

Excerpt from Chapter 10 of *The Giver* by Lois Lowry

The man shook his head. “No, no,” he said. “I’m not being clear. It’s not my past, my childhood that I must transmit to you.”

He leaned back, resting his head against the back of the upholstered chair. “It’s the memories of the whole world,” he said with a sigh. “Before you, before me, before the previous Receiver, and generations before him.”

Jonas frowned. “The whole world?” he asked. “I don’t understand. Do you mean not just us? Not just the community? Do you mean Elsewhere, too?” He tried, in his mind, to grasp the concept. “I’m sorry, sir. I don’t understand exactly. Maybe I’m not smart enough. I don’t know what you mean when you say ‘the whole world’ or ‘generations before him.’ I thought there was only us. I thought there was only now.”

“There’s much more. There’s all that goes beyond—all that is Elsewhere—and all that goes back, and back, and back. I received all of those, when I was selected. And here in this room, all alone, I re-experience them again and again. It is how wisdom comes. And how we shape our future.” (77 – 78)

from Lowry, Lois. *The Giver*. New York: Bantam, 1993.