



GREATER GOOD STUDIO

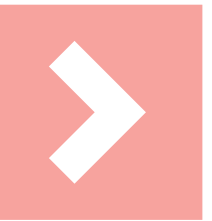
# Understanding Power and Privilege in Design



SERVICE DESIGN NETWORK NYC

REMOTE/ZOOM

JUNE 16, 2020





**Design changes behavior.  
It matters who's asking for that change.**



**Greater  
Good  
Studio**



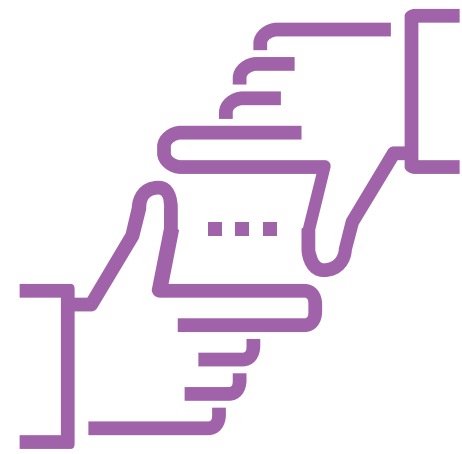


**We use design to  
elevate voices of people, work across  
perspectives and generate new ideas.**



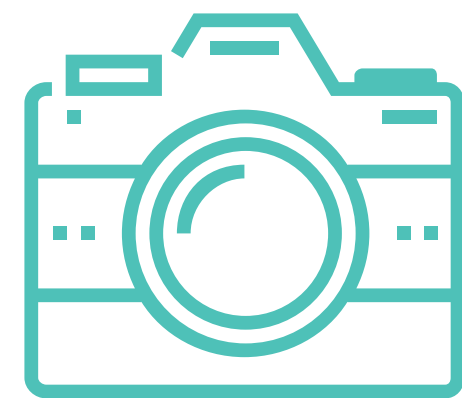
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# Human-Centered Design



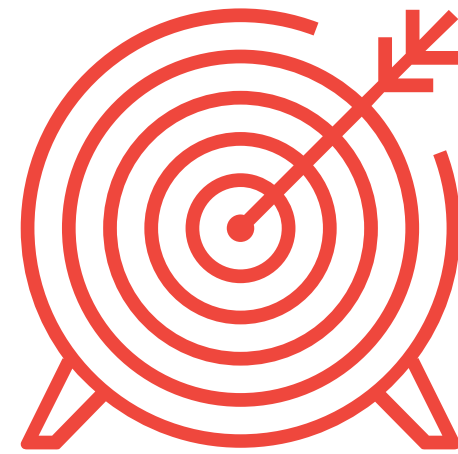
## FRAMING

Defining questions to answer and people to engage.



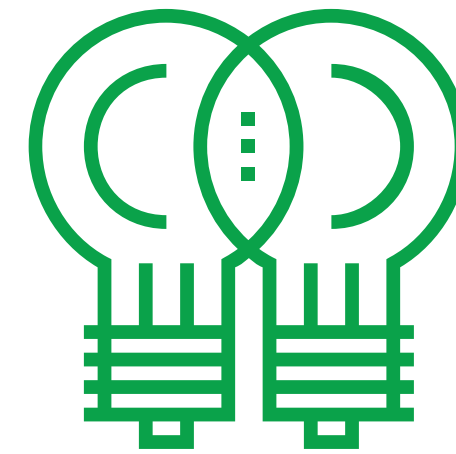
## RESEARCH

Learning from people about their needs and values



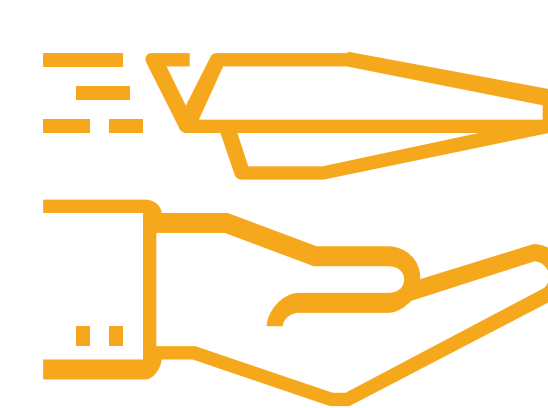
## SYNTHESIS

Finding patterns and areas of opportunity



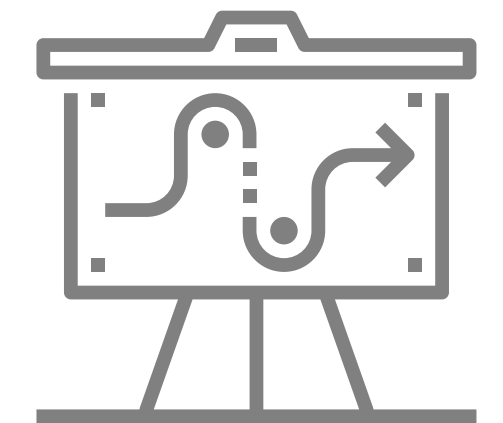
## CONCEPTING

Creating a high volume of new ideas



## PROTOTYPING

Making tangible mock-ups and gathering feedback



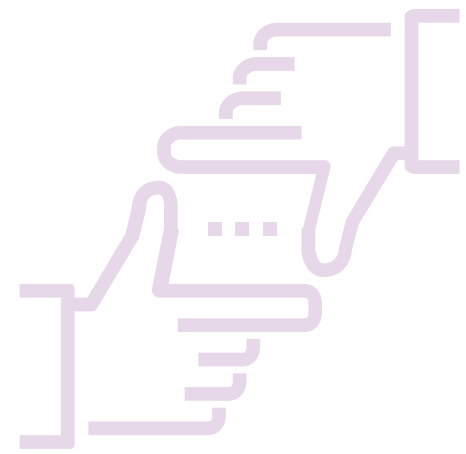
## PILOTING

Refining solutions in order to pilot test



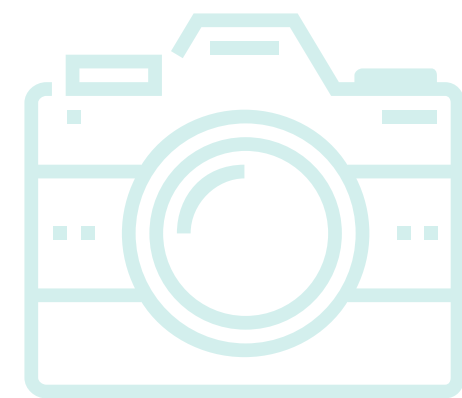
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# But HCD is not inherently good.



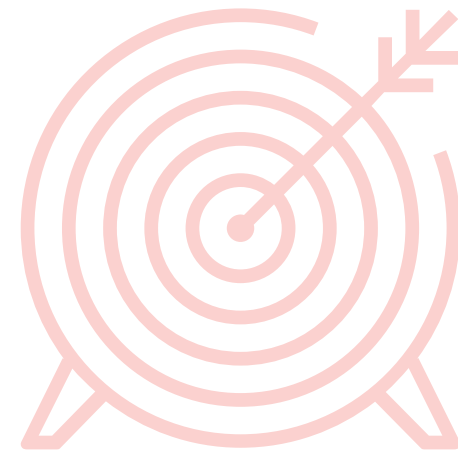
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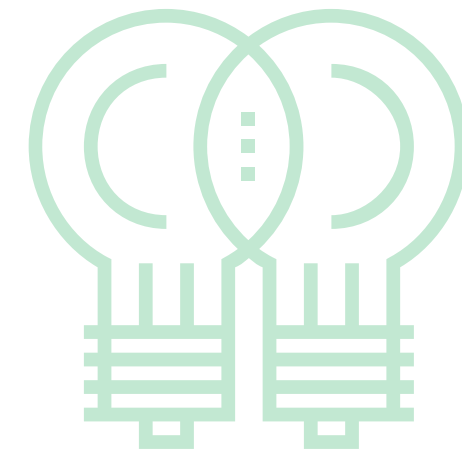
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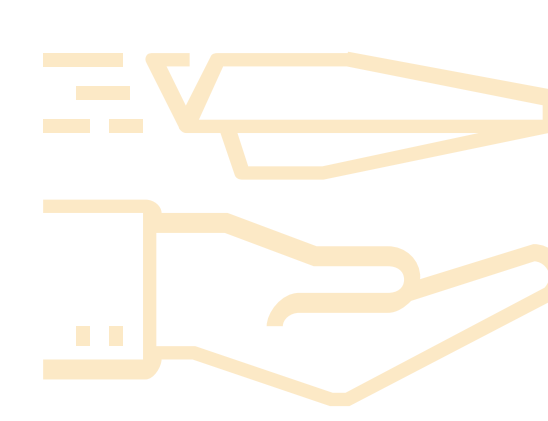
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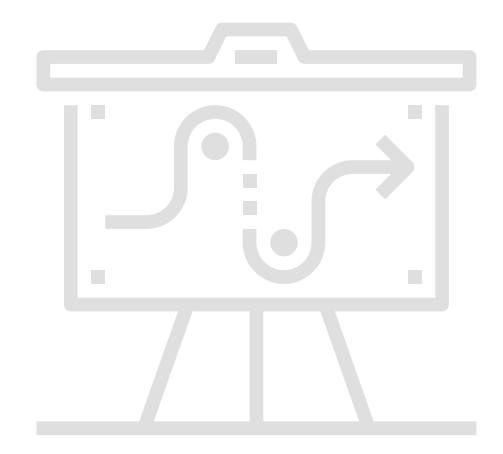
## CONCEPTING

Creating a high volume of new ideas



## PROTOTYPING

Making tangible mock-ups and gathering feedback



## PILOTING

Refining solutions in order to pilot test



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**“Adam Bowen and James Monsees were pursuing master’s degrees in product design at Stanford when they decided to do something about their smoking addictions.”**

**<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-11-01/stanford-pals-hit-the-jackpot-with-juul-s-meteoric-rise>**







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*“Monsees and Bowen approached smokers on campus and asked them what they loved and hated about their habit.”*

*“The complaints were consistent: fear of being seen with a cigarette and paranoia about smelling of smoke on a first date.”*

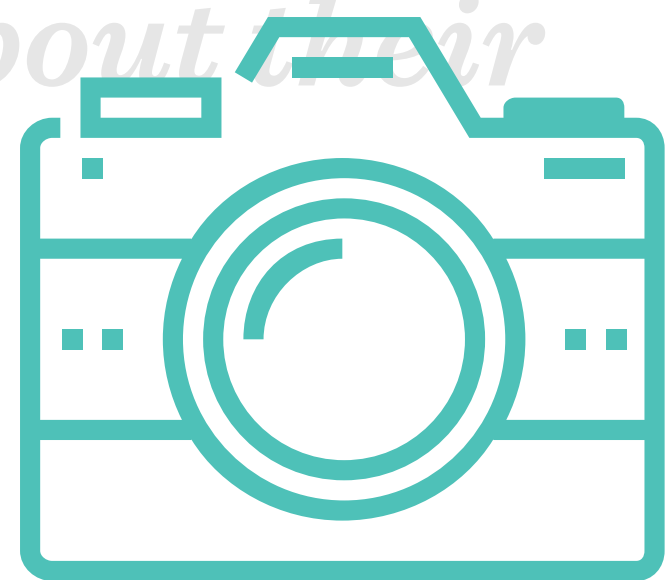
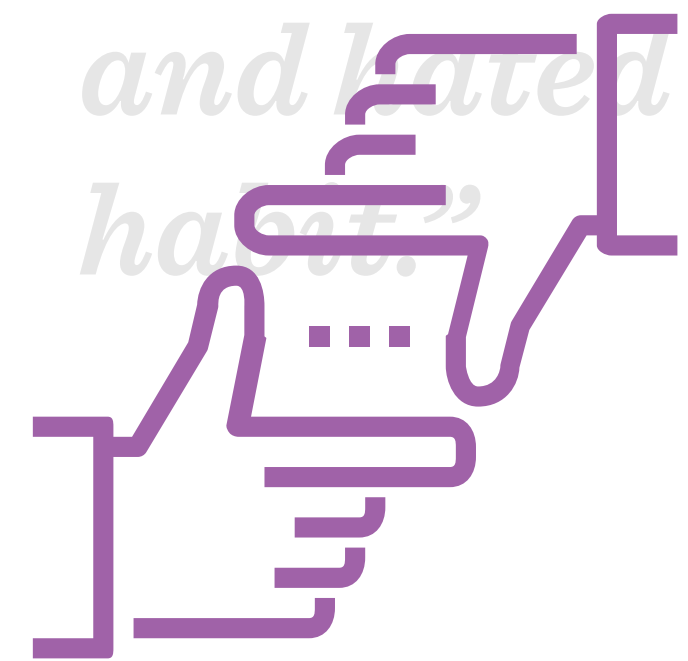
*“Their first prototypes were ad-hoc assemblies of bespoke components and items found on drugstore shelves.”*

**<https://stanfordmag.org/contents/vice-made-nice> July 2012**

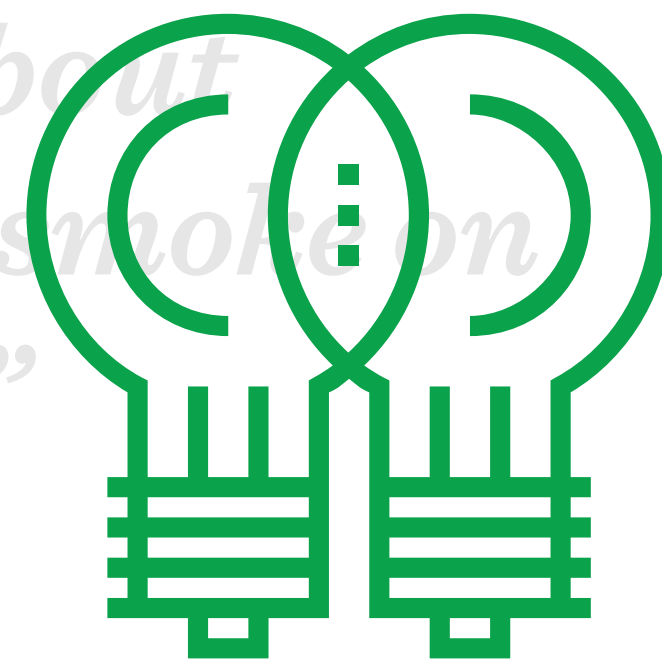
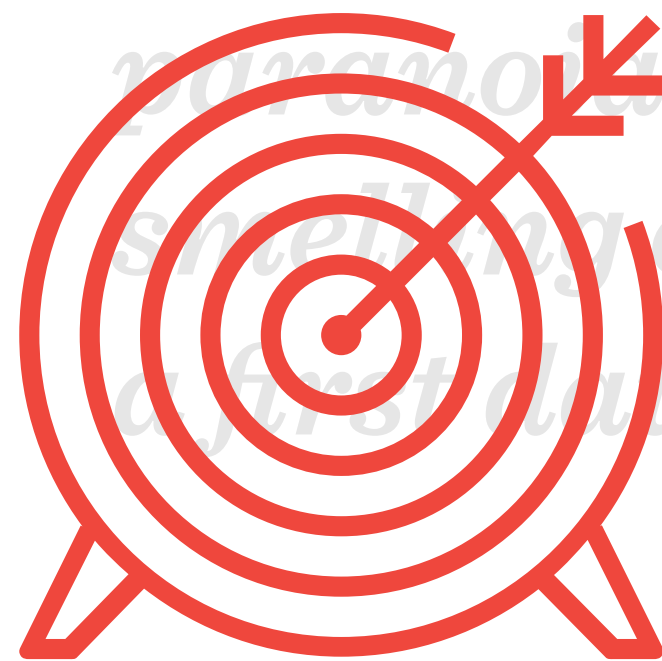


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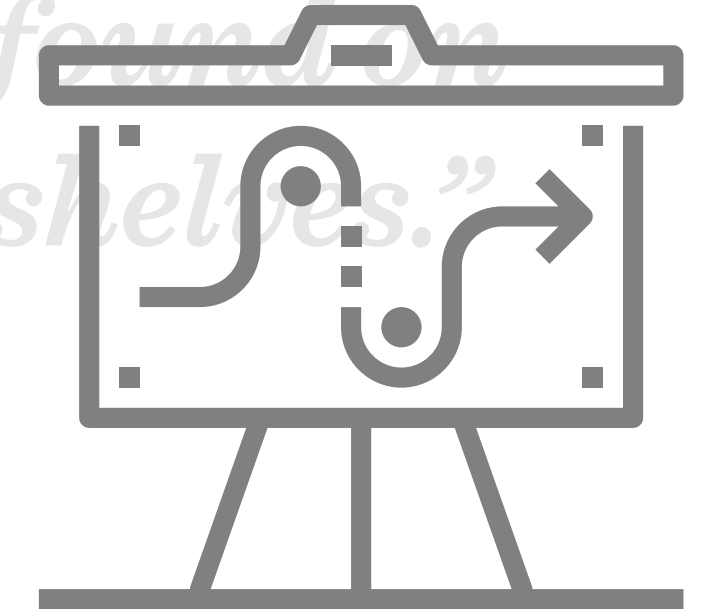
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<https://stanfordmag.org/contents/vice-made-nice> July 2012

# Design Observer



George Aye | Opinions

03.14.19

## It's Time to Define What "Good" Means in Our Industry



**George Aye** co-founded Greater Good Studio with the belief that design can advance equity for all. Previously, he spent seven years at global innovation firm IDEO before being hired as the first human-centered designer at the Chicago Transit Authority. Since founding Greater Good, he has worked across complex social issues such as criminal justice, civic engagement, public education, public health and youth development. Greater Good Studio was awarded the TED Prize City 2.0 (2012) and recognized in the Public Interest Design 100 list (2013). The studio's work was featured in LEAP Dialogues: Career Pathways in Design for Social Innovation (published 2016) and Public Interest Design Practice Guidebook (published 2015). He is a frequent speaker and workshop facilitator. He presented on the topic of design and power at SXSW 2018 and the Service Design Global Conference 2017. George holds the position of Adjunct Full Professor at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Jobs | July 31

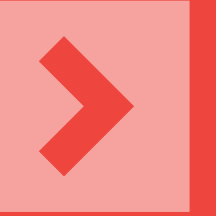
**Real Estate Arts**  
New York, NY  
Senior Designer

**?What If! Innovation**  
Brooklyn, NY  
Lead Designer

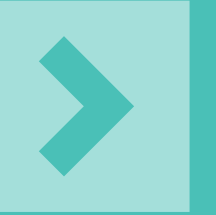
**Lumisource LLC**  
Elk Grove Village, IL  
Product Design Intern

**Slalom Consulting**  
San Francisco, CA  
Experience Design Cor

[Post A Job](#) [View All](#)



**My conventional training gives me a  
conventional view of good.**



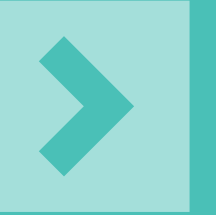
# 3 *principles for good design.*



**Good design** *honors reality* .

**Good design** *creates ownership* .

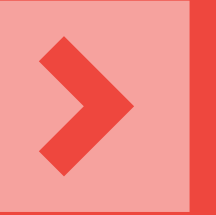
**Good design** *builds power* .



**Anthropology** *honors reality* .

**Social Work** *creates ownership* .

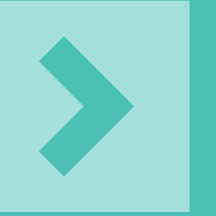
**Organizing** *builds power* .



**My training says:**

**Good design *honors the future*.**





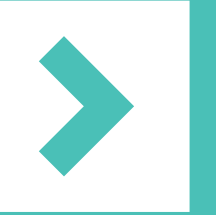
Good design *honors reality* .



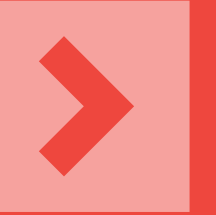
**New Models of Care  
Hennepin County Medical Center  
Minneapolis, MN**



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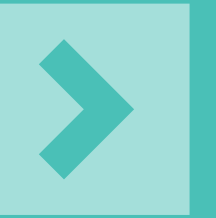


**Lived experience**  
**+**  
**Learned experience**



**My training says:**

**Good design *retains ownership*.**



Good design *creates ownership* .

CHILDREN



FAMILIES



**Raising Places  
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation  
Six Communities Across US**

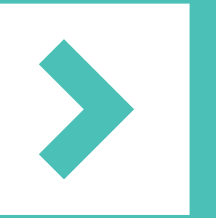


**Raising Places  
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation  
Six Communities Across US**

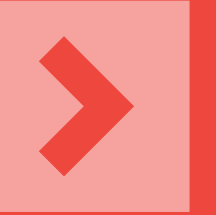




**Raising Places  
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation  
Six Communities Across US**



**People adopt the change that  
they are a part of making.**



**My training says:**  
**Good design hoards power.**



Good design *builds power* .

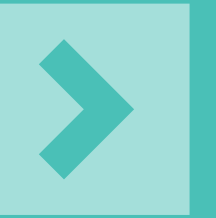
# Design Education's Big Gap: Understanding the Role of Power



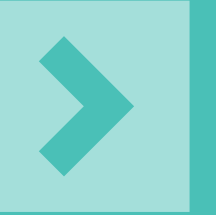
George Aye

Jun 2, 2017 · 13 min read

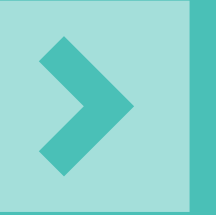




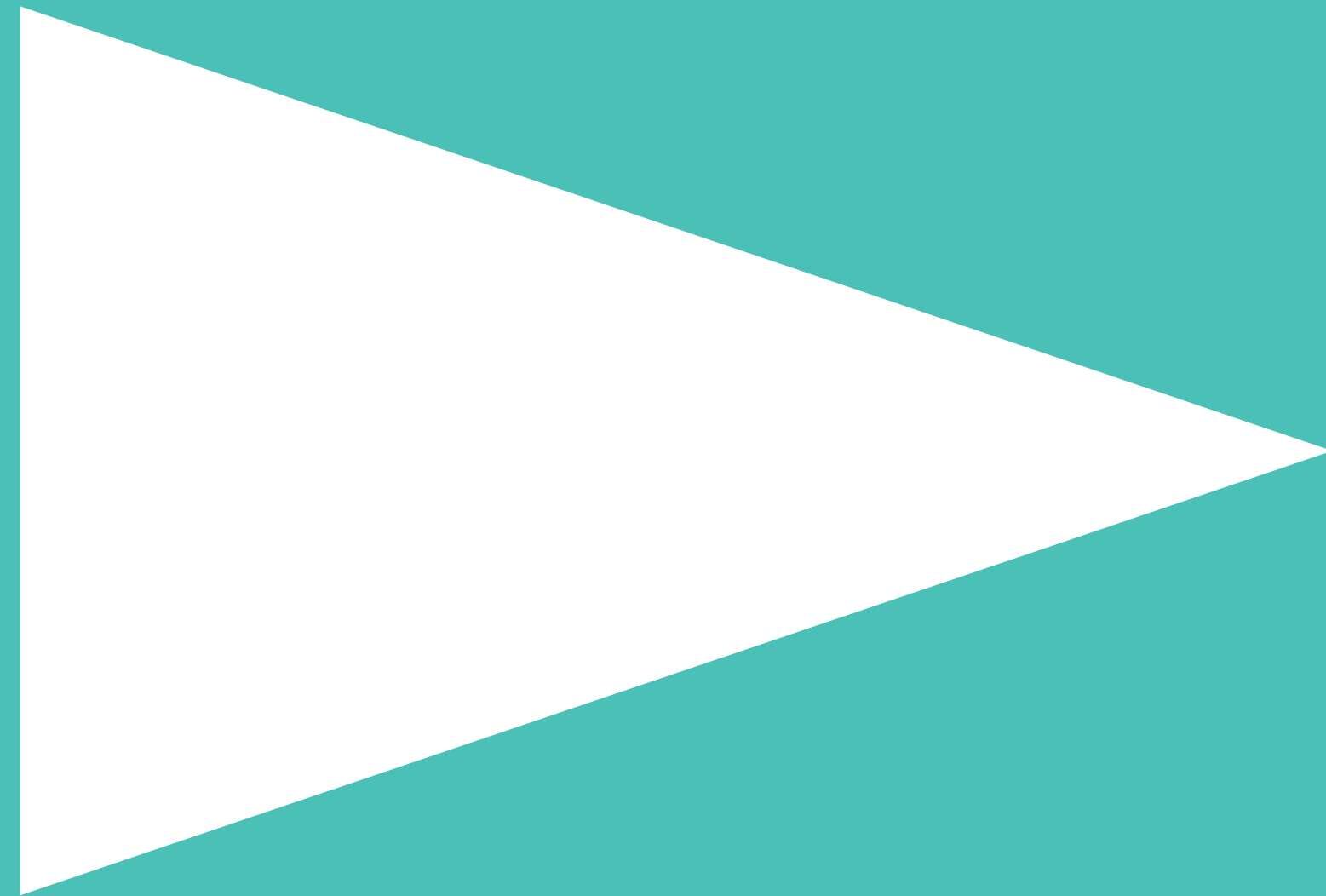
**Power:**  
*the ability to affect an outcome*



**Power asymmetry:**  
*Power is often lopsided*



# Power asymmetry

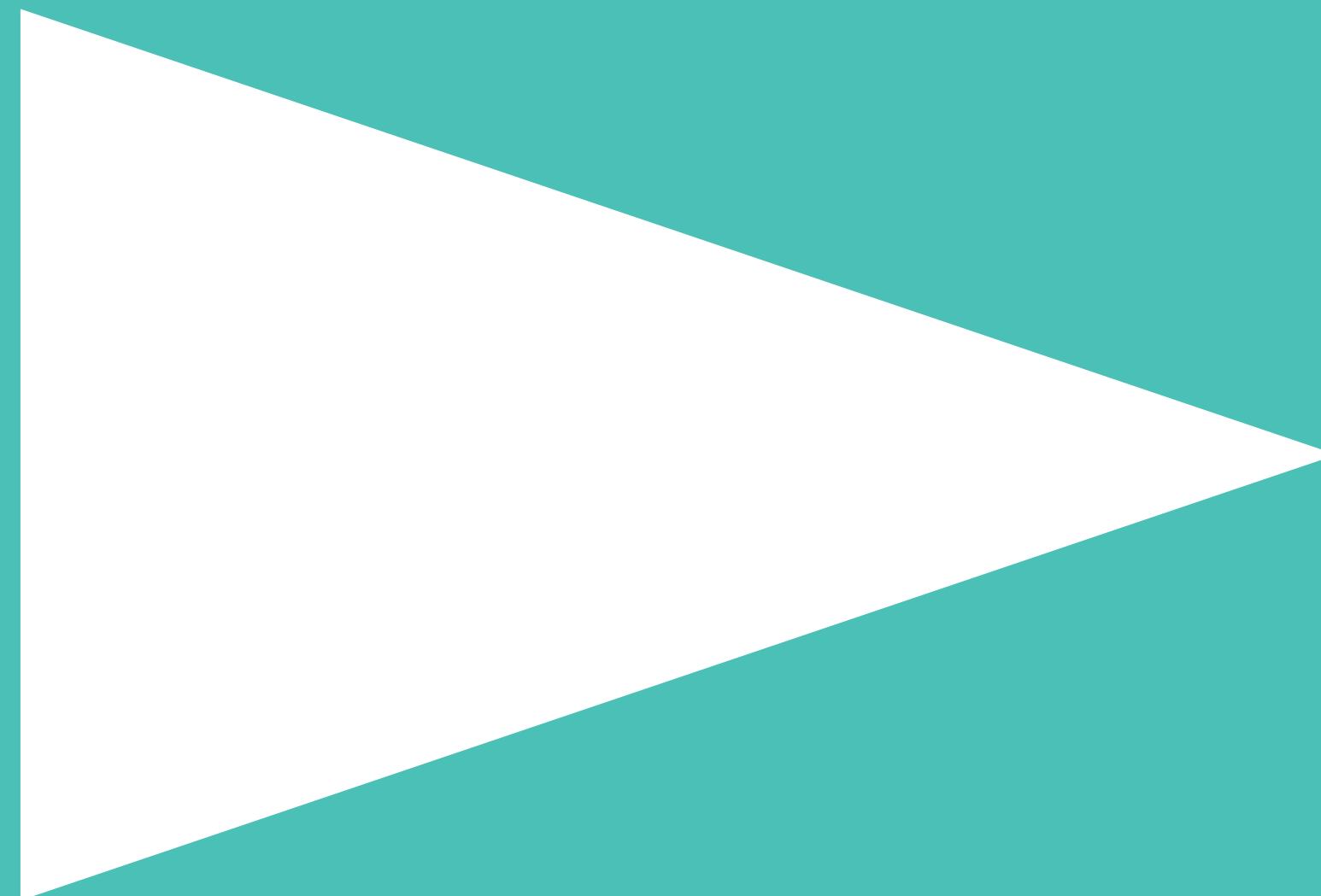






# Power asymmetry

**Law Enforcement**  
**Doctors**  
**Employers**  
**Funders**  
**Teachers**  
**Landlords**  
**Local Government**  
**Leadership**

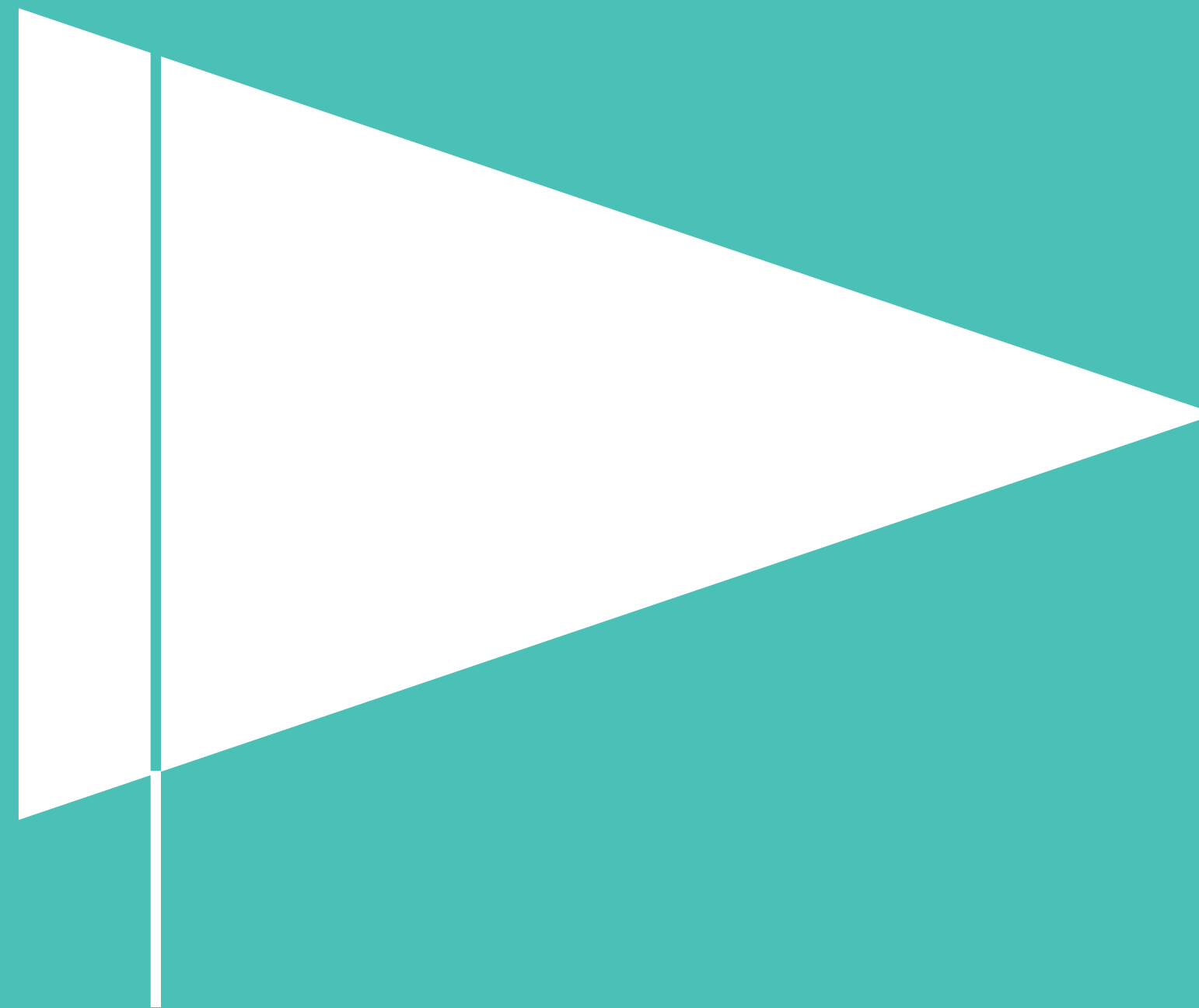


**Detainees**  
**Patients**  
**Employees**  
**Grantees**  
**Students**  
**Renters**  
**Community**  
**Front line staff**



# Power asymmetry

Law Enforcement  
Doctors  
Employers  
Funders  
Teachers  
Landlords  
Local Government  
Leadership



Detainees  
Patients  
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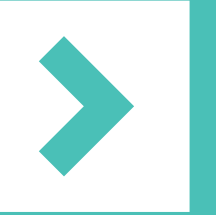
Greater Good Studio



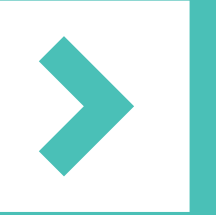
**Squared Away  
Metropolitan Tenants Organization  
Chicago, IL**



**Squared Away  
Metropolitan Tenants Organization  
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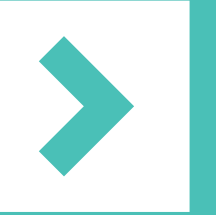


**The people with the least power  
are often closest to the problem.**



# 1.

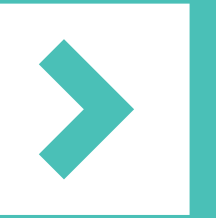
We value learned experiences but discount lived experiences.



# 1.

We value learned experiences but discount lived experiences.

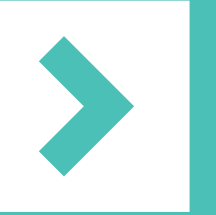
**How might your work honor reality?**



# 2.

People adopt the change that they are a part of making.

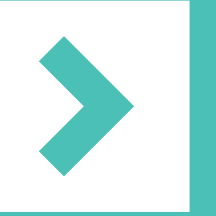




# 2.

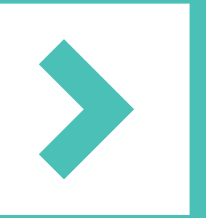
People adopt the change that they are a part of making.

**How might your work create ownership?**



3.

The people with the least power  
are often closest to the problem.



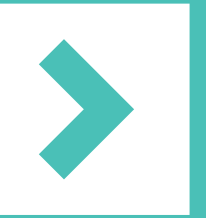
# 3.

The people with the least power  
are often closest to the problem.

**How might your work build power?**



**george@greatergoodstudio.com**



## Reflections

*Talk to the person seated next to you and develop a question.*

**Shout out to Eve Tuck | @tuckeve**



**Talk + Q&A**



**Facilitated Discussion on  
Power + Privilege**



# Facilitated Discussion on Power + Privilege



**Shout out to Akaya Winwood**



---

# Power in Identity







## [ Inter-personal ]

**What identity do  
you claim?**

**What identity was  
placed on you?**

**What identity did  
you earn?**



## [ Organization ]

*What identity do  
we claim?*

*What identity was  
placed on us?*

*What identity did  
we earn?*



---

# Privilege in Context





# Privilege:

*It's a gift that you did nothing to earn*



***Ask for forgiveness,  
not permission.***

***Lean In.***

***Move fast and  
break things.***

***Go big or  
go home.***



# Privilege:

*It's a gift that you did nothing to earn.*



## Privilege:

*It's a gift that you did nothing to earn.  
The benefits depend on the context.*



## Privilege

## Benefits in this context

**I'm 43**

**Judgement is often deferred to me due to my age**

**I'm male**

**Patriarchy affords me unlimited leadership roles**

**I'm cisgendered**

**I'm accepted for the sex organs I was assigned at birth**

**I'm heterosexual**

**Who I'm attracted is supported and protected**

**I'm neural-typical**

**I am free of any side effects from medication**

**I'm able-bodied**

**Environments unencumbered physical mobility**

**I'm extroverted**

**Verbal processing and is rewarded and encouraged**

**My childhood is trauma-free**

**I spend little time with coping strategies for past trauma**

**I have a British accent**

**My words carry gravitas**





[ Inter-personal ]

**Take an inventory of your  
own unearned privileges**



## Privilege

## Benefits in this context

**In business for 8 years**

**We're seen as leaders since there's so few others this old**

**We were founded in 2011**

**A growing awareness of design in general population**

**Our mission is to advance equity**

**Massive wealth disparity put spotlight on equity**

**We work exclusively with social sector clients**

**Design work is not reviewed as critically (or credibly) since we're seen as 'good people for trying**

**We have White and Asian co-founders**

**We appear non-threatening to our White clients**

**Our prior work experience was in the business sector**

**The social sector thinks that innovation can only come from the business sector**



## [ Organization ]

*Take an inventory of our own  
unearned privileges*



---

# Power in Motion





**[ Inter-personal ]**

**When was the last  
time you gave away  
your power  
intentionally?**

**When was the last  
time you lost  
your power  
unintentionally?**

**When was the last  
time you took  
someone else's  
power?**

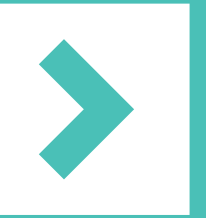


## [ Organization ]

*When was the last  
time we gave away  
our power  
intentionally?*

*When was the last  
time we lost  
our power  
unintentionally?*

*When was the last  
time we took another  
organization's  
power?*



## Tangible Takeaway

*Look at your calendars and find  
the next moment where power  
asymmetry is present.*

*What can you do to disrupt it?*