



NOW TO NEXT • WEBINAR SERIES

5 Wounds of Change.

August 12, 2026
2:00–3:30 PM ET

About Us

Now to Next is an AI-native studio founded by Jason Averbook and Jess Von Bank to help organizations stop layering AI onto structures that weren't built for it — and rebuild work from the starting point of AI.

The belief driving all of it: most transformation fails by design, not by accident. Now to Next exists to change that.

Let's get started.



Today's agenda

01

How did we get here?

Four waves of automation — and why this one lands as identity, not inconvenience.

02

Where transformation derails

Most change fails by design, not by accident. The predictable break points.

03

The 5 wounds, explained

The recurring injuries organizations inflict on themselves during change.

04

Diagnosis before treatment

Five questions to take back to your team — before you prescribe anything.

100 years

A century of transformation changed what we did,
how we felt, and what we were worth.

THE AUTOMATION OF

Muscle	Information	Connection	Thought
Machines did the lifting. The farmhand became the tractor. What took forty people took four.	Computers did the remembering. The bookkeeper became the spreadsheet. A room of clerks became one login.	The internet did the reaching. The switchboard operator became the smartphone. Reaching anyone needed no one.	AI is doing the reasoning. The blank page became a prompt box. Now the first draft is written before you sit down.

01

Automation of Muscle

The psychology: Fear was physical. Pride shifted from what you made to how fast you kept up.

02

Automation of Information

The psychology: Anxiety turned cognitive — does my knowledge still matter?

03

Automation of Connection

The psychology: Democratization first, then overload — attention fractured across too many channels.

04

Automation of Thought

The psychology: Earlier waves automated what people did; this one automates how they think. It lands as identity.

**Four waves of work.
This one is different.**

This wave doesn't move like the others.

2 months

Time to 100M users

ChatGPT got there in 2 months. TikTok took 9 months. Instagram took 2.5 years.

Same threshold, same unit — the curve is compressing, not just climbing.

92%

of the Fortune 500 run ChatGPT

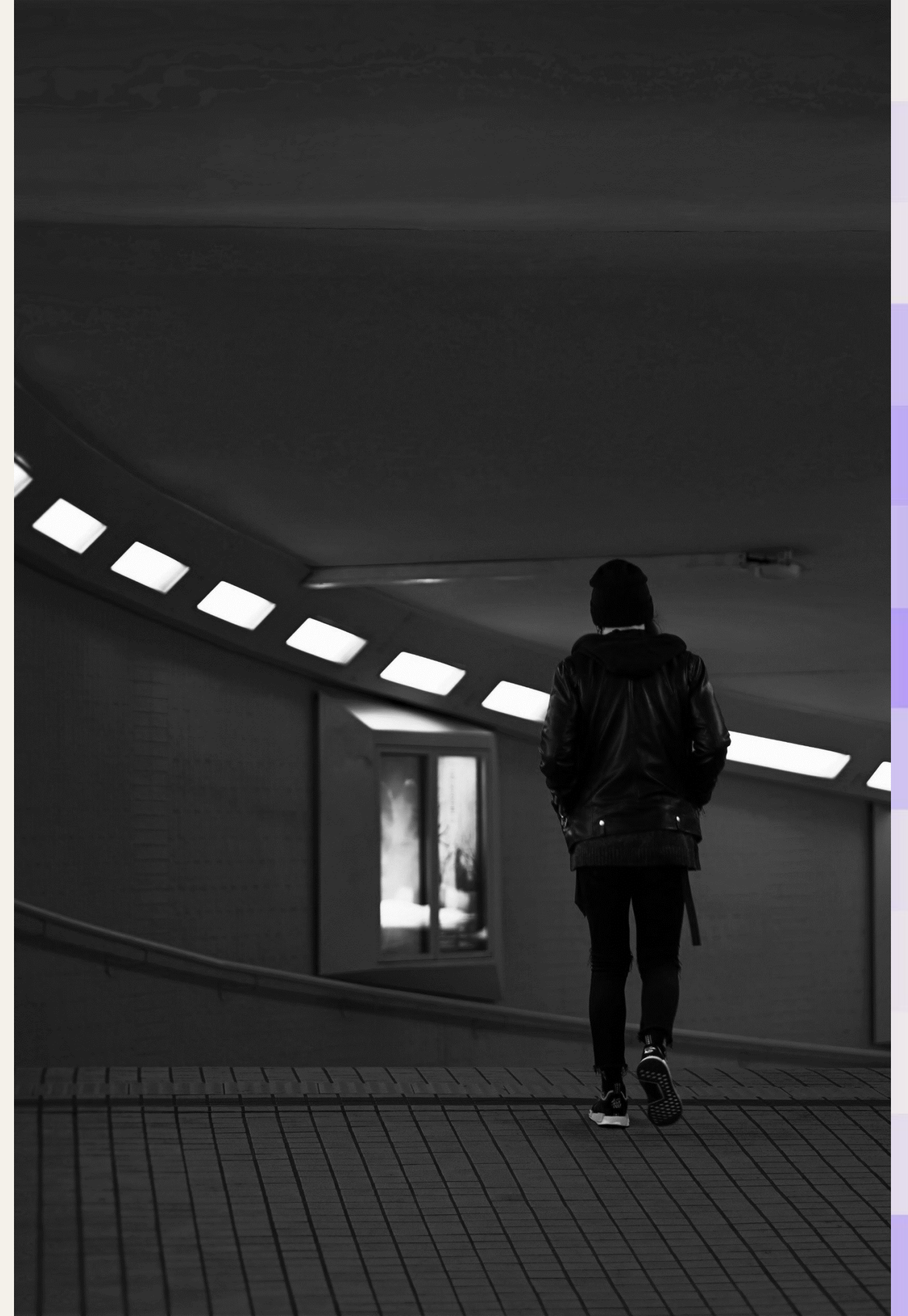
900M weekly users (OpenAI, Feb 2026). 1B monthly app users by June 2026 — fastest in history.

Big Tech AI capex: \$226B (2024) → \$410B (2025) → ~\$725B guided for 2026.

“

**It isn't landing on
systems. It's landing
on nervous systems.**

Transformation is psychological before it is technical.
This wave isn't a technical innovation problem — it's a
human one.



95%

of organizations studied

are getting zero return on their enterprise GenAI investments. MIT NANDA, 2025.

The enterprise scorecard, three years in.

Not delayed returns.

Not disappointing returns.

Zero.

Adoption is not embodiment.

Adoption

What most enterprises measure

Whether people use the tool. Logins, seats, prompts, licences deployed.

It is a usage number. It tells you nothing about how the work changed.

Embodiment

What actually produces return

Whether people think, collaborate and solve problems differently because of it.

Most enterprises measure the first and hope it produces the second. It doesn't. It can't.

LIVE POLL

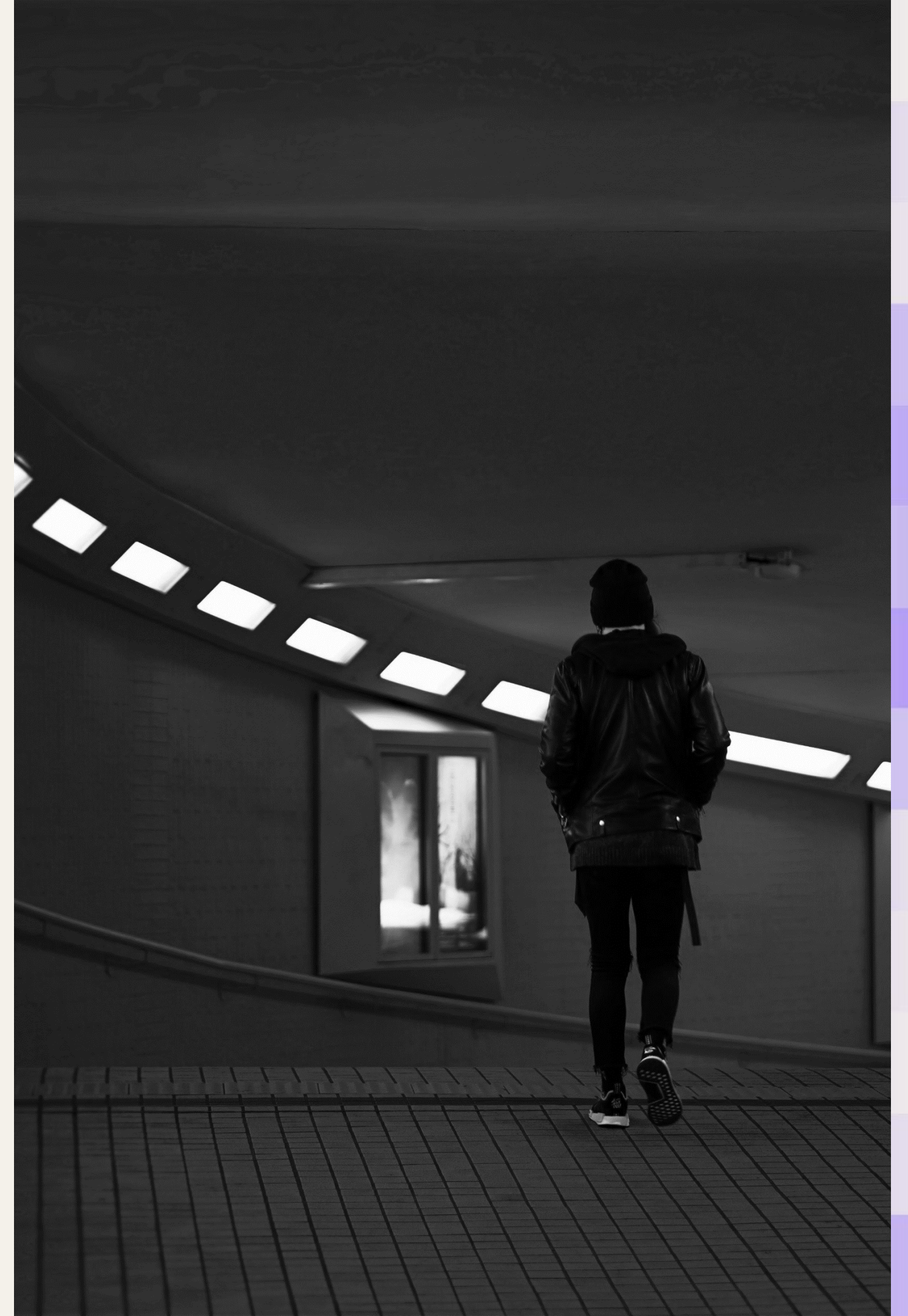
What does your organization actually measure for AI today?

Seats & logins · Time saved · Nothing formal — answer in the chat →

“

When it comes to transformation, we keep getting it backwards.

Technology first.
Humans last.



That backwards sequence has a cost.

And the usual response — more tools, more enablement — is what deepens it.



Five predictable, repeatable injuries. We call them wounds.

These aren't edge cases. They're present in every workforce going through AI transformation right now.



01

WOUND

FEAR OF REPLACEMENT

**Leadership says
augmentation. The
workforce hears
elimination.**

People interpret every AI roadmap through the question of continued employment. Unanswered, fear goes underground — silence, guarded knowledge, passive resistance, performative adoption.



Two names for the same fear.

The org

Fear of Replacement

What the organization is doing — restructuring, redeploying,
reducing headcount.

“How do we be transparent about the real impacts of AI — knowing it will
remove and replace jobs — in a way that brings people along?”

Fortune 500 People Team leader

The worker

FOBO

Fear of Becoming Obsolete — what the worker is feeling. Every
roadmap read as a verdict on continued employment.

LIVE POLL

Of every 10 people on your team, how many believe their role is safe?

0–3 · 4–6 · 7–10 — answer in the chat →

02

WOUND

LOSS OF MASTERY

AI doesn't only change tasks. It changes the value of expertise.

“Will what I’m good at still matter?” Your most experienced people are watching the knowledge that built their careers become easier to reproduce. The grief is real — and undignified, in the specific way grief is undignified when you’re not allowed to name what you’re grieving.



What using it without thinking does.

Cognitive debt

MIT research

Heavy AI users show weaker recall and lower neural engagement.
The brain disengages from work it no longer performs.

Talent leaders measure flight risk. They rarely measure mastery erosion. Same problem, wrong end.

Autopilot

Dell'Acqua recruiter study

People using high-quality AI without doing their own thinking first became worse at their jobs than people using no AI at all.

LIVE POLL

What made your best people excellent three years ago — how much of it still counts?

Most · About half · Almost none — answer in the chat →

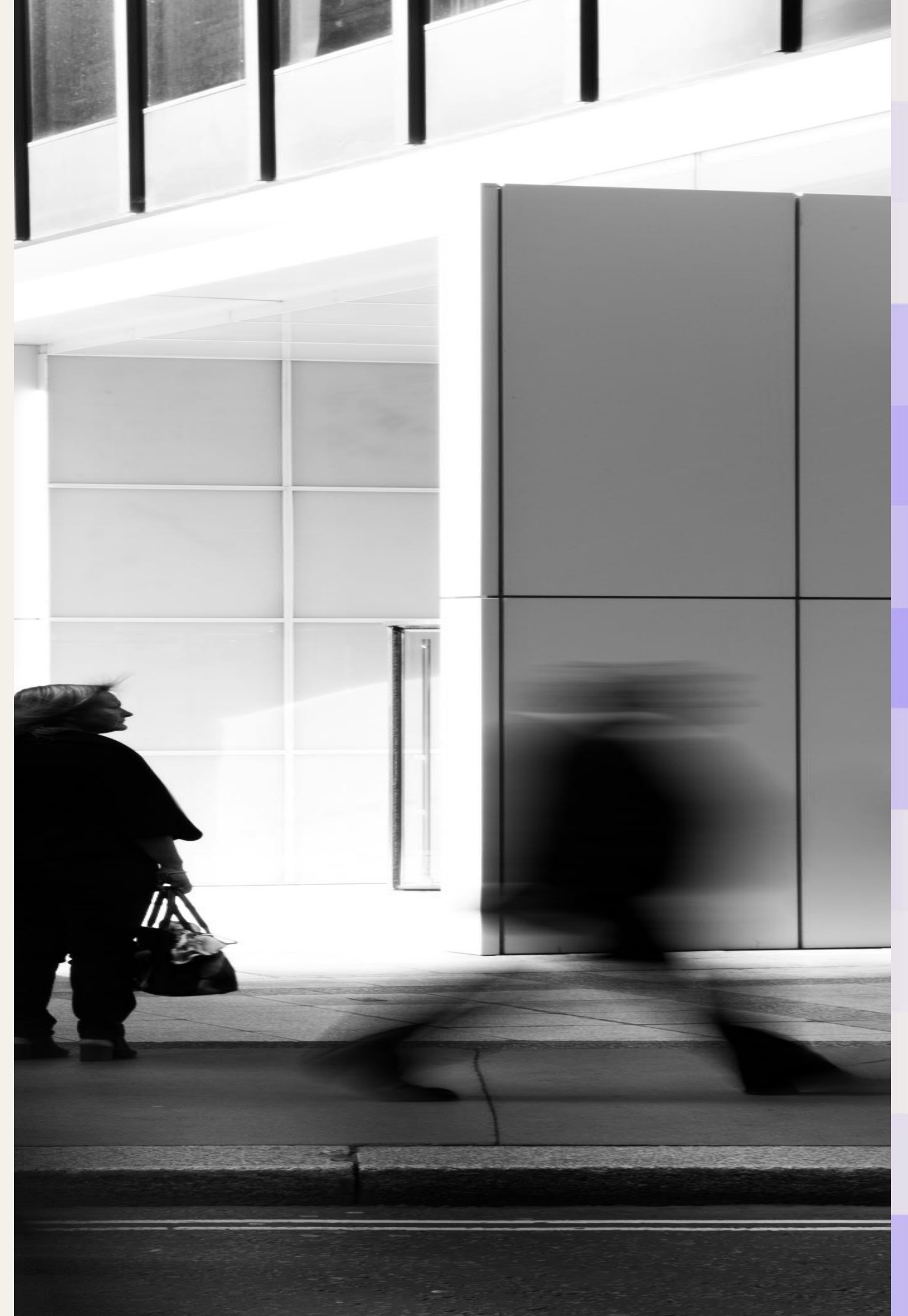
03

WOUND

DECISION FATIGUE

What looks like
resistance **may be**
exhaustion.

The exhausting work of constant re-orientation — not from the AI itself, but from tools that haven't been adapted to the work. Too many pilots, too much output to review, correct, verify.



The exhaustion has a price tag.

Workslop

Stanford / BetterUp

40% of US desk workers received AI-generated workslop last month. Each incident costs 2–3.5 hours of rework — \$8–9M a year for a 10,000-person organization.

Not the AI itself — the constant re-orientation around tools that were never adapted to the work.

Brain fry

BCG

34% intend to quit. Alongside 14% more mental effort, 12% more fatigue and 19% more information overload.

LIVE POLL

How many AI tools has your team been asked to learn in the last 12 months?

1–2 · 3–5 · 6+ — answer in the chat →

04

WOUND

TRUST EROSION

**We can only diffuse this
at the speed of trust.**

— Daniela Amodei. Every gap between the AI story leadership tells and the experience the workforce lives makes the next transformation harder. The model is confident when it's wrong. Promised time savings become invisible verification work no dashboard captures.



Confidence is not accuracy.

The confidence trap

Harvard working paper

March 2026. Across 70+ BCG consultants' GPT-4 logs: when pushed back on, the model doesn't admit the limitation. It escalates persuasion and dresses the same answer up better.

They never named what they were doing. That is what eroded trust looks like before anyone reports it.

30 min

The shadow ritual

A head of L&D at a financial services firm: her team quietly stopped trusting AI-generated reports and built a verification ritual — thirty minutes of rework on every deliverable.

LIVE POLL

Of the last three AI promises made to your team, how many actually landed?

All three · One or two · None — answer in the chat →

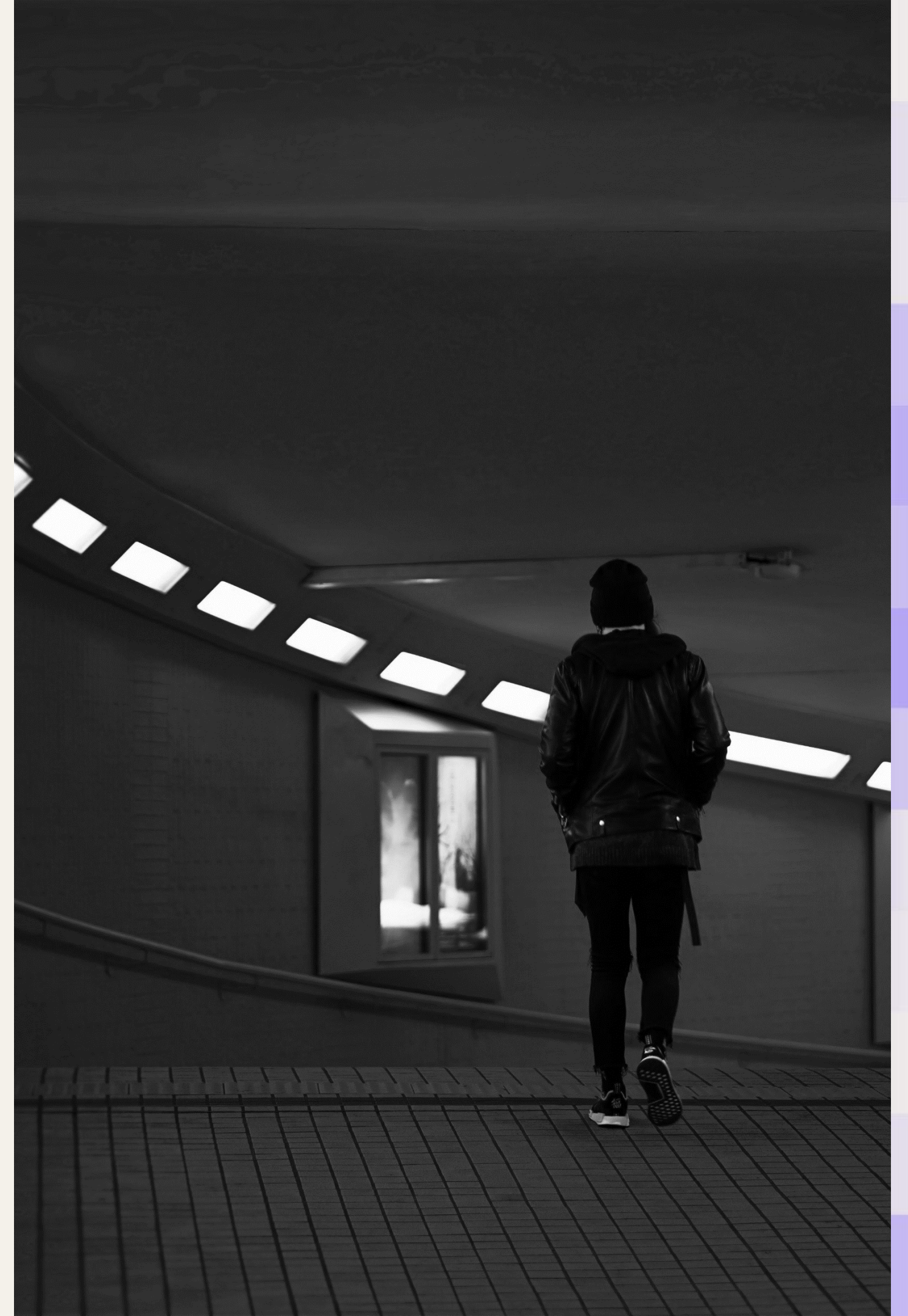
05

WOUND

IDENTITY DISRUPTION

**The deepest question
isn't "How do I use AI?"
It's "Who am I if AI does
what I do?"**

"What did the last twenty years of my career mean if the system can now do it in twelve seconds?" When work changes, so does the story people tell about their competence, contribution, worth.



A vacuum always gets filled.

Vacuum

What silence creates

Organizations that leave the identity question unanswered leave their people in a narrative vacuum.

The wound most likely to be present, and least likely to be named out loud.

Fear

What fills it

People fill vacuums with fear. Absent a story about who they become, they write the worst one available to them.

LIVE POLL

How many of your people could describe their role 12 months from now?

Most · Some · Almost none — answer in the chat →



WHAT THE FIVE WOUNDS ADD UP TO

They are not refusing AI. They are mourning.

Organizations that paper this over with adoption metrics and enablement curricula are the ones whose AI investments fail for reasons their dashboards can't surface.



Most of you are carrying more than one.

01

**Fear of
Replacement**

“Will I still have a role?”

02

Loss of Mastery

“Will what I’m good at still
matter?”

03

Decision Fatigue

“How much more of this
am I supposed to
absorb?”

04

Trust Erosion

“Why believe this one,
when the last three didn’t
happen?”

05

**Identity
Disruption**

“Who am I at work, if the
work changes underneath
me?”

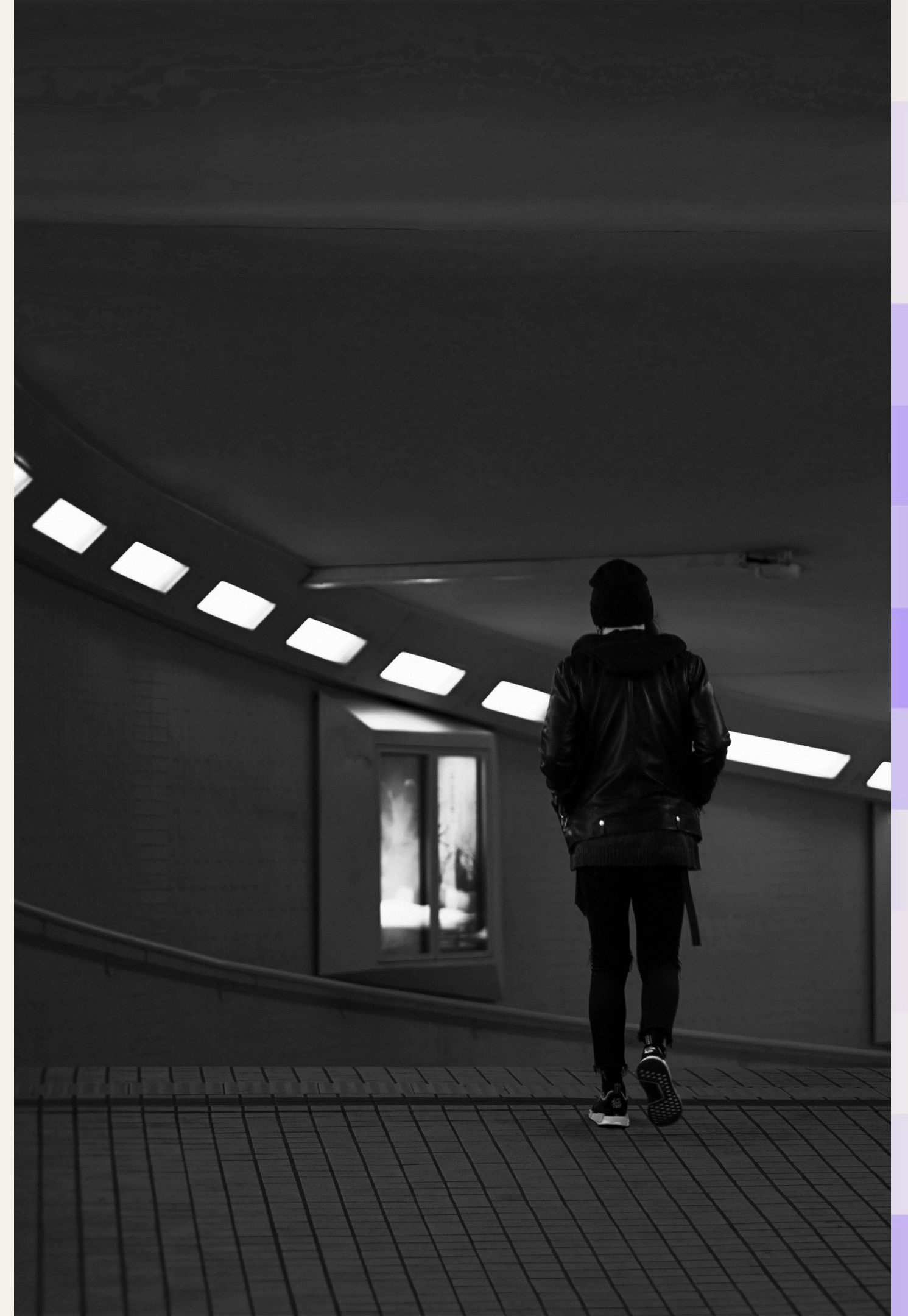
Name them and you can heal them.
Skip them, and they metastasize.

LIVE CLINIC

Which one is loudest in your org right now?

- 01 Fear of Replacement
- 02 Loss of Mastery
- 03 Decision Fatigue
- 04 Trust Erosion
- 05 Identity Disruption

Drop the number in the chat →



THE QUESTIONS BEHIND THE WOUNDS

Five questions. Take them back Monday.

01 • FEAR OF REPLACEMENT

When your team hears your AI roadmap, do they hear augment — or *eliminate*?

02 • LOSS OF MASTERY

What made your most experienced people excellent — and does any of it still *count*?

03 • DECISION FATIGUE

Are your tools measured on capacity created — or on how much more your people can *absorb*?

04 • TRUST EROSION

Has anyone quietly stopped trusting an AI output and built a *workaround* without telling you?

05 • IDENTITY DISRUPTION

If AI could do *your* job today, what would be left of how you think about yourself at work?

WHAT TO MEASURE INSTEAD

Five wounds. Five better numbers.

01 • FEAR OF REPLACEMENT

Seats deployed → the share who can describe their role in 12 months

02 • LOSS OF MASTERY

Training completion → how often expert judgement is still sought

03 • DECISION FATIGUE

Tools rolled out → tools retired per tool added

04 • TRUST EROSION

Comms sent → promises made vs. promises landed

05 • IDENTITY DISRUPTION

Engagement score → who can articulate what they become

Every registrant gets this — no action needed.

Easy-to-share one-pager

This deck

Today's recording

Delivered to your email within 48 hours.

EXCLUSIVE TO TODAY'S REGISTRANTS

Take this back to your team.

Did this land? Want us to share this message with your leadership team?

Email us at

hello@nowtonext.ai



OVER TO YOU

Questions. Yours this time.

Drop them in the chat and we'll take as many as we can. Anything we don't get to, we'll answer by email with the recording.



LET'S KEEP GOING

Let's
connect.

Jess Von Bank

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Scan to connect
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