

# The Stages Of **ACTIVISM**

From Seika Brown and the  
youth activist team  
“Archnova”

*Summary of toolkit:  
Steps, resources, contacts, and  
philosophies*



# Table of Contents

AN INTRO TO ARCHNOVA	-----	3
TIMELINE OF OUR WORK	-----	4
STAGES OF ACTIVISM	-----	5
STAGE ONE: Beginnings	-----	6-7
STAGE TWO: Research	-----	8-9
STAGE THREE: Networking	-----	10-11
STAGE FOUR: Reflect & Plan	-----	12-15
STAGE FIVE: Execution	-----	16-17
STAGE SIX: Repeat	-----	18
RESOURCES FOR YOU	-----	19
ACTIVIST PHILOSOPHY	-----	20
SPECIAL THANKS	-----	21

# An Intro To Archnova

## Our Origin

Starting back in December of 2017, a psychology project focused around finding a solution to a school-wide issue was assigned to Founder Seika Brown. After being unable to establish a mental health club, Brown took the idea outside of school and from there, Archnova was formed.

## Who We Are

Archnova consists of six individuals all passionate about improving mental health education, policy, and awareness. Combining a Latin and Greek root, Archnova translates to "New Beginnings." We aim to demonstrate that anyone, regardless of age, can create change in topics and issues that impact today's world.



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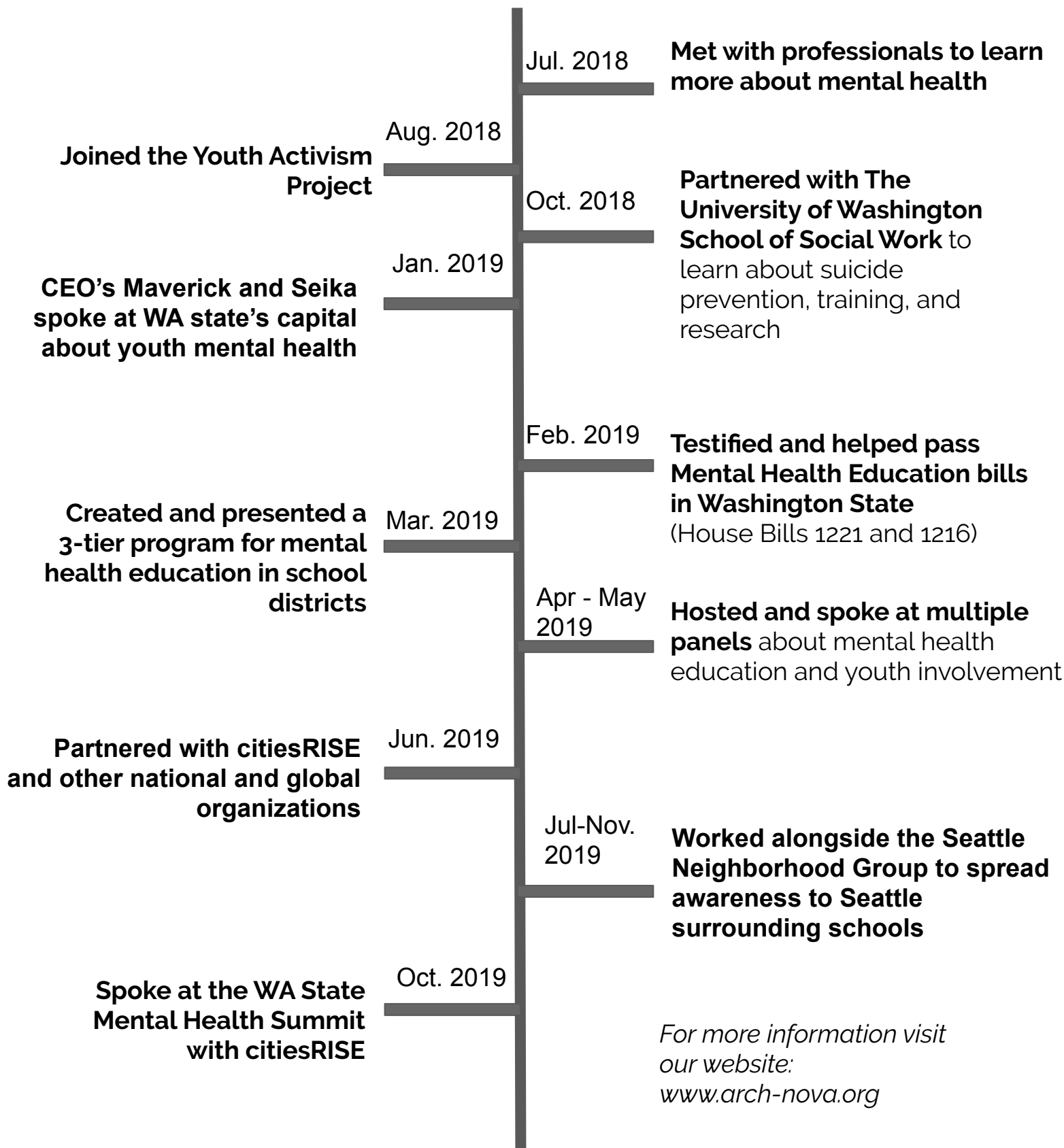


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# TIMELINE

(of our work)



# STAGES OF ACTIVISM

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## Beginnings

*What are you passionate about?  
Meet with others who are  
passionate about similar  
topics.*

1

2

## Networking

*Contact and learn from  
professionals, workers,  
other activists, etc.  
Build off your  
knowledge from the  
research stage.*

3

4

## Execution

*Execute your plan  
from stage 4. Send  
out newsletters, post  
online, create a small  
audience. Execution  
is key.*

5

6

## Research

*Educate yourself on your  
topic: its history, previous  
research on it, the  
professionals who work in the  
field, and what is being done  
to improve its state.*

## Reflect and Plan

*Reflect upon the past 3  
stages. What have you  
learned? Where can you  
apply your ideas? What can  
you share with the public  
(social media, website,  
podcast, etc)? Plan from  
there.*

## Repeat

*Repeat stages 1-5.  
Re-build upon your ideas,  
research, networks, plans  
and execution.*

# Stage One: Beginnings

- Give the people you're recruiting an idea of what you want to do.
- Ask **starter questions** if you can't come up with an idea.
- Keep it simple.
- Don't worry about details.



***Note that you can start with either of these steps first, but having a rough idea for a campaign helps recruit people.***



→ Don't be shy! Ask your friends if they want to help out.

→ Talk to kids that participate in clubs at school.

→ Some teachers may be able to share your contact info to other students.



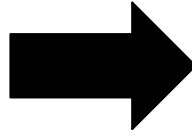
→ Lastly, look up if there is any pre-existing team in your community.



## Brainstorming an Idea

An “idea” **does not** mean having a strict plan on what you want to do. **It's choosing the topic** you want to focus on. For example: Political Activism, Mental Health, Women's Rights, etc.

You DO NOT need a solid idea to get started. It is OKAY to be unrealistic.



- What social causes do you care about?
- What impacts your community?
- What do you have a personal connection to?
- What do you think is wrong in today's society?
- What do you wish existed?
- What already exists?
  - Copy and implement existing programs



## Forming a team

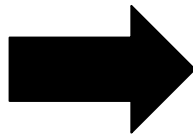


To form a team, start with asking your friends.

If your school has clubs, organizations, or outspoken individuals, don't be shy, ask them if they are interested!

It doesn't hurt to ask teachers or other adults if they know anyone who may be interested

***There is a misconception that you have to have a big team in order to accomplish something, but that is false.***



Once you have your team, it is good to stay organized. Here are a few tips:

**Assign roles.** A social media director, researcher, scribe, etc. helps keep everyone engaged.

**Meetings:** Set a day of a week to have meetings and/or a timeframe of when to have them (ex. once every two weeks)

**Communicate:** We recommend having a “constitution” of rules, such as preparing questions for every meeting, communicating if you cannot attend an event/meeting

**PRO TIP: Have a shared Google Docs folder and someone type an agenda for meetings, take notes, store research info, etc.**

# Stage Two: Research





# Stage Two: Research

## Research Checklist:

- Your topic
- Who works in the field
- What efforts are being done to help the issue
- Data/analysis
- Do field research in YOUR area

## PRO TIP

Divide research topics among your team; this will keep productivity levels high. Have someone check in with each person to ensure that work is getting done.

Stay organized by creating a google drive folder of your research.

## Researching your topic:

→ Go online and begin looking up past and current data.

→ Look up current policies around your topic.

Ex: What has been implemented to support your topic? Is there any support?

- Knowing what does and does not exist will give you an advantage when speaking to professionals (or others) and carrying out your campaign

→ Research who works specifically in your field. This is not limited to an individual and can be organizations or companies.

- Note: Research both those who work in and out of your community/area.

→ We recommend conducting field research about your topic within your community.

Ex: Archnova conducted a mental health survey looking at student mental health in our school district.

- Note: A great and easy way to conduct research is through a Google Form Survey.

- Brainstorm what kind of questions you need answers to as well as any information that could enlighten your knowledge about your topic.

- Conducting your own research raises your credibility in later stages.

# Stage Three: Networking

In stage two you researched people who work in your field. Reach out and get into contact with them.





## DO this:

Being genuine is the #1 thing in connecting with a person or business.

- Introduce yourself
  - Name, age, who you are, what you do, your team's mission statement
- Be passionate.
  - engage in conversation and listen, share ideas
- Build a relationship
  - Be collaborative and open minded., ALWAYS follow up
- Stay true to you
  - Be casual, being informal is better than trying hard to impress someone

## AVOID this:



- Introduce yourself
  - But DO NOT give them your whole life story. It's easy to make it all about you, avoid that. Share bits and pieces but not everything.
- Be passionate.
  - It's good to rehearse but DO NOT sound like a robot, Be engaged to the topic and avoid sounding bland. Stay focused and active.
- Build a relationship
  - The best opportunities come from genuine relationships. Stay connected with the people you talk to and always follow up after a meeting, call or event
- Stay true to you
  - DO NOT change who you are or try to be "impressive". But also avoid being un-flexible. Compromises are wins.

# Stage Four: Reflect and Plan



# Reflect:

By now, you have completed half of this toolkit. You have brainstormed an idea, collected research and data and lastly networked and connected with people in your field.

- Stay constant on social media
- Create a website - have a newsletter
- Engage in public events
- Work with your local officials
- Partner with other groups in your area

You have spent a lot of behind the scenes work and now is time to apply them.

***Before we continue, we will spotlight some of the most popular types of activism campaigns to supply a source of inspiration if needed.***

***Knowing what kind of activist campaign you want to host will be crucial for Stage Five: Execution.***

***Reflecting leads to Planning***

***Reflecting on what you so far collected will prompt you in the direction for your future campaign.***

# Common Activism Campaigns

**Social Media Campaign:** Awareness based. Though everyone should have their own social media, some campaigns can be centered only on social media.

**Rally/Walk/Strike:** These take extra planning, research and work. However it is a great way to gain momentum, connections and create a statement. Rally's, walks and strikes are different things but are foundationally similar. See what <https://front.moveon.org/rally-organizing-guide/> has about how to host a rally.

- You will need speakers, volunteer members, press, etc

**Lobbying/Policy Change:** Sounds hard but is easy. Reach out to local and state departments and representatives. Have a mission statement and an ask. Your gathering of field research is a great way to show your state officials you mean business

## “Gathering Spaces”

(A “gathering space” does not always mean a physical area. Rather it usually is an online place where voices, stories, resources, ideas etc are shared)

- Online Blog/Forum (Ex: Meddling Kids Movement)
- Podcast (Ex: TruthLinesVoice)

***We highly recommend looking at [Sophrosyne Mental Health](#) if you need an example for they have done multiple different types of campaigns, including policy work, rallies, awareness and app building***



# Plan:

Planning for any form of advocacy is essential. Here are a few ideas and tips to plan for events, advocacy, etc..

- Stay consistent on meetings.
  - Keeping your team organized and engaged is the most important thing for execution and planning
- Stay consistent on posts and newsletters.
  - Have a posting schedule (every tuesday for a newsletter or twice a day for posting online)
- Stay publicly engaged and search for events correlated with your topic.
  - What is happening in your area? Google events in your area (Example: For Archnova we have searched “Mental Health Events Seattle” and many results showed up)
- Continue to reach out to professionals and potential partnerships.
  - Keep emailing and calling your representatives, if you show that you’re persistent they may respond or connect you with someone else. Look up other activists or organizations you can partner with for an event (TIP: Check instagram and twitter for actively engaged teams)

# Stage Five: Execution



***Depending on what type of campaign your team chose to focus on the execution of it may vary. However, execution involves multiple aspects regardless of the type of campaign you're leading.***

# 1

## Execution takes mental work

- It takes discipline above all things.
  - Avoid burnout but to execute anything, it takes hard work and will. It is easy to lose focus. So remind yourself why you started to your campaign in the first place.
  - Make sure to take breaks but stay organized with your work
- Sometimes you have to do things you don't want to do. Being patient and understanding will drive the success of your project

# 2

## Execution happens in stages

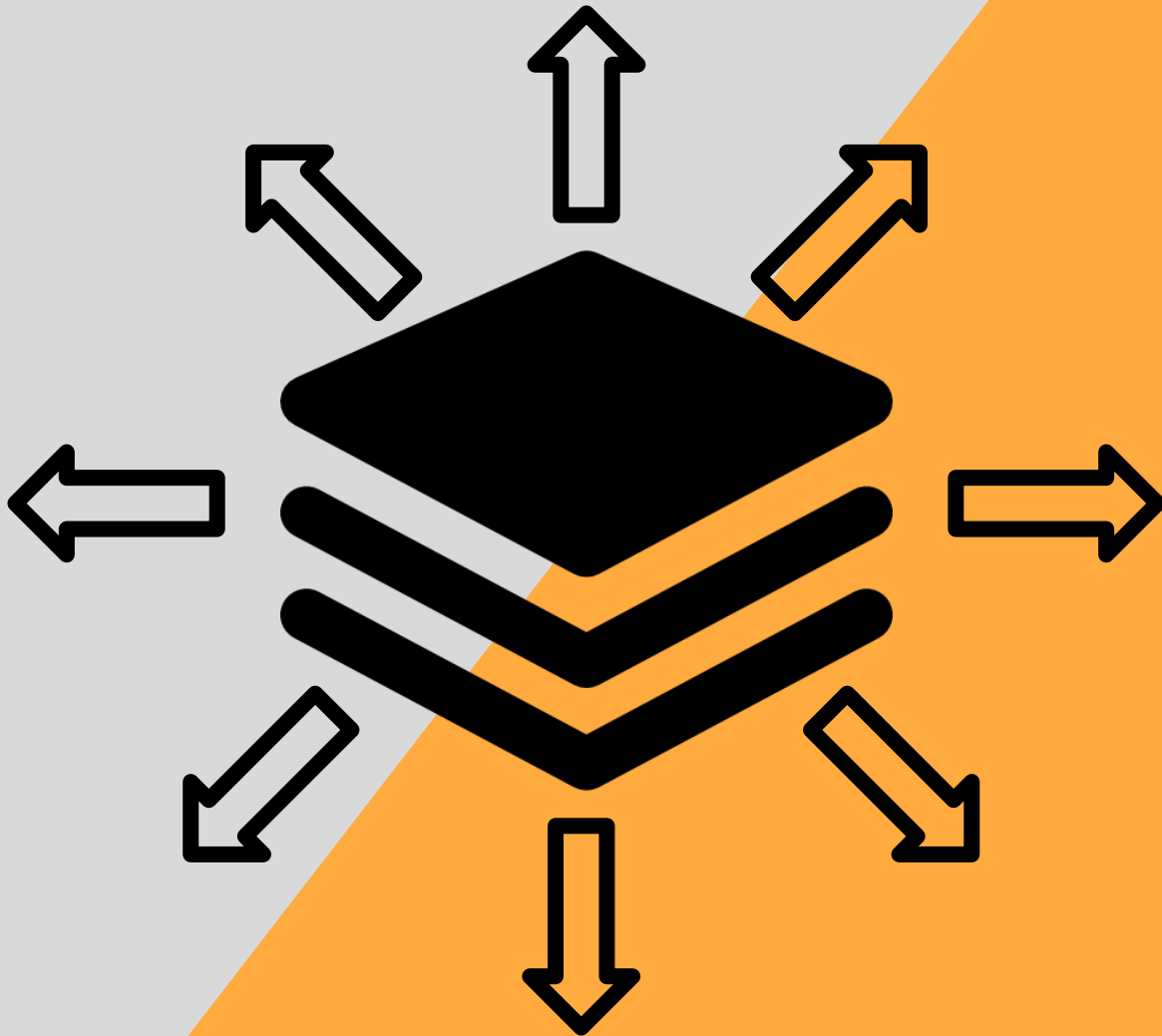
- The good thing about execution is that if you have been following this toolkit then you already executed half of the things you need to do.
- It takes brainstorming, researching, networking, reflecting and planning to be able to execute.
- In Stage Four you should have consulted on an type of campaign and began your planning.
- A tip for planning is to create a timeline of what you want to accomplish on what days/weeks.

# 3

## Execution is not smooth

- Though you should create a timeline/plan, do not expect to be able to follow it to the dot. You can't predict the future, things will happen.
- Though it won't be smooth you can prepare for it. Make your deadlines earlier than later.
- For example, you're designing your website and you need it to be released on the 14th. Instead have your deadline be on the 12th so you have some days to fall back upon incase you cannot reach the deadline.
- Once again, things don't go smoothly, that example won't always work, but it will help you stay up to date and organized.

# Stage Six: Repeat



That's It. Repeat and continue. By the time you executed your campaigns, you are already a pro activist and can continue to learn how to be an activist with experience. Truth is, activism is like anything, it never follows one strict guideline. These past six stages can overlap, happen one before another. However, it can give you some aid on how to approach your dream. Good luck!

# Activist Philosophy

There are a few major things to remember in the terms of success and character.

1. **Your story is important, but know when and when not to share it.**
  - a. Meaning that sharing your story is a GOOD thing, however, being humble and open to listening to others is a crucial need in the terms of networking and social spotlight.
2. **Discipline determines success rate.**
  - a. Discipline is the practice of working hard thoroughly. You want to discipline yourself to your goals and deadlines to maintain momentum.
  - b. Discipline requires you to do things you do not want to do. Activism is a field of passion and hope, sometimes you may encounter times where the work you must do is tedious or long, discipline yourself to finish them as needed.
3. **Be humble in your work**
  - a. Honor and humility come from being humble. Practice in uplifting others, even if you don't get things in return. Activism may be draining but it is rewarding as a field. You're helping others :)
4. **Gratitude is the first step in living a balanced lifestyle**
  - a. Having gratitude for your friends, family, co-workers and daily necessities will drive you towards realization and happier days when you're working through tough times.
5. **Most importantly, take breaks**
  - a. Success isn't a straight path of push until the end, Your energy and physical and mental willpower must be used accordingly, one hard push until the end won't work. Divide your energy as needed and allow yourself to recharge.

# Resources and Contacts to look into

## Youth Engagement

- The Youth Activism Project
- DoSomething.org (Youth led global movement over social issues)
- FreeChild Institute
- Juv Consulting (Consulting agency helping campaigns and ideas)
- Teens Speak Up (Engaged dialogue about social justice causes)
- Stu Voice (Empowering students to take action)

## Mental Health Organizations

- NAMI (National Alliance of Mental Illness) (Clinics and events all over the country)
- Mental Health America (Have an Advocacy Network and Conferences)
- The Trevor Project (Focused around Mental Health for LGBTQ)
- Country Wide Assistance
- Hustle Hard Scholarship
- NoHo Youth (nhnenc.org)
- Major Minor Youth
- Girls Action
- One Student Initiative

## Organizations to support when you can't spend tons of time

- The Amazing Campaign
- The Echo (Ig: We Are The Echo)
- Global Nomads Group
- Mental Health/Youth Engagement
- CitiesRise
- The Conversationalist

## Etc.

- Performing the World (Theatre Activism)
- We Win Strategy Group
- Global Climate Strike
- Cliche Teen Journal
- Lune Magazine
- Radio Project



# A Special Thanks

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