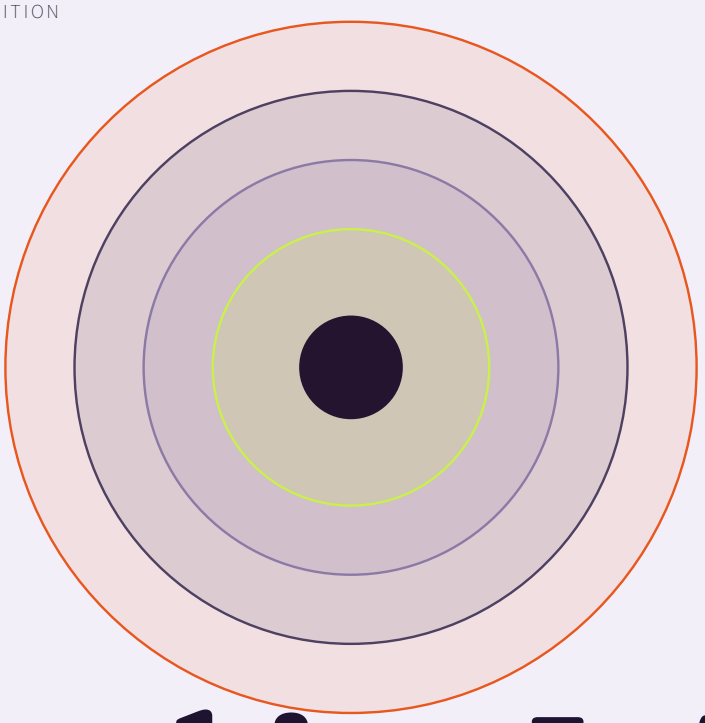


Everything Is Tuberculosis: The History and Persistence of Our Deadliest Infection

A reading of the book by John Green (2025)

1. ACTION BOOK

CONTENTS

Inside this edition

The book in a minute 4

The takeaways 5

Your action book 7

Before you go 8

PART TWO · THE ACTION BOOK

The setup checklist 10

Find the person behind the number 11

Notice the story told about an illness 12

Ask who pays 13

ABOUT THIS EDITION

This is HourLife's reading of Everything Is Tuberculosis: The History and Persistence of Our Deadliest Infection, in our own words. It is not a substitute for the book.

BEFORE YOU START 01

The book in a minute

John Green is the novelist behind The Fault in Our Stars and a co-creator, with his brother Hank, of the educational video series Crash Course. In Everything Is Tuberculosis he follows the disease from the romantic idea of consumption in the 19th century, through the sanatorium era and Robert Koch's identification of its cause in 1882, to the antibiotics that made it curable. His argument is that TB still kills more than a million people a year not because medicine lacks a cure, but because of poverty, inequality and the price of tests and drugs. The book is anchored by Henry Reider, a young patient Green met at Lakka Government Hospital in Sierra Leone in 2019, whose treatment shows what a cure demands in practice. Along the way Green covers the fight over the patents on bedaquiline, a newer drug for drug-resistant TB, and asks why the world has accepted a curable disease as normal.

Below are the 9 ideas HourLife readers vote up most, each in our words with a note on what it asks of you, and then the steps that put them to work.

WHAT READERS KEEP

The takeaways

1

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

TB is curable, and it still kills more people than any other single infectious disease, so the gap is a choice the world keeps making.

Green's central point is that the medical problem was largely solved decades ago. Antibiotics can cure most cases, yet WHO reporting again ranks TB as the deadliest infectious disease. What decides who lives is whether the test, the drugs and the support reach the person who needs them.

2

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

A statistic hides the patient, so the book keeps returning to one young man.

Green met Henry Reider at Lakka Government Hospital in Sierra Leone in 2019. Following one person through diagnosis and treatment turns a death toll into a life with a family, plans and a long, hard course of medicine. The numbers matter more once you can see who sits behind each one.

3

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

How a society explains a disease depends on who the disease is killing.

When consumption took poets and the comfortable classes, it was cast as a sign of a refined, sensitive nature. When it was tied to the poor, to migrants and to crowded housing, the same illness was read as a moral failing. Green shows that the stories we tell about sickness say more about us than about the bacterium.

4

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

The romance of consumption was a story that made a killer look beautiful.

In the 19th century the pale, thin, feverish look of a person with TB was admired, and the illness was linked to artistic genius. Writers such as John Keats died of it young, which fed the myth. Green treats this as a warning: a flattering story can keep people from seeing suffering for what it is.

5

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Before there was a cure, there was rest, air and waiting, and a whole architecture grew up around it.

Sanatoriums offered fresh air, food and long hours lying out on open balconies and porches. They also separated the sick from their families, sometimes for years. Green uses this era to show how a disease can reshape buildings, towns and ordinary daily routines.

6

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Naming the cause changed the science long before it changed the stigma.

Robert Koch announced in 1882 that a bacterium causes tuberculosis. That moved the question from who is weak to how the infection spreads. Yet blame and shame around TB outlasted the discovery, and they still keep people from getting tested today.

7

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

A cure only works if the whole course is finished, and finishing takes far more than pills.

Treatment lasts months, and for drug-resistant TB it has historically lasted much longer, with hard side effects. People need food, transport, time off work and someone checking in. When a course is cut short, the illness can return in a form that the old drugs no longer treat.

8

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Patents and prices decide who gets the newest medicine.

Bedaquiline was a major advance against drug-resistant TB, but its patents and price shaped where it could be used. Green recounts the public pressure over those patents. The lesson he draws is that access is designed by people, and people can redesign it.

9

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Once you look closely at one old disease, you start to see how much of the world it shaped.

The title is the book's argument in miniature. TB runs through fashion, literature, medicine, migration and public health, so caring about it is a way of seeing inequality more clearly. Green asks readers to treat a curable disease that still kills as something that does not have to be normal.

PUT IT TO WORK

Your action book

Do the setup steps once, then keep the habits going. The setup changes your week; the habits keep it changed after the first good one.

The download puts this whole reading and a printable action book in one PDF: the setup checklist, then a page of real calendar days for each habit, starting on the day you choose.

SET UP ONCE

- [ ] Learn the warning signs
- [ ] Ask about testing after close contact
- [ ] Read your country's TB figures
- [ ] Pick one group to follow
- [ ] Map the chain of cure

KEEP UP DAILY

- ◯ Find the person behind the number
- ◯ Notice the story told about an illness
- ◯ Ask who pays

30 days · Nov 6 - Dec 5, 2026

Part two, after the reading, prints each of these as a page to fill in by hand.

THE LAST WORD

Before you go

Pick one step from the action book and do it today. An idea from a book starts to count once it changes what one ordinary day looks like.

PART TWO

The action book

Change the setup once, then keep it up. 5 setup actions to do once, and 3 habits to mark each day for 30 days.

Nov 6 - Dec 5, 2026

Print it, or write on it in any PDF app.

SET UP ONCE

The setup checklist

Each of these is done once. Do one a day, and check it off when it is done.

- [ ] SETUP 1

Learn the warning signs

Save a note on your phone: a cough lasting more than two to three weeks, night sweats, unexplained weight loss, fever or coughing up blood.

If you or someone close to you has these, see a doctor and ask about TB.

MY VERSION DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 2

Ask about testing after close contact

If you have lived or worked closely with someone who has TB, ask a clinician whether you should be tested.

Many public health services test contacts for free.

MY VERSION DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 3

Read your country's TB figures

Spend twenty minutes with the latest WHO Global Tuberculosis Report summary or your national health agency's TB page.

Write down two numbers and one question they raise.

MY VERSION DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 4

Pick one group to follow

Choose one organisation that works on TB care or access to medicines and sign up for its updates.

One steady source beats a dozen you never read.

MY VERSION DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 5

Map the chain of cure

Use the chain on this page to name the four links between a sick person and a cure.

Pick the link you understand least and read one article about it this week.

MY VERSION DONE ON

DAILY HABIT 1 OF 3

Find the person behind the number

When a health story gives you a death toll, look for one named person's story in the same piece or a related one.

Nov 6 - Dec 5, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3	4	5	6 ○	7 ○	8 ○
9 ○	10 ○	11 ○	12 ○	13 ○	14 ○	15 ○
16 ○	17 ○	18 ○	19 ○	20 ○	21 ○	22 ○
23 ○	24 ○	25 ○	26 ○	27 ○	28 ○	29 ○
30 ○						

December 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○	5 ○	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP

DAILY HABIT 2 OF 3

Notice the story told about an illness

When you hear a disease described, ask who it is blamed on and who it is romanticised for.

Nov 6 - Dec 5, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3	4	5	6 ○	7 ○	8 ○
9 ○	10 ○	11 ○	12 ○	13 ○	14 ○	15 ○
16 ○	17 ○	18 ○	19 ○	20 ○	21 ○	22 ○
23 ○	24 ○	25 ○	26 ○	27 ○	28 ○	29 ○
30 ○						

December 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○	5 ○	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP

DAILY HABIT 3 OF 3

Ask who pays

When you read about a new drug or test, look for its price and where it is available.

Nov 6 - Dec 5, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3	4	5	6 ○	7 ○	8 ○
9 ○	10 ○	11 ○	12 ○	13 ○	14 ○	15 ○
16 ○	17 ○	18 ○	19 ○	20 ○	21 ○	22 ○
23 ○	24 ○	25 ○	26 ○	27 ○	28 ○	29 ○
30 ○						

December 2026

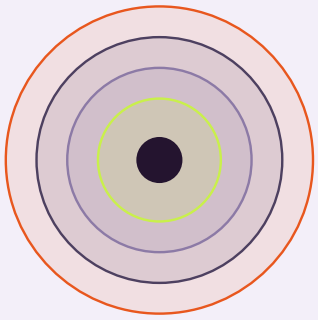
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○	5 ○	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP



We have known how to cure TB for most of a century. What is still missing is the decision to cure everyone.

HOURLIFE NOTE AFTER JOHN GREEN