

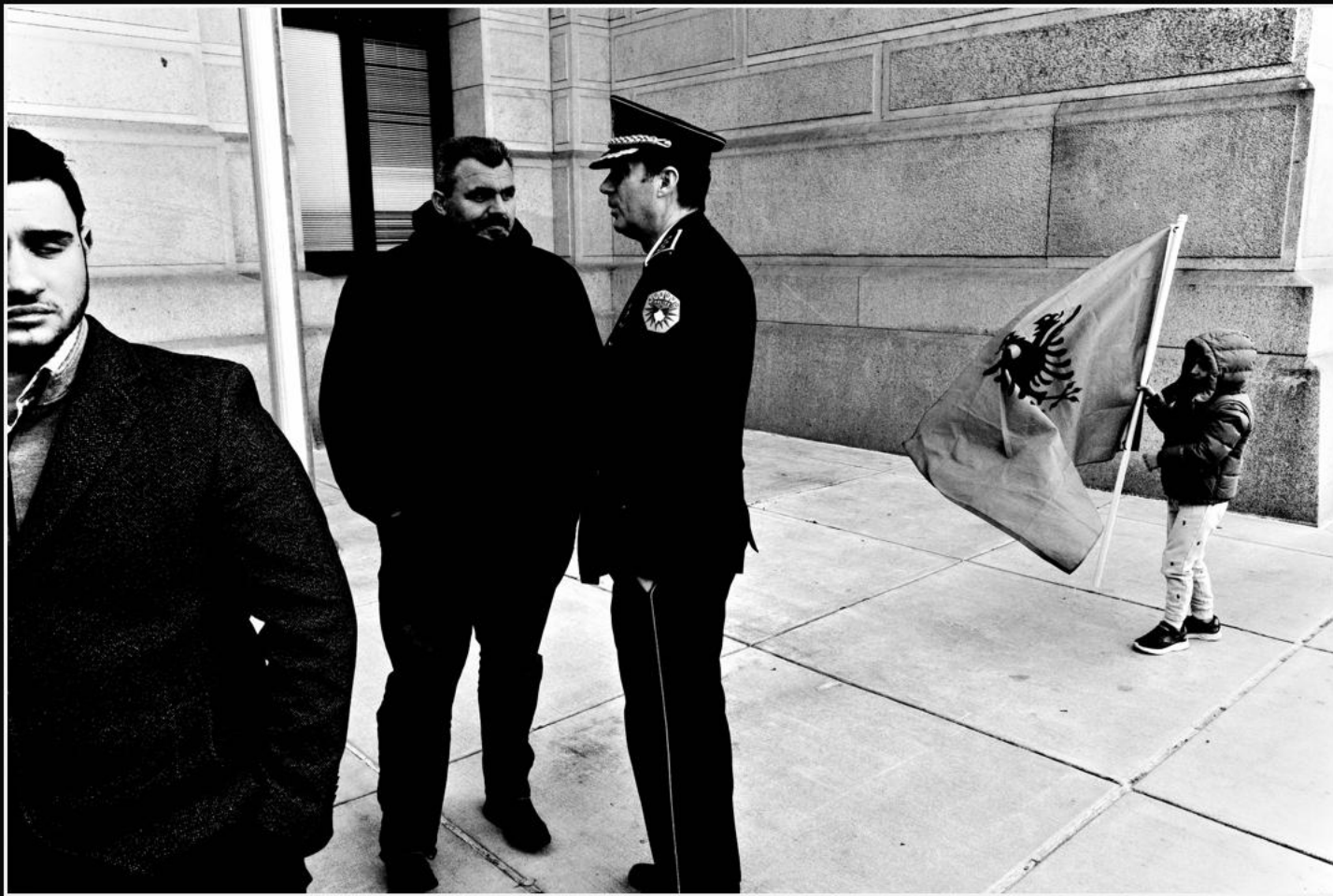
FLUX ACADEMY · A SCHOOL FOR SEEING

MODULE 7 · THE STREET

Candid vs Engaged

BY DANTE SISOFI

LESSON 037



Two Doors Into the Same World

- Candid and engaged aren't opposites — they're two doors into the same world
- Both require presence; neither requires stealth
- Your approach shapes the depth of what you find



What You'll Walk Away With

- Understand when candid serves the moment — and when it limits you
- Know exactly how and why to ask for permission without killing spontaneity
- Build a flexible approach that draws from both



The Stealth Myth Is Holding You Back

- The street photography world fetishizes invisibility
- But stealth without connection often produces soulless work
- Emotional closeness beats physical proximity every time



The Secret Is Sociology, Not Photography

- The secret to great street photography is sociology, not photography
- It's about how you engage with real, breathing people
- Your camera is the excuse — your humanity is the tool



What Candid Actually Is

- Candid: fly on the wall, minimal interaction, spontaneous
- You move through the world responding to what unfolds
- Speed and instinct are the currency



What Engaged Actually Is

- Engaged: time, trust, relationship-building
- You integrate into the scene instead of extracting from it
- Depth and authenticity are the reward



Asking Doesn't Kill the Moment

- Asking for permission deepens the moment — it doesn't destroy it
- You're invited in; you can work the scene, refine, recompose
- Trust is when the real photograph happens



Human First, Photographer Second

- Smile. Open posture. Real curiosity.
- Be human first, photographer second
- You don't need to be a stealth ninja



Presence Lets the Frame Assemble Itself

- Stop hunting and start being — just live in the place
- Presence and unhurried time let you recognise elements lining up
- Foreground, middle ground, background: the composition assembles through attention, not pursuit



Body Language Speaks Before Words Do

- Walk into a new neighbourhood and lead with a smile and open posture
- Warmth invites warmth — small human exchanges open doors
- Sometimes no words are needed — presence alone communicates everything



In Guarded Spaces, Engagement Is the Only Key

- In a tense or unfamiliar community you can't just walk in snapping like a tourist
- You have to engage, explain who you are, and build trust before you lift the camera
- Engagement earns you the time to work the scene — and that's where the keepers live



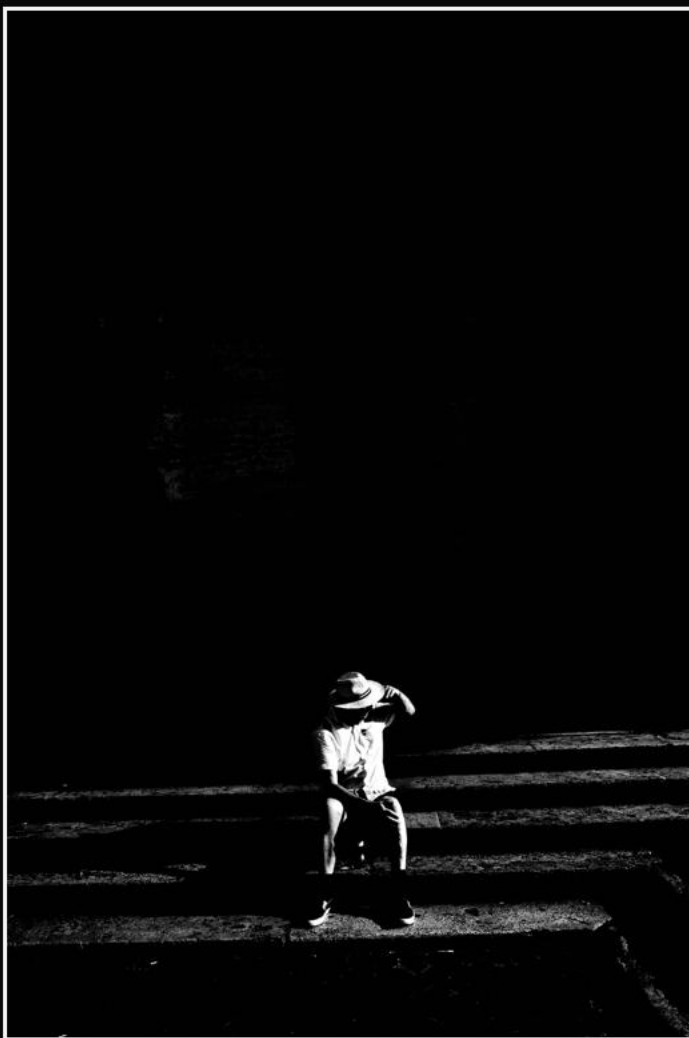
The Instax Technique

- Carry an Instax camera as a trust-building tool
- Gift the print immediately — breaks cultural and language barriers
- Opens doors: homes, communities, moments most photographers never reach



Emotional Closeness Beats Physical Closeness

- Physical proximity without emotional closeness produces hollow work
- You can be across the room and completely in tune
- Or a foot away and totally disconnected



When to Go Candid

- Use candid when the moment is genuinely fleeting and unrepeatable
- When engagement would collapse the scene
- Let instinct and speed carry you



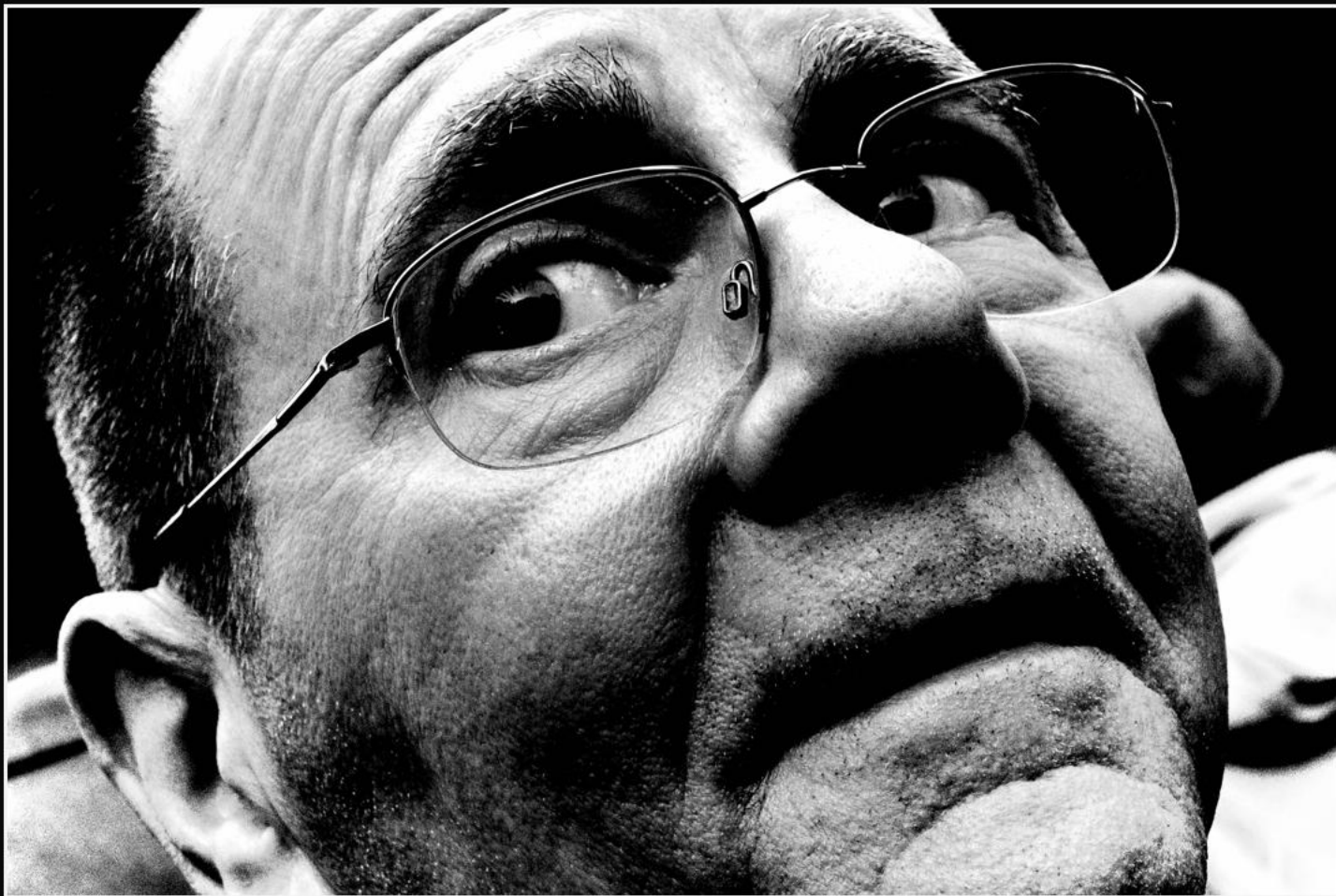
When to Engage

- Use engagement when you're entering a community or unfamiliar space
- When depth and multiple frames matter more than a single grab
- When you have time to work the scene and want richer access



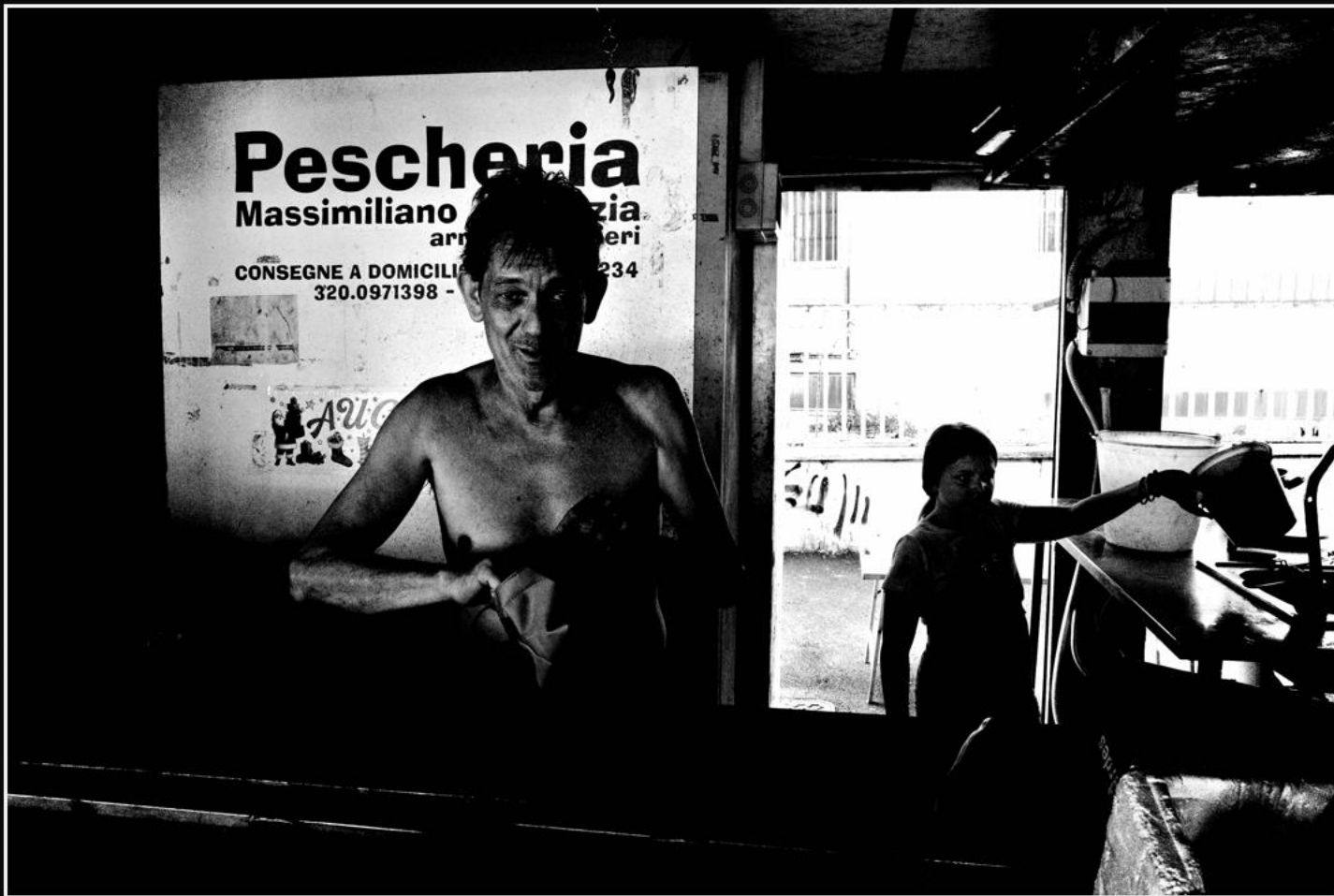
No Rules, Just Play

- There are no rules in street photography
 - none
- Someone needs to give you permission to ask for permission — here it is
- Do this your way: with heart, curiosity, and soul



The Engagement Challenge

- This week: ask permission from at least three strangers
- Notice how the scene changes when you're invited in
- Work the scene — multiple angles, stay longer than feels comfortable



Blend Both in One Outing

- Go out with both modes active simultaneously
- Lead with engagement to build presence in the scene
- Then let candid moments arise naturally from that trust



Hiding Behind the Stealth Ideal

- Treating stealth as the only legitimate approach
- Missing the deeper access that comes from showing up as a human
- Confusing invisibility with neutrality — they're not the same



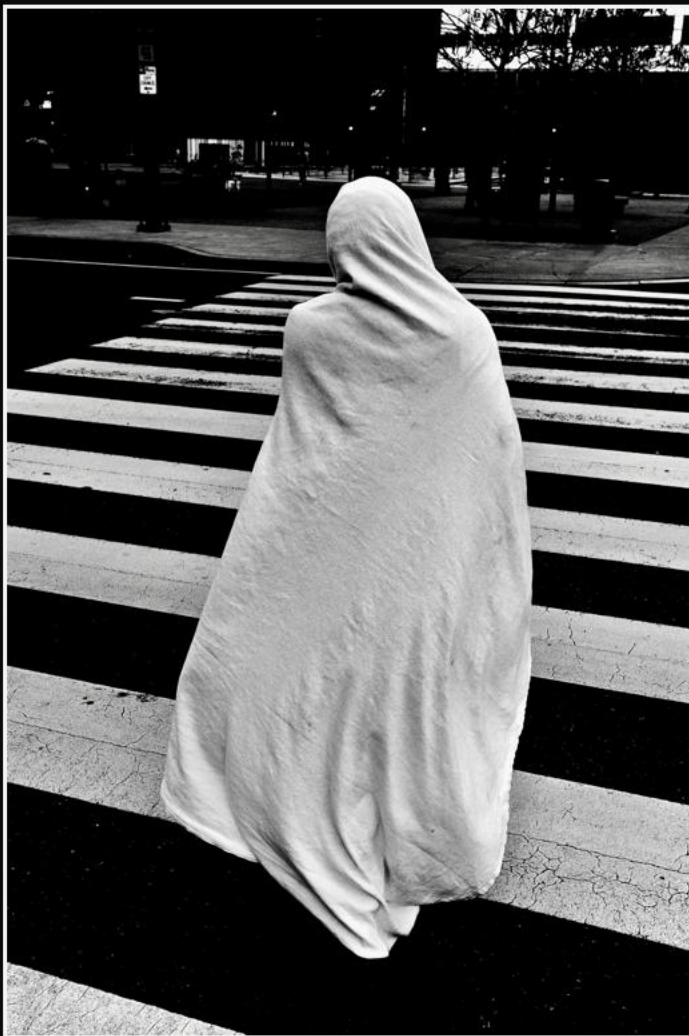
Posing When You Should Be Waiting

- Asking permission and then immediately posing the subject
- Trust doesn't mean pose — it means you can now wait for the real moment
- Engagement earns you patience, not a stage direction



Building on Getting Close

- Lesson 036 established what it means to get physically and emotionally close
- This lesson extends that into the how — the method of approach
- Candid and engaged are both strategies in service of closeness



Setting Up Working a Scene

- Next: Lesson 038 — Working the Scene
- Once you're in, engaged or candid, how do you stay and sculpt?
- The approach gets you through the door; the next lesson teaches you what to do inside



Show Up Like a Human

- Candid and engaged are tools, not identities
- The real skill is knowing when to use which — and being courageous enough to choose
- Show up like a full human: open, curious, real