing folks in your life who help you learn and grow.

This isn’t some kind of manifesto (probably obvious but just in case!)—it’s a few basic ideas that could help. They help me. Some have for years and some are pretty new, but everything here showed me ways I can lean into my path and dreams.

My intention is this can be picked up at any page and add a bit of light to your day. I hope it reminds you of those times when we feel unstoppable and to recognize these feelings are always near, even when things are tough. That you always have access to these powers.

HYPE is about being present, leaning into your dreams, doing for self, and moving past that dusty old wack voice in our heads already telling you reading this is a sign of weakness.

HYPE is non-linear. Being open to natural beauty on a walk might make you a better skateboarder or teacher. Eating exactly what you want in the morning might make you a better partner, friend, or DJ. I invite you to see how tapping into yourself can improve things that may feel unrelated.

HYPE isn't one size fits all. Not everything here will be your jam. What's easy for you might be challenging for me and vice versa. Maybe this can be another way we embrace our differences and practice rolling with hella compassion for ourselves and our crew.

I'm writing this as a cisgender, heterosexual, white male born and raised in a Minnesota suburb. I grew up in a stable, upper-middle-class 2-parent household. Resiliency comes easy to me and I know this is directly linked to my shell not being chipped away by the many forms of unrelenting hate and trauma I don't experience thanks to my upbringing, gender identity, sexual orientation, and white lanky body. This is my humble, limited perspective, and I'm proud to share it with you.

I also know I'll forget everything here in about 5-minutes. That's why ***HYPE*** is a practice. It takes hard work to be the Fun Professionals* we know we're capable of being. It takes discipline and reminders and all the little tricks we make up for ourselves to survive and thrive. I'm so down for anything that helps.

CREWLOVE

*Folks prioritizing joy and rolling with change to create dope experiences

Do you for the crew

HYPE is getting out of our heads and living beyond our thoughts. Leaving the space to be us.

It's acknowledging the hard work we put in to get here. That no one else could possibly be where we are right now. It's learning from and trusting our experience. *Doing us* again and again—honoring what's possible.

***“We need to look / Not at
what’s wrong / But what is
possible...”***

- Diane di Prima

HYPE is knowing ourselves well enough to accept the good with the bad—owning each without judgment. We're refusing the real us when we avoid these truths in our hearts.

In *Uncomfortable with Uncertainty*, Pema Chödrön says things stay with us until we've learned what we need to learn from them. So repping for ourselves not only keeps us growing but also helps with the forever-process of settling the hard stuff.

My good bud STLB3 practices “getting lost”—letting go of distractions and being fully present in his painting, gardening, music, drawing—anything he loves to do. Here the activity and whatever he creates are less important than the openness he feels while doing it, knowing he’s doing something 100% for him.

Things on my list are making beats, rapping, biking, meditating, writing, reading... everything I love could show up here and it feels good to write a few down.

Doing more of my actions of self-love makes me a better partner, friend, coworker, and random person to interact with on the day-to-day. **HYPE** is showing (with action) our partners, friends, coworkers, and crew that repping for ourselves is for their benefit as well. Maybe even inspiring them to do the same.

***“Might bring myself some
flowers, I’m in love with
myself.”***

- Quelle Chris

On his blog in the early 2000s, Count Bass D wrote about the challenge of being influenced by MF DOOM and using that energy to make his art. **HYPE** can be experiencing art, music, people—everything we love—owning why we love it and letting these feelings create art, conversations, and vibes that are 100% us.

No one shares the sum of your influences. They're a gift to ourselves, our crew, our family, and our world. **HYPE** is practicing doing us, repping and owning what we love, and sharing with the people around us for that full-circle crescendo of joy.

Ditch the inner-hater

HYPE is living unclouded by our inner-hater, that questioning voice up top casting doubt and throwing shade on our original ideas and creative work. Forever “protecting” us from everything challenging and new. This made-up bully in our heads does its best to make sense of our situations via past experience—ultimately not representing our best selves at all.

The inner-hater wants us to think it belongs, that we’re stuck with this wack voice and not supposed to imagine a life without it. And it makes sense for us to let the inner-hater take over since it’s nice to feel like we have it all figured out. Life is scarier when we admit what we don’t know—and continue.

Moving past this voice of self-hate and doubt is a forever practice. We face decades of our inner-hater cementing itself in everything we do by showing up confidently and comfortable with who we are. As this energy grows, the inner hater has a lot less to talk about.

Our inner-hater can't possibly hold the truth about right now. It tries but inevitably fails, forgetting we don't have all the answers and things aren't as predictable as they seem. No matter what happens, we still don't know what's ahead. It's proven to us over and over again via surprise rough times and all the cool things we don't see coming.

This wack negative voice can't draw on the right now, because we're all here learning that together. What if we give it no choice but to silently observe? Listening to what we are experiencing and learning from it. We're feeding *it* the dialogue here, not the other way around.

***“I never let doubt in my
mind cuz I know when
I touch the mic it’s to
rhyme.”***

- ODB

My friend Mark shared a practice that helped me understand how the inner-hater can feel so real, so permanent, and still only exist as a temporary thought. Thinking through these steps changes how I hear my inner voice.

Think of an object. Try a boombox. Acknowledge the obvious. It isn't a real boombox. It's just a thought.

Next, think of a friend. Like the boombox, it isn't them. Just another thought.

Now think of yourself. Something we've all done millions of times and (maybe) never stopped to think, this isn't me. Just like the boombox and friend, it's a projection in our heads, and we exist infinitely beyond this thought.

We can give ourselves the gift of self-encouragement over doubt.
We can acknowledge our inner-hater will pop up and be prepared to disagree.
We can ask our hearts for the confirmation we need to move forward.

Being us 100% invites our full self to the world, and what we experience gives life every opportunity to be so f'n cool. In *HYPE*, we get to own our desire as everything—beyond this ever-present doubtful voice.

The greater reward comes from this more challenging path, and *HYPE* is letting our full self exist right here. It's allowing ourselves to give up on pretending we have all the answers and lean into the unknown—opening up to the gifts lurking in our individual and collective ultra-hype mystery.

Just make stuff

Sometimes it's up to us to just get out of the way and live. To open up to the magic that's always right here.

***“Present Moment
Wonderful Moment.”***

- Thich Nhat Hanh

In Patrick Rhone's mega-hype *Some Thoughts About Writing*, a book that calls out the excuses we use to avoid doing what we love, he opens with a Kurt Vonnegut quote: "Your only real motivation should be to feed your soul."

If we're not feeding our soul judgment-free creativity growing out of all of our art and life experiences, we could ask why we make that art or do that specific thing?

Maybe our art is running or swimming. Something not so directly shared as poetry, music, or painting. Maybe our souls are fed by writing or calling a friend and telling them we love them and how important they are to the crew.

I worked at an arthouse theatre for a couple of years and saw hundreds of films. At some point, I stopped thinking of them as good or bad. Slamming popcorn and RC Cola while witnessing someone's art and giving an off-the-cuff review started to feel like undeserved judgment. I played with what happened when I left space where I'd typically overanalyze and critique. It was hella awkward, but started to open up something new in my mind.

I started applying this to other art in my life. Interacting with it more or less based on how much I was drawn to it. Letting action be the analysis. Opening up to work I was halfway about from artists I love and expected something different from (when what they created was something different). I started to sense artists creating and sharing work judgment-free.

Working on being less judgmental of other artists' work helped me stop overthinking my own.

“Pray working.”

- Octavia E. Butler

(care of adrienne maree brown)

Years ago my friend Barzan told me to write **JUST MAKE STUFF** on a sticky note and hang it up in my studio. Just create, judgment-free. We've either put in the practice or not, and it doesn't matter either way. Creating is open to everyone, even though we're told only a select few have the gift or permission to do it.

We can make stuff without thinking about how we'll share it. Or we can make stuff for a specific thing. It still doesn't matter! We get to choose if our work is shared, and either way, the crew benefits from you doing you. Our version of getting seen or heard, of success—which Julia Cameron defines as “Joy” on episode #484 of *The James Altucher Show*—is personal.

Please apply this to your life if the art and community you create is more complicated than writing songs, or painting. Maybe your contribution is crushing it at work while being the most fun person in the room. ***HYPE*** can be just doing that and finding your joy there too.

My friend Greg is brilliant with illustration, music, and graphic design. The big question for him was what he should focus on.

His search led him to an artist consultant with a studio down the hall from his. Saving him the time and money of her services, she cut right to it. Telling him to do what comes naturally and feels right, she told him to DO WHAT'S EASY.

When we're over-analyzing what we create or how we live at levels of unattainable perfection or undue judgment, we're missing out on so much dope work and living. It's easy to get stuck in this stress of what we're *not doing* when all we need to do is put in the time to create or run or write or cook or whatever feels most like honoring ourselves today.

We can pay attention to what feels easiest—what’s naturally jumping out—and feel good and accomplished doing whatever that is for us in this moment.

My boss and mentor Frances is a living example of getting shit done and moving on. She was the first to introduce me to the mantra, “Perfection is the enemy of the good.” She recognizes most successful people aren’t thinking about the obstacles others are trying to make perfect. Her work is prolific, and openly imperfect.

In the practice of *HYPE*, this can mean being less hard on ourselves, and doing what feels right instead of waiting for some signal in the distance to get started. Same goes for finishing something we’ve been working on for a long time—finally calling it complete. Hard to think of a better example for me than this book.

Love

HYPE is practicing staying in our moments of feeling ourselves. When we're having awesome days, we can acknowledge them to work on staying in these spaces of self-love.

Reflection is usually saved for less-cool situations, but allowing ourselves to give credit to the times we're living our 100% Fun-Pro-Life helps take the megaphone back from the negative, putting it in front of ***HYPE*** where it belongs. (HPR)

***“Love, not judgment, sows
the seeds of tranquility
and change.”***

- Danna Faulds

We can hang out, be open, hustle, seek, learn, take care of our body and mind, challenge ourselves, rest, love, and listen—and where we land will be so incredible and 100% us it would be impossible to sit here and dream it up.

Cruising forward with the combination of our experiences big and small happening all day every day. Opening up to new perspectives leading us to rad places we didn't know existed but were moving towards the whole time. We're like a pinball, bouncing off this to land in that, occasionally falling through cracks and always looking for new and unexpected routes.

HYPE is honoring our path. It's repping the work of those who raised us and the crew who raised us again. It's our gift to ourselves and the world. It's how we'll be the most polite and contagious Fun Professionals. The folks out there prioritizing joy even when times are tough.

HYPE isn't second-guessing or questioning our experience, but living it. It's a cycle that feeds itself more joy.

To love in *HYPE* is removing expectations for ourselves, each other, and our environment. Just sharing space with crew. Being, existing, and finding the subtle power from inside these spaces. Listening closely and witnessing the magic.

Here love is action.

Seeing someone we love living to their utmost is really the best, and we get to provide this inspiration and support for our crew every day.

HYPE is “Following your heart and paying attention,” life-changing advice from my Buddha-mom Susan. It’s being awake and acting with love.

This came up when she and I were talking about self-employment and taking the leaps you need to be successful, and the same goes for ditching wackness and making room for our contributions to the world.

It’s letting go and experiencing everything in front of us. Fear, love, stress, joy... opening up to all of these feelings as tools to reflect and grow.

HYPE is always there waiting for us to realize there's nothing in our way. Our rad vibes belong outside, not trapped within.

Let the love and new ideas and art see the light and be shared. What happens to them will happen to them, and we'll always be able to dream up more.

There isn't such a thing as finishing learning this stuff. We're constantly opening up to reminders on our path—noticing signs to be more us and recognizing when the inner-hater is throwing shade. ***HYPE*** is letting these thoughts come and go while knowing what's true in our hearts beyond them.

CREW!

***“Life is pure adventure,
and the sooner we realize
that, the quicker we will be
able to treat life as art.”***

- Maya Angelou

Thank you

Abigail for the sweet lil gold notebook that started this project, your super-smart feedback, and the forever-hype you share every day.

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BIPOC artists. Your creativity existing beyond the harsh environments white folks like me create and benefit from.

All my artist mirrors and creW listening, reading, and sharing.

This book wouldn't exist if I hadn't read Thich Nhat Hanh, Patrick Rhone, James Altucher, and Julia Cameron.

HYPE

is self-empowerment on unapologetic blast. It's recognizing that repping our full self is how we'll be at our best for the crew—the collective whole, our community doing the important work of creating joy and change.

I hope this lil book helps you embrace your path, continue beyond inevitable challenges, and remember (again and again) doing you for the crew is the ultimate gift to moving forward.