What? | How? | Why?

concrete ← → emotional

WHAT (what are they doing in the photo?)	HOW (how are they doing it?)	WHY (why are they doing it this way? Take a guess!)
-little girl picking root vegetables	-she's smiling, even though it looks bigger than her, it looks fun	-somehow it's been made into a game...gardening is fun...getting messy is fun to her?

WHY use What? | How? | Why?

During observation mode, What? | How? | Why? is a tool that can help you drive to deeper levels of observation. This simple scaffolding allows you to move from concrete observations of the happenings of a particular situation to the more abstract potential emotions and motives that are at play in the situation you're observing. This is a particularly powerful technique to leverage when analyzing photos that your team has taken into the field, both for synthesis purposes, and to direct your team to future areas of needfinding.

HOW to use What? | How? | Why?

Set-up: Divide a sheet into three sections: What?, How?, and Why?

Start with concrete observations:
What is the person you're observing doing in a particular situation or photograph? Use descriptive phrases packed with adjectives and relative descriptions.

Move to understanding:
How is the person you're observing doing what they are doing? Does it require effort? Do they appear rushed? Pained? Does the activity or situation appear to be impacting the user's state of being either positively or negatively? Again, use as many descriptive phrases as possible here.

Step out on a limb of interpretation:
Why is the person you're observing doing what they're doing, and in the particular way that they are doing it? This step usually requires that you make informed guesses regarding motivation and emotions. Step out on a limb in order to project meaning into the situation that you have been observing. This step will reveal assumptions that you should test with users, and often uncovers unexpected realizations about a particular situation.

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