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November 7, 2021

THE PLAYGROUND

November is here, and so is our first official newsletter (and our first events)!

Welcome back to **The Playground**. This month, we're highlighting blogger Jonah Foss, sharing music from our favorite local artists, and inviting you to both our *Artist Mixer* on November 12th, and a *Photography Workshop* on November 19th.

We're so thankful for you and our community <3

Please share **The Playground** with your fam and friends!

Slide Through To





Social Mixer for Artists & Illustrators

November 12th, 5-6PM in SAV 264

Come meet other artists in the area for a night of fun!



Introductory Photography Workshop

November 19th, 5-6PM in SAV 264

Grow your photography skillset--and your network, at this workshop and mixer!

COOL KID ON THE BLOCK:

JONAH FOSS

(BLOGGER)



Jonah Foss ([@jonahfoss](https://twitter.com/jonahfoss)) is a first year student at the University of Washington in hopes to study business administration. In his free time however, Foss enjoys taking pictures and writing for his blog.

Check it out the at jonahfoss.com, and read on to learn more about his writing and inspirations.

When did you start writing? And, what inspired you to start your blog?

Jonah: I started writing online in May of this year, a few days after my 18th birthday. I had an existing website that I had set up as an online resume during my college admissions process, but the idea to turn it into a blog didn't really come naturally to me. Previously, I enjoyed writing (in school or otherwise), and I've received a lot of support in the form of friends praising my writing and I'd always done well in my

previous English classes but had never considered that I could make the time to write about whatever I wanted. After spending so much time on the internet, I felt that I wanted to carve out my own corner of the web that I could completely own, and the most natural way I felt I could go about that was through my writing. Too long for social media and too short to call them essays– it's almost as if I wrote a blog because I didn't feel comfortable in any other medium.

What's your favorite piece that you've written?

J: [Following My Own Advice for Once](#) is probably my favorite piece I've written. It's a retrospective on my ongoing relationship with self-help and productivity content on the internet and how it's affected my self-esteem and coping skills during the pandemic, and probably the body of writing I've put the most of myself into, ever. Although I'm proud of the concepts I strung together, I'm just as happy if not more that I've gotten the confidence to be vulnerable in my writing and online.

"Self help has to be the means to an end, not an end within itself. The former results in a more conscious and mindful life, the latter results in a narcissistic attitude that goes nowhere" - From *Following My Own Advice For Once*

Why write? In other words. *what's your 'why'?*

J: I write for a few reasons. One, it helps me achieve mental clarity. Writing (for my own blog, not for school) helps tremendously with being present and allows me to be much more objective about my thoughts than I would if I kept everything bottled up inside my head. It's almost as if when I write, the camera that I see out of goes into third person and I just become an observer of my life and the lives of others. I write about a lot of things, but I think I enjoy writing the most about things that we all think or know but never talk about. Bestselling author and Georgetown professor Cal Newport has a joke that says, "your number-one most important skill as a college student is writing ability. Your second most important skill as a college student is writing ability. Your third most important skill as a college student is, you guessed it, writing ability" and so on. Not only do I enjoy writing as an outlet, but also is a practical place where I can practice my messaging and academic writing. Being able to publish anything I want on my little corner of the internet allows me to get feedback from anyone anywhere, and increases my area for good things to happen to me. Speaking of which, writing has helped me make friends and connections. The first person who reached out to me at UW did so via Discord a month before move-in after they had read work on my website, and I've been able to connect with founders and all manner of people on the web, many of them through my writing. I've recently been thinking of it as making friends asynchronously, where someone can learn a lot about you without having to even speak to you once. I think that's also a benefit of being vulnerable on the web– you become a lot more 'real' than most people who are posting anonymously.