



Eyes Wide Open: Overcoming Obstacles and Recognizing Opportunities in a World That Can't See Clearly

Isaac Lidsky

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In this *New York Times* bestseller, Isaac Lidsky draws on his experience of achieving immense success, joy, and fulfillment while losing his sight to a blinding disease to show us that it isn't external circumstances, but how we perceive and respond to them, that governs our reality.

Fear has a tendency to give us tunnel vision--we fill the unknown with our worst imaginings and cling to what's familiar. But when confronted with new challenges, we need to think more broadly and adapt. When Isaac Lidsky learned that he was beginning to go blind at age thirteen, eventually losing his sight entirely by the time he was twenty-five, he initially thought that blindness would mean an end to his early success and his hopes for the future. Paradoxically, losing his sight gave him the vision to take responsibility for his reality and thrive. Lidsky graduated from Harvard College at age nineteen, served as a Supreme Court law clerk, fathered four children, and turned a failing construction subcontractor into a highly profitable business. Whether we're blind or not, our vision is limited by our past experiences, biases, and emotions. Lidsky shows us how we can overcome paralyzing fears, avoid falling prey to our own assumptions and faulty leaps of logic, silence our inner critic, harness our strength, and live with open hearts and minds. In sharing his hard-won insights, Lidsky shows us how we too can confront life's trials with initiative, humor, and grace.

Eyes Wide Open: Overcoming Obstacles and Recognizing Opportunities in a World That Can't See Clearly Details

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From Reader Review Eyes Wide Open: Overcoming Obstacles and Recognizing Opportunities in a World That Can't See Clearly for online ebook

Josh Holden says

Good book--enjoyable to read. It was weakened by trying to be both a memoir and a self help book though. It's closer to a memoir, which makes the self help lessons it tries to teach seem to fall flat.

Reggie Carlisle says

This book was amazing.

It's not often that I read a book that I want to buy several to give away, but this is one of those times.

I can honestly say that this book could be transformative for your life, if you choose to let it.

It addressed many of my fears, my challenges, and helped me see them more clearly.

I can say I will read it again and again, but only after I get it back from people I will immediately lend it to.

I have already shared ideas out of this book with my children, who asked if they could take it and share it with their classes at school.

It made me question myself, take stock, and helped me find ways to move forward with a better view of how to do so.

Jeremy Macey says

I find Isaac to be inspiring and motivating. I saw him speak publicly before listening to his book. There are some great concepts presented in this book about how to change the way we see others, obstacles, and ourselves. He shows this by telling stories from his lifetime, hoping they will relate on some level to the reader. Many do. That being said, I feel like after finishing the book, I have to put the steps together myself and figure out my own ways to live Eyes, Ears, and Heart Wide Open. Overall, the book was worth the read and has helped me to reflect about how I can change my perceptions.

Maciej Nowicki says

Eyes Wide Open is about overcoming obstacles. It presents a mindset on how to do it. Most of all, it's an encouraging and captivating book. Just imagine Isaac Lindskey, the author of the book, who as a blind person, graduated from Harvard Law School, worked for a top Manhattan law firm, and successfully salvaged a failing business and transformed it into a multimillion business.

I found this reading very gripping, as Isaac explained in details how he makes decisions and deals with people. We need to be more observant of what's behind what we think we see. How to do that? It is critical to notice if the words, facial expressions and tone all match up. Believe me – easy to say when... (if you like to read my full review please visit my blog: <https://leadersarereaders.blog/2018/1...>)

Joni Haynes says

I won this book from Goodreads, and I read it, hoping to gain some insight into what my brother went through when he lost his eyesight. While I did learn a few things, I found the book to be mainly a lot of bragging about what this man did with his life, even without vision. I like his philosophy, but have to note that he was not completely on his own in his endeavors. He could probably not have achieved most of what he did if he hadn't had support from his wife and other family members. All in all...I give it 3 stars.

Christopher Lawson says

I'm a Funny Blind Guy with an Open Heart

In EYES WIDE OPEN, Isaac Lidsky provides a series of autobiographical essays, which document his struggles with Retinitis Pigmentosa—commonly called “RP.” The author explains the hideous nature of this disease: One gradually loses vision, starting from the periphery, causing a “tunnel effect.” There is no cure, although there is a lot of research going on.

The author recounts his many struggles with RP and his plan to just solve the problem logically—just like it were some math problem. Of course, that didn't work, and Isaac was forced to face circumstances that weren't as simple as solving a geometry problem. The author began to see how to better use his other senses. He makes it clear that his hearing is not actually more acute than sighted people—it's just he uses it more effectively: “I gained heightened abilities of perception employing my other senses.” As a result, “Eyes wide open became my powerful philosophy and active daily strategy.”

In the chapter, “Acceptance and Surrender” the author explains his tendency to put limits on himself. He cites the challenge of “throwing out the first pitch.” Even though he was a highly successful lawyer, he had convinced himself he could not throw a baseball. He discovered that “The self-limiting assumptions we make about ourselves are buried deep and easily missed.”

If you read nothing else, DO NOT MISS CHAPTER 8! In this chapter, Isaac explains that “Going blind opened wide my heart.” He now experienced and felt kindness all around him—had had gotten “heart sight.” The author's vulnerability actually opened him up to new possibilities. He could apprehend things and people he had taken for granted before: “I felt it in random strangers who helped me. I felt it in friends who labored to understand. I felt it in my sisters who sought to protect me. . . They taught me to see with my heart, and I feel in love with the view. Joy, grace, beauty, and beneficence are everywhere if you choose to see them.”

Besides Chapter 8, whatever you do, READ THE LAST 2 PAGES! These 2 short pages are a call to action, based on changing your worldview: “How do you want to live your life? Who do you want to be?”

So all in all, I found EYES WIDE OPEN to be an interesting read—especially the inspiring Chapter 8, “Heart Wide Open.” Keep in mind this really isn't a “How to” book for blind people. It's really more a philosophy of life, related by someone who has faced a massive challenge, and learned to make the best of it. The sections appear to be independently written essays. This makes the read seem a little disconnected, and hurts continuity somewhat. Nevertheless, the author's encouraging words and especially his worldview come through loud and clear. The author closes the book with this admonition: “Count your blessings, not your

burdens. Live with grace, not greed.”

This was a very tough book for me to read, since my daughter suffers from the same disease. On the other hand, I hope the encouraging words found in EYES WIDE OPEN may help those suffering from RP.

For another story about a journey through RP, see: Laura Lawson Visconti, “Believing is Seeing.”

Advance Review Copy courtesy of the publisher.

Jess Macallan says

I received this book from the publisher via NetGalley.

3.5 stars

This book explores how we perceive the world and the experiences of the author, who went blind at a fairly young age. Mr. Lidsky is an intelligent, accomplished man, and his life experiences are interesting and varied. I appreciate that he makes valid points regarding the limitations of sight and ties them back to his struggles as he learned to adjust to new ways of experiencing the world. However, the formal writing style comes across as more scholarly than the engaging, conversational style I expect from memoirs. I also wasn't quite clear on the progression of the story. There seemed to be no flow or structure to the layout of the chapters.

Readers looking for an informational memoir will enjoy this book. I do also recommend the author's TED talk, which is what prompted me to request this book.

Jennifer says

Open your heart to Eyes Wide Open...

Issac Lidsky has opened his heart to share his story. It is audacious, humbling, funny, heart wrenching, and real.

I recommend listening to the book as Issac narrates his own text. To hear him directly makes his story that much more interesting.

Grab a glass of fine wine, or whatever your beverage of choice, and sit back and marvel at Issac's extraordinary stories and journey. Then apply the lessons of living Eyes Wide Open to your own life.

Leslie says

As a self help book, I give it a C+, the ideas are not new and are not really presented in a coherent way. As an autobiography, I give it a B+! It is very interesting to read how Isaac dealt with slowly going blind, and how he made major life decisions--some of them quite risky and unconventional. It's worth reading even though it is not well organized. I think it is always helpful to read, or hear about, people who achieve at a

high level, and how they do it. Some of the techniques Isaac refined because of a lack of vision are pretty valuable tools for the sighted, too.

Minwoo says

This book contains a lot of well-synthesized nuggets of wisdom / realizations with good analogies. Some I've learned on my own, others nicely introduced. His chapter on how poker explains life and luck was almost word for word my worldview, which I enjoyed.

The big aha moment for me was when he made analogies on how to measure life using balance sheet, P&L, and cash flow analysis. It was something I had never thought of, but was a great articulation of what my unorganized thoughts entailed. The notion of ignoring market value approach and taking book value is something I'll definitely keep in mind.

Lots of good stuff in the book, but 4 stars because it's less universal (I think if I read this when I'm 50 I wouldn't have found it as helpful) and more a series of personal worldview without academic rigor (not that it's a bad thing, just less influential as other books I rate 5 stars). Nonetheless great to have read.

Wanda Maynard says

The first sentence in this strong, meaningful, and skillfully written book titled, EYES WIDE OPEN by Isaac Lidsky, grabbed me as I grasped the opportunity to gather knowledge, or become aware of how blindness, not only can, but does effect a lot of people. The title itself showed a true meaning also. The author not only opened my eyes, he opened my heart with this all inspiring book. He also asked these two questions that I like and thought a lot on. "How do you want to live your life? Who do you want to be?" Those are two very good questions worth thinking about. We can have our eyes wide open and gaze at an obstacle in our way, but yet are unable to see what might be in front of us, behind us, or way ahead of us. Does that stop us from stumbling and falling all over ourselves? let this book be an inspiration to us all and help us to be able to see clearly not only through our minds, but also through our hearts when and if our sight is slowly being taken away. Does that also mean we must take other steps in order to be able to get on with our lives? Does that blindness stop us from having that vision beyond our view? A very inspiring and interesting read.

Tina says

I liked the beginning and the end with the motivating talk, but the parts about poker and football, not so much. It was interesting to read about how he dealt with becoming blind by age 25.

Yodamom says

Who doesn't need help overcoming obstacles? Recognizing opportunities, who'd ever want to miss one of those ? I expected the usual self help guide with steps examples and mantras to follow. I got a memoir with real life experiences. The author dealt with blindness slowing becoming one of his realities. In this books he bravely walks his reader through his fails, wins, stumbles, and triumphs over himself and his awakening to

what is real not an illusion. His going blind, forced him to focus on other parts of life and judge them with a clearer vision. He had to reevaluate his actions, finding very surprising reasoning behind them. I respect this mans journey and his strength to open his world to help others. I got some excellent points to work on for opening my own eyes. Truly listening is a big one I struggle with. "Tell it to my like I'm a 5 year old" His made a comment about how we listen only to react. I had that gasp moment, yes that is sadly true. I've been working on this and it is a hard one to break. the mind/ego wants to wander and dominate the conversation. For me this is the most important lesson I got from the book. I'm a work in progress. While I didn't get what I expected from this book based on the title I did get at least one great thing from it. I suspect each person will pick their own lesson to grab ahold of or maybe all of them ?

Monnie says

4.5 stars, actually. First and foremost, I'll describe this book as a brief autobiography of a remarkably talented and successful individual. From the first page to the last, I was captivated and amazed at what the author has accomplished. Beyond that, I couldn't agree more with his premise that "Your life is not happening to you. You are creating it...tell yourself that others control your choices and you will choose not to choose."

He should know. He and his two sisters were born with retinitis pigmentosa, a degenerative disease of the retina, which was diagnosed when he was 13 years old. By age 25, his eyesight was totally gone. Instead of bemoaning what he no longer could see, though, he concentrated on controlling his own destiny. In this book, he describes how others can do the same.

Much of that process, he says, comes with the realization that we don't see with our eyes, but rather with our brains. "Living with your eyes open and living eyes wide open are very different," he posits - and outlines how readers can follow his example. The most meaningful take-away for me, I think, is that, "You will never control tomorrow, but you can always choose whether to act today, and how."

Each chapter has a different focus. Chapter 2, for instance, deals with tackling fear in the midst of crisis (I can only imagine how terrified I'd be at the mere thought of losing my eyesight); Chapter 4 discusses the elusive line between "acceptance" and "surrender." Interspersed throughout are pearls of wisdom such as (one of my favorites), "When you assess your self-worth with reference to the judgments of others, you make a fundamental and costly mistake...you will never find self-esteem in others' eyes."

Everything is laid out in an orderly, easy-to understand fashion, although the explanations in a couple of spots were so complex that by the time I finished reading I'd forgotten what the point was (that said, keep in mind that at my grandmotherly age and keep-the-show-on-the-road Aries mentality, I tend to have the attention span of a flea). I'd also expect that outer-directed folks who believe the world is conspiring against them and there's nothing they can do to change things won't get it at all.

As for me, I found the book uplifting, motivating and well crafted. I thank the author and publisher, via NetGalley, for the opportunity to read the book in exchange for an honest review.

Mediaman says

This book is the opposite of what I thought it would be--there is nothing inspiring about it. What a major

disappointment. Lidsky's story of being a child actor, going to Harvard, going blind and leading major businesses could have been told in an inspirational way but instead the author decides to preach nonsense to the reader in long, boring chapters that sound like a college thesis instead of something for the everyday reader. Then as you get into the book you discover he has no issue with doing unethical things like lying, manipulating, and bribing. All things he learned growing up from his high-powered attorney father. Basically he comes across like a spoiled, entitled rich kid who happened to have something terrible happen to him (which is very sad) but who doesn't really deserve to publish this kind of half-cocked advice.

If you are looking for details about his time on *Saved by the Bell: The New Class* you will not get it. He does talk about the audition process but that's it. It's his claim to fame for many book buyers and they will be disappointed.

If you want to know about the process of him going blind he won't really get into it. The book is written in a mixed-up style where chapters skip around and there isn't a coherent narrative. It sucks any emotion or empathy off the pages.

If you want to feel sorry for the guy, that won't happen as you hear him talk about his multiple business failures, refusal to listen to others' warnings, how he mooched off everyone he knows (taking \$350,000 cash from his mother when he screwed up & bought a business without due diligence), and how he went belly-up on a start-up. I can't figure out what qualifies this guy for writing this book--he hasn't succeeded at almost anything he has done!

What you do get is a lot of bizarre philosophy. He doesn't believe in fear (which is stupid since fear is a natural reaction in all creatures for self-protection). He doesn't believe in criticism, claiming to set himself up as a "strong man" against it (which is a typical young adult entitlement attitude today). You will hear long, verbose, repetitive discussions about things that scared him (ironic since he claims to not believe in fear), especially the birth of his triplets. While I appreciate his stance to not terminate one of them, he goes out of his way to make sure everyone knows he supports a mother's right to kill one of the three babies inside her (he obviously IS sensitive to politically correct criticism, considering he and his wife did the opposite).

He does believe in luck BUT he doesn't believe poker is luck--he says he believes the one guy that says it's 99% skill (Seriously? And why is there even a long chapter about luck in this book?). And of course he thinks there's nothing wrong with having no integrity, and let me quote him here regarding what his dad taught him when they took Super Bowl trips without tickets: "We've scalped, bribed, schmoozed, counterfeited, begged, snuck, stretched, bent, and faked our way through." This is something a trained Harvard lawyer should be proud of?

He admits to manipulating others to get his way and that seems to be the sad message of this book: when luck throws you a lemon then find a way to get someone else to fund your lemonade stand!

This guy has a story that should be told, but he is the wrong one to tell it. And it's way too soon in his life to act like he knows what he is doing. He comes across as naive, immature, and often clueless. I feel sorry for his supportive wife, family, and friends who have all had to suffer due to his bad choices. There's probably a good guy inside but he seems blind to the fact that he's a shyster that uses others instead of depending on himself to help others.
