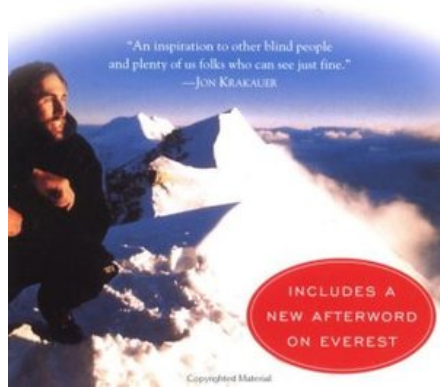


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ERIK WEIHENMAYER

A BLIND MAN'S JOURNEY
TO CLIMB FARTHER THAN THE EYE CAN SEE

TOUCH THE TOP OF THE WORLD

MY STORY



Touch the Top of the World: A Blind Man's Journey to Climb Farther than the Eye Can See

Erik Weihenmayer

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Touch the Top of the World: A Blind Man's Journey to Climb Farther than the Eye Can See

Erik Weihenmayer

Touch the Top of the World: A Blind Man's Journey to Climb Farther than the Eye Can See Erik Weihenmayer

Erik Weihenmayer was born with retinoschisis, a degenerative eye disorder that would leave him blind by the age of thirteen. But Erik was determined to rise above this devastating disability and lead a fulfilling and exciting life.

In this poignant and inspiring memoir, he shares his struggle to push past the limits imposed on him by his visual impairment—and by a seeing world. He speaks movingly of the role his family played in his battle to break through the barriers of blindness: the mother who prayed for the miracle that would restore her son's sight and the father who encouraged him to strive for that distant mountaintop. And he tells the story of his dream to climb the world's Seven Summits, and how he is turning that dream into astonishing reality (something fewer than a hundred mountaineers have done).

From the snow-capped summit of McKinley to the towering peaks of Aconcagua and Kilimanjaro to the ultimate challenge, Mount Everest, this is a story about daring to dream in the face of impossible odds. It is about finding the courage to reach for that ultimate summit, and transforming your life into something truly miraculous.

"I admire you immensely. You are an inspiration to other blind people and plenty of folks who can see just fine." (Jon Krakauer, author of **Into Thin Air**)

Touch the Top of the World: A Blind Man's Journey to Climb Farther than the Eye Can See Details

Date : Published March 26th 2002 by Plume (first published February 1st 2001)

ISBN : 9780452282940

Author : Erik Weihenmayer

Format : Paperback 368 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Adventure, Biography, Sports, Mountaineering, Autobiography, Memoir

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From Reader Review Touch the Top of the World: A Blind Man's Journey to Climb Farther than the Eye Can See for online ebook

Jennifer says

I read this book years ago after I met Erik and heard him speak. This is the story of his life - not only his climbing, but his experiences growing up that helped form him into the courageous and outstanding person he is. Everyone should read this.

John Stieven says

If you ever think you just can't do something, remember Erik -- the first blind person to climb Mt. McKinley -- and on track to climb the highest mountains on each continent! Unbelievable story of courage and determination.

Sheila says

Autobiography of a man who lost his sight as a teenager, but went on to climb mountains.

Jackie says

I liked this book, but I actually liked the parts that really had nothing to do with mountain climbing a little bit more. The book is mainly about climbing mountains, and the main guy just happens to be blind. I don't have a desire to climb mountains, and after reading this book I have less of a desire to climb mountains, if that is possible. Actually, I think it might be an advantage to climb mountains blind, because you cannot look down and think, "Yikes! The drop down is much farther down than I thought it was!" There are so many elements that make rock climbing a dangerous sport, blindness seems like a little thing compared to that. I did like reading about his experience with his first guide dog, how he adapted to working, his relationship with his mother, and the creativity of his friends. He is surrounded by some really great people. I laughed a little. I cried a little. I winced at the pain a lot! While he was climbing the mountain, I wanted to turn around and go home (and I wasn't even there)! He explains in the book how life is a mountain. I believe it is. It still does not make me want to go out and climb an actual one.

Mihai says

To be certain, this was not at all the book I was anticipating. I remember hearing the news, many years ago, that a blind man had reached the summit of Everest and had come down safely. At the time such a feat seemed simply impossible, so I filed the story in the recesses of my brain with the understanding that some

day I would take the time to learn more about it. When I finally decided to read *Touch the Top of the World*, I did so with the expectation that it be a memoir centered around that monumental experience on the highest mountain on the planet.

Instead and to my surprise, Everest was only the latest chapter to be added, as the book went to the printer (indeed, it even comes after the epilogue), in Weihenmayer's amazing saga of crushing one barrier after another. As *Touch the Top* makes it clear, Everest was only the culmination (at the time) of a life-long struggle to come to terms with a disability and, having accepted it, to push body and mind far beyond the limitations of blindness. I was impressed by Weihenmayer's deeply personal narrative, sharing with the reader intimate details about his family, as well as detailed accounts of the many experiences that made him into the confident climber and family man that he turned out.

Of course, all of Weihenmayer's successes were possible because of the unrelenting support provided by a wide-ranging network of people who understood what he would not be defined by lack of sight and were fully behind his seemingly impossible, yet groundbreaking adventures. While purely from a mountaineering perspective this book is somewhat thin (the main climbs other than Everest chronicled are Denali, El Capitan and two attempts on Aconcagua), its message is clearly that what matters most is the journey, not the destination(s).

Touch the World is an inspiring introduction to the legend that Erik Weihenmayer has become. As we know now, he went on to complete the Seven Summits, after which he switched gears and delved into other sports like ultra running, rafting and kayaking, with accomplishments that very few sighted people can match. Weihenmayer is living proof that impossible can indeed be nothing.

Jenny says

This book tells about the author, how he became blind and the obstacles he overcame to hike some of the highest mountain peaks in the world.

I found this book while cleaning out my dad's house and figured I'd like to read it before giving it away. I thought the first half to two-thirds of the book was very interesting. I liked hearing about how the author's sight gradually disappeared by his early teens, and then I really was interested to read how he coped with that in his early adulthood as he went to school and got a career and lived on his own, and even how he met his wife. I was less interested in reading the last third of the book, which went into detail of how he climbed the mountains and rocks that he was working on. It was a bit too detailed for my interest and knowledge of mountain climbing.

Kristopher Swinson says

This was a decent read that had me laughing at times. Thanks to his very graceful acceptance of his condition, he tells the story in a way that doesn't draw attention to his disability in the expected sense. He continually places it in a reducible context...which is very odd, considering that most people probably purchase the book because they don't anticipate the normalcy that he seeks. He himself admitted, offhandedly, that blind people can be as shallow as anyone else about dating (142-143)!

To the reviewer who said that his achievement in climbing was just blind luck, you missed the point he made so excellently: "people's perceptions of our limitations are more damaging than those limitations themselves" (165), and he went on to say how many factors go into success (or failure), but people are often only looking at his blindness (166-167, 205).

This achieved a favorable balance whereby it's neither a travelogue nor armchair philosophizing. (You don't feel like you're trapped on the mountain with him forever or like he's constantly repeating sightless observations on life.) I enjoyed his perceptions about summits and the life climb (195, 207-208). The autobiographical details remained fairly relevant, but not always.

Nancy Rossman says

The human part of the story, having sight and Erik's memory, and then the trouble started at a young age since he was blind at 13/14.

This poignant and optimistic tack in lieu of other family tragedy would encourage anyone and perhaps have them closing the book and more grateful of what they do have.

Mountain climbing is always mysterious to me. Especially the seven peaks with all of the history of danger and Erik wanting to do it initially is beyond courageous however, his continuing with it after his marriage left me wondering what the real objective was. His over the top detailed explanations were too much. Does the average reader really want to know all the specifics of a climb, and especially when much was repeated.

If Erik is devoted to his wife and now baby girl, I felt something amiss with all of what he continued to do afterwards. The best part of the book was the beginning, for sure.

Tif says

Mike heard him speak at a conference a few weeks ago and was very impressed. So I went out the next day to get his book.

Totally inspiring! Makes me wonder if I ever really do anything really difficult in my life? I feel like I need to climb a mountain or run a marathon or something.

I hope he writes more about the climbs he did after this book. I want to read about Everest!

Mohsen M.B says

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Fabio says

This guy is blind and has climbed every mountain on earth. I cant even fit in my pants. This book really helps you realize how lazy you are. which is why I burned it and ate some ice cream.
