

# Why is **balanced empathy** a challenge in innovation?



Balancing empathy: the key to meaningful innovation

By Yvonne Gillis

**EPR Annual Conference 2025** | 06062025

# YVONNE GILLIS

*Product Owner & Designer – Syntilio*

🧠 Passionate about humanising healthcare technology

👛 Experience:

- UX & Research – WEAREREASONABLEPEOPLE
- Digital Design – YG Design
- Market Research – Piece of Pie

🎓 MSc Design for Interaction – TU Delft



UMC Utrecht



**PHILIPS**



VO HCB



REDIAL



BOOK



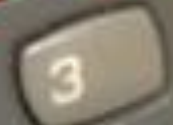
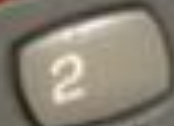
MUTE



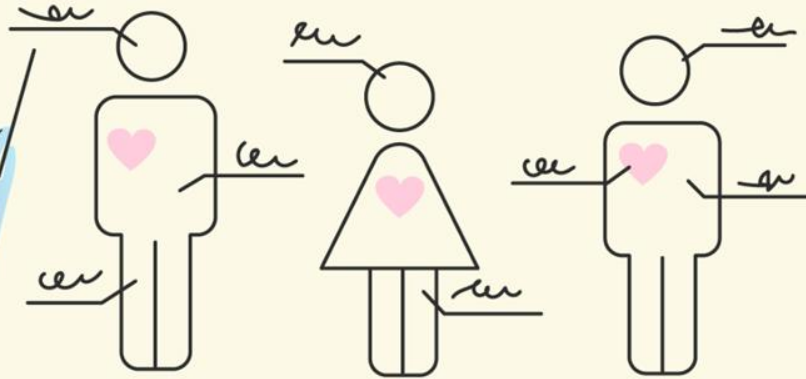
MENU

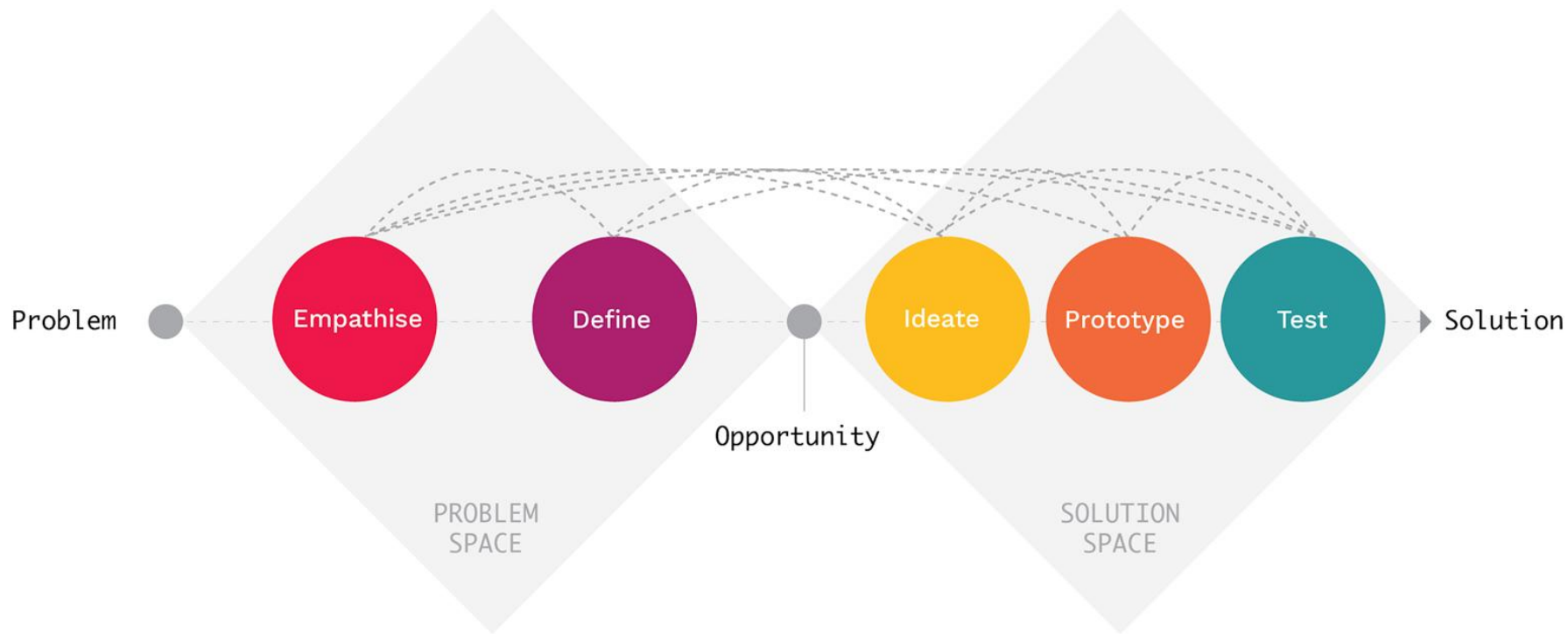


MAIL

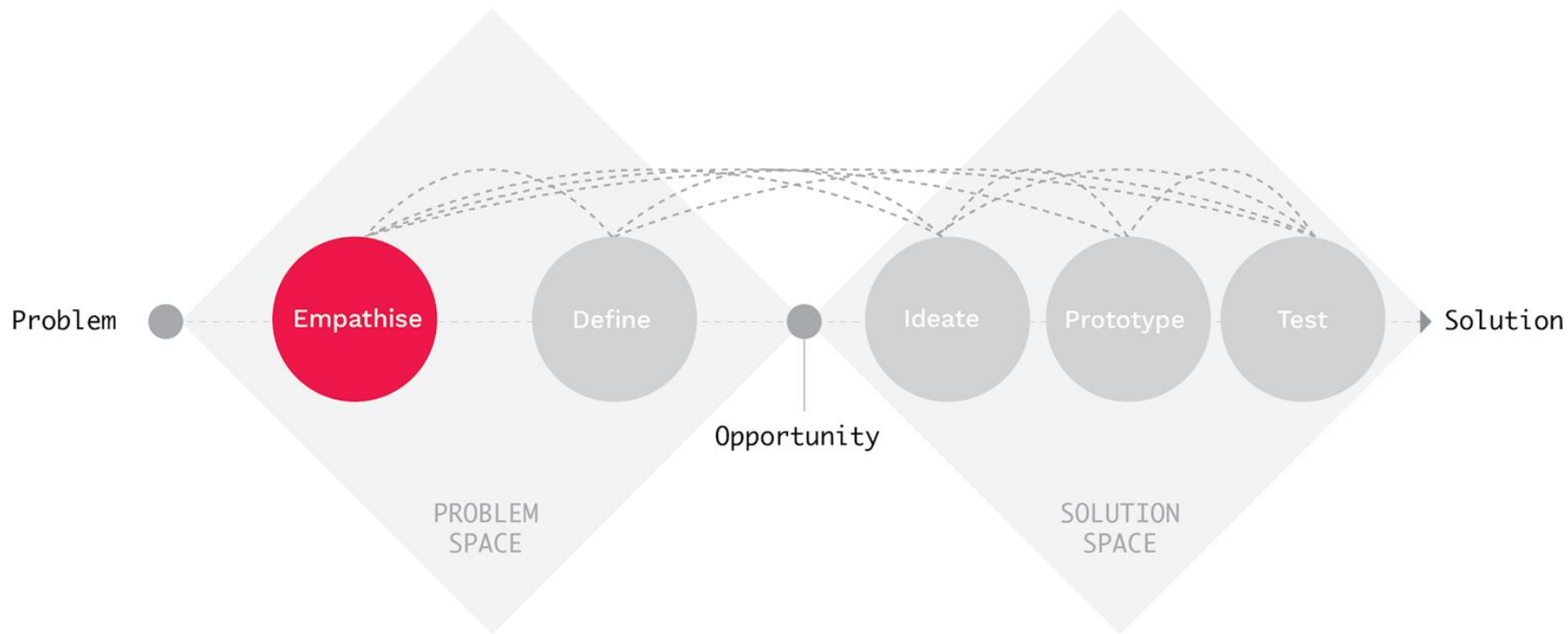


# HUMAN CENTERED DESIGN





Combination of Design Thinking & Double Diamond



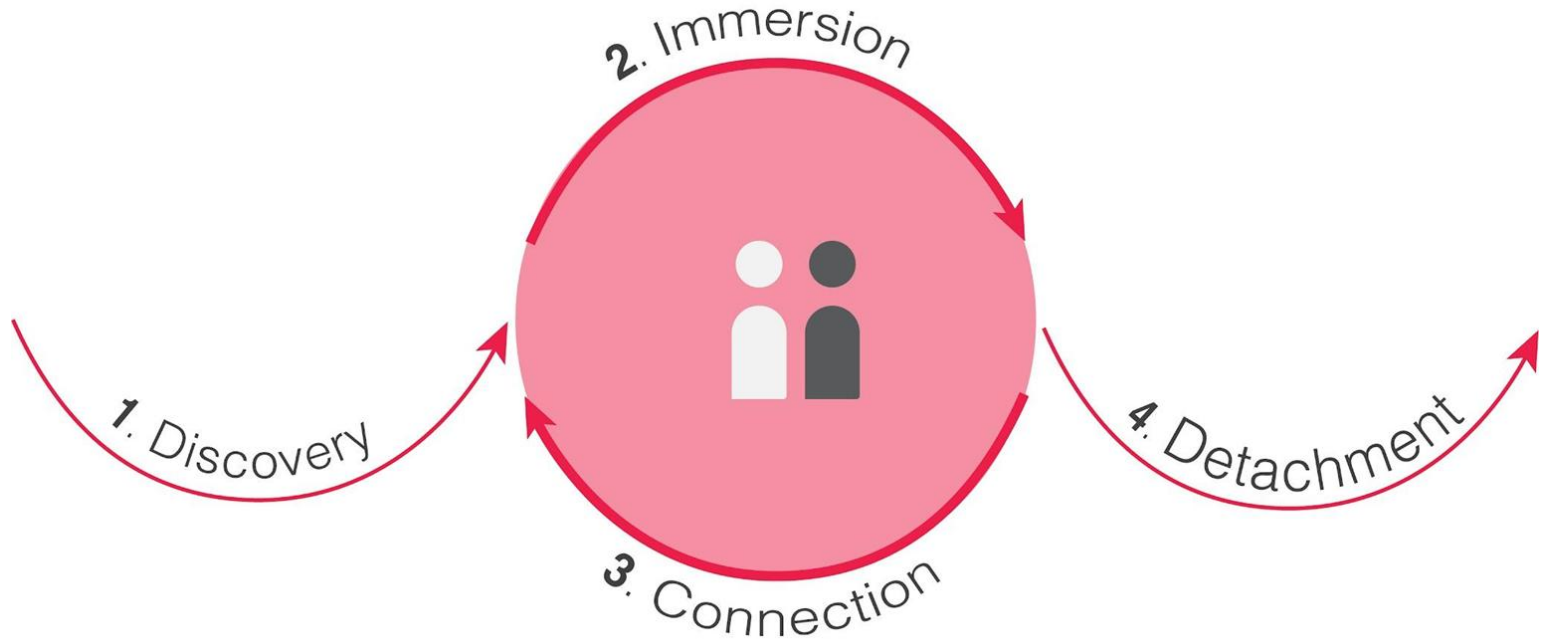
**EMPATHY**

# EMPATHY

*“is the power to imagine and feel what you believe to be another person’s experience.”*

By Ignaas Devisch





Design Empathy Framework

Derived from Kouprie & Sleeswijk Visser (2009)

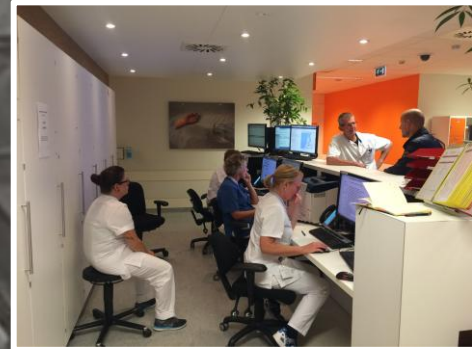
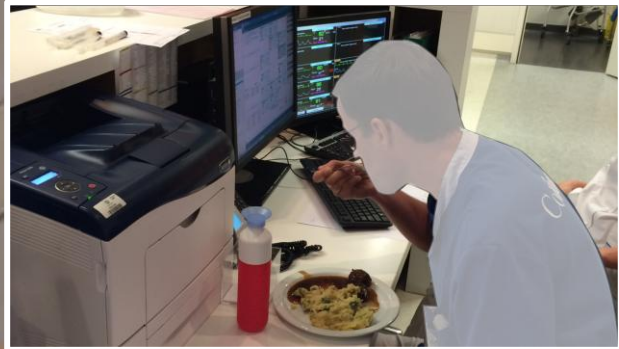


## **CASE STUDY #1**

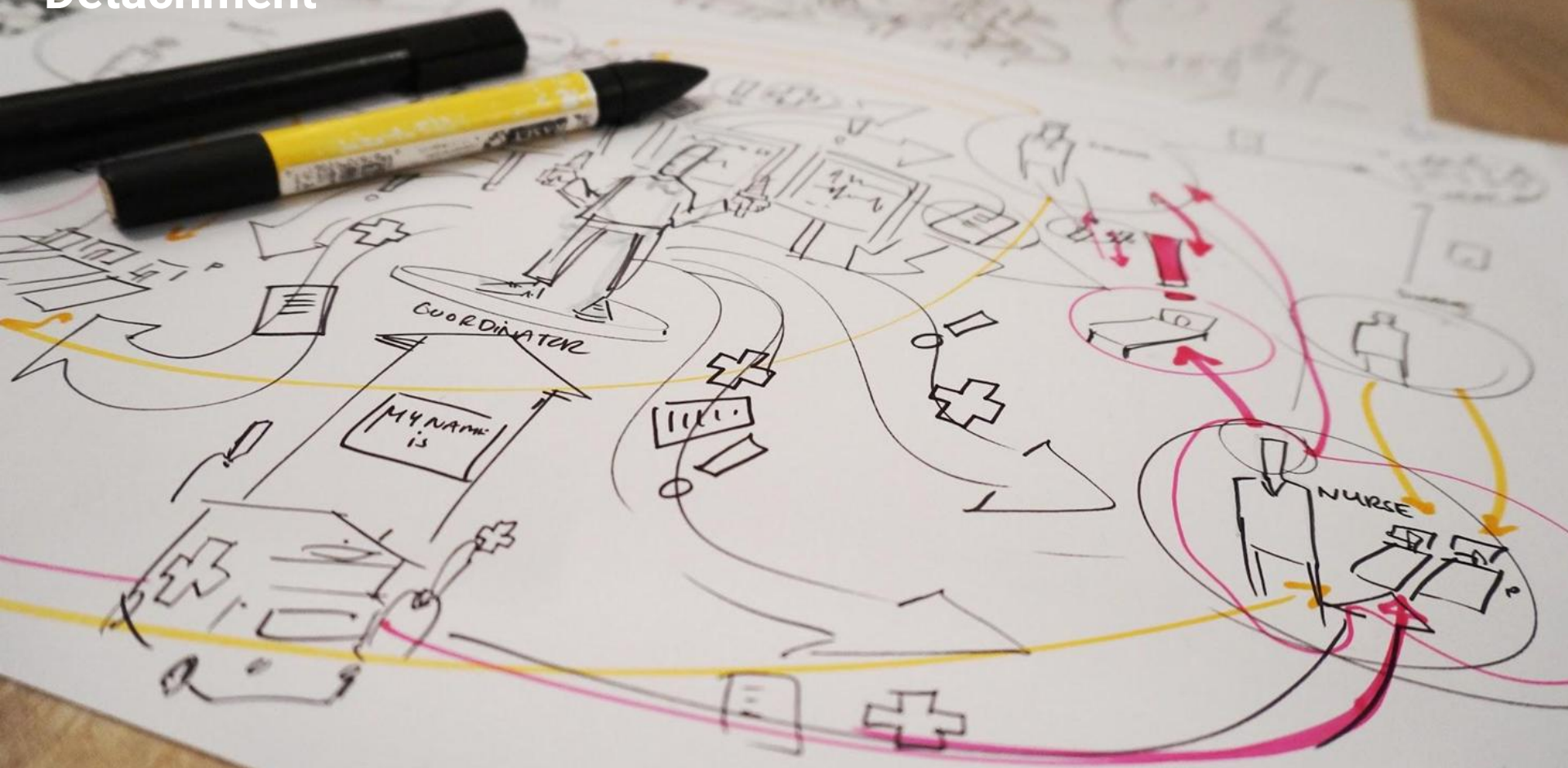
**How could we keep better track of all patients in the Emergency Department?**



# From Discovery to Connection



# Detachment





# Immersion + Connection



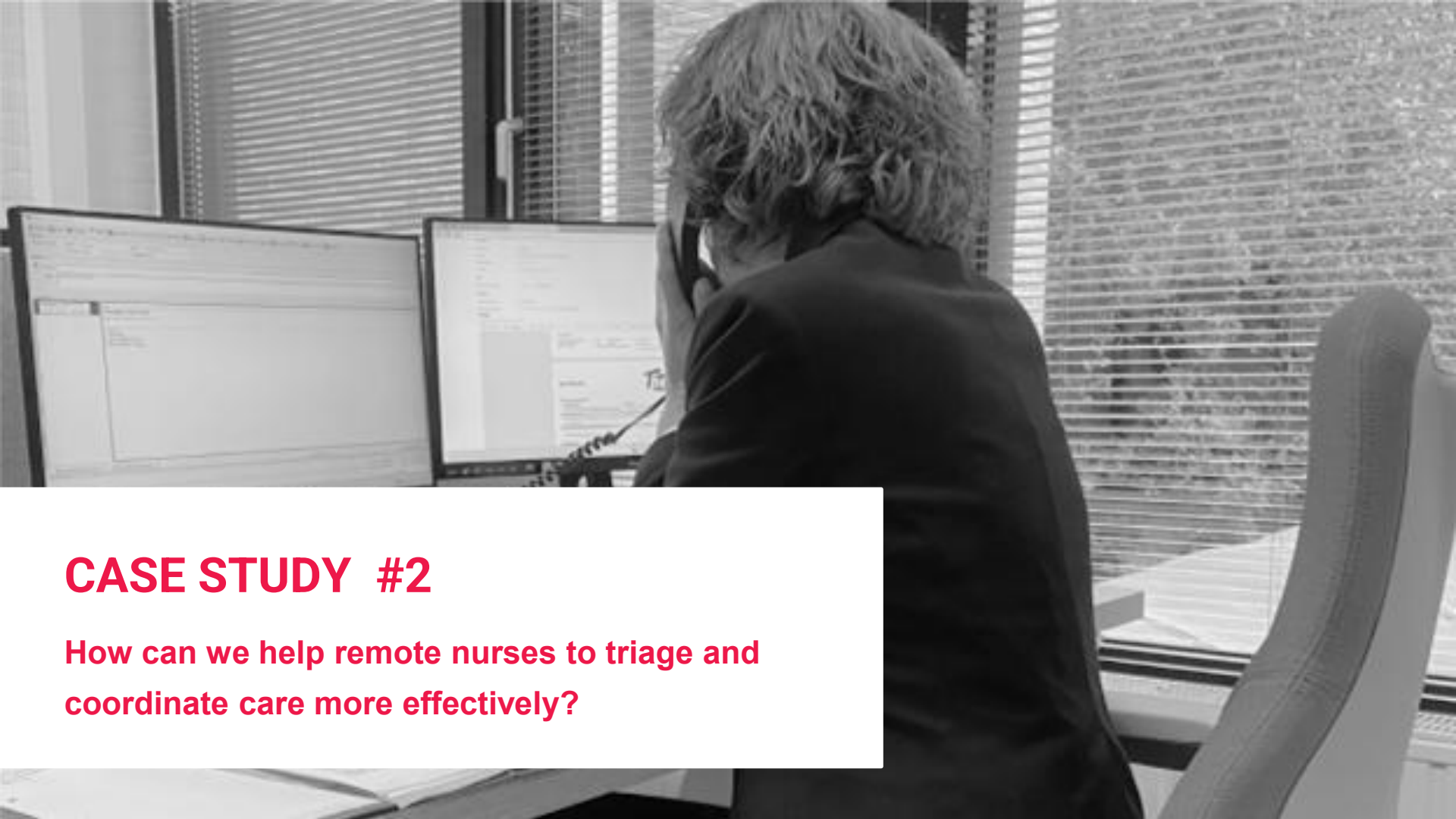
# Immersion + Connection



EMPATHY





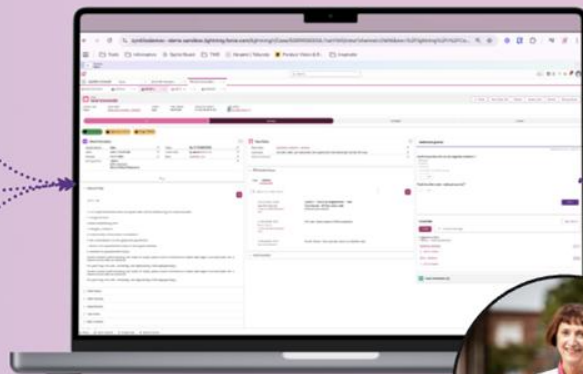


## **CASE STUDY #2**

**How can we help remote nurses to triage and coordinate care more effectively?**



Reduces pressure on care providers

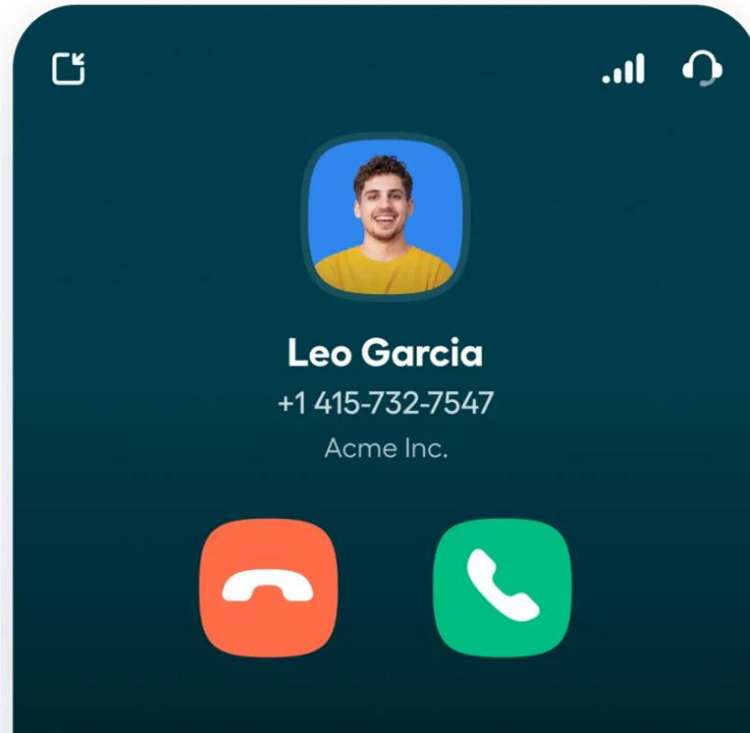


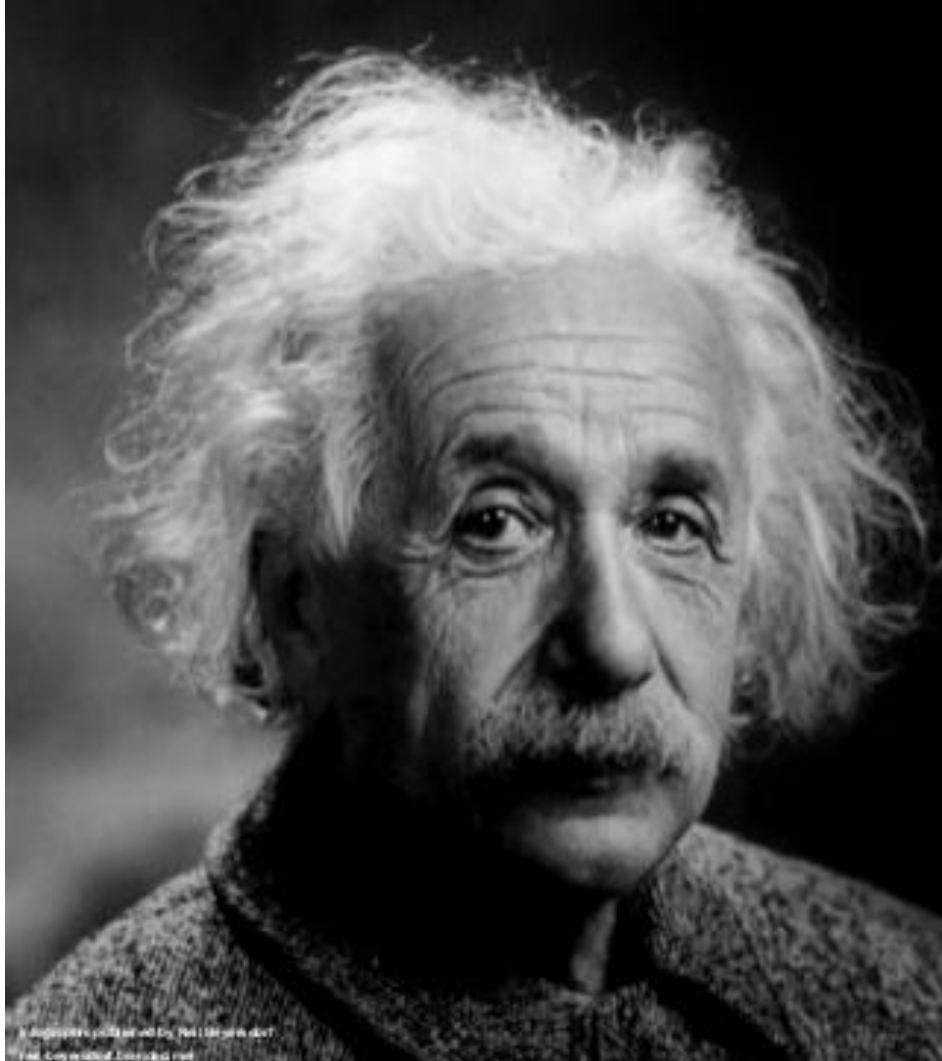
Responds

Triages

Coordinates

## Must-have functionality: Number Recognition



A black and white portrait of Albert Einstein, showing his characteristic wild, white hair and mustache. He is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The background is dark and out of focus.

“If I had an hour to  
solve a problem I'd  
spend 55 minutes  
thinking about the  
problem and 5 minutes  
thinking about  
solutions.”

*Albert Einstein*

# From Discovery to Detachment



## **User Need**

quickly access  
to patient  
information


## **Workflow data**


< 20% of the  
time patient  
calls

# The real need wasn't automation — it was speed.

Caller/client component ⓘ

Caller is Client

 Client

 Caller

▼ Medical

Karel de Leeuw · 09-07-1971 · 4631RN · 334466

Karel Adrianus Buuron · 29-05-1949 · 4615JL · 321334

Karel Groenendijk · 18-09-1954 · 4811XC · 318814

Karel Marinus Heeren · 06-12-1960 · 4711HM · 300469

Karel Isedorus Steegs · 27-08-1947 · 4706KA · 306880

Herwig Karel Josephus Oostvogels · 04-02-1942 · 4881AH · 311344

Karel van Veen · 21-10-1935 · 4611EH · 313723

Marcus Gerrit Karel van Oosten · 09-09-1985 · 4661ZA · 324830

Karel Johannes Karremans · 14-02-1935 · 4624XA · 326956

## Recognise when empathy goes too far

- ▶ Red Flag 1: You build what people say they want
- ▶ Red Flag 2: You lose sight of boundaries
- ▶ Red Flag 3: You avoid challenging the status quo





# **Practice balanced empathy: Understand when to connect – and when to detach.**

Balancing empathy: the key to meaningful innovation

By Yvonne Gillis

**EPR Annual Conference 2025** | 06062025