

How the Kendama Improved My Street Photography

What's popping, people? Over the past year, I've been practicing meditation with a Japanese toy called the **Kendama**. This simple wooden toy, consisting of three cups, a spike, and a ball attached by a string, has become a way for me to **train my mind-body connection**. It's a technical skill that also has a creative side, requiring focus, patience, and coordination to perform various tricks by catching the ball in different cups or on the spike.

Practicing with the Kendama has surprisingly enhanced my approach to street photography, especially when I'm shooting with my **Ricoh on a wrist strap**. The experience has taught me to handle my camera with fluidity and spontaneity, creating images in a way that feels less controlled but more connected to my intuition.

Developing the Mind-Body Connection

Using the **Kendama** as a meditation tool helps me train my coordination and concentration, just like a street photographer training their eye and instinct. It's all about the **connectivity between mind, body, and spirit**. When I'm out photographing, I often don't even look through the viewfinder or LCD screen. Instead, I trust my movements, letting the camera flow with me as I move. The goal is to make photographs in a way that is instinctive, allowing myself to be *surprised by the results at the end of the day*.

"Using the camera in this unconventional way requires a connectivity between mind, body, soul, and spirit."

Letting Go and Embracing the Flow

Practicing with the Kendama has also taught me to let go of rigid control, focusing instead on *flow and spontaneity*. This approach has had a huge impact on my street photography. By walking, observing, and following my gut, I can master the craft in a more intuitive way.

"When you're on the street, go slow and let life flow. Just let the chips fall as they may."

With my camera on a wrist strap, the Ricoh becomes like the Kendama itself — there's a parallel in the motion, the coordination, and the instinct required to make each move. This lets me approach street photography in a state of play, moving fluidly and being open to the unexpected.

Benefits for Hand-Eye Coordination and Handling

The **hand-eye coordination** I've developed from practicing with the Kendama has translated directly into my ability to handle my camera with ease. Whether I'm capturing an impromptu moment or quickly adjusting angles, the muscle memory from practicing with the Kendama comes into play.

"The more I practice Kendama, the better I become at handling my Ricoh."

This mind-body connection isn't just about physical skills. It's about tuning into the moment, trusting my instincts, and embracing a playful, explorative approach to photography. With the Kendama, you're always focused on the next move, just like in street photography, where each scene presents a new opportunity.

How Kendama Practice Benefits Street Photography

The experience of practicing Kendama has brought new elements to my street photography:

- **Improved hand-eye coordination**, allowing for quick, instinctive camera handling.
- **Increased focus and patience**, essential for capturing those fleeting street moments.
- **A mind-body connection**, making each shot feel like an extension of myself.
- **A playful, open approach**, letting me flow through the streets and capture life as it happens.

With the Kendama as my unexpected training tool, street photography has become even more immersive and spontaneous. By letting go, slowing down, and embracing this flow, I'm able to capture the streets in a way that's true to myself. So, if you're looking for a creative way to enhance your photography, maybe give the Kendama a try — it just might surprise you!