

*"About four years into this  
head-long rush something happened  
obstacles began appearing everywhere"*

...it felt like I was running into all of them. My enthusiasm waned.... my energy was low. Gradually, my greatest passion turned into a huge burden that caused me to avoid even thinking about photography. It was like being engulfed in quicksand. Like a good photo warrior I pushed, persevered and applied my well-developed determination muscle. I kept 'producing work', however, much to my horror, the feedback about the resulting work, from people I trusted, was that it seemed stilted, dry, technically excellent but lacking.... my earlier work was stronger they said - and they were right, it was. Was I losing my mojo? After a promising start had I just dried up? The answer seemed to be a resounding, yes.

*"While all this was going on  
I was making good money..."*

and had lots the best of equipment it could buy - a full Nikon 35mm camera system set up, a complete Hasselblad medium format kit and a large format 4x5 camera system - all at which I was technically proficient - some might even say at an advanced level. Yet, it meant nothing to me - it all sat in my equipment locker pretty much unused. I was too embarrassed and perplexed to talk about this with anyone.

*"What I learned from these periods  
has allowed me to experience a  
steady creative flow since."*

Here's the reason I bring this up now, so many years later; what I've just described was the first of several creatively blocked periods I've run into over the years. It was a few years before the tide turned and I felt a sustained flow return. *Cont...*

*"...these experiences became the foundation from which my creative methods and processes arose"*

Now, years later, I find these periods are rare; they now seem like periods of renewal and creative growth. Often following periods of high accomplishment, these experiences can be harrowing at first but also great learning experiences, often contain great power as well as the seeds for future work. It's helped me to view them as part of the larger creative process or cycle at work in my life.

*"I'm passionate about helping others navigate the pitfalls of the creative process"*

Getting back to the answer I'd give the person who, at the beginning of this article, asked where my enthusiasm and passion for photography comes from, I would say that it's rooted in all my 'failures' from which grew a sense of gratitude, joy and insatiable curiosity about life in general – my photography is an extension of that. Of course this influences the content and tone of all my classes, workshops and mentoring programs. I'm a student and a servant. I'm passionate about helping others navigate the pitfalls of the creative process so they can manifest their gifts in a timely fashion without unnecessary setbacks. The world needs those gifts now more than ever.

### *Four Ways To Sustain Flow and complete projects*

1. Follow your heart, your interests and your dreams.
2. Find out what brings you joy; be around it often.
3. Feel awe and wonder for the world around you.
4. Set a creative goal; reach for it through action.