

# Responsible Design

A discipline principally concerned with practicing in an ecosystem, honoring that community with its solutions, and sharing in the accountability of its outcomes.

[designresponsibly.org](http://designresponsibly.org)

## Principles



### Be curious.

Learn your surroundings by practicing from within an ecosystem.



### Be thoughtful.

Honor that community with solutions formed from this new understanding.



### Be humble.

Admit that you will fail, adapt well and share in the responsibility.

## Practices

### 01. Talk about hope.

There are topics that we neglect to discuss because we feel they should be assumed. If hope is our foundation, it's well worth mentioning. It's okay to tell those you're serving that hope is your goal. Speak it into existence.

### 02. Embrace real people.

Sure, people are messy. They are often hard to understand and even harder to love, but they are who we serve. Whether our design is direct or indirectly in serving our audience, we know our design will impact real people. Finding community with others is risky, but its rewards allow us to realize a more complete design vision.

### 03. Ask better questions.

One of the most human things we can do is build community through conversation. Dig for intimate insight through the questions you ask. Don't absently inquire, but rather actively listen to people and surroundings, allowing your questions to form organically.

### 04. Be self-aware.

Some of the most simple advice is the hardest to embody. Though you may live and work in the role of designer, you are also someone else's user. Chances are you may even be one of the hard-headed ones designers love to gripe about. Design the products you would want to use.

### 05. Practice patience.

This is without one of the hardest virtues for me to foster in my life. Efficiency can feel at times like muscle memory. However in evaluating the most invaluable aspects of my life, I see the common pattern of time and trust. This will prove no different in our work.

### 06. Slow down.

Slow down and note how certain designs make you feel physiologically and mentally. Especially make note of times when interactions cause anxiety. By experiencing these realities yourself, you can gain perspective on the pitfalls you will inherently create through your work.

### 07. Simplify solutions.

Timeless design identifies a purely human need and creates a simple solution that stands the test of time. It's not about having the trendiest aesthetic or remediating a short term need. It's about designing for real people, in real time.

### 08. Iterate & repeat.

Exercise humility. Continually come back to the reality that you may not get it right the first time. Rather than allowing this truth to defeat you and your practice, use it empower your design.

### 09. Share responsibility.

Don't shy away from responsibility. It's only in this shared experience of working toward a goal that meaningful trust will form between you, your clients and your users. It's a shared commitment to refinement rather than a prideful journey to designer self-fulfillment.