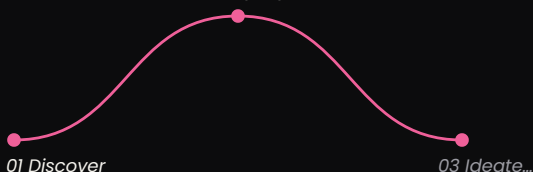


7 steps to design your **life** through UX principles.



A short, honest field guide to noticing what's quietly running your life — and designing something that actually fits. No overhaul. No burnout. Just seven steps.

This is a preview: the Introduction and the opening of Chapter 1, Discover.

BY

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Life as Your Most Important Design

Design starts with a decision to pay attention.

In UX, that decision has a shape. Before a designer draws a single screen, they move through a process: understanding a problem, then defining it, then exploring solutions, then building and testing them. The UK Design Council mapped this rhythm in 2004 and called it the Double Diamond — two diamonds side by side, each one opening wide to explore and narrowing to decide.

This book borrows that shape for its first five chapters — Discover, Define, Ideate, Prototype, Test — because it is, genuinely, one of the clearest tools I know for turning confusion into a plan. But the Double Diamond closes at Test. It was built for shipping a product, not for living a life. So this book keeps going for two more chapters, Iterate and Flow, because a life doesn't get "delivered" once and left alone — it has to be run, day after day, the way a live event has to be run once the doors open.

I spent years designing digital interfaces before I spent years producing festivals, sponsorship activations, and brand experiences in the live events industry. But if I'm honest about why this book exists, it isn't really about either career. It's about a pattern I only recognized after living inside it for most of my twenties: I am extremely good at planning — and then, right around the point where it would have to become real, quietly starting the next idea instead.

What eventually got me unstuck wasn't a better framework. It was realizing I didn't have to pick one right path and commit to it forever before I was allowed to start. I could test a version of myself the way a designer tests a prototype — small, honest, reversible — and let the result tell me something true.

That is the lens this book asks you to turn on your own life: not self-improvement, but design. Not "fix yourself," but understand the system you're already running, and change the parts that no longer serve it.

What this book is not

This isn't a productivity system, and it isn't therapy. I'm not a therapist, and if you're working through something that needs one, please go find one — this book will still be here afterward. What I am is someone who has spent years being trained to ask "what does this person actually need, and how do I know that instead of guessing" — first about strangers using an app, later about a few thousand people walking into a festival. This book is that question, turned toward you.

Each chapter pairs one stage of the design process with real research behind it — not because you need footnotes to trust your own experience, but because I'd rather hand you the actual sources than ask you to take my word for it.

Picking What to Work On

You don't need a fully-formed problem to open Chapter 1 — that's what the first two chapters are for. But it helps to walk in with a rough area of your life you're curious about: your routines, your relationship with money, your relationships, your work or creative life, your body and energy, your sense of self-worth.

Pick whichever one makes your stomach tighten slightly as you read it. That small reaction is usually a decent sign you've found the real one — not the one that sounds good to say out loud, but the one that's actually running underneath.

Ready? Let's start where every good design process starts: by putting down the assumptions, and actually looking.

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Understand the User. Understand Yourself.

Awareness is the first design step.

Every good design process starts with humility: before a designer touches a solution, they admit they don't yet know the problem. So they go looking. They watch how people actually behave, not how they say they behave — those two things are reliably different. They sit next to someone using a product and notice where a hand hesitates, where a brow tightens, where a sigh escapes without the person even registering it. None of that is about finding fault. It's about finding what's true.

This chapter asks you to turn that same attention on yourself. Not to fix anything yet — just to look.

UX Principle: Discover

In UX, Discover is the first quarter of the Double Diamond, and it runs on one instruction: don't solve yet. That's harder than it sounds. Most people — designers included — want to jump straight to the fix. Discovery asks you to sit in not-knowing a little longer than feels comfortable, because the fix that arrives too early is usually a fix for the wrong problem.

Researchers in the field call this reactivity: the fact that people change their behaviour the moment they know they're being watched, and change their account of their own behaviour even more, because we're all narrating ourselves a little kinder than the facts support. That's exactly why discovery leans on observation over self-report wherever it can — watching what someone actually does, not just asking them what they think they do.

Live Design: What a Producer Learns Before the Doors Open

I spent the first part of my career in UX, and the second part producing events — festival sponsorship, brand activations, partner experiences for a few thousand people at a time. The thing nobody tells you when you move from screens to physical space is how much of the job is identical. You still start with research. You just call it something else.

Before a single sponsor stage or brand activation goes up, an event producer is already asking UX questions without the UX vocabulary: Who is actually walking through this gate — not who we're pitching to the sponsor, but who really shows up? What do they need at 2pm on day one that they won't need at 11pm on day three? Where does the queue break their patience, and where does a bit of friction actually build anticipation instead of killing it?

Both fields fail the same way when they skip this step. A product team ships a feature nobody asked for because they designed for who they assumed the user was, not who actually shows up. An event team builds something that looks incredible in the deck and falls flat on the ground because nobody walked the site at the hour real guests would be there — tired, sun-hit, three drinks in, not the fresh, attentive version of a guest everyone pictured in the planning meeting.

Your life runs on the same logic, and you are, at once, the producer and the guest. You already know — somewhere below the level you usually check in with — where your own plan quietly stops matching how you actually show up...

END OF PREVIEW

The rest of the chapter — and six more — **continue here.**

What Stéphanie discovered about herself, the Discovery Journal exercise, and the six chapters that follow — Define, Ideate, Prototype, Test, Iterate, Flow — are waiting in the full book.

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Get your copy of "7 Steps to Design Your Life Through UX Principles" and start with Chapter 1 today.