

Light Warrior

Championing the Tourist Mindset

During my morning walk, I spent some time around the Philadelphia Museum of Art, admiring its beautiful architecture and sculptures. There's one sculpture of Rocky Balboa, a legendary figure from the movie *Rocky*, which many tourists visit and photograph. I find that every morning I champion this tourist mindset—an approach to life akin to that of a tourist. Tourists are eager to get out there and explore, especially before sunrise. They are curious and open to new experiences. I try my best to remain in this curious state because, for me, this is the ultimate goal of photography: **increasing your curiosity by one percent each day.**

It's not about how great the photos you make are; it's about how many photos you make and how you keep remaining curious. That's how a photographer wins.

Become a Legend

While Rocky may not be a real person but just a fictional character, there is something powerful about the myth, the story, and the sculpture itself. The gesture, the muscular tone of his physique, and the grand size of the sculpture elevate the human spirit to a new height. When I look at a sculpture like this, it reminds me that I can strive to achieve something more in life.

Nearby, there is also a sculpture of George Washington, our nation's first president. He stands tall on horseback, looking down the Benjamin Franklin Parkway towards City Hall. Revolutionary heroes and sculptures like these make me feel proud to be an American, or even simply to be human.

But why settle for being just "human"? Why succumb to the basic state of citizenship? Perhaps there is something more we can strive for, something akin to legends like Rocky or Washington.

Maybe when we think of life in black-and-white, pain and pleasure become our binary experience. We seek freedom, right? Isn't that what America is all about?

Freedom and Courage

We can choose what we want to do and what we do not want to do. To me, that is the basic notion of freedom. However, this becomes rather simplistic because we can also choose freely to pursue endless hedonistic pleasures if we deem that as the goal of freedom.

But does this truly make us free—simply embracing pleasure as the ultimate source of freedom? What about pain? If we pursue pain in hopes of gaining strength, am I still free?

Maybe, but perhaps **freedom is merely courage**. Freedom becomes an expression of fearlessness and courage, similar to how I view George Washington on horseback, leading the army in revolution. Perhaps freedom is what George Washington fought for, and he attained that freedom as a byproduct of his courage and fearlessness—of being truly intrepid.

To be free is to be dangerous.

Freedom does not necessarily mean indulging in endless drugs, binge-watching a million TV shows, or buying cool stuff. Freedom is something we must fight for—it's an endless battle, an uphill journey, striving for new heights, like the legends immortalized in sculptures.

To be free is to be extraordinary.