

# Designing with Empathy



Aaron Gustafson  
@AaronGustafson  
[adaptivewebdesign.info](http://adaptivewebdesign.info)



# Designing with Empathy



Design ≠ Art





Art serves the Artist

**“I’ve been amazed at how often those outside the discipline of design assume that what designers do is decoration—likely because so much bad design simply is decoration. Good design isn’t. Good design is problem solving.”**

**– Jeffrey Veen**



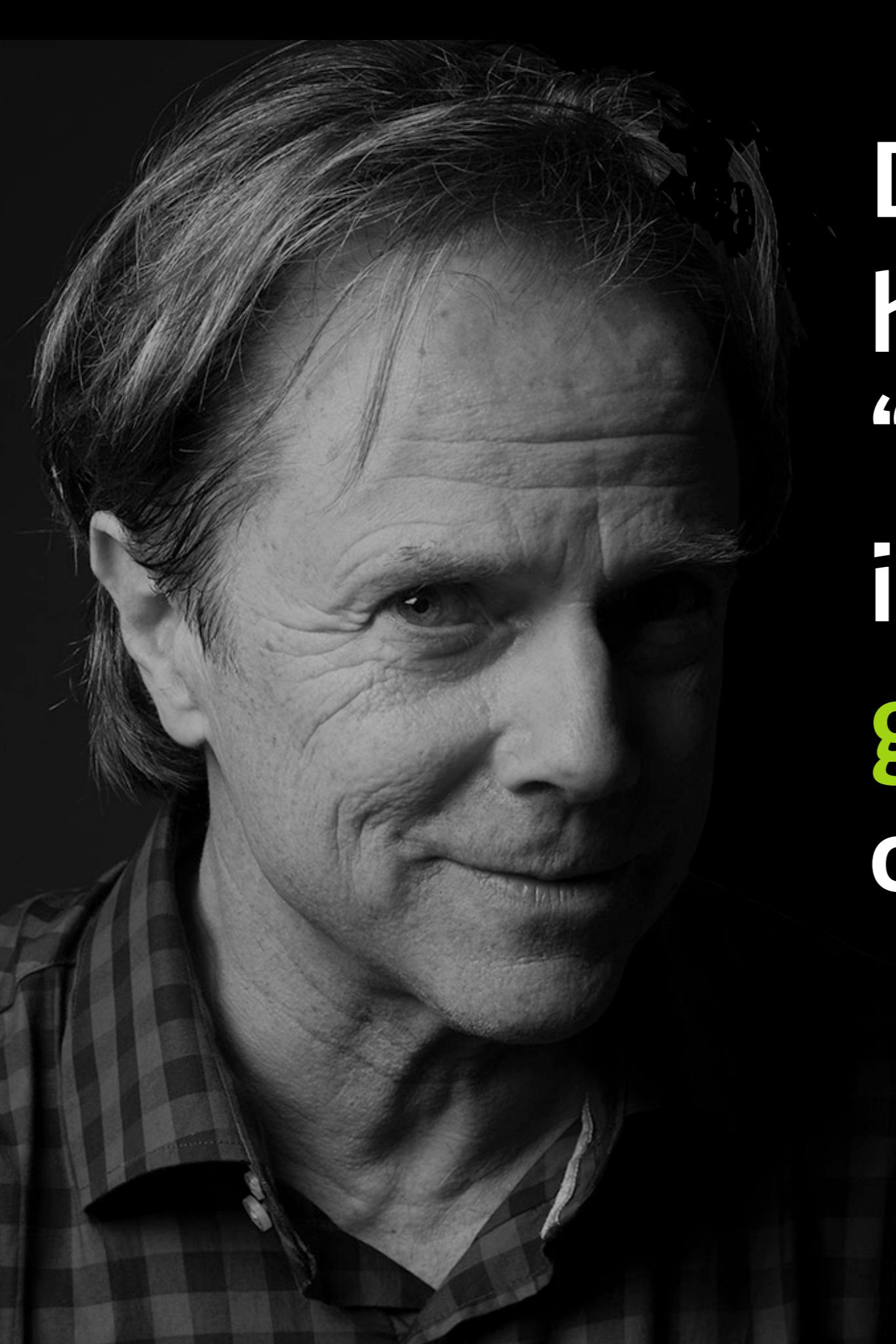
# de-sign

/də'zīn/

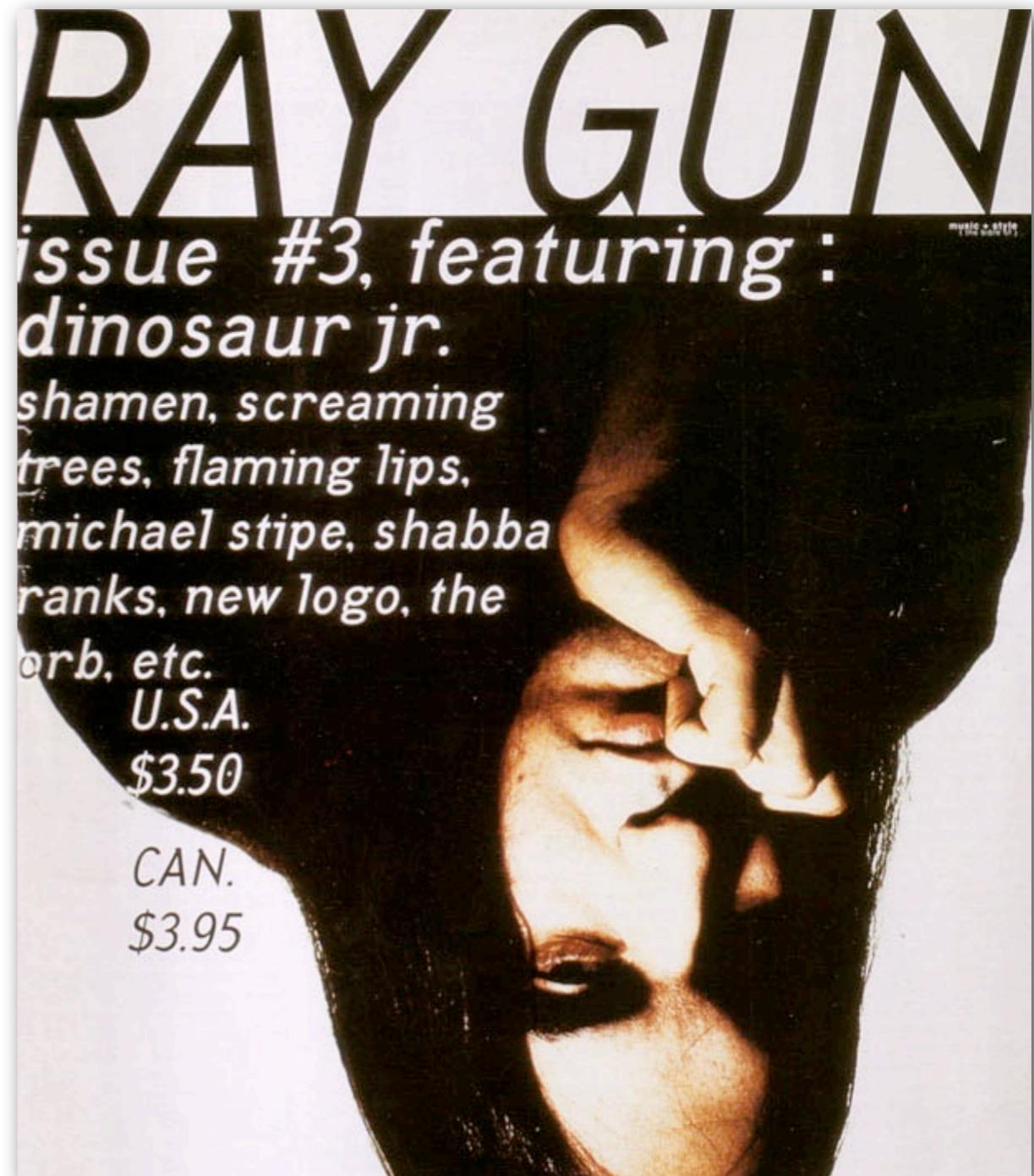
To devise for a specific function or end

Classical: To indicate

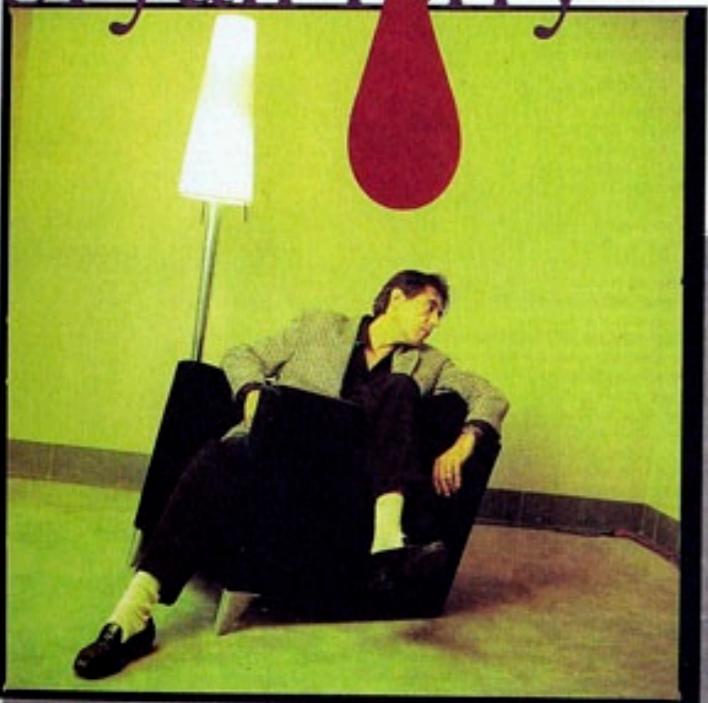
Medieval Latin: *designare*, to mark out

A black and white close-up photograph of David Carson's face. He has long, light-colored hair and is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. His skin shows signs of age, including wrinkles and a prominent brow.

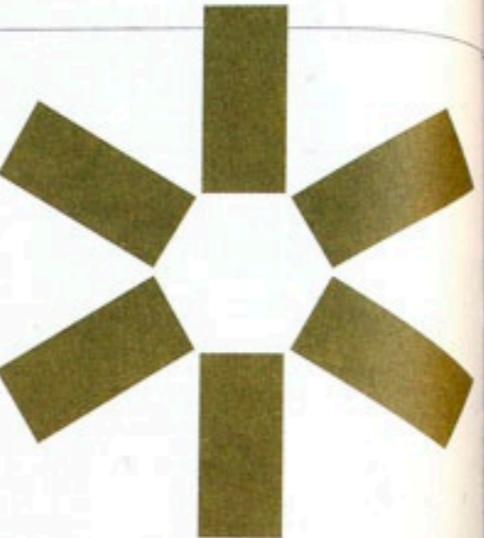
David Carson  
has been called  
“the most  
influential  
**graphic designer**  
of our times”



# bryant + co.

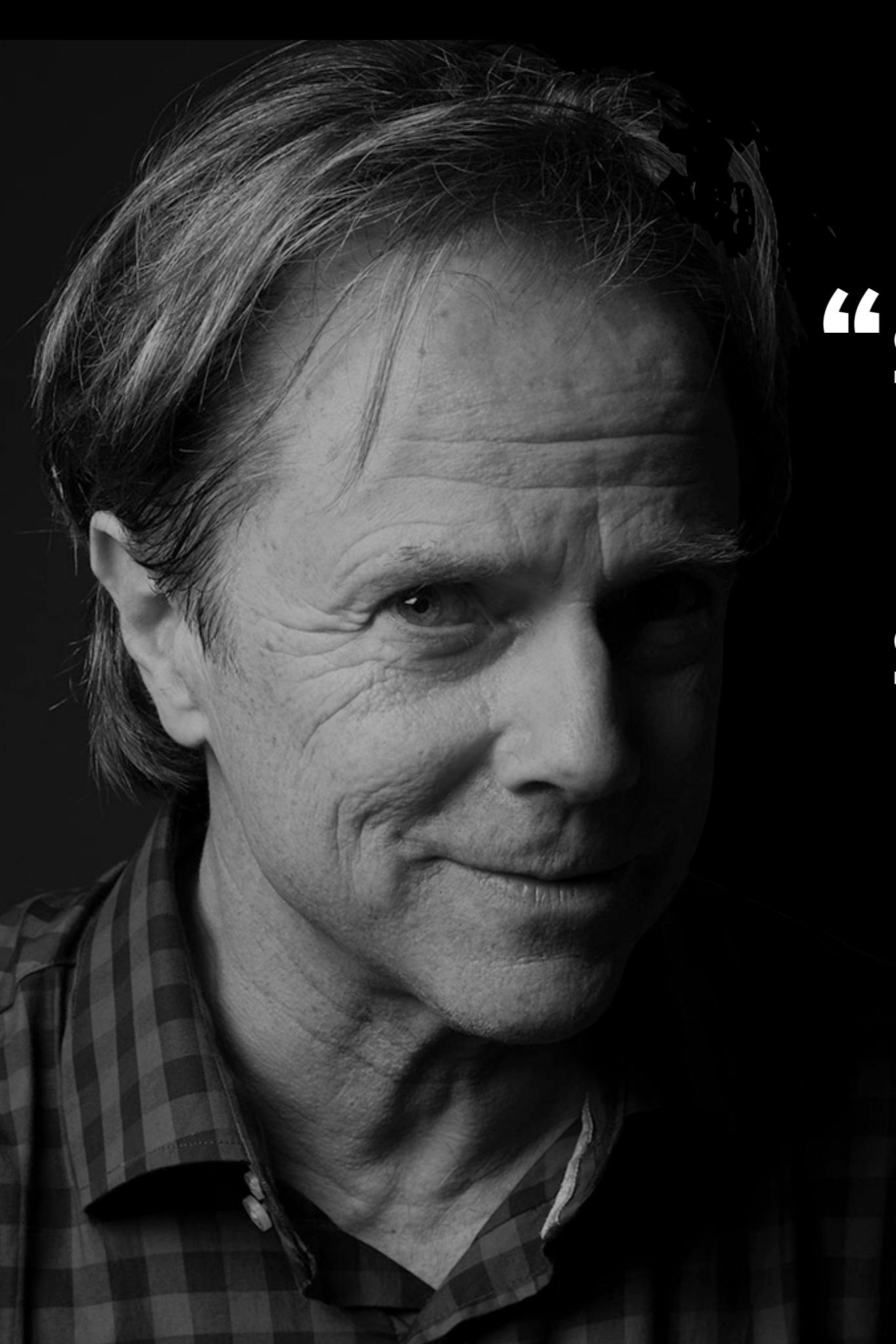


photos: Peter Morello stylist: Jill Spector



**It was Art**

**It was Ego**

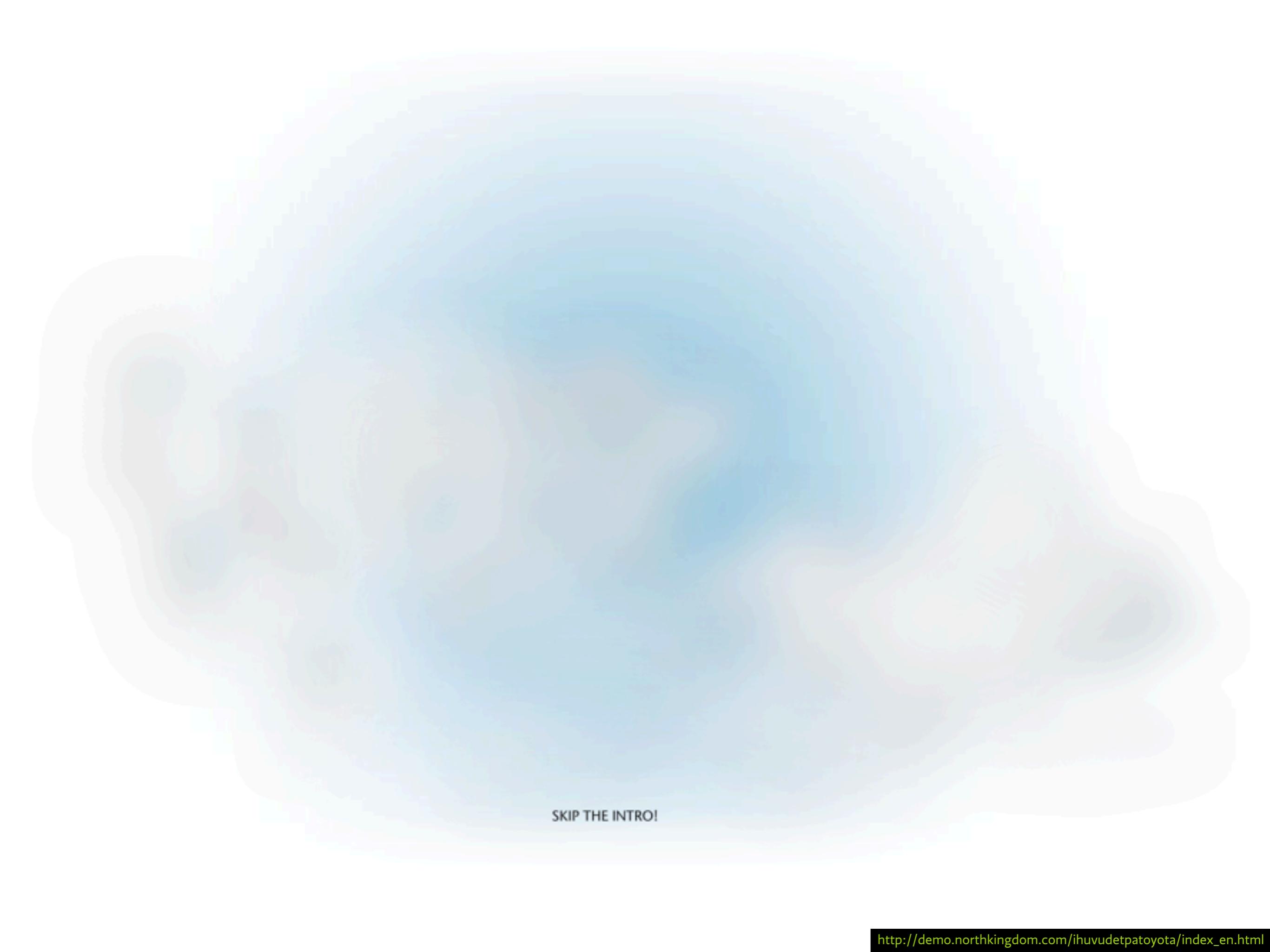
A black and white close-up photograph of a man's face. He has long, dark hair that is slightly messy. His eyes are blue and have a thoughtful, somewhat weary expression. He is wearing a plaid shirt. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and shadows.

**“subjective,  
personal, and  
self-indulgent”**



“Your ego is a  
bad designer.”

– Christopher Butler



SKIP THE INTRO!



#04 #05 #07 #18 #25 #33 #40 #49 #51 #61 #74 #86 #92 #96 #114 ⓘ



TOYOTA

#04

#05

#07

#18

#25

#33

#40

**#49**

#51

#61

#74

#86

#92

#96

#114

(2)

Easy Flat System

# YESHIVAH OF FLATBUSH

## הישיבה דפלטבוש



X

Yom HaShoah Community Program- featuring Witness Theater Sunday April 7 7:00pm



quick news: 3/06/2013 - 1st Annual Engineering Symposium at JBHS! [Read More](#)





quick news: 4/15/2013 8:00 PM - Yom Ha'atzmaut Community Program Monday April 15, 2013





Just because you can  
**doesn't** mean you should





Design  
isn't about  
showing off

# Design to



communicate  
not alienate

**Design = Creativity  
for Communication**

# Designing with Empathy

# em·pa·thy

/'em-pə-thē/

From the Greek *empathia* meaning  
“state of emotion”

# **em·pa·thy**

**/'em-pə-thē/**

**The action of understanding, being aware of, being sensitive to, and vicariously experiencing the feelings, thoughts, and experience of another ... without having the feelings, thoughts, and experience fully communicated in an objectively explicit manner**



Meet  
Charlie



and  
**Jack**





# Observe



Question



**Listen**

A sepia-toned photograph of a man with glasses and long hair, sitting in a chair with his hand on his chin, looking thoughtful.

Use your **intuition**



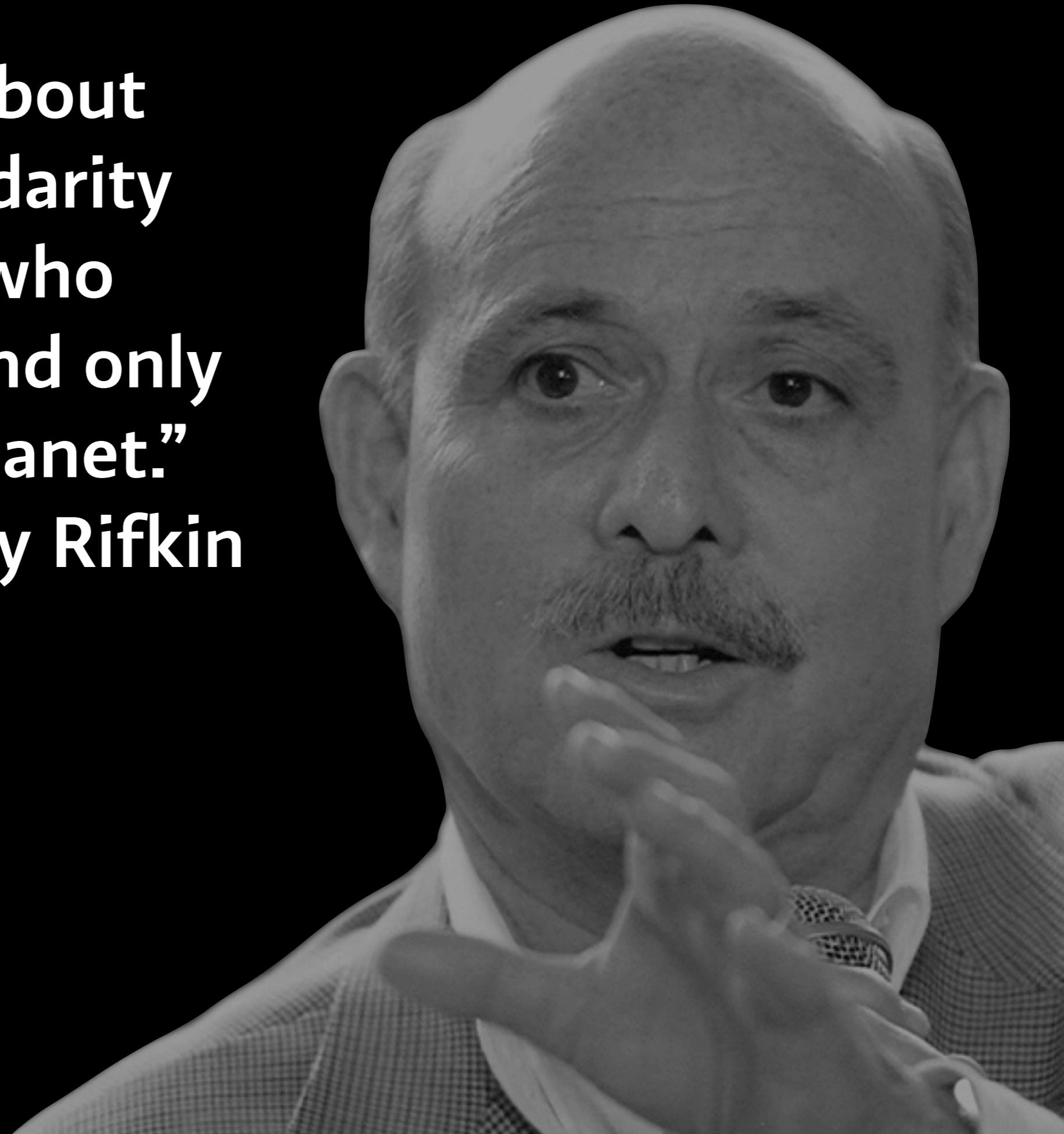
**Be Patient**

# Perspective is everything



**“Empathy is about  
showing solidarity  
with others who  
have a one and only  
life on this planet.”**

**– Jeremy Rifkin**





Solidarity requires  
communication

# Global Community



## Nation States



## Religious Groups



## Tribes



Global response  
within 3 hours

# **em·pa·thy**

**/'em-pə-thē/**

**The action of understanding, being aware of, being sensitive to, and vicariously experiencing the feelings, thoughts, and experience of another ... without having the feelings, thoughts, and experience fully communicated in an objectively explicit manner**

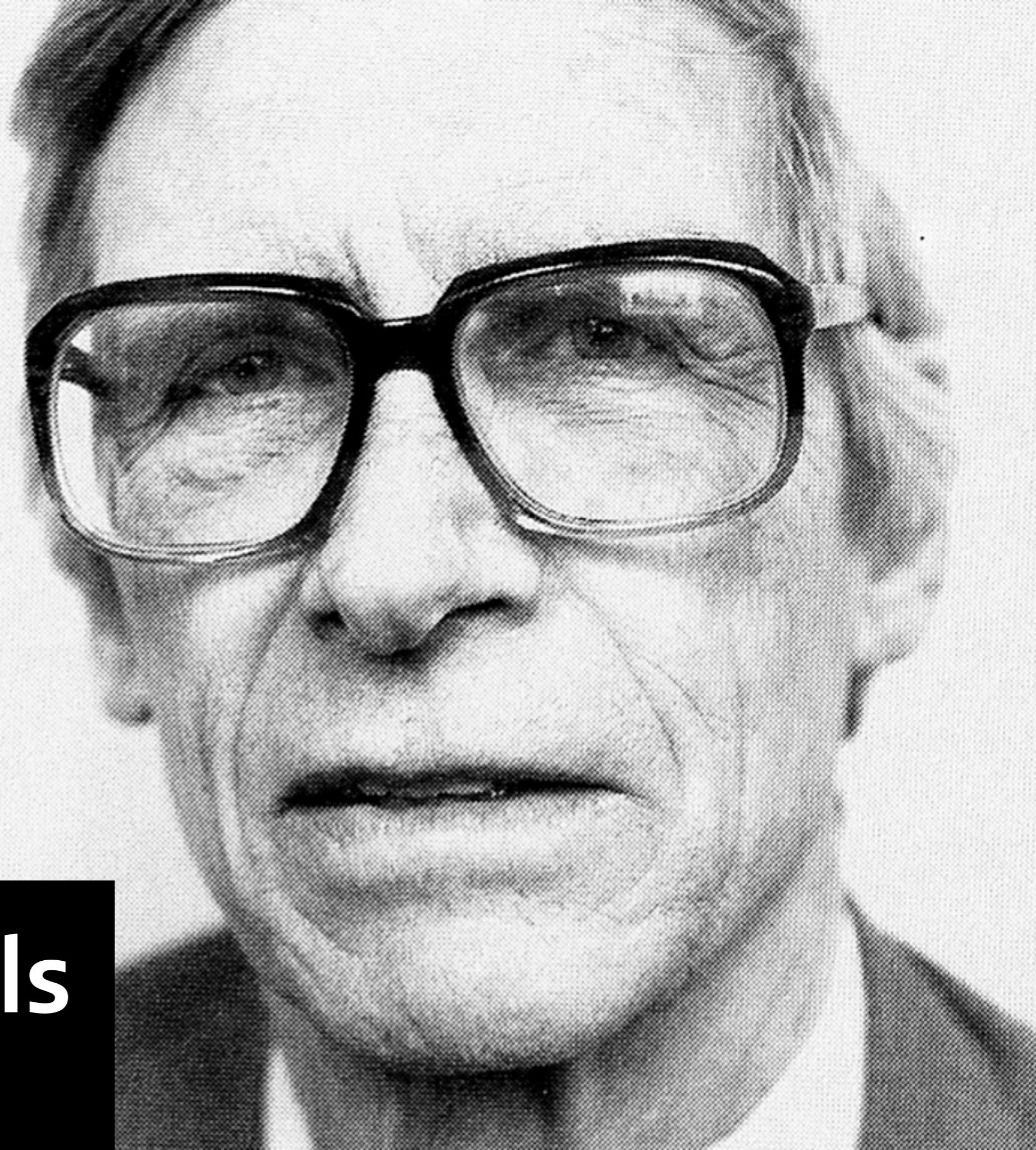
# **em·pa·thy**

*/'em-pə-thē/*

**The action of understanding, being aware of, being sensitive to, and vicariously experiencing the feelings, thoughts, and experience of another ... without having the feelings, thoughts, and experience fully communicated in an objectively explicit manner**

**Also:** the capacity for this

**John Rawls**  
1921-2002



# Selfishness is a **survival instinct**



We are able to empathize by  
seeing ourselves  
in others.





**Aw, dude.**



**That sticks.**

# Personas

# foster empathy



“Tell me more! I need Internet at home and in my classroom. So, it’s got to work. When I do have trouble, though, I want to be able to fix it quickly on my own.”

My school continuously strives to be a premier educational institution in the state of Georgia. Technology is now a part of our everyday lives, so I use technology and the Internet in my classroom. I use it for personal projects, but also for classroom projects with all of my students. When in a classroom with 30 middle school kids, I don’t have time to call the DSL provider if I have trouble with the connection. So, I

## Teach Me **TINA**

### LEARNING FOCUSED Teacher

title

Science Teacher

company name

Crabapple Middle School

industry

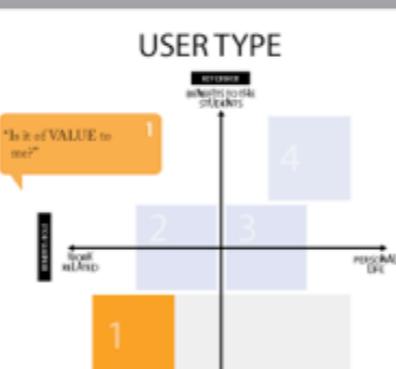
Education

location

Roswell, Georgia

description

Crabapple Middle School has enjoyed twenty plus years of excellence in education since its opening in 1983. In 1988, Crabapple Middle became Fulton County's first National School of Excellence and a Georgia School of Excellence. In 2003, Crabapple Middle was recognized as one of the first Georgia Lighthouse School to Watch for excellence in middle level education.



KEY VALUES

#### EMPLOYMENT

- » Medium sized middle school - Science teacher - Southeastern United States

#### TECH SAVVY

- » Knows some computer jargon, but may need further explanations for some terms and concepts

#### COMMUNICATION PREFERENCES

- » Likes seeing connection speed and other detailed information pertaining to her DSL connection

Credit: Kevin O'Connor

They also  
frequently  
devolve  
into another  
name for  
**“the user”**





Personas  
need to  
be real.

They need  
to be  
human.

User Scenarios =  
situational empathy

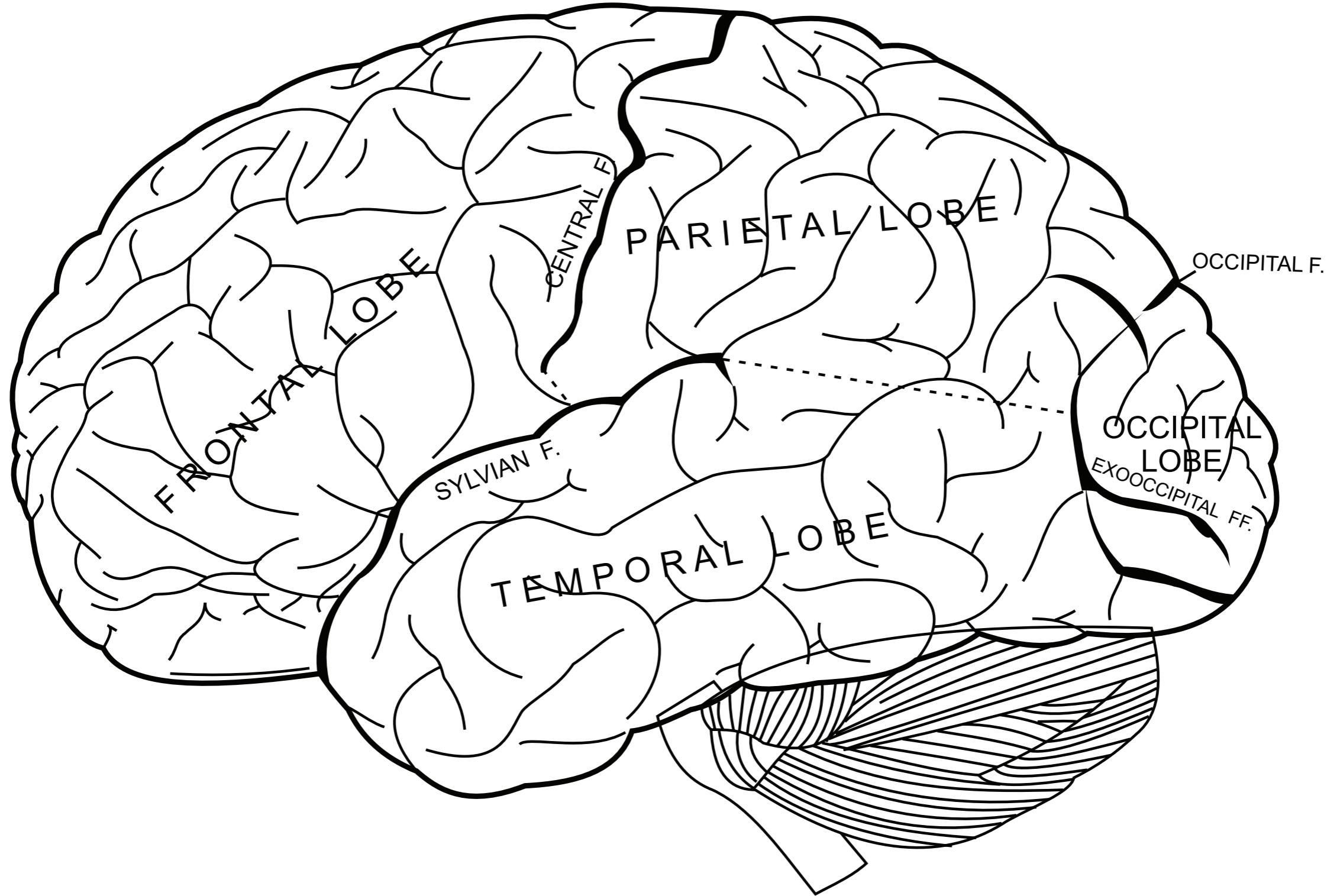


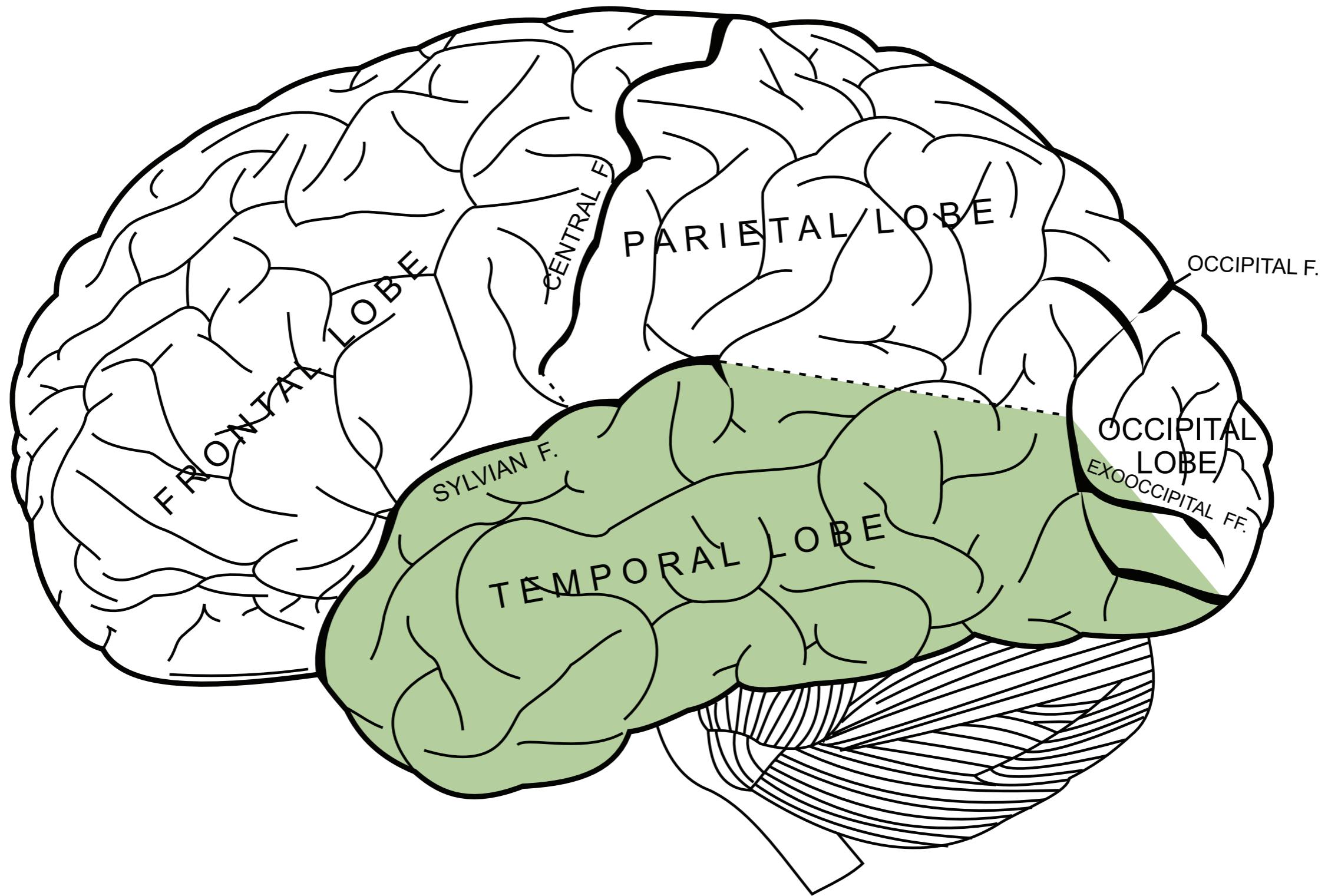
User Scenarios =  
situational empathy

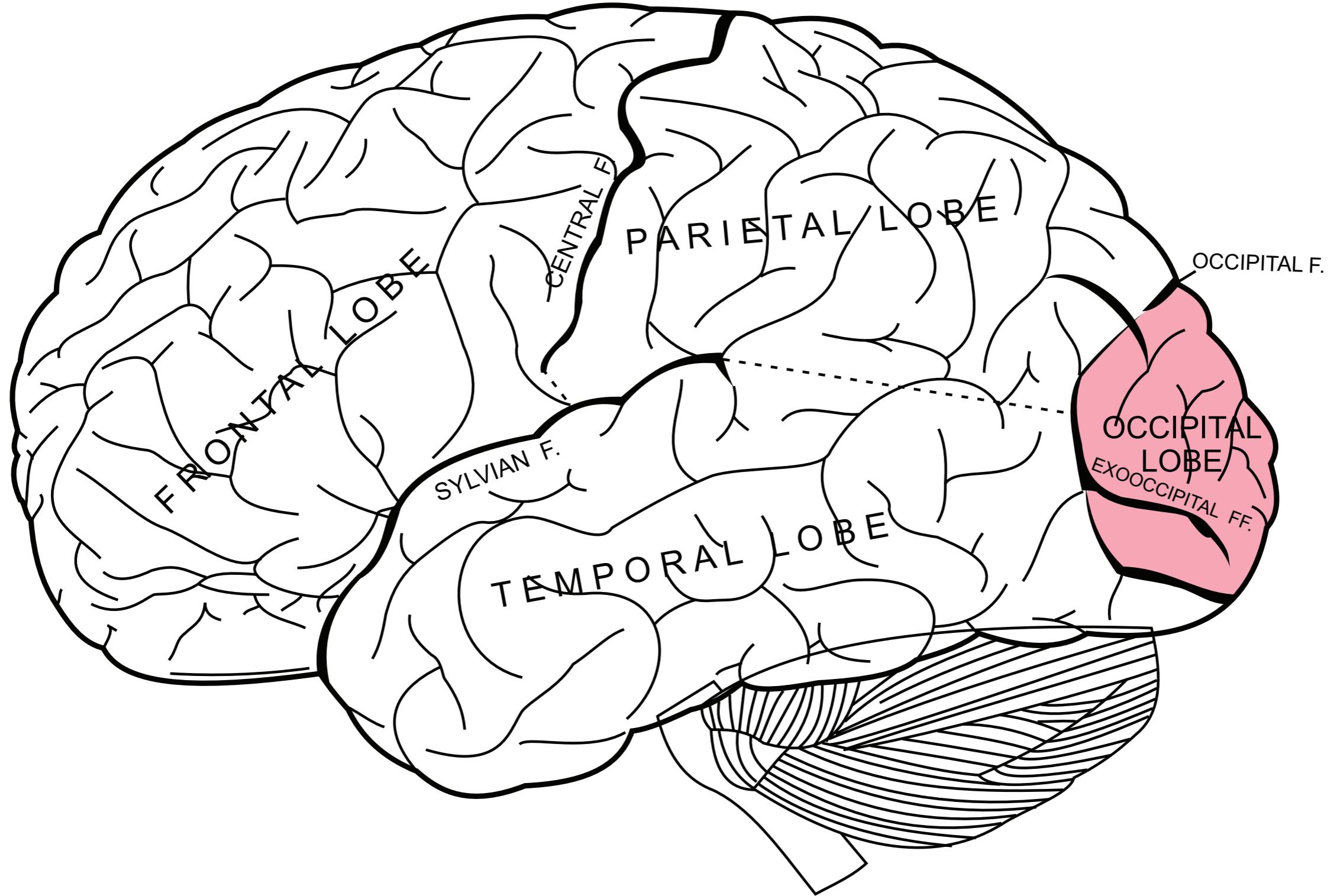


A photograph showing three individuals from behind, looking down at a desk and working together. They appear to be engaged in a collaborative task, possibly related to design or problem-solving, given the context of the text overlay.

Design is  
problem  
solving







# Call out the relevant facts:

Bob is a mechanic

He is left-handed

He wants to look up parts info (and possibly order a replacement part) while under a car



We only need enough detail  
to be able to put ourselves in  
his shoes.



We only need **enough detail**  
to be able to put ourselves in  
his shoes.

Who cares  
about his  
macchiato  
addiction?



# We want info on his

- goals,



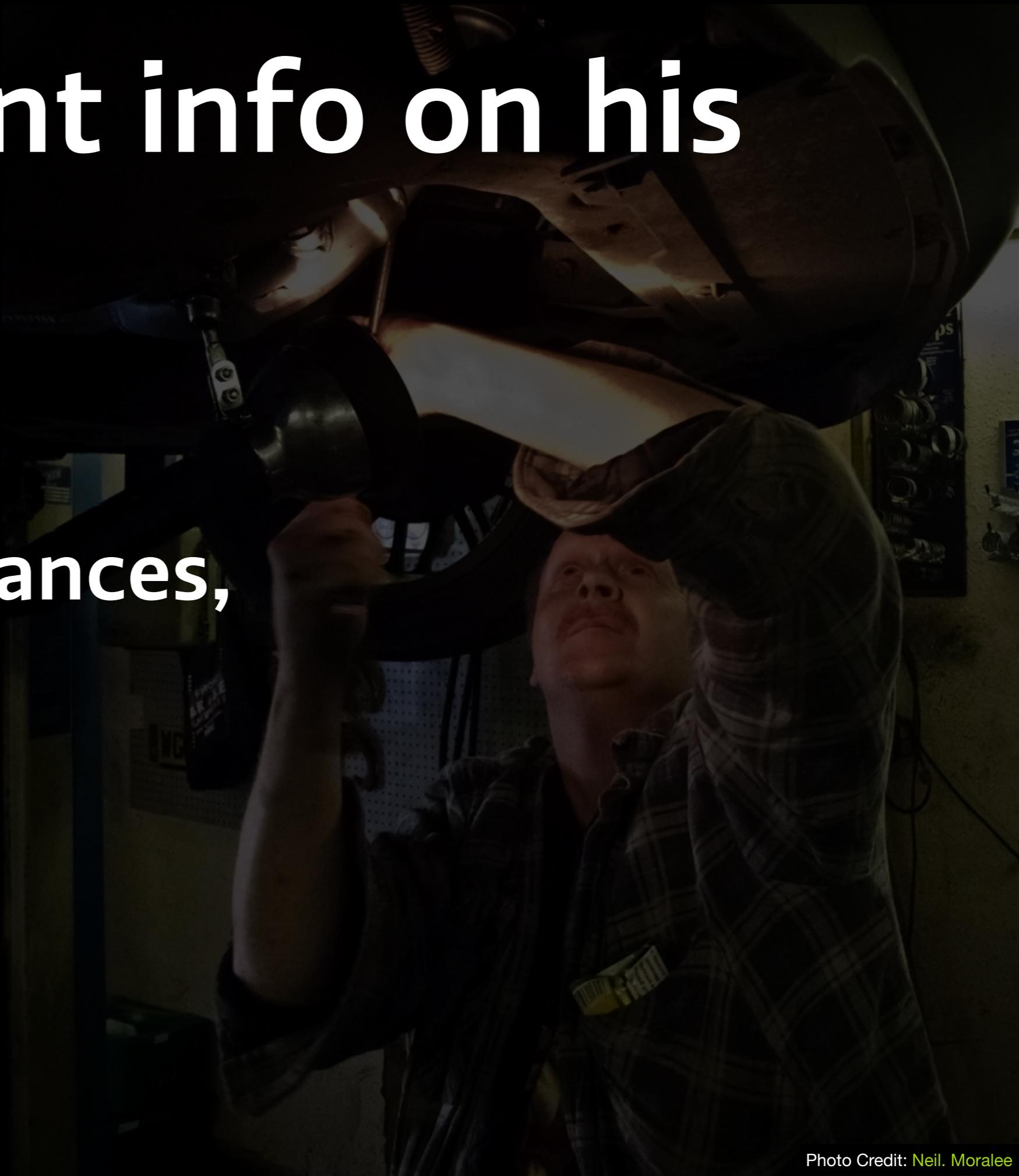
# We want info on his

- goals,
- needs,



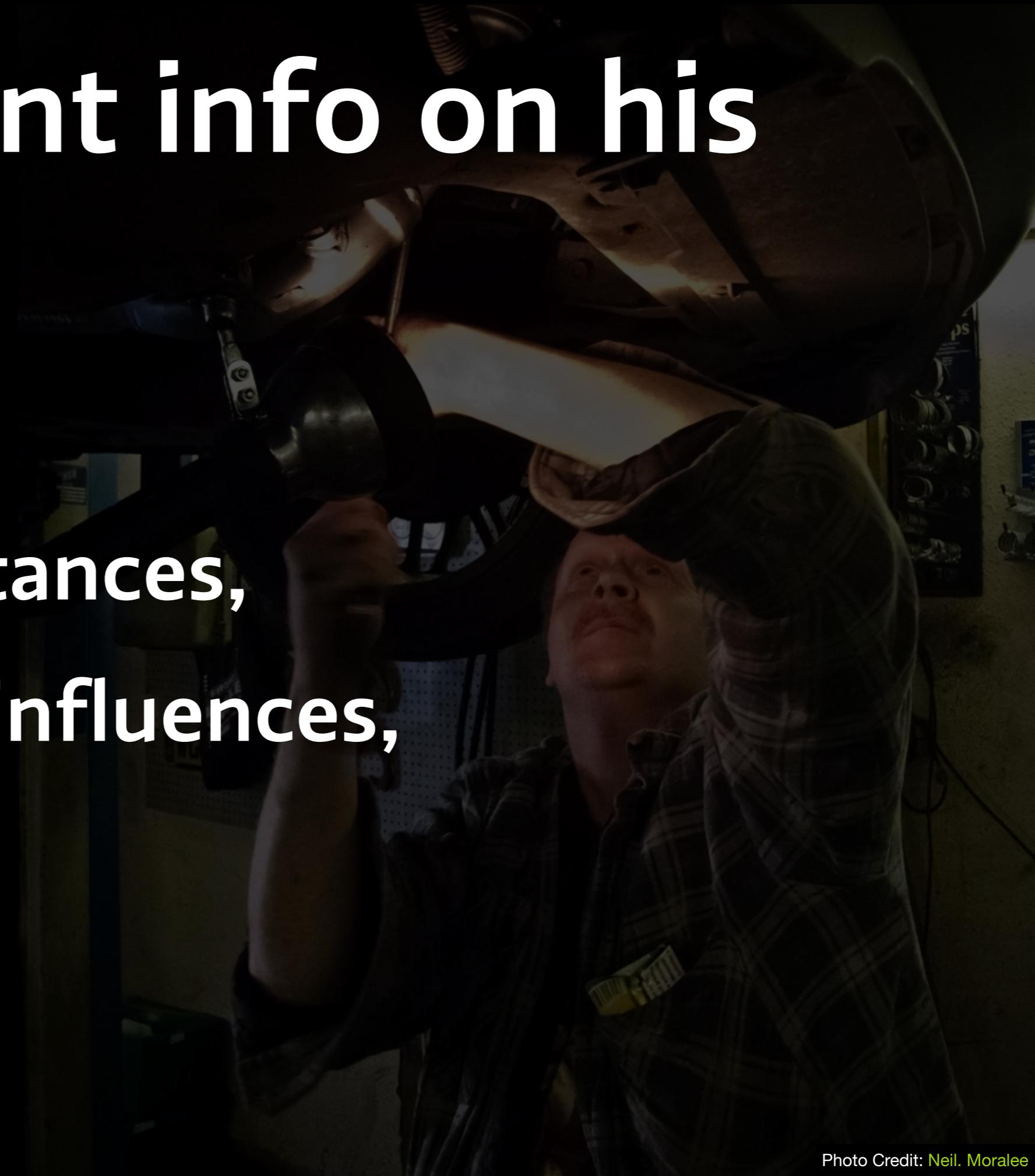
# We want info on his

- goals,
- needs,
- circumstances,



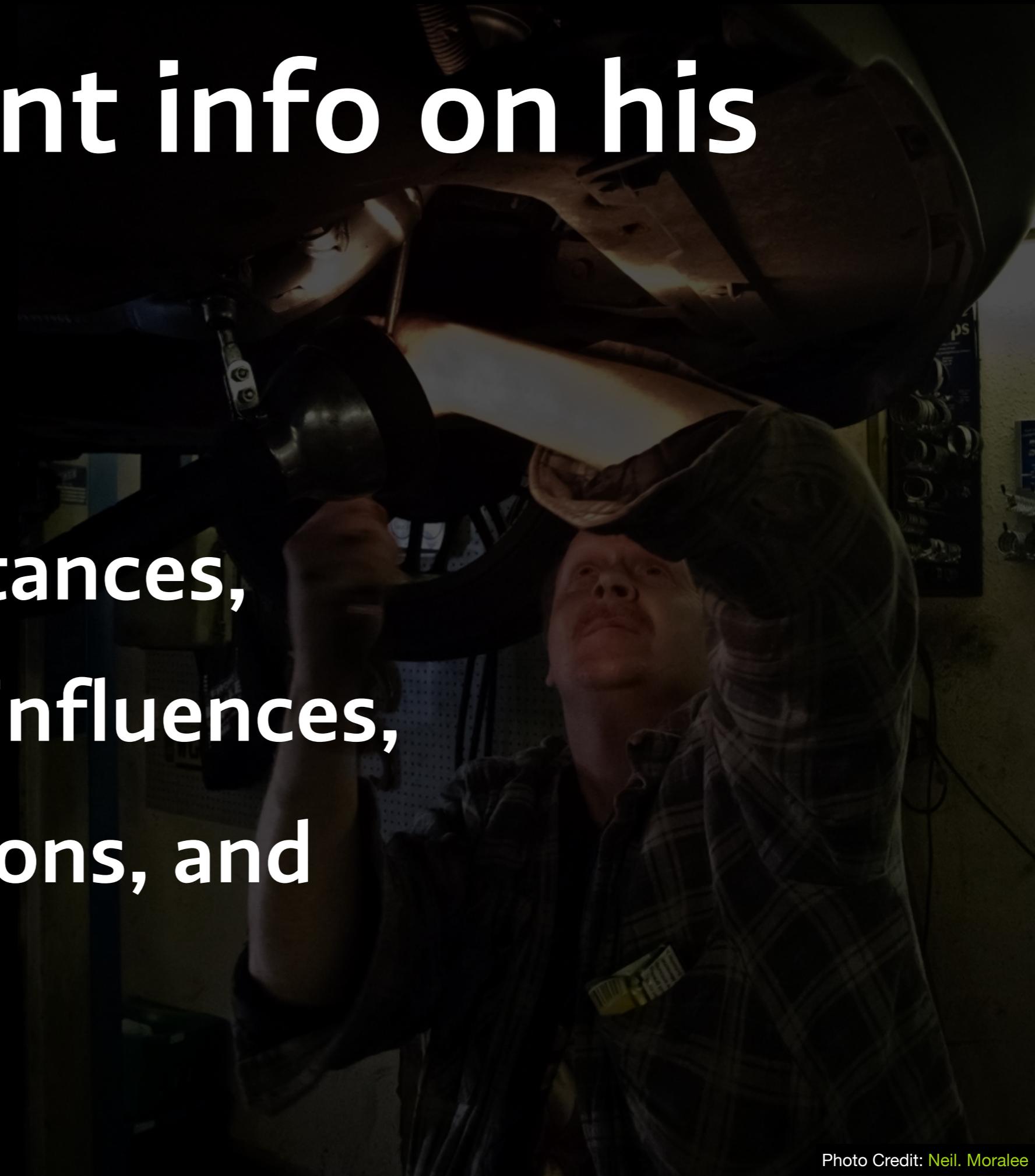
# We want info on his

- goals,
- needs,
- circumstances,
- outside influences,



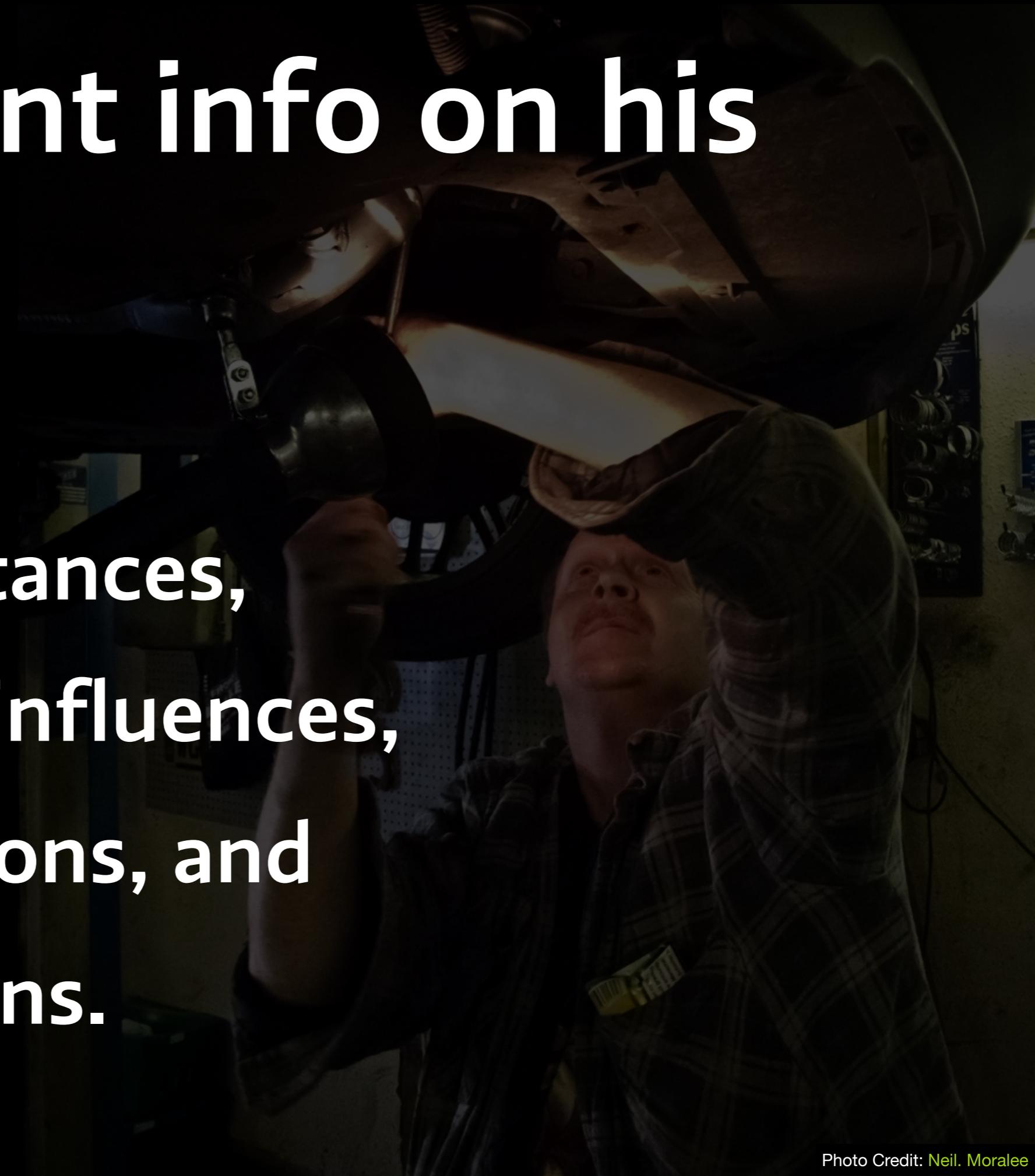
# We want info on his

- goals,
- needs,
- circumstances,
- outside influences,
- distractions, and



# We want info on his

- goals,
- needs,
- circumstances,
- outside influences,
- distractions, and
- limitations.



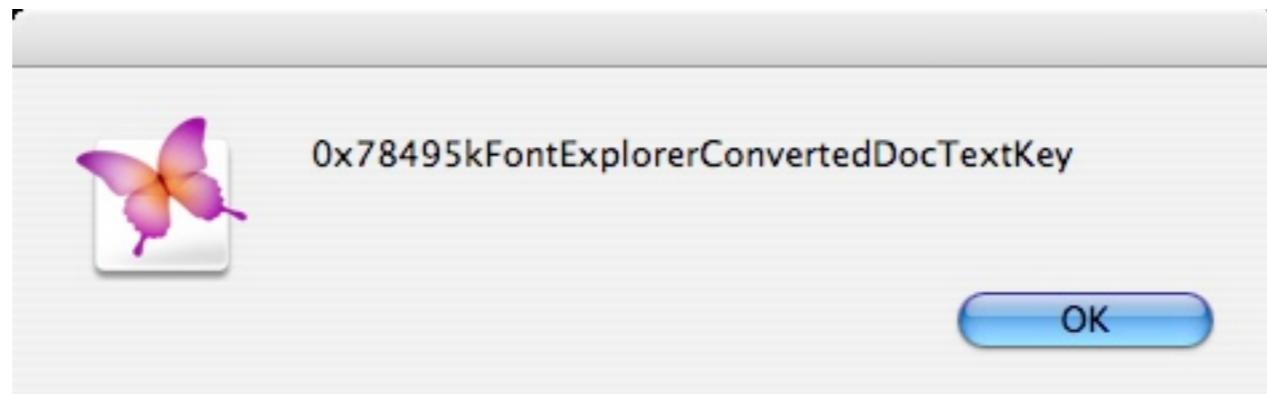
User scenarios help us  
empathize in a **productive** way





# Set a **performance budget**





Author appropriate content

# Consider physical limitations





Facilitate **satisfaction**

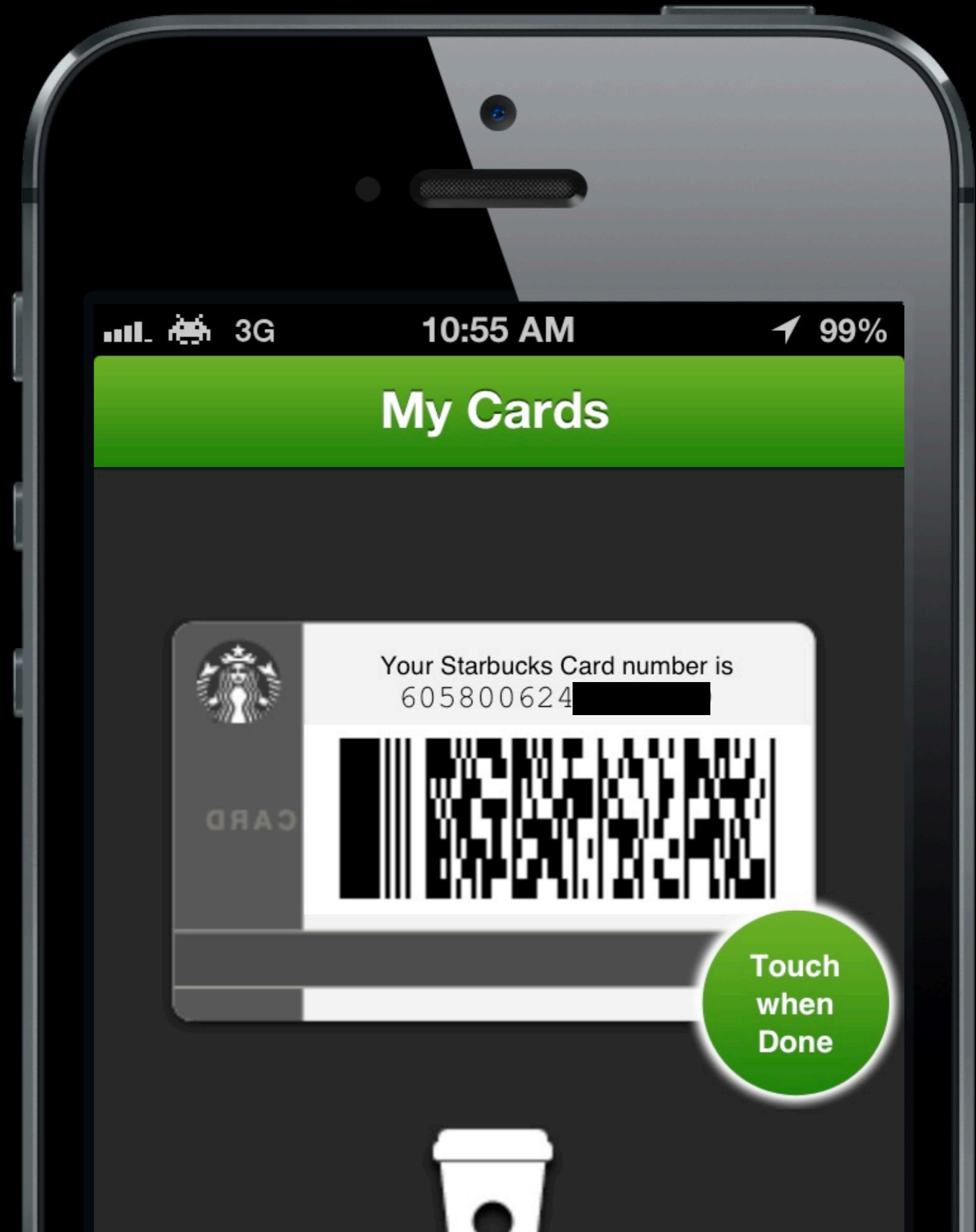
# Don't create unnecessary barriers



Don't force  
your agenda  
on your  
customers



# Consider indirect users



# Consider indirect users

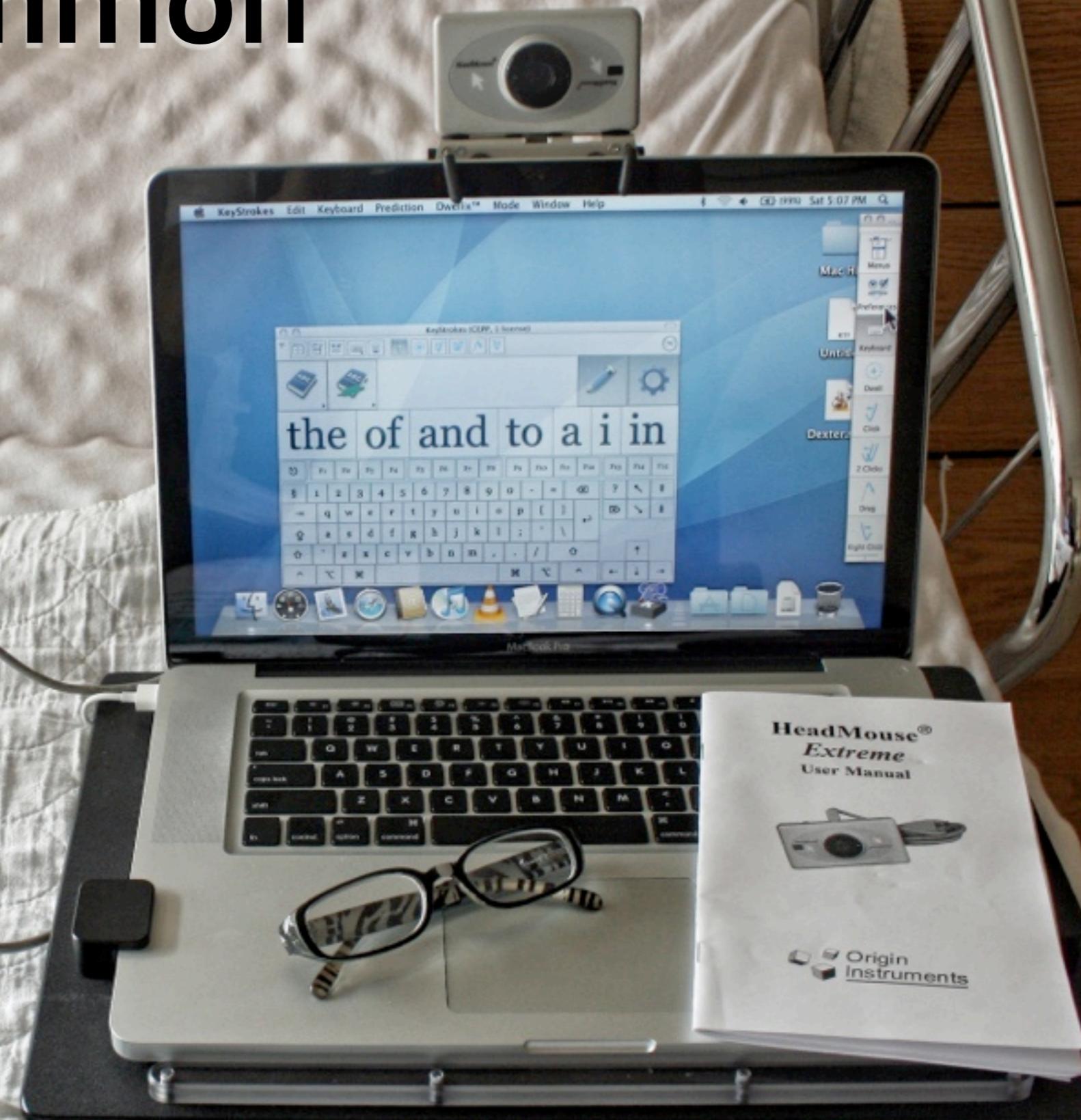


# Consider indirect users



605 800 624 [REDACTED]

# Support common assistive technology



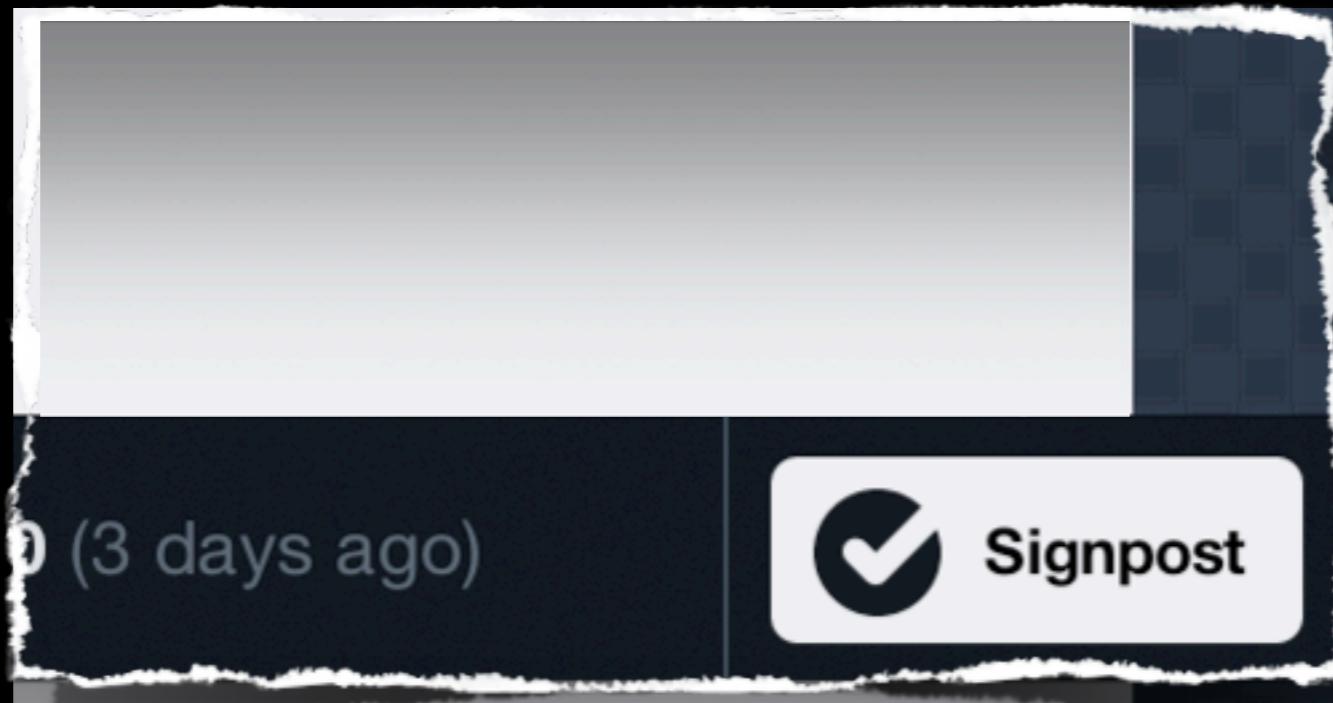
Help users learn to  
accomplish complex  
tasks and

**reward**

them for  
doing so.



# Progressive Reduction

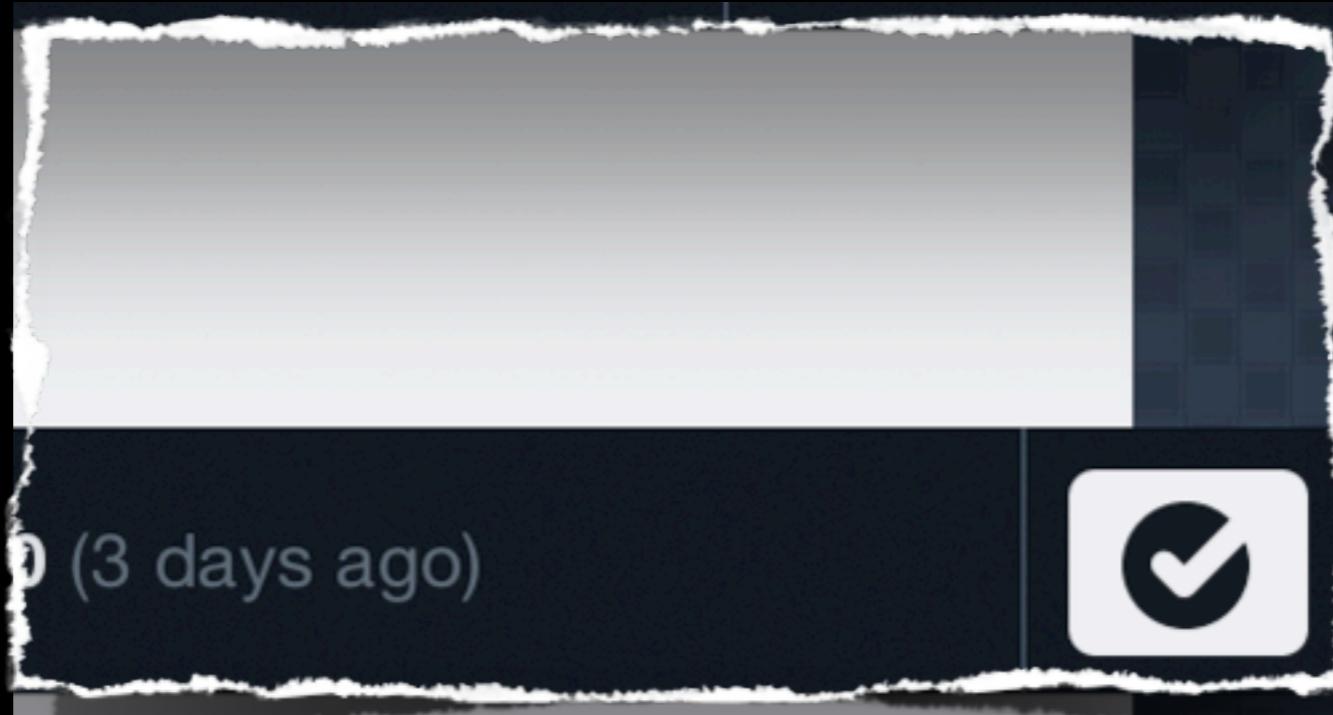


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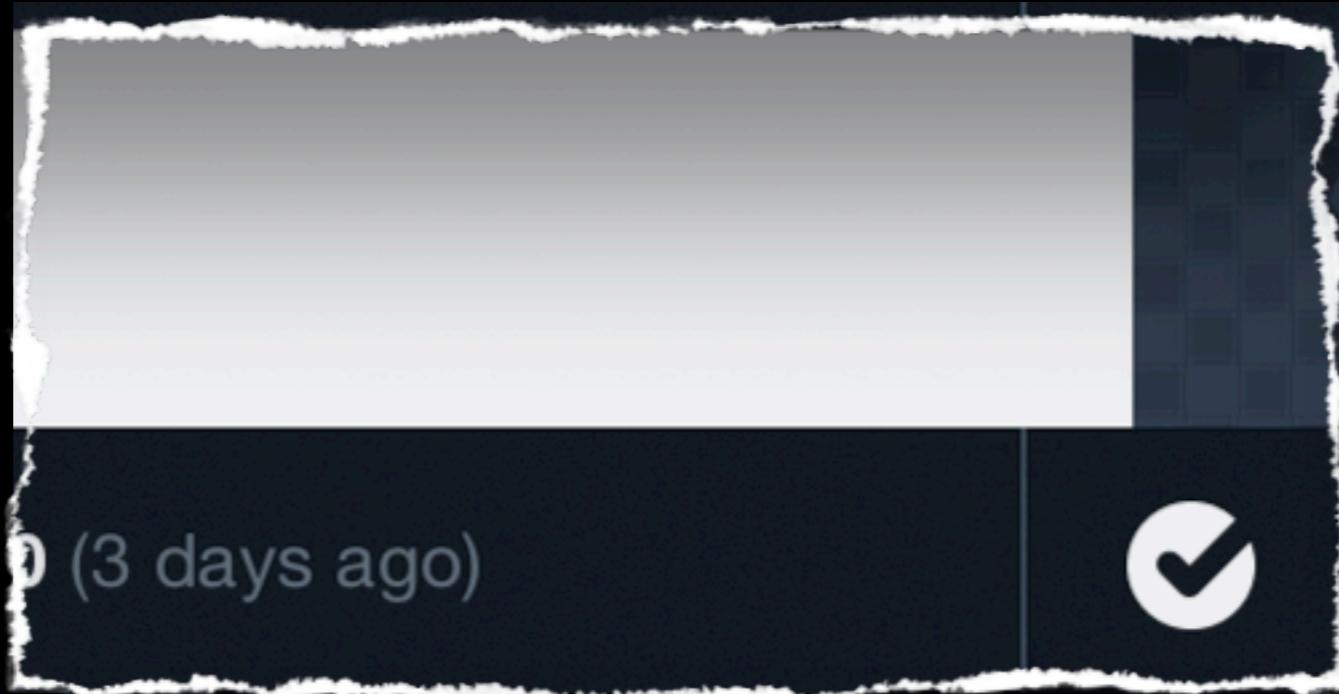


Signpost

# Progressive Reduction



# Progressive Reduction



Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find harmful.

-Buddhism

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

-Christianity

# The Golden Rule

No one of you is a believer until he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself.

-Islam

What is hateful to you, do not to your fellow man. That is the entire law; all the rest is commentary.

-Judaism



“[Progressive enhancement]  
keeps the design open to  
the possibilities of sexiness  
in opportune contexts,  
rather than starting with  
the ‘whole’ experience that  
must be compromised.”

– Ben Hoh



# Egalitarianism

Equality of opportunity,  
not equality of outcome

# Designing with Empathy

# Thank you

Further reading: [http://is.gd/readlist\\_empathy](http://is.gd/readlist_empathy)

Slides: <http://slideshare.net/AaronGustafson>

# Designing with Empathy

by Aaron Gustafson  
[@AaronGustafson](#)

Further reading:

[http://is.gd/readlist\\_empathy](http://is.gd/readlist_empathy)  
<http://adaptivewebdesign.info>  
<http://blog.easy-designs.net>

Slides available at  
<http://slideshare.net/AaronGustafson>

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