



# GITTINGS

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## GLOBAL

### PHOTOGRAPHERS CONFERENCE 2025

Chicago, Illinois





# Photographer Spotlight

## Michael A. Schwarz/Atlanta

May 30, 2025

We are gathering proposals from photographers to find a good mix of, business, marketing, and creative presentation ideas that will engage other business owners and creatives. You have incredible personal work and series, and I wanted to ask if you might put together a quick pitch for a 15–30-minute presentation about staying creative as a person and professional?

If this is anything you might like to do, please let us know.  
-Michel Leroy

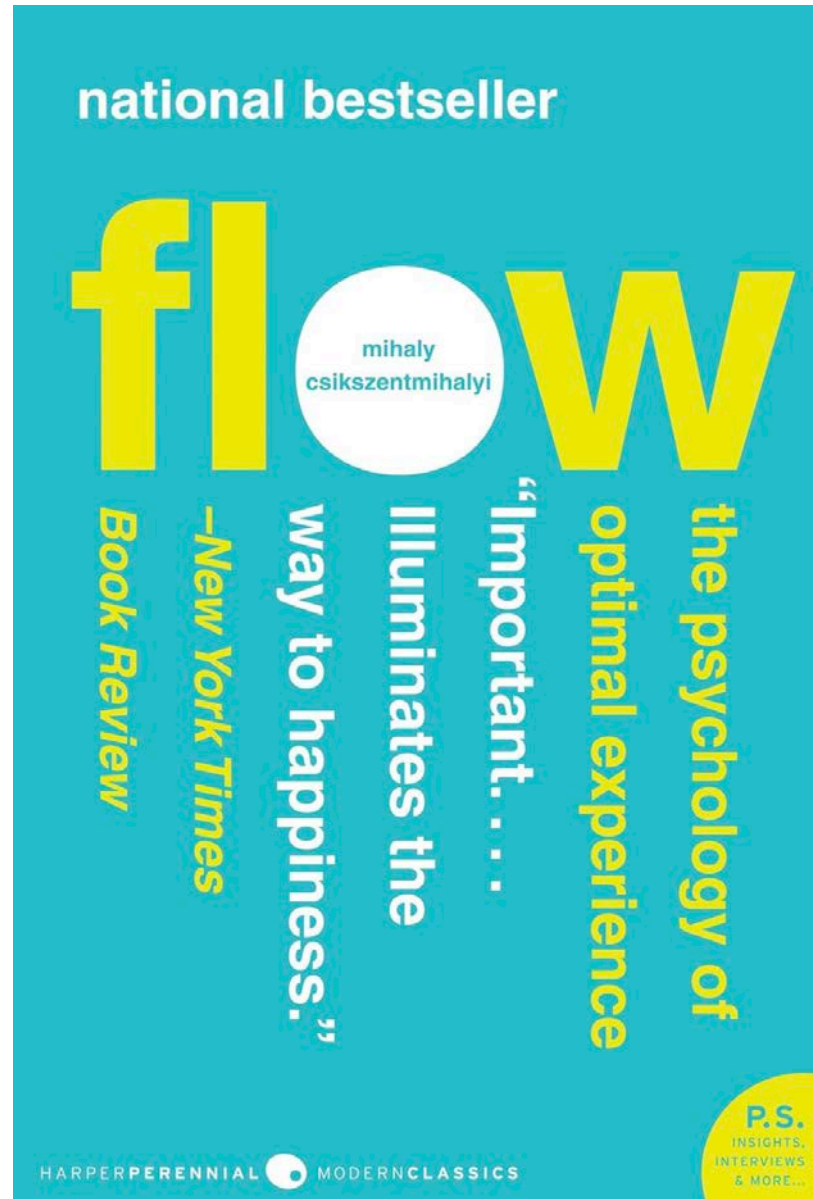
Hell no.



# **Staying Engaged and Passionate About Your Photography**







Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

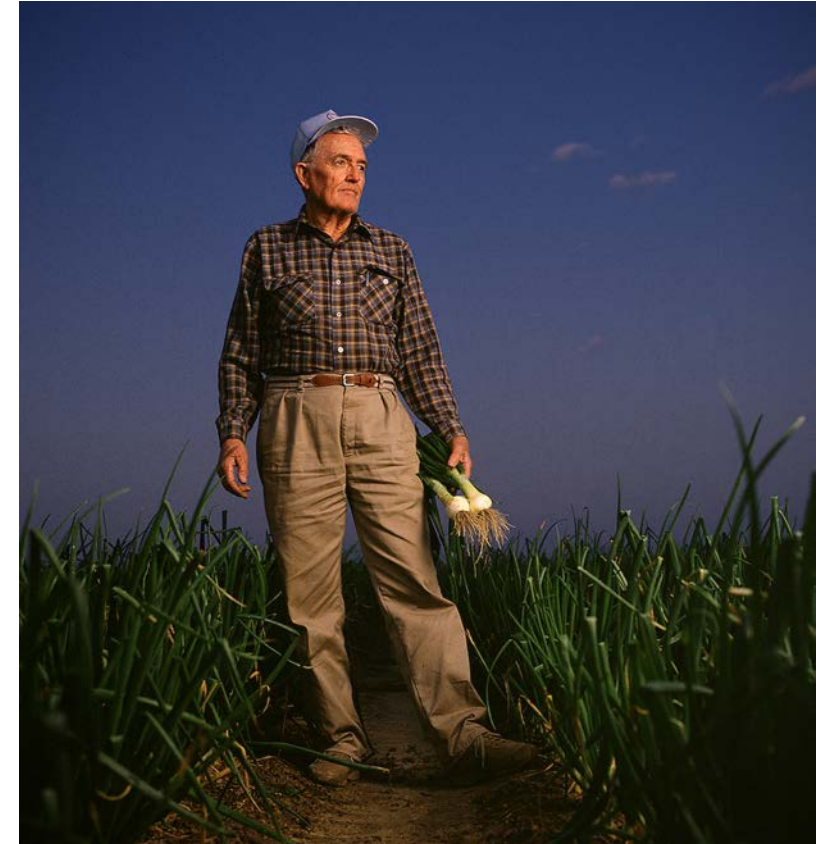
Pronounced  
muh-hay-lee chik-sent-mee-hai-ee

AKA

Dr. C

# Introduction to Flow

- Definition of Flow: "A state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter."
- Why Flow Matters:
  - - Greater happiness
  - - Personal growth
  - - Enhanced creativity & productivity





# The Origins of Flow

- Csikszentmihalyi's Research Background
- Study of artists, athletes, scientists
- Goal: Understand optimal human experiences



# Characteristics of Flow

- Complete Concentration
- Clarity of Goals & Feedback
- Balance Between Challenge & Skill
- Sense of Control
- Loss of Self-Consciousness
- Altered Sense of Time
- Intrinsically Rewarding



# Conditions for Achieving Flow

- Clear goals
- Immediate feedback
- Matching challenge with skill and going slightly beyond
- Avoiding distractions
- Commitment and focus

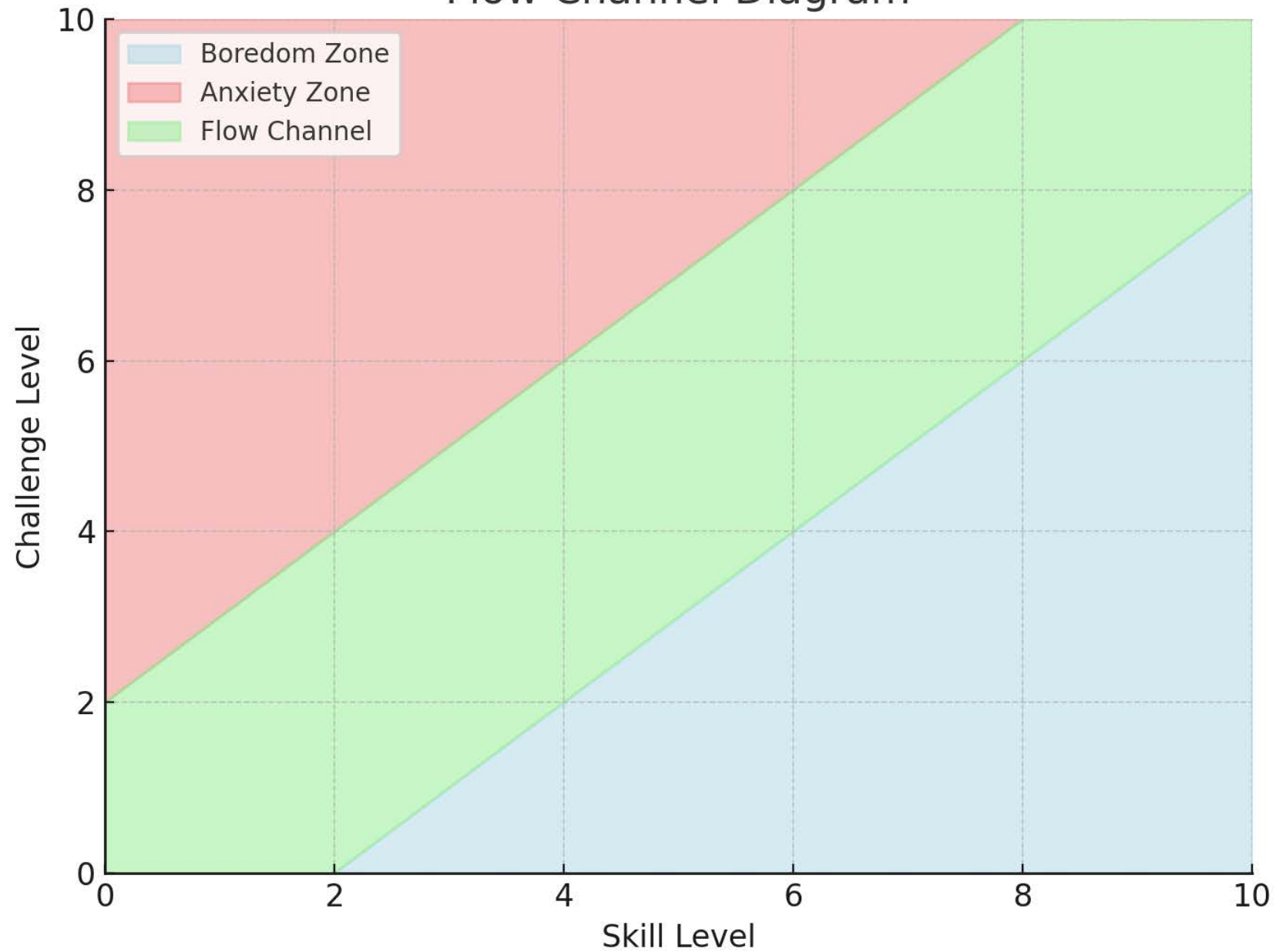


# The Flow Channel

- Challenge vs. Skill Graph:
  - - Anxiety (High Challenge, Low Skill)
  - - Boredom (Low Challenge, High Skill)
  - - Flow Zone: Balance between challenge and skill



# Flow Channel Diagram





# The Autotelic Personality

- Definition: Doing things for their own sake
- Traits:
  - - Curiosity
  - - Persistence
  - - Low self-centeredness



# Why Autotelic People Experience More Flow

- The experience is the main goal
- Flow thrives when you do something you want to, not because you have to
- They tend to seek out and embrace activities where challenge matches their skill, but their curiosity and enjoyment push them to stretch their abilities without feeling overwhelmed



# Flow in Everyday Life

- Work: Challenging tasks, clear feedback
- Leisure: Hobbies, sports, arts
- Relationships: Engaged communication, shared experiences



# Obstacles to Flow

- Passive entertainment (e.g., excessive TV, scrolling)
- Anxiety or boredom from mismatched challenges
- Lack of feedback or clear goals



# Benefits of Flow

- Increased happiness
- Enhanced performance
- Growth of skills and abilities
- Greater life satisfaction





# Applying Flow in Your Life

- Set clear, achievable goals
- Seek new challenges
- Break tasks into manageable parts
- Focus on the process, not just the outcome



# Conclusions

- "The best moments in our lives are not the passive, receptive, relaxing times... but the ones in which we are fully engaged."



# Calls to Action

- Identify flow activities in your life today
- What are some challenges we can accept or new things we can learn that bring “Flow” to our lives?



# Discussion

- How can we achieve Flow in our Gittings shoots?

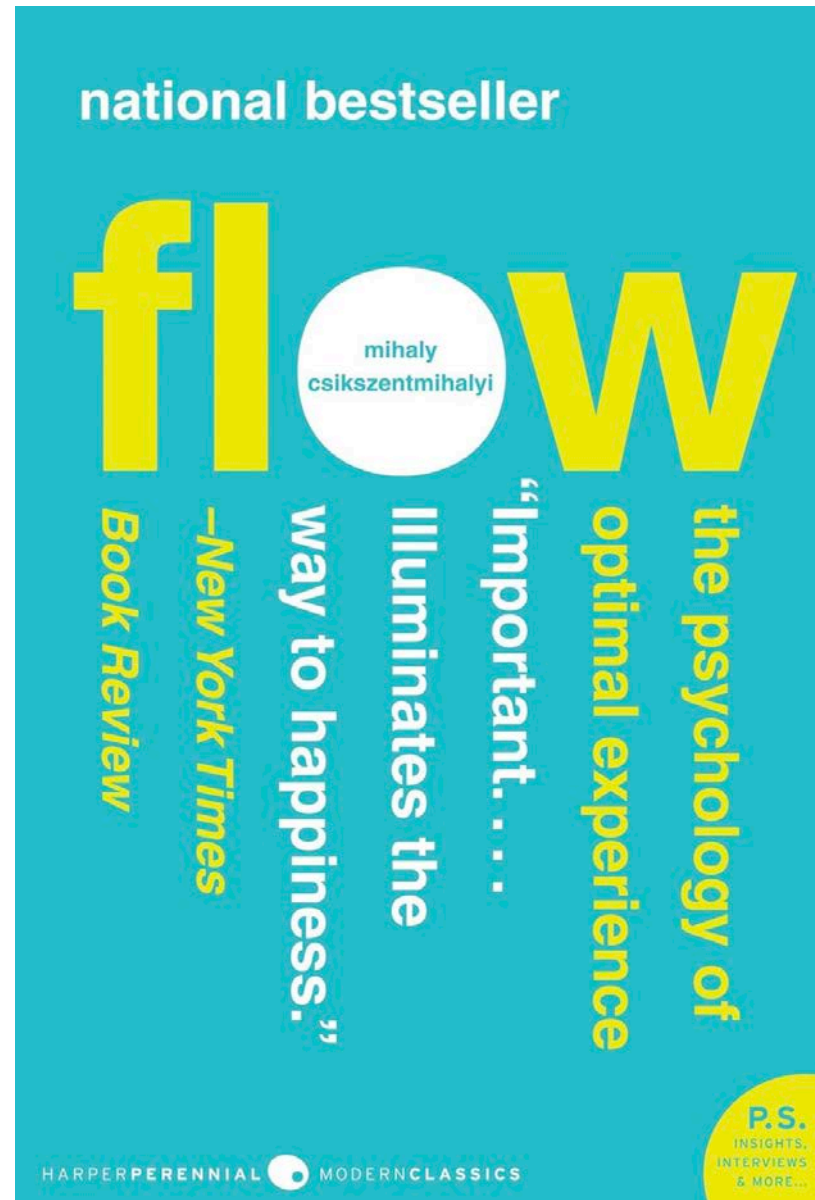


# Discussion: Maintaining Our Passion for Photography

- Importance of community
- Join an organization
- Network for the sake of sharing experiences
- What new skills can we learn
- Merge your non-photo passions with your photography







Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi



The end

Thank you