

# LOST IN TRANSITION

3 KEY STRATEGIES TO HELP YOU WALK  
THROUGH THE TRANSITION FROM SIGHTED TO  
VISUALLY IMPAIRED

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# FROM THE AUTHOR

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This book is designed to give you some idea of what it is like to walk the often times unfamiliar road that is sight loss. Many times, your doctor simply looks at you and says, "You are losing your sight" with no offer of support afterwards. It can feel very lonely and very confusing. It is like trying to cross a bridge you have never been to before. Only now, you are doing it with your eyes closed.

This book is NOT intended to be an exhaustive monologue on what sight loss is all about. There are so many things to discuss it would take far more pages than we have here. But, at the end, I wish for you to have found one thing: HOPE.

I hope that you will know that your life has not ended. Yes, something has ended. But, life itself has not. Be encouraged that sight loss isn't the end, it's just the beginning...


My best to you in this journey,

Derek Daniel

Life After Sight Loss

# CHAPTER ONE

ONE DAY  
AT A TIME



When someone goes through a major change in life, it can quickly become unmanageable. After all, with big change comes many smaller changes. Below is an example of how the big change of sight loss can cause many smaller changes:

## BIG CHANGE: SIGHT LOSS

### SMALLER CHANGES

- Loss of independence
- Potential loss of job
- Learning old skills in new ways (i.e. Brushing teeth)
- Coping with emotional turmoil
- Changes in relationships (spouse, kids, parents, etc.)

As you can see, sight loss is simply one of the changes happening in your life. Though it is the largest, it affects many other areas throughout your daily experience.

Think of it this way: Let's say you have a daily routine of getting up, make a cup of coffee, reading your news feed and relaxing before you start your day. Then, you shower, get dressed and drive off to work. Notice how just your morning alone has now been completely altered. You most likely won't be able to use your coffee maker without help, your morning news is very visual, shampoo and conditioner bottles often look the same and don't even get me started on driving.

And, you haven't even left the house yet! This doesn't even include work, restaurants, shopping and taking a walk down the street. While sight loss is the cause, you are most likely focused on how all the other things in your life are changing and not for the better.

This is typically where people begin to fall apart. They get very overwhelmed by all the "small changes" and just shut down. It becomes too much to deal with so they don't. But, this is a bad strategy. After all, you'll have to deal with them eventually, so why not start off a little different.

The best way to approach this is to take one day at a time. And, even breaking that day down into small, simple goals you can meet. Don't try to do everything at once because this will cause you more anxiety. Anxiety equals shutting down and that's not what you want.


## **ACTION STEP**

Choose a goal to master each day. This could be something as simple as taking a shower or learning to use the microwave. (That one is harder than you think) Choose one each day for 7 days. Let each thing be something you would normally do everyday. This way, your life can be as normal as possible while the storm of sight loss swirls around you.

# CHAPTER TWO

HAVE A SEAT  
IN THE MUD





One thing that I know about major change in life is that it brings up a ton of emotions. Sometimes these emotions can be good and sometimes they can be, well, not so good. Look at these changes below and determine how you think you would respond emotionally:

- **LIFE CHANGES**

- Moving
- Having a baby
- Getting married
- Death of a loved one
- Graduating college
- Being audited
- Empty Nesting

Depending on who you are, you most likely have a specific feeling come up when you read each of those things. Whether it is good or bad, you should deal with the emotions that arise within you.

Sight loss is a major change that most would deem a negative event in your life. After all, as we said in chapter one, you are not only losing sight, you are losing so many other things along the way.

For example, your ability to hop in the car and drive wherever you want to go. Most blind people who have lost sight say this is the hardest part. Freedom and independence cannot be underestimated. Because of this, emotions like sadness, sorrow, anger, and the like can rise up within you and overwhelm you.

While this book cannot begin to cover the toll that sight loss can take on your mental health, it is important to recognize that you will soon be dealing with feelings you may not even be aware were in you.

The important thing to do in this process is to face them head on. Trust me, it will be hard. But, it is the healthiest thing you can do. Doing things like crying, yelling and going on long, pensive walks can help you through the hard emotions.

Take a few moments to "sit in the mud." Facing the hard feelings can help you to overcome them.

*(NOTE: If you feel you cannot cope with these emotions on your own, please seek professional help from a therapist or counselor in your area. Don't take your mental health lightly.)*


## **———— ACTION STEP ————**

Tell someone you trust how you are feeling on a regular basis. Even if you aren't sure of what the feelings are, express them to a trust friend or family member. This way, not only are you getting them out, but you are inviting someone else into your heart and mind to share in your journey.



# CHAPTER THREE

GET SUPPORT  
FROM OTHERS



Losing your sight can feel very lonely. This is especially true if you have never met another blind person in your life. But, even if you have, your journey could be very different. Blindness is a spectrum and there are many different spots on it you could fall.

Another reason people feel alone is because no one around them "gets it." Plus, these people don't know how to help. They try to be encouraging with words and helpful in actions. But, this can make you feel like you are a burden and less than what you used to be. This compounds on and then you feel even lonelier.

Typically, we don't do well when we feel alone. Here are a few things that people choose to do when they feel this way:

- Retreat from others
- Isolate themselves
- React with anger
- Enter into depression
- Walk away from relationships
- And worse...

It's so easy to slip down into isolation, depression and walk away from what you know. The feeling that you are all alone in this process can be a real crushing blow to you and your mental state. And, until you feel like there is someone who understands you, it is hard to "climb out" of the hole you feel that you are in.

This is where things like support groups and finding people who have walked your journey can be so valuable. You can ask hard questions, share thoughts you might deem inappropriate and get feedback from those who have "been there, done that."

Support groups can be found locally or online. A quick Facebook search for "blind" or "visually impaired" brings up a whole list of groups that you can join. Here, you can share where you are in the journey and hear from people who may be years ahead of you or exactly where you are as well.

Whether you find a local group, an online group or just someone to act as a mentor, learning that you are not alone is invaluable in your journey of sight loss. It could mean the difference between walking away from your life and engaging in it.

## **ACTION STEP**

Do a search for blind support groups in your area and on Facebook. Take the first step and contact someone locally to see how they get together. Also, ask to join a Facebook group that will offer supportt when you need it most.

# RESOURCES

# FOR MORE SUPPORT

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I hope this information found in this eBook was encouraging to you! If you'd like continued support, please see the links below for more information. Thank you for taking time to read through this eBook and my best to you!

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*Let me be your*

**SIGHT LOSS  
COACH**

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