

5 Ground rules for Reading Minds

1) People are the experts in their own life. For as much as we think we know based on the ways a person is similar to us, or others we know, we are always just making educated guesses and we must be willing to be wrong.

If we say or do something and someone tells us we made a mistake, or hurt them in some way, we should be accountable.

2) We need to consider who we are calling in and who we are leaving out. What ideas or principles are people gathering around? What language are you using to call your people in? Who shows up? Who didn't show up? Is anyone missing? How do you feel about who is or is not there?

3) Your ability to understand what a person is thinking is impacted by your own biases, preferences, and experiences. Taking the time to observe your own patterns and understand, identify, and override your own biases will make it easier for you to understand other people's lens.

4) Explicit Inclusion Everyone thinks that the trouble with niching down, or talking to ONE person is in conflict with the idea of inclusion. Explicit inclusion reminds us that even though talking to everyone means you're talking to no one, talking to one person might mean you are sacrificing the very thing that will make your community vibrant.

5) "With great power comes great responsibility"

Power = the ability to influence or direct someone's behavior or the course of events.

We can still use non-creepy persuasion to do things that are ethically questionable. We're at a time where we need to be considering the impact of our power. Are we creating spaces where people are more free, or less free?

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