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Volunteers experience 40 days of isolation in a cave – 28th April, 2021

Level 4

Could you survive without your smartphone? Could you live in a cave for 40 days? Fifteen people did just that. They took part in a project called Deep Time to see if they could totally disconnect from the modern world. Scientists examined how they adapted to basic living conditions in a cave with no sunlight for six weeks. They had no contact with the outside world. They only had their body clock to know when to wake up, go to sleep and eat.

Most volunteers enjoyed the total isolation. They wanted to stay underground longer to finish projects they had started. Deep Time's director 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."

Level 5

Could you survive without your smartphone or 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 coped with being totally disconnected from the modern world. In a \$1.9-million project, scientists examined how people adapted to drastic changes in living conditions. They put the 15 volunteers in a cave with no sunlight for nearly six weeks. They 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 enjoyed the experience of total isolation. They expressed a desire to stay underground longer to finish projects they had started. Deep Time's director 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." The participants lost their sense of time. One team member estimated his time underground to be 23 days.

Level 6

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.