



Slow Photography

Forget the Selfie - slow photography is the new way to share your precious moments

By Conrad Ian Kellett

How many photographs do you take each week? How many times do you look at them? Is there a better way to **capture** your memories? Slow photography could be the answer.



Our world moves at **breakneck** speed these days. Everyone is in a rush to pack as much as they can into 24 hours. A recent look at my Picasa app showed I have thousands of photos stored. Photos I have taken to remind me of the places I've been to and everything I have done. Have I ever really gone back and looked at them? Perhaps I have **skimmed** through them, but I really can't remember.

Whenever I visit my mother, I start to wonder why I need to take so many pictures. You see, every time I visit her, I pick up one of her many old photograph albums to look at. She has labelled them either by year, *Summer 1996*, or theme/event, *Pat and Ken's Party*. Most of them **predate** digital cameras. There was a time when you took 24 photos or 36 photos per film. You did not get a second chance or the option to delete the pictures you took, so your photo takings had some thought behind them.



As I flick through the photo albums, I can remember each photo that I had taken. For example, the one taken in Kranjska Gora after looking through the viewfinder for ages to get the best angle and light. The camera was carefully **perched** on the bridge with the timer set to five seconds. It's a good photo and it brought back great memories. My Picasa album has no depth in comparison, just lots of random images that I took.

I guess I am advocating *slow photography*, **in a similar vein** to the *slow food* movement, which encourages you to take time to appreciate and reflect.



So, here is my challenge: make a record of the year Spring 2016 to Spring 2017. Limit the number of pictures to 24, but do not take hundreds and select from them. Instead, imagine you have a film with just 24 possible shots. Have them printed and put them in an album (yes, it's a slow process - that's the idea). Contact me next summer. I'd be really interested in your results.

I was recently in London and witnessed **sightseers** snapping away at anything and everything. Selfie sticks were everywhere. Some even walk round pointing their iPads as they go. Now, while many would argue there is nothing wrong with this, it strikes me that with everyone observing the world through a screen, there is no one left seeing the real thing! As tourists, we are failing to stop and recognise the real beauty of the object or the moment, in our eagerness to capture them on our devices.

Slow photography encourages you to take fewer photos by thinking more about why you are capturing an image. In doing so, you will find a closer connection with the subject and your memory and experience of it will be **enhanced**.

How to embrace Slow Photography



1. Print your photos and show them. If you can, persuade a gallery to show them. If not, use your house or office as a gallery. Get your school to have an area where slow photographs can be exhibited.
2. Cut down on the number of photos you post online. Be selective.
3. Join a camera club that meets face to face, not just online.
4. SLOW DOWN when taking photographs. Enjoy your surroundings and think about what you are trying to capture: a feeling, an atmosphere or an image.

When you participate in slow photography, as you travel, you may find you go to fewer places and stay for longer, exploring both the landscape and people in more depth. (B2)



QUICK QUESTIONS:

1. Why does the writer think that having only 24 photographs was an advantage?

- A. He did not waste time taking photographs and could look at the things around more.
- B. People took fewer selfies.
- C. He was forced to think about the picture he actually wanted.

2. Which is the best definition of slow photography?

- A. Slow photography is about taking more photos and thinking more about the content of the photographs.
- B. Slow photography encourages you to take fewer photos by thinking more about why you are capturing an image.
- C. Slow photography is taking photographs without a digital camera.

3. How can slow photography improve the experience of what you have seen in memory?

- A. Your memory and experience of it will be enhanced.
- B. You will have an album to look at.
- C. It is a better way to achieve long-term memory.

Answers: 1. C 2. B 3. A

capture (v) – to record or keep forever.

breakneck (adj) – extremely and often dangerously fast.

skim (v) – to read or look at something quickly; flick through; browse.

predate (v) – to come before; exist before.

perch (v) – to sit or be placed at the edge of something.

in a similar vein (idiom) – in a similar manner or way.

sightseer (n) – a tourist; visitor.

enhance (v) – to improve; increase; enrich.