

Hand Guide To

# Cultural Activism & Entrepreneurship

---

-----

## An Autarkic Model

---

-----

Designed By

# Dror Kessler

2016 Sderot Boulevard, [www.sderot-blvd.com](http://www.sderot-blvd.com)  
[dror.kessler@gmail.com](mailto:dror.kessler@gmail.com)

## --- Read This First ---

This short hand guide describes an autarkic model for cultural activism and entrepreneurship that has been implemented in Sderot since 2010. The model has greatly contributed to the realization of over 50 events, performances, gatherings and the establishment of several long running groups of interest.

The guide provides a short description of the model's goals, its three tenants (Autarky, Quality & Sustainability) and definitions for its underlying concepts, as well as some useful real life examples. For a more detailed, aural and narrative-rich version you may contact Sderot Boulevard.

~

Culture - *"that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society"* (E.B. Tylor)

~

Activism - *"A dead thing can go with the stream, but only a living thing can go against it."* (G.K. Chesterton)

~

Entrepreneurship - *"Is the process of starting a business, offering an innovative product, process or service"* (Wikipedia)

~

The model's goal is to support the invention, implementation and sustained operation of culture related concepts, events and groups, for the benefit of the participants and the community at large. Its therefore and foremost a model for the providing of one's self needs, be them cultural or other. It is argued that this point of view, of self need understanding and providing, is the root enabler for an ever growing larger circles of effect within the local community.

~

Autarky - *"Autarky is the quality of being self-sufficient. Usually the term is applied to political states or their economic systems. Autarky exists whenever*

an entity can survive or continue its activities without external assistance or international trade” (Wikipedia)

~

Quality - “A characteristic or feature that someone or something has, something that can be noticed as a part of a person or thing, a high level of value or excellence” (Merriam-Webster)

~

Sustainability - “The capacity to endure, to remain diverse and productive indefinitely” (Wikipedia)

## --- Autarky ---

Needs & Wantings - What are your cultural needs? What do you want to take part in? Try to be self-serving rather than altruistic at first.

Resource Spaces - What are the resources that are available directly to you? Use your resources, spend your money, get your equipment out, make best of your schooling.

Autonomous Spaces - Operate only where you can have total autonomy. This will allow you the creative freedom needed to start somethings from nothing and save you from having to explain yourself needlessly.

## --- Quality ---

Upwards Pull - Always start from the top. Create activities that are of high quality and content. Pull your audience upwards towards them. Never start from the basics, because that’s where you’ll stay.

Enjoying The Ride - Always have a good time. It is hard enough to start something significant and pull people towards it. At least make sure you are enjoying it.

Courageous Differentiation - Shy away from the “me too” syndrome. Don’t be afraid to do something totally different, even if it seems risky, stupid or odd.

Creative Copying - Take the parts you like from existing and successful ventures. We all copy. Make sure you are creative there as well.

New Language & Symbols - build a language of communication and symbolism around your idea. Repeat key concepts and words. This will make your ideas become emblematic and help them resonate.

# --- Sustainability ---

Long Term - Always think long term, plan your new ventures to go on for at least 6 months, regardless of their acceptance and initial development. Most ideas fail because they never make it past their initial introduction phase. Build things to last.

Recurring - Design your events to be recurring on a regular basis on the onset. Use days of the week and month as your markers (e.g. every second Wednesday). This will etch the occurrence of your activity in people's minds.

The Crazy Few - When operating in a group, recognize the few member who are actually key to making the activity be realized. Allow these few to go crazy, while the rest of the group supports their passion.

Standing Invitation - Always have a warm and welcoming open invitation to join the creative team or to be a participant. Some people can only join at later stages, when some clarity and operation is achieved, while others find themselves lost when outside of the initial phase.

Always On - Never cancel an event. Always have it, no matter what the conditions are, or especially the expected attendance. Having the event is one thing that actually attracts people to come.

Transparency & Honesty - Document your process and activities in an open and interesting manner. This will not only allow your team to reflect but others to better understand what you're all about and join. Build a website. Publish often. Never be manipulative in your depictions.

Yes over No - When confronted with a dialectic or a boolean dilemma, always prefer the positive or the Yes path. Saying No is obvious and limiting. Saying Yes is challenging and mind expanding. Practice saying Yes.

## --- Real Life Examples ---

Folk Club - "is a regular event, permanent venue, or section of a venue devoted to folk music and traditional music" (Wikipedia)

The "Sderot Folk Club" meets on every last Thursday of the month. Established in 2014, it supports the need of local musicians for a peer group, an acoustic audience and for repertoire development. Meetings take place at a public space (a Pub). Members sit in a circle, play and sing acoustically in turn, presenting their songs with a short background story. Reading of poetry or other materials is also encouraged, as well as new and original materials. Guests are always welcomed. Audience members are encouraged to actively participate by preparing materials for the next meeting. The activity is led by an organizer and coordinated with the Pub owner.

see: [www.sderot-blvd.com/sderot-folk-club](http://www.sderot-blvd.com/sderot-folk-club)

Cultural Salon - "is a gathering of people under the roof of an inspiring host, held partly to amuse one another and partly to refine the taste and increase the knowledge of the participants through conversation" (Wikipedia)

The "Sderot Cultural Salon" meets on the second Wednesday of the month. Established in 2011, it provides for the interest of its host and participant in cultural environments and happenings around the world. The activity takes place at the host's private residence. The host prepares a 45-90 minute presentation of a cultural phenomena that normally includes several related subjects and the showing of a relatively obscure and provoking 20 minute movie. Following the presentation, which can also be interactive, discussion, music and the serving of food follows.

see: [www.sderot-blvd.com/sderot-cultural-salon](http://www.sderot-blvd.com/sderot-cultural-salon)

## --- Be The Change ---

"Everything Changes But Change Itself" (Heraclitus, 470 BCE)

