



Inner Navigation: Why We Get Lost and How We Find Our Way

By Erik Jonsson

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A FASCINATING INVESTIGATION OF HOW WE NAVIGATE THE PHYSICAL WORLD, "INNER NAVIGATION" IS A LIVELY, ENGAGING ACCOUNT OF SUBCONSCIOUS MAPMAKING. Why are we so often disoriented when we come up from the subway? Do we really walk in circles when we lose our bearings in the wilderness? How -- and why -- do we get lost at all? In this surprising, stimulating book, Erik Jonsson, a Swedish-born engineer who has spent a lifetime exploring navigation over every terrain, from the crowded cities of Europe to the emptiness of the desert, gives readers extraordinary new insights into the human way-finding system. Written for the nonscientist, "Inner Navigation" explains the astonishing array of physical and psychological cues the brain uses to situate us in space and build its "cognitive maps" -- the subconscious maps it employs to organize landmarks. Humans, Jonsson explains, also possess an intuitive direction frame -- an internal compass -- that keeps these maps oriented (when it functions properly) and a dead-reckoning system that constantly updates our location on the map as we move through the world. Even the most cynical city-dweller will be amazed to learn how much of this innate sense we use every day as we travel across town or around the world. Both a scientific and a human story, "Inner Navigation" contains a rich assortment of real-life insights and examples of the navigational challenges we all face, no matter where or how we live. It's a book that is as provocative to ponder as it is delightful to lose yourself in. Don't worry: Erik Jonsson will help you find your bearings.

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Lorretta Cox:

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