

up-down

attentional exercise

silently choose two people in the group

without revealing your choices, adjust your own height—by standing, sitting, crouching, moving, etc.—as needed to match the average height of the two people you selected

maintain this average height as closely as possible for one minute

tidy line

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11 SEPTEMBER 2024

this semester i would like to establish a practice of 20 minute tidying upon return from my day as a way to reintegrate myself with my space. in addition, i would like to learn some new tools (html, rhino, etc) as a method of record keeping and/or to support the intervention.

it has been 19 1/2 hours since my initial intervention. i am sitting at my dining table and somehow, in the 9 hours i've been awake things have yet again leaked from their rightful spaces. however, in this brief period, my attitude has changed: the things strewn about feel less like a mess and more like an invitation to my return this evening.

yesterday's objects were largely new items that replaced old ones. this is not the case today. in my sightline the currently misplaced items are: a mug, a vacuum flask, a perfume bottle, a wallet, three cat toys, two blankets, a pair of socks, house slippers, a book, a magazine, two pens, a pair of headphones, a baseball cap, a shoe horn, a tuft of cat hair, a silicone bag, eight folders, two pillows, a paper cup, a napkin. in turn each item represents a previous action: this morning's tea, yesterday's tea, many spritzes, a walk and return, little running, a season change, a change of day, a shower, a new excitement, jon's work, jon's ride, jon's walk, new boots, a cat fight, yesterday's lunch, anticipated papers, a nap, mid-morning tea, a spill.

these items are not only evidence of how i experience time passing but also affirm my identity and my history. this occurs in a small way when orienting myself amongst a singular external reflection (read: object) but the result of a collection supports my sense of belonging.

i am home now. i arrived moments ago and was briefly affected by the state of the vestibule and amongst other things strewn about. my current state limits my ability to be anything more than an observer. disorder is a history of action. in this case it feels more like a history of inaction. things not returned to their rightful homes creates a thin layer of chaos atop varied

surfaces. despite my discomfort it seems to be the preference of the cats and other inhabitants of the house.

earlier today, in reflection and imagination, i figured i would be more affected by the chaos on the way out the door then the way in. it's not the case. the way in and the way out are the same. they are similarly affected by the permeable boundary that is the vestibule. the vestibule is not just a location in space. additionally it is a location in time. the intro and outro. amongst other things, it most often serves as a place for me to become something other than what i just was.

i tidied up from 7:23-8:15 pm. i started when i spilt no more than 2 ounces of water on the leather cushion next to me at the time. water with lemon. i went to get a towel. there was a scattering of unintended objects on every raised surface in the kitchen. i became distracted and minorly overwhelmed. i began to tend to other things. as i find most of the time, i end up tidying in a path. usually the path it's either the path which i enter or depart. the horseshoe of my apartment. it goes: vestibule, living room, dining table, kitchen, bathroom. or the inverse. if the vestibule or the bathroom are not addressed from the beginning they typically will not get treated with the same respect as the other areas.

i began by lighting two candles, whose wax is nearly finished, 6 inches below the narrow mouth with a stick of woodless sandalwood incense. i returned the candles to their natural position and placed the incense in it's holder and began.

in a somewhat particular order, i replaced the empty container of soy milk from the cabinet to the fridge and beside it's empty space placed rice cakes, debugged five items (one of which i wrapped in the receipt and rubber band to be returned) and the remainder went into the bathroom...

i am tempted to catalog each action i did. in fact, i previously accounted for at least thirty minutes of my time. i took longer to write it all out then it did for me

to complete the various tasks. i've omitted it for the time being as i realized my process of tidying consists of lots of things moving in and out from new to old places and back again. from container to container. from outside container to inside container. just as i did today: from home to subway to subway to campus to bathroom to class to studio to bathroom to subway to park to shop to shop to dinner to subway to subway to shop to back home again. considering this, it is no wonder tidying serves as an unwinding. it is a microcosm of the previous nine hours. it serves as an integrative action, bridging outside with in, much like the vestibule.

i want to find my attention. it might be easier to be home to see where my attention ends up. a lot of the time it ends up on cleaning. or at least lately, when i come home my time seems to be focused of maintaining a certain understanding of my space. maybe this is interesting.

how can this be manipulated? slow down. an action hasn't even been made yet, just observing. imagine walking in. somehow i imagine the mess more so on the way out than the way in. as i close my eyes, i see myself heading for the door. there is an urgency in arrival. the entrance becomes a throughway. immediately after entering there is an expectation that something else will follow. the process of arrival is transitory.

this set up is both intentional and structural. the vestibule serves as a resting stop. allowing for what was outside to stay isolated to this area and for my innerness to arrive inside. each space dictates its use, most of the time. however most others are multi-use. the vestibule is the in-between space i was observing last night in someways. well what do i want to learn about it? again slow down. observe. from afar.

also interesting is this projection i am experiencing. sitting in studio, writing, walking through the space mentally. sitting here physically. how much of my time is in fact exploring a place that i am not currently. moments ago, i was thinking about when i will go home. will i go downtown first? where downtown will

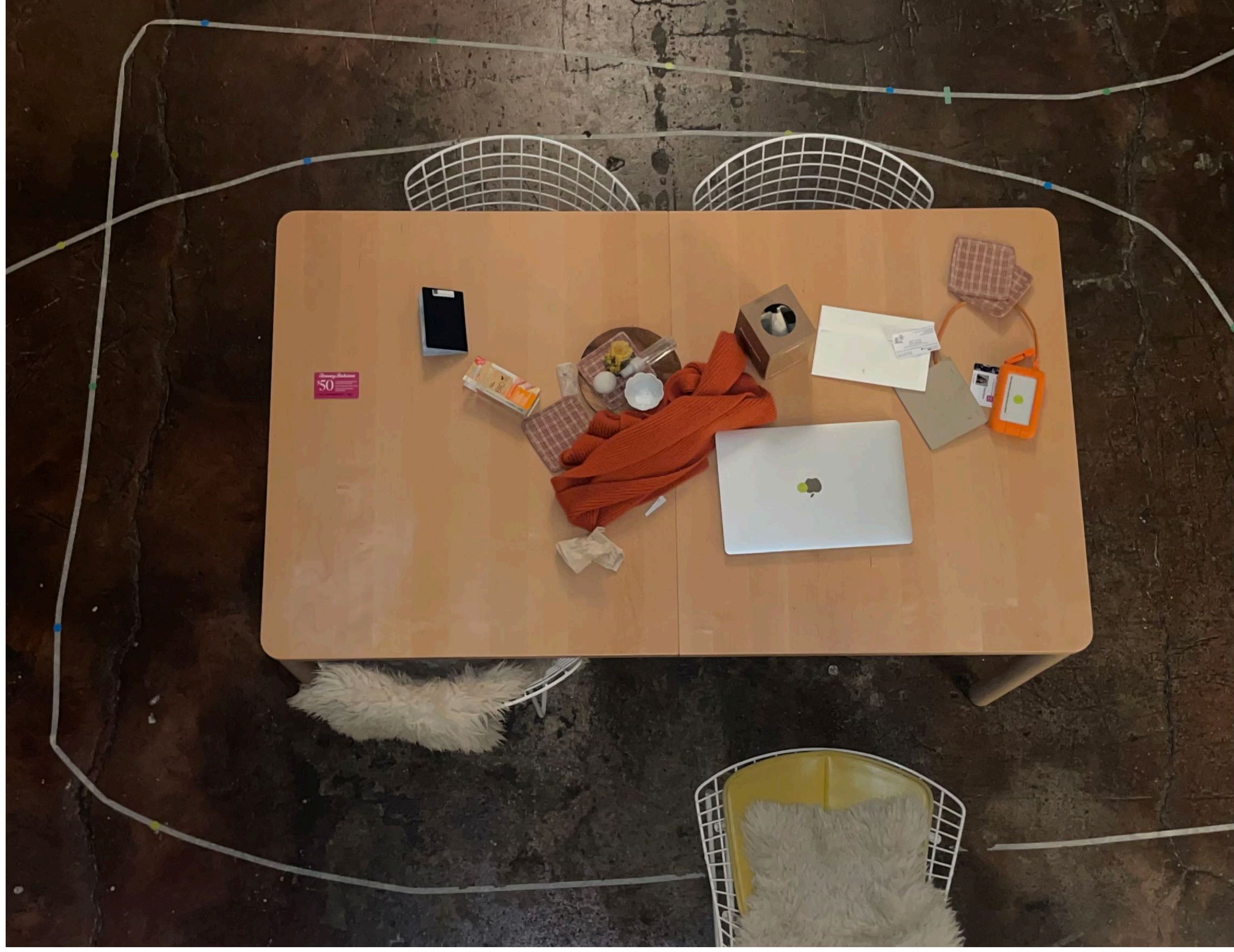
i go? will i take the subway to christopher st. then imagining the photo my mom sent of the man standing next to that stop two weeks ago. this is the most recent iteration i can hold of that space in my mind.

of course i am also here now. observing the computer, writing. overhearing other people's conversations. the sound also dictates space—especially that which i cannot see in my periphery. it confirms that the space is larger than my isolated visual field when my head is in a fixed position. and now i am amplifying this experience. not allowing myself to look beyond the boundaries of the computer but still try to gather an understanding, remotely. it's limiting. it becomes distracting. in my attempt to be fully focused in the presence of external stimulus, i became distracted.

what if i attempt to understand spaces in a non visual way. what other senses provide an understanding of my surroundings? i think of the difference in meditating with the magnetic timer on the i beam next to me vs when i play the track playing from the speaker in the other room. for the latter, time then exists in the other room. the space in which i meditate then becomes isolated. and for the former, there is an implied urgency. i have not taken the time to set up my phone, or i feel that i don't have the full 20 minutes to meditate, or as of late i decide i don't want to look at my phone until i've meditated.

back to space, back to this internal understanding. back to this tracing and mapping. this tracing and mapping often happens while meditating too. sometimes in the physical realm and other times in the emotional realm. a stroll of sorts. do these imagined spatial interactions prepare me? if so how? and if not how? for one, they can absolutely be the focus of my anxieties.

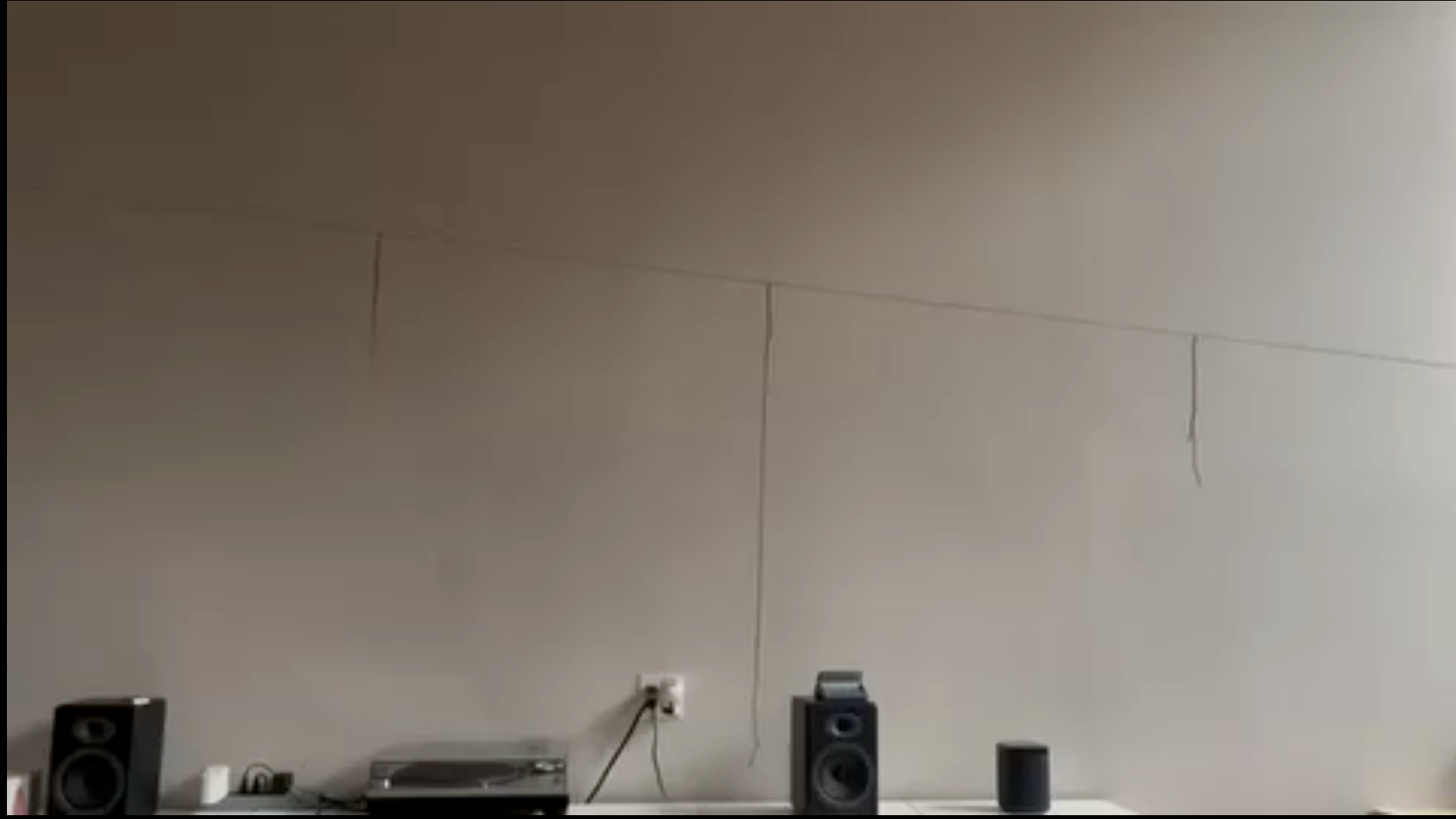
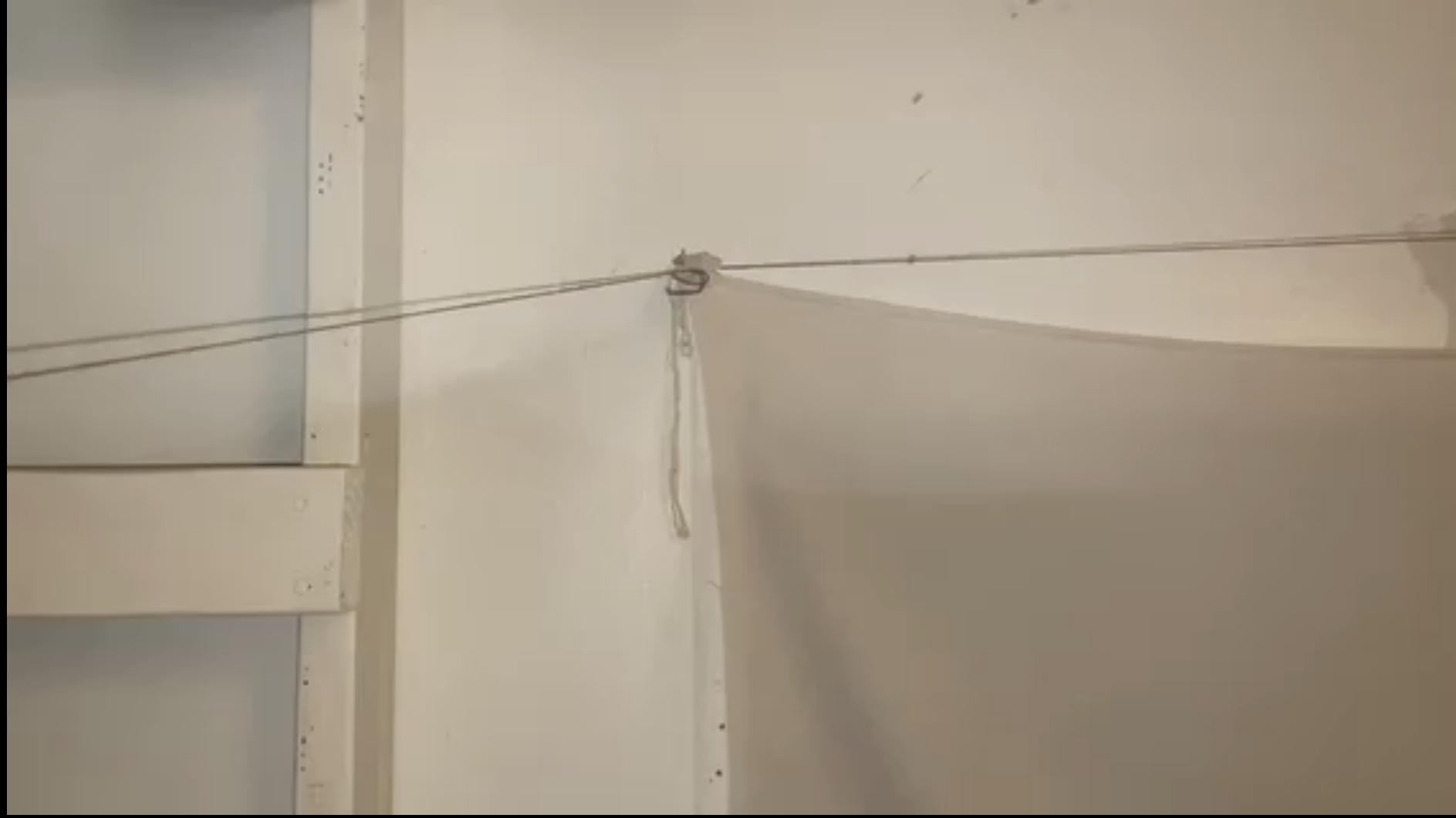
perhaps related, is a desire to get shit done. there is a handful of half-finished house projects that are waiting for me free them from the burden of space. these 'sites' are multi-month bus stops for objects, projects, interests etc. at first their presence is apparent and rather quickly they embed themselves into the











instead of observing the motor bring the string around space, we will to do it together

take a number.

calculate the sum of its digits (e.g., #18 would be $1+8=9$) then
take that many steps in any direction.

we'll then pass the ball of yarn. starting with #1, hold the strand
of yarn before passing it to the next person in numerical order.

once everyone has been accounted for, pass the ball back to #1
to tie the ends together.

pinch



thank you