CAMERAPIXO PRESS ACADEMY

COURSE
INTRODUCTION TO MODERN PHOTOJOURNALISM

MODULE 6
BOOK B
PERSONAL JOURNAL

COURSE MATERIALS

PERSONAL JOURNAL



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IMP.M6BB

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In the field, in balance

This Personal Journal is your private space for reflection and growth. It is not a test, but an opportunity to think deeply about how you work in the field, what keeps you safe, and how you maintain mental balance when the demands of photojournalism are high.

Inside, you will find guided questions and prompts that explore both physical safety and mental resilience. You'll reflect on how you prepare for assignments, how you read and adapt to changing situations, and how you process difficult moments while preserving your creativity and focus. These reflections will help you recognise your strengths, identify areas for improvement, and plan practical ways to strengthen your safety mindset.

The value of this journal comes from your honesty and consistency. Use it regularly, revisit it before and after assignments, and treat it as a personal record of your professional growth. Over time, it will become both a reflection of where you are now and a guide to working safely, confidently, and with purpose.

Strong stories come from safe, steady photographers.

Building safety and resilience

REFLECTIONS AND PRACTICES TO STRENGTHEN YOUR SAFETY MINDSET AND INNER BALANCE

Working as a photojournalist means more than capturing strong images — it means returning from every assignment safe, focused, and ready for the next. Your physical safety is essential, but so is your mental resilience. Both are skills you can develop, and both require regular attention.

This journal is your personal space to reflect on what safety means in your work, how you prepare for assignments, and how you recover afterwards. Here, you'll explore your habits, your instincts, and your ways of responding to changes in the field — whether they're sudden and intense or gradual and subtle.

By taking time to answer these questions and complete the exercises, you'll strengthen your ability to make decisions calmly, anticipate risks before they happen, and maintain your creative energy under pressure. The goal is not to avoid challenges, but to meet them with confidence and clarity.

Use this space honestly. There are no right or wrong answers — only insights that will help you grow as a professional and as a person. Over time, these reflections will become a resource you can return to whenever you need guidance, motivation, or a reminder of how far you've come.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

These prompts are designed to help you think deeply about your habits, instincts, and decision-making in the field. Use them to explore how you approach safety and mental resilience in different situations, and to identify ways to strengthen your approach for future assignments.

- **HOW DO YOU DEFINE SAFETY IN YOUR WORK AS A PHOTOJOURNALIST?**
- **WHAT STEPS DO YOU TAKE BEFORE AN ASSIGNMENT TO PREPARE FOR BOTH PHYSICAL AND MENTAL CHALLENGES?**
- **HOW DO YOU ASSESS A SCENE WHEN YOU FIRST ARRIVE?**
- **WHAT SIGNALS OR CUES TELL YOU IT MIGHT BE TIME TO REPOSITION OR LEAVE?**
- **HOW DO YOU PROTECT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH DURING EMOTIONALLY DEMANDING ASSIGNMENTS?**
- **WHAT HABITS HELP YOU MAINTAIN FOCUS AND AWARENESS IN THE FIELD?**
- **HOW DO YOU RECOVER AND RECHARGE AFTER A CHALLENGING ASSIGNMENT?**
- **WHAT LONG-TERM PRACTICES CAN HELP YOU BUILD BOTH SAFETY AWARENESS AND RESILIENCE?**

1 HOW DO YOU DEFINE SAFETY IN YOUR WORK AS A PHOTOJOURNALIST?

Safety can mean many things — from physical protection in unpredictable environments to maintaining the mental clarity needed to make good decisions. For some, it's about avoiding obvious risks; for others, it's about being prepared to face them. Your definition will influence the way you work, the choices you make, and how you measure a successful assignment.

Reflecting on your own definition of safety will help you recognise what you prioritise most. This awareness can guide your preparation, your in-field adjustments, and the way you balance getting the shot with protecting yourself.

2 WHAT STEPS DO YOU TAKE BEFORE AN ASSIGNMENT TO PREPARE FOR BOTH PHYSICAL AND MENTAL CHALLENGES?

Preparation starts long before you pick up your camera. It involves knowing where you're going, understanding potential risks, and ensuring you have the gear and mindset to handle unexpected changes. It also means thinking about how you'll maintain focus, energy, and calm under pressure.

Taking time to plan for both your body and your mind can improve your performance and reduce stress once you're in the field. Whether it's checking your safety kit, rehearsing exit routes, or setting a mental intention for the day, preparation sets the tone for the entire assignment.

3 HOW DO YOU ASSESS A SCENE WHEN YOU FIRST ARRIVE?

The first few minutes on location can set the tone for your entire assignment. Observing crowd behavior, lighting, potential hazards, and key points of interest helps you position yourself strategically. This is the moment to notice where you can move freely, where risks might arise, and where the most compelling images might happen.

A deliberate assessment ensures you're not rushing in blindly. By pausing to scan the environment, you can balance safety with strong visual opportunities from the very start.

4 WHAT SIGNALS OR CUES TELL YOU IT MIGHT BE TIME TO REPOSITION OR LEAVE?

Conditions in the field can shift quickly, and recognizing early warning signs can prevent you from getting caught in unsafe situations. These cues might be physical — like crowd movement or changes in security presence — or more subtle, such as a shift in tone or mood.

Knowing when to move is a skill built from experience and awareness. The earlier you detect these signals, the more options you have to reposition while still protecting your ability to work.

5

HOW DO YOU PROTECT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH DURING EMOTIONALLY DEMANDING ASSIGNMENTS?

Some assignments expose you to intense or distressing situations. Protecting your mental health in these moments is essential for sustaining your career and your well-being. This can involve setting boundaries for what you will and will not photograph, taking mental breaks, or using grounding techniques to stay balanced.

Having a plan for emotional self-care allows you to remain compassionate without becoming overwhelmed. It also helps you recover more quickly after the assignment, so you can continue working at your best.

6

WHAT HABITS HELP YOU MAINTAIN FOCUS AND AWARENESS IN THE FIELD?

Fieldwork requires you to split your attention between safety, storytelling, and technical execution. Habits like situational scanning, regular light checks, or staying mobile can keep your awareness sharp. Consistency is key — small actions done regularly can become second nature.

By reflecting on the habits that work best for you, you can refine them and make them an intentional part of your workflow, ensuring you stay both safe and effective in the field.

7

HOW DO YOU RECOVER AND RECHARGE AFTER A CHALLENGING ASSIGNMENT?

Recovery is more than just resting; it's an active process of returning to physical and mental balance. This might include reviewing your images in a calm setting, talking through the experience with a trusted colleague, or spending time on activities unrelated to work.

Taking intentional steps to recharge ensures that difficult assignments don't drain your energy for future work. It also reinforces resilience, making you more prepared for the next challenge.

8

WHAT LONG-TERM PRACTICES CAN HELP YOU BUILD BOTH SAFETY AWARENESS AND RESILIENCE?

Safety and resilience are skills that develop over time through consistent effort. Long-term practices might include regular scenario training, physical fitness, mindfulness routines, or ongoing peer discussions about field safety.

By committing to habits that strengthen both body and mind, you invest in a sustainable career where you can continue telling important stories while protecting yourself.

PHOTOJOURNALISM ACADEMY

Mental resilience prompts

Exercises and reflections to strengthen your inner stability in the field

Field assignments can be unpredictable, demanding not just your technical skills but also your ability to stay calm, think clearly, and adapt quickly. Mental resilience is what allows you to work effectively even when conditions are challenging, and to recover quickly afterwards.

This section offers prompts and exercises designed to help you reflect on your mental approach to photojournalism. They focus on how you manage stress, maintain focus, and keep your creativity alive under pressure. Some will ask you to think about past experiences; others will encourage you to plan ahead for future situations.

By working through these prompts, you will develop a stronger awareness of your mental strengths and areas where you can grow. Over time, these practices can become part of your everyday routine, helping you remain steady, confident, and ready to tell important stories no matter what the day brings.

A steady mind tells the strongest stories.

FINAL PROMPT

Finish this sentence: ***"No matter what happens in the field, I will always…".***

This is your personal commitment to yourself. Keep it short, clear, and meaningful — something you can remember and repeat when you need focus or reassurance in challenging moments.

Prompts to Build **Mental Resilience**

How do you prepare yourself mentally before starting an assignment?

Your mindset before you begin can shape how you handle challenges later. Think about the routines, thoughts, or small actions that help you start focused and confident.

ANSWER

1

What strategies help you stay calm when situations in the field change suddenly?

Unexpected shifts can be stressful, but having a few go-to techniques can keep you grounded. Reflect on what has worked for you in the past or what you'd like to try.

ANSWER

2

Prompts to Build **Mental Resilience**

How do you train your mind to stay focused when the field environment feels overwhelming?

Photojournalism often requires scanning multiple elements at the same time. Consider how you mentally prepare, filter distractions, and prioritise what matters most.

ANSWER

3

What mental strategies help you recover quickly after a spike of stress or adrenaline?

Assignments can create sudden spikes in tension. Think about the mental tools, visualisation techniques, or thought patterns you rely on to return to balance.

ANSWER

4

Prompts to Build **Mental Resilience**

How do you protect your creativity during long or repetitive assignments?

Even routine work can drain your creative energy. Reflect on how you keep your ideas fresh and your perspective engaged over time.

ANSWER

5

How do supportive relationships strengthen your mental resilience in the field?

The right people can help you process experiences and maintain perspective. Consider how you build and maintain these supportive connections.

ANSWER

6

Prompts to Build **Mental Resilience**

What personal signs tell you that you are reaching your mental limits?

Recognising your own warning signals is key to preventing burnout. Identify the patterns, thoughts, or feelings that indicate it's time to pause or step back.

ANSWER

7

How do you celebrate or acknowledge your successes in a healthy way?

Acknowledging positive outcomes can reinforce resilience. Think about the ways you mark progress and appreciate your own work without overworking yourself.

ANSWER

8

My Safety **Manifesto**

A safety manifesto is your personal commitment to protecting yourself in the field while doing your best work. It's a statement of principles you can return to before and after assignments — a reminder of what matters most to you as a photojournalist. Your manifesto should reflect both your values and your practical approach to staying safe, so that every decision in the field is guided by a clear sense of purpose.

Think about what safety means to you, how you want to work, and the boundaries you will not cross. Keep it honest, simple, and something you'll be proud to follow.

I commit to always…
In every assignment, I will…
I will never compromise on…
To protect myself and my work, I will…
I believe that safety means…

(You can use these as starting points or create your own unique phrasing.)



Every safe return is a step toward the next story

PHOTOJOURNALISM ACADEMY

Field Safety **Action Plan**

An action plan turns your safety intentions into concrete steps. This page is your space to set practical, achievable goals that will strengthen your safety habits in the coming weeks. The clearer your plan, the more likely you are to follow through — and the more natural these safety measures will become over time.

Choose three actions that you can start implementing immediately. Be specific. Include where, when, and how you will carry them out. Review your plan regularly and adjust as needed.

ACTION	DEADLINE
	*MM/DD/YYYY*

ACTION	DEADLINE
	*MM/DD/YYYY*

ACTION	DEADLINE
	*MM/DD/YYYY*



BONUS MATERIAL
Safety & Resilience Skills Inventory

IDENTIFY YOUR STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR GROWTH IN THE FIEL

Your safety and mental resilience in the field depend on more than instinct — they rely on a combination of practical skills, daily habits, and self-awareness. By taking a clear look at what you already do well and where you can improve, you create a personal roadmap for growth. This inventory is not about judgement; it's about awareness. The more honest you are in assessing your abilities, the more useful this tool will be. Some skills may already feel second nature, while others might need more focus and practice.

Use this page as a snapshot of where you are right now. Return to it after a few months to track your progress and see how your strengths evolve over time.

SKILL / HABIT	I ALREADY DO THIS CONSISTENTLY	I SOMETIMES DO THIS	I WANT TO IMPROVE THIS
RESEARCH LOCATION AND RISKS BEFORE ASSIGNMENT	☐	☐	☐
IDENTIFY AT LEAST TWO EXIT ROUTES	☐	☐	☐
MAINTAIN SOFT, NON-THREATENING BODY LANGUAGE	☐	☐	☐
TAKE REGULAR MENTAL RESET BREAKS	☐	☐	☐
RECOGNISE EARLY WARNING SIGNS OF TENSION	☐	☐	☐
DEBRIEF AFTER CHALLENGING ASSIGNMENTS	☐	☐	☐
MAINTAIN PHYSICAL READINESS FOR ASSIGNMENTS	☐	☐	☐
SEEK SUPPORT WHEN MENTALLY DRAINED	☐	☐	☐

BONUS MATERIAL
Turning Skills into Action

FROM SELF-ASSESSMENT TO PRACTICAL STEPS

Once you've identified your current safety and resilience skills, it's time to turn awareness into action. Use the sections below to choose specific habits or abilities you want to focus on and plan how to strengthen them in your daily work.

My strongest skill right now
What do you already excel at, and how will you maintain this strength?

One action I can take this week
A small, specific step you can complete in the next seven days.

My top area for improvement
Which skill needs the most work, and why is it important?

One action I can take this month
A bigger step to build lasting change and improvement.

PROJOURNALISM ACADEMY

BONUS MATERIAL Weekly Safety & Mindset Tracker

BUILD CONSISTENCY IN YOUR SAFETY HABITS AND MENTAL RESILIENCE

Good safety and resilience habits are built through regular practice, not occasional effort. By tracking your actions each day, you create awareness and accountability — two key elements for lasting improvement. This tracker is designed to help you monitor both physical safety measures and mental resilience practices in your daily work. It's not about perfection; it's about progress. At the end of each week, review your tracker. Celebrate what you've done well, note any gaps, and adjust your approach for the following week. Over time, these small, consistent actions will become second nature in the field.

WEEK OF		MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
SCANNED ENVIRONMENT BEFORE STARTING								
IDENTIFIED AT LEAST 2 EXIT ROUTES								
MAINTAINED SOFT, NON-THREATENING BODY LANGUAGE								
CHECKED CROWD MOOD AND LIGHT CONDITIONS								
KEPT SAFE DISTANCE AND MOBILITY								
TOOK A SHORT MENTAL RESET BREAK								
USED ONE FOCUS TECHNIQUE								
NOTED ONE POSITIVE OBSERVATION DURING ASSIGNMENT								
DEBRIEFED OR REFLECTED AFTER ASSIGNMENT								
PRACTICED A PERSONAL WELL-BEING HABIT								

COLOR YOUR MOOD
USE A COLOR TO REFLECT HOW YOU FELT THAT DAY:

- **Green** – Energized & motivated
- **Blue** – Calm & focused
- **Yellow** – Neutral or routine
- **Pink** – Frustrated or tired
- **Red** – Blocked or discouraged



PRINT AND REPEAT WEEKLY FOR BEST RESULTS

BONUS MATERIAL Mental Reset Journal – Daily Prompts

TWO QUICK REFLECTIONS TO STRENGTHEN AWARENESS EVERY DAY

A strong safety mindset grows with regular reflection. Taking a few minutes at the end of each day to note what helped you stay calm — and what challenged your focus — builds lasting awareness. Keep your answers short. Even one sentence in each column can help you spot patterns, refine your strategies, and strengthen your resilience over time.

WEEK OF

	WHAT HELPED ME STAY CALM TODAY?	WHAT CHALLENGED MY FOCUS AND HOW I RESPONDED?
☐ **MON**		
☐ **TUE**		
☐ **WED**		
☐ **THU**		
☐ **FRI**		
☐ **SAT**		
☐ **SUN**		



You don't have to grow fast.
You just have to keep growing.

BONUS MATERIAL My Safety Mindset

DISCOVER HOW YOU THINK AND ACT UNDER PRESSURE

Every photographer develops a personal safety mindset — a way of thinking and acting that shapes decisions in the field. Understanding yours will help you build on your strengths and address any habits that could put you at risk. This awareness is the first step to becoming both safer and more effective in your work.

STRENGTHS UNDER PRESSURE – WHAT HELPS ME STAY SAFE?

When you know your strengths, you can rely on them in demanding situations. Identify the habits, instincts, and strategies that keep you safe and focused when conditions change.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

What habits help me remain aware in unpredictable situations?

How do I stay calm when events change rapidly?

What makes me feel most in control in the field?

VULNERABILITIES – WHAT PUTS ME AT RISK?

Recognising your vulnerabilities helps you plan better and avoid repeating mistakes. Be honest about the situations or behaviours that could compromise your safety.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

What situations make me lose focus or awareness?

How do I tend to react when I feel rushed or stressed?

Which safety measures do I sometimes skip and why?

BONUS MATERIAL My Resilience Drivers

DISCOVER WHAT KEEPS YOU MENTALLY STRONG IN THE FIELD

Mental resilience is sustained by knowing what energises you, motivates you, and helps you recover after challenges. By identifying your personal drivers, you can ensure that your approach to work remains balanced, focused, and sustainable over the long term.

ENERGY SOURCES – WHAT RECHARGES ME?

Your energy sources keep you balanced and able to perform at your best. They can be people, activities, or environments that restore your focus and creativity.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

What activities or environments help me recover after intense work?



Who in my life provides positive support and perspective?



When do I feel most mentally refreshed?



LONG-TERM FUEL – WHAT KEEPS ME GOING?

The deeper reasons you do this work — and your vision for the future — provide long-term motivation. Knowing them helps you keep going even when conditions are tough.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

What is my deeper purpose for working in this field?



How do I want to grow in the next 1–3 years?



What signs will tell me I am still working in balance?





Closing Reflection

CARRYING SAFETY AND RESILIENCE INTO EVERY ASSIGNMENT

Your safety and resilience are the foundation of every story you tell. The stronger these foundations, the more stories you will be able to share over the years — and the more trust you will build with your audience, your colleagues, and yourself.

Remember: safety is not a limitation, it is an enabler. When you know how to protect your body and mind, you open the door to working with clarity, confidence, and creativity in any environment.

Carry forward the tools, reflections, and habits from this journal into your daily work. Let them guide your preparation, your decisions in the field, and your recovery afterwards.

Your mission from here: *Go into the field prepared, stay aware, protect yourself — and keep telling the world's stories.*

NOTES

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M1 BA | M1 BB | M1 BC | M2 BA | M2 BB | M2 BC | M3 BA | M3 BB | M3 BC | M4 BA | M4 BB | M4 BC | M5 BA | M5 BB | M5 BC | M6 BA | **M6 BB** | M6 BC

ESSENTIAL
PROFESSIONAL
EXPERT

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