

## SECRETS OF CREATING GREAT PEOPLE PICTURES

BY CLIFFORD GETZ

### THE ONE THING THAT WILL MAKE YOUR PICTURES GREAT

Get out of your insecure rut of being rejected and devise a plan to approach your subject in a new more intelligent manner. It will work!!!! Do not say "Can I take your picture? It is an invitation to their saying NO. You would say the same.

Put camera out of sight, smile and approach your subject saying hi or hello and say I'm a student of photography in a class in California.....

You have such an interesting face and I would be honored if you would allow me to take a picture of yourself for my class project.....

My name is..... What is your name?

Shake hands and ask anything that comes to your mind (example. Do you live here? Good idea...Show them a picture of your family back in California., etc. Smile and keep talking.

**THE IMPORTANT THING IS TO GET THEM TO RELAX BEFORE YOU START**

Once they agree. you are HOME and on your way to a great picture . It's easy.

**WHAT TO DO NEXT?** Try, if you can, to take them to a better place, in the shade if possible. **OVERCAST DAYS ARE GREAT.** Avoid direct flash if possible. Raise ISO if not enough light. You need wide aperture (like f2.8) to blow out the background and have shallow depth of field behind their face. Find a plain or pleasant background. Consider fill flash to lighten up the face. If indoors, try some bounce flash.

**NOW.....the important thing, I have found, is to take a "full face picture"**

To do this you have to fill your lens with their face which means you have to move in (keep talking) until this has happened. If you cannot get close use a telephoto lens and zoom in to get a full face picture.

Be sure that you and your camera are on a level with their face

**DO NOT SAY "SMILE"** This WILL come later if you like

Have them look with their eyes right into the lens. Remember the eyes of the peasant girl in Afghanistan that photographer Steve McCurry took.

This cannot be overstated. Be sure they understand this.

**HINT....** If you are standing, place the parent of the child or the owner of the pet directly in front and below you. If you are sitting, place them directly behind and above you. You need and want the subjects eyes going right at and into your camera.. **IT'S THAT IMPORTANT !**

Keep talking and say wet your lips, etc ("you are doing great") Joke around  
Show them the pictures you have taken and promise to send them some of  
the pictures. Get their e-mail or address and DO IT  
Once you are happy with this pose (keep talking) ask them to assume  
different poses (turn, look off to side, etc.) "These pictures are great! "  
You might then, start walking around the subject taking pictures of their face  
and ask them to give different looks at the camera as you walk around

Now, start taking full face and BODY pictures using the same tactics as above (keep  
talking and tell them how great they are doing. THE KEY IS TO RELAX THEM

If the clothing of the subject is also really that interesting include that in the taking  
of more shots . Ditto the environment around the subject SHOT SHOT SHOT

REMEMBER KEEP SHOOTING. YOU SHOULD HAVE SHOT 50 OR 100 PICTURES  
ALREADY. TRY DIFFERENT LENSES AND DISTANCES FROM SUBJECT. THEY  
SHOULD NOW BE RELAXED AND YOU SHOULD STILL BE TALKING.

TRUST ME THIS WILL WORK. IF UNSURE TRY IT ON YOUR FAMILY BEFORE YOU  
GO AWAY TO GET A GOOD PRACTICE FOR TAKING SOME GREAT PEOPLE PICTURES

REMEMBER SOME OF THE PROPS I USE (colored material to mask the background,  
You need a willing assistant to do this, mirror, etc. I carry a red jacket for  
Someone to wear in scenic situations.

#### SOME GENERAL THOUGHTS

1. YOU SHOULD NEVER BE WITHOUT YOUR CAMERA
2. YOU SHOULD CONSTANTLY BE LOOKING AROUND FOR SOMETHING OR  
SOMEONE THAT MIGHT BE GREAT TO SHOOT
3. THE BEST THINGS ARE THINGS THAT WOULD CREATE AN EMOTIONAL  
RESPONSE IN THE EYES OF THE VIEWER ( EXAMPLE...HAPPINESS,  
ANGER, BEAUTY, ETC.) SAY TO YOURSELF...IS THIS A "WOW" PICTURE?
4. WHEN TRAVELING LOOK FOR A GREAT BACKGROUND AND WAIT UNTIL  
SOMEONE OR SOMETHING COMES INTO THE SCENE.
- 5 IN A FOREIGN LAND LEARN A FEW KEY WORDS AND HAVE SOMEONE WRITE  
THEM DOWN FOR YOU (AS IF YOU WERE BLIND) TO SHOW OTHERS. (FOR  
EXAMPLE....I AM A STUDENT, ETC)
- 6 BEST ADVISE....YOU ARE NEVER TOO CLOSE TO YOUR SUBJECT. MOVE WAY  
MORE CLOSER TO YOUR SUBJECT.
7. BRING GIFTS WITH YOU (PENS ARE GOOD) DON'T FORGET "THANK YOU"
8. BE CREATIVE . TAKE PICTURES OF BODY PARTS, FOR EXAMPLE

9. IF SHOOTING A COUPLE HAVE ONE LOOK LOVINGLY AT THE OTHER. KISS  
MAYBE? BACK TO BACK IS GOOD
10. KIDS AND ANIMALS.....SHOOT ON THEIR LEVEL AND KEEP IT CANDID
11. HAVE SOMEONE ELSE TAKE MANY MORE PICTURES OF YOU AND YOUR  
COMPANYION
12. IF AT SOME IMPORTANT PLACE IN THE WORLD, HAVE SOMEONE ELSE TAKE  
A PICTURE OF YOU AND COMPANION LOOKING AT THE SCENE
13. AFTER TAKING A GREAT PICTURE, THINK ABOUT HOW THE PICTURE WOULD  
LOOK IF YOU WERE HIGHER, LOWER, CLOSER, ETC. AND DO IT.
14. GOOD ADVISE. TAKE MORE AND MORE PICTURES BY SITTING DOWN, LAYING  
DOWN AND SHOOTING FROM GROUND LEVEL.
15. WHEN ABOUT TO TAKE A PICTURE, LOOK FOR DISTRACTING ELEMENTS OR  
GET DOWN AND SHOOT UP WITH SKY IN BACKGROUND OR MOVE  
LEFT OR RIGHT, BACK OR FORWARD. FOR A BETTER PICTURE.
16. WHENEVER IN NEW PLACE, ASK AROUND FOR GREAT PLACES TO SHOOT AND  
IF ANYTHING IS HAPPENING OR ABOUT TO HAPPEN
17. LOOK FOR CARTIER BRESSON "DECISIVE MOMENT" WHEN SOMETHING  
EMOTIONAL IS HAPPENING OR ABOUT TO HAPPEN
18. LEARN BASICS OF GROUP PICTURES (TRIANGLE, FAT PERSON IN BACK, ONE  
STEP FORWARD AND TURN, LOOK AT CAMERA, ETC
19. THINK ABOUT WHAT KIND OF A STORY OR EMOTION THAT FACE IS TELLING  
YOU AND CAPTURE IT FOREVER.
20. CHECK OUT YOUR PICTURES WITH A MONOCHROME CONVERSION. YOU WILL  
BE ASTONISHED HOW GOOD SOME WILL LOOK IN BLACK AND WHITE.
21. REMEMBER THE TIME OF DAY. EARLY MORNING AND LATE AFTERNOON WILL  
PROVIDE THE BEST RESULTS. MID DAY IN FULL SUN SHOULD BE AVOIDED.
22. MAKE YOUR SUBJECT LAUGH IF APPROPRIATE. WE SHALL TALK ABOUT THIS.  
SOME GOOD JOKES, FUNNY FACES OR TICKLING MIGHT WORK!!!

FINALLY, GET OVER IT....YOU ARE INSECURE ABOUT APPROACHING PEOPLE,  
HATE REJECTION AND TO TAKE GREAT PEOPLE PICTURES YOU MUST CHANGE  
THIS BAD ATTITUDE TO TAKE PEOPLE PICTURES YOU WILL BE PROUD OF. YOU  
NEED TO GET THEM TO SAY YES AND FOLLOW THROUGH WITH A GOOD SHOOT.

IT IS THERE FOR THE TAKING.

JUST DO IT.....

CLIFF GETZ