

What Do You *Really* Want in Photography and Life?

It seems in life, discovering what we want is critical. Once we discover what we want, then everything else falls neatly into place.

For example, let us say that our passion is photography, art, travel creativity, and other things. Then the question is, what is it that we want out of it?

First, I think we want to live a more interesting life. To not just stay in the same bubble or place, but to travel to different places, nomad around, explore new territories, etc.

Traveling is good for us. Why? Traveling forces us to re-challenge our typical way of approaching things, and allows us to innovate new approaches. For example, weightlifting, I discovered all these new techniques and approaches when I was living in Phnom Penh Cambodia, at a different type of gym. For example, I discovered the high handle trap bar, the open hex bar, and also, because the gym was empty and devoid of any other humans, I was able to just focus more and innovate and experiment with new types of lifts.

Also, I think there is some sort of deep connection between man and his environment in so far much as novel environments stimulate us. There is this funny bias and Zen and Buddhism, and maybe Puritan American Protestant ethic that says:

You should be grateful for what you have, instead of what you don't have.

I am starting to realize that this is a weak and small way of thinking. Instead, to reach our apex of development, we must explore new territories new places etc.

The physical is underrated?

Physics, the physical, the real world. Our bodies are physical, the connections in our body is physical, the electricity and blood in our bodies are physical, the hormones in our body or physical, etc.

Our bodies are physical.

Why is it that in today's world, there seems to be a bias against the physical? There is this overdevelopment of the "mental" faculties, for example, the focus on studying, schooling, information, "work" etc.

And where does this bias originate? My theory is that it is this general Quaker protestant American, western, Judaism, Christian, Islamic thought of an afterlife; the thought that is after we die, our soul and our mind remains, but the body dies.

As a consequence, the negative bias is that the body doesn't really matter. The general gist that they try to propose is this:

*Yeah yeah yeah, the body is **kind of** important. Just do the bare minimum to maintain it, in order to do more virtuous things, related to good works, the mind, spirituality, "the soul", etc.*

As a consequence, it seems that in today's modern-day world, 99.9% of our efforts is around optimizing for our mind. In order to be more "productive", to "work" more, to make more money, to build more capital, to accumulate more, purchase and consume more, etc.

A more physical life?

What I love most about photography, [street photography](#), traveling, etc. is this: the focus on the physical. This means our ability to walk, use our legs, explore new geospatial spaces, etc.

For example, when you're traveling in on the world, what is the most essential in critical Tim? Your legs, your body. Your physicality.

This is why I believe that when it comes to traveling, some things which are really important include maximizing your mobility. Vibram five fingers shoes, some sort of athletic pants, shorts, and leggings (I like the lululemon vital Drive compression half short leggings, and the Lululemon license to train shorts, with zippers in the front and the back pocket.) And also, clothing that doesn't get in your way, as simple as when you're traveling, just wear a T-shirt, some sort of either merino wool T-shirt, I like the [Outlier.nyc](#) merino wool T-shirt, or even the Lululemon "metal vent" t shirt. Or a merino wool blend t shirt — clothing which does not restrict your mobility.

Also, the biggest benefit of traveling insanely light, and not bringing too much stuff is it usually practical one; don't think of it like some sort of virtuous minimalistic thing, just think practically:

The less stuff you carry with you when you travel, the more mobility you have, the further you can venture without exhaustion and fatigue, the more you could conquer, etc.

Simple ways to travel light is when you are on the road, leave your laptop at home, just bring along your [iPad Pro](#), the smaller one.

Also, with your camera, the most small camera viably possible, currently speaking, the Ricoh GR 3X digital camera. I still think it is a quadrillion times better than any other camera on the market, irregardless of price.

Now what?

Once you have become a bitcoin billionaire, once you have total life freedom, then what?

My personal thought and intervention is that then, you can use your stability and security to simply pursue things which are more interesting to you, and to go bigger.

New epic life goals?

I think the reason why Elon Musk and Kanye West are such a great inspiration and motivation to me is this; it is precisely their “craziness“, or their “detachment from reality“, which is fun and interesting to me.

For example, if a decade or two ago, Elon Musk said that he would start an electric car company, and a space company, people would think he is high on crack. But now that he has done did it, now other people, small people, find other things to criticize him about, simply because they hate that they are no match for him.

Become crazier and more audacious?

So then, the next step is this:

Given your insane uberabundance, what do you want to do?

My epic life goals

Another funny irony is that I have discovered that after achieving all of my life goals and dreams, I no longer really have any life goals or dreams anymore. Simply on a daily, weekly, or monthly level, **I simply want to pursue things which are personal interesting to me.** Whatever is interesting to me at the moment.

For example, what is currently interesting to me is thinking about the body, physique, powerlifting 2.0, and more strongman-style weight lifting and training.

For example, I just did an atlas lift of nine plates, and a 2.5 pound plate on each side, effectively maxing out the bar, assuming that I'm using clips on each side for "safety". 865 pounds.

The reason why this is so interesting to me is that currently speaking, I don't think anyone in the world has had as interesting thoughts and innovative thoughts on weight lifting, diet health and fitness, etc.

For example, I think I am the first and only person that I know, maybe even in the world who does powerlifting style lifts, one rep max while fasted. I never eat breakfast or lunch, only one massive dinner, I typically break my fast around 8 PM. And also for the most part, I am 100% carnivore. I also don't take any supplements, not even protein powder!

My big innovations:

1. Everyone says that you need to eat some sort of sugar or carbs, but I have proven that to be false. I consume no carbohydrates, no sugar and no starches, no "vegetables", no "fruit", or even "fiber", And it is fine, I am still able to poop at least once or twice every day.
2. People always say that you have to eat something before lifting really heavy weights, like a small snack, or even a way protein shake. I've also discovered this to be totally false; before I go to the gym, for the whole day I have consumed nothing, the only thing I drank was black coffee and water.
3. I think I am the only person that I personally know who lifts so heavy, who does one rep max style lifting, who doesn't use any sort of straps, hand or wrist straps, or weight lifting belt, knee wraps, knee sleeves, etc.

Theory —

*The best way to distinguish yourself is on what you do **NOT** do, rather than what you **do** do.*

Art photography

Recently, my Ricoh GR 3X went kaput, it doesn't even charge or turn on anymore. Therefore for last month or so, I was just experimenting with my iPhone SE, the built-in camera app, the noir mode, and the photographic styles putting on rich contrast, and also the provoke app.

Typically speaking, I actually do believe that it is possible to make artistic and also beautiful photos on an iPhone, even an iPhone SE. Certainly you could also do it on the iPhone Pro. However, this is what I discovered:

To make artistic and beautiful photos, aesthetically pleasing photos on an iPhone, or a smartphone is more difficult, as it requires more "massaging" of the images.

For example, when I'd shoot with a Ricoh GR 3 or 3X, in high contrast black-and-white monochrome mode, with the contrast to max, the JPEG images out of camera already look 1000 times better than the iPhone photos. You could make the iPhone photos look beautiful as well, but it requires more post processing, adjusting the contrast and black-and-white points, etc.

Also, third-party camera apps on the iPhone are not well integrated into the iOS. That is from the lock screen, it is very difficult to "quick draw", the camera app. Even the built-in iPhone camera app, having to push and hold the camera icon on the bottom right corner is another layer of friction. My simple proposal is this:

iPhone "quick draw" camera mode: to have some sort of setting in the camera app that when you just take your phone out of your pocket it automatically opens the camera app.

Also something else I discovered; the benefit of having a standalone digital camera, like a pocketable digital RICOH GR camera in your front right pocket is that when you are using GPS on your iPhone to get somewhere, you can still take pictures.

For example, something that I was doing was when I am driving and I see something interesting while I am stuck at a stoplight, I will shoot a photo by taking

my Ricoh GR out of my front right pocket, and just shooting it, or even turning around and shooting photos a Seneca or Cindy on my right.

Black and white

Certainly you can make very beautiful photos in color as well as black and white. But why is it that I prefer black and white? For myself, it is all about option Allotey. That means, I just see more photo opportunities in black-and-white than I do in color.

Color is tricky, especially in the context of high ISO photography. Aesthetically speaking, when you should color photos at a high ISO, the photos look pretty ugly. However if you shoot high ISO photos in black-and-white, the photos still look beautiful.

Also the big things that we do not see the world in black-and-white. Therefore, black-and-white photos are intrinsically interesting, as I did automatically looks different.

Then, perhaps art photography is this; **transfiguring the world to look different.**

Now what?

Some ideas:

1. If you want honest feedback on your photos, upload them to arsbeta.com
2. Start your own blog. Bluehost.com and install WordPress.org
3. [Zen of Eric WHY APP?](#)

EK CONSULTANCY

To turbocharge your thinking, shoot me an email at eric@erickim.com

EK WORKSHOPS

Conquer with EK:

- May 6th (Saturday): CREATIVE CONFIDENCE ONLINE WORKSHOP (9am-11:30am, Online via Zoom)
 - May 20th: DOWNTOWN LA ART WORKSHOP (Saturday, 11am-4pm) @ Verve Coffee
 - May 27th: Downtown LA turbo thinking workshop, details to be posted soon.
 - July 29-30th: SAIGON VIETNAM EPIC STREET PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP (Details to be announced).
-

Random thoughts and ideas on my mind

The new Lamborghini Revuelto is terrible.

First of all, it looks like a Corvette. It should be the other way around. Secondly, the design is really boring, it is not extreme enough. The reason why I hate the name so much is that because first of all, I think a scrambled eggs. Also, it is not audacious and bold enough.

Names are insanely important. For example, the Aventador is a great name, because it sounds like adventure, and bullfighter. Huracan is also a good name, because it sounds like hurricane. You want to become the hurricane.

Also, audacity and boldness. I think Lamborghini is no longer interesting to me.

Moral of the story:

You must go more extreme, more insanely bold, more crazy.

Linen is the future?

Linen is 1 trillion times better than cotton. One of my favorite new possessions which I have had for the last few months, even when traveling to Korea, was my new beloved [outlier.NYC grid weave linen towel](#).

Why? At first it originated with this issue that because I take a shower about three or four times a day, my traditional cotton towels were perpetually wet, and smelly. One of the greatest benefits of using a grid weave linen towel is that first of all, it dries insanely quickly, and also doesn't smell it. This might be my new possession.

Also, I have a linen plug in Korea. I might start producing some linen products. Stay updated.

Manual is the future?

Recently, my Ricoh GR 3x went kaput. It no longer charges, and doesn't even turn on, even when I try swapping in and out new batteries.

This is insanely frustrating, because literally every single record your camera have owned, has either broken, or stopped becoming functional:

1. Ricoh GR 1s film compact camera stops working
2. I gift my friend Josh White my Ricoh GR1v film camera, and he tells me it eventually breaks and stops working
3. The first Ricoh GR digital camera I buy, it stops working
4. The second RICOH GR II digital camera I gift to my friend Mark, it stops working
5. My Ricoh GR III camera has some sort of critical lens issue, and doesn't really

- turn on anymore
6. My Ricoh GR 3X no longer turns on anymore
-

Camera longevity?

So I am at kind of at a crossroads —

First, I do genuinely believe that for photography, the Ricoh GR3X is the best digital camera. However, do you really want to keep having to buy and replace it, because the longevity doesn't last for longer than a year or two?

Secondly, and how important is longevity for a camera anyways? Truth be told, having over two Lamborghinis in the bank, I don't really need to worry about money, I can technically afford anything. However, I just have to ask myself the question:

Do I value it, is it worth it to me?

What do we want to do with photography anyways?

Moving forward, perhaps what we must consider is this; what is it that we really want out of photography?

I think the answer is we desire to become more artistic, more creative, more motivated more inspired, less obstructed, and also more prolific.

One big thought is I think **we want to become more artistic as photographers, and also make more artistic photos.**

What is an “artistic” photo anyways? My simple thought is an artistic photo is a photo which does not really resemble reality, we know that it is *from* reality, but it looks different. Things are made more abstract, more unclear, more difficult to decipher.

Shooting in manual focus mode

I think one of the Achilles’ heel that we suffer as photographers is that we are always trying to nail the focus. However, what if the desired outcome were actually the opposite, in which **we were trying to intentionally make things out of focus?**

So one of the good benefits of my Ricoh GR 3X breaking is that I rummaged through my camera closet, and I re-discovered my old Ricoh GR3, which is still technically kind of broken, but at least it sometimes turns on.

So this is the big issue with my RICOH GR III: the auto focus no longer works. I turn on the camera, and press the shutter button, and then the camera attempts to focus and the lens starts making a weird retracting sound, and then the display says “lens error“, and turns off.

One funny workaround I have discovered which actually kind of sometimes works is setting it into manual focusing mode, And just keeping it pre-focused at around .3 m, 30 cm, and just not touching it. As a consequence, this is how my shooting behavior has changed:

When I see something I want to photograph, whether it be Seneca or Cindy, or something else, I just instantly turn on my camera, and just start shooting at rapid gunfire, machine gun style, thinking at the back of my head, “Oh if I shoot a lot of photos, a lot, one of these photos are bound to be in focus.”

As a consequence, the interesting advancement is that in a single given day, I was able to shoot around 850 photos. Mostly of Seneca, Cindy, and some other random stuff in the suburbs.

Upon reviewing the photos, I was surprisingly delighted. Why? **It was in fact the out of focus and blurry and unclear photos which I actually loved the most.** So maybe my Ricoh GR3X breaking was actually a blessing in disguise.

Therefore, as a simple photo assignment, just take your camera, and pre-focus it, then manual focusing mode to the minimum focusing distance, and just shoot everything at that distance.

For example if you have a manual focusing camera, let's say a Leica M camera, typically most of the lenses have a minimum focusing distance at around .7 m. Spend a whole month only shooting photos at .7 meters.

For RICOH GR camera, put it into "snap focus" mode at 1meter, or manual focusing mode at .3, .5, whatever distance you like.

EK SHOPPE

Become the best photographer:

1. HENRI SHOULDER STRAP: For the heavyweights
2. HENRI NECK STRAP MARK IV: Perfected design
3. HENRI WRIST STRAP PRO: For the pros.

[ALL EK EQUIPMENT >](#)

Books for the bold

Good books:

1. 100 lessons from the masters of street photography // Dropbox // Direct Download
2. Street photography contact sheets // PDF DOWNLOAD

More books.

What's on my mind

1. Jesus as Philosopher?
 2. Getting more people into strongman style lifting, the Eric Kim method of weight lifting, also women?
 3. Really into minivans now, super dad mode. Apparently the Kia carnival fits eight passengers!
 4. Very happy to be back in Southern California, walking around topless all the time.
-

More thoughts to come

EK BLOG: <https://erickimphotography.com/blog/>

John Wick 4?

Really want to watch John Wick 4.

The Philosophy of John Wick

Stoic thoughts

1. Just leave other people alone. Especially with unpleasant people. And also don't try to be "nice" to them.
2. Utilize every single downside and disadvantage to your benefit, as a form of strengthening and becoming more powerful.

Stoicism

Fortune favors the crazy

EK

Share the thoughts!

If there is even one funny thing here which gave birth to new thoughts or wings, feel free to forward this to a friend!

EK TURBO NEWS: <https://erickimphotography.com/blog/newsletter/>
