

## Street Photography Philosophy

Street photography is more than an art form; it's a philosophy, a way to engage with life in its rawest, most unfiltered form. The etymology of the word "philosophy" itself — **Philos** meaning "love" and **Sophia** meaning "wisdom" — reminds us that true wisdom often lies in simplicity and openness. Socrates' famous declaration, "I am wise because I know I know nothing," captures the essence of street photography: stepping into the world without assumptions and being prepared to see it anew.

### The Child's Mind: Curiosity and Openness

As street photographers, we should embody the spirit of a child. Children are curious, courageous, and always open to trying new things, learning as they go. Similarly, in street photography, our aim is to be open and receptive, letting life unfold around us without trying to control it. The streets become our playground, and we, the photographers, are simply big kids with cameras, exploring and creating. Embracing this "beginner's mind" is essential because **the more we know, the less we are surprised**. To photograph with true spontaneity, we must forget what we think we know and instead play with the world.

### Photography: Drawing with Light

Photography's etymology — **Phos** meaning "light" and **Graphia** meaning "writing" — reveals its essence: drawing with light. Each photograph is an instant sketch of life, capturing a fleeting moment. But a photograph isn't just about documenting; it's a reflection of the photographer's courage, heart, and soul. **Courage** (from the Latin *cor*, meaning "heart") is essential in street photography. To make meaningful photographs, one must be physically close to life, embracing its unpredictability and engaging openly with its many facets.

***"A photograph is a self-portrait of the photographer."***

Every image becomes a piece of the photographer's heart, capturing not only the world as it is but also the soul of the photographer in that moment.

### **Intuition and the Flow State**

Street photography requires **intuition**. Life on the streets unfolds with a natural entropy and randomness, and a street photographer must navigate this unpredictability with sharp instincts. In this way, photographing becomes akin to a dance, a kind of flow state where we respond to life as it happens. The goal is not to control the environment but to flow with it, letting the camera capture moments as they come. It's a physical game as much as it is a visual one, where we're simultaneously actors and directors, making sense of the scene and yet allowing it to unfold naturally.

***"Your next picture is your best picture."***

In street photography, there's no endgame, no ultimate masterpiece. Each photograph is simply a part of the journey. This practice demands daily effort, resilience, and an acceptance of failure as a natural and essential part of the process.

### **The Camera as a Passport**

The camera is an excuse to see the world. It's a passport, a key that unlocks experiences, places, and people you might otherwise never encounter. For me, the camera has taken me from Philadelphia to the bustling streets of Mumbai, the vibrant markets of Mexico City, and the rich cultural tapestries of Israel and Palestine. It allows me to step beyond my familiar world and into the lives and landscapes of others, connecting with humanity in profound ways. In this sense, the camera becomes a sword, cutting through the chaos and revealing the beauty within.

***"The camera allows me to exist in the present moment."***

With a camera in hand, life transforms. The mundane becomes extraordinary, a canvas for creativity. Each click of the shutter freezes a moment, allowing us to exist outside time, creating memories that live on.

## **The Goal of a Street Photographer**

The purpose of street photography isn't fame, money, or recognition. It's about **embracing the spirit of play**, remaining open to life's spontaneity, and nurturing an insatiable curiosity. A street photographer's goal is to continue growing, to find beauty in the mundane, and to see the world with fresh eyes every day. Each walk down the same lane brings new surprises.

***"You can create a new world in a fraction of a second."***

Through street photography, we participate in life, capturing moments that transcend the ordinary, championing humanity, and, in a way, creating our own reality. The photograph is merely a byproduct of this process — a testament to our engagement with life's fleeting beauty. And while we may not live forever, in each photograph, we find a moment that does.

Street photography allows us to **live in a continuous state of becoming**. There's no endpoint, no final masterpiece — just the endless flow of life, with each day offering a new canvas. So, let's embrace the unknown, and with curiosity and courage as our guides, continue to create and explore.