

Needfinding

Press Play: Interactive Device Design | July 23, 2012

The Nature of Needs

Why observe people listening to music?

Needs Exercise Part I

Design a New Product



5:00

Image from flickr: estherg

Needfinding

What Is It?

A Process for Discovering people's explicit and implicit needs so that we can create appropriate solutions.

What Do You See Here?

Not: What Do You Interpret Here



Distinctions For Needfinding

☐ NEED is a VERB

A physical, psychological or cultural requirement of an individual, or of a group of individuals.

☐ SOLUTION is a NOUN

An object, action or process that satisfies a need.

Design Activity Part II

Design to Solve a Need

high shelf.
To reach something on a



3:00

Types of Needs

An iceberg floating in the ocean. The tip of the iceberg is above the water line, while the much larger base is submerged below the surface. The sky is blue with light clouds, and the water is a deep blue.

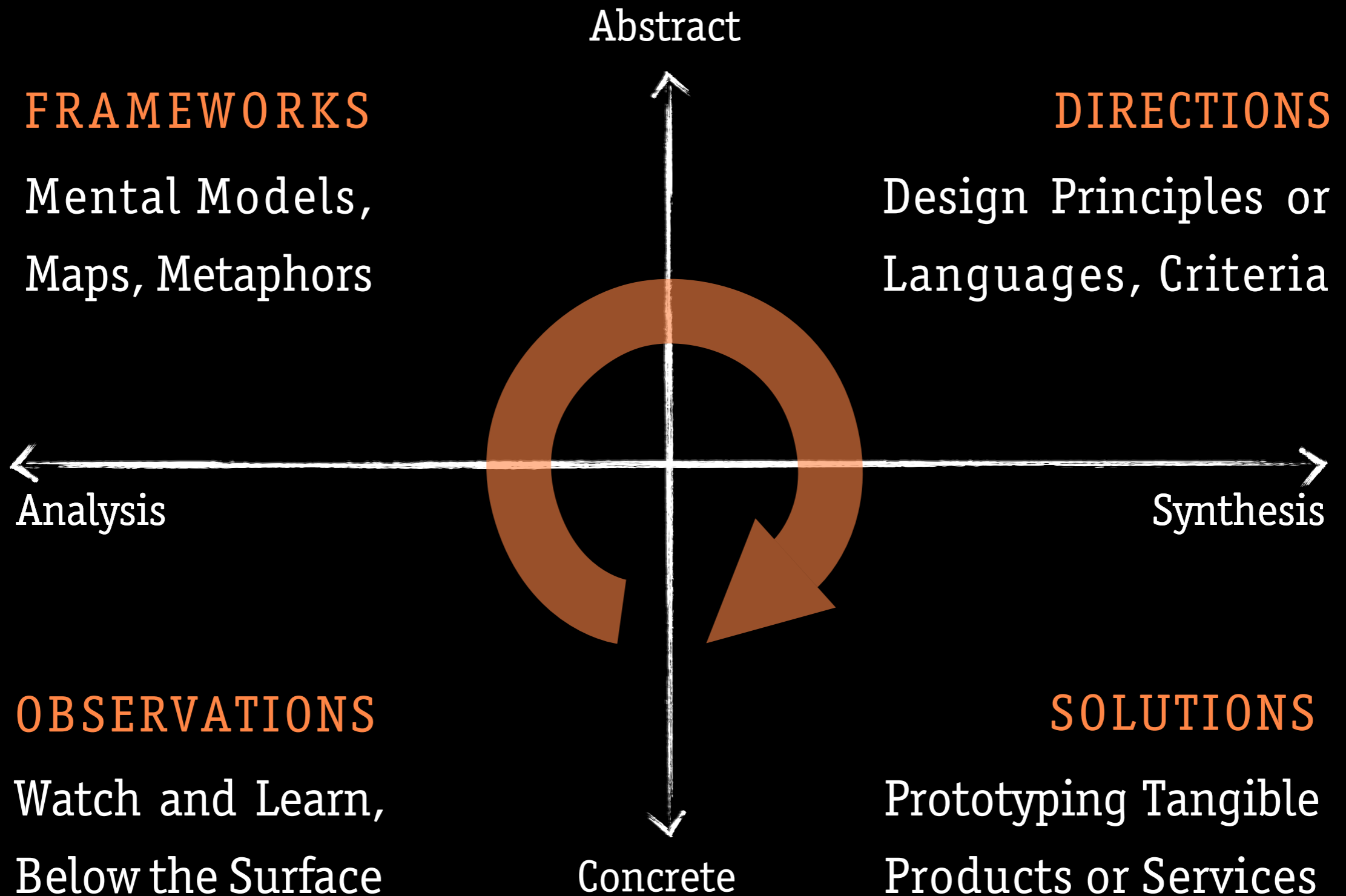
EXPLICIT

Directly expressed by the needer.
Or perceived by the needfinder.

IMPLICIT

Not directly expressed by the needer.
Requires active, creative interpretation by the needfinder.

Needfinding Process



How to Start Needfinding?

Learn to Observe (Watch & Ask) Thoughtfully

Observations

Start by Watching

Watch. Get bored. Then watch some more.

Interesting, unexpected or notable things.

Look for 'workarounds' in what people do.

Emotionally charged moments or reactions.

Ask yourselves 'why' these should happen.

What to Watch For

A.E.I.O.U.

Activities (at Many Levels)

aeiou AEIOU

Environments

Interactions

aeiou aeiou

aeiou

aeiou
AEIOU

Objects

aeiou

uoiea

Users

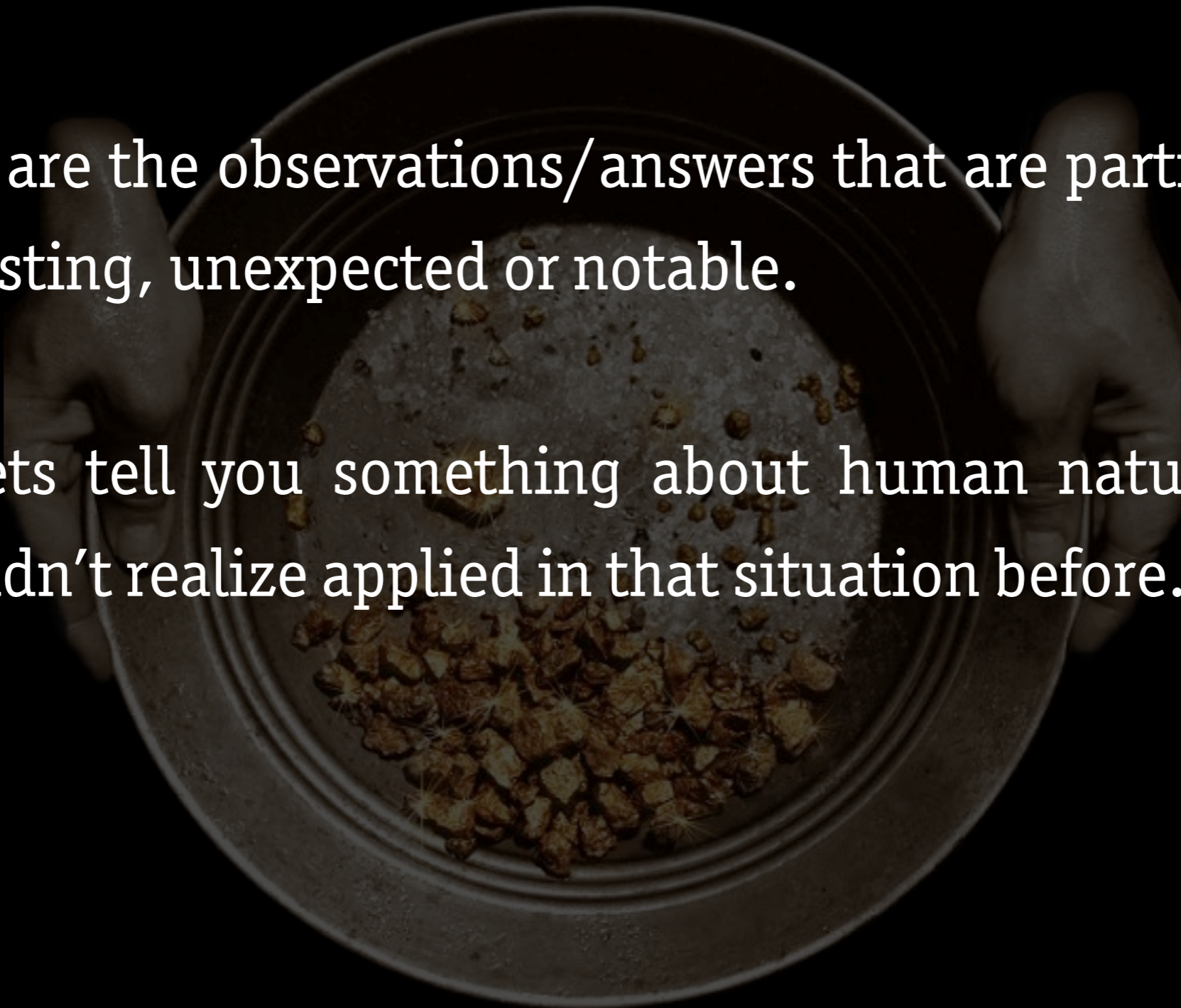
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What to Find 'Nuggets!'

These are the observations/answers that are particularly interesting, unexpected or notable.

Nuggets tell you something about human nature that you didn't realize applied in that situation before.



Example Nuggets At the Meat Counter



Example Nuggets

At the Gas Station



Image from flickr: tjdevey

More on Observations

Continue 'Observing' by Asking

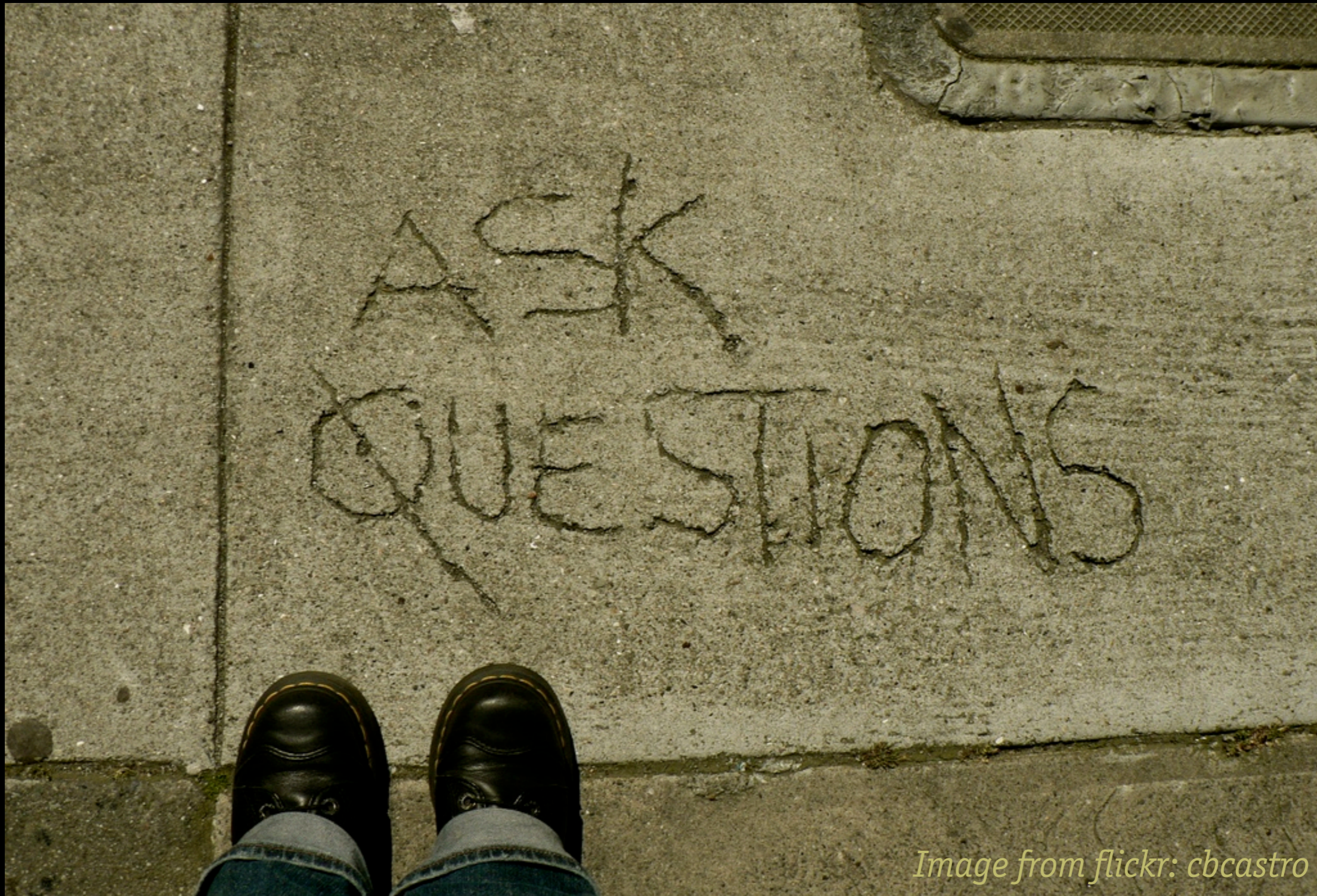


Image from flickr: cbcastro

Observe and Ask

Try to Avoid 'Why'

Don't ask directly 'why' someone does something. They probably haven't thought about why before, and will come up with an answer just because you asked.

Think of indirect ways to get at the data that you want.

Ask open-ended questions, then follow where they lead.

The Nature of Needs

One of the Fundamental Challenges

Needfinding About Frames

The rule sets that people use to interpret the world.



Image from flickr: silversldr

About Frames

Developing Empathy

Escaping your own frame is fundamental to needfinding.

To do so, you have to recognize what that frame is, and be sensitive to those of others. To 'get inside their heads.'

To effectively needfind, you need to forget about your problems, and care about other people's lives.

A Coffee Story

Frames and Needs



Not All Needs Are Equal

There is a Hierarchy of Needs

COMMON Need to be loved Shared needs of nearly everyone

WHY?

CONTEXT Need to get married Same age, profession, religion

HOW?

ACTIVITY Need to go on a date Same context, do the same thing

HOW?

QUALIFIER Need to hold a hot cup Do the same thing, the same way

Need to get to the store

Need to set a meet time

Creating a Needs Hierarchy

Common, Context, Activity, Qualifier



Empathizing with Others

Patricia Moore



Key to Great Needfinding

Indirectly, from Dale Carnegie



If you want people to be interested in you, you need to be genuinely interested in other people.

In-Class Activity

Photos and Verplank diagrams

Homework for Next Week

Deep dive: Preliminary MP3 player designs

Parts list, interface and software design