

Name

Professor

Course

Date

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Exploring the Soul and Living Deliberately

Since the beginning of humanity, human beings have continuously sought to understand the human mind, body, and soul. Most scientists have managed to explain biologically how the human body functions. This has enabled individuals to have deep and wide knowledge about the functioning of their bodies; hence the creation of different drugs that can cure body illnesses. However, what scientists have failed to unravel is the manner in which to explore the human soul or mind. The mind and soul are components of a human being that are incomprehensible; they cannot be measured and there is no one who can explain the ultimate desire or distaste of their own soul. The mystery of the soul often leads people to ask themselves what drives man into committing some sinister actions or extremely desirable actions such as killing themselves or other individuals or dedicating all the wealth one has to the poor. In his book *Into the Wild*, Jon Krakauer recounts the true story of an extraordinarily intelligent young man, Christopher McCandless, who after graduation decided to desert his family and friends and wander into the Alaskan terrain where he met his death. Juhani Pallasmaa's *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses* explain the relation between structural design and human senses. On the other hand, in *Is Google Making us Stupid?*, Nicholas Carr seeks to affirm that the internet technology has had diverse effects on human beings; these effects will worsen in the future. This essay will

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utilize the articles of the three authors to explain the manner in which individuals can explore their own soul and live deliberately.

The first way in which human beings can explore their own soul is by isolating themselves from the rest of the world and reading about the world and themselves. This points to the fact that individuals can seek isolation and desolation by staying away from the rest of the human population and all other aspects that relate to human civilization. In his narration, Karakauer writes, “Said he wanted to see a single person, no airplanes, no sign of civilization. He wanted to prove to himself that he could make it on his own, without anybody’s help” (205). As McCandles sought to explore the wilderness, he had no phone, no pets, and no cigarettes but he only carried books. He did not desire to see other people, neither did he carry any essentialities that human beings needed to survive with and yet he felt that he was ultimately free. At that very moment, he had an understanding of his inner soul, since there was no one and no object that could interfere with his understanding of himself. The only activity that he enjoyed doing was writing and reading the books he had carried. Just as McCandles chose to disappear in the wilderness, most human beings choose to remain in solitude to get a clear view of their feelings and thoughts. Seclusion provides time for one to reflect over actions, utterances, and experiences. This reflection is a thought process in which one can make conclusions regarding the way things happen and why they happen. Carr suggests that “The kind of deep reading that a sequence of printed pages promotes is valuable not just for the knowledge we acquire from the author’s words but for the intellectual vibrations those words set off within our minds” (Carr 73). He recognizes the importance of reading by stating that reading assists humans as it equips them with knowledge as well as allowing them to reflect extensively. Indeed, it is true that a person can read a text about a particular subject and get to understand himself or herself much better

than they did before reading the text. For instance, if one reads a text about the characteristics of intelligence, they might immediately perceive themselves as intelligent, since they find that they possess most of the characteristics in the text. This helps them to understand themselves, explore their souls, and thus, live deliberately. So, it is through isolation and reading that human beings can have time to reflect, look into their soul, develop a deeper understanding of the soul, and live deliberately.

Involving oneself in change and new experiences is another way that a person can explore one's soul and live deliberately. New experiences allow individuals to learn more about their capabilities and incapacities. An uneducated adult who attempts attaining formal education might find the experience valuable for their economic being as well as the intellectual capability as compared to an untrained adult who rejects change. In the same way, a young person who decides to live on her own will explore their soul much deeper than the one who decides to live with their parents. The main character of Krakauer's book writes, "The season of snows was preferred, that I might experience the pleasure of suffering, and the novelty of danger" (203). McCandles writes this at the beginning of his journey into Alaska. He had chosen a change of terrain from his usual way of life, so that he could experience different surroundings and expose himself to dangerous occurrences. From these words, one can understand that the narrator was a fearless person. He was not afraid of change and pain. The words portray him as a person who was desperate to explore his own soul, and he understood that it is only change and new experiences that would allow him explore it efficiently. In his essay, Carr narrates the story of a renowned writer, Friedrich Nietzsche, whose vision was failing, and he was forced to buy a typewriter. Carr writes, "Once he had mastered touch-typing, he was able to write with his eyes closed, using only the tips of his fingers. Once could once again flow from his mind to the page

(69).” Prior to buying the typewriter, Nietzsche used to write by hand; but since he was becoming blind, he had to change his way of writing, and adapt to using the typewriter, which was a new form of technology in writing at his time. Through using this machine, Nietzsche realized that his form of writing and thought had changed. This only reinforces that change and new experiences have the power to introduce people to new versions of themselves while allowing them to live deliberately and explore into their souls.

One can also explore into the soul and live deliberately by sharing their experiences with other people. Sharing thoughts, feelings, and daily struggles enables people to identify with others and discover their own peculiarities and strengths. It is true that human beings are the same, especially in the way their bodies function. For example, the process of digestion is similar in almost all human beings. However, there are other elements, such as their thinking processes, their speed of learning, and reactions to same stimulus, that differentiate people. When they interact and talk to each other, people learn that they are more capable or incapable in undertaking certain tasks. This assists them to explore their souls. Carr writes, “I’m not the only one. When I mention my troubles with reading to friends and acquaintances—literary types, most of them—many say they’re having similar experiences” (67). Carr’s experience while using both new and old technology was queer. He decided to ask his friends if they were having the same occurrences, and he found out that the experience was not unique to him alone.

Consequently, sharing information can be an insight into the human soul as one can find that they share or do not similar characteristics with others. In his article, Pallasmaa states, “Our bodies and movements are in constant interaction with the environment; the world and the self inform and redefine each other constantly” (288). Pallasmaa asserts that the regular interaction between human bodies and the environment, which includes other human beings, allows them to

understand and redefine themselves continuously. Pallasmaa believes that the environment can change the way people view themselves on a continuous basis. This proves that sharing happenings can actually increase knowledge of the soul and allow individuals to live deliberately.

Understanding of ones' soul and having a deliberate life is the ultimate goal that people desire to achieve throughout their existence. Nonetheless, many of them cease existing without discovering their inner souls, since they do not have the knowledge with the help of which they can gain this information. Krakauer's, Carr's, and Pallasmaa's articles provide one with an insight on how to understand human soul. First, individuals have to isolate themselves and read extensively. Isolation and reading allows them to have time to reflect on experiences, actions, and utterances. Secondly, they have to open themselves to change and new experiences; these highlight the strengths and weakness of a person, enabling them to discover more about themselves. Lastly, individuals can share their experiences with others. In this way, they get feedback that enables them to comprehend who they are and live according to their wishes. In the entire globe, the mystery of the form of the soul is far-reaching that those who are curious have undergone numerous and weird occurrences to get a clear understanding. However, others have given up choosing to live life in simple and efficient ways. Despite the route one takes, they have to understand that exploring one's soul and living deliberately are goals that are hard and, at the same time, easy to achieve depending on the approaches that individuals implement.

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