

## Why I Wake Up at Dawn to Shoot Street Photography

### What's poppin people? It's Dante.

Getting my morning started here in Logan Square, Philadelphia. Just watched the sunrise here.

It's *so beautiful* when you see the red hues rise in the sky and the people start to come out—dog walkers, bikers, the commotion on the streets as cars move into work. The clock tower was illuminated.

The light is glimmering. I can see the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Beautiful sculptures. The roaring sound of the fountain in the background.

This place—it's really beautiful. It's actually the closest park to where I live. And when I look out to the skyline, there's just so much beauty around me.

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### The Morning Goal 🌸

There's this garden here, and I'm just *embracing the beauty of the morning*, you know, rising at dawn.

***"Rising at dawn. You know, I thought about this notion this morning because I'm thinking about goals."***

What does it even mean to be successful?  
Specifically, *as an artist*.

And my thought was:

***"What if there is no goal? What if you just detached completely from the outcome itself?"***

Not the photos.  
Not the art.  
Not the fame.  
Not the gallery.  
Not the zine.

But the *everyday life* of the artist.

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### **My Only Goal: Curiosity**

For me, my ultimate goal is to **increase my curiosity**.

A *physical, tangible* goal that represents that?  
Waking up early in the morning with *exuberance for life*.

That's where I find meaning.  
That's where I'm affirming life.

***"It's through the click of the shutter and waking up early simply to catch the sunrise."***

To listen to the birds.  
To notice the flowers bloom.  
To watch the seasons change.  
To be *observant*.  
To be *curious*.

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### **Detach from the Outcome**

When you let go of goals—when you *detach*—you can simply **be**.

In this modern world, everyone talks about:

- Self-improvement
- Hustle
- Productivity

But as an artist?

***"A life of leisure is where we seek to be."***

To *wander*.

To *walk*.

To *think, read, write, create, make*.

So think about how you can **cultivate leisure** in your life.

Neglect the notion of *productivity*.

Forget about "success."

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## **Vitality Comes First** 💪

By cultivating vitality, leisure becomes inevitable.

***"The more sleep I get, the deeper the rest, the more power I have in the morning."***

That's when the magic happens.

You need *vitality* to feel that love for life.

***"The only life worth living is a life full of vitality."***

Everything else? It falls into place.

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## Strength First, Then Art

If you're looking to increase your curiosity:

- **Cultivate vitality**
- Think about your **physiology**
- Strengthen the body
- Clear the mind

*Fasting* helps me stay sharp.

No food digesting = no brain fog.

Laser focus. Quick decisions.

***"When you're clear-headed, ideas come easily. That's critical for an artist."***

You can start to create in a *simple, beautiful* flow state.

That's where I want to be. Always.

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## The Flow State

*Observing. Photographing. Affirming life.*

That's the goal.

***"Through photographing, I'm saying YES to life."***

That's curiosity in action.

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## Technical Notes: Ricoh GR III Settings

I'm photographing botanicals with:

- Ricoh GR III
- High contrast black and white
- Small JPEGs
- Macro mode
- Autofocus ON
- Program mode
- Slight underexposure: **-0.7** EV on the adjustment lever

This crushes the background and isolates the subject.

Flowers. Hand gestures. Anything.

**Light and shadow play.** That's what I'm developing now.

Crush the shadows. Follow the light. Create sublime moments.

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## Final Reflections

I'm gonna keep photographing now, turn this video off, and *focus*.

Just listening to the birds.

It's drizzling a little.

But I was thinking...

**Goal-setting.**

**Success.**

**Photography.**

***"Live your everyday life and bring your camera for the ride."***

Photograph *through* your routine.  
Photograph the *mundane*. It's not what it seems.

There's *intricate beauty*.  
*Patterns in nature*.  
*Symbolic gestures* in people.

***"Use photography as a way for you to ask questions."***

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## What's the Name of This Plant?

### **Common mullein**

Tall central flower spike.  
Small yellow flowers.

It's a biennial plant often found in disturbed areas, roadsides, and gardens.

***"Well, looks like it's in the right spot."***

Pronounced: **MULL-en**.

Right. Cool.

**Common mullein.**