

Say Yes to Life: Photography, Flow State, and the Spirit of Play

And have a peaceful day. Always a pleasure to see you, Saleem. Yeah. Got a beautiful sunrise.

A beautiful day ahead. See you, bro. Rico.

GR, what's poppin' people? It's Dante.

Getting my morning started here in *Fairmount Park, Philadelphia*. Wow. I don't know if the GoPro picks this up, but there's a crazy spider web here. Look at that. Can you get it with the Ricoh?

"Each click of the shutter is me affirming life itself. It's me saying yes to life."

Say Yes to Life

What does that mean?

Essentially, I'm eager for the day. I'm eager to catch the sunrise and embrace the **spirit of play**. There's just *so much to do, to see, to explore, and to photograph*.

Life is this endless pursuit of:

- wonder
- awe
- curiosity

And in order to embrace that *childlike curiosity*, one must enter a **flow state**.

Forget Everything You Think You Know

To enter flow is to forget what you think you know. That means:

- *emptying your mind*
- *moving your body*
- *letting go of expectations*

With each shutter click, you're asking:

“Why?”

You're wondering:

“What’s out there? Who is this? What is this?”

Photography becomes a **dialogue with the world**—an open, honest curiosity that comes through *how you carry yourself every day*.

Don’t Take Yourself So Seriously

Practical tip for photographers:

Stop taking yourself so seriously.

When you treat the world like a playground—when you're just a *big kid exploring*—you enter this **exuberant state of being**. That’s when you find:

An insatiable lust for life.

Life as the Ultimate Video Game

It's like an open-world game.

You gotta **level up**—physically, mentally, spiritually.

"Artistically, through the use of a camera, we can achieve this goal of transcendence."

Think of **Nietzsche's metamorphosis** in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*:

1. The **Camel**—burdened by society's weight
2. The **Lion**—destroys what was imposed
3. The **Child**—returns to innocence, play, and pure creativity

By returning to *day one*, every day, you enter this **endless transformative state**.

Return to the Child

When you're hardened by society or overwhelmed by knowledge, it's the *childlike mind* that frees you.

That's where real **growth** happens.

"I strive to ascend. And the only thing holding me down is gravity."

Yes, we're flesh creatures. Yes, we bleed and lust and grieve. But recognizing our **mortality?**

That *awakens the spirit*.

A Mini-Death Every Night

Each night is a **mini-death**.

So when I wake up, I'm full of:

- **Gratitude**
- **Joy**
- **Vitality**

Grateful for:

- The sunlight
- The meat in my freezer
- Water in my cup
- My camera
- My vision
- The feeling of *wind and warmth on my skin*

Photography is drawing with light.

“Perhaps light is truth.”

Everything Is in Flux

You start to recognize *patterns*:

- In **nature**
- In **people**
- In **yourself**

The veins in leaves echo your veins.

The **trees** grow and branch like the **lungs** in your chest.

“This, to me, is a beautiful thing—to observe how people move and groove.”

We're *bipedal, upright, visionary beings*—capable of crafting tools, building shelters, and transcending.

Vitality as the Apex

That *feeling of vitality*—of overcoming physically?
It's supreme.

“You soar upwards like an eagle... and nothing can really break your spirit.”

Physical strength brings:

- Mental strength
- Spiritual clarity

And from there, you rise above material needs.

You don't care for:

- Cars
- Money
- Status

You become light. You become **free**.

Beyond the Material: The Divine

Christians often forget the modern world *isn't it*.

We gather wealth, but for what?

“When you realize the meaninglessness of material things, you ascend. You let go. You become light.”

And when you let go, you return to that *divine spark within*.

You become a **creator**, not a consumer.

You become **godlike**.

Ascend, Transform, Evolve

So stop chasing horizontally. Competing for clout, cars, whatever.

None of it means anything.

“Float upwards like an eagle in flight.”

Let yourself:

- Enter the chrysalis
- Turn to goo
- Embrace the suffering
- Emerge as something new

That’s the real **beauty of life**.

Let Go to Find Peace

Let go of what you think you know.

Understand yourself.

Find peace in the chaos.

From that peace comes:

- **Vitality**
- **Artistic expression**
- **Spiritual awakening**

And then... you return to the child.
To that original *womb-like state* before birth.

You evolve until you die.
And if nothing else, *at least you can make a photograph.*

Simple Joys, Endless Curiosity

I've got:

- Coffee
- A camera
- A place to sleep
- Meat in my fridge
- Air conditioning

Yeah, I embrace the material world *lightly*.
But I never forget: **It's all temporary.**

"And perhaps recognizing the finite nature of it all awakens your spirit."

Conclusion: Follow the Light

Embrace the spirit of play.

Wake up each day with **gratitude** and **curiosity**.

Say yes to life. Let go. Let it flow.

“I want to be endlessly walking this street, curious about what’s beyond the horizon, following the light, snapshotting my way through life.”

That’s what it means to live.

To play.

To *be*.
