Key Concepts
DSLR Photography

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Key Learnings #1 – Exposure

Exposure: Defined as *the amount of light that reaches the sensor determined by the combination of aperture, shutter speed and ISO settings.*

A good or "correct" exposure is one that captures the *overall tonal range* of your subject. By "overall tonal range" we mean the range of *dark* through *light tones.*

"Making an Exposure" is a process ... 1. you spot your subject, 2. you decide how to approach your subject, and 3. it ends when the shutter is released.

Underexposure: Too little light hits the sensor: the scene is dark, the subjects appear gray and dingy instead of clean and white. Lack of detail in the darker regions (the shadows).

Overexposure: Too much light hits the sensor: the scene is bright, the subjects appear washed out and lack detail in the bright regions (the highlights).

Your Goal as a Great Photographer: *To capture an image that is neither too dark nor too bright, but … just right!*

"Technically Correct" Exposure: An exposure based on what the camera light meter is seeing and setting. In other words, what the camera "thinks" the proper settings should be. Yes, the camera thinks!

A C*reative Exposure:* By understanding the camera controls, you can make an "inspired" exposure. For example, the camera wants to freeze a sports action, but you set exposure to blur the action.

Taking Charge of Your Exposures

- Understand your camera's light meter (read the manual, experiment)
- Review your exposures on the LCD
- Learn to use *Photoshop Elements* to help understand how exposure works
- You can deviate from "technically correct" exposures
- Wean Yourself Off the Automatic Scene Modes (sports, portrait, snow/beach, landscape, etc.)

Ansel Adams: *"Visualization is a conscious process of projecting the final photographic image in the mind before taking the first steps in actually photographing the subject."*

Visualization is an acquired skill, but takes practice.

- Shoot often – *practice, practice, practice*!
- Study your failed shots
- Keep notes
- Study your *metadata* ("data about data," the camera and exposure information recorded with each digital photo and viewable in various software programs - like *Photoshop*, *iPhoto* and others.)
- Visualize your photo, framed, and hanging in your home

A Good Photo Captures the Mood of the Moment! Exposure is one factor that can enhance mood. *1. Check out the postcard rack for ideas, 2. Remember; you can deviate from the technically correct exposure, 3. EXPERIMENT, experiment, experiment; practice, practice, practice!!*

NOTES

A Great Photograph ...

- *Has a central theme or idea.*
- *Focuses attention to a single point-of-interest*
- *Simplifies*