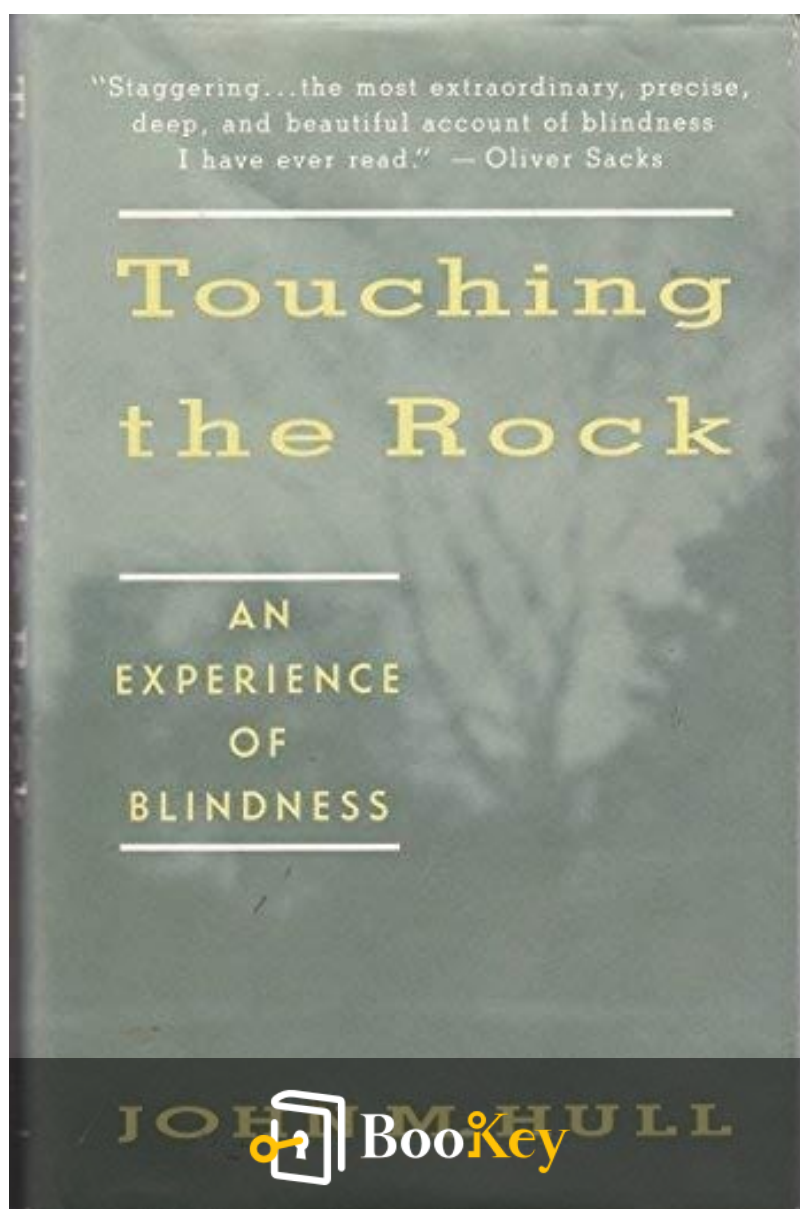


Touching The Rock PDF

John M. Hull



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Exploring the Depths of the Blind Experience.

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About the book

In "Touching the Rock," John M. Hull presents a profound and captivating exploration of the enigmatic experience of blindness, delving into a realm often perceived as distant and alien. Rather than a narrative of reconciliation with loss, this work offers an extraordinary and insightful account that captures the depth, complexity, and beauty of life in the absence of sight. Celebrated by Oliver Sacks as "staggering" and "the most extraordinary" reflection on blindness, Hull's memoir invites readers to perceive the world through a transformative lens, revealing the richness found in the often uncharted territories of human experience.

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About the author

John M. Hull was an esteemed Emeritus Professor of Religious Education at the University of Birmingham, recognized for his significant contributions to the fields of religious education, practical theology, and disability studies. His personal journey of becoming blind mid-career profoundly shaped his work and reflections, leading to a deep exploration of these themes in his writing. Hull served as the editor of the British Journal of Religious Education for 25 years and co-founded the International Seminar on Religious Education and Values, where he held the role of general secretary for over three decades and was honored as president emeritus until his passing. Following his retirement, he continued his academic pursuits as Honorary Professor of Practical Theology at the Queen's Foundation for Ecumenical Theological Education in Birmingham, England.

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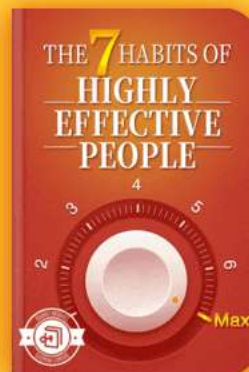


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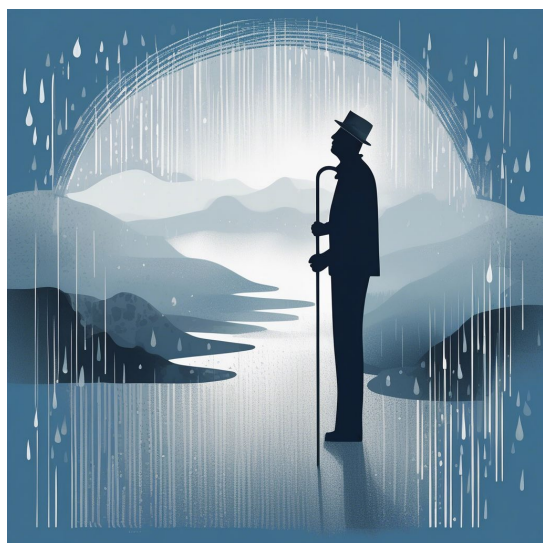
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Chapter 1 Summary : 1. Sinking



Section	Summary
Introduction to Blindness and Dreams	In June 1983, Hull reflects on nearly three years of blindness, noting how his dreams, initially vivid, now change, tracking significant life moments, including the birth of his son.
The Symbolism of the White Cane	Hull dreams about forgetting his white cane in Normandy, symbolizing his struggles with independence and adaptation to blindness.
Perceptions of Weather and Environment	Hull describes how his perception of a "nice day" relies on sound and touch, emphasizing sensory experiences rather than visual ones.
Memories and Faces	He divides relationships into those remembered visually (pre-blindness) and those without clear faces (post-blindness), expressing distress over fading memories of loved ones' features.
Navigating New Relationships	Hull reflects on redefining relationships, relying on voice and interaction rather than visual cues, enhancing his awareness of vocal nuances.
Sensory Experiences of Awareness	He notes improved sensitivity through "echo location," enabling him to sense obstacles and providing a deeper awareness of his environment.
Reflecting on Personal Identity	Hull questions the impact of losing his reflection and how it disconnects him from his physical identity, feeling like a disembodied voice.
Acknowledging Emotions in Language	Explores how blindness alters his understanding of language and communication, emphasizing the challenges of visual metaphors with sighted friends.
Beauty of the Rain	Describes a profound experience in the rain, connecting with his environment through sound and feeling present despite lacking sight.
Dreams Reflecting Dread	Shares a nightmarish dream of being stranded on a sinking ship, symbolizing feelings of dread and isolation related to his blindness.
Conclusion	Hull's reflections encompass struggles with identity, relationships, and sensory experiences, showcasing a complex interplay of hope, loss, and the search for connection.



Chapter 1 Summary: Sinking Summer 1983 Dreaming

Introduction to Blindness and Dreams

In June 1983, John M. Hull reflects on his nearly three years of blindness and the changes it has brought to his dreams. Initially, his dreams remain vividly pictorial, bringing joy and colour. He recalls significant moments, including the birth of his son Thomas, which he experienced with a mix of wonder and fear. Despite his blindness, he retains some visual memories of Thomas from his early years.

The Symbolism of the White Cane

On June 3, Hull dreams about a trip to Normandy, where he forgets his white cane—a symbol of his blindness. This dream illustrates his internal struggles with independence and the emotional impact of losing his vision. As he navigates his world, the white cane serves as a vital tool for mobility, marking the transition from sighted to blind experiences.



Perceptions of Weather and Environment

By June 5, Hull discusses how his understanding of a "nice day" is shaped by sound and touch rather than sight—where wind and rain offer him a sensory experience that resonates with the changes in his life. He feels the world around him through sound and the texture of his surroundings rather than visual cues.

Memories and Faces

On June 21, Hull describes how his relationships are divided into two groups: those he remembers visually (pre-blindness) and those he encounters without clear faces (post-blindness). Over time, the faces of loved ones fade from memory, highlighting the distress of forgetting familiar features in those closest to him, including his children.

Navigating New Relationships

On June 23, Hull reflects on the impact of blindness on how he perceives new acquaintances. Lacking visual information, he relies on voice and interpersonal dynamics to form connections. This change alters his understanding of



relationships, making them more about vocal interaction than physical presence. He is increasingly aware of the richness of voice and how it reveals emotions and personality.

Sensory Experiences of Awareness

By July 14, Hull notes developments in a newfound sensitivity termed “echo location,” allowing him to sense obstacles in his environment beyond his cane. These heightened perceptions create a more profound understanding of his surroundings, allowing him moments of detailed awareness amid the absence of sight.

Reflecting on Personal Identity

As he grapples with losing the image of his face, Hull questions how this impacts his sense of self. He wonders if the loss of his own reflection leads to feelings of being a disembodied voice in the world, disconnecting from his physical identity.

Acknowledging Emotions in Language

On September 1, Hull explores how language uses visual



metaphors and how his blindness shifts the meaning of common expressions, leading to occasional misunderstandings with sighted friends. He asserts the importance of using language without limitation, highlighting the inherent connection between visual experience and communication.

Beauty of the Rain

On September 9, Hull describes a beautiful moment in the rain, noting how it reveals the landscape around him through sound rather than sight. The rain offers a sensory depth, connecting him with his environment, providing a rich experience of the world where he feels both present and engaged.

Dreams Reflecting Dread

By September 16, Hull shares a nightmarish dream about being stranded on a sinking ship, symbolizing his feelings of dread and isolation due to blindness. The light and speed of the world he once knew seem to recede, illustrating the emotional weight and permanence of his condition.



Conclusion

Hull's reflections throughout this chapter convey his struggle with identity, relationships, and the sensory world as he adapts to life without sight. His dreams and experiences reveal a complex interplay of hope, loss, and the persistent search for connection in a world increasingly defined by darkness.



Chapter 2 Summary : 2. Into the tunnel



2 Into the Tunnel

Autumn 1983

Smiling

John reflects on the nature of his smiles, noting a conscious effort behind them due to a lack of reciprocal smiles from others, which makes him feel less connected and appreciated.

‘Show Daddy’

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John describes his interactions with his young son, Thomas, highlighting how he has taught him to communicate and engage with him through touch and guiding actions, reinforcing their unique bond despite John's blindness.

Seeing with a Stick

He discusses the challenges sighted people face in recognizing how he perceives the world through his cane. Misunderstandings arise when others assume they can guide him without realizing their actions hinder his ability to gather necessary information.

‘I Always Look After People Like You’

A chance encounter with a man after an accident demonstrates the instinct to assist those with disabilities. The man expresses gratitude for John’s presence, interpreting it as a sign to help.

The Waterfall

John dreamt of a serene retreat with stunning natural beauty but contrasts this with a previous ominous dream about



sinking waters. He feels renewed by the uplifting elements of this dream.

Reaching into Clouds

A troubling daydream evokes feelings of isolation, as John imagines his loved ones surrounded by black clouds, representing his perception of blindness and isolation. He realizes the black clouds symbolize his own mental state rather than their reality.

Does Thomas Know I Am Blind?

John reflects on moments with Thomas that indicate a lack of understanding about his blindness. Thomas assumes John can see in the dark, revealing the child's innocence and his perceptions about adult capabilities.

Playing the Recorder

In a musical dream, John grapples with his inability to read music due to his blindness, confronting the social anxieties and challenges that arise from his condition.



In the Public Library

He dreams of a public library where he struggles with sorting books, simultaneously exploring themes of envy and the experience of being another blind individual navigating a challenging environment.

Panic in a Mineshaft

John recounts experiences of panic associated with his blindness. One instance illustrates a feeling of being lost and trapped in darkness, symbolizing his struggle with the sense of control in his life. The imagery of being in a coal truck deep in a mineshaft encapsulates his fears and feelings of isolation, emphasizing his need to break free from the oppressive darkness.

Through these reflections and experiences, John explores the complexities of blindness and its emotional dimensions, weaving together themes of connection, identity, and the inherent struggles of navigating a world that perceives him differently.



Chapter 3 Summary : 3. Beyond light and darkness

Summary of Chapter 3: Beyond Light and Darkness

Infancy and Sensory Experience

In infancy, there is a strong connection between visual images and desires, such as hunger. The sight of food can evoke hunger even when it is not felt, highlighting the anticipatory nature of sight. The aroma of food also plays a significant role, although sight often takes precedence. For visually impaired individuals, this connection is disrupted, causing a lack of motivation towards food despite feelings of hunger.

Sexual Desire and Image Association

Similar dislocation occurs with sexual desire; the connection between the need for intimacy and the visual representation of a partner is integral. A blind man may experience sexual



hunger but find it challenging to relate it to specific individuals without visual cues. This can lead to feelings of boredom or disinterest in relationships, indicating a reliance on sight to foster desire.

Blindness as a Religious Crisis

Blindness is framed as a religious crisis, causing inner turmoil and fear of acceptance. The struggle with the reality of blindness and the need to break tasks into manageable parts is emphasized. The author reflects on the pressure of chaotic environments and how familiarity is crucial for the blind, who may feel lost without it.

The Nature of Touch and Face-to-Face Interactions

In blind relationships, the significance of face-to-face interactions diminishes, altering personal connection and

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Chapter 4 Summary : 4. Time, space and love

Section	Content Summary
Rapunzel Revisited	In March 1984, a discussion about blindness arises while reading Rapunzel with his son Thomas, fostering a deeper insight into disabilities in children's stories.
Less Space, More Time	In April 1984, the author reflects on how losing his sight has changed his perception of time, allowing him to experience it differently than sighted individuals.
Acoustic Space	The author explores the acoustic environment, contrasting dynamic sounds that enrich his understanding with the silence that implies absence.
Making Love in the Pub	In May 1984, the author dreams about the dangers his loved ones face, symbolizing his fears and vulnerabilities due to his blindness.
Don't You Want Your Sight Back?	During a meeting with a hypnotherapist, the author challenges the idea that willpower can restore his vision, emphasizing the reality of his irreversible eye damage.
Sin: The Cause of Blindness	The author encounters biblical views on blindness and sickness, reinforcing his belief that his condition cannot be cured by superstitious beliefs.
'You Bastard, You're Not Blind!'	A confrontational incident on campus reveals societal misconceptions about the author's blindness and the challenges he faces from disbelievers.
Am I a Workaholic?	The author reflects on his discomfort when away from work, associating it with heightened awareness of his blindness, but finds comfort in intellectual pursuits where blindness feels less prominent.

4 Time, Space and Love

Rapunzel Revisited

In March 1984, the author listens to the story of Rapunzel with his son Thomas. This prompts a significant discussion about blindness, as Thomas questions why the prince is blind



and connects it to the author's own experience. This marks a moment of deeper understanding concerning disabilities in children's narratives.

Less Space, More Time

In April 1984, Michael observes a change in the author's perception of time since losing his sight. Unlike others who rush through their tasks, the author seems to have more time for activities. He reflects on how blindness alters one's relationship with time, noting that sighted people manipulate time while he experiences it as a constant medium for his actions.

Acoustic Space

Later that month, the author explores the acoustic world outside, noting the depth and variety of sounds that inform his understanding of his environment. He contrasts the dynamic nature of sound with the stable visual world, emphasizing how sound provides a continual revelation of activity while silence negates existence.

Making Love in the Pub



In May 1984, the author dreams of a distressing scenario involving a potential accident to his loved ones, reflecting his fears surrounding blindness and the vulnerability it brings.

Don't You Want Your Sight Back?

In a later encounter with a hypnotherapist at an Indian restaurant, the author confronts the notion that willpower alone could restore his sight. He asserts that structural damage to his eyes cannot be repaired by sheer will, rejecting the hypnotherapist's views and discussing the emotional toll of false hope regarding his blindness.

Sin: The Cause of Blindness

Upon meeting Mr. Cresswell at church, the author faces biblical interpretations of blindness and sickness. He resists emotional pressure to adhere to superstitious practices, asserting his belief that his sight loss can't be remedied by adherence to rigid doctrines.

'You Bastard, You're Not Blind!'



A confrontational encounter on campus highlights societal misunderstandings and aggression towards the author's blindness. This incident reveals external judgments and the struggles the author faces from those who doubt his disability.

Am I a Workaholic?

Reflecting on feelings of tension when away from work, the author associates his discomfort with the constant awareness of his blindness. Social and familial interactions often heighten his sense of deprivation regarding information. Yet, he finds solace in intellectual engagement, where blindness becomes less salient.



inspiration

Key Point: Time transforms our perception of existence.

Life inspiration: As you navigate through life, consider how your understanding of time can be fundamentally altered by perspective. In Hull's journey, the experience of blindness allowed him to engage in a more profound relationship with time, an aspect that many rush through without reflection. This insight challenges you to pause, embrace the moments that life offers, and recognize that it's not just about the fast-paced ticking of the clock but the richness of each experience. By letting go of the urgency that often drives us, you can discover a deeper appreciation for the present, fostering a sense of peace and fulfillment in the mundane—an invitation to make each moment count.



Chapter 5 Summary : 5. The wind and the sea

5 The Wind and the Sea

Body Time

John Hull contrasts the experiences of the blind and deaf, stating that while the deaf experience the world in space through movement, the blind navigate through sound and time. For the blind, the world is transient, often underscored by a lack of spatial awareness. He explains how he relies on a sense of body-time to gauge his location, often leading to instances of overshooting familiar places. Unlike the sighted, who recognize physical landmarks, blind individuals rely more on their actual movement and timing to define their space.

Naming

After attending a conference, Hull reflects on the challenges



blind individuals face when recognizing people. He notes that sighted individuals primarily use physical appearance to connect with others, while blind individuals rely heavily on names and voices. This binary creates a scenario where Hull must actively work to remember people's names and associate them with their voices, often leading to a more cumbersome process of relationship building.

Litmus Paper

Hull discusses the passivity of blind people in social situations, revealing the difficulties in transitioning between conversations and making new connections. He has developed techniques to assert his agency through asking sighted friends to guide him in conversation, which leads to his own social exploration, but also highlights the limitations imposed on him as a blind individual.

Walking Together

When walking with friends, Hull reflects on the complexities of losing independence. While he appreciates the company, he also must rely on his friends for navigation, leading to a loss of self-direction during the journey. He emphasizes that



this dependency alters mutual experiences, creating anxiety for both parties in social interactions.

Stairs and Escalators

Hull describes stairs as safe spaces for blind individuals, while noting the general public perception that stairs are dangerous for the blind. He explains the importance of direction and the challenge of navigating unexpected elements, emphasizing that blind individuals need a predictable environment to feel safe.

Learning from Cassettes

Hull shares his experience studying from cassettes, highlighting the differences between auditory and visual learning. He reflects on how listening improves his ability to summarize and retain information, establishing that spoken content from recordings parallels immediate experiences.

Becoming a Child

Through anecdotes about moments where Hull experienced child-like treatment due to his blindness, he expresses



discomfort with being infantilized. He grapples with the loss of autonomy and adulthood as others perceive him through the lens of disability.

The Power of Powerlessness

Hull recognizes the paradox of his condition where his blindness gives him a unique social power by drawing attention from others. He articulates the struggle to navigate the extremes of being marginalized or centered in attention due to his blindness, seeking a balanced human experience.

Feeling the Wind

Hull describes the sensory experience of wind as deeply enriching for the blind. Unlike sighted individuals, he connects intimately with the tactile and auditory qualities of a windy day, interpreting it as a metaphor for spiritual experience.

Seeing with Your Fingers

Explaining the impact of tactile perception, Hull illustrates how carrying objects while blind can become overwhelming.



He emphasizes the necessity of touch for navigation, underlining that blindness entails significant adjustments in sensory reliance.

Training the Sighted

Hull analyzes interactions with sighted individuals, pointing out their hesitance and awkwardness when engaging with a blind person. Through illustrating scenarios, he emphasizes the importance of creating mutual understanding and respect for independence in these relationships.

Does He Take Sugar?

Hull addresses the discomfort of being spoken about in the third person, expressing a desire for direct communication. This common oversight reflects broader societal issues regarding how disabled individuals are often marginalized in social contexts.

Visiting Melbourne

Reflecting on his visit to Melbourne, Hull confronts emotional turmoil linked to memories of his childhood and



the changes he faces as a blind man. He navigates relationships while grieving the loss of visual memories and grappling with newfound limitations within familiar settings, ultimately seeking acceptance and connection with family amid his challenges.

Places

Hull revisits the notion that every place has unique, sensory experiences. His visit to Fairy Park showcases how active participation and tactile interaction can create memorable and distinct experiences for a blind person.

Submarine

In a vivid dream, Hull explores the themes of powerlessness and navigation, uniting his experiences of blindness with the metaphor of submarine travel. He underscores the struggle for direction that both he and the submarine face, weaving in reflections on identity and awareness.

Throughout these narratives, Hull navigates his world through deeply personal reflections on disability, agency, and human connection, illuminating the complex nature of existence from his perspective as a blind individual.



Chapter 6 Summary : 6. Round the bend

Chapter 6: Round the Bend

Overview of Public Speaking Challenges

In August 1984, the author reflects on the challenges of public speaking without notes following his loss of sight. He shares various methods he experimented with, including using micro-cassettes and braille, ultimately finding success in a mental strategy to organize his thoughts into a sequence.

The Experience of Dreaming

A vivid dream occurs, where the author sees a toddler for the first time, evoking emotions of wonder and connection. He contemplates the nature of dreams and their significance.

Childhood Curiosity about Sight

The author's son, Thomas, asks about color, highlighting the fragmented understanding of blindness during childhood



conversations. The author reflects on how both children and adults often misunderstand the implications of blindness.

Family Heritage and Faith

While visiting Melbourne, the author discusses his mother's Christian faith and its lineage, tracing it back to influences from her parents and their connections with significant figures like Mildred Treloar, a missionary. He draws parallels between their experiences and his own journey.

Reflections on the Underground Experience

On September 19, the author enjoys traveling on the London Underground, appreciating the auditory experiences it provides, such as the sounds of the train and its environment, which contribute to his sense of presence.

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Chapter 7 Summary : 7. Beyond feelings

Summary of Chapter 7: Beyond Feelings

Introduction

In this chapter, John M. Hull explores the nuances of his relationships with his children, Thomas and Elizabeth, and his reflections on grief, identity, and the experience of blindness. His discussions often reveal an internal conflict between visual memories and the reality of being blind.

The Impact of Blindness on Relationships

Hull questions whether his inability to see Thomas and Elizabeth permanently affects his bond with them. He reflects on how memories of Imogen and Marilyn remain fixed in time, leading to a sense of cognitive dissonance. He contrasts his experiences with his children, who are unaffected by his visual memories due to their upbringing in a blind environment, versus his feelings of alienation with Imogen and Marilyn.



Navigating the World Without Sight

Hull shares anecdotes illustrating his complicated interactions with the sighted world. For example, seeking directions or hailing a taxi often results in well-meaning but misguided assistance, which can feel infantilizing. He describes how he feels lost in a physical sense, as he must rely on auditory and tactile cues rather than sight.

Grief and Adjustment

He recalls his childhood and how returning to Australia confronted him with his past sighted self, leading to feelings of mourning. However, he notes that his period of mourning is gradually shifting, and he is finding a new sense of control and acceptance in his life.

Interactions with Children

Hull describes joyful moments with his children but also the emotional toll of his limitations. He emphasizes the stark contrast between his previous playfulness and his current struggles to engage fully. His relationship with his children is



marked by a poignant sense of loss, rooted in the limitations imposed by his blindness.

Dreams and Isolation

He articulates feelings of exhaustion and remoteness from his family and the world around him, often retreating into sleep as a form of escapism. An interesting metaphor he uses is likening himself to a nocturnal animal, suggesting a growing affinity for darkness and retreat from the overwhelming brightness of the day.

Conclusion

Ultimately, Hull's reflections in this chapter delve deep into the complexities of identity, memory, and emotion in the context of blindness. He grapples with the struggle between visual memory and the present, navigating both physical and emotional landscapes of his life as a blind man.



inspiration

Key Point: Embracing Acceptance Over Grief

Life inspiration: In this chapter, John M. Hull poignantly illustrates the journey from grief to acceptance, a crucial lesson for all of us. Imagine standing in the shadows of your own challenges, grappling with the weight of loss, whether it's the loss of sight, dreams, or relationships. Hull's evolution toward acceptance teaches us that while mourning our past selves is natural, it is equally vital to embrace the present circumstances and discover new joys within them. You may find that by focusing on the beauty that exists in your current reality, rather than what has been lost, you unravel the strength to forge deeper connections and foster new identities, much like Hull does with his children. This perspective can inspire you to transform your own struggles into moments of resilience and growth, allowing you to navigate life with a renewed appreciation for the richness of your experiences.



Chapter 8 Summary : 8. Still looking

Chapter 8 Summary

The Meaning of Black Wholes

In March 1985, the author reflects on the autobiographies of blind people, notably Colonel Sir Michael Ansell's "Soldier On." While Ansell portrays a stoic demeanor regarding his blindness and life challenges, the author expresses a different inclination. He emphasizes the importance of seeking understanding and meaning in his experiences rather than adopting a stoical acceptance of blindness. This quest for understanding is portrayed as a deeply personal journey that integrates all facets of his life, suggesting that faith and coherence are essential to cope with such a profound experience.

Still Looking

The author shares that he still feels the urge to look despite being blind in one eye, hinting at a psychological connection



to sight. By experimenting with his perception, he expresses a lingering hope and readiness for experiencing visual stimuli, even as he acknowledges the complexities of blindness.

Sound and Silence

In May 1985, the author explores the distinction between sound and silence, likening it to the relationship between sight and blindness. He notes that blindness is an internal state where the world remains visually intact, while silence represents an absence of sound. This exploration highlights how sound possesses a quality of transcendence that sight does not.

Gentle Death

Following a lunch outing in May, the author describes a moment of profound isolation and exhaustion, feeling a desire to retreat into warmth and rest, pondering the nature of existence and the relationship between a desire to escape and deeper feelings of melancholy.

Recognition and Social Dynamics



Later in May, the author recounts a humorous yet revealing incident where he could not recognize a familiar voice in a social setting. This occurrence underscores the challenges faced by blind individuals in social interactions, illustrating the often comical yet complex dynamics of recognition and social games.

Childlike Perception of Blindness

In June, the author reflects on a lighthearted interaction with his daughter, Lizzie, who humorously connects his blindness to her playful notion of him transforming into "Banana Man." This interaction highlights the innocence of childhood perceptions and the playful way children process complex realities, including their parents' disabilities.



Chapter 9 Summary : 9. Waking up blind

Section	Summary
Summer 1985: Discovering Community	The author finds comfort in a blind association, reflecting on differences in adapting to blindness based on age and uncertain memories of interactions.
The Nature of Experience	Sound overwhelms blind individuals, leading to loneliness and abstract memories of conversations, absent of visual context.
The Sensory World	A newfound appreciation for touch leads the author to value tactile experiences, emphasizing weight, texture, and sound over visual knowledge.
Family Dynamics and Perceptions of Ability	Conversations with family reveal how blindness influences perceptions of physical abilities and strength.
Philosophical Engagement with Blindness	A conversation with an Irishman leads the author to contemplate how blindness impacts experience and relationships.
Creativity and Blindness	As commitments lessen, the author explores personal creativity, dedicating time to research and writing inspired by his blindness.
Experiencing Motion	The author describes navigating the world through sound and tactile sensations, contrasting sensory perceptions between blind and sighted individuals.
Walking and Purpose	Walking without visual landmarks leads to a more introspective experience for the blind compared to the goal-oriented nature of sighted walking.
Dreams and Reality	A vivid dream of temporarily regaining sight underscores the emotional transition between realities, highlighting the weight of his experience.
Reflecting on Five Years of Blindness	On the fifth anniversary of his last eye operation, the author reflects on his journey from despair to clarity, emphasizing growth through adversity.

Chapter 9 Summary: Waking Up Blind

Summer 1985: Discovering Community

In June 1985, the author attended his first meeting of an



association for the blind, experiencing comfort in shared habits among blind individuals. He noted differences in adjusting to blindness based on age and reflected on the odd sensation of not clearly recalling interactions, particularly whether they were face-to-face or via telephone.

The Nature of Experience

The author notes the overwhelming nature of sound for blind individuals compared to sighted people. Sounds can easily dominate and erase other auditory experiences, leading to feelings of loneliness, especially in noisy environments. Memories of conversations become abstract for the blind, lacking visual context, which contributes to uncertainty in recalling where events occurred.

The Sensory World

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Chapter 10 Summary : 10. Lost children

Lost Children

Entering a Birthday World

In September 1985, during Thomas's fifth birthday party, the narrator experienced uncertainty about recognizing a child on his knee, fearing it was his daughter Lizzie. He felt disconnected, especially when unable to engage fully in the birthday festivities. After the party, he managed to bond with Thomas by exploring his gifts in a quieter setting, participating meaningfully in his birthday world.

Leading Daddy

Thomas began guiding the narrator to school, developing a system to help prevent him from colliding with obstacles. The experience of saying goodbye became more significant for both, transforming it into a playful game. Lizzie also enjoyed leading him, contributing to a light-hearted competition between siblings.



Ludo and Family Games

Playing blind-friendly Ludo and other games allowed the narrator to engage with his children, fostering a sense of participation and enjoyment, even when unsure of the game rules or the visual elements.

Gabriel

The narrator found joy in his newborn son Gabriel, focusing on tactile connections over visual interactions. His growing ability to relish these experiences showed a shift toward deriving genuine pleasure from touch rather than visual cues.

Lost Children

A dream about losing his children in a supermarket reflected the narrator's fears and feelings of loss associated with blindness. This haunting imagery conveyed the isolation blindness can create within family dynamics and highlighted the struggle between his sighted past and blind present.

Wild Geese



At a party, the narrator felt exhilarated by the music of the Wild Geese choir, despite being unable to see them. He noted how others' descriptions of the performers did not enhance his experience, as the joy derived from sound transcended visual elements.

Bells

After attending a wedding, the narrator reflected on the repetitious comments about his blindness amidst the beautiful church setting. Instead, he found profound joy in the church bells, emphasizing how sound creates an immersive experience that can rival visual beauty.

Heat

He became increasingly aware of sensations such as heat, realizing a heightened sensitivity to changes in temperature and pressure, enriching his sensory experience.

A Put Down?

During a meeting, the narrator felt alienated as a kind-hearted



speaker repeatedly acknowledged his blindness, inadvertently reminding him of his exclusion. This raised questions about how well-meaning individuals can unknowingly reinforce feelings of inadequacy.

From Accident to Meaning

The narrator pondered the randomness of life's events, including his blindness, arguing that meaning is assigned retrospectively. He rejected the notion of a predestined path, emphasizing faith's role in transforming random occurrences into a meaningful narrative and asserting that true fulfillment originates from a meaningful life rather than mere happiness.



Chapter 11 Summary : 11. The gift

The Gift

Discussion with Thomas

On December 28, 1985, John Hull has a candid conversation with his son, Thomas, about his blindness. Thomas inquires if his father will always be blind, leading to an exploration of the nature of his condition. Thomas expresses confusion about God's role in healing, illustrating a child's understanding of divine power versus human limitations.

Loved Objects

Reflecting on December 29, 1985, John discusses the difficulty blind individuals face during Christmas, a time marked by beloved objects. He reflects on his previous love for books and other tangible items but acknowledges that the connection has diminished. John contemplates whether he should engage more with objects he can appreciate through touch.



Navigating Through the Storm

On March 3, 1986, John recounts a vivid dream where he navigates a ship through a stormy sea. This dream symbolizes the escapism blind individuals might experience. He realizes that sighted people engage with the world visually while he can only access his conscious experience, making dreams a rare and uplifting escape.

The Language of Smiles

A conversation on March 21, 1986, with his daughter Lizzie reveals her insight into the disconnect caused by his blindness, particularly regarding smiling. She articulates a profound observation about the difficulty of mutual expressions of joy and the rare connection they share in communicating affection.

Insights from Lizzie

On April 20, 1986, while sharing a moment with his children, Lizzie likens his blindness to being trapped in a deep well, articulating the despair associated with lost light



and connection. This poignant metaphor signals her emotional understanding of his condition and its implications for both of them.

Blindness as a Gift?

By April 21, 1986, John begins to entertain the notion of blindness as a paradoxical gift—a transformative experience that could lead to greater depths of understanding and life. He grapples with the complexities of accepting this notion while recognizing the challenges that come with it.

Accepting the Gift

On April 28, 1986, during a Mass at Notre Dame Cathedral, John muses about the nature of gifts, feeling a profound connection to God through the act of accepting his blindness as a part of his existence. This pivotal moment reveals a sense of grace in his experience and a spiritual acceptance of his condition.

Carousel Performance Reflection

On May 3, 1986, after attending a performance of



“Carousel,” John reflects on the nature of gifts in relation to his experience of blindness. He considers whether accepting such a significant challenge obligates him to offer something in return, thus bringing forth the complexities of gratitude and acknowledgment.

All and Nothing

On May 10, 1986, John extends the idea of gifts from blindness to death, pondering their intertwined nature. He suggests that if both blindness and death can be perceived as gifts, then they reshape one’s understanding of existence. He concludes that life encompasses both darkness and light, and they are ultimately part of a unified experience.



inspiration

Key Point: Blindness as a Gift

Life inspiration: In the chapter 'Blindness as a Gift', John begins to see his blindness not as a mere affliction but rather as a profound opportunity for deeper understanding and insight. This perspective can inspire your life by encouraging you to reframe your own challenges or hardships as potential gifts. It invites you to delve into the rich, often unseen layers of experience that come with adversity. Just as he discovers grace in accepting his condition, you too can find strength and wisdom in your trials. This transformative view empowers you to embrace life's complexities with a sense of gratitude, helping you connect more deeply with yourself and those around you.



Chapter 12 Summary : 12. Touching the rock

Summary of Chapter 12: Touching the Rock

Introduction to Conversations with Lizzie

In a breakfast conversation with his daughter Lizzie, John M. Hull addresses the complexities of faith and sight, acknowledging that God has his own challenges. Despite Lizzie's innocent questioning about his blindness, Hull emphasizes that they are here to assist God rather than solely seeking His assistance.

Teaching Lizzie to Read

Hull reflects on his experiences teaching Lizzie to read, recognizing that blindness doesn't prevent him from engaging in her learning process. He enjoys playful interactions as they work with flashcards and books, allowing Lizzie to think critically and reinforce her skills while Hull



supports her in a fun, collaborative manner.

Dreams of Sight and Connection

John recounts two vivid dreams where he recovers his sight and sees his daughters, Imogen and Lizzie. In the dreams, he experiences the joy and wonder of seeing their faces, though these moments are disrupted by anxieties about Lizzie's eyesight, which he learns has been affected without his prior knowledge.

Conference Interaction Mishaps

At a conference, Hull amusingly recounts awkward encounters due to his blindness, including misidentifying people and confused farewells. Such experiences illustrate both the challenges and humorous aspects of navigating social situations without sight.

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Chapter 1 | Quotes From Pages 53-86

- 1.How long do you have to be blind before your dreams begin to lose colour?
- 2.My dreams have continued to be pictorial. Indeed, dreams have become particularly enjoyable because of the colourful freedom which I experience when dreaming.
- 3.I began to carry a short, white cane early in 1980, mainly as a signal to traffic when I was crossing the road.
- 4.A nice day occurs when there is a clear, blue sky.
- 5.I have been having that thought for at least ten years. I could still manage, provided it did not get any worse.
- 6.The face no longer has the central place for me which it has in normal human relationships.
- 7.What can it matter to me what sighted men think of women, when I, as a blind man, must judge women by quite different means?



8. I feel that the rain is gracious, that it has granted a gift to me, the gift of the world.

9. My life is in crisis.

Chapter 2 | Quotes From Pages 87-109

1. 'I always look after people like you.'

2. 'The black cloud is in my brain.'

3. 'I must get out into it. At the same time, I had a sense of outrage. How could this happen to me?'

4. 'Your smiles make you feel good.'

5. 'Did you come in like that – jab, jab, jab – with your stick?'

6. 'I said, 'Where are your socks?' He will pass them to me, even though they have been on the floor only six inches away.'

Chapter 3 | Quotes From Pages 110-153

1. '...once the food can be seen desire for the actual food takes the place of the feeling of hunger...'

2. 'Blindness dislocates this primordial union of desire and image.'



3. 'I must also fight back by recognizing the circumstances in which panic is likely to occur.'
4. 'The alternative to this is to establish some sort of environment, a study, a room, a route, a passage, some kind of territory.'
5. 'To be seen is to exist.'
6. 'Darkness is as light with thee.'
7. 'What matters is not that I am blind, but that I am known and that I am led by the hand, and that my life, whether sighted or blind, is full of praise.'
8. 'Such knowledge is too wonderful for me! It is high, I cannot attain it.'
9. 'If I say, "Let only darkness cover me... even the darkness is not dark to thee.'
10. 'The transforming power of the alternative archetype is to be appropriated not by acceptance but by praise.'





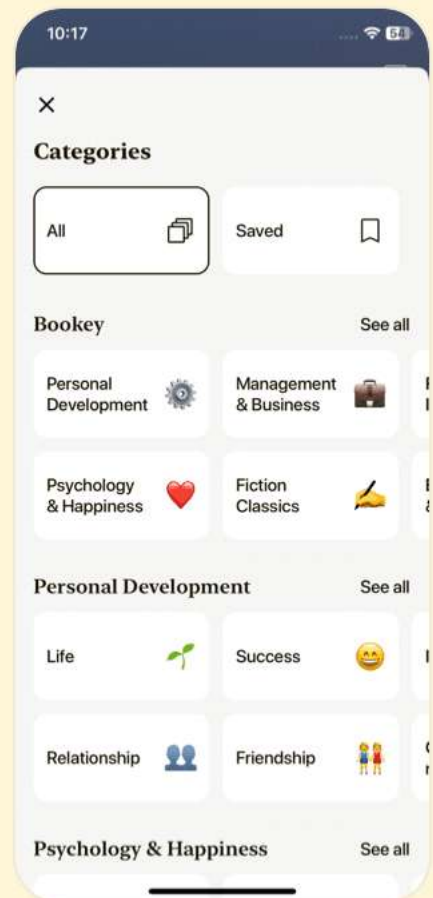
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Chapter 4 | Quotes From Pages 154-180

1. 'Can't you see the pictures?' he asked. 'No.' 'But I can see the pictures.' 'Your eyes aren't poorly', I said.
2. 'But, on the other hand, don't misunderstand me. I am a contented person.'
3. 'I will never accept the loss of my sight!'
4. The world of being, the silent, still world where things simply are, that does not exist.
5. Perhaps all severe disabilities lead to a decrease in space and an increase in time.

Chapter 5 | Quotes From Pages 181-227

1. If the blind live in time, the deaf live in space.
2. The world of the blind is more ephemeral, since sounds come and go.
3. For the blind person, the house is only there because of past experience.
4. From my point of view, he has suddenly vanished.
5. The name is the verbal cue around which that particular



story hangs.

6.I hope that these will restore to me some of the initiative in making and keeping human friendships.

7.How can we get away from each other?

8.The sighted world is mainly visual, an invisible phenomenon like the wind is only observed incidentally.

9.The blind person sees with his fingers.

10.I must not put myself under such demands, that I must not have such expectations.

Chapter 6 | Quotes From Pages 228-258

1. ‘Just forget all that rubbish’, she said. ‘You won’t forget it. Just come and talk to us.’

2. ‘So this is her. This is the smile they all talk about. These are those luminous, brown eyes.’

3.My body is similarly made up of many patterns, many different regularities and irregularities, extended in space from down there to up here.

4. ‘Oh.’ The concept of being unable to see has so many fragments.



5.As I look back now, I feel that the laying down of the mosaic ended in the summer of 1980.

6.I have turned a corner in the tunnel.

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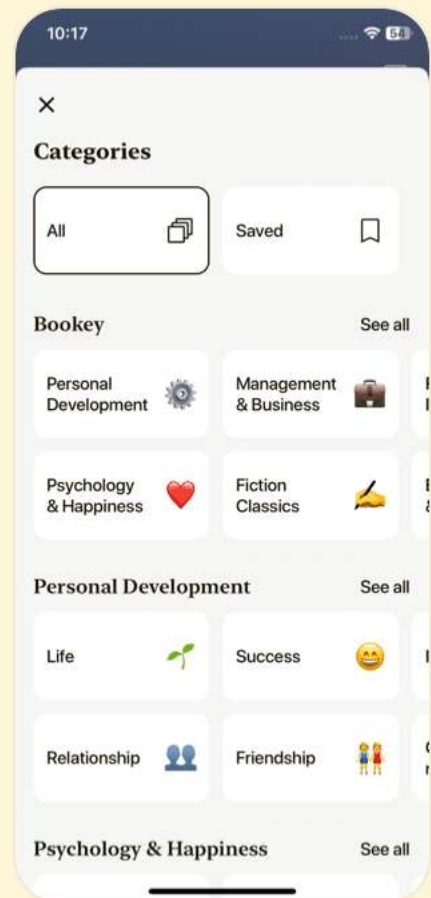
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Chapter 7 | Quotes From Pages 259-292

1. Is the fact that I have never seen them going to be a permanent loss in my relationship with them?
2. I may try to turn my back upon your image as it glows brightly on the far side of the floor.
3. The discomfort of this contradiction can make you feel a little uneasy, or it can become quite painful.
4. With a loved woman, so much of the experience of growing older together lies in witnessing the work of time.
5. I have become separated from my own shadow, as in the cartoons.
6. What does it matter that I can no longer see, if my world continues to be rich and full?
7. I am amazed at how some people seem to be able to adjust so quickly, so vigorously.
8. The irony of it is that now I am besieged with offers of help which I don't need, while previously, when any offer of social converse would have been gladly accepted, I was left to myself.



9.This gives a sense of remoteness. At work, I can control the bombardment, at least to some extent, by creating a predictable day.

10.There is always more to a familiar place than you realize.

Chapter 8 | Quotes From Pages 293-307

1.I cannot write a stoical or a matter-of-fact book; I have to write in my own way, trying to understand what is happening to me.

2.The quest for full significance and for complete integration will never be ended. It will never be a finished product. Nevertheless, the quest remains worthwhile.

3.I must, however, never forget that blindness is only a part. My overriding attempt must be to have the courage to be faithful as a whole, that is as a person in whose life this is one aspect amongst many others.

4.What I seek is a strong identity based on inclusion, not exclusion.

5.Silence is an absence. Sound thus has absence built into it as its counterfoil, whereas sight does not.



- 6.The ability to close the eyes represents the power one has over things that are seen, the power to exclude. Hearing, however, is always receptive, whether to sound or to silence.
- 7.I kept wondering what it would be like to lie down under a blanket of snow.
- 8.What am I to do? Am I to stand there, feeling more and more foolish, suggesting name after name, while my interrogator with increasing impatience says, 'No. No. No. Try again'?
- 9.Does she know what blindness is or not?

Chapter 9 | Quotes From Pages 308-329

1. 'I was told by two or three older blind men that the time of adjustment towards loss of sight grew longer in direct proportion to your age.'
2. 'The nearest visual parallel would be the experience of being dazzled.'
3. 'I am beginning to enjoy the different textures of materials.'



4. 'Blindness is like a huge vacuum cleaner which comes down upon your life, sucking almost everything away.'
5. 'There is a delightful contrast with the smooth clean sharpness of the metal bracelet in the bag.'
6. 'One must re-create one's life or be destroyed.'
7. 'There is a strange change in the state or the kind of activity in my brain.'
8. 'Even a single day without study, away from the possibility of learning something new, can precipitate a new sense of urgency and suffering.'





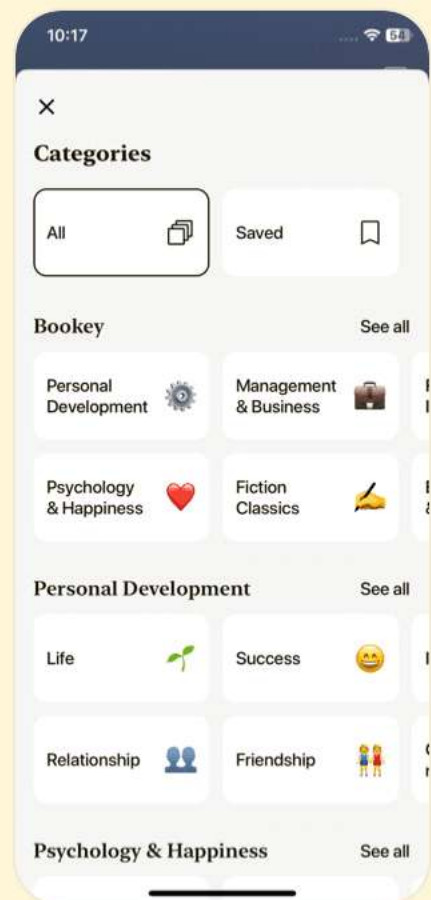
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Chapter 10 | Quotes From Pages 330-347

1. Each of the events which preceded the big event was fortuitous, and the entire sequence had no more probability within it than was accumulated as each accidental event prepared the way, more or less, for the next.
2. Faith is a creative act. It is through faith that we transform the accidental events of our lives into the signs of our destiny.
3. The most important thing in life is not happiness but meaning.
4. Retrovidence is a visionary gift of the Holy Ghost.

Chapter 11 | Quotes From Pages 348-363

1. 'God does help me, in lots of ways.'
2. 'Why doesn't God help you?'
3. 'Is blindness a gift?'
4. 'I accept the gift. I accept the gift.'
5. 'But if blindness is a gift and death is a gift what have we to fear?'



Chapter 12 | Quotes From Pages 364-376

1. Well, I replied rather hesitantly, ‘perhaps God has ideas of his own about all this. He’s not just there to look after us, you know. God’s got his own problems.’
2. I realize now that you do not have to have sight to teach a child to read, although this problem caused me much distress in the early years of blindness.
3. One of the good things about this procedure is that the child has to do all the thinking, all the recognition. She has to help me, and my role as a knowledgeable adult is reduced to a minimum.
4. The point of view of the dream is different from that of the conscious person, because the dream expresses its knowledge in symbolic or imagelike impressions and snatches of memories.
5. Since April I have been working through the idea that blindness should be thought of as a gift, in some strange way.



6.I had discovered the Abbey itself. Every night I returned, to explore a little bit more.

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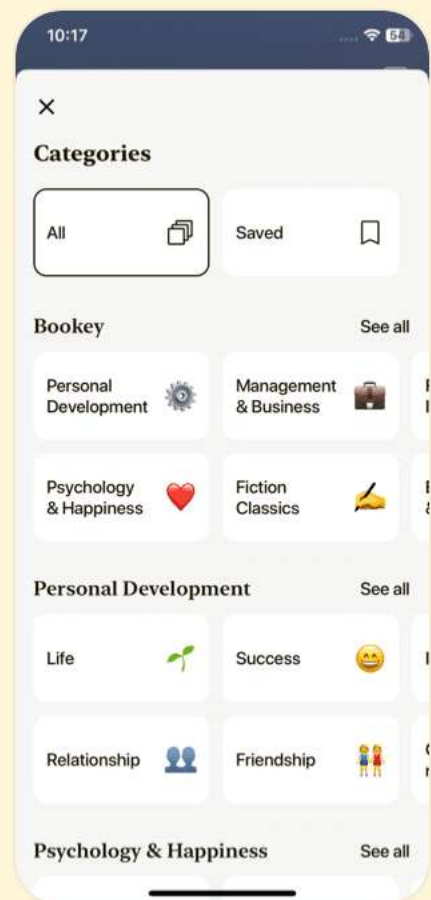
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Touching The Rock Questions

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Chapter 1 | 1. Sinking| Q&A

1.Question

How does the experience of losing sight impact your perception of dreams?

Answer:Losing sight has profoundly altered my perception of dreams; they remain vivid and colorful, allowing me to delve into a realm of imaginative freedom that I no longer experience when awake. Even though I can no longer see in reality, my dreams still bring a rich tapestry of visual experiences, which serve as a fleeting reminder of my past sighted life. I often wonder about the permanence of this vividness – will my dreams eventually fade into abstraction as my memories of sight fade?

2.Question

What does the white cane signify for a person who is

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blind?

Answer: The white cane represents independence and mobility for someone who is blind, serving as a tool that enables safe navigation of the environment. In my dreams, forgetting the cane symbolizes a deeper loss—it's not just a physical tool that's missing but the potential to connect and love. Losing my cane in the dream reflects a fear of losing agency and connection to the world around me.

3.Question

How does the environment change for a person who is blind in the context of weather?

Answer: For me, the concept of a 'nice day' has morphed significantly; what once relied on visual cues now centers around tactile and auditory experiences. The gentle rustling of leaves in the wind or the rhythmic pitter-patter of rain provides a textured understanding of the world. I translate environmental sounds into a sense of space and context, which are integral to negotiating my daily existence.

4.Question

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How does one process the faces of people both known and unknown after losing sight?

Answer: After becoming blind, I categorize people into two groups: those with memorable faces from my past and those whose faces have blurred into anonymity. The faces of those I haven't seen in years remain vivid, while those I meet daily become less distinct. I grow increasingly anxious about the fading images of my loved ones, equating this loss to forgetting their essence. I fear that the gallery of familiar faces I once held dear may soon be empty.

5.Question

What is reflected in the longing to remember one's own appearance after losing sight?

Answer: The longing to remember my own appearance reveals a profound connection between self-image and identity. I grapple with the unsettling realization that as I lose the visual familiarity of my own face, I may also be losing parts of my sense of self. This existential contemplation highlights the weight of visual identity in defining who we



are. Am I merely a spirit wandering in the memories of others now?

6.Question

Why might blindness alter the way one perceives human interaction and relationships?

Answer:Blindness has changed my interaction with others, as I rely heavily on auditory cues rather than visual impressions. The lack of sight means that first impressions depend on gestures, tone, and voice rather than physical appearance. As a result, relationships evolve based on deeper connections formed through communication, rather than superficial judgments. It makes me question how we perceive one another fundamentally, beyond the surface.

7.Question

What role do dreams play in helping manage the emotional impact of blindness?

Answer:Dreams act as both a refuge and a reminder of what was lost. They can provide moments of clarity and visual prowess that starkly contrast with my waking reality. These



vivid journeys can alleviate feelings of despair temporarily, offering a glimpse of the world through colors and scenes I once frequented. However, they also highlight the emotional duality of coping with the permanence of blindness versus the fluidity of dreams.

8.Question

How does experiencing nature through sounds and textures redefine what it means to perceive beauty?

Answer:Experiencing nature through sound and texture reshapes my understanding of beauty. The auditory nuances of rain or wind evoke emotional responses that are as profound as visual stimuli. This alternative perception instills a sense of connection and harmony with the environment, despite the absence of sight. I find beauty not in what I see but in the richness of sound and feeling, creating a deeper resonance with my surroundings.

9.Question

In what ways does the use of visual metaphors in language challenge communication between blind and sighted individuals?



Answer: The prevalence of visual metaphors in our language creates a barrier in communication between blind and sighted individuals, as much of our conversational structure presupposes an ability to see. This reliance can lead to misunderstandings, as a blind person navigates language filled with visual imagery without the corresponding sensory experiences. This disparity prompts a need for more inclusive language that transcends visual frames of reference.

10. Question

What is the emotional weight of dreaming about a sinking ship, reflecting on the challenges of blindness?

Answer: Dreaming about a sinking ship encapsulates the emotional turmoil associated with the gradual loss of sight. It symbolizes the encroaching isolation and helplessness felt as I navigate a world that feels increasingly distant. The ship's sinking serves as a poignant metaphor for the pull of normalcy slipping away, representing an inevitable drift into an unfamiliar reality. This dream starkly illustrates my fears about being cut off from loved ones and the vibrant world,



paralleling the tension between freedom and entrapment.

Chapter 2 | 2. Into the tunnel| Q&A

1.Question

What does John Hull realize about his smiling and the smiles of others?

Answer:John Hull realizes that the spontaneous nature of smiles has changed for him since losing his sight. He is conscious of his smiles, noting that they are no longer met with the usual responsive smiles from others, making his smile feel almost futile, like 'sending off dead letters.' He reflects on how smiling is typically a reciprocal act, but for him, without visual acknowledgment, it feels disconnected.

2.Question

How does Thomas, John's son, demonstrate his understanding of his father's blindness?

Answer:Thomas shows his understanding of John's blindness through interactions like saying 'Show Daddy' when he wants his father to feel an object. He also differentiates between



objects he believes his father can or cannot read, soon grasping that 'Daddy can read this because it is brailled.' These cue-based communications reflect Thomas's adaptation and awareness of John's blindness.

3.Question

How does John describe the challenges faced by blind individuals in terms of societal perceptions?

Answer: John reflects on how sighted people often misunderstand how blind individuals use other senses, particularly with the white cane. He emphasizes that for blind people, perception is not simply about vision but about using touch and sound within their physical reach. This often leads to communication barriers where sighted individuals offer assistance based on their own visual experiences, which may not be helpful to a blind person.

4.Question

What profound moment occurs with the man who helps John cross the road?

Answer: A poignant encounter happens when a man, after



directing John to avoid a parked car, insists on helping him cross the road following an accident involving his brother. This moment signifies a bond formed in shared humanity, where the man feels a sense of duty to those like John, seeing him as a symbol of goodwill and a reminder to care for others.

5.Question

What is the significance of John's dream about the waterfalls and the retreat center?

Answer:John's dream of a serene, elevated retreat surrounded by waterfalls symbolizes hope and renewal. It contrasts with a darker dream about being submerged, showcasing a juxtaposition between despair and peace. The peaceful atmosphere of the retreat indicates his yearning for tranquility and a reprieve from the struggles posed by blindness, effectively capturing the emotional landscape he navigates.

6.Question

What realization does John come to regarding his children's awareness of his blindness?



Answer: John realizes that his children, particularly Thomas, may perceive his blindness differently from how he sees himself. For instance, Thomas's behavior suggests he believes adults can do everything children can do, including seeing in the dark. This reflection compels John to confront how his family adapts to and contextualizes his blindness in their interactions.

7.Question

What can be inferred from John's recurring panics and dreams related to his blindness?

Answer: John's experiences of panic and distress highlight the profound emotional turmoil associated with losing sight. His dreams often reveal the underlying fears and insecurities tied to his blindness, such as feeling trapped or out of control. These themes reflect a struggle with identity, competence, and the coping mechanisms he develops in navigating a world that is perceived very differently by himself due to his blindness.

8.Question



What does John's symbolic imagination reveal about his internal struggles with blindness?

Answer: John's vivid imaginations, like the black cloud surrounding his children or being trapped in a mineshaft, reveal his internal struggles with the perception of blindness. They symbolize feelings of isolation, confusion, and a longing for clarity. They express his fear of losing connection not just with his surroundings but with his loved ones, which complicates his emotional landscape.

9.Question

How does John relate his dream of performing with an orchestra to his experience of blindness?

Answer: In John's dream about being part of a musical performance, he faces panic over his inability to read music due to blindness. This demonstrates his awareness of his limitations in a social setting and the fear of failing in front of others. It highlights his ongoing struggle with confidence and competence in roles that traditionally rely on sight, symbolizing broader anxieties about abilities amid blindness.



10.Question

What overarching themes emerge from John's journey as described in Chapter 2?

Answer:The chapter weaves together themes of perception, connection, identity, and the emotional journey through blindness. John navigates his shifting relationships, learns to understand his children's perceptions of him, and grapples with the fear and isolation that comes with visual impairment. The contrast of light and darkness, both literally and metaphorically, symbolizes his ongoing search for understanding and acceptance within himself and the world.

Chapter 3 | 3. Beyond light and darkness| Q&A

1.Question

How does the experience of blindness change the perception of desire, particularly in relation to food and sexuality?

Answer:Blindness alters the direct association with visual cues that typically inform our desires. For food, a blind person may feel hunger but lacks the visual stimulation that typically intensifies the



craving, diminishing motivation to eat. Similarly, regarding sexual desire, the absence of visual stimuli means a blind person may know they have sexual hunger without being able to direct it towards a specific person or image. This lack of visual reference complicates the transition of desire from a generalized feeling to a specific longing, impacting both the experience and expression of those desires.

2.Question

What dilemma does the author face regarding acceptance and resistance to blindness?

Answer: The author grapples with the conflict between accepting blindness as a fact of life and resisting it as an unacceptable reality. Acceptance feels like giving up, a surrender that may undermine his will to fight against his circumstances. On the other hand, not accepting it leads to frustration over the immutable nature of his condition.

3.Question

What coping strategies does the author employ to combat feelings of panic and depression?



Answer: To manage panic and depression, the author sets small, achievable goals instead of overwhelming tasks. He recognizes the triggers of panic and seeks familiarity and predictability in his surroundings to create a sense of stability. He also experiences meditation through quietness and retreating into a 'nothingness' state, though he acknowledges this may not be a long-term solution.

4.Question

How does the author illustrate the importance of touch in relationships for blind individuals?

Answer: Touch serves as a primary means of connection for blind people, replacing visual cues in relationships. The author highlights the abrupt transition from hearing someone's voice to feeling their touch, which becomes a significant and sometimes shocking reality. He notes that for blind lovers, the physical intimacy may evolve into deeper sensitivity and gentleness due to their reliance on touch, smell, and sound.

5.Question



What does the author mean by the 'territorial rights' lost due to blindness?

Answer: The author expresses that blindness results in a loss of control over one's environment and sense of territory. The familiar routes and recognizable objects that once provided comfort and security become uncharted territory, leading to feelings of vulnerability and displacement.

6.Question

How does the author respond to the spiritual implications of blindness?

Answer: The author explores blindness as a kind of spiritual journey, suggesting it brings him closer to the experience of divine knowledge. He reflects on the psalm expressing God's omnipresence and understanding, concluding that while blindness restricts his sensory experience, it also enables a unique exploration of faith and the profound nature of being seen by God.

7.Question

What does the author find significant about the concept of being known by God in the context of blindness?



Answer: Being known by God takes on a profound meaning for the author, who finds solace in the idea that divine knowledge transcends visual limitations. He reflects that God's understanding is complete and intimate, not reliant on physical sight, offering comfort and affirming his existence beyond the constraints of his blindness.

8.Question

How does the author's dream about his daughter illustrate his fears and anxiety related to blindness?

Answer: In his dream, the author experiences a visceral fear of losing his daughter and the emotional turmoil that would accompany such a loss. The vivid visuals of the dream highlight his struggles with uncertainty and isolation, revealing deeper anxieties about his inability to fully engage in his children's lives due to his blindness.

9.Question

What is the significance of the conversation between the author and his son about blindness?

Answer: The dialogue underscores the innocence and



confusion of childhood regarding complex concepts like blindness. It illustrates how children tend to interpret conditions based on their immediate experiences, revealing the challenge of communicating the realities of blindness without causing fear or misunderstanding.

10.Question

What insights does the author provide about the physical and emotional experiences of being blind?

Answer: The author shares that blindness not only distorts the perception of one's body but also impacts emotional states, leading to a sense of disconnection and invisibility. As he navigates his experiences, he articulates the complexities of feeling both physically grounded in his body yet psychologically burdened by the loss of sensory input.



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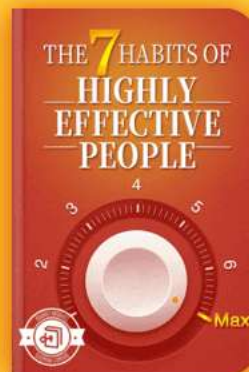


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Chapter 4 | 4. Time, space and love| Q&A

1.Question

What does the interaction between John and Thomas about blindness signify?

Answer: The interaction symbolizes a child's innocent yet profound understanding of disability, highlighting the journey of acceptance and the differences in perception between those with and without vision. Thomas's probing questions about blindness reflect a growing awareness that connects John's condition to his identity, ultimately fostering empathy.

2.Question

How does John's perception of time change after losing his sight?

Answer: John experiences an expansion of time. Unlike sighted individuals who rush against the clock, he finds himself in a deliberate pace, treating time as a continuum where tasks can be completed over longer periods without



the pressure of urgency.

3.Question

What does John's experience in the acoustic world reveal about his consciousness?

Answer: In the acoustic world, John discovers a dynamic reality rich in movements and sounds that define his existence. Unlike the visual world which is stable, sound offers him a continuously changing experience, one where actions and presence are communicated through noise, affirming his connection to the environment.

4.Question

Why does John refuse to accept offers of help from 'faith healers' or hypnotherapists?

Answer: John's rejection stems from a desire to maintain dignity and reject false hopes. He emphasizes that his blindness is not due to a lack of willpower but rather structural damage, and he refuses to be emotionally manipulated into accepting superstitious practices.

5.Question

How does John perceive rest and action in relation to his



world?

Answer: John views his world as one of action rather than being. Silence equates to a lack of existence, where only activity signifies life. His experience suggests that identities and realities are shaped through sound and action rather than passive observation.

6.Question

What does John mean by saying his life is a 'world of becoming'?

Answer: John suggests that his existence is defined by ongoing changes and activities, not by fixed states of being. He implies that life, especially from his perspective as a blind person, is continuously evolving through interactions and engagement with his surroundings.

7.Question

How does the experience of the man in the campus incident reflect societal attitudes towards blindness?

Answer: The encounter highlights ignorance and prejudice, showcasing a misunderstanding of blindness. The aggressive



accusation reveals societal tendencies to challenge and invalidate the experiences of those with disabilities, reflecting broader attitudes toward the limitations placed by society on disabled individuals.

8.Question

What does John mean when he talks about 'space' and 'time' in relation to disability?

Answer:John posits that disabilities often lead to a constricted physical space (as seen with mobility issues) but an expanded experience of time, suggesting that while one's physical range diminishes, their perception and experience of time may broaden, allowing for a deeper engagement with tasks.

9.Question

In what ways does John find renewal from his blindness through intellectual work?

Answer:John finds intellectual engagement refreshing because it allows him to immerse himself in ideas and work without the constant reminder of his blindness, enabling



moments of clarity and a temporary escape from the burdens of social expectations and personal limitations.

10.Question

How does John's relationship with time reflect a larger theme in the narrative?

Answer:The relationship with time underscores the theme of acceptance and adaptation. John shows a deep understanding of his situation, transitioning from rushing against time to embracing a measured, intentional approach, revealing a deeper philosophical reflection on life post-blindness.

Chapter 5 | 5. The wind and the sea| Q&A

1.Question

What are the primary differences in how blind and deaf people perceive time and space?

Answer:Blind people experience the world in a more ephemeral way, with sounds coming and going, making their perception of space less stable. Deaf people, however, measure time through the observation of movement and can see permanence in



their environment, like landscapes or buildings.

2.Question

How does a blind person's sense of body time affect their navigation through familiar routes?

Answer:Blind individuals rely heavily on their body time and spatial memory, as they cannot visually gauge distances or landmarks. For instance, they may overshoot a familiar destination due to changes in their environment, like a blocked path, demonstrating their reliance on past experiences rather than visual cues.

3.Question

What challenges does a blind person face in social settings compared to sighted people?

Answer:A blind person often struggles with initiating and maintaining social interactions since they cannot visually scan a room or recognize people by appearance. They depend heavily on names and voices, which requires them to work harder to form connections compared to sighted individuals who can rely on visual recognition.



4.Question

How does the perception of others differ for blind individuals versus sighted individuals?

Answer:For a sighted person, others have an 'abiding presence' based on visual cues. In contrast, blind people perceive others as momentary presences that come and go based on sound, often leading to surprising encounters when someone approaches without a verbal introduction.

5.Question

In what ways do blind individuals perceive their surroundings differently than sighted individuals, particularly in open spaces?

Answer:Blind individuals find open spaces challenging because they lack any distinguishing features to orient themselves. They rely on tactile, auditory, and spatial cues to navigate, which can be disrupted in smooth, unstructured environments.

6.Question

How does the experience of wind differ for blind people compared to sighted individuals, and what significance



does it hold?

Answer:Blind individuals experience wind directly on their bodies, feeling its movements and changes intimately, which can evoke powerful sensations. For sighted people, wind is often secondary to visual cues. The wind symbolizes the Holy Spirit's presence for the blind, as they engage with it on a more profound sensory level.

7.Question

What practical techniques does the author employ to navigate social situations and maintain connections?

Answer:The author uses specific techniques, like asking sighted friends to introduce him to others by name, which allows him to interact with multiple people in a short time, thus fostering social connections despite the limitations of blindness.

8.Question

What emotional challenges does the author face regarding his relationships and social interactions?

Answer:The author expresses a deep sense of grief and



frustration in navigating familiar relationships without visual recognition, feeling cut off from loved ones and struggling to maintain his role within his family and social circles.

9.Question

What insights does the author provide about the perception of personal independence and dependence in blind and sighted interactions?

Answer:Independence often shifts when a sighted person accompanies a blind individual; while they may offer company, they inadvertently restrict the blind person's ability to navigate independently, leading to an uncomfortable dynamic of dependency.

10.Question

How does the author reconcile his blindness with his identity and relationships?

Answer:Through reflection and acceptance, the author learns to navigate his self-worth as a blind individual, embracing his experiences while acknowledging the emotional complexities tied to his blindness and familial relationships.



Chapter 6 | 6. Round the bend| Q&A

1.Question

What key strategies did John M. Hull develop to lecture effectively without visual aids?

Answer:John M. Hull experimented with various methods to lecture without notes, including using micro-cassettes for prompts and braille headings, but ultimately found success by relying on his mental scanning techniques. He learned to structure his thoughts into organized paragraphs and could reference prior points during his discussions. This adaptation allowed for a more fluid, less formal engagement with his audience, turning the act of lecturing into a more responsive experience.

2.Question

How did childhood interactions influence Hull's understanding of blindness in relation to sighted experiences?

Answer:John's conversations with his children, especially his son Thomas, highlighted the contrasts between sighted and



blind perceptions. For example, Thomas's innocent questioning about color illuminated how children perceive the implications of blindness differently than adults, showcasing the gradual understanding of blindness through everyday interactions within the family.

3.Question

What insights does Hull provide about the emotional impact of his blindness when engaging with family and the world?

Answer:Hull articulates a profound emotional experience when he reflects on his presence with sighted children. He notes that despite being physically present, he feels devoid of shared visual experiences which creates a sense of fragmentation in his interactions. This contrast underscores how connectedness can be influenced by the shared sensory experiences that sight provides.

4.Question

What does Hull imply about the passage of time for a blind person compared to a sighted person?

Answer:Hull perceives time differently as a blind person; he



describes a sense of having entered 'blind time' where experiences feel less defined by visual markers. The absence of visual memories contributed to feelings of stagnation in accumulating new experiences, making the past seem receded and less relevant to his current existence.

5.Question

What role does sound play in Hull's experience of the world, particularly in urban environments like the London Underground?

Answer:Hull finds richness in the auditory experience of the London Underground, noting how the various sounds—such as the trains, people's conversations, and environmental noises—create a vibrant tapestry that envelops him. This shows that for Hull, sound becomes a primary way to perceive and navigate the world, filling the void left by visual absence.

6.Question

Reflecting on the origin of his mother's faith, what significance does Hull find in passed-down beliefs within families?



Answer:Hull explores the lineage of faith and its transmission through generations, underscoring the connections between his mother, Mildred Treloar, and an old blind preacher. He expresses fascination with the cyclical nature of passed-down beliefs that transcend generations, noting how these beliefs not only shape individual identities but also interweave lives across time.

7.Question

What realization does Hull express about his relationship with memory and experience as a blind individual?

Answer:Hull elaborates on how his memory is constructed not through visual imagery but through bodily sensations and interactions. He explains that for him, memories are connected to physical experiences and emotions rather than sight, indicating a unique mode of recollection that highlights the interdependence of sensory experience and personal history.

8.Question

How does Hull describe the process of re-orienting himself in life after losing his sight?



Answer:He metaphorically likens his adjustment to turning a corner in a tunnel—losing the guiding light of his sighted past, requiring him to develop new methods for understanding his surroundings and experiences. This reflects a journey of adaptation where he must navigate his identity in a world that increasingly feels alien.





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Chapter 7 | 7. Beyond feelings| Q&A

1.Question

How does the author perceive the impact of blindness on relationships with loved ones?

Answer:The author feels a conflict between the visual memories of loved ones and the reality of not being able to see them. He grapples with cognitive dissonance—holding two contradictory beliefs: the remembered visual image remains vivid, while the actual person has changed, creating an emotional and relational distance.

2.Question

What is the significance of Imogen's age in the author's relationship with her?

Answer:Imogen acts as a bridge between the author's past sighted life and his present blind experience. However, he worries that he may always see her as a seven-year-old, which could stifle the evolution of their relationship as she grows up.



3.Question

What metaphor does the author use to describe the experience of blindness?

Answer:The author compares blindness to a 'journey through a dark tunnel' where faces of loved ones recede like lights, causing a powerful awareness of time's passage and emotional disorientation.

4.Question

How does the author describe cognitive dissonance in his perception of himself?

Answer:He experiences cognitive dissonance regarding his self-image. He remembers what he looked like as a sighted person, yet he knows that this image is outdated, leading to a confusing relationship with his present identity.

5.Question

How does the author describe his experience with the outside world and being recognized?

Answer:He shares his frustration with the inability to engage socially in public spaces like a bar. Where he once initiated conversations as a sighted person, he now feels isolated and



must rely on others to approach him, which severely limits his social mobility.

6.Question

What emotions does the author feel regarding his interactions with his children?

Answer:The author experiences a poignant sense of loss and longing during interactions with his children. While there are joyful moments, he also feels a disconnect due to his inability to participate fully in their play and experiences.

7.Question

What does the author conclude about mourning the loss of his sight?

Answer:He considers his period of mourning largely over after four-and-a-half years, although he acknowledges that feelings of grief may resurface. He finds a new sense of calmness and control in navigating his life without sight.

8.Question

How does the author describe the challenges of transitioning through familiar environments, especially in new contexts like snow?



Answer:He articulates that while sighted individuals may struggle with physical stability in snow, for him, the challenge lies in losing positional awareness, as familiar landmarks are obscured, leaving him disoriented.

9.Question

What reflection does the author provide on the relationship between body and world, particularly in relation to his blindness?

Answer:The author describes a unique disconnection: he feels acutely aware of his body and its capabilities but lacks a clear sense of the external world to engage with, contrasting with another individual's experience of being cut off from their body itself.

10.Question

How does the author describe the experience of socializing in the context of his blindness?

Answer:He recounts feeling uneasy in social settings like bars, as he now depends on others for recognition and assistance, which alters his previous autonomous interactions and social expectations.



Chapter 8 | 8. Still looking| Q&A

1.Question

What does John M. Hull convey about his quest for meaning in the experience of blindness?

Answer:Hull emphasizes that rather than accepting blindness stoically, he engages in a deep quest for understanding. He seeks coherence and meaning in his life, integrating his experience of blindness with the rest of his life. He believes that full meaning is preferable to partial understanding and stresses the importance of faith in this journey.

2.Question

How does Hull differentiate between blindness and deafness?

Answer:Hull contrasts blindness with deafness by stating that blindness is an internal state where one knows the external world is still visible, while deafness involves the absence of sound. In blindness, one can still look even if nothing is seen, whereas in silence, sound is absent entirely.



3.Question

What analogy does Hull use to describe the experience of entering silence?

Answer:Hull compares entering silence to driving into a bank of fog, where the perceptual world is obscured momentarily. This signifies a loss of sound similarly to how fog obstructs sight, highlighting that silence represents absence.

4.Question

What feelings does Hull express during his lunch with his daughter, and what do they signify?

Answer:During lunch, Hull feels a deep sense of isolation and abstraction, stemming from not being addressed directly by the waitstaff. This reflects a longing for connection and the impact of blindness on his interpersonal experiences. He meditates on the notion of giving in to a desire to escape, linking it to a potential desire for death.

5.Question

How does Hull react to social situations where he cannot recognize voices?

Answer:Hull uses humor to cope with social interactions



where people test his ability to recognize them. He responds cheerfully yet candidly, highlighting the absurdity of the situation while managing to maintain his composure and not hurt anyone's feelings.

6.Question

What does the phrase 'turns into Banana Man' signify in the conversation with his daughter?

Answer:The phrase reflects the playful and imaginative perspective of his daughter, Lizzie, who associates blindness with a fun character, 'Banana Man.' It signals her innocence and perhaps a child's understanding of blindness as something tied to traits of her father, adding a light-hearted touch to the serious topic.

Chapter 9 | 9. Waking up blind| Q&A

1.Question

What feelings did John M. Hull express when he attended the annual meeting of the association for the blind for the first time?

Answer:He felt a curious comfort in being in a setting where the responses and habits of blind



people were accepted and understood. The experience was unique, as it contrasted with his previous interactions, allowing him to connect with others who shared similar experiences.

2.Question

How does John M. Hull describe the difference between his past and present experiences regarding memory and presence?

Answer:He describes a curious sensation of uncertainty about whether he had been in the presence of someone or just on the phone. Unlike sighted people who associate memories with visual cues, his memories are stripped of these contextual backgrounds, making it harder to recall specific interactions.

3.Question

What does Hull reveal about the sensory nature of his world as a blind person compared to the sighted experience?

Answer:He notes that, unlike sighted people who see a multitude of visual stimuli simultaneously, blind individuals



might experience sounds that overwhelm others. This creates a unique form of isolation in social settings, where louder sounds can obliterate voices, leading to feelings of loneliness.

4.Question

What significance does Hull attribute to his sensory experiences with touch in recent months?

Answer:He has begun to appreciate the depth of knowledge and pleasure obtained through touch, discovering the beauty in textures, shapes, and sounds that come from handling different objects. This tactile exploration has become a vital source of joy and understanding in his life.

5.Question

In his reflections on walking, what contrast does Hull draw between sighted and blind individuals?

Answer:Hull points out that sighted people visualize a destination, giving purpose to their walking. In contrast, blind individuals are primarily aware of their bodies in motion without a clear external objective, often leading to a



sense of aimlessness unless familiar cues guide them.

6.Question

What realization does Hull have regarding the stages of his journey through blindness over five years?

Answer:He recognizes a progression from hope, to the struggle of adjustment, to despair, and finally to a current stage of intellectual and emotional growth. He reflects on how blindness has forced him to look inward, leading him to greater clarity and creativity than before.

7.Question

What metaphor does Hull use to describe his initial experience of blindness, and how does that metaphor evolve?

Answer:He metaphorically likens blindness to a vacuum cleaner that sucks everything away, leaving him to rebuild his life with new priorities. Over time, he feels that this process has helped him focus and redefine what is essential, transforming his experience of loss into a source of strength.

8.Question

How does Hull's interaction with a stranger at the train



station reflect his personal philosophy towards blindness and healing?

Answer: When the stranger suggested that 'Jesus will heal' him, Hull responded with assurance of how he felt healed through inner guidance despite his external blindness. This reflects his belief in spiritual healing and personal growth beyond physical sight.

9.Question

What lessons does Hull convey about the nature of creativity stemming from his blindness?

Answer: Hull suggests that the creative surge he has experienced may be linked to the introspective journey blindness has forced upon him, leading to a re-evaluation of his life's priorities, and thus unleashing a creative potential that might have remained dormant.

10.Question

Why does Hull feel a heightened urgency for learning and intellectual sustenance in his current state?

Answer: He feels that inactivity breeds a sense of suffering



and urgency to engage with learning as a means of fulfilling his need for connection and intellectual stimulation, suggesting that even one day away from study can provoke discomfort.

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Chapter 10 | 10. Lost children| Q&A

1.Question

How did John manage to connect with Thomas's birthday presents despite his blindness?

Answer:John felt disconnected during Thomas's birthday party, unable to participate fully in the joy of admiring presents. However, he found a meaningful way to connect with his son by asking Thomas to bring all his gifts to the bed the next day. This allowed John to explore each item through touch while receiving Thomas's descriptions, thus creating an intimate experience that transcended the social pressures of the party.

2.Question

What does John's experience of being led by Thomas and Lizzie during walks illustrate about their relationship?

Answer:John's experience of being led by Thomas and Lizzie reflects a developing trust and bond between them. As Thomas held John's hand and guided him away from



obstacles, it demonstrates a role reversal where the children take on responsibilities, deepening their relationship. The joy John feels in their playful competition to lead him highlights their mutual love and care.

3.Question

What profound emotional themes are explored in John's dream about the children?

Answer:In this dream, John grapples with the fear of losing connection with his children due to his blindness. The dream symbolizes the anxiety and despair of searching for Thomas and Lizzie, representing the emotional weight that blindness brings to family relationships. It conveys the idea that he feels they are becoming 'lost' in a world he cannot see, emphasizing the struggle of maintaining closeness as his vision fades.

4.Question

How does John perceive joy and meaning in his interactions with Gabriel?

Answer:John finds joy in the tactile experiences with



Gabriel, enjoying the warmth, smell, and sounds of the baby, which he describes in a vivid manner. Despite societal expectations or comments about sight, John's connection with Gabriel transcends visual elements, allowing him to experience genuine pleasure and emotional fulfillment. This signifies a profound shift in how he derives meaning from life, favoring sensory and emotional connections over visual interpretations.

5.Question

In what way does John reflect on the responses of sighted people regarding his blindness?

Answer: John observes that sighted people express pity for his blindness, often highlighting what he cannot do or see, which reinforces his sense of being an outsider. He feels that their attempts to include him often remind him of his limitations rather than engaging him in meaningful conversation. This highlights the wider societal struggle to recognize and appreciate the value of lived experience beyond sight.



6.Question

What does John suggest about the nature of accidents in relation to life events like his blindness?

Answer:John posits that life events, such as his unexpected blindness, arise from a series of accidental happenings rather than a predetermined path. He emphasizes the idea of 'retrovidence,' where meaning is assigned to life events through reflection after they occur. This insight leads to the understanding that while one might not choose or control their circumstances, they can find significance in experiences, creative faith, and the connections developed therein.

7.Question

How does John reconcile the concept of happiness with meaning in life?

Answer:John argues that while happiness can be a product of fortunate circumstances, true meaning arises from understanding and embracing life experiences, even those that are challenging. He suggests that the focus should be on



the significance of life's events and the rich emotional landscapes they create, rather than merely pursuing happiness.

8.Question

What insights does John gain about his relationship with blind experiences at cultural events, like the wedding?

Answer:At the wedding, John realizes that his connection to experiences is not diminished by his lack of sight; instead, he finds joy in the vibrations of the bells rather than their visual appearance. This insight underscores that meaning can be derived from sensory experiences and emotional responses, challenging societal preconceptions about the losses associated with blindness.

9.Question

What does John's sensitivity to heat signify in his evolving sensory perception?

Answer:John's newfound awareness of heat and changes in temperature represents an evolution in his sensory perception as he adapts to blindness. This heightened sensitivity



encourages him to engage more deeply with the world around him, indicating that even in the absence of sight, there are ways to experience life fully and meaningfully.

10.Question

What role does faith play in John's interpretation of events and his overall understanding of life's meaning?

Answer: John believes that faith enables individuals to transform the seemingly random and accidental events of life into meaningful experiences. It is through faith that he can impose coherence and significance on the occurrences surrounding his blindness—demonstrating that meaning is an active process of engagement with life rather than a passive outcome.

Chapter 11 | 11. The gift| Q&A

1.Question

Why doesn't God help you to get your eyesight back?

How do you respond to this question?

Answer: I explained to my son, Thomas, that while God does not restore my eyesight, He helps me in



many other ways. God gives me strength and courage to face the challenges of my blindness, even though in his young understanding, he sees God as someone who should have the power to give me my sight back, akin to super-heroes like He-man or Superman.

2.Question

What does the discussion about blindness reveal about the child's understanding of God?

Answer:It shows that Thomas views God through a lens of power and capability, expecting Him to act like a superhero. This highlights the innocence and simplicity of a child's theology, which needs time and experience to evolve into a more complex understanding that embraces the concept of weakness and the presence of God in suffering.

3.Question

How does the author reflect on the nature of 'loved objects' as a blind person?

Answer:The author expresses a poignant sense of loss



regarding the tactile and aesthetic experiences of loved objects, like books and music. While he cherishes the feel and smell of books, he realizes they no longer evoke the same deep affection; they lack the immediacy and personality once felt. This absence raises the question of what it means to truly love something when sight is no longer part of that experience.

4.Question

What does the dream about navigating a ship in a storm symbolize for the author?

Answer:The dream symbolizes resilience and the struggle to maintain stability amidst chaos. It reflects the author's experience with blindness, representing the continuous effort to hold onto a semblance of control and safety in a world where he often feels vulnerable and isolated.

5.Question

How does the author interpret his blindness as a 'gift'?

Answer:He wrestles with the idea that perhaps blindness could be seen as a transformative experience, leading to a



deeper understanding of life. While he struggles to accept this notion, he considers the potential for it to bring about a concentrated, purifying phase of life, pushing him away from a view of disability and toward a perspective of newfound capacities.

6.Question

What significance does the experience of attending Mass in Notre Dame Cathedral hold for the author?

Answer:Attending Mass in the cathedral filled him with a profound sense of worship and acceptance of his blindness as a part of his spiritual journey. The experience highlighted the beauty of music and the divine presence he felt, reminding him that within the darkness of his existence, there can be moments of illumination and connection with God.

7.Question

What does the author learn about the relationship between gift and giving after accepting his blindness?

Answer:The author contemplates the reciprocity involved in accepting gifts. He ponders whether accepting the gift of



blindness requires him to give something in return, and if so, how to honor that relationship without equating it to a debt. This leads to a deeper recognition that the true gift of life, love, and peace transcends the physical experience of blindness.

8.Question

What philosophical insight does the author arrive at regarding life and death?

Answer:He reflects that if blindness and death can both be viewed as gifts, then life itself, which encompasses both, is also a precious opportunity. This philosophical stance suggests a radical acceptance where the boundaries between life and death, light and darkness, are blurred, underscoring the idea that meaningful existence can be found in both suffering and joy.

Chapter 12 | 12. Touching the rock| Q&A

1.Question

What can we learn about faith from the conversation between John and his daughter Lizzie?



Answer: The dialogue reflects a deep understanding that faith is not merely about seeking help or miracles from God but about recognizing that God has his own challenges. It teaches us to not view faith as a one-sided transaction but rather as a partnership where we, too, have a role in supporting the divine.

2.Question

How does John demonstrate that blindness does not impede teaching?

Answer: John's experience teaching Lizzie to read illustrates that blindness does not limit one's capacity to educate. He engages her through tactile learning and creative interactions, showing that a supportive and encouraging presence can facilitate learning effectively, regardless of the teacher's physical limitations.

3.Question

What significance do John's dreams hold about his perception of sight?



Answer: John's dreams highlight the complex relationship between his self-identity and his blindness. They reveal a desire for connection and understanding, as he visualizes seeing his daughters clearly. These dreams serve as a metaphor for longing and the inner vision he holds, emphasizing that perception is multifaceted and not solely reliant on physical sight.

4.Question

How does John's experience at the town hall illustrate the challenges of social interactions for those with disabilities?

Answer: John's encounters at the town hall demonstrate the awkwardness and misunderstandings that can arise in social situations due to his blindness. Despite the confusion, his humorous reflections expose the inherent humanity in these moments, reminding us that connection can be formed even amidst uncertainty.

5.Question

In what way does John describe blindness as a gift?



Answer: John's contemplation of blindness as a gift suggests that it offers unique perspectives and depths of understanding. He relates it to cultural and religious themes where hardship is intertwined with spiritual insight, implying that challenges can lead to greater wisdom and appreciation of life's nuances.

6.Question

What lessons did John learn from exploring the Iona Abbey?

Answer: Through his exploration of the Abbey, John learned the value of perseverance and self-discovery. By venturing out alone at quieter times, he cultivated a sense of autonomy and understanding of his environment, demonstrating that exploration and adaptation can lead to personal growth and a deeper connection to one's surroundings.

7.Question

How does John's way of teaching reading to Lizzie reflect on the nature of engaging with children?

Answer: John's method of teaching emphasizes active



participation from Lizzie, transforming the learning process into a collaborative and enjoyable experience. This suggests that involvement and interaction build stronger bonds and enhance learning, highlighting the joy and playfulness in education.

8.Question

What can the reader infer about the role of dreams in understanding one's reality from John's narrative?

Answer:John's narrative implies that dreams are a powerful vehicle for processing emotions and hopes regarding one's reality. They allow individuals to explore desires and fears that might not be consciously acknowledged, serving as a bridge between aspiration and reality.

9.Question

How can the 'terrible gift' concept apply to personal struggles outside of blindness?

Answer:The 'terrible gift' concept can apply to anyone facing challenges, suggesting that difficulties often carry hidden opportunities for growth, wisdom, and transformation.



Recognizing adversity as a potential source of insight can inspire others to confront their struggles with resilience and hope.

10.Question

What message does John's experience offer about redefining limitations?

Answer: John's experience encourages a reevaluation of limitations, suggesting that they can be reframed as opportunities for creativity and connection. Instead of being bound by what he cannot do, John illustrates how embracing his circumstances leads to meaningful engagement with his family and surroundings.





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Touching The Rock Quiz and Test

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Chapter 1 | 1. Sinking| Quiz and Test

1. John M. Hull's dreams remained vividly pictorial after he went blind.
2. The white cane serves as a vital tool for Hull's mobility and symbolizes his blindness.
3. Hull's understanding of a 'nice day' is primarily based on visual cues after losing his sight.

Chapter 2 | 2. Into the tunnel| Quiz and Test

1. John reflects on his smiles and feels appreciated due to reciprocal smiles from others.
2. John teaches his son Thomas to communicate through touch, reinforcing their unique bond despite his blindness.
3. John believes that sighted people always understand how he perceives the world through his cane.

Chapter 3 | 3. Beyond light and darkness| Quiz and Test

1. In infancy, visual images are closely linked to



desires such as hunger.

2. Blindness enhances the individual's capacity to form intimate relationships through touch and face-to-face interactions.

3. The author believes that praising God's omniscience helps in finding purpose beyond the challenges of blindness.





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Chapter 4 | 4. Time, space and love| Quiz and Test

- 1.The author discusses how losing his sight has made him feel that he has less time for activities.
- 2.The author believes that his blindness can be cured by sheer willpower.
- 3.The author experiences societal misunderstanding and aggression towards his blindness during a campus encounter.

Chapter 5 | 5. The wind and the sea| Quiz and Test

- 1.John Hull states that blind individuals rely more on physical landmarks compared to sighted individuals.
- 2.Hull finds the experience of the wind deeply enriching and interprets it as a metaphor for spiritual experience.
- 3.Hull believes that every place has unique sensory experiences and emphasizes the importance of visual context in navigating them.

Chapter 6 | 6. Round the bend| Quiz and Test

- 1.The author successfully found a method for public



speaking without notes by primarily using visual aids.

2. The author's son Thomas demonstrates a clear understanding of the implications of blindness when he asks about color.
3. The author enjoys sensory experiences like listening to rain, which help him connect with his environment despite his blindness.



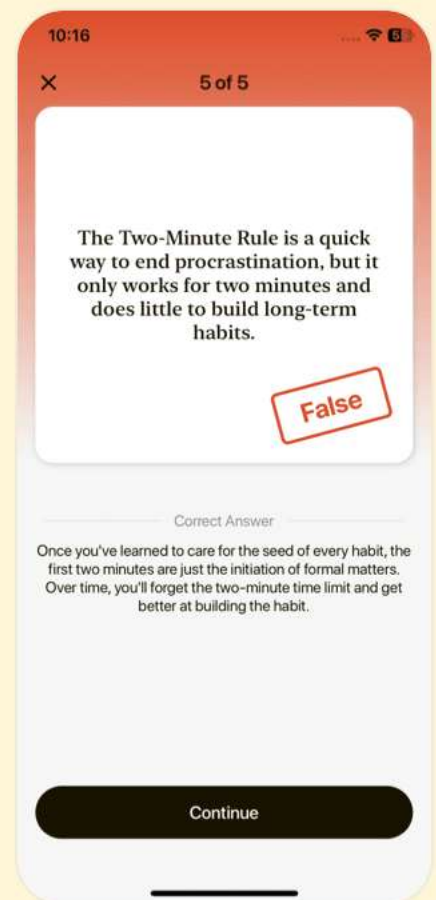


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Chapter 7 | 7. Beyond feelings| Quiz and Test

1. John M. Hull explores the impact of blindness on relationships with his children in Chapter 7.
2. Hull's visual memories of his previous life do not affect his emotional responses to his relationships with Imogen and Marilyn.
3. Hull describes a feeling of control and acceptance in his life as he adjusts to his blindness over time.

Chapter 8 | 8. Still looking| Quiz and Test

1. John M. Hull adopts a stoical acceptance of blindness similar to Colonel Sir Michael Ansell.
2. The author expresses a lingering hope for experiencing visual stimuli despite being blind in one eye.
3. The distinction between sound and silence is similar to the distinction between sight and blindness.

Chapter 9 | 9. Waking up blind| Quiz and Test

1. In June 1985, the author experienced the comfort of shared habits among blind individuals at his first meeting of an association for the blind.



2. The author found that blind individuals experience sound in the same way as sighted individuals, leading to similar feelings of loneliness.
3. The author reflects positively on his creativity, attributing it to a renewed focus after leaving various university roles.





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Chapter 10 | 10. Lost children| Quiz and Test

- 1.The narrator felt fully engaged in his son Thomas's birthday party activities.
- 2.Thomas helped the narrator navigate safely to school by developing a system to avoid obstacles.
- 3.The narrator believes that all life's events, including his blindness, are predestined and have a specific meaning from the start.

Chapter 11 | 11. The gift| Quiz and Test

- 1.John Hull believes that blindness can be perceived as a transformative gift.
- 2.Lizzie expressed that her father's blindness made their connection stronger.
- 3.During his reflections, John Hull claims that both blindness and death reshape one's understanding of existence.

Chapter 12 | 12. Touching the rock| Quiz and Test

- 1.John M. Hull believes that blindness prevents him from engaging in his daughter Lizzie's learning process.



2. Hull considers blindness as a potential 'terrible gift' that can be linked to philosophical and religious teachings.
3. Hull's dreams depict him as fully able to see in dream scenarios, directly confronting his blindness during those experiences.





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