

THE ARTICLE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2104/210428-isolation.html>

Could you survive for a few days without your smartphone or without being connected to the Internet? How about living in a cave with no mod cons for 40 days? Fifteen people did just that. They took part in a project called Deep Time to see how they would react to and cope with being totally disconnected from the modern world. Scientists from the Human Adaption Institute led the \$1.9-million project. They wanted to understand how people would adapt to drastic changes in living conditions. They put the volunteers in a cave for nearly six weeks. There was no sunlight and the cave dwellers had no contact with the outside world. They had to rely on their body clock to know when to wake up, go to sleep and eat.

Most of the volunteers said they enjoyed the experience of total isolation. Two-thirds expressed a desire to remain underground a while longer in order to finish projects they had started. Deep Time's director Christian Clot said the experience would, "test humans' ability to adapt to the loss of their frame of reference for time and space". He said: "Our future as humans on this planet will evolve. We must learn to better understand how our brains are capable of finding new solutions, whatever the situation." One striking observation is that participants lost their sense of time. Mr Clot said: "In our heads, we had walked into the cave 30 days ago". One team member estimated the time underground to be 23 days.

Sources: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-04-25/deep-time-experiment-sees-people-spend-40-days-in-cave/100093966>
<https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20210424-french-volunteers-leave-cave-after-40-day-endurance-trial>
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/apr/25/deep-time-team-ends-40-days-underground-in-french-cave>

WARM-UPS

1. ISOLATION: Students walk around the class and talk to other students about isolation. Change partners often and share your findings.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, talk about these topics or words from the article. What will the article say about them? What can you say about these words and your life?

survive / smartphone / cave / project / cope / modern world / contact / volunteers / isolation / desire / underground / experience / loss / brain / observation / sense

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. UNPLUG: Students A **strongly** believe we should all unplug from the modern world for a few days; Students B **strongly** believe the opposite. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

4. ISOLATED: What are the good and bad things of living in these isolated places? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners often and share what you wrote.

	Good Things	Bad Things
A cave		
The desert		
The jungle		
A desert island		
A mountaintop		
Antarctica		

5. INTERNET: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "Internet". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

6. THINGS I'D MISS: Rank these with your partner. Put the things you'd most miss if you spent time in isolation at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- Smartphone
- TV
- Fast food
- Tea or coffee
- Music
- Shopping
- Friends
- News

VOCABULARY MATCHING

Paragraph 1

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 1. mod cons | a. Deal effectively with something difficult. |
| 2. react | b. A person or animal that lives in or at a specified place. |
| 3. cope | c. The machines and devices of a well-equipped modern house that create an easier way of life. |
| 4. institute | d. Act in response to something; respond in a particular way. |
| 5. drastic | e. An organization having a particular purpose, especially for science, education, or a specific profession. |
| 6. dweller | f. Likely to have a strong or far-reaching effect; radical and extreme. |
| 7. rely on | g. Depend or count on someone or something. |

Paragraph 2

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| 8. expressed | h. Attracting attention by reason of being unusual, extreme, or prominent. |
| 9. desire | i. Conveyed a thought or feeling in words or by gestures and conduct. |
| 10. adapt | j. Develop gradually, especially from a simple to a more complex form. |
| 11. evolve | k. The action or process of looking at something or someone carefully or in order to gain information. |
| 12. striking | l. A strong feeling of wanting to have something or wishing for something to happen. |
| 13. observation | m. Roughly calculated or judged the value, number, quantity, or extent of. |
| 14. estimated | n. Make something suitable for a new use or purpose; modify. |

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2104/210428-isolation.html>

1. TRUE / FALSE: Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- a. The article says we could all survive without a smartphone. **T / F**
- b. Forty people lived in a cave for 40 days. **T / F**
- c. The research project cost \$19 million. **T / F**
- d. Volunteers had to rely on their body clock in the cave. **T / F**
- e. Two-thirds of the volunteers enjoyed the cave experience. **T / F**
- f. The research director said we needed to find solutions to situations. **T / F**
- g. The participants in the research lost their sense of time. **T / F**
- h. One team member left the cave after 23 days. **T / F**

2. SYNONYM MATCH:

Match the following synonyms. The words in **bold** are from the news article.

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. survive | a. change |
| 2. took part | b. extreme |
| 3. react | c. depend |
| 4. drastic | d. judged |
| 5. rely | e. make it |
| 6. enjoyed | f. answers |
| 7. adapt | g. participated |
| 8. solutions | h. obvious |
| 9. striking | i. behave |
| 10. estimated | j. loved |

3. PHRASE MATCH: (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. survive for a few days without | a. dwellers |
| 2. see how they would | b. time |
| 3. how people would adapt | c. on their body clock |
| 4. cave | d. of total isolation |
| 5. They had to rely | e. to drastic changes |
| 6. enjoyed the experience | f. for time and space |
| 7. Two-thirds expressed a desire | g. your smartphone |
| 8. their frame of reference | h. finding new solutions |
| 9. our brains are capable of | i. react to and cope |
| 10. participants lost their sense of | j. to remain underground |

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2104/210428-isolation.html>

1. What do people in the cave have to live without for 40 days?
2. What is the name of the project in the article?
3. How much did the research project cost?
4. What did the cave dwellers have no contact with?
5. What did the cave dwellers have to rely on to know when to eat?
6. What proportion of the volunteers enjoyed the cave experience?
7. What did many participants want to finish?
8. What did the research director say humans would do?
9. What did the director say we needed to find?
10. What did the participants lose their sense of?

AFTER READING / LISTENING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2104/210428-isolation.html>

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'isolation' and 'cave'.

isolation	cave

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• survive• cave• project• modern world• changes• body clock	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• volunteers• underground• loss• humans• planet• time
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ISOLATION DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

1. What did you think when you read the headline?
2. What images are in your mind when you hear the word 'isolation'?
3. Would you like to have taken part in this experiment?
4. What do you think of caves?
5. Could you survive for a few days without your smartphone?
6. Could you live in a dark cave for 40 days?
7. How would you cope with being disconnected from the world?
8. What does your body clock tell you?
9. What would you do in a cave for 40 days?
10. What would you miss about having no contact with the outside world?

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ISOLATION DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

11. Did you like reading this article? Why/not?
12. What do you think of when you hear the word 'cave'?
13. What do you think about what you read?
14. How would you deal with total isolation?
15. How might our future on this planet change?
16. How good are you at finding new solutions?
17. What happens when you lose your sense of time?
18. How sociable are you?
19. To what degree is technology isolating people?
20. What questions would you like to ask the participants?