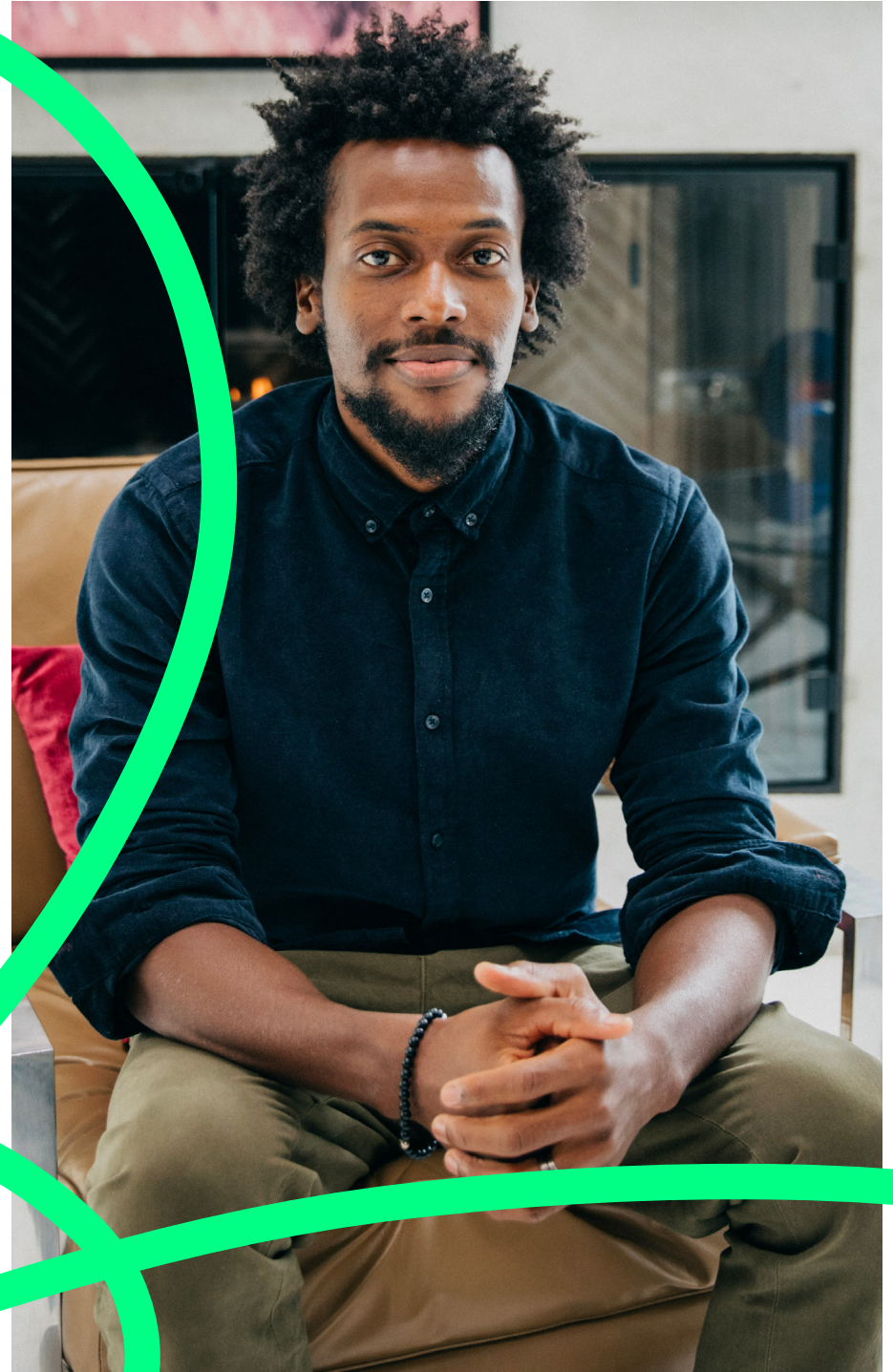


# Artivism: Transform Your Creative Voice into a Catalyst for Change

Skillshare x Nikkolos Smith



Artivism, that  
perfect place  
where art  
and activism  
meet.

Your creativity can make a difference. This toolkit is made to help you channel your creative voice and start a lifelong journey of activism.

In today's world, each and every one of us has a unique voice. We can share our experiences and perspectives with the world at the click of a button. I've chosen to humanize the Black experience and reflect on the joys and pains of our society. How will you use yours? This kit is here to help bring your activist voice to light. As you go through these prompts and develop your activism journey, I ask you to be fearless. Be fearless in finding issues that drive your passion. Be fearless in putting your voice out there.

Your voice matters. Your art matters. It's time to share it with the world. Come along for the journey or jump in wherever you're at. Activism is a cycle and is meant to repeat.

Let's get going,  
**Nikkolas Smith**

“An artist’s duty, as far as I’m concerned, is to reflect the times.”

– Nina Simone

Throughout the history of humanity, we’ve always had parts of the world that are not in perfect working order, not perfectly functioning. We have always had broken bones. If you open up social media or watch the news, you’ll see this world can be a little crazy. We need to work together to tackle all of the issues in front of us.

Activism has the power to spark conversation about parts of the world, or ourselves, that we don’t often talk about. Those conversations can be difficult but they need to happen. With my activism, I’m always pulling from what’s happening in the world. I like to think of my art as a way of holding up a mirror to the world and saying: this is what’s really going on.

In this first section, we’re going to find the broken bone that ignites your passion. We’ll uncover what makes you wish you could climb the highest mountain and tell everybody: **this needs to be fixed.**

**Fill in these prompts in a way that best suits you—jot down words, doodle your thoughts, or write full sentences. This is a space for you to discover. Just remember: be fearless.**

When I picture a perfect world, I see:

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In that perfect world, I feel:

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I'm surrounded by:

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There's a lot of:

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There's no:

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**If you get stuck, I recommend looking to other artists for inspiration, listening to music or a podcast, or going on social media to see what's happening in the world today.**

When I picture the world today, I see:

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In today's world, I feel:

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I'm surrounded by:

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There's a lot of:

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There's no:

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The biggest differences between these two worlds are:

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I think \_\_\_\_\_

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needs to change to get closer to a more perfect world.

When I think about advocating for change,

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excites me the most.

The broken bone I want to start healing is:

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“Not  
everything  
that is faced  
can be  
changed,  
but nothing  
can be  
changed until  
it is faced.”

—James Baldwin

These days, creativity goes well beyond paper and canvas. Creativity is within all of us. It's that innate sense of curiosity that allows us to dream up new ideas and see beyond our physical surroundings. Artivism gives us license to use that creativity and educate the world on issues that are important to each of us through our own eyes.

My own journey with artivism started with a simple practice: my Sunday Sketch series. At the time many years ago, I felt like my life was in a period of upheaval. I found joy and purpose in the act of making something every Sunday and sharing it with the world.

Sometimes, it can feel overwhelming to figure out where to begin and decide what medium to use. Just know whether you choose to share your message via illustration, writing, photographs, film, or any other medium, you can drive change in the world.

**In this section, we'll explore what medium best fits you, your message, and your lifestyle.**

**First, eliminate any mediums you're not interested in.**

Think about if there are any mediums you know you're not interested in exploring. Write them here:

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**Now, let's explore possible mediums for you.**

What activities do you do for fun and/or relaxation?

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What activities do you find the most joy in?

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What do you think you're really good at?

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What are the common activities throughout your answers?

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**Lastly, let's narrow it down to your best fit.**

Practically speaking, how will activism fit into your daily, weekly, or monthly routines?

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Do you have certain times when you're most likely to want to create?

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Which of the activities from the last section are most likely to fit your schedule?

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“Nothing  
can stop the  
power of  
committed  
and deter-  
mined people  
to make a  
difference in  
our society.”

—John Lewis

Creative activism gives you an opportunity to educate, inspire, and create hope in your community and the world around you. Whether you're joining an existing movement or starting a new one, your art has the power to educate on issues and spark change.

When I started my activism journey, I did two things that helped me truly feel like an activist: I built a ritual to stay on track and I let go of my fear of being judged. I want you to be set up for success with a ritual that excites you and the power to overcome any fears that strike. Your activism ritual should include a cadence for how often you'll create, how you'll stay inspired, and how you'll share your work.

A lot of times the fear of being judged stops us from putting ourselves or our work out there. If fear strikes, remember that your unique perspective can change someone's outlook, cause them to feel new emotions, and start new conversations. Your voice can drive change in a way no one else's can. That's why no matter what doubt comes your way, you have to be fearless in sharing your work with the world.



**In this section, we'll uncover how you can start mending broken bones and building your activism journey.**

**Remind yourself of the broken bone you're working to heal.**

The issue I want to amplify, support, and remedy is:

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Fixing this issue is important to me because:

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I'm going to start my activism journey using my chosen medium:

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**Plan how you'll stay inspired.**

When I want to learn more about this issue, I:

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I am the most excited to create when I:

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The artists and/or activists who inspire me are:

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**Build your activism journey roadmap.**

My first step in my activism journey will be:

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Circle one: I will create a daily / weekly / monthly inspiration routine.

Circle one: I will set aside time daily / weekly / monthly to create activism.

My activism ritual will include:

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When I'm feeling nervous or fearful about putting my activism out into the world, I will:

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By six months into my activism journey, I will:

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By one year into my activism journey, I will:

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Your art is  
**transformative.**  
It has the power  
to make people  
laugh, to make  
them cry, and to  
make them think  
about something  
differently.

Your art can rally people around a movement in a way that nothing else can.

Your creativity is a catalyst for change. You have the power to challenge the status quo, influence people, inspire them, and urge them to take action.

You have found that broken bone—that thing you want to fix in this world—that only you can mend from your unique perspective. Now, it's time for you to embark on your activism journey.

If you ever feel uncertain or begin to doubt yourself, remember: your voice matters, your art matters, and you have the ability to change the world.

I hope someday we won't have so many broken bones to fix. Until then, I'm glad to know there are people like you out there pushing for healing. I can't wait to see what you create.

All my best,  
**Nikkolas Smith**