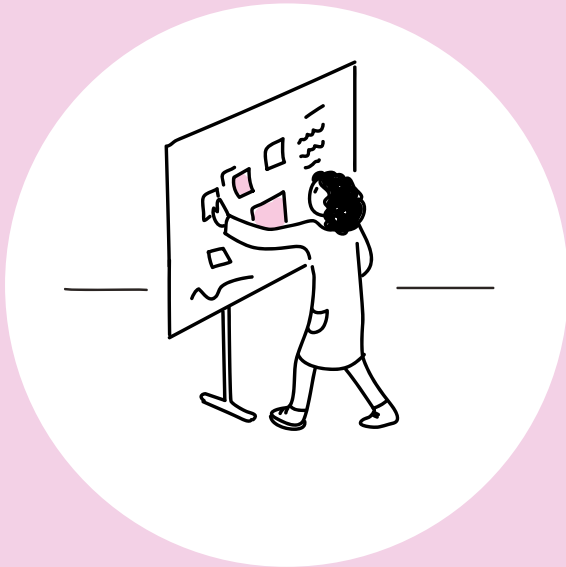# 04
# SYNTHESISE

# SYNTHESISE

Use the tools and resources in this guidebook to accomplish the goals below. Once your design team has achieved these objectives, you will be in a strong position to advance to the next phase in your design process. Use the reflection tools in the **Design Work Journal** to evaluate whether your design team is ready to move to the next phase.

Get aligned around your qualitative data as a team by reviewing what you learned from your design research
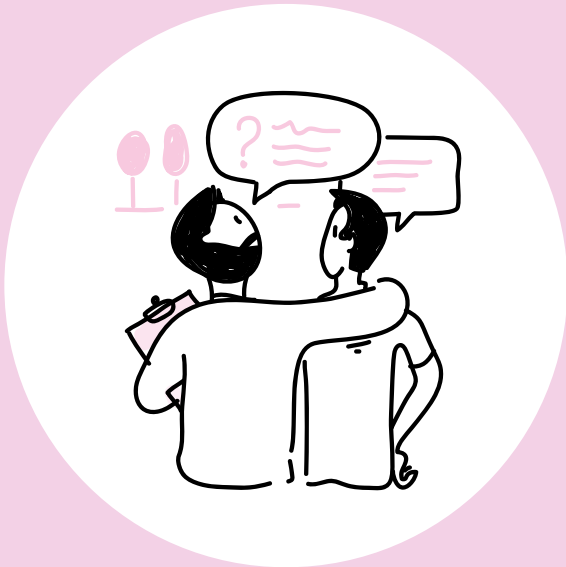
Discuss the most relevant and surprising observations you gathered as a team

Identify patterns and themes that emerge across the qualitative data

Build new insights that help you see new opportunities to solve problems and meet stakeholders' needs
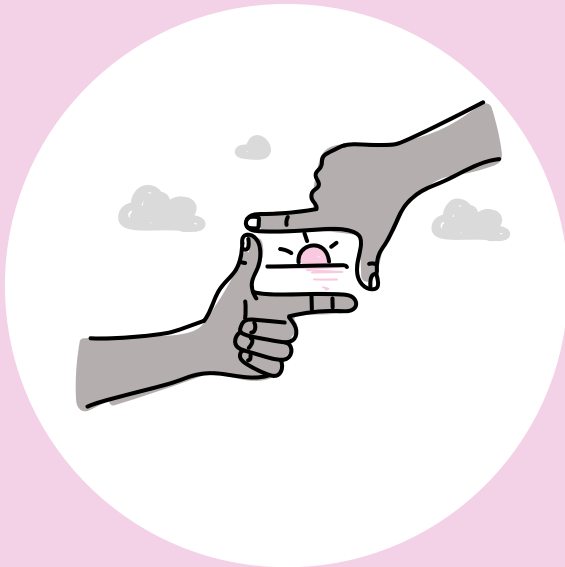
Connect your themes and insights to specific people you met during your design research

Get inspired by the details of specific peoples' lives by reviewing the stories of the individuals who are most connected to the themes emerging from your synthesis

Articulate the needs, challenges, motivations and goals of specific people as they relate to your project

Reframe challenges and needs into opportunities to generate solutions for the stakeholders

# SYNTHESISE

Once you have completed your design research and empathised with the stakeholders you are serving, you must take the qualitative data you have gathered and synthesise it. In the process of synthesis, you make sense of the data and create new insights that will drive our innovation process.

**This process of abductive reasoning helps us to infer meaning and redefine problems to generate new solutions.**

What steps can you take to ensure that we are redefining problems and creating new insights into the problems of a development challenge?

## Side Navigation

**CAPTURE YOUR WORK**

**PROCESS TIPS**

**MINDSET TIPS**

**EQUITY STRATEGY**

**CO-DESIGN STRATEGY**

**FIELDWORK**

# Table of Contents
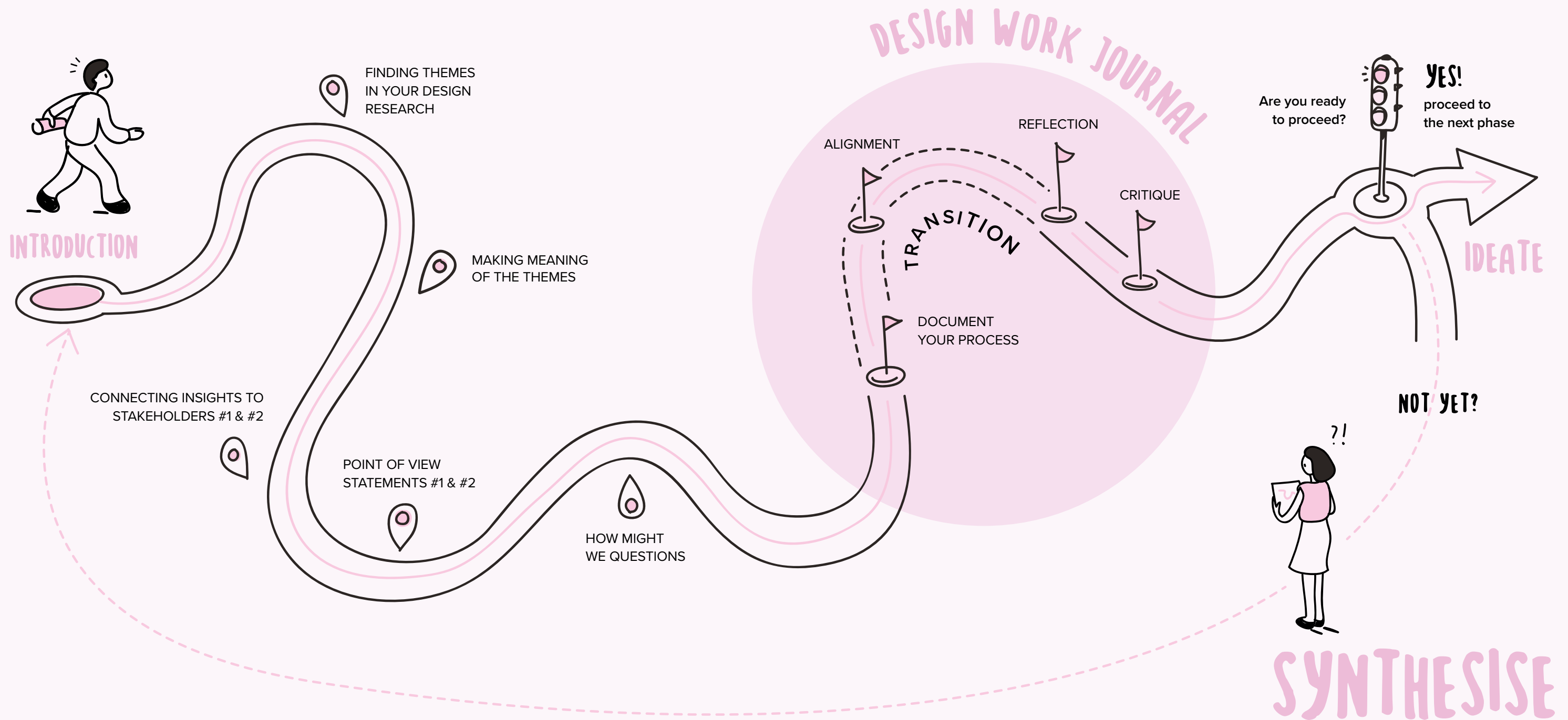
You can find a video lecture as well as more articles on this phase of the **Human-Centred Design** process in the **Resource Book**. You will also find a full demonstration example of each of the tools in there. Scan the QR code or click here to access this resource.

DESIGN WORK JOURNAL

FINDING THEMES
IN YOUR DESIGN
RESEARCH

MAKING MEANING
OF THE THEMES

INTRODUCTION

CONNECTING INSIGHTS TO
STAKEHOLDERS #1 & #2

POINT OF VIEW
STATEMENTS #1 & #2

HOW MIGHT
WE QUESTIONS

ALIGNMENT

REFLECTION

TRANSITION

CRITIQUE

DOCUMENT
YOUR PROCESS

Are you ready
to proceed?

YES!
proceed to
the next phase

IDEATE

NOT YET?

SYNTHESISE

## OVERVIEW OF SYNTHESISE PHASE

The tools in the **Synthesise Phase** of the challenge are focused on developing a point of view about the needs of your stakeholders.

During this stage of the challenge, designers narrow from lots of information to a statement that is inspiring and specific.

This phase of the design challenge will include: analysing your design research activities (interviews and shadow), inferring an interesting insights to build a Point of View statements and personas, and then writing How Might We questions.

## OBJECTIVES OF SYNTHESISE PHASE

The goal of this phase is to identify the needs of your stakeholders based on what you heard and saw about their experiences, motivations and emotions.

At the end of this phase, all team members should be clear on several new Point of View statements that they will use to inform their design work. The team will also generate How Might We questions that they will use to generate solutions.

## MINDSETS OF SYNTHESISE PHASE

- Elevate the lived experiences of stakeholders to be as important as technical expertise
- Share power and decision-making with community members
- Look carefully to understand potential problems and opportunities
- Stay optimistic that you can solve the problem
- Hold back on solving the problem until your team has learned from stakeholders

- Put aside biases and assumptions about what you think the problem is - listen to the stakeholder
- Seek new perspectives on old problems
- See opportunities in constraints
- Get comfortable with navigating contradictory information

**Scan the QR codes on <u>page 30</u> for the following resources:**

- Synthesise **Mural Template**
- **Design Work Journal** PDF
- Design Work Journal Mural Template

# SYNTHESISE:
# TEAM ACTIVITIES

When you convene your design team, use these hands-on, immersive activities to help build your design skills and mindsets. An important part of these activities is the debrief after - don't forget to make time to reflect on what you learned as a team.

Begin the collaborative session with one the following activities:

## CONVERGENCE

**Goal:** This exercise is designed to help participants listen, make connections between ideas and anticipate what others are thinking.

**Instructions:** The goal of Convergence is to get two people to say the same word at the same time. First, ask everyone to stand in a circle facing the centre. Ask for two volunteers. Have them stand in the centre of the circle. Ask them to think of one word that they will say at the count of three. If the two words are not the same, ask for two volunteers who think they can say a new word that is the same.

If the words are not the same the next two people are seeking one new word that is the convergence of the previous two words. For example, if the words were popcorn and ticket, the next people might say "movie."

No previous words can be repeated. Repeat until two people successfully say the same word at the same time.

**Online Adaptation:** Ask for two volunteers from the group. Count to three and have the two people say the words. Ask for two more volunteers. Continue the process until two people say the same word at the same time.

**Debrief Questions:**

- What was it like to jump in to offer an idea? What was hard about it? What was easy?
- How did it feel to be working on such an open-ended challenge?
- How did it feel to be working on that challenge as a group?

## STORY MACHINE

**Goal:** This exercise is designed to help participants listen and respond creatively to an open-ended prompt. This exercise is also designed to help participants explore an idea without one single correct answer.

**Instructions:** The goal of Story Machine is to create a new story from a series of prompts. Have everyone divide into three groups: people, places and things. Have everyone write one thing from their category down on a piece of paper and stack them. Have one person draw one piece of paper from each category. Ask for four volunteers to tell a story on the spot based on the three pieces of paper.
They will write the story one word at a time. When the group feels that they have created a complete story, everyone should start clapping.

**Online Adaptation:** Divide the group into three based on their first initials. Assign each category. Have people write one word for their category on a piece of paper and hold it up to the camera. Ask for four volunteers. Have the volunteers pick a person, place and thing. Have everyone else put down their words. Have the volunteers create a story. When the group feels that they have created a complete story, everyone should start clapping.

**Debrief Questions:**

- What was it like to make up a story in the moment?
- What was difficult about that? What was easy?

*During Convergence, sometimes it may seem as though the group is not going to come to the same word - keep going. Sometimes the group has to diverge before they converge.*

*Convergence is an activity designed to help participants identify patterns and anticipate what others are thinking. Story Machine is an activity designed to help participants get into a creative mindset.*

# SYNTHESISE:

# INTRODUCTION TO TOOLS AND METHODS

At the top of each tool description is the recommended amount of time to complete the tool. Try to spend only the recommended time. If you spend significantly less time on the tool you might not do enough rigorous thinking to advance your project. Also, keep up your project momentum by not spending too much time on each tool.

Design Leads should review this page before the design team is scheduled to meet. Take note of opportunities to engage the community and plan for that. Gather needed materials. Take note of fieldwork and help your teammates plan for that work.

**Documentation Strategy:** Be sure to capture all of your work throughout this process, using the tools provided as the main place to capture your thoughts and reflections. **Remember:** if it isn't written down or captured, you have no evidence of it! Be sure to take photographs and/or screenshots, especially when working with stakeholders and community members. Be sure to ask permission before you take photos of people.

**Co-Design Strategy:** Inviting community members (experts, stakeholders, civil society organisations, local partners) to contribute to this activity is especially helpful. Inviting community members to join for this exercise helps bring their knowledge of the community into the process.

**Equity Strategy:** Make sure that you are working to identify those stakeholders, communities and organisations who are under-represented, under-resourced and whose voices are not often heard.

---

**60 minutes**

## #1 FINDING THEMES IN YOUR DESIGN RESEARCH

**WHAT IS THIS TOOL?**

The **Finding Themes in Your Design Research** is a tool to help your team begin to group your observations and quotations and find themes across all of your design research activities.

**WHAT IS YOUR GOAL?**

When you have completed this tool, your team should be aligned around several themes that emerged from your design research.

# SYNTHESISE: TOOLS AND METHODS

**60 minutes**

## #2 MAKING MEANING OF THE THEMES

**WHAT IS THIS TOOL?**
The **Making Meaning of the Themes** tool helps your design team interpret the themes that emerged from your design research.

**WHAT IS YOUR GOAL?**
When you have completed this tool, your team should be aligned around the insights you inferred from the themes that emerged from your design research data.

**60-120 minutes**

## #3 CONNECTING INSIGHTS TO STAKEHOLDERS #1 & #2

**WHAT IS THIS TOOL?**
The **Connecting Insights to Stakeholders** tool helps you identify two stakeholders who are connected to the insights you prioritised during the previous exercise and identify relevant data points from your design research activities.

**WHAT IS YOUR GOAL?**
When you have completed this tool, your team should be aligned around the two stakeholders you are going to focus the rest of your design work on and why their experiences are related to the design challenge you are working to solve.

**60-120 minutes**

## #4 POINT OF VIEW STATEMENTS #1 & #2

**WHAT IS THIS TOOL?**
**Point of View (POV) Statements** are designed to help you take your observations and guesses and turn them into a statement that preserves the emotions of the stakeholder for whom you want to design, so you can be inspired to imagine innovate ideas.

**WHAT IS YOUR GOAL?**
Your POV statement will help your team align around a real person's story and their needs in regard to your design challenge.

**60-120 minutes**

## #5 HOW MIGHT WE QUESTIONS

**WHAT IS THIS TOOL?**
**How Might We (HMW) Questions** are designed to help your team turn your POV statement into How Might We questions that will drive your brainstorming process.

**WHAT IS YOUR GOAL?**
HMW questions help you to rally your team around a question that captures the needs and emotions of the stakeholder your work is focused on. HMW questions also expand the problem in a way that creates a generative atmosphere for new ideas.
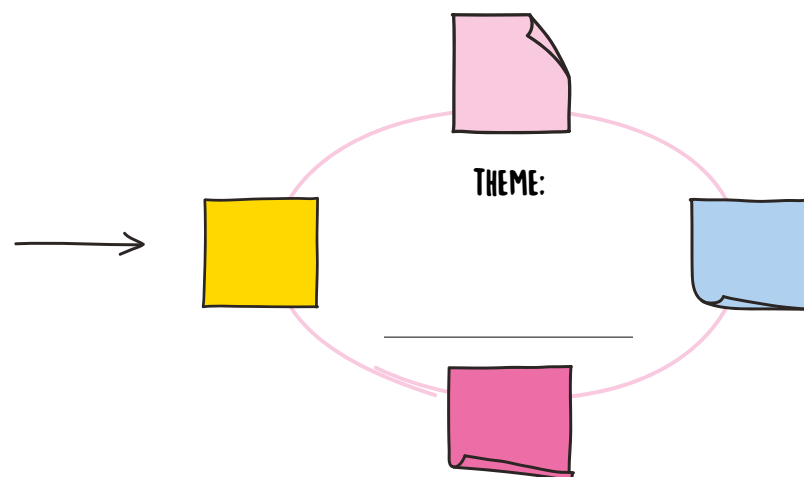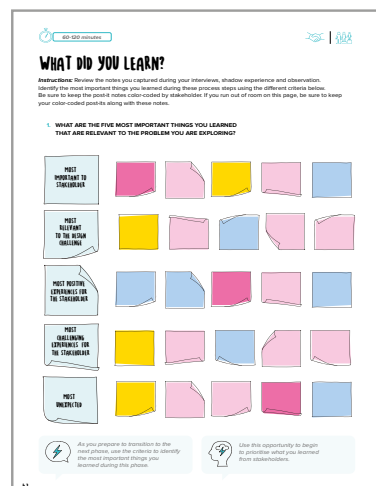
# SYNTHESISE:
# TOOLS AND METHODS

# Finding Themes In Your Design Research

*Instructions:* Review the **What Did You Learn?** tool. Pick the three of the most interesting or relevant post-its from that tool. Ask yourselves, does each of the three post-its represent different aspects of the problem or are they connected? If all three post-its represent different aspects of the problem, rewrite each of them next to its own circle on this worksheet. If some of the post-its are connected, cluster them around the same circle. Now, review **What Did You Learn?** again and look for other relevant post-its for each of the circles on this worksheet. Make sure to note color-coding of each post-it. Next, write a theme that represents each cluster of post-it notes in the middle of the circle.

THEME:

THEME:

THEME:

THEME:

For more guidance for this tool as well as an example, refer to the **Resource Book** on page 146.

Be sure to take a step back to look for themes across your design research activities.

Challenge your team to think beyond the obvious connections and get to deeper root causes.

# Making Meaning Of The Themes

*Instructions:* For this activity, select the two most important themes that you identified in the last activity. Write each theme in the blank space below. Then complete the sentence with an insight that your team creates by making meaning from the data you have collected in your research. Repeat this process for both themes. Once you have created three insights for each of the themes, take a step back and circle the two most important or relevant insights (across all the themes) about the problem you are working to solve.

THEME

*Theme* _____ *is/are important to this project because...*

1 _____
*Insight*

2 _____
*Insight*

3 _____
*Insight*

THEME

*Theme* _____ *is/are important to this project because...*

1 _____
*Insight*

2 _____
*Insight*

3 _____
*Insight*

**NOW, REVIEW THE SIX INSIGHTS YOU HAVE CREATED ABOVE AND CIRCLE THE TWO MOST IMPORTANT OR RELEVANT TO THE PROBLEM YOU ARE WORKING TO SOLVE.**

For more guidance for this tool as well as an example, refer to the **Resource Book** on page 148.

In order to get to deeper insights, ask yourselves why a theme is important several times.

It may help your team to work independently at first and then share ideas and refine them as a group.

# CONNECTING INSIGHTS TO STAKEHOLDERS #1

**Instructions:** For this activity, take the first insight your team chose from the **Making Meaning of Themes** tool and write it in **Box A**. Next, as a team, review the relevant observations and quotations from the related theme and select the stakeholder who your team feels is the most affected by the problem you are working to solve (note the color-coding of the observations to identify the person). Describe that specific stakeholder in **Box B**. Next, review the **What Did You Learn?** and **Finding Themes in Your Design Research** tools and gather all of the observations and quotations from your interactions with this person that are related to this insight. Rewrite them on the post-its in **Box C**. Once you have completed that, circle the three most interesting and relevant data points in **Box C**.

For more guidance for this tool as well as an example, refer to the **Resource Book** on page 150.

*Work together to review the relevant data points from the **Empathise Phase** and bring them forward into this phase of the design process.*

*This exercise is a moment to narrow your design project and focus on a particular problem and stakeholder. Work as a team to get to consensus on who you are going to focus on.*

**A**

Refine and rewrite your first insight.

**B**

Which stakeholder is this insight most important to?
Which stakeholder do you want to design for?

**C**

Gather observations and quotations that are relevant to this insight from your interaction with this stakeholder.

# POINT OF VIEW STATEMENT #1

*Instructions:* **Point of View** statements help a design team rally around one specific stakeholder and the problem they face. This is important because it helps the design team better understand the circumstances and the feelings and motivations of a real person who is close to the problem. Now, refer to the **Connecting Insights to Stakeholders #1** tool and match the information labeled with the letters to the corresponding numbers in the Point of View tool. For Box 1, describe the stakeholder and their life. This will come from **Box B** in the **Connecting Insights to Stakeholders #1** tool. For Box 2, rewrite the observations and quotations that you circled from **Box C**

in that same tool. This will form the core of your Point of View statement. For Box 3, rewrite the insight linked to **Box A** in the **Connecting Insights to Stakeholders #1** tool. Remember that your team developed this insight first on the **Making Meaning of the Themes** tool. Next, for Box 4, think of needs statements for the stakeholder that are related to Boxes 2 & 3. This helps move a problem toward actionable opportunities. Don't come up with solutions yet, instead focus on the barriers the stakeholder needs to overcome or the needs they have that are unmet. Repeat this step for the second insight you circled on the **Making Meaning of Themes** tool.

### 1

**WE MET:** Describe the relevant stakeholder.
Reference Box B on the Connecting Insights to Stakeholder #1 tool (page 18).

### 2

**WE NOTICED:** Top three observations or quotations from the previous exercise.
Reference Box C on the Connecting Insights to Stakeholder #1 tool (page 18).

For more guidance for this tool as well as an example, refer to the **Resource Book** on page 151.

*Good problems are specific and inspiring. This comes from good analysis and thinking deeply about the problem, moving beyond the obvious ideas.*

*If your design team has conflict during the process of developing Point of View statements, have each person write one individually. Then share them, discuss and vote on the strongest version.*

*Remember to respond directly to the fieldwork and not stray into judgment or away from the evidence.*

### 3

**WE THINK THIS IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE:**
Reference Box A on the Connecting Insights to Stakeholder #1 tool (page 17).

### 4

**WE THINK OUR STAKEHOLDER NEEDS A WAY TO:** Describe what your stakeholder needs to accomplish and why.

## IF THE NEEDS STATEMENT FEELS TOO BIG AND OVERWHELMING, ASK YOURSELVES:

What's stopping us from meeting this need?

Then, rewrite the need around what you identified as a barrier.

## IF THE NEEDS STATEMENT FEELS TOO MUCH LIKE A SOLUTION, ASK YOURSELVES:

Why would we want to do this?

Then rewrite the need around the motivation.

# CONNECTING INSIGHTS TO STAKEHOLDERS #2

For more guidance for this tool as well as an example, refer to the **Resource Book** on page 152.

**Instructions:** For this activity, take the first insight your team chose from the **Making Meaning of Themes** tool and write it in Box A. Next, as a team, review the relevant observations and quotations from the related theme and select the stakeholder who your team feels is the most affected by the problem you are working to solve (note the color-coding of the observations to identify the person). Describe that specific stakeholder in Box B. Next, review the **What Did You Learn?** and **Finding Themes in Your Design Research** tools and gather all of the observations and quotations from your interactions with this person that are related to this insight. Rewrite them on the post-its in Box C. Once you have completed that, circle the three most interesting and relevant data points in Box C. You will repeat this step again with the second insight from the **Making Meaning of Themes** tool.

*Work together to review the relevant data points from the **Empathise Phase** and bring them forward into this phase of the design process.*

*This exercise is a moment to narrow your design project and focus on a particular problem and stakeholder. Work as a team to get to consensus on who you are going to focus on.*

## A
Refine and rewrite the second insight.

## B
Which stakeholder is this insight most important to?
Which stakeholder do you want to design for?

## C
Gather observations and quotations that are relevant to this insight from your interaction with this stakeholder.

# POINT OF VIEW STATEMENT #2

*Instructions:* **Point of View** statements help a design team rally around one specific stakeholder and the problem they face. This is important because it helps the design team better understand the circumstances and the feelings and motivations of a real person who is close to the problem. Now, refer to the **Connecting Insights to Stakeholders #2** tool and match the information labeled with the letters to the corresponding numbers in the Point of View tool. For Box 1, describe the stakeholder and their life. This will come from **Box B** in the **Connecting Insights to Stakeholders #2** tool. For Box 2, rewrite the observations and quotations that you circled from **Box C** in

that same tool. This will form the core of your Point of View statement. For Box 3, rewrite the insight linked to **Box A** in the **Connecting Insights to Stakeholders #2** tool. Remember that your team developed this insight first on the **Making Meaning of the Themes** tool. Next, for Box 4, think of needs statements for the stakeholder that are related to Boxes 2 & 3. This helps move a problem toward actionable opportunities. Don't come up with solutions yet, instead focus on the barriers the stakeholder needs to overcome or the needs they have that are unmet.

Repeat this step for the second insight you circled on the **Making Meaning of Themes** tool.

**1**

**WE MET:** Describe the relevant stakeholder.
Reference Box B on the Connecting Insights to Stakeholder #2 tool (page 22).

**2**

**WE NOTICED:** Top three observations or quotations from the previous exercise.
Reference Box C on the Connecting Insights to Stakeholder #2 tool (page 22).

For more guidance for this tool as well as an example, refer to the **Resource Book** on page 153.

*Good problems are specific and inspiring. This comes from good analysis and thinking deeply about the problem, moving beyond the obvious ideas.*

*If your design team has conflict during the process of developing Point of View statements, have each person write one individually. Then share them, discuss and vote on the strongest version.*

*Remember to respond directly to the fieldwork and not stray into judgment or away from the evidence.*

**3**

**WE THINK THIS IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE:**
Rewrite one of the insight statements you selected in the previous exercise.
Reference Box A on the Connecting Insights to Stakeholder #2 tool (page 22).

**4**

**WE THINK OUR STAKEHOLDER NEEDS A WAY TO:**
Describe what your stakeholder needs to accomplish and why.

## IF THE NEEDS STATEMENT FEELS TOO BIG AND OVERWHELMING, ASK YOURSELVES:

What's stopping us from meeting this need?

Then, rewrite the need around what you identified as a barrier.

## IF THE NEEDS STATEMENT FEELS TOO MUCH LIKE A SOLUTION, ASK YOURSELVES:

Why would we want to do this?

Then rewrite the need around the motivation.

# HOW MIGHT WE QUESTIONS

*Instructions:* First, generate a **How Might We Question** based on the **Point of View** statement you wrote on the previous tool. Focus on the needs of the stakeholder you identified. Then, answer the prompts below and use your answers to create new HMW questions that address the same problem from different perspectives.

**POSSIBLE VERBS TO USE...**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| HELP | CREATE | REMIND | RESTORE | CUSTOMISE |
| ENCOURAGE | PROVIDE | CHANGE | SHIFT | DEVELOP |
| MOTIVATE | INSPIRE | INCREASE | IGNITE | BUILD |
| EMPOWER | INCENTIVISE | DECREASE | SPARK | AMPLIFY |
| EDUCATE | PROMPT | CHALLENGE | SUPPORT | ACCELERATE |

**HOW MIGHT WE... (VERB THAT IMPLIES CHANGE) + (STAKEHOLDER) + (OPPORTUNITY)?**

( 1 )          ( 4 )

For more guidance for this tool as well as an example, refer to the **Resource Book** on page 154.

*High-quality **How Might We Questions** should also feel actionable and inspiring. When you read the question out loud to the team, if there are not a few ideas that you generate quickly then it might need some more iteration to refocus on the stakeholder, the opportunity, and the verb that will help you achieve the change you want. Return to the worksheets to guide the work.*

*Avoid How **Might We Questions** that are too vague or lack a specific stakeholder. Focus on human-centred questions that seem actionable and inspiring for the team.*

---

Is there something good about the current conditions that you might make better?
Use your answer to write a new How Might We Question.

**HMW...**

Is there something negative about the current conditions that you might improve?
Use your answer to write a new How Might We Question.

**HMW...**

Is there a specific aspect of this challenge that you want to focus on?
Use your answer to write a new How Might We Question.

**HMW...**

What might you focus on in order to improve outcomes for stakeholders?
Use your answer to write a new How Might We Question.

**HMW...**

What might you focus on in order to decrease stress?
Use your answer to write a new How Might We Question.

**HMW...**

What is a relevant analogy you might draw inspiration from?
Use your answer to write a new How Might We Question.

**HMW...**

What might you focus on in order to increase joy?
Use your answer to write a new How Might We Question.

**HMW...**

What might you focus on in order to eliminate a pain point for stakeholders?
Use your answer to write a new How Might We Question.

**HMW...**

Is there an assumption you are making that you might question with your HMW question?
Use your answer to write a new How Might We Question.

**HMW...**

**If the HMW question feels too big and overwhelming**, ask yourselves: "What's stopping us from meeting this need?"

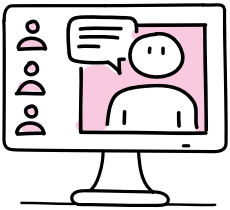Then, rewrite the HMW around what you identified as a barrier.

---

**If the HMW question feels too much like a solution**, ask yourselves: "Why would we want to do this?"

Then rewrite the HMW around what is motivating your design team.

# SYNTHESISE:
# DIGITAL TEMPLATES

# SYNTHESISE: DIGITAL TEMPLATES

All of the **tools and resources** have **digital versions** that will allow your design team to capture your work, share it with others and collaborate while working remotely. Scan the **QR codes** below to access these resources.

## #1

### SYNTHESISE SLIDE DECK & ICONS TEMPLATE

Use this slide deck template to create presentations throughout your design project.

*Scan this QR Code or click here to access a slide deck template for the Synthesise Phase.*

## #3

### DESIGN WORK JOURNAL

Use this PDF of the **Design Work Journal** to capture the most important information from each phase of the design process, as well as reflect on and improve the quality of your design work. Your design team will use the same Design Work Journal throughout your project.

*Scan this QR Code or click here to access a PDF of the Design Work Journal.*

## #2

### SYNTHESISE PHASE MURAL TEMPLATE

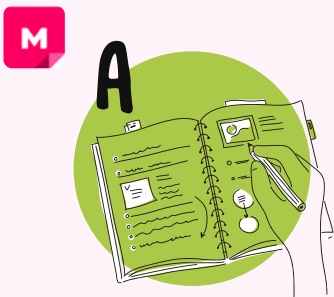Use this Mural template to complete your team's **Synthesise Phase**.

*Scan this QR Code or click here to access a template in Mural, an online collaborative platform.*
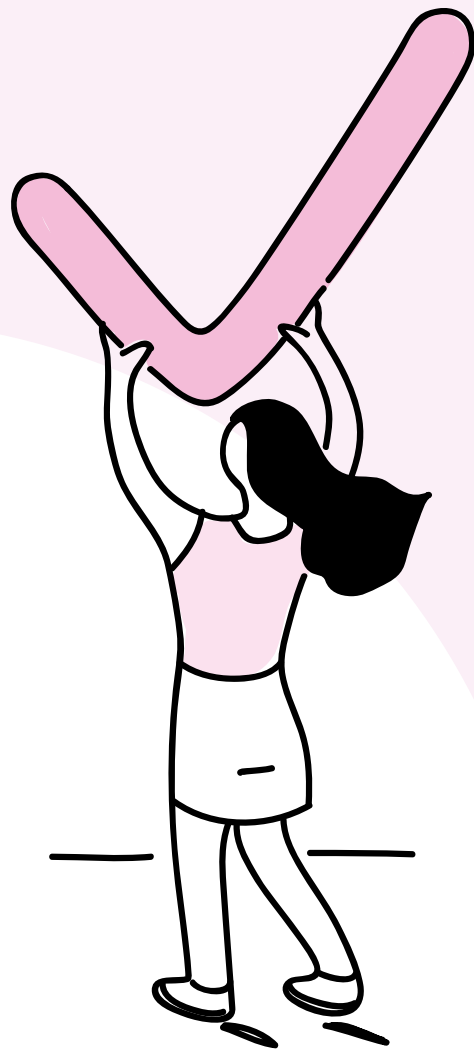
## #4

### DESIGN WORK JOURNAL MURAL TEMPLATE

Use this Mural template of the **Design Work Journal** to capture the most important information from each phase of the design process, as well as reflect on and improve the quality of your design work.
Your design team will use the same **Design Work Journal** throughout your project.

*Scan this QR Code or click here to access a template in Mural, an online collaborative platform.*

# SYNTHESISE: CHECKLIST

Congratulations on completing the **Synthesise Phase** of your design challenge. At the end of this step, your design team should feel aligned around the needs of your stakeholders and the opportunities to meet those needs.

At the end of every phase of the design process, use the checklist provided to make sure you are making progress and are ready to move forward.

**BY NOW, YOU SHOULD HAVE COMPLETED THE FOLLOWING:**

☐ Complete the tools of the **Synthesise Phase** that were listed in your design pathway; depending on your design pathway, you may skip this phase

☐ **Document your work** in your **Design Work Journal** through pictures and reflections on what you learned

☐ Complete the **Team Alignment** exercises in your Design Work Journal

☐ Complete the **Equity Reflection** exercise in your Design Work Journal

☐ Complete the **Process Reflection** exercise in your Design Work Journal

☐ Use the **Process Critique** in the **Design Work Journal** tools to reflect on the quality of your design work

# 04
# SYNTHESISE