

Brad Pitt says he suffers from facial blindness

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Hollywood heart-throb Brad Pitt has revealed he suffers from facial blindness. This is a neurological disorder that causes people to find it difficult to recognize people's faces. In more serious cases, sufferers can draw a blank when seeing

the face of a family member or even one's own face. The condition is called prosopagnosia. It is a little-known ailment that afflicts about 1 in 40 people. It often triggers anxiety as people feel embarrassed in social situations when they struggle to remember who people are. Sufferers tend to avoid situations in which they will meet people, and as a result become withdrawn. In extreme cases, they will be reluctant to leave their home.

Brad Pitt, 58, says he has not been officially diagnosed with prosopagnosia. He first spoke about it in 2013. He said nobody believed him when he could not recall their name. He worried that people thought he was being "aloof, inaccessible and self-absorbed". He said: "People hate me because they think I'm disrespecting them." He said he has used many strategies to get around his lack of recall. He asked acquaintances where he had met them before, but said that made the situation worse. He explained: "People were more offended....You get this thing, like, 'You're being egotistical. You're being conceited.'" He hopes speaking about facial blindness will raise awareness of it.

Sources: cnn.com / metro.co.uk / wikipedia.org

Writing

Famous people should talk more about medical problems. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

Hollywood / heart-throb / facial blindness / faces / blank / ailment / anxiety / reluctant / officially / worried / aloof / hate / strategies / lack / recall / acquaintances / awareness

True / False

- 1) Brad Pitt has revealed he's going blind. T / F
- 2) People with facial blindness find it difficult to draw. T / F
- 3) About one in forty people suffer from facial blindness. T / F
- 4) People who have facial blindness never leave their house. T / F
- 5) Brad Pitt was diagnosed with facial blindness last week. T / F
- 6) Brad Pitt worries that people think he's being aloof. T / F
- 7) Brad Pitt has tried many things to put names to faces. T / F
- 8) Brad Pitt hopes that he can raise awareness of prosopagnosia. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

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|-------------------------|------------------|
| 1. revealed | a. unfriendly |
| 2. disorder | b. apprehension |
| 3. anxiety | c. upset |
| 4. struggle | d. disclosed |
| 5. reluctant | e. approaches |
| 6. aloof | f. contacts |
| 7. strategies | g. hesitant |
| 8. acquaintances | h. disease |
| 9. offended | i. consciousness |
| 10. awareness | j. stumble |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What do you think about Brad Pitt?
- c) Do you ever draw a blank?
- d) What do you do if you forget someone's name?
- e) How do you feel if someone forgets your name?
- f) Has anyone accused you of being aloof or egotistical?
- g) How can we raise awareness of facial blindness?
- h) What questions would you like to ask Brad Pitt?