

Tribhuvan University

Traumatic Impact of Parental Divorce : Albom's *For One More Day*

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Letter of Approval

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Abstract

This research aims to trace the traumatic experiences of children due to the parental divorce in Albom's *For One More Day*. Its structural modality shows Charley as a trauma patient with failure character observing his traumatic condition with the idea of sense of loss at first due to the separation of parents. The reasons of trauma such as 'the sense of loss', 'role of memories' and 'Oedipus complex relationship' all are shaped due to the circumstance of parents' divorce. Charley's loose family relationship, his unsuccessful baseball career, the absence of father etc. all play the role in his sense of loss and conditions as trauma victim. Furthermore, the memory of past events and dead mother haunt him. Charley makes the discussion of suicide and goes to his mother's home to end his life in traumatic condition where he meets his mother's ghost. After this horror incident Charley is brought to the hospital from where his new mode of meaningful life begins. Thus, all the journey of protagonist's life from normal to abnormal as well as worse to good follows with his extreme experience of trauma. Through these circumstances related with family relationship blend with traumatic condition, Albom depicts that the basic root of trauma within his protagonist is due to the filial bondage and family obstacles.

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Chapter I: Trauma and its Impact

The word “trauma” is used to describe experiences or situations that are emotionally painful and distressing, and that overwhelm people’s ability to cope, leaving them powerless. Trauma has sometimes been defined in reference to circumstances that are outside the realm of normal human experience. Unfortunately, this definition doesn’t always hold true. For some groups of people, trauma can occur frequently and become part of the common human experience. “Traumatic events are extraordinary, not because they occur rarely, but rather because they overwhelm the ordinary human adaptations to life.” (Herman 133).

In addition to terrifying events such as violence and assault, relatively more subtle and insidious forms of trauma—such as discrimination, racism, oppression, and poverty—are pervasive and, when experienced chronically, have a cumulative impact that can be fundamentally life-altering. Particular forms of trauma, such as intentional violence and/or witnessing violence, sustained discrimination, poverty, and ensuing chaotic life conditions are directly related to chronic fear and anxiety, with serious long-term effects on health and other life outcomes.

Filial Bondage and Family

This research is based on Mitch Albom’s novel *For One More Day*, the story of frustration and failure of an unsuccessful baseball player Chick Benetto. In particular, it aims to trace the traumatic impact of parental divorce upon the children as well as its

reconciliation through the traumatic experiences in the text. *For One More Day* is a story of Chick's relationships with his baseball carrier and family members which explores the extreme experiences of trauma by its protagonist Chick who is called Charley too. The novel begins with the reason of suicide attempt by Chick and ends revealing all the events and happenings during his lifetimes from his childhood to death at the age of 52 which reveals the impact of parental divorces. In this sense, the entire text is based on filial bondage.

Chick from his childhood is trapped by the different ways shown by his father and mother. Father wants him to make a professional baseball player and mother wants to make him an academician. Even after the divorce of his parents he could not leave the dream of baseball though he lives with his mother. He sees glamour on baseball. As a result he leaves his study, concentrated on baseball, marries and has a daughter. Due to being fractured he could not be a professional player. He neither wants to do other simple profession nor is able to meet his dream of professional player. Charley has lost many things in his life. As a result, Charley damages all the family relationships due to heavy alcoholism and frustration. Charley even chooses the path of suicide. Thus, the protagonist is victimized by his traumatic experiences. As the novel begins, the protagonist Charley gives the clarification behind his suicidal attempts. From this point the readers easily presuppose that he is in the position of complete restlessness with frustrated and depressed world views. Gradually, all the secrets behind his condition are revealed. It is clear that he is upset through his childhood when his parents were divorced. Furthermore it is revealed that he has been suffering due to the tussle of his parents' dream about him. He neither could follow the path shown by mother nor could

meet his father's aim to make him a professional baseball player. Thus he is victimized by the wrestle of big dreams seen by mother and father.

Apart from these causes Charley is haunted by the incident of divorce of his parents. He is unaware of the causes of divorce between them. But he has faced the humiliation of his friends, neighbors and society due to being the child of divorced parents. He always dreams of the union of his parents. But it never happens. As a result, he is somehow disturbed personality since his childhood which also plays a significant role for his traumatic experiences.

Protagonist Charley's attempt to suicide clearly presupposes that he is in complete stage of frustration, depression and alienation. The description mentioned by Mitch Albom of Charley's drinking alcohol (alcoholism) clarifies that Charley is a victim of depression. Mitch Albom mentions, "After that I dranked more-ballplayers in my time always drank-but it became a problem which, in time, got me fired from two sales-jobs. And getting fired made me keep on drinking. I slept badly, I ate badly. I seemed to be aging while standing still" (5). He is depressed and alienated from his family though he has a loving mother, wife and daughter. He has a complete family. Though he could do any work to handle his family, he does not dare to do. He is much more guided by his failure baseball carrier than the matter of his family on one hand. And on the other hand he could not understand the role of mother in his life and the value of a family. There are many losses faced by Charley during the course of his life. After the death of his mother, Charley does not see any possibilities to overcome the obstacle in family relationship and carrier. As a result, he chooses the way to suicide. As the proper place to end his life,

Charley chooses his mother's home where he has spent his childhood with his mother and sister.

The family obstacle, the loss of faith and relation, the loose faith, values and ethics all are the result of Charley's predicament. These aspects in the life of the protagonist make him restless, failure, and frustrated. Mitch Albom by portraying the failure protagonist such as Charley with his story of failure, unsuccessful, frustration and depression and his family relationship too is completely damaged and again by bringing him back to normal life after the encounter with mother's ghost from the spot of suicidal attempt; tries to depict the overcome to the predicament through the self experience of trauma in his text *For One More Day*.

Divorce and Its General Causes

This research aims to trace the parental divorce as the ultimate cause of extreme traumatic experiences in this text elaborating the above mentioned issues in *For One More Day* by Mitch Albom. The failure life of protagonist Charley is the cause of his trauma victimization. As the cause or tendency of trauma, 'sense of losses' and 'role of memory' play vital role in the case of Charley. Thus this research work aims to trace these causes of trauma. The phenomenon of trauma seems all-inclusive trauma which can be defined from two approaches: first, psychoanalytic-formalistic approach and second, cultural approach. According to the first approach, a victimized subject does not display the real traumatic experience; s/he rather exposes and expresses the testimony, in a very distorted and deceptive manner due to the fear of social death. Regarding psychoanalytical approach, Freud's ideas are very much significant. In *Studies on Hysteria*, Freud is committed to the view that the "Reminiscences that cause hysterical

suffering are historical in the sense that they are linked to actual traumas in the patient's life" (186). The effect associated with the post trauma cannot be acknowledged. The amnesia that results means that the force of the effect becomes dammed up. The injured person's reaction to the trauma "only exercises a completely cathartic effect if it is an adequate reaction", they write, the past that continues to wound is the "past originally has found no outlet" (187).

Unlike the psychoanalytic-formalistic approach, cultural approach examines the undercurrents of the distorted testimonies by conceptualizing it in the network of cultural politics. In that sense, trauma brings home, the limitations of our understanding and at the same time it dislocates the so-called traditional disciplinary boundaries leading us to rethink our notion of experiences of and of communication. In a person's telling of trauma "what remains to be said is the disaster, ruin of words, demise of writing for both the speaker and listener" (Lamothe, 543).

As the strategy or structural model of this research, it traces out the protagonist as the victim of trauma first of all with the references of his failure or unsuccessful life. This step proves him as a trauma victim. After proving him as a trauma victim, this research work aims to reveal the causes of his trauma. Thus dealing with the frustration of the protagonist and tracing out all the possible reasons behind will be the second step of this project. Furthermore, this research work traces the role of trauma experiences to overcome the predicament through the understanding of family values.

Through these points, this research work justifies its hypothesis that Mitch Albom by bringing the protagonist Charley back to normal life from the extreme experiences of trauma that has nearly suicide; tries to justify that the reconciliation is possible through

the traumatic experiences. Charley Benetto with his story of failure, unsuccessful, frustration and depression and whose family relationship too is completely damaged; tries to depict the failure of American Dream and family values in his novel *For One More Day*. The book tells the story of Charley “Chick” Benetto, a former baseball player who encounters myriad problems with his career, finances, family and alcohol abuse. This leads him to become suicidal. Charley goes on a drunken rampage and decides he is going to end his life in his old home town, but when he misses the exit, he turns around driving down the wrong side of the highway causing an accident, Charley flees to his old home – his suicide attempt an apparent failure – to see his mother, who had died eight years prior.

Charley returns to his old family home, and spends one more day with his mother who appears in the form of ghost, wherein a number of previously unknown factors related to his difficult childhood and troubled relationship with his father are revealed to him. His mother assists him in resolving his issues and getting his life back on track. The day ends when Charley regains consciousness at the scene of the accident in a police officer's arms. The book's epilogue describes how Charley was inspired by his experience to quit drinking and reconcile with family, including his daughter, Maria, before his death five years later. At the end, Maria is revealed to have been the narrator of the story. She recounts his death, “Charley ‘Chick’ Benetto died last month, five years after his attempted suicide, and three years after our encounter on that Saturday morning” (195).

Author in General

Albom mostly deals with the issues of life experiences that he encountered with people, actions and events in his novels. He was a good baseball player with strong

passion and devotion toward it. That's why he has taken a baseball player as the protagonist in *For One More Days*. In *The Five People You Meet in Heaven* too the protagonist is a baseball player. For an instance, Mitch Albom wrote, *The Five People You Meet in Heaven* from the inspiration his uncle Eddie gave him. Thus, it becomes trustworthy to include the biographical evidences in this section of research paper.

An award winning writer, Albom has written screenplay for both *For One More Day* and *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*. He is an established playwright, having authored numerous pieces for the theater, including the off-Broadway version of *Tuesdays with Morrie*. It has been seen more than forty productions nationwide and several recent comedies which have been produced and performed in venues across the country. He is fond of writing fiction as he expresses in his interviews with *Publishers Weekly* in Aug 18, 2003 and from his fictions. Albom is appraised by Andrea Sachs in time that we have to think of Mitch Albom as the Babe Ruth of Popular literature hitting the ball out of the park every time he's bat.

Albom's base to write the novel comes from the story that his uncle, a blue-collav war veteran had told him. He writes with the image of Eddie in his head. He and other people have loved his uncle. But his uncle, Eddie dies thinking his life as waste. Similarly, the response to *Publishers Weekly*'s question "Did Eddie work at amusement park?" Mitch Albom says, "No, he worked as a Cab driver in factories, that kind of thing. I've always loved amusement parks, and I wanted to set the books in a place the world be a little magical. I also want Eddie to be involved with children, and what better place than amusement Park" (56). Once again Mitch Albom has chosen a simple character Charley

as his protagonist. Thus, Albom is interested to observe the failure life of commoners. He makes a person think about his/her whole life as if it is happening to him/her.

Mitch Albom deals with the theme of meaning of life in the period of depression and diversified flexibility as turning towards the religion. However, he discards this charge of being theist in his interviews with newspaper, journals. By mismatching the era's situations and circumstances with the issues that he dealt provides the rays of hope in life by showing world war and own country's attack on Vietnam, Iraq and in Afganistan. Mitch Albom finds the futility of war for the sake of humanity. So he tries to derogate the war-oriented mentality through his writings by portraying the ill effects of war on innocent people. For example in the *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*, Eddie and Tala are the victims of war. He is also searching for the meaning of life in the insecure time on every field, but finds the meaning of life to distribute others at the mouth of death of his professor Morrie Schwartz.

Mitch Albom has been highly influenced by the contemporary sociopolitical situations. As he has gone through the changes in America, he finds postindustrial America being a superpower over other countries after the collapse of cold war. It is told, "American attack on Iraq and economic depression during 1990 and its impact on people, people's feelings of depression, alienation, frustration, meaninglessness of life overwhelming during Albom's life in process" (Bokenkamp 304) .

So, to escape from that frustrated worldly reality to improve the world's deteriorated feelings of humanity he presents his novels intended towards imparting meaningful lesson in life by rejecting the ghosts of meaningless and absurdity in lifetime. He follows the trend of postmodernism's enchantment towards mystic and spiritualistic

culture by going beyond the disenchantment of modernism over religion. At the time of insecurity, he searches for the meaningful life and provides the idea of living life by pointing to the value of love, life, sacrifice and generosity. He intends to improve the life in the period of chaos and warfare.

There is the influence of his life on his works. As a rule, a writer's life is the main source of inspiration, and probably the most influential factor which defines his/her literary works. In fact, many cases it is possible to say that literary work of a writer is the reflection of his/her life, and events that occurred in it which produced a significant impact on the writer's personality, his views and beliefs. It happened to Mitch Albom, outstanding contemporary writers whose life experience is reflected in such works of his as *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*, *Tuesdays with Morrie*, and *Fab Five*. Moreover, he deals with traumatic effect of World War II through the character, Eddie in *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*.

Author in Relation to the Novel

Speaking about the works written by Mitch Albom, it is necessary to say that though they are not very numerous they are still quite interesting and noteworthy because they are closely related to the real life and authors' personal experience and feelings. In fact, they make readers feel as if the author involves him/her in his own life revealing his feelings and thoughts that disturb him as well as he raises problem he is particularly concerned with. Albom's *Tuesdays with Morrie*, which is as tragic and complicated as the real life. In this work the author recalls how the political controversies of 1950s affected his and Morrie's years at Brandeis University. Following the national withdrawal from the Vietnam War in 1973, and former president Nixon's resignation from office in

1974, Brandeis Campus, as many other college campuses national wide, was “a hot bed for political debate and protest” (Bokenkamp 304). Continuing the thread of racial tension in *Tuesdays with Morrie* is a story Morrie tells about an incident in which he had acted as a “negotiator between the University president and a group black students who felt that they were being oppressed by the school administration” (311).

Albom’s the novel *For One More Day* too is analyzed and interrupted through the various viewpoints. The first and the obvious feature of the novel is the fictional genre of a family story. The novel is shaped on the base of mother/son relationship. It also carries the family norms and values. So, various critics have connected the novel *For One More Day* with a family mechanism. In this regard, Daisy Maryles mentions:

Grief- stricken Charles ‘Chick’ Benetto goes into an alcoholic tailspin when his always attentive mother, Pauline, dies, Framed as an ‘as told to’ story, Chick quickly narrates her funeral; his drink- fueled loss of savings, job (sales) and family; and his descent into loneliness and isolation. After a suicide attempt, Chick encounters Pauline’s ghost. Together, the two revisit Pauline’s travails raising her children alone after his father abandon them. She braves the town’s disapproval of her divorce and works at a beauty parlor, taking an extra job to put money aside for the children’s education. (30-31)

Maryles focuses on the family values and mother’s hard struggle for her children after she is left by her husband. Like other text by Albom, in the novel *For One More Day* too, has attracted the attention of many critics and also received a bountiful criticism from the very year it was published in 2006. Many critics were attracted for its shocking contents

that shattered the contemporary conventions. The novel is analyzed and interrupted through the various viewpoints. Another critic Nawokta observes the text with different perspective. He has viewed *For One More Day* with gothic element. His spectacle of gothic studies takes the novel as a story of ghost. Nawokta says:

Albom narrates with finesse, particularly in Chick's wistful litany of his mother's pearls of wisdom, 'A child embarrassed by his mother is just a child who hasn't lived long enough.' If Posey's truisms may not necessarily break new literary ground, Albom deserves credit for giving her depth and complexity that transcend familiar pop culture notions of motherhood in 50s America. The gentle strumming of musical accompaniment befits Albom's brand of writing. This ghost story provides an affirming tale of moral instruction and emotional catharsis. (55)

Gothic novel deals with subline and the supernatural, the underlying theme of the fallen hero applies to the real world. All the incidents, happened in the novel, are depicted through the psychologically distracted personality of Chick. He even sees his dead mother in gothic appearance.

The text has been analyzed from various perspectives by large number of critics before. But they all have tried to limit the text with family issues. Though the text mainly deals with traumatic experiences the critics have not dared to connect it with this issue. Albom presents the traumatic worldview with the behaviors of characters and their living in severe suffering. Characters' restlessness, frustrated, depressed and anxious condition vividly picturize the traumatic vision in novel. Albom expresses traumatic condition of characters directly in the novel by. And all these frustrated and traumatic world views are

overcome through the self understanding of their plights during the course of their failure life. In particular this research aims to observe the plight, failure and frustration of Charley Benetto and his overcome through the extreme experiences of trauma.

The term “trauma” refers to problematic situations like disorder, injury and destruction caused by the psychological repression and physical destruction. Trauma becomes problematic when it is reflected in the repetitive action and is the action shown by the abnormal mind to the body. Trauma is a medical term of origin denoting a severe wound or injury and the resulting after effects. Trauma theory as a privileged category includes diverse fields with its specific focus on psychological, philosophical, ethical and aesthetic questions about the nature and representation of traumatic events. Traumatic element lies on enigmatic survival of problems and destruction what Charley goes through.

Trauma is a serious injury or shock to the body as from violence or an accident and relating to psychiatry, the dictionary defines trauma as an emotional wound or shock that creates substantial lasting damage to the psychological development of a person. Trauma has now crossed the boundaries of psychiatry and mediclinical, and has shown an increasing insistence on direct effects of external violence in psychic disorder. Trauma is defined as extremely unpleasant injury which causes us to feel upset, anxious shocked normally. Ruth Leys says: The term trauma acquired a more psychological meaning when it was employed by J. M. Charcot, Pierro Janet, Alfred Binet, Mortin Prince, Joshef Bseuer, Sigmund Freud, and other turn-of-the century figures to describe the wounding of the mind brought about by sudden, unexpected, emotional shock. The emphasis began to

fall on the hysterical shattering of the personality consequent on a situation of extreme terror or fright. (3-4)

From this reference we come to know that trauma is the result of psychological or physical torture, disturbance, unexpected and sudden emotional shock. Charley's suicide attempt presupposes him as a traumatic victim. Keeping these issues into the consideration, this research aims to trace the parental divorce, its consequences to bring the trauma upon the children as well as reconciliation of trauma in the text *For One More Day*.

Objectives, Limitation and Methodology

This research aims to trace the traumatic experiences as the result of parental divorce and its reconciliation in Mitch Albom's *For One More Day*. Its structural modality shows Charley as a traumatic figure with failure character observing his traumatic condition with the idea of sense of loss at first. After this it analyses the reasons of trauma such as the parental divorce, the sense of loss, role of memories and 'Oedipus complex relationship' with his parents. Charley's loose family relationship, his unsuccessful baseball career, the absence of father etc. all play the role of lack or sense of loss to make him trauma victim. Furthermore, the memory of past events and dead mother haunt him. Charley makes the discussion of suicide and goes to his mother's home to end his life in traumatic condition where he meets his mother's ghost. After this horror incident Charley is brought to the hospital from where his new mode of meaningful life begins which this research work aims to observe through trauma studies.

As its limitation it includes the issues related with trauma theory and in particular the historical trauma that determines external factors as the cause of trauma with its

connectivity on textual evidence since Charly's trauma is caused by external factors. Furthermore, proper library research and necessary guidelines from teacher will be included to complete this project. This work of dissertation does not go further to the irrelevant issues as well as unauthentic sources. Trauma theory, in general is its theoretical modality or methodology.

This thesis is divided into four chapters. The first introduction including general introduction of research and framework, the writer's introduction, his works and issues in relation with trauma in the first chapter, discussion of the trauma theory in the second chapter, textual analysis in third chapter. The last chapter concludes the entire research work.

Chapter II: Trauma Theory

Trauma and Its Conditions

The word 'trauma' is a medical term of Greek origin denoting a severe wound or injury and the resulting after-effects. For instance, a grave injury to the head might induce delirium or even a gradual enfeeblement of the victim. Keeping the lexical meaning into the consideration, trauma refers to the human condition of torture, suffering or mental stress. The problem of trauma is not simply a problem of destruction but also, fundamentally, an enigma of survival. It is only in recognizing traumatic experience as a paradoxical relation between destructiveness and survival that we can also recognize the legacy of incomprehensibility at the heart of catastrophic experience.

Trauma is an emotional injury or an overwhelming experience of pain. One of the most succinct and useful definitions of trauma in its psychological rather than physio-medical understandings is from Cathy Caruth. She defines trauma as "an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed, uncontrolled repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena" (11).

The term 'trauma' provides a method of interpretation of disorder, distress and destruction aroused by the psychological repression. It locates that the effect of an event may be dispersed and manifested in many forms not obviously associated with the events, scars on a social body and its compulsive repeated actions. Moreover, trauma refers to the action shown by the abnormal mind to the body. Trauma becomes problematic when it is reflected in the repetitive action. Trauma shows the direct reaction in abnormal

phenomena. The abnormality is mostly psychic but manifested in the physicality which becomes more uncommon and stressful. The stress to the mind occurs due to various causes. Thus, trauma is directly related with human conditions.

It has been few years that psychiatry has shown an increasing insistence on the direct effects of external violence in psychic disorder. This trend has culminated in the study of “Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder”, which describes an overwhelming experiences of sudden or catastrophic events, in which is he response to the event occurs in the often delayed, and uncontrolled repetitive occurrence hallucination, flashbacks and other intrusive phenomena. As it is generally understood today, traumatic disorders reflect the direct imposition on the mind of the unavoidable reality or horrific events, the taking-over-psychically and neurobiological-of the mind by an event that it cannot control. As such it is understood as the most real, and also most destructive psychic experience.

Physical and Mental Trauma

Trauma could be divided into two categories as physical and mental. Physical trauma is the pain of external bodily damage but the mental one is the internal pain faced by the survivors. Trauma theory in general talks about the psychological aspect of suffering rather than physical but it is categorized in two different categories such as psychological and cultural based on the reason of trauma. Psychological trauma refers only inner psychology of victims for their torture and schizophrenia. But the historical or cultural trauma refers to the outside causes for the traumatic experiences.

The physical trauma is taken as the response to the physical injury which depends on the degree and the suddenness of the injury and the previous physical condition of the

victim. In the case of violence, physical harm and other events like rape the victim go through the both physical and mental torture. In this connection, Kane quotes Sierz's view, "It was about violence, about rape, and it was about these things happening between people who know each other and ostensibly love each other. . . suddenly, violently, without any warning, people's lives are completely ripped to pieces (Kane qtd in Sierz 101-2)"

Physical trauma is related more to physical hurts and damages which affect vital organs leading to the serious condition of the patients. Though the body reacts against the physical stress, these defenses are believed usually to increase the tissues, functional resistance to damaging stress, but they may overact to trauma and cause early physical exhaustion. The physical trauma is medic that is serious injury or shock to the body as from violence or an injury of shock to the body from violence or an accident. Trauma theoretically is a real psychological disorder. Trauma comes with the individual feeling and subjective assessment of victims of how threatened and helpless they feel. The extraordinary events closely affect the victims and they come fundamentally as the trauma itself.

Psychological Trauma

Trauma theory as is developed after the Sigmund Freud finds the dynamic of trauma, repression, and symptom formation as the matter of hysteria. The overpowering event is revealed in the form of somatic symptom or compulsive, repetitive behavior. Studying the trauma theory related with Freud, James Berger reads that the neurotic symptoms are related with the repressed drives. He comments, "... initial theory of trauma and symptom becomes problematic for Freud when he concluded that neurotic

symptoms were often the result of repressed drives and desires than of traumatic events"

(1).

The traumatic event and its aftermath again become central to psychoanalysis. Further, the theory of trauma for Freud becomes the account for the historical development of entire culture. And he develops the elaboration of the concept of 'latency'. Berger defines the term as "a memory of traumatic events which can be lost over time but then regained in a symptomatic form when triggered by some similar events" (3).

Freud's views on trauma manifest the ambivalence regarding the significance of the historical event. Regarding this late twentieth century time, the world is indeed defined by historical catastrophe. The different types and sizes of war have led the turmoil of all kinds. The events and the usual representation of these events have in large part shaped contemporary modes of viewing the world. The world develops according to the upcoming challenges and the changes. The trauma, based upon Freudian interpretation of mind, is somehow developed by the inner psyche of mankind. The result of trauma has become a tool of literary and cultural analysis. According to Freud, the trauma analysis pays the closest attention to the representational means through which an event is remembered and yet retains the importance of the event itself, the thing that did not happen.

Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* indeed opens with his perplexed observation of a psychic disorder that appears to reflect the unavoidable and overwhelming imposition of violent events on the psyche. Faced with the striking occurrence of what were called the war neuroses in the wake of World War I, Freud is

startled by the emergence of pathological condition – the repetitive experience of nightmares and reliving of battlefield events – that is experienced like a neurotic pathology and yet whose symptoms reflect, in startling directness and simplicity, nothing but the unmediated occurrence of violent events. Freud thus compares it to the symptoms of another long-problematic phenomenon, the accident neurosis. The reliving of the battle can be compared, he says, to the nightmare of an accident:

Dreams occurring in traumatic neurosis have the characteristic of repeatedly bringing the patient back into the situation of his accident, a situation from which he wakes up in another fright. This astonished people far too little ... Anyone who accepts it as something self evident that dreams should put them back at night into the situation that caused them to fall ill has misunderstood the nature of dreams. (Freud 13)

The returning of traumatic dream perplexes Freud because it can not be understood in term of any wish or unconscious meaning, but is, purely and inexplicably, the literal return of the event against the will of the one it inhabits. Unlike the symptoms of normal neurosis, whose painful manifestations can be understood ultimately in terms of the attempted avoidance of unpleasurable conflict, the painful repetition of the flash back can only be understood as the absolute inability to avoid an unpleasurable event that has not been given psychic meaning in any way.

Freud ultimately argues, in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* that ‘it is traumatic repetition, rather than the meaningful distortions of neurosis that defines the shape of individual lives’ (17). Starting from the accident neurosis to explain the nature of

individual histories, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* can thus be said to ask what it would mean for history to be understood as the history of trauma.

Freud's comparison of the war experience to that of the accident introduces another element as well, however, which adds to the significance of this question. For it is not just any event that creates a traumatic neurosis, Freud indicates, but specifically "severe mechanical concussions, railway disasters and other accidents involving a risk to life" (18). What Freud encounters in the traumatic neurosis is not the reaction to any horrible event but, rather, the peculiar, and perplexing experience of survival. If the dreams and flashbacks of the traumatized thus engage Freud's interest it is because they bear witness survival that exceeds the very claims and consciousness of the one who endures it.

The intricate relation between trauma and survival indeed arises not, as one might expect, because of a seemingly direct and unmediated relation between consciousness and life threatening events, but rather through the very paradoxical structure of indirectness is physical trauma. In fact, Freud begins his discussion of trauma by noting the "bewildering" fact that psychological trauma occurs not in strict correspondence to the body's experience of life – threat – through the wounding of the body. Freud notes that a bodily injury "works as a role against development of a neurosis" (18). Unlike the body, however, which protects the organism by placing stimulation within an ordered experience of time. What causes trauma then is a shock that appears to work very much like a threat to the body's spatial integrity but is in fact a break in the mind's experience of time:

We may, I think, tentatively venture to regard the common traumatic neurosis as an extensive breach being made in the protective shield against stimuli. This would seem to reinstate the naïve theory of shock . . . (it) regards the essence of the shock as being the direct damage to molecular structure . . . of the nervous system, whereas what we seek to understand are the effects produced on the organ of the mind. It is caused by lack of any preparedness for anxiety. (31)

The shock of the mind's relation to the threat of death is thus not the direct experience of the threat, but precisely the missing of this experience, the fact that, not yet been fully known. And it is this lack or direct experience that, paradoxically, becomes the basis of the repetition of the nightmare: These dreams are endeavoring to master the stimulus retrospectively, by developing the anxiety whose omission was the cause of the traumatic neurosis.

The relationship between trauma and mental illness was first investigated by the neurologist Jean Martin Charcot, a French physician who was working with traumatized women in the Salpetriere hospital. During the late 19th century, a major focus of Charcot's study was hysteria, a disorder commonly diagnosed in women. Hysterical symptoms were characterized by sudden paralysis, amnesia, sensory loss, and convulsions. Women comprised the vast majority of patients with hysteria, and at the time, such symptoms were thought to originate in the uterus. Until Charcot, the common treatment for hysteria was hysterectomy. It is a study on the psychological or neurosis trauma.

Charcot was the first to understand that the origin of hysterical symptoms was not physiological but rather psychological in nature, although he was not interested in the inner lives of his female patients. He noted that traumatic events could induce a hypnotic state in his patients and was the first to as van der Kolk, Weisaeth, & van der Hart mentions, “describe both the problems of suggestibility in these patients, and the fact that hysterical attacks are dissociative problems—the results of having endured unbearable experiences” (50).

Historical/Cultural Trauma: Psychological Roots

Freud says that how soldiers react to similar war traumas depends on how far the war situation triggered prior psychic conflicts. In war, such internal conflicts, together with intense fear for his life or that of close ones, threatened the soldier's identity and hence the dizzy panic or paralysis that followed, treating such neuroses. Now the trauma is dealt with historical context since the external factors like war, holocaust, violence, separations etc. cause of trauma of human beings. Keeping these external causes of trauma into the consideration, Cathy Caruth, Jenny Edkins, Geoffrey Hartman, Tim Woods and other trauma theorists have dealt with cultural or historical trauma which traces the external factors as the causes of trauma.

Charley (Chick Benito) the protagonist gets the psychological torture and traumatic experiences due to the separation of parents and family obstacles. His traumatic experience is caused by external or socio-cultural factors. So this research aims to include the cultural trauma in references with Cathy Caruth, James Berger, Kal Tali, Dominik LaCapra etc.

Kali Tal, in *World of Hurt: Reading the Literature of Trauma*, takes an approach entirely different from those of LaCapra and Caruth. Tal is hostile to psychoanalysis and bases her views of trauma on cognitive psychology and of feminist that identifies strongly with the testimonies of rape and incest survivors. Tal's main discussion deal with recent critical approaches to the testimonies of Holocaust survivors, literature produced by American Veterans of the Vietnam War and testimonies of women survivors of incest and child abuse. Tal's major concern is the social appropriations of individual testimonies. Differing quite emphatically from psychologically oriented writers like Caruth and LaCapra, Tal argues that "the literature of trauma consists only of the writing of victims and survivors of trauma" (Berger 576). Berger defines Tal's view on literature of trauma as identity of author in relation with traumatic experience where he writes:

Literature of trauma is defined by the identity of its author. The works of the critic of the literature of trauma is both to identify and explicate literature by members of survivor groups and to deconstruct the process by which the dominant culture codifies their traumatic experience. (576)

Tal emphasizes on the individual survivor's account of trauma and her opposition to all interpretive "appropriations" that prevent her from seeing trauma in broader social and historical forms. Tal has no sense of traumatic return of the repressed, of widespread cultural symptoms and fetishes and of the role of trauma in ideology.

Kali Tal defines trauma as a life threatening event that displaces one's preconceived notions about the world; Tal stresses that the event must be experienced firsthand, and not vicariously perceived as mediated through any textual conduct. In other

words, trauma is known as threat to life of bodily integrity, or a close personal encounter with violence and death.

Certainly, the effect of trauma is profound. Trauma brings changes to the individual and s/he recognizes the experience of the integration. Kelly cites Root as saying:

Trauma permanently changes a person. It contrasts to its stressful experience, which challenges an individual's capacity to cope, trauma destroys multiple dimensions of security and exceeds the limits of human capacity to process and integrate horrible experiences into a coherent perception of self and self-in-relationship to other and the world. The disorganization created by this upheaval motivates the individual to attempt to find meaning in the experience so that she or he can reorganize the experience and integrate it into her or his perception of self, and self in relationship to others and the world. (3)

Psychoanalysis believes that crucial to recovery from an experience of trauma is the capacity and willingness to incorporate that traumatic event inside oneself as an indispensable piece of personal history and identity. The research on psychic trauma, which has been historically entwined with psychoanalytic theory, has increased in the past decade. Trauma may cause the psychological damages and such victims can be accessed by psychoanalysis.

This brief survey of trauma theory indicates some of the range of concerns that can be conceptualized under the category of trauma. It stretches from psychic life to public history, reading materials that can include romantic poetry, psychiatric histories,

accounts of sexual abuse, memories, testimonies, documentaries, the symptoms, silences, omissions and so many others in national histories. Trauma theory can be understood as a place where different critical approaches converge. In a way, it is a product of another of those periodic crises about the function of criticism in society. Trauma theory tries to turn criticism back toward being an ethical, responsible, purposive discourse, listening to the wounds of the other. But if it is truly to do this, this point of convergence also needs to be the start of divergence, of an opening out of theory to wider contexts. Luckhurst states that "trauma is intrinsically multidisciplinary" (506).

Cultural Trauma

Cultural trauma seeks the cause of trauma as the external factors. In this trauma certain social, cultural or historical incidents or events make the victim traumatic. Historical or cultural trauma is developed during and after the First World with the experience of war victims in post traumatic experiences. Cathy Caruth states that trauma as the limit of knowledge is a continuation of the Yale project. In its most general definition trauma describes an overwhelming experience of "sudden of catastrophic events, in which the responses to the event occurs in the after delayed and uncontrolled repetitive occurrence of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena" (Caruth 181).

The experience of the soldier faced with sudden and massive death around him, for instance, who suffers this sight in a numbed state, only to relive it later on in repeated nightmares, is a central and recurring image of trauma. When traumatic experience takes place, the body and mind are found in numbed state. In such Post- Traumatic Stress Disorder occurs. Now, the phenomenon of trauma has seemed all inclusive. Trauma can be defined from two approaches: first, psychoanalytic-formalistic approach, second, cultural approach.

The trauma theory has aroused a tremendous and vivid interest among the cultural and literary theorists. The reason behind why trauma theory has begun to draw the attention of theorists pushes us to look at popular culture and mass media obsessed by repetitions of violent disaster. James Berger says it has become popular because of:

The successions of Die Hards, Terminator, and Robocops as well as Nightmares on Elm street, disease and epidemic films, and now the return of the “classic” disaster films and of twisters and turbulence and the repeated sequence of mini-apocalypses within each films; at “real life” cop shows: and at the news itself, that never exhausted source of pure horror.
(571)

Thus, in these days there are horror-inspiring representation of violence and disaster in books, films and TV serials which have interested the critics who have felt the need to study Trauma theory because these events leave a great mental shock in readers and viewers.

Relating to the Medic, the *American Heritage College Dictionary* defines trauma as “a serious injury or shock to the body, as from violence or an accident”, and relating to psychiatric at the dictionary defines trauma as “an emotional wound or shock that creates substantial lasting damage to the psychological development of a person” (1439). Trauma may be in the form of natural and technological disasters, war or individual trauma.

While trauma is studied in relation with each other’s experience, it captures the human sentiments and attachment with each other. Judith Herman asserts:

Traumatic events call into question basic human relationships. They breach the attachments of family, friendship, love, and community. They

shatter the construction of self that is formed and sustained in relation to others. They undermine the belief systems that give meaning to human experience. They violate the victim's faith in a natural or divine order and cast the victim into a state of existential crisis. (51)

For Herman trauma is connected with human feeling and attachment. Judy Kelly views the psychiatric types of trauma as the emotional wound which hampers the psychological development of a person. He writes: "an emotional wound or shock that creates substantial lasting damage to the psychological development of a person. The emotional trauma occurs when the psychological pain of traumatic events involves damage or threat to an individual's psychic integrity or sense of self" (1).

Geoffrey Hartman opines that trauma study is closely linked to a specific ethical or socio-cultural tension which arises from an awareness of the persistence of violence in a culture that no longer condones martial virtues of war. Various stress-related disorders may result from the trauma experience such as attachment disorders, conduct disorders, and dissociate reactions, eating disturbance. Trauma effects may also be evidenced as multiple personalities, paranoia, anger, and sleep problem, and difficulty trusting people and difficult relationships which captures the issue of attachment.

The mitigation of trauma is nonetheless recognized so acted out, is a requirement or precondition of working through problems. Generally, acting out and working through are intimately linked but analytically distinguishable processes. When he shows such intrusive link and analytical distinction between acting out and working through, LaCapra argues:

That a basis of desirable practice is to create conditions in which working through, while never fully transcending the force of acting out and the repetition, compulsion, may nonetheless counteract or at least mitigate it in order to generate different possibilities a different force field in thought and life, notably emphatic relations of trust not based on quasi- sacrificial processes of victimization. (717)

LaCpra proposes that “trauma should be seen as raising the question of identity, rather than simply finding an identity” (86). He implicitly suggests that a good piece of traumatic literature, instead of constructing an ideological edifice of identity politics, should help highlight the ways through which surrender to such a politics can be avoided. In order not to let the real traumatic experiences of traumatized subjects be opened the government uses many strategies to make their experiences remain under shadow.

To justify the same fact Jenny Edkins in his “Introduction: trauma, violence and political” talks about the reckoning that comes in the aftermath of a war or catastrophe is over, he says that the dead and the missing are listed, families grieve and comfort each other, and memorials are erected. If it is a war that has been won, commemoration endorses those in power. Victory pervades remembrance ceremonies and war museums "tale of glory, courage and sacrifice" (Edkins 1).

But the combatants who return from the battle-field tell the different tale of plight and predicament. Survivors are subdued, even silent. They cannot forget and some are "haunted by nightmares and flashbacks to scenes of unimaginable horror" (Edkins 1). In their dream they relive their battlefield experiences and awake again in sweat. Edkins opines that trauma stems "from this period and from an attempt to understand why

traumatic events are re-lived time and again by survivors" (2). Edkins further supports his opinion:

Events that give rise to what we categorize today as symptoms of trauma generally involve force and violence. Often this is a threat to those people involved, their lives and integrity, as in rape, torture or child abuse; sometimes it also involves witnessing the horrific deaths of others, for example in war time combat or in concentration camps. The victim of trauma feels they were helpless in their enforced encounter with death violence and brutality. (3)

Edkins focuses on the practices of trauma and memory. He argues, "Trauma can be very much influenced by dominant views that are by the state" (11). In his discussion of practices of trauma, Edkins says that after traumatic events, there is a struggle over memory. For him, some forms of remembering can be seen "as ways of forgetting: ways of recovering from trauma by putting its lesson to one side, refusing to acknowledge that anything has changed, restoring the pretence" (16). Trauma in this sense is the result of the attachment of human feeling with regard to their lost relatives and nearest one. It gives a kind of sense of loss to the trauma victim which is the major feature of attachment and bondage as the major cause of trauma.

Chapter III

Traumatic Impact of Parental Divorce in Albom's *For One More Day*

The researcher aims to explore the issue of reconciliation through the traumatic experiences in Mitch Albom's novel *For One More Day*, the story of destruction, alienation, frustration and failure of its protagonist Chick Benetto who is called Charley. Albom presents the protagonist Charley who is completely alienated from his family as well as has faced the failure baseball career. His unsuccessful journey of life leads him to the heavy alcoholism and further to the mentality of suicide with extreme experiences of trauma. Through these points we claim that Charley is a victimized personality with failure life. His disturbed condition is analyzed with his traumatic experiences.

At the beginning of the novel the protagonist Charley gives the clarification behind his suicidal attempts. Charley reveals, "I tried to kill myself, right" (3). From this point the readers easily presuppose that he is in the position of complete restlessness with frustrated and depressed world views. Gradually, all the secrets behind his condition are revealed through Charley's narration. It is clear that he is upset through his childhood when his parents were divorced. Furthermore, it is revealed that he has been suffering due to the tussle of his parents dream about him. He neither could follow the path shown by mother nor could meet his father's aim to make him a professional baseball player. Thus, he is victimized by the wrestle of big dreams seen by mother and father.

Anyway at the end of the text, Charley is able to return to common life after his long traumatic experiences. Keeping all these issues, this research aims to trace the reconciliation through the extreme traumatic experiences in this text elaborating the

above mentioned issues in the text *For One More Day*. The failure life of protagonist Chick Benetto is the cause of his trauma victimization. As the cause or tendency of trauma, 'sense of losses' and 'role of memory' play vital role in the case of Charley. Thus this research work aims to trace these causes of trauma. Furthermore this research work tries to show the overcome of trauma through its extreme experiences after the encounter with mother's ghost. Protagonist Charley's encounter with his mother's ghost is possible due to his traumatic condition because in normal condition people never encounter and communicate with ghost.

Mitch Albom's protagonist Charley Benetto is completely distrusted. The predicament of this protagonist Charly defines him as a result of extreme torture, depression, frustration and his unsuccessful career of life. Thus, charley Benetto is a broken man. His life is destroyed by alcohol and regret. He loses his job. He leaves his family. He hits rock bottom after discovering he won't be invited to his only daughter's marriage. Finally he decides to take his own life.

Mitch Albom's protagonist Charley Benetto is completely traumatic personality. The predicament of this protagonist Charly defines him as a result of extreme torture, depression, frustration and his unsuccessful career of life. Thus, Charley Benetto is a broken man. His life is destroyed by alcohol and regret. He loses his job. He leaves his family. He hits rock bottom after discovering he won't be invited to his only daughter's marriage. Finally he decides to take his own life.

At the beginning of the text protagonist is in complete restlessness. The causes of his suicide attempts show his plight as traumatized personality. Mitch Albom writes, "Let me guess. You want to know why I tried to kill myself. You want to know how I

survived. Why I disappeared. Where I've been all this time. But first, why I tried to kill myself, right?"(3). Thus, the protagonist clarifies the cause of his intention of suicide. Furthermore, Albom mentions, "The truth is, there is no line. There's only your life, how you mess it up. And who is there to save you" (3).

Charley furthermore gives the detail of his journey to his mother's house to commit suicide, at midnight. On the way he is drunk. He narrates:

Money become problem; Catherine and I fought constantly about it. And over time, our marriage collapsed. She grew tired of my misery and I can't say I blame her. When you're rotten about yourself, you become rotten to everyone else, even those you love [. . .] I left my family shortly thereafter-or they left me. (5)

The description mentioned by Mitch Albom of his drinking alcohol (alcoholism) clarifies that Charley is a victim of depression. Frustration and depression inherent in protagonist after his failure as a baseball career is reflected in his alcoholism. These all are the result of his traumatic experience of unsuccessful life which further leads him to the destruction of his family divorce with his wife Catherine. Thus, these consequences lead Charley to the alienation and isolation.

Times and again Charley mentions about suicide attempt. Albom writes, "And one night, in early October, I decided to kill myself"(6). Similarly, he talks about frustrated life and alcoholism frequently. He mentions, "Apparently. Through my drinking, depression and generally bad behavior, I had become too great an embarrassment to risk at a family function" (6). All these references justify Charley as frustrated, depressed and

alienated personality. To deal with his destructive part of his life, it is better to take references from trauma.

The day he plans to kill himself is the day of his daughter's marriage. Charley is not called in the marriage ceremony. His negligence by his family members appears as an ultimate cause of sudden psychological torture. This sudden, unexpected incident makes him emotional sock.

Charley is mentally and psychologically weak. Sudden shock of not inviting in daughter's wedding leads him more to the alienation and frustration and depression. Further, he makes his mind to suicide attempt. Then he moves to his mother's home where he had spent his childhood with his mother and sister. Charley on the way faces an accident as well as meets his mother's ghost in hallucination. Albom writes, "Now, when I say I saw my dead mother, I mean just that. I saw her. [. . .] It's crazy. I knew. You don't see dead people" (24). Following references, when Charley Bentto sees his mother's ghost while he is trying to finish himself in his old house, further justifies him as a victim of traumatic experience, "I have given it all the thought that you are probably giving it right now; a hallucination, a fantasy, a drunken dream, the mixed up brain on its mixed up way. As I say, I don't expect you to go with me here" (24).

The terms 'hallucination' 'a fantasy' 'a drunken dream', 'mixed-up brain' all refer the traumatic experience of protagonist. He sees the ghost of his mother. This encounter with his mother itself presupposes protagonist as a mentally disturbed personality. In normal condition man does not see the ghost generally. This narration of Charley justifies his mental disillusionment. Ahead with the development of the plot, Charley communicates with the ghost of mother. This encounter with mother and talking with her

reveals all the hidden realities inherent as mysteries in protagonist's life. All these events and incident occurs in magical and mystical way because of the psychological disturbance of protagonist. Charley's encounter with his mother's ghost is itself the result of his extreme experience of hallucinations. Hallucination itself is the result of extreme experience of trauma. The hallucination too is a part of traumatic experiences. For her the traumatic victim may experience the horror dream like circumstances, events in his psychological disturbance. All such incidents are result of extreme hallucination. Charley's hallucination and encounter with ghost is also the result of his traumatic experience.

The protagonist's suicidal feeling is enough to denote him as a frustrated personality. When the failure or the feeling of lose is in extreme position, people try to kill themselves. In this situation there is no hope, no optimistic vision. There is only the sense of lose. Novel begins with the narrator or protagonist Charley's description that why he is trying to take his own life. Then he reveals all his loose family relationships. He mentions that how he is alienated from his family members. Albom mentions, "The truth is, there is no line. There's only your life, how you mess it up. And who is there to save you" (3). Charley furthermore gives the detail of his journey to his mother's house to commit suicide, at midnight. On the way he is drunk, the description mentioned by Mitch Albom of his drinking alcohol (alcoholism) clarifies that charley is a victim of depression. Mitch Albom mentions, "After that I dranked more-ballplayers in my time always drank-but it became a problem which, in time, got me fired from two sales-jobs. And getting fired made me keep on drinking. I slept badly, I ate badly. I seemed to be aging while standing still" (5). Frustration and depression inherent in protagonist after his

failure as a baseball career is reflected in his alcoholism. These all are the result of his traumatic experience of unsuccessful life which further leads him to the destruction of his family divorce with his wife Catherine. He narrates:

Money become problem; Catherine and I fought constantly about it. And over time, our marriage collapsed. She grew tired of my misery and I can't say I blame her. When you're rotten about yourself, you become rotten to everyone else, even those you love. One night he found me passed out on the basement floor with my lip cut cradling a baseball glove. I left my family shortly thereafter-or they left me. (5)

Thus, these consequences lead Charley to the alienation and isolation. His isolation, and contact less life with his family member leads him toward the traumatic situation in one hand and this isolation in the other hand classifies Charley as a traumatized figure.

Gradually, protagonist Charley moves to alienated life style. He moves to another apartment. He breaks all the connection with his family members and friends. Charley reaccounts all the incidents one by one on the day of his suicide attempt. All his alienations and lonely life reflects his depression. Mitch Albom writes reflecting the failure life of Charley is reflected in these lines:

I moved to an apartment. I grew ornery and distant. I avoided anyone who wouldn't drink with me. My mother, had she been alive, might have found a way through to me because she was always good at that, taking my arm and saying. [. . .]. But she wasn't around, and that's the thing when your parents die, you feel like instead of going into every fight with backup, you are going into every fight alone. (5)

Times and again Charley mentions about suicide attempt, “And one night, in early October, I decided to kill myself” (6). Time and again he talks about frustrated life and drunkardness such as “Apparently. Through my drinking, depression and generally bad behavior, I had become too great an embarrassment to risk at a family function” (6).

Following references, when Charley Bentto sees his mother’s ghost while he is trying to finish himself in his old house, further classify him as a victim of traumatic experience, “I have given it all the thought that you are probably giving it right now; a hallucination, a fantasy, a drunken dream, the mixed up brain on its mixed up way. As I say, I don’t expect you to go with me here” (24).

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Ahead with the development of the plot, Charley communicates with the ghost of mother. This encounter with mother and talking with her reveals all the hidden realities inherent as mysteries in protagonist’s life. All these events and incident occurs in magical and mystical way because of the psychological disturbance of protagonist. “This is a story about a family, and as there is a ghost involved, you might call it a ghost story. But every family is a ghost story. The dead sit at our tables long after they have gone” (Preface). Through these references we could conclude that protagonist Charley might be mentally disturbed personality. A normal people could not see a ghost, if man is in

normal situation he could not talk or spend hours with ghost as done by Charley. All the incidents and encounter with ghost is the result of hallucination. Furthermore, the death of mother haunts Charley. Albom mentions the event of the death of Charley's mother:

I broke down I fell to my knees, crying, the wet grass staining my pants [. . .] After the funeral I got so drunk I passed out on our coach. And something changed. One day can bend your life, and that day seemed to bend mine inexorably downward. My mother had been all over me as a kid-advice, criticism, the whole smothering mothering thing. These were times I wished she would leave me alone. (4)

Sense of loss is one of the major causes behind the predicament of the protagonist Charley. Charley misses so many valuable things, parts of his life as well as nearest and dearest one. The text itself goes further with description of the reason behind his suicide attempt this effort to kill himself presupposes his traumatic condition revealing the reason of his loneliness due to the death of his mother.

Sense of Loss or Absence of Family Love and Trauma

The protagonist is badly haunted by the loss or absence of his mother. At first he doesn't recognize the importance of mother when both mother and son are together. He leaves his mother running after his own idea and dream. But later, after missing mother he realizes that he has lost something important in his life which leads Charley to the path of suicidal attempt. Further to denote the mother's death as a major issue of sense of loss and Charley's restlessness, Mitch Albom notes these lines:

But then she did. She died. No more visits, no more phone calls. And without even realizing it, I began to drift, as if my roots have been pulled,

as if I were floating down some side branch of a river. Mothers support certain illusions about their children, and one of my illusions was that. I liked who I was, because she did. When she passed away, so did the idea [. . .] Mother's death is the turning point of the text itself starts with their issue. A year after my mother died, I did the dumpiest thing. (4)

Departure of mother badly traumatizes Charley. While he returns his old house to commit suicide, he sees his dead mother. Even in his restlessness or mental disorder he sees his mother's ghost, talks with it. Absence of his mother as a cause of predicament is justified through the Charley's encounter with mother's ghost. Mitch Albom foregrounds, through Charley's narrations; "Now when I say I saw my dead mother, I mean just that. I saw her. [. . .] she didn't say a word. She just looked at me" (24). Charley wants to call his mother but due to the extreme hallucination he can't bring out sound. Albom writes, "My brain wanted to shout her name but there was no sound from my throat" (24). Keeping all these issues in consideration we can claim that the sense of loss of his mother causes the predicament of the protagonist.

There is loss in many aspects of Charley's life. As novel begins he has just lost his mother. But, Albom narrates the story in flashback technique. It is clearly revealed that Charley has lost many things in his life. He has lost his father in his childhood. He has lost his academic and baseball career both when he has grown up. He has lost the smooth relationship with his mother, wife and other relatives. So Charley has victimized by the sense of loss.

About the plight, failure and complete restlessness of protagonist Charley its better to connect it with traumatic theory related with loss. It justifies Charley as a failure

character with traumatic experiences. When absence is converted into loss, one increases the likelihood of misplaced nostalgia or utopian politics in quest of a new totality or fully unified community. When loss is converted into absence, one faces the impasse of endless melancholy, impossible mourning, and interminable aporia in which any process of working through the past.

Absence of something or someone is converted in to loss. The absence or loss is memorized in nostalgic sense. It makes the victim of loss thinking that his/her loss as if some utopian or valuable. The complete sense of loss or absence makes the victim more melancholic and mourning. Loss is often correlated with lack, for as loss into the past, so lack is to the present and future. A lost object is one is that may be felt to be lacking, although a lack need not necessarily involved a loss. Lack nonetheless indicates a felt need or deficiency; it refers to something that ought to be there but is missing.

The past is misperceived in terms of sheer absence or utter annihilation. Something of the past always remains, if only as a haunting presence or revenant. Moreover losses are specific and involved particular events, such as death of loved ones on a personal level or on a broader scale, the losses brought about by apartheid or by the holocaust in its effects on Jews and other victims on the Nazi genocide, including both the lives and the cultures of affected groups. The loss might have different varieties. Any way loss victimized the people. The sense of loss plays the vital role to drag the experience to the destruction which Charley faces in his life.

Mitch Albom has moved his plot with flashback technique. It begins with reason behind the suicide attempt of a middle aged protagonist Charley. Charley memorizes the event of his mother's death and his absence in her eleventh moment. He moves to his

mother's home where he had lived with his mother and sister as a family after the divorce between his parents. He is intoxicated, mentally disordered and faced an accident on his way. In his home, he encounters with the ghost of his mothers. Mother's ghost reveals his entire family story, which gives details about Charley's traumatic experience since his childhood due to the absence, loss separation, conflict or lack in different aspects, things and levels.

The developed narration reveals that there had been an absence of his father since his childhood after the divorce between his parents. The divorce or separation between parents has played the vital role for the development of predicament since the childhood of Charley. The references of divorce or separation could be noted as mentioned in the text. Albom writes; "Still, if that was the day divorce became familiar, I remember distinctly the day it became abhorrent" (68).

The divorce of parent's causes the protagonist loses his father. The divorce leads the protagonist to the alienation as well as hampers upon their social reputation. After divorce of parents, Charley memorizes them together as "Apparently, that was only as long as my father's big hands were wrapped around her. Once she was divorced freed of his grasp, other woman did not want that charm anywhere near their husbands" (74).

Narration provides details that why this mother handled family faced the social and moral obstacles due to being single after divorce. It furthermore gives the feeling of sense of loss or absence to the protagonist Charley which further leads him towards the traumatic situation. Albom writes:

Thus my mother lost all of her friends. She might as well have the plague.

The card games she and my father used to play with neighbors finished [. . .

] In the fourth of July, you could smell charcoal everywhere yet no one invited us to their cookout. At Christmastime, you would see card in front of houses and mingling adults visible through the bay windows. But my mother would be our kitchen, mixing cookie dough. (74)

The absence or loss of father brings drastic change in family. Mother Pauline “Posey” should change her profession from nursing to a beautician, because of changed behavior from senior doctor as being a divorce woman. Charley narrates, “May be you are wondering how my mother came to be a hairdresser. As I mentioned, she had been a nurse, and she truly loved being a nurse. She had that deep well of patience to carefully dress bandages, draw blood, and answer endless worried questions with upbeat reassurances” (81). Protagonist faces the loss of his father, furthermore, he faces the loss of the mother’s profession as a nurse. Narration develops,

‘Did they let you out of work early?’ Roberta asked. ‘Yes sweetie, something like that’ she sniffed. [. . .] I lifted my head and looked straight at her. What I saw, I don’t think I had ever seen before. My mother looked lost I would later learn that she had been fired from the hospital. [. . .] some staff members felt that she was too much of a distraction to the male doctors, now that she was single. (83-84)

Family loses the father. Mother loses the respective job of nursing and starts or working as a beautician. This shift in profession due to loss of something further makes Charley alienated, lost, frustrated and beyond the social respect. Charley narrates; “But loss is loss and I knew that look because I’d worn myself. I hated her for having it. I hated her for being as weak as I was” (84). Furthermore, Charley reveals; “It was true, as

a teenager, I had pushed my mother away. I refused to sit next to her at movie. I squirmed from her kisses. I was uncomfortable with her womanly figure and I was angry that she was only divorced woman around” (89).

Charley is unwarned about the truth behind the separation between parents. He is just haunted by his father’s departure from home. He sees his home incomplete without father. Father’s absence becomes one of causes behind the development of tension in a teenager’s psychology. As a result Charley slowly starts hating his mother Pauline. This hatred towards his mother leads the protagonist to the path of depression, frustration, incomplete and something lacking as well as depressed. Thus, this absence of his father makes protagonist, traumatic. Following lines reveal the protagonist's quest of unity from the absence and separation:

I used to dream about finding my father. I dreamed he moved to the next town over, and one day I would ride my bike to his house and knock on his door and he would tell me it was all just a big mistake. And two of us ride home together, me on the front, my dad paddling hared behind and my mother would run out the door and burst into happy tears. (111)

Both Charley and his sister Roberta feel the lack of their father. Both of them are victimized by the absence of father. In one hand, the absence of father leads the protagonist toward rootlessness. On the other hand, they feel humiliated before the neighbors. About the absence of father, Charley narrates, “She was fifteen. I was twenty. She had no idea about my father [. . .] She wanted my mother happy. I wanted her to stay the same. It had been nine years since that Saturday morning when my mother’s crushed the corm puffs in the in the palm of her hand. Nine years since we’d all been a family”

(127). Impact of divorce of parents upon teenager could be denoted through the following references from the text:

In college, I had a course in Latin, and one day the word “divorce” came up. I always figured it came from some root that meant divide.” In truth, it comes from “divertere” which means “to divert”. . . I believed that all divorce dose is divert you, away from everything you thought you knew and everything you thought you wanted and steering you into all kinds of other stuff, like discussion about your mother’s girdle and whether she should marry someone else. (128)

Charley needs his father for support in his activities like providing inspiration for baseball carrier. The dream of being professional player is filled by his father in Charley’s mind. As a result, Charley misses his father a lot. The lack or absence of father is revealed in the event of his first shaving while Charley is fifteen years old. Charley narrates;

I am fifteen and, for the first time, I need to shave [. . .]. My mother calls me to the bathroom one night after Roberta is asleep. She has purchased a Gillette safety Razor, two stainless-steel blades and a tube of Burma-shave cream. ‘Do you know how to do this?’ ‘Of course,’ I say. I have no idea how to do it. ‘Go ahead,’ she says. I squeeze the cream from the tube. I dab on my face. ‘You rub it in,’ she says. I rub it in. I keep going until my cheeks and chin are covered. I take the razor. ‘Be careful,’ she says. ‘Pull in one direction, not up and down.’ ‘I know’, I say, annoyed. I am

uncomfortable doing this in front of my mother. It should be my father she knows it. I knew it. Neither one of us says it. (95)

These lines clarify the absence of father faced by Charley. Charley as a grown up boy feels same with his mother's instruction of saving. Apart from father Charley has lost his wife Catherine. That's why, he calls her 'ex-wife'. The conversation with his ex-wife after his decision of self killing reveals the worst relationship between them.

Charley loses all the family members, family relationships, homely environment. As a result Charley is not called in the marriage ceremony of his only daughter Maria. These all lost, absence, separation and lack further play vital role in the development of protagonist full of restless, lonely and worthless. Charley narrates; "At that moment, I felt lonelier than I'd ever felt before, and that loneliness seemed to squat in my lungs and crush all but my most minimal breathing. There was nothing left to say. Not about this. Not about anything" (10).

This worst relationship of Charley with his family members makes him complete restless, disturb, mentally weak, disillusioned and full of tortured. From his childhood, he has been traumatized but its climax comes after his negligence in his daughter's ceremony. After the marriage of his daughter, Charley makes a strong decision of suicide. His mental disturbance as a traumatize personality is revealed through these lines:

Later I went back to my apartment and drank some more. I knocked over furniture. I wrote on the walls. I think I actually stuffed the wedding photos down the garbage disposal. Somewhere in the middle of the night I decided to go home, meaning Pepperville Beach, the town where I grew up. [. . .] I went to the bedroom and took a gun out of the drawer. (11)

Thus, protagonist Charley is in complete restlessness due to the strong feeling of sense of loss. It leads him to the memory of his childhood. As remarked by La Carpa, Charley is too traumatized by the absence or sense of loss when nostalgia plays most dominant role in his predicament. His departure toward his mother home to kill himself clarifies it. In this regard Mitch Albom writes, “The city was quiet, the lights were blinking yellow, and I was going to end my life where I began it” (11).

Absence appears in all societies or cultures, yet it is likely to be confronted differently and differently articulated with loss. In term of absence, one may recognize that one cannot lose what one never had. With respect to the critique of foundations, one may argue that absence (not loss) applies to ultimate foundations in general, notably to metaphysical grounds (including the human being as origin of meaning and value. Charley has been victimized by the loss he has faced in different level.

Similarly, Memory, remembrance of past or nostalgic views about the past is another cause of traumatic circumstance. Role of memory in the course of trauma is clearly discussed by the trauma theorists. Protagonist Charley too is haunted by the memories of the past. All his losses are revived through the memories. About the role of memory to make him traumatized.

Memory is the process of faculty which recollects the past events, happening, histories. It is nostalgic because it recollects the things which are lost in present while memory victim is remembering. Mitch Albom has mentioned the plot in flashback narrative. His protagonist Charley recounts all the past events of his family life, career etc. randomly. Thus the memory has played the most dominant role of narrative as well as it is taken one of the major causes of protagonist’s predicament.

Memory and Trauma memory become not only a subjective internal construction of past events, but also a necessary imaginative component. It tells a larger collective history and develops personal identities that defy attempts to forget and to bury the ethical representation of the past, and literature. It functions as a mechanism for collective memory which opens of the past. It can act ethically by resisting fixed narrative. All these signs reflect him as a distressed and frustrated personality. Protagonist Charley too goes through similar experiences.

The protagonist as well as narrator of the text Charley goes ten years back to the event of his mother's death and funeral. It is the memory of his past. Memory and remembrance play the vital role to create the traumatic situation upon the experience. Following evidences clarify the nostalgic condition about the past faced by Charley.

Looking back, I began to unravel the day my mother died around ten years ago. I was not there when it happened, and I should been so I lied. That was bad idea. A funeral is no place for secrets. I stood by her gravesite trying to believe it wasn't my fault [. . .] and then my fourteen year - old daughter took my hand and whispered, I'm sorry you didn't get a chance to say good - bye, and that was it. I broke down. I fell to my knees, crying, the wet grass staining my pants. (3- 4)

At the beginning of the novel protagonist decides to die himself. He memoirs the event of his mother's death and his absence in her eleventh hour. Then, he recollects all his spent with his mother and without her thus, the whole text is constructed with the memory and nostalgia of protagonist Charley. In his course of memory he memoirs his home, mother, father sister, wife, daughter, his baseball his surroundings. Thus he remembers all things

of his life school days, collages days etc. which make him much nostalgic as well as traumatic.

To kill himself; while he reaches his home, he says, “I looked out on the trees below me Behind them I saw the baseball field where I had learned the game from my father. The sight of it still dredged up sad memories. What is it about childhood that never lets you go, even when you’re so wretched it’s hard to believe you ever were a child” (16). After this, Charley suddenly memorizes his small daughter shifting from his own childhood. Albom writes, “The sky was lightening. The crickets grew louder. I had a sudden memory flash of little Maria asleep on my chest when she was small enough to cradle in one arm, her shin smelling of talcum powder” (17).

The memory of small innocent daughter, Maria, is furthermore replaced by the memory of her marriage. Charley is not informed or invited in his daughter Marria’s marriage. This memory of his negligence hurts him too much. Here, the joyful memory of his daughter is replaced by the painful memory of her marriage with his absence in this ceremony. Albom writes, “Then I had vision of me, wet and filthy as I was now, bursting into her wedding, the music stopping, everyone looking up horrified, Maria the most horrified of all. I lowered my head. I would not be missed. I took two running steps, grabbed the railing, and hurled myself over” (17).

Charley remembers his father and baseball time and again. It has been haunting him through his whole life because the memory of his father makes him aware of his absence in his life. And the memory of baseball gives sense of looser to him due to his unsuccessful attempt to be a professional baseball player. Albom writes:

My father once told me ‘you can be a Mama’s boy or a daddy’s boy. But you can’t be both’. So I was a daddy’s boy. I mimicked his walk. I mimicked his deep, smoky laugh. I carried a baseball glove because he loved baseball, and I took every hardball he threw, even the ones that stung my hands so badly I thought I would scream. I was on the pay phone in the dorm. This was well after my father’s first visit but it had taken me that long to find the courage to tell her. (123)

Charley remembers baseball as well as his father comparing it with unsuccessful baseball carrier. About the memory of father Albom writes, “Apparently, my father had kept them all these years. He must have dropped them off sometime during the night, without even phoning the room. I looked for a note, but there was nothing else in the box. Just my shoes with all their old scrapes” (164).

Parental Divorce and Psychological Impact upon Charley

Charley Benetto is a child of his father Leonard Benotto and mother Pauline Benetto. Leonard, the father of Charley is a lover and player of baseball. He is an athlete. Charley most of the time remembers his childhood, his baseball and his father. The craze and learning baseball in the life of Charley is due to his father. Even after the departure of father from house Charley is haunted by the ghost of baseball. He always wants to be a professional baseball player, playing in senior league. Because, Leonard had a wish to make Charley a good baseball player.

On the other side Charley’s mother Pauline wants to make Charley an academic person. She taught him to read, learn and write from his childhood. Though Charley’s family is left by father, Pauline struggles very hard for the good education of Charley.

She sends him to college, manages the fees and books taking all the obstacles herself as a nice mother.

But there is always a tussle of aims sprouted by father and mother in Charley's mind since his childhood. He is in confusion what he should be. Anyway, the hard life and struggle of mother has been dragging Charley towards baseball in his college days. Protagonist is always in confusion that what should do. The predicament of staying in confusion of choosing father's or mother's desire is clearly reflected in the following lines as Albom writes, "My father once told me, you can be a mama's boy or a daddy's boy. But you can't be both" (21). Though Charley has desire to be a baseball player he could not neglect his mother because mother has been taking all the hard life and struggle for his further education.

Charley is no more guided by his mother's dream. Once while he meets his father in baseball stadium in his college life; Charley leaves his study and joins the baseball club. Here, while Charley is going to meet his mother's aim, desire and want as a graduate of university degree, the aim of his father comes between son and mother. As a result, Charley could not lead his further education. This failure academic life of Charley becomes the major cause of his failure, frustrated and unsuccessful life. This makes the protagonist more traumatized, psychologically loosed and failure in his life.

The triangular relationship among Charley (son) Leonard (father) and Pauline (mother) could be compared with the triangular relationship of Oedipus complex according to Freudian psychoanalysis as a cause of psychological disease or traumatic experience. According to Sigmund Freud every child has a desire to meet or possess his mother but he gets his father between 'he' (son) and 'mother'. So father stops him to

reach on mother. As a result son is failure. Unsuccessful and repressed his desire which leads him towards the psychological patient.

Charley's failure, depression and repression are the symptom of his unsuccessful attempt to meet his mother's dream, aim or goal. Because, father's aim (goal) comes between his mother's goal and him. As a result, he leads himself towards the failure life. It makes him psychological imbalance with extreme experience of traumatic situation.

The basic symptoms of trauma recur in the novel in the form of nightmares, flash backs, distorted memory and other repetitive phenomena. Because of these repetitive phenomena, traumatic figure increases irritability, failure of protagonist and aimlessness and the destructiveness. The novel is filled with these characteristics in this sense and it is not far from traumatic vision. Albom's literary world is world of destruction, horror, death, nightmare and disorder. Regarding this fact into consideration, the present researcher carries out some symbols to denote the traumatic world view in the text.

Charley, the hero of the novel, is haunted by nightmares and flashbacks to the scene of unimaginable horror which is the essence of trauma. The settings, symbols and circumstances all represent the traumatic world view. The symbols like "Wet grass" (4), "Black sky, thunder, I was lying in wet grass" (14), "Muddy hills" (15), "Accident, Rain, Yellow leaves" (25) represent the traumatic theme in the novel. Similarly, the images of ghost, dark ruined soul, felling knees reflect the helplessness of protagonist as well as horrific situation. Albom writes, "Ghost, she was laying me down in wet grass, returning my ruined soul" (191) and "Then the dark pulled away and there were stars" (190) to present the gothic experience faced by protagonist. The references such as "I fell to my knees, crying, the wet grass staining my pants [. . .]. Black sky, thunder, I was lying in

wet grass. Night devastation, loss, dark” (14), emphasize that Charley as a victim of trauma.

The novel is a dramatization of miserable and frustrated lives of its protagonist. Charley, the hero of the novel, is haunted by his traumatic circumstances. The hope of beautiful is deemed or it is limited only in the imaginative world, in real world it is dying out. Everywhere he finds not more than misery, pain frustration, hopelessness, anxiety and disillusionment and every time he wants to forget it but the traumatic memory of the past strike him bitterly and make his effort worthless.

Charley, a frustrated hero is haunted by the traumatic experiences. His wound is mental and psychological, which is more painful than physical and remains long lasting, sometimes at night, he cannot tolerate it and internal pain suddenly comes out. The torture of the ‘sense of loss’ and ‘memory’ has made him mentally disordered. He finds pain, sorrow, frustration, depression everywhere which make him as an anxious and fearful person. The lines presented in the book make clear that trauma strikes the persons' attitude towards progress, achievement and better life.

Charley's life is triggered by traumatic experiences and unstable contemporary situation. He has a very pessimistic perception of life which haunts a lot to make his life better and prosperous. As a result, he takes the decision to commit suicide and finds his mother's home where he had spent his childhood as the better place for suicide. In the house, Charley encounters with his mother's ghost. While Charley reaches home to commit suicide, he remembers all manhood. He remembers all struggle faced by his mother for the improvement of his life. All the memories now turned to the appointment with mother's ghost. Mitch Albom writes, “Now, when I saw my dead mother I mean just that.

I saw her. She was standing by the dugout, wearing a lavender jacket, holding her pocket book. She didn't say a word. She just looked at me. My brain wanted to shout her name, but there was no sound from my throat" (24).

Through the communication with ghost, Charley is able to know all the hidden mysteries of his family and himself. As a result he returns to normal life. In other words, he gets care or reconciliation through the extreme experiences of trauma. Self realization plays the vital role in the care or reconciliation of traumatic situation. Self-mastery or self knowledge plays major roles for the care or understanding of owns circumstance. Charley goes his childhood home with the full of memory of his mother to commit suicide. There, he not only meets the mother ghost but also remembers all the major and minor events of his life. After the proper communication with mother ghost, Charley knows the meaning of each and every movements of his life. Hidden truths and mysteries during his life are revealed. As a result protagonist returns to the common life. In this sense all his traumatic experiences as the result of his parental divorce.

The reconciliation of protagonist Charley becomes possible while he meets the ghost of his mother. Meeting with ghost itself is the cause of the experience of extreme trauma. The appointment with ghost in midnight and to conduct communication with it is not possible in common stage of human being. So the appointment with ghost and revealing all the hidden mysteries and truths during the life of Charley itself is the extreme experience of trauma. Thus the experience of trauma leads the protagonist to the care, truth and new life as result Charley stops thinking of self destruction. He knows the value of his life. While Charley sees his mother's ghost, he is traumatic. Following lines clarifies, "I have given it all the thought that you are probably giving it right now; a

hallucination, a fantasy, a drunken dream, the mixed-up brain on its mixed up way. As I say I don't expect you to go with me here" (24). Before seeing the mother ghost protagonist is in complete restlessness. Due to the extreme experience of trauma, he faces hallucination. In hallucination, he sees his mother's ghost. Thus, it is clear all things happen due to the trauma.

After seeing the mother's ghost, protagonist tries to know the meaning and hidden truth about his family, his failure life as well as the cause of divorce between his parents. Through the memory of his childhood protagonist find the meaning and reconciliation. Albom writes, "Still I can say I adored my mother, in the way that boys adore their mother's while taking them for granted. She made that easy. She didn't mind smearing ice-cream on her face for laugh" (32). Charley recounts every movement spent with his mother. This furthermore leads him the memory of his family. Albom writes:

She wasn't easy on me, don't get me wrong. She smacked me. She scolded me. She punished me. But she loved me. She really did. She loved me falling off a swing set. She loved me stepping on her floors with muddy shoes. She loved me through vomit and snot and bloody knees. She loved me coming and going, at my worst and at my best. She had a bottomless well of love for me. (33)

Mitch Albom not only shows the love of Charley's mother towards him but also present her as an ideal mother by presenting the title of the chapter "Times My Mother Stood Up for Me" repetitively in six times in the text. The protagonist memoirs more as a result he is able to judge all the responsibilities taken by his mother to make his life better.

Through this memoir, Charley gets reconciliation and leads him toward the self realization as an ultimate solution of his trauma.

All the extreme memories make the protagonist able to distinguish himself that what his mother had done him and what he could not do as a response of his mother's love and devotion. For this comparison, Charley narrates his story with the title "Times I Did Not Stand Up for My Mother" and "Times My Mother Stood Up for Me".

At the third or final visit of mother's ghost Charley gets the complete overcome to his traumatic condition. At her final visit, Charley knows the secret of his parents' divorce while his mother makes him meet with his father's another wife. At that time mother advises him too. Albom writes, "You have one family, Charley. For good or bad, you have one family. You can't trade them in you can't lie to them. You can't run two at once; substituting back and forth sticking with you family is what makes it a family" (183). The final movement with mother clearly gives the details about Charley's victory towards his trauma. The final movement with mother about Charley's victory over his trauma clearly gives the details:

We all three hung there silently for a minute, each in our own world. Then my mother turned to me. 'You have to go now', she said. 'Go?' My voice chocked. 'Where? Why?' 'But Charley. . .' She took my hands. 'I want to ask you something first.' Her eyes were with tears. 'Why do you want to die?' I shivered. For a second I couldn't breathe. 'You knew . . .?' She gave a sad smile. (186)

Through this reconciliation charley leaves his thinking of suicide. At least once more he wants to meet his mother and spent a little to time with her. So Charley wants to live "one

more day” which leads the protagonist to the new life leaving all the intention of death. At the end of the text, through the narration of Maria with whom Charley had been living, we come to know that after this ultimate encounter with the ghost in extreme hallucination, Charley had got complete reconciliation or overcome to his traumatic circumstances. Albom writes:

I have forgotten so many things in my life, yet I can remember every moment of that time with my mother, the people we saw, the things we discussed . . . you may think me crazy, that I imagined the whole thing. But I believe this in the deepest part of my soul: My mother, somewhere between this world and the next, gave me one more day, the day I’d wanted so badly, and she told me all that I’ve told you. (193)

Charley is a traumatized personality haunted by ‘the sense of loss’ and ‘memori Charley’s loose family relationship, his unsuccessful baseball career, the absence of father etc. all play the role of lack or sense of loss to make him trauma victim. Furthermore, the memory of past events and dead mother haunt him. Charley makes the discussion of suicide and goes to his mother’s home to end his life in traumatic condition where he meets his mother’s ghost. After this horror incident Charley is brought to the hospital from where his new mode of meaningful life begins. Thus, all the journey of protagonist’s life from normal to abnormal as well as worse to good follows with his extreme experience of trauma. Through these circumstances blend with traumatic condition, Albom depicts that the parental divorce and its impact leads the people to trauma.

Chapter IV: Conclusion

Parental Conflict Leaves Negative Impact

Albom presents the protagonist Charley who is completely alienated from his family as well as has lost many things in his life from family to profession. His unsuccessful journey of life leads him to the heavy alcoholism and further to the mentality of suicide. Through these points this research has claimed Charley as a victimized personality with trauma experiences, he has faced in his life due to the family crisis and parental divorce.

Proving Charley as a failure personality with extreme experiences of trauma this research has traced out the three different factors as the major elements of his traumatic circumstances. First of all Charley is haunted by the Oedipus complex relationship among father, mother and himself. The Oedipus complexity in the novel appears while Charly cannot follow his mother's dream to be scholar because his father's dream of baseball blocks his way. From his childhood he is disturbed by the two different paths shown by his mother and father. His father wants to make him a professional baseball player. But his mother wants to make him an academic person with University education. Father, being the person from the background of army and athlete, has an extreme craze upon baseball. Charley too learns baseball from his father. But the mother believes on education and academic knowledge from university.

She forces her son to give emphasis on education. After being single woman, Pauline does hard struggle for the further education of Charley. From the childhood Charley is in confusion that what he should be in future. Due to the conflict in dreams of

his parents he neither becomes a professional baseball player nor an academician. Rather this tussle of dreams leads him to the failure and frustration.

While Charley is following the mother's advice, he is forcefully guided by his father's dream. Psychologically, Charley is weak to face the circumstances. Mentally he is disturbed from his childhood which becomes one of the reasons behind his failure. The trauma is rooted in his mind from his childhood. Thus, it has explored the trauma of protagonist rooted from his childhood as an Oedipus complex personality psychologically.

This research has discussed that the sense of loss plays the most dominant role for Charley's predicament. There are so many aspects of loss in the text faced by Charley. Everything is fine when the protagonist is with his parents- father Leonard and mother Pauline. But, time onward when Charley is nine years old, parents are separated. Charley and his sister Roberta live with mother. Both of them lack the father. He faces the lack in guideline of masculine tasks such as baseball playing and shaving.

Charley, after parents' divorce, faces the mockery and humiliation from society, neighbors etc. It impacts him psychologically from his childhood. He always dreams to unite his parents but could not. Rather it adds the traumatic circumstances in the life of protagonist. Slowly he starts to hate his mother. Due to being a divorced woman Pauline too should leave the prestigious job of nurse and should start a beauty parlor. The demotion of mother's profession from nurse to beautician adds much humiliation for Charley. This humiliation in the childhood of Charley leads him to the path of trauma. The major loss in the life of Charley is the loss of his dream of being professional baseball player.

The failure or loss of his baseball career itself is another cause of his destruction and trauma. He leaves the university education and joins the club. Unfortunately his small injury seized away his American Dream seen by Charley. His failure in profession too is caused by the lack of father and his supportive roles. In this regard, parental divorce is the major cause of Charley's predicament.

Based on this study, this thesis may also recommend studies on impacts of parental divorces and conflict in the Nepalese context as well. Although we in Nepal may not have incidences of divorce in so many volumes as in the west, impact of parental divorce or conflict can be equally or even more painful in our part, in case of whatever frequency of such cases occur.

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