

Transcript for voice notes by Nikita Zook:

When You Want To Give Up

Hi, this is a voice note for you to listen to when you want to give up.

Wanting to give up is something I am very familiar with and I want you to know that wanting to give up doesn't not necessarily mean that something is wrong or that you're not good at making art. I actually think that wanting to give up can just be part of the process.

When you first start a project, it's exciting. You're looking through your materials, you're imagining what you could make, and you have ideas, there's a lot of energy in that. But as you're working, you might start to get tired, or you might realize that it could be harder than you thought to make your ideas real, or something that you thought would work, doesn't. And that can be disappointing. That might make you start to doubt yourself or wonder if you can do it or not. And that makes sense.

What I want you to know is, it's ok that this is happening, it's normal, and it doesn't mean you should give up. It just means you probably need a break. And after you take a break, for 5 minutes, or half an hour, or maybe even an entire day, what you made might look different, or you might feel different about it and have some other ideas that you want to try.

Things I do to take a break include: petting my cats, going for a walk and listening to a podcast, making myself some tea, dancing in my living room, or telling a friend how I feel.

So that's what I wanted to tell you. I hope that helps, and I hope you don't give up.

The World Needs Your Art

Hi, I'm back to record another voice note for anyone who is starting to worry that maybe they can't make art or aren't an artist.

When I was making this activity, I was actually thinking about you, and I was also thinking about my 12 year old self, who wanted to be an artist, but didn't think that she could be.

Something I want you to know, is that it took me a long time, almost 25 years, to call myself an artist. I am a self-taught artist, which means that I didn't go to art school, and I don't have an art degree. The thing that helped me start seeing myself as the artist I always was, was a 100 day project I did in 2016. Basically, I decided I was going to making something every day for 100 days and share it online. During those months of practicing, of making art even when I didn't feel like it, or even when it didn't seem like I had any good ideas, I realized that being an artist was less about talent and more about skill. And a skill is something you can learn. It's trying, and failing, and seeing what happens next. My 100 day project also helped me see that the thing that had been standing in the way of me calling myself an artist or not, was the fact that I didn't think I was one. You're an artist if you want to be. It's as easy and as difficult as that.

So if you're listening to this, still wondering if you're good enough, just like I was, yesterday, or last week, or two months ago, or two years ago, or when I was 12, I want to tell you, in case no one else has recently, that you are. I don't even need to see your art to know that. I know that you are the only you who will ever be and if you don't make your art, no one will. So I hope you keep practicing, I hope you keep finding ways to be creative, and I hope you call yourself an artist.