

Indi Young Interview Trimmed-1

Kyle Bowen: [00:00:00] Indi, it's so great to talk with you today. I have been looking forward to this conversation all week.

[00:00:06] **Indi Young:** [00:00:06] Yeah, it's nice to see you again, Kyle. I love our conversations.

[00:00:11] **Kyle Bowen:** [00:00:11] Great. So we have a lot to talk about, so I think we'll just jump right in, but first, I introduced you to my readers the author of Practical Empathy, and Mental Models. So they know a little bit about you, but maybe you'd like to introduce yourself as well

[00:00:25] **Indi Young:** [00:00:25] Yeah, sure. I am right now very interested in trying to design for different perspectives rather than letting ourselves design for the mythical average user. So I'm getting people tools, and actually, more powerfully I'm giving people mindsets and awareness. And mindsets and awareness seem to be the thing that people are so grateful for because every situation is different, and you have to be the person who brings this mindset and this approach into your own context into the way that works for that context. One of the things I'm doing, also, is empowering people and giving them self-confidence that they are able to do this.

[00:01:20] **Kyle Bowen:** [00:01:22] So I want to let listeners know that. Let's maybe first define what the problem space is, and then we will get to how it relates to them as museum leaders, multicultural organizations. What is the problem space?

[00:01:36] **Indi Young:** [00:01:36] The problem space is the thing that's been largely ignored. You've probably heard of design thinking in the museum space, and that begins with a section called empathy. A lot of other jobs to be done, also, begins with the section where it's like, oh, we need to understand our users. However, growing up all of us are taught to solve problems, to come up with ideas that that is the way that we get feedback. That's the way that we get known. That's the way we get promotions. That's the way that we graduate university. So we're swimming in this culture of solving problems, and very little is done to understand the problem first. So that's what these methods are trying to do is say, oh, yeah, we've got to those understand problems first, and by understanding the problems we need to know user needs, right?

[00:02:40] When I took it all apart I realized that whenever you say user, whenever you say patron, or participant, or family member, or any of those other nouns you might use to reference somebody that you're trying to support you're looking at them through the lens of your solution. That noun is somebody who has a relationship to your organization, or a potential relationship to your organization that you're trying to market to. And so all of that is still within our realm of how we grew up of problem solving. Let's come up with ideas. Let's understand these patrons that we're trying to support better, and yet what we're missing is their point of view. So instead of using any of those nouns I use the word person, and I try to understand the person's purpose without relationship to our organization.

[00:03:42] So one of the things that's really different about the problem space is that we're paying attention to people and their purposes not to our solutions.

We're not even getting into idea land yet. All we're trying to do is absorb their perspective, and absorbing their perspective takes time. It takes trust. You have to build trust with people. You need to get to depth with people. You can't understand them just based on their opinions and preferences, and explanations. We have to get to depth in the problem space. We need to understand their inner thinking, their emotional reactions, their guiding principles, so that we understand what their world is like, what their context is like, how their thinking changes from context to context. And really get into that so that we can see patterns.

[00:04:41] So in the problem space it's all about getting to individual unique depth with different people, and then finding patterns across those different people, and starting to support those patterns, and inviting in, bringing all of this knowledge into the strategy space, into the space where you start thinking, you start a project. Well, what are we going to change? How are we going to change this? We have this problem. We have these numbers. How do we address it? Well, let's look at our depth of knowledge, and see what's there that can tell us something. See if it can tell us something about different thinking styles, and a thinking style that we could support much better. Now that we're in the pandemic days and cultural institutions, and museums are much less attended shall we say. I was going to say largely abandoned, but that's probably not what you want to hear.

[00:05:46] **Kyle Bowen:** [00:05:46] That's harsh, that's harsh, yeah.

[00:05:48] **Indi Young:** [00:05:48] Exactly, but it's temporary. It's temporary, and we'll all going to get our lives back after our vaccines. So theoretically what I want to talk about is before times, and the future times because the current times are hard except the current times are great for developing problem space knowledge. This is the perfect time. The way that I develop this has always and only been one-on-one, and it has always and only been by telephone with no video, remote. So this is perfect timing for us. We're forced to take a little pause. Normally, the pushback I get is, well, we don't have time to really go understand people, so we're just going to keep failing fast, and get nowhere. Oh. So, anyway, that's how I wanted to capture this is the problem space is about people, what are the purposes?

[00:06:55] Let me just give an example. Let's say a purpose is I want to keep my kids out of my hair, right? And it's a rainy day I need to get something done. I need to give them something to stay entertained, but I'm the kind of parent who wants them to maybe do a little learning along the way. So how about we do a little outing to the aquarium, or something, or how about I put on a Discovery Channel set of programs. There's a lot of ways to solve that problem. See, that's the problem space. It isn't about the aquarium. It's about what a person is trying to solve, but what's interesting is if you talk to a bunch of people who have this problem there's different thinking styles about how they go about solving it, and that allows you to produce different experiences. I was recently in Bath at the Roman Baths in Bath. Do you say it that way?

[00:08:07] **Kyle Bowen:** [00:08:07] Sounds right to me. Yeah, we'll go with it.

[00:08:10] **Indi Young:** [00:08:10] I was blown away because they had about six or seven different threads that you could use to go and explore that. They had a

thread you could follow that was if you were interested in archeology. They had a thread you could follow if you were interested in the lives of people at that point in time. They had a thread you could follow that had to do with how famous personalities in the U.K. experienced this and what it meant to them what the experience is, and how to feel, right? They had all sorts of different approaches. They had all sorts of different ways of experiencing the same thing.

[00:08:53] So there was a bit of mosaic that they had unearthed, and it's there on the floor with a light on it, and it's gorgeous. And there's some explanation how it was made, but there's also video playing in the background on the wall that makes it look like the mosaic is in this woman's room, and she's having her servant come and help her dress her hair, and having a conversation with her about going to the temple which the Roman Baths was a part of I guess. So I was just blown away because it looks like they had done some research. It looks like they had realized there are different thinking styles. And it looks like they carefully designed it so that even if your context switched mid path through the Baths you could switch. It was really beautiful.

[00:09:48] **Kyle Bowen:** I'd love to hear the difference between you're talking about one of those different interests how is that different than purpose?

[00:09:55] **Indi Young:** [00:09:55] Yeah. So I would say purpose and interest are the same. I would conflate them for the purpose of understanding the problem space. So research is all about creating knowledge, right? And it's all about trying to fill in gaps in your knowledge, and half the time we don't realize what our gaps are, so it's almost a chicken and the egg thing sometimes. So I have to put some constraints around it so that we can first of all recognize what knowledge we're missing, but second of all gather some data that actually has patterns. I constrain everything by purpose. I may have said interest that's another way of saying it, but it's more tied to ... So an interest is something that you might list, right? Oh, I have these interests, but how do you act on them, and how do you think around them? That's the purpose.

[00:10:58] So maybe my purpose is to everywhere I go learn about what are the people like here? What is it like to live here current day, right? And that purpose it may be an interest, but it takes form like when I go to Venice, and I live in the upstairs apartment of this friend of mine who's a shopkeeper that I became friends with over the years. I'm actually channeling a friend of mine named Cynthia. And I spend four weeks there, and I live like the locals, and I chat with the locals, and I become friends with more of this guy's friends. That's one thing that I do there in Venice, but it's also the same thing that I did when I went to Chechnya right after the wars to try to understand what went through people's minds during those wars so that I could get a much better understanding of what it was like to live there.

[00:12:00] So that's a part of what I'm doing everywhere I go is connecting with the people, and understanding what's their world like in their heads. What makes them tick? How do they decide to do what they did? What was it like emotionally? What was the inner thinking going on? So I just switched examples there from Bath to my friend Cynthia who does this sort of thing, but those are two examples where your purpose is something that has an action, and I'm just using it as a

constraint so that we can gather data, so we can understand what knowledge we might want.

[00:12:40] **Kyle Bowen:** [00:12:40] Yeah, that raises a voice in my mind that had an objection to something you were saying earlier which is, wait a second, wait a second, the problem space has no relationship to the organization?

[00:12:52] **Indi Young:** [00:12:52] Yeah.

[00:12:52] **Kyle Bowen:** [00:12:52] It's not about the organization. Well, we don't have the time or resources.

[00:12:56] **Indi Young:** [00:12:56] Time, or money, yeah.

[00:12:59] **Kyle Bowen:** [00:12:59] Yeah.

[00:12:59] **Indi Young:** [00:12:59] Yeah. I've done this with startups a lot and the CEOs halfway through I'll ask them to listen to one of the listening sessions I did that was particularly interesting. And they'll come back to me the next day, and they'll say, "Indi, what are we spending our money on here? This doesn't have anything to do with what we're trying to accomplish." And I will connect it for them. For example, let's use the example of Bath, and let's pretend that we were the people doing the research that resulted in those different threads that you can use to go through. Well, obviously, archeology, right? Because it's an archeological site, but how did this thread of how people who are famous in the U.K. experience it come up? So you wouldn't have come up with that just out of your head. Maybe you do, maybe you have.

[00:14:04] I was just giving a talk at the Federal Reserve the other day and they started the thing with this little comedy sketch with this design group saying, "Okay, how are we going to figure out the features. Here's the wheel of features. Let's spin the wheel." And it's just basically like pulling it out of the air. The problem is is that it will only represent the people in the room and those people's experiences, and if none of those people are interested in what the famous people in U.K. have to say, or what their opinions are, they're never going to come up with a thread like that, right? But if they have gone, and done open-ended listening sessions. I'm introducing another word. I'll define thinking styles soon, too, but if they had gone and done open-ended listening sessions with people who had a purpose, right?

[00:15:00] A purpose maybe of visiting towns, or something, entertaining myself on the weekend. And you would recruit for people who had happened to probably gone to something like that so that you would get their thinking about that. You would constrain your recruiting so that you will hear information that applies, okay? It may not be your museum, or cultural area, but it may be a related one, okay? And in it you maybe heard from a whole bunch of people about how they had just been reading about this famous person, and they really love catching up every day with what they said, and they were reading the tweets, or whatever, as they're going through this museum and they were curious.

[00:15:52] They just like, "I wonder if this person's ever been here, and if they've ever stood here? Maybe I'll take a picture of myself here where this person might have been. I wonder what they were thinking?" And if that came up over and over again as a pattern that becomes a thing you can support, okay? And that's something that wouldn't have come from the wheel of features, or the team in the

room if they weren't that type of person, right?

[00:16:23] **Kyle Bowen:** [00:16:23] So it sounds like, what you're describing it sounds like you're trying to bring in some diversity.

[00:16:30] **Indi Young:** [00:16:30] That's exactly what we're trying to do. I was just talking to my niece about this the other day. She was interested in racial discrimination and how to think about. And she had already been taught that race is a construct. It isn't a real thing it's a human construct. And how does that fit into her head? I say, okay, the place that I start is to say, mindset-wise, become aware of whenever a demographic comes out of your mouth. And as a demographic comes out of your mouth find out if you're trying to say something about a group of people. And as soon as you are saying something about a whole group based on a demographic you're doing discrimination, right? You're using bias or assumptions. You're not talking about real humans. You're talking about correlation, but correlation is not causation.

[00:17:35] And she's like, "We just learned that." She's in high school. "We just learned that in my statistics class." And I'm gobsmacked because she learned in statistics in high school. School is so much better then when I was a kid, but anyway, correlation is not causation. And so this awareness of a demographic coming out of your mind if it's related to something you want to say about a group you are now on thin ice. You don't want to be there. You want to back up, and you want to base it on something more solid. So the idea now so that's the mindset basis for it. When I'm working with teens like that CEO who pushed back, and said, "Hey, this doesn't have anything to do." What I'm interested in is keeping people from looking at the audiences they want to serve through a lens of bias, unconscious, or conscious, right? Oftentimes, it's unconscious.

[00:18:42] So the idea is to back away from that thin ice, and go find out about real people, and use the real patterns of inner thinking. Inner thinking is not caused. Inner thinking, emotional reaction, and guiding principle that's the triad that I look for, but none of those are caused by a demographic except in certain circumstances. If you have just been discriminated against that is going to cause thinking, that is going to cause emotional reaction. If that happens enough in your life that's going to cause guiding principles. If you have a certain physiology that's going to cause thinking like I have a physiology that's different than your physiology. Someone who's in a wheelchair has different physiology than someone who has low vision, right? And yet you're still underneath we're all still having inner thinking. We're all still having emotional reactions. We're all still having guiding principles.

[00:19:49] This example came up yesterday. One of the people had shown a picture of a staircase in a subway, and it was really ugly, and had an angle, and everything, and they said, "Oh, hey, is this accessible?" And everybody is like "No way." And he's like, "Actually, it's as accessible as possible for people with low vision and blindness because the handrails go the entire way. And there's a landing, and there's bright paint on the top step and the bottom step. There's also an elevator just outside of this picture." So everybody is like, "Oh, interesting." And so what I did was I tried to use that example. I'm like, "As a low vision person I would be grateful for the yellow stripe. I would grab the rail, and then I

would be delighted that it actually goes the entire way." That's a reaction to a solution. That's in the evaluative space. That evaluative research is in the solution space, okay? If we go back over to the problem space. I'm making it sound so complex, and it really isn't. I've got a diagram that I can show which may help.

[00:21:06] **Kyle Bowen:** [00:21:06] I've shared that diagram before and I will share it again, yeah.

[00:21:11] **Indi Young:** [00:21:11] Oh, good. So in the problem space all we're doing is we're trying to understand the person, and look for patterns across each the person. So that we have patterns of inner thinking, which are much more solid than statements about correlation of demographic, okay? So that's why I want to start with that. Then if there's discrimination happening, if there's physiology, low vision happening, we layer that back in. So one of the things I create is thinking styles. Thinking styles are archetypes without demographics. And they describe a person's mental approach to a purpose in a context. So interestingly enough they're very similar to personas, but I don't use pictures, I don't use names. Names and pictures are great for characters and scenarios, but not great for archetypes. And so when I'm using a thinking style it's really all about the mental stuff going on the heart maybe, but emotions are they in the heart really? I don't know.

[00:22:25] Anyway, so I'm interested in what's going on mentally. Finding the patterns, building thinking styles in terms of different people's approaches so that we can make sure we are measuring against our support for those different thinking styles, okay? And then I also create mental model diagrams, which is like a city skyline of all the things that go through people's minds as they're trying to accomplish their purpose. It is not a timeline. A journey map that's the word I'm trying to think of. It's not a journey map. Journey maps are in the solution space. They're all about a relationship of a person to you, your organization, most of them are. And sadly most of them use a generic person instead of an actual different thinking style, different characters. Even if they have personas they don't seem to use them in the journey maps because that means if you have five personas you have to write five journey maps. And they're all like blah, but that's truly what's needed because we're missing it.

[00:23:31] Anyway, the mental model diagram is where I layer in lots of data. Now a mental model diagram it looks like a city skyline, and underneath each building you can layer in your support for that building, your foundation for what's going on, the thinking, the emotions, the guiding principles in that part of this person's approach to the purpose. And you will find gaps, so you will find weaknesses. You'll find stuff that you've designed that is designed for a generalized version of these three towers, but not actually what's going on in those towers, or you might have stuff that's created for the mythical average user, average museum goer, and that person doesn't exist. So you can find a lot of weaknesses that you could layer in, also.

[00:24:25] These events of discrimination. These events of physiology that we're up against. The people in the world that you're working in are working with a physical world, so this is already a part of their thinking. It has been for years the

physiology of it, but has the inner thinking been explored with respect to the physiology? I think a lot of the time we approach our physical world based on what the experts have done, and the experts haven't actually listened to people. So there's a woman who is deaf who is a user experience researcher. And I am forgetting her name right now. She's active on Twitter. I will get you her name for the show notes.

[00:25:17] **Kyle Bowen:** [00:25:17] Please, yeah.

[00:25:19] **Indi Young:** [00:25:19] But she's been really vocal about, hey, you guys haven't asked us. You haven't come and talked to us. You haven't heard what's going through our minds, and so you're coming up with these solutions that are based on what the experts did at a 10 foot distance without developing a rapport with anybody who is deaf, or who is in a wheelchair. What is their life like? What goes through their minds? And how can we support them better? There's different thinking styles, and we're not supporting them. We haven't even looked.

[00:25:58] Derek Featherstone is the person that comes closest to doing this kind of work to actually getting in touch with people who have physiological issues. And the physiological applies to if you're in biotech, right? And you're creating solutions for people with a certain physiology. So it isn't just design spaces, just to give that a broader perspective, but the key I think, also, with respect to bias and discrimination is to go and hear those stories. Go and talk to individuals and hear those stories, and understand what their guiding principles are for dealing with it, what their emotional reaction is, and the cascade that happens after that, and how they deal with each situation.

[00:26:55] We did that just recently for a financial company that was giving people loans in a way. And the amount of discrimination and stories that we heard was just flooring. I mean, the company, the organization that hired us knew that most of the other people in their industry were bad, and they discriminated, but these people thought of themselves as good, right? Most of it was gender discrimination that they thought of from the outset that when we brought them these stories they were like, "Oh, right. We are better, but it's not good versus bad. We're better, but we have not learned how to speak this language yet, and there are so many opportunities for us."

[00:27:55] They came to me and they said, "Hey, in 10 years we want to be the inclusive company." And in 10 years they will be there because they have this data now, but two more things to say about is that with respect to discrimination it is hard work. It's hard work for the person collecting the stories. It's damned hard work for the person being discriminated against. So be very aware of how hard this is. There's a lot of work that goes into making a safe space for a person to talk about it, and then taking care of yourself afterwards because you're the one pulling these patterns together, and having to layer them on top of this diagram afterward. It is hard work, and I think that's why most people don't do it. And that's why I really welcome this opportunity, this pause that we have where people are becoming more aware of discrimination, and are interested in finding out about it, and have time to find out about it.

[00:29:08] Resources, money, how do you do that? Well, it isn't something you

have to hire somebody to do, right? It is convenient to hire somebody to do it, but at the end of the day you're going to have to know all this data anyway. The person you hire is going to drag you through it, so you could do it yourself, it is not impossible. That's why I've written the books. That's why I'm trying to encourage people build this community. And there's also another woman named Vivianne Castillo who started a group called Human-Centered only without any vowels. And so Human-Centered is just starting up its first cohort the end of September. And she is helping people develop that strength to do the research, and hear the stories and take care of themselves, and make safe space to explore discrimination, okay? That's a great resources if anybody is interested in that.

[00:30:17] **Kyle Bowen:** [00:30:17] Absolutely.

[00:30:17] **Indi Young:** [00:30:17] Yeah.

[00:30:18] **Kyle Bowen:** [00:30:18] can an organization be empathetic?

[00:30:21] **Indi Young:** [00:30:21] No. An organization is made up of people and the people within it can be empathetic, but there's eight different definitions of empathy. It's like the blind man and the elephant trying to define empathy it's all these different things. And then you get books like the one that Paul Bloom at Yale wrote is against empathy. And Don Norman, who's a user experienced person has written all these essays like empathy is bad, let's do compassion. Well, in the eight types of empathy one of it is called empathic concern which is compassion. So he is saying, "I'm against empathy, but this kind of empathy is good." So that's fine. Words, people, right? If we could all stop arguing about it has to be one true thing, and accept that it is multi-faced, right? Multifaceted, and it does mean many things. So compassion, yes, you do want to use compassion. [00:31:27] The thing that he's against, and the thing that Paul Bloom is against is something called emotional contagion. That's a type of empathy where you feel what the other person is feeling. It is the thing that Human-Centered is trying to give me better strength to bear because when I'm in a listening session I am hearing these people's stories, and I am feeling it, right? But the thing that I'm doing the two kinds of empathy that I'm using in my work one of them is called empathic listening, and that's how I am starting off a listening session, and building rapport, and keeping trust going. So empathic listening is the type of empathy that I champion. Dr. Brene Brown, also quite famous, she champions empathic listening. She calls it plain old empathy. So a lot of people kind of empathic listening is empathy. A lot of people know emotional contagion is empathy.

[00:32:25] The other one that I use a lot is cognitive empathy. So cognitive empathy is building enough of an understanding of how that person ticks, how they think, how they react, what their guiding principles are, that triad, right? So that you could be them. So you could act them if you were an actor. And that is key for me to understand. Then when I switch from the problem space into the strategy space, or into the solution space that's key for me to be able to be them and develop solutions for them. Key for me to able to be a thinking style, and develop solutions from because the thinking style represents cognitive empathy. So, it's all tangled up, and it sounds a little woo-woo to some people, but I think

your listeners are already very focused on people, and understanding people does not sound woo-woo to them. It is what they have already been doing, but in a less sort of bounded way so that you can see very specific things coming back, and opportunities, or weaknesses, and being able to measure yourself that way. So that's what I'm trying to do.

[00:33:59] **Kyle Bowen:** [00:33:59] Yeah. And so that's interesting because I mean so many folks in the museum world really value diversity, fighting bias. We hold these ideals close to us, but putting it into practice can be challenging. What are your thoughts on that?

[00:34:24] **Indi Young:** [00:34:24] Yeah. So it is hard that's why I mentioned Human-Centered. And often we let other experts tell us, and those experts we don't know how they did their research for the most part from what I hear from this user experience developer person who is deaf she's like, "You guys don't talk to us." These studies are not representative, and so that's why I mentioned Derek Featherstone, but it is not impossible to do yourselves. So let me just imagine that I am a small cultural institute perhaps one in my own town. There's an old historic big, big, big house that has garden space. It has a very special glass house I guess that's a greenhouse so they have all sorts of events going on there, and groups that work there in and out of there. It's not so much a touring kind of a place, but a home for a lot of different groups.

[00:35:32] So there's a group that grows some sort of really historic very rare plants in the glass house. There's a group that does succulents. Well, okay, I don't know that much more about it, but let's say we're the group in charge of everything. Let's say we're maybe three full-time people and five volunteers that come pretty regularly that's eight total, right? This is not a lot of fire power. However, you already have experience which can be cast in this light, so I think the first thing you would want to do is spend a week, two weeks, three weeks on Zoom, right? Going through your knowledge, and trying to write it down in a viewpoint from the person. So all the work I do is in first person present tense.

[00:36:34] I am that other person and I write it down with a verb first, which is in first person present tense so that it represents the key of what's going through my mind, or my heart as I'm trying to accomplish this purpose, okay? All of the experience you already have is going to be purposes that had to do with your org, but you could start to even think about people that you've spoken to, and had relationships with that had similar experiences with other types of orgs, right? Maybe you have a partner whose in theater and belongs to a theater group at an actual theater, and has had some thinking that has to do with not only that group, but that group's connection to the location, and the purpose that it serves, right? The historic purpose that it serves. So you can represent that person.

[00:37:33] This is an exercise in trying to represent other people's thinking in first person present tense. This is the place where a lot of problem space research goes wrong because people try to jump to insights. They try to jump to conclusions. They try to write nouns from their own perspective, and this is walking right back into that thin ice where we're starting to talk about groups of people by demographic, okay?

[00:38:06] **Kyle Bowen:** [00:38:06] That urge to prove value, right?

[00:38:09] **Indi Young:** [00:38:09] Yeah.

[00:38:09] **Kyle Bowen:** [00:38:09] Yeah.

[00:38:10] **Indi Young:** [00:38:10] Yeah, exactly. And the exercise of writing things down first person present tense, and writing enough of them down you can't stop it just 30 of these things. All eight people want to try to write down 50 of them. Once you get going, oh, my God, you keep going, you keep going, you keep going. Get a couple 100 of them, get 500, get 800 of them. And then start looking for patterns across them. Now looking for patterns is another place where we want to jump to value. We have this natural way of thinking of things through the lens of our organization, and we want those patterns to fit into the way things are right now, and you have to stop that urge, and say, okay, let's just look at what they're saying from their point of view in their context. Not me, but I am this person, and my context, and my purpose are X and Y. And gosh, you know what? This matches this other person over here so I'm going to start building patterns.

[00:39:18] It's slow work, but it's so powerful because what you end up building, and you do this together with your other volunteers, right? You might hop on the phone, or on Zoom, or whatever for a couple hours, two hours a day for a couple of weeks you'll get it done. You've got the time. It doesn't cost anything. This is data, though, that you have to be very careful that you only represent another person's perspective, and that the patterns don't represent you from your perspective of the organization. They have to represent that person's purpose. So the way the patterns come together are going to be more purpose oriented, okay?

[00:39:59] And when those patterns comes together that builds into a mental model diagram. My book talks about what the levels are for that, and how to create those towers, and what that means, but the towers are basically the groups, and inside the towers each of the boxes in the tower are each of those statements from that person first person present tense, or from the three people who said something similar we're going to have three boxes with their statements in that tower. Then what you can do after you've got this together, I mean, first of all it's going to develop a matrix. I was just reading XKCD the physics guy who makes cartoons, and they're trying to figure out how a giant Rice Krispie square could serve as a craft barrier for cars. They're like it gets stiffer as the marshmallow gets harder over time, so maybe it will crumble, so let's put it into a hexagon shape because the hexagon is the strongest shape out there, right?

[00:41:02] So in a way that's a great analogy because what I'm doing is I'm building these patterns in a very strong shape. It doesn't actually take a hexagonal shape, but I'm building them together in patterns of people's approaches to their purpose, and that provides such a strong model. That city skyline is so strong that it lasts decades, and people I have worked with decades ago who are using this data who still add to it, and layer it, and layer more data on top of it, and use it to find their next weakness, and fill that in, okay? So it lasts decades. It's something that you could give to the next person who takes over, right?

[00:41:53] When I talk about that triad the inner thinking, the emotional reactions,

the guiding principles that's cognitive empathy that's the definition of cognitive empathy. If you were one of those I forget how they call it. There's a couple of movies out there where they told the actors what their characters were. They gave the actors their thinking styles, and a bunch of context, and then said, okay, let's start shooting a movie in this context. And then they just act their characters and this amazing movie comes out of it. It's a totally different director approach. So why did I mention that? Now I forget, no way.

[00:42:39] **Kyle Bowen:** [00:42:39] Well, so I keep having this objector voice coming into my head which I wasn't planning on for this, but I imagined a voice that's saying, hey, wait a second. All our marketing is based on demographics. We rely on that all that time. Are you saying we should just throw that out?

[00:42:56] **Indi Young:** [00:42:56] No. Great question. So marketing has 150 years worth of process and method building, okay? At its roots what marketing is is trying to get somebody aware of the fact that you're here to do something, and maybe they'll do it with you, or you can support them somehow, okay? To get that message to them historically we had to put it in front of them print wise, and we had to know where they might be so we could put the print there physically. And then newspapers came along, right? Or what have you, and then we could put it in the newspaper, but which section? So we had to think of people as great big crowds, and try to get the message in front of where that crowd was likely to be. We did that with demographics, so that's why it's demographics based, it's historical. I think yes, and, is the answer. I wouldn't abandon all your marketing. Certainly the methods have been developed and they're quite mature, and must be working.

[00:44:13] However, I think this approach would be an additional way to look at marketing from a thinking style perspective, or from a purpose perspective is there a way we could get a message to someone whose trying to accomplish this purpose as they're accomplishing this purpose, right?

[00:44:39] **Kyle Bowen:** [00:44:39] Yeah.

[00:44:41] **Indi Young:** [00:44:41] It's a yes, and. I would not throw out the marketing. One of the things that I've done also in the past with a couple of different clients is I matrixed it so I took the marketing segments, and I put them vertically, and then I took the thinking styles, and I put them horizontally and we made the little cells, right? With everything intersecting, and then we considered each cell. And we're like, oh, my gosh, you know what? We've been so concentrated on this intersection like this thinking style and this market segment are so important to us that we're going to meld them together in our thinking, right? But truly market segments are for a different thing than designing. They are truly for getting a message to somebody. And when you're designing you can take that meld, or take the thinking style, but you can't design to a market segment.

[00:45:43] **Kyle Bowen:** [00:45:43] By design you define that broadly I assume.

[00:45:46] **Indi Young:** [00:45:46] Yeah, I'm saying it broadly. Let's take it to a little example. Let's say you're the aquarium and let's say you've segmented your kids by age maybe age range, or something. And you've got the tide pool for the itty-bitty kids to stick their hands in there and touch something weird. And the

older kids don't go in there because it's full of itty-bitty kids, but there's a heck of a lot of older kids who are really interested, and they wish they could go in there, but it feels weird, right? So the design of the tide pool thing could change if we knew that thinking, right? We've only set it up bright primary colors, lots of stools, things that toddlers use, and toddlers are fine with, but the older kids are like, nuh-uh. I'm a big girl now. I've grown up. So, anyway.

[00:46:51] **Kyle Bowen:** [00:46:51] That's an awesome example, yeah.

[00:46:53] **Indi Young:** [00:46:53] Okay.

[00:46:54] **Kyle Bowen:** [00:46:54] You mentioned this being such a unique time as painful as it may be. A lot of cultural organizations are thinking about re-imagining their purposes. These conversations about what is our role now? What does this mean? How can we support people or serve people and be more equitable, and these sorts of things. What does the problem space, or is problem space research is there a connection there?

[00:47:26] **Indi Young:** [00:47:26] I'm going to have a conversation Friday with somebody in the U.K. who is having that exact question. And she said to me, hey, we're a group a nonprofit that supports kids, who are black and brown, get into STEM. So science, technology, engineering, and math, and they do a festival that does something like that. And she said, "You know what? While we have our own lived experiences we know we're missing stuff, and we would like to take this time to go and understand that to see if we can reach out to people who have a different approach, or a different circumstance, or something that us, our team, didn't think of, have no experience, haven't lived." So she's well aware of this gap in knowledge. And she wants to fill it.

[00:48:21] So one of the things we're going to talk about is how is it that you can take this time to get on the phone with people? How do we define who it is that you're missing? You have the sense that you're missing something. How do we find those people and get those stories? How do we sit down on the phone, and have a listening session? Like I said all my career I do not do listening sessions face-to-face. Not even on video. There's a reason for that. What you want to do is make a safe space for people. You want to build trust so they can talk to you about their deep inner thinking. When you do this face-to-face there is an authority relationship going on.

[00:49:07] There's also maybe like, wow, you're a lot different than I thought you were, or that kind of visual cues, or body language cues, or uh-huh that kind of cue, right? Maybe you're taking notes, but in a listening session I actually don't take notes I record it. In a listening session I don't have visuals. I have my voice, and I use my voice, and my tone of voice, and I use words to offer support. So empathic listening is all about recognizing that whatever a person's emotions, and inner thinking is valid, is true for them even if it doesn't match your own.

[00:49:57] I could, given enough strength go and listen to a fascist and have them unpack for me what their inner thinking is. I probably only have the strength to do one of those, but it's possible, right? But, anyway, in a listening session visual is not wanted. We want to offer a safe dark space for our minds to connect, and our voice, and our tone of voice, and our words, and our communication are the thing that build that bridge. So that's why this time is a

really perfect time for that.

[00:51:13] **Kyle Bowen:** [00:51:13] So you're saying to reimagine our organization's purpose here comes the objector again.

[00:51:19] **Indi Young:** [00:51:19] Okay.

[00:51:19] **Kyle Bowen:** [00:51:19] To reimagine our organization's purpose we just need to go listen to people?

[00:51:25] **Indi Young:** [00:51:25] That's how Indi sees it. So the organization's purpose is probably different than all the purposes that different people may have, right? Whenever I say people it's always plural, different people you heard me just say. I like plurality. So you may not want to say define our purpose, maybe our purposes. It is a yes-and sort of a thing. Maybe what we've been doing has been fine, but let's add to it. Let's reimagine it. Let's blossom a whole bunch more flowers out of this, right?

[00:52:07] **Kyle Bowen:** [00:52:07] how could people find out more about you?

[00:52:10] **Indi Young:** [00:52:10] I have a website indiyoung.com. I'm on Twitter Indi Young. I'm on LinkedIn Indi Young. I'm on Medium. I've got a publication called Inclusive Software which talks about stuff that has nothing to do with software. I'm trying to get the tech world to pay attention to this because the tech world has their own guiding principles about development of solutions, and they need to hear this, so anyway. I have a couple of books out there. I have a reading list that I'm developing. We're rolling out a new version of the website right now because the current one is really bad, but I have talks, recorded talks on there that you can peruse. So those all may be of help.

[00:52:59] I mean, yes, I do coaching, yes, I teach courses, but those cost money. For all of that I have a super low level ticket price, but that's still a ticket price, right? I do work with graduate students, and post grads, and do an exchange; what can you help me with? And I will let you have some of the courses, or have some coaching, or something. I want this to grow. I want it to grow. I want more people to be doing it, so there's a lot that I'm willing to help out with. I also have a Slack workspace where various people who have been starting doing this have discussions. So that may also be something if you want an invitation to that just reach out to me via the website.

[00:53:56] **Kyle Bowen:** [00:53:56] Awesome. I'll put links to all those resources