

Vulnerability

By Meaghan Smith

As I sit and prepare for a photo shoot the butterflies begin to set in. The way in which I open my soul's eyes to view a new client leaves me wide open and vulnerable. At least for the first few moments, vulnerability shows up in a rapid heartbeat, the anticipation of being on time, of having the light be working in your favor, and of course the first vibe when you meet someone for the first time. This experience I am describing is almost identical for the client.

The photographer (myself) desires ultimate truth and comfort -- well behaved, fun, and unique, happy, flowing, friendly and warm people. Yet, it is my job to mold anything placed in front of my lens into that. Simply put, my artistic vision and purpose is to reveal kindness and respect while finding their unique essence and beauty.

There is always a twinge of vulnerability dancing between the photographer and her subject. This energy is a combination of nervousness, desire to look perfect, shyness, striving, boldness, trusting, fear, a racing mind, a quiet heart, technical challenges and ego.

The professional. The model. The child. Everybody placing themselves in front of a camera desires to be attractive and flawless. So, it is most important for me as the photographer to keep talking and affirming my clients' movements and poses, and to limit any awkward moments that can quickly spiral and dip their confidence or shift the mood. Somehow my way of being fragile while emanating comfort & confidence works to translate that vulnerability into an open trusting experience.

This element of vulnerability is what sets my images apart from other photographers. My heart sees their heart, and in that connection we create images that show a depth and honesty, visible through my client's eyes in the photographs. No one is perfect, and in the same breath we are all perfect and show up in our moment just as we are meant to. I am here to capture that.

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