

# Tuesdays with morrie analysis essay



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Tuesdays with Morrie, was based on a true story about friendship and lessons learned. It's about a sports writer, Mitch and former sociology professor, Morrie, who is in his last days of life after being diagnosed with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) and their rekindled relationship after many years. They first met on the campus grounds at Brandeis University. This never forgotten relationship was simply picked back up at a crucial time in both Mitch's and Morrie's life. After seeing his professor in an interview on the show " Nightline", Mitch is reminded of a promise he made sixteen years earlier to keep in touch.

Since the airing of that show, Mitch met with Morrie every Tuesday to learn and understand all the wisdom and lessons of life. These discussion topics included: death, fear, aging, marriage, family, forgiveness, a meaningful life, and so on. This story took place in Morrie's study in West Newton, Massachusetts. Overall, this book was about Morrie's and Mitch's final class: The Meaning of Life. Development: Development is a lifelong process. It incorporates the biological, emotional, cognitive, and spiritual growth of people.

Our genetic make-up, culture, society, and experiences are the factors that influence our developmental growth. The developmental stages that this book touched basis on were middle adulthood and old age. According to Erik Erikson, there are eight stages of psychosocial development. This book portrays the last two: Generativity vs. Stagnation (middle adulthood) and Integrity vs. Despair (old age). A theory of this development is that the tasks accomplished in one stage lay a foundation for tasks in the next stage of development (McLeod, 2008).

The developmental issues for old age are determined by biological and personal factors. This involves adapting to the physical declines and finding meaning in life as the end of life approaches (Steinberg, p. 573). Morrie accomplished this task wonderfully. There are many physical characteristics that Morrie had to adapt to. The most significant of them all was dealing with ALS. ALS is a painful disease that attacks the muscles. Due to this disease he was unable to do the things he loved (dancing) and eventually daily activities (we often take for granted). He loses the instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs).

These include preparing meals, managing finances, going to work, and so on. He also lost his ability to do activities of daily living (ADLs), which include: eating, bathing, dressing, toileting, and being able to get in and out of a bed or chair (Steinberg, p. 554). A prime example of his lost of ADLs was when he could no longer wipe his bottom. Yet, another is when he talks about him needing assistance with his swim wear; as a result his privacy being lost. In addition to the complications that occur with the disease, the book also mentions signs of the primary aging process (gray hair).

Regardless of his failing health he found happiness, joy and even humor in it all and until the end. In the book, Morrie is in his last stage of development, integrity vs. despair. Erikson believed each period in life was a struggle between two opposing factors. He regarded this psychosocial crisis in later life as integrity vs. despair. Due to the increased declines and losses that occur in this stage, it is easy for many to resort to despair. However, the challenge is to achieve and maintain integrity, which can be done by accepting the past, present, and future (Cherry, 2012).

Throughout the book Morrie never once choose despair; instead, he showed integrity and dignity until his last breath. In the book, Morrie does not allow the disease to consume him, but rather he uses each moment to teach. The book touches basis on Morrie’s life review, which is the process by which people assess their lives, recalling and evaluating their past (Steinberg, p. 573). Through this process Morrie was able to find meaning and purpose within his life. He passed this knowledge onto Mitch when he told him “ So many people walk around with a meaningless life.

This is because they’re chasing the wrong things. The way you get meaning into your life is to devote yourself to loving others, to your community, and to creating something that gives you purpose and meaning. ” (Albom, p. 43). This is also a great example of how and what generativity is about (discussed later). Morrie’s life review leads him to feel that his life had meaning, which prepared him to face death. Overall, this stage of life’s goal is to feel at peace with oneself and the world without regrets.

On the other hand, Erikson’s model can be applied to Mitch’s middle age stage of development. This period of life’s challenge involves the struggle between generativity and stagnation. Generativity is the desire to contribute to one’s family, community, and society by nurturing and guiding the next generation. Stagnation is a sense of self-absorption and lack of meaning that results when adults focus on their own needs (Steinberg, 502). Mitch suffered from the latter, self-absorption. Mitch is a sports reporter and husband that lives a fast-paced life and is constantly working and traveling.

He is always striving for materialistic possessions. He is so engrossed in his own desires and needs that it consumes his life. An example of this can be understood when he pulls up to Morrie's house and is on the phone, but since he is so engulfed in himself he later regrets that time lost with Morrie. The book talks about some of his struggles to find meaning with his life and to change the person he has become over the years. Throughout the book, Mitch is able to change his selfish ways and begin to live a more meaningful life.

This is the period that ends self-interest. In conclusion, this book reveals a lot about life lessons and the process of development. In the book it is clear that Morrie has accomplished all stages of Erikson's model. Due to his positive resolutions to aging and development, Morrie transitioned into death peacefully (what he wanted). This story captures love, compassion, and wisdom, in which Morrie possessed. Ironically, these are the strengths that develop in the last three stages of Erikson's theory about development.

Audience: Any individual can gain something meaningful from this book. So many life questions are asked and answered throughout the book. This book would be beneficial and enlightening to many. This book can be read by an older adolescent and older. Anyone can read the book regardless of their experience. In other words, this book can be read by someone who is or might go through a stage of life taught in the book. However, this book is specifically about a young man and an old man so this appears to be the audience targeted.

A more specific audience that might benefit is one who is struggling with aging and/or death. This audience could benefit because of topics discussed and the wisdom that is being passed on. If you are someone dealing with the challenges of aging and death this book will teach you how to overcome and get at a better place within. The book teaches you not to fear, but understand we are born to die. Overall, I believe any person old or young and regardless of experience can learn a valuable lesson from the book