

Which story's main character undergoes the biggest epiphany in your opinion why (i...

[Literature](#)



It is without question that difficult experiences and/or traumatic occurrences oftentimes serve as the causal mechanism for a complete change in the way that individual views the world. This “change” is oftentimes referred to in terms of an epiphany. The purpose of this brief analysis is to discuss the way in which this concept of Tiffany/personal growth/change, was affected within the short story “The Things They Carried”.

Whereas other stories are capable of discussing and analyzing the way in which a particular point in time allowed for a character to develop a new idea about life, the particular short story in question takes the idea of epiphany to a new level; revealing a situation in which the entire existence of life is placed within a different definition as the lieutenant seeks to distance himself from the world he has known and more closely associate with the world that is impacting him to the greatest degree. In essence, Lieut. Jimmy Cross, the leader of the squad, faces a horrific situation in which one of his team members dies a grisly death in front of his own eyes; the result of enemy action. However, rather than concluding that war is bad, evil, difficult, or unfair, Cross instead undergoes a transformation in which he realizes that even though it is impossible to bring his squad member back from the dead, potential future occurrences that might take place within the squad could best be presented if he dedicated himself completely and entirely to this “hellish” life that he currently lives in Vietnam.

This epiphany is of special importance due to the fact that most individuals that are placed within a trying situation will keep images of future happiness for past joy before their minds as a means of enduring the hardship that they face. However, Lieut. Jimmy Cross sees this approach as futile due to the fact

<https://assignbuster.com/which-storys-main-character-undergoes-the-biggest-epiphany-in-your-opinion-why-in-other-words-which-main-character-undergoes-the-biggest-change/>

that it ultimately provides the distractions that can take away from the efficiency and utility that could be provided within this particularly difficult time. As a direct result of this particular epiphany and newfound approach to the conflict, Lieut. Cross takes all the reminders of life prior to the war and burns them; both symbolically, figuratively Lee, and literally purging himself from the memory that could otherwise affect his performance and the ability that he had to lead his men in an effective manner.

The epiphany that Lieut. Cross underwent was so profound that it impacted upon the way in which he lived his life, the manner in which he understood personal relationships, and interpretation of patriotism and homeland, and an integration of the worth of self. Whereas many epiphanies in different stories are able to impact upon a certain aspect of character and/or reality, Lieut. Cross' epiphany impacted upon a variety of different interpretive levels; revealing a situation in which the young man not only saw the world in a different light, he altered his own behavior as a means of matching this "new reality" that was the result of this epiphany.