

## THE RESISTANCE – EPISODE 1.9

### Rules for Artists episode transcript

**Matt:** This week on The Resistance, we've got a special one-off episode to break things up. You may have heard our most recent interview with Dave Monks. It's an enlightening conversation about feeling permission to be the person, or in this case, the musician, that he wants to be. And the pressures we feel to meet everyone else's expectations.

During that same conversation with Dave, he ended up telling me about a list that he keeps in a personal writing journal. The heading on it is, quote, "My Advice for Artists." But it's really intended to motivate himself to not lose sight of the most important lessons he's learned.

It's not common to find a rock band steeped in Mary Oliver's poetry, but Tokyo Police Club has always been very thoughtful about their creative approach. And Dave's solo music emphasizes the same. I asked Dave if he would be willing to share his list with us, and he graciously obliged.

We decided it would be a nice stand-alone sort of moment to encourage all of you as you seek to take the next steps of progress toward your own endeavors and face the resistance. Here's Dave Monks from Tokyo Police Club, giving us a short list of the lessons he's learned, titled "Advice For Artists."

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**Matt:** Welcome to The Resistance, a podcast that features honest discussion with meaningful artists about the opposing forces we all face when moving toward our better selves. I'm your host, Matt Conner.

[music]

**Dave:** This is Dave Monks, and I play in Tokyo Police Club.

[music]

I've been battling resistance as well for many a year, and I wrote this note in the back of my notebook here, and the title is "My Advice For Artists." So I thought I would share it with you guys. And of course, since the title says "My Advice For Artists," it obviously means, "my advice for me." So I just thought I'd share some of these points with you, permitting that I can read my handwriting here.

Create time that is only yours. That means, usually, getting up early or finding time at night. Create time that is only yours. Spend that time wildly. Spend it like you have tons of it. Strive to fail often. I think we're all familiar with that concept.

Wear your self-editing hat with great caution. Yeah, sometimes you gotta put on this little hat that says, like, is this too long? Or is this, remember when you put that hat on, you are the satanic monster, a threat to yourself. So, when you gotta put that hat on, just be very careful. Be very gentle. And try and only wear it for five minutes. That's even a lot.

See friends with intention. And I think part of that is trying to recognize which friends are actually healthy for you to open up with and share your daily grinds and your ins and outs with, because a lot of people won't see what you're after and appreciate what it takes. Watch out for those logical, judgey ones.

Oh, man. Okay. Do silly things. Do silly things. So I saw this sign today that said, "reward for lost cat. The cat's name is Meemu." And I thought that was such a great name for a cat, so I made up a song for Meemu today when I was walking around. Okay, now you all hate me. That's fine.

Another thing here is, and this is part of being silly, and I don't want this to sound too preachy, but I personally, I strive to not waste money on cultural symbols, and to waste money on personal symbols. And there's things that mean stuff to other people, like having clean Stan Smiths, or having an Impreza instead of a Hyundai Accent. Or having, yeah, like a Patagonia jacket instead of a who knows, or whatever. Man, that shit so doesn't matter. It's so much better to waste money on buying yourself a massive LEGO castle if that's what you're into, or a tiara. If you feel like you need a tiara, you should definitely buy that. Still, you'll be at the store, and you'll be like, oh my god, this is so dumb. Why am I buying myself, I don't know, maybe it's like a Christmas tree or other holiday item. Whatever it is, maybe it's a crystal rock, or maybe you want to go to Disneyland. You should absolutely go to Disneyland instead of buying something that you think—I don't know. Just do stupid stuff.

Your art isn't a peep show. And whatever you're creating needs to be contained in order for the magic to take form. Because I've regretted showing my stuff to other people. So often, it creates expectations, which means it creates should and should nots, which means it creates rights and wrong, which means it creates worry.

The last one here is just to keep going. Don't stop, because it's a learning process, and you contain all the magic. You have all the lyrics. You have all the script ideas. You have everything in you. You don't need your talented friend to fill in some other stuff like their frog DNA to your Jurassic Park dinosaur. You have it all. Just give yourself the time.

One last thing I just wanted to share is, there's an essay by Mary Oliver called "Of Power and Time." And it's in her book "Upstream." It sort of gives you her version of this. And she's a great poet, if you don't know her. American poet. I recommend that essay to you. Okay, so that's my advice for myself and maybe you, and thanks for putting me on here, Matt.

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**Matt:** You've been listening to The Resistance. If you've enjoyed this episode, please rate us on iTunes and subscribe on your favorite podcast app. And for more information and further episodes, you can find us at [listentotheresistance.com](http://listentotheresistance.com). Our theme is composed by Chad Howat. Engineering, production, and additional music by Jay Kirkpatrick. My name is Matt Conner, and I'm your host.

Join us for our next episode with Toad the Wet Sprocket singer and solo artist, Glen Phillips.