

## The Journey of Finding Your Style

For the past two years, I've been reflecting on my work, transitioning from color to black and white. Looking at my photographs with some distance, I believe I've developed a style—a way of seeing the world. Even when I compare my old color work to my black-and-white frames, I still see *my voice* running through them.

This showed me that developing a voice in photography is possible, no matter the approach. But to get there, you need three things: **consistency, discipline, and courage.**

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## Focus on the Essentials

It's easy to get caught up in gear. *What camera should I use? What lens? Should I shoot film or digital? Black and white or color?* All of that is noise. The real work begins when you simplify.

Here's what worked for me:

- **Stick to one camera and one lens.** Limiting your tools forces you to focus on seeing rather than tinkering.
- **Pick a direction—color or black and white—and commit.** Constraints are essential for creativity.
- **Stay consistent and disciplined.** Shoot regularly and stick with your setup long enough to develop a rhythm.

If you're experimenting early on, that's fine—everyone does it. But after a year of exploring, it's time to take things seriously. *Discipline will push you to grow.*

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## The Role of Courage

When I think about what it takes to find your voice, courage is at the forefront.

*"If you want to get close to life, you need the courage to stand on the front lines."*

For me, this meant getting physically close to my subjects. I've always been drawn to humanity's rawness, and that closeness is reflected in my work. To do that, you have to be bold, audacious, and willing to face rejection or discomfort.

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## Learn from the Masters

Studying the work of great photographers shaped how I see. Here are some of the photographers who influenced me early on:

- **William Klein:** His loose, raw compositions and visceral approach taught me to embrace imperfection.
- **Alex Webb:** His mastery of light, shadow, and layered complexity showed me the heights street photography can reach.
- **Larry Towell:** His closeness and integration within communities inspired me to embed myself in the scenes I photograph.
- **James Nachtwey:** His boldness in documenting conflict motivated me to face the chaos of life head-on.
- **Sebastião Salgado:** His adventurous spirit and ability to explore the world with a camera sparked my own curiosity to travel.

If you want to develop your style, immerse yourself in the work of those you admire. *What draws you in? What resonates with you?* Use these insights to inform your own work.

*"You need to understand what has been done before you to know what can be done."*

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## Cultivate Your Voice Through Experience

Developing a style isn't just about studying the masters—it's about putting yourself out there. For me, that meant traveling, volunteering, and immersing myself in different cultures and environments.

Some pivotal experiences included:

- **Volunteering in Israel and Palestine:** Living on a kibbutz, working with Palestinian families, and experiencing life up close influenced my approach to photographing humanity.
- **Traveling to Zambia:** Spending time in rural communities gave me access to moments I wouldn't have otherwise witnessed.
- **Shooting daily in Philadelphia:** Practicing at home sharpened my skills and prepared me for bigger adventures.

*"To create photographs that resonate, you have to be present in the world."*

These experiences taught me that photography isn't just about light, shadow, and composition—it's about where you choose to place yourself. Travel, explore, and let your surroundings influence your work.

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## The Power of Photo Books

One of the most inspiring tools in my journey has been photo books. For example, Alex Webb's *The Suffering of Light* became my bible for street photography. It's 30 years of his best work, and every time I revisit it, I find something new.

Photo books can transport you to new places and perspectives, sparking your creativity. I recommend studying the best work you can find. Ask yourself:

- *What makes this photograph great?*
  - *What emotions does it evoke?*
  - *What elements—light, color, composition—stand out?*
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## **Keep Moving Forward**

If there's one lesson I've learned, it's this:

*"Never stop moving, never stop making, never stop exploring."*

Curiosity drives creativity. It's what pushes you to try new things, go to new places, and press the shutter again and again. I've been photographing for a decade now, and I'm still just getting started.

Your journey will be endless. Wherever you are in it, embrace the process.

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## **Final Thoughts**

If you're struggling to find your style, remember:

1. **Simplify.** Limit your tools and make decisive choices.
2. **Study the greats.** Learn from their work and build on it.
3. **Put yourself out there.** Travel, explore, and stay curious.
4. **Be disciplined.** Consistency is the foundation of growth.
5. **Be courageous.** Push yourself to the front lines of life.

Finding your voice isn't about rushing to create a masterpiece. It's about showing up every day, pressing the shutter, and trusting that the process will lead you to something meaningful.