

Second Nature: Navigating vs. Inhabiting

There's a difference between knowing how to navigate a workplace and knowing how to inhabit one.

When you first move into a house, you have to think about where everything is.

Which cabinet has the coffee cups?

Which switch turns on that light?

Where did we decide the towels belong?

For a while, you're navigating.

But live there long enough and something changes.

You stop thinking about where the coffee cups are. You walk into a dark room without reaching for the wrong switch. You know which floorboard creaks and where to drop your keys.

Eventually, you just know where things are.

 **A good Teams environment can become the same way.**

At first, Teams requires conscious navigation.

Which Team was that in?

Which channel should I use?

Was that conversation in a chat or a post?

Where did we put that file?

Those are perfectly reasonable questions when the environment is new.

But over time, the small habits we talked about in #41 begin to change things.

Conversations consistently happen in the right places.

Replies stay attached to the conversation.

Channels have names that make sense.

Files live where people expect to find them.

Those repeated habits create predictability.

Predictability creates familiarity.

And eventually, familiarity becomes second nature.

 **When you're navigating, the software has your attention. When you're inhabiting, the work has your attention.**

That distinction matters.

A well-used Team stops feeling like a website you have to visit and begins to feel more like a place where your work happens.

You don't have to stop and think about every turn.

You know where the conversation belongs.

You know where the people are.

You know where the work lives.

The technology becomes less visible, and the work becomes more visible.

Maybe that's one measure of successful adoption we don't talk about enough.

Not whether people know where all the buttons are.

But whether they've stopped thinking about the buttons at all.

Because eventually, you just know where things are.

And sometimes, familiarity is the hook that brings you back.