Felix Talkin

Assume a beginner's mindset

You carry your own experiences, understanding, and expertise. Your unique perspective is an incredibly valuable asset to bring to any design challenge. At the same time, your viewpoint carries assumptions and personal beliefs. Your preconceived notions may, in fact, be misconceptions or stereotypes, and can limit the amount of real empathy you can build. Assume a beginner's mindset in order to put aside biases and approach a design challenge with fresh eyes.

How to assume a beginner's mindset:

Don't judge.
Observe and engage users without the influence of value judgments on their actions, circumstances, decisions, or "issues."

Question everything.
Even (and especially) the things you think you already understand. Ask questions to learn about the world from the user's perspective.

Be truly curious.
Strive to assume a posture of wonder and curiosity, both in circumstances that seem either familiar or uncomfortable.

Find patterns.
Look for interesting threads and themes that emerge across user interactions.

Listen. Really.
Ditch any agendas and let the scene soak into your psyche. Absorb what users say to you, and how they say it, without thinking about how you're going to respond.