

## Through My Electronic Viewfinder

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As you travel towards creativity do you ever find your path pot-holed, blocked or full of diversions? Does job stress, time constraints, commitments, bad weather, bad health, high gas costs and a very unreliable van stifle your journey? Do you often ask yourself, "Does the world need another picture of a deer or a turkey?" Has your photography become stale? Do all your flower images fit the stereotypical flower shot that won the last competition?

Photography tends to be superficial. We find a subject and photograph how it looks and quickly move on. It's so easy to fall into the trap of photographing our subjects in a stereotypical way without looking more deeply into the subject. Many photographs make great eye candy but fail to tell a story. We need to look more deeply than what is presented on the surface. It's one thing to make a picture of what someone looks like but it's another thing to make a portrait of who they are.

*When you approach something to photograph it, first be still with yourself until the object of your attention affirms your presence. Then don't leave until you have captured its essence. – Minor White.*

*We have to learn to photograph not what something is, but what else it is. – Minor White.*

Do your pictures strike an emotion in the viewer? Do they tell a story? As the artist, it's how you choose to interpret the world that's in front of you that makes your images unique and personal while still holding universal appeal.

*A photograph is usually looked at - seldom looked into. - Ansel Adams.*

*A true photograph need not be explained, nor can it be contained in words. - Ansel Adams.*

Do you ever watch people viewing your prints in a gallery? In many cases they take a quick look and move on. Ansel tells us a good picture should speak for itself. Adding text often helps to make our weak picture look stronger. Add a good title or a caption to the print and watch people read the title. They will often take a longer look at the print. Have the photographer stand next to the print and tell them why he took the picture. They will spend much more time studying the print.

If your photographs aren't capturing the essence of your subject perhaps it's time to re-evaluate your vision and your story telling.

***Dick Budnik***