Why You Should Treat Photography as a Visual Diary

What's poppin', people?
It's Dante, currently walking along the Manayunk Towpath here in Philadelphia. You can kinda see the bridge there in the background. I'm just going towards the forest, and there's some new apartments here, new homes. *Wow.*

I've been back here as a boy almost like every weekend, I feel like, as a child — especially in the summer. Like, every single day I'd ride my bike here on this exact path. Grew up pretty close to here. So yeah, there's an art festival going on, and there's lots of people on Main Street. But I like to kinda walk through the arts festival and then wander the path.

The Power of Place

The towpath is a really special place here in Philadelphia. Actually, if you keep walking this way, you can go *all the way* to Valley Forge and beyond. And if you keep walking that way, the trail connects all the way back to Center City Philly — where I live.

Today I was thinking about the *stream of becoming*, and treating photography as a **visual diary of your day**, and why that's such an empowering way to make photographs.

Check out the yarrow. The Achilles.

Oh no. It's starting to rain.

Walking Is the Frame

Honestly, when I'm photographing these days, I find such infinite essential experience in walking in new places, on different surfaces. Like walking on a gravel path as opposed to walking on the street. Looking towards the horizon on a path like this, having a tree canopy overhead — *as opposed to the bustling street.*

There are so many nuances you can have in your day. Just embracing the *spirit of play*, not taking photography so seriously. That's where I like to be — in this flow state of producing more photographs each day.

> ***"My next photograph will be my best photograph."***

Stay Present, Stay Light

I don't dwell on the photos I made yesterday. I don't stress over what I'll shoot tomorrow. I remain **present**. And from that place, I enter this endless flow state. And that mindset? It's bringing so much *joy* into my life.

This is what I chase as a photographer — *inner joy* — the joy that's cultivated through clicking the shutter. The result of the image? The final product? A book? Whatever? That's not really my concern.

> ***"The most liberating way to approach photography is to simply photograph for yourself — because it brings you joy."***

Detachment Is Freedom

When I photograph like this, I actually don't care if anything happens with the photos. I'm *completely detached* from the outcome. I'm completely detached from whether or not somebody ever sees these images.

Sure, I publish them to my own website. I cull through them. I throw them on my iPad. But I'm not too worried about what happens next. I kinda just let the chips fall as they may.

I enjoy **being immersed in the process** — making the pictures — and detaching *completely* from the result.

A Camera in Your Pocket

When you treat photography as a **visual diary of your day**, your only real responsibility is simple:

- Keep making pictures
- Put the camera in your pocket
- Bring it along for the ride

That's how I find the **magic in the mundane**. The *extraordinary* in the ordinary. It's just about following your inner curiosity. Photographing the things *you* deem worthwhile. Like...

- I like walking on these kinds of paths
- I like going to the arts festival
- I like photographing in a certain way
- I like perceiving things with my own two eyes

And I'm not caught up in needing to *do* anything with the photographs. I just enjoy **making** them.

> ***"It fulfills my life's purpose and goals — just to keep moving, keep exploring, keep photographing."***

Evolution Through Movement

When I photograph with this kind of visual diary approach, it's honestly just a way to **remember the day**. A way to stay present. A way to open myself up to new experiences.

And as I move through the world and shoot this way, I find that I'm always changing. Always evolving. Movement and photography — they do that to me. That feeling of **transformation** brings me joy too. Clicking the shutter *is* part of that joy.

> ***"It's good to change your mind. It's good to destroy and rebuild."***

Right now, I'm rebuilding. Shooting black and white these days. Finding more joy. More love for life. And through that love, I grow more curious. More willing to go out and *click* again.

Just some thoughts today.
Here in Manayunk, Philadelphia.
Guess I'll stay dry under here for a sec.