

- JACK: But wouldn't you say that joining a cult is a little more extreme than buying a car or having an affair?
- DIANA: Sure, but remember that a lot of people long for something more than sex and fast cars. They wonder what's out there, what their purpose is, what's beyond this life.
- JACK: And religious cults have all those answers—well, at least that's the argument.
- DIANA: Yeah, so the whole issue may be related to loneliness and longing rather than sickness.

Thinking Further

Invention is not simply answering a few questions. Instead, it is a process of exploring, discovering, and developing ideas. Ideas that emerge from initial responses should be explored even further. For example, in his dialogue with Diana and Marcus, Jack's thinking evolves:

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| Beginning of the dialogue: | Sick people join cults. |
| End of the dialogue: | Loneliness and longing, which run rampant in mainstream culture, drive people to wonder what they're missing. This is where cults come in. |

With this new understanding, Jack might come to more insightful conclusions about the perspective of people who join cults:

I guess in the eyes of a potential cult member, a cult doesn't look like a cult. I mean, a group doesn't hang a "Cult" sign on the door. They don't say, "Hey!! Join our cult!! We'll all kill ourselves next year! It'll be great!!" No. A cult is merely a group of people who offer a web of relationships and a clear purpose in life. Isn't that why people go to college even though they hate it?! Isn't that why people join the Army?? A clear sense of purpose!!! Is college a kind of cult? Is the Army?!! Here's the message of both institutions: "Leave behind everything—your family, etc. Come here. Stay with us. And . . . you have to follow our strict schedule of events. But in the end, you'll be way better off." Holy crap! We're a culture of . . . cults.

Jack's continued exploration of why people join cults has taken him into new intellectual territory. He is exploring the relationship between something he thinks is dangerous (cults) and something he thinks is normal (college, the army).

Use the following questions to further explore your topic:

- How has your understanding of the cause developed? What new idea has entered your thinking?
- Why didn't you think about this before?