

## **I. Mitch Albom and *Tuesdays with Morrie***

Mitch Albom was born to Ira Albom, a corporate executive and Rhoda Albom, an interior designer. Raised in New Jersey, Albom received a B.A. in sociology from Brandeis University, where he met Morrie Schwartz, a professor who encouraged his students to follow their hearts rather than to strive to attain the highest-paying jobs they could find.

Albom completed an M.A. in journalism at Columbia University where he continued his studies, receiving an M.B.A. in 1982. He became a highly successful sports journalist who was known for his sensitive treatments of teams that strove for excellence. He also was appreciated for the wit and humor of his writing. By 1995, Albom had been a sports columnist for *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *The Fort Lauderdale News* and *The Sun Sentinel* and became a well-established sports writer for the *Detroit Free Press*. By 1988, Albom was co-host of the popular *Sunday Sports Albom*, which later became the *Monday Sports Albom*, a syndicated weekly sports show. In 1995, *The Mitch Albom Show*, a nationally syndicated sports talk show, was proved to be a very popular sports columnist in the public.

A nationally syndicated columnist for the *Detroit Free Press* and a nationally syndicated radio host for ABC and WJR-AM, Albom has been named top sports columnist in the nation by the Sports Editors of America, the highest honor in the field for more than a decade. ESPN's *Sports Reporters* Albom also regularly serves as a commentator for the network. He serves on numerous charitable boards and has founded two charities in metropolitan Detroit: *The Dream Fund* which helps underprivileged youth study the arts and *A Time to Help* a monthly volunteer program.

Journalist, radio personality, songs writer and best-selling author, Albom added playwright to his résumé with the 2002 stage version of *Tuesdays with Morrie* which he co-wrote with Jeffrey Hatcher. He lives with his wife, Janine, at Michigan in United States of America.

Albom is an internationally renowned and best selling author, journalist, screen writer, playwright, radio and television broadcaster musician of twenty first century. He is the author of nine books: two novels, one memoir, two sports-oriented nonfiction, and four collections of his newspaper columns. His books have collectively sold over twenty-six million copies world wide. They are published in more than fifty territories and in forty three languages around the world and also have been made into Emmy Award winner.

He recalls the moments in his life when he was overwhelmed by emotion, he felt tears and he lost in vast. These sorts of backgrounds make him to meet the point of creation. His first novel, *The Five People You Meet in Heaven* (2003) is the most successful US hardcover first adult novel. This novel has been turned into a successful TV movie in 2004 which became the most popular TV movie of the year. In this book, Mitch Albom gives a marvelously real story that will change everything about the after life and the meaning of our lives. He mentions that his real uncle, Eddie Beitchman was the source of his inspiration for this novel. Eddie was also a World War II veteran, who lived a life like that of the fictional character, rarely leaving his home city and often feeling that he didn't accomplish what he should have. He died at 83. This book is a tale of a life on earth. It's a story about love, a warning about war and a nod of the cap to the

real people of this world, the ones who never get their name in public. According to San Seder and Stephen Sherrill,

Of course, the five people- each of whom had influenced Eddie's life while they were alive- all have some thing to teach Eddie. A cynic might find these lessons cloying and even preachy, but you know what? I bought it I fully believed that these people would exist in real life and that their lessons, while may be not completely original, are worthwhile. (1-2)

Now he returns with a beautiful haunting novel, *Have A Little Faith* about the family we love and the chances we miss. It is true that this book's title is *Have A Little Faith*, seems to focus on faith. However it would be more truthful to say that its principal theme is hope.

The story is really about a small town. Rabbi and protestant minister, protagonists in the tale; it is really about Mitch Albom's reaction to these two men what he felt about the difficulties both men endured and how he came to respect both of them. It is found that relating to the two clergymen and agreeing with Albom who presents their stories in a down to earth manner showing how they behave with humor and sometimes irreverence. The closest that one comes to the idea of faith is that the two clergymen have a strong belief that God exists and this belief helps sustain them despite their difficulties. However, both of them have no real answers to questions such as why there is evil in the world and how can a person prove that God exists. Nor do they really expect God to become involved in their lives and aid them. Rabbi defines faith as doing. Rabbi further says that human beings are how they act, not how they believe. He also says that faith is

persistence. This is the life he led for helping others and never stopping to do so and this is the life that the protestant minister led.

Senator Bob Dole, author of *One Soldier's Story: A Memoir*, expresses "the book is a heart breaking eulogy which teaches us to abandon selfishness. Mitch Albom offers to his already loyal readers, and millions more, a timeless story when America needs it most - a story of faith, hope, and the meaning of serving others" (126). As *Have A Little Faith* evolves and Mitch must write the heartbreaking eulogy, he discovers a yearning that, in the end, we all discover: to be involved in something greater than ourselves. As Mitch observes, we find meaning through our human struggles and more importantly in walking the path that God has in store for us all along. *Have a Little Faith* reminds us to seek and recognize how God is working in our lives in ways.

His most recent book *For One More Day* (2006) debuted at number one on the New York Times Bestseller list and spent nine months on the list of number one. The inspiration of this book comes again from a real person, his mother who stood up for him all her life. This book has been turned into a successful film in 2007. The author of *No Good Deeds*, Laura Lippman, in his interview, says that, "This is a story about family and as there is a ghost involved you might call it a ghost story" (1-2).

One night, Albom is watching the American Broadcasting Company's (ABC) late-night news show, *Nightline*, it makes him surprise, Morrie Schwartz appears on the television's screen. Schwartz has recently been diagnosed with the amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), the disease that has killed baseball player, Lou Gehrig some years earlier. Albom spent little time in flying to Massachusetts to visit his former professor. This initial visit led to a weekly visit every Tuesday for the rest of Schwartz's life, which

ends in fourteen weeks by the death of Schwartz. In course of these visits, Albom is dismayed to realize that despite his youth, vigor and the success of his career, Schwartz was happier and more at peace with himself than Albom has ever been.

This realization leads Albom to write a memoir of his visits to his dying professor, published in 1997 as *Tuesdays with Morrie: An Old Man, a Young Man, and Life's Greatest Lesson*. This book, written with the remarkable sensitivity that has been so appealing in much of Albom's sports writing becomes the best-selling book in United States in 1998. From the author of the number one New York Times Bestseller, *Tuesdays with Morrie* comes this long-awaited follow-up, an enchanting, beautifully crafted novel that explores a mystery of human psyche. Mitch Albom gives us an astoundingly original story that will change everything about the life and the meaning of human life here on the earth.

Real depiction about human life is the key feature of Mitch Albom's writings. *Tuesdays with Morrie* is based on Albom's recount of Schwartz lectures, quotes, experiences and conversations in time line. It is set chronologically by frequent flashbacks and allusions to contemporary events in each visit which has been set from Brandeis University to end of Morrie's life.

In *Tuesdays with Morrie*, newspaper columnist, Mitch Albom recounts his time spent with his 78 years old sociology professor at Brandeis University, Morrie Schwartz, who is dying from Lou Gehrig's disease (ALS). Albom, a former student of Schwartz, had not corresponded with him since attending his college classes at sixteen years earlier. The first three chapters begin with an ambiguous introduction to the final conversation between Albom and Schwartz, a brief flashback to Albom's graduation at 20 years earlier,

and a brief recount of the events Albom experiences between his graduation and the point where he becomes prompted to return to his professor. *Tuesdays with Morrie*, his poignant chronicle of several insightful dialogues conducted with a former college professor, the onetime mentor's final months of a terminal illness, spent over two years on the *New York Times* bestseller lists.

To sum up, it is found that the perception of Mitch Albom on his experiences spreads on his writings because all the books have feelings and experiences that has had himself. The researcher in this thesis tries to find how the narrator, the author of the book get psychologically traumatized due to the death of the dearest mentor, Morrie Schwartz. He left his office works even in critical situation at the time of worker's strike and moves to Massachusetts to meet his professor after listening about the incurable disease that has suffered to his dearest professor, Morrie. He is the best teacher in Mitch's life. His living style, friendly behaviour, teaching style and being the old teacher in the Brandies University, he becomes the best teacher to Mitch's life. During the time Morrie is suffering from physical pain by the Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis but Mitch is suffering from psychological shock by the same disease because he is nearly losing his dearest professor. It creates to Mitch a great psychological trauma. So, Mitch mind can not stay without extracting something about the Morrie's life. He writes about the memoirs of Morrie. The all memories which are included in this book move smoothly from the Brandies University to the end of Morrie's life as *Tuesdays with Morrie* due to the psychological trauma. He makes a serial from their Brandies University to the end of the Morrie's life with various flashbacks. So this novel is narrativized to heal the psychological trauma that has had in Mitch's mind.

### **Critics on *Tuesdays with Morrie***

Mitch Albom is an internationally renowned and best-selling author, journalist, screenwriter, playwright, radio and television broadcaster and musician. *Tuesdays with Morrie* has sold 14 million copies worldwide. This book is about a dying professor and his final and favourite student. This book is written in the student's point of view and is based on a true story. Its basic theme is to learn how to die, in order to know how to live. Various Critics opines their views on this novel in different ways.

Carolyn Kraemer Cooper, *Journal of Religion and Health*, expresses about human life and death applying his view on Morrie in this novel. He expresses:

*Tuesdays with Morrie* is a blueprint for dying well-if we are given the chance. Not many of us could cherish the time provided by a long, slow progressively degenerative illness the way Morrie did. In this impassioned tale of a student-teacher relationship that parallels the Zen master –disciple bond, Mitch Albom captures the essence of Morrie Schwartz and his remarkable wisdom about life and death. ... As Morrie begins to take leave of his body, he is capable of engendering a deeper compassion and passion for life in both himself and his associates. As his faculties wane, he searches for the profound delight in his remaining senses and abilities.

(192)

Paul Finnetry explains Morrie spends his life miraculously. While spending life after the suffered by the disease, he even concentrates him for good things. He says about the novel as:

The book *Tuesdays with Morrie* is a magical account of the time Mitch spent by the bedside of Morrie, his teacher who was dying of a terminal illness. One day Mitch asked Morrie if he felt sorry for himself.

'Sometimes in the mornings,' he said, 'that's when I mourn. I give myself a good cry if I need it. But then I concentrate on all the good things still in my life. I don't allow myself any more self-pity than that.' A little each morning, a few tears and that's all. Mitch thought of all the people he knew who spent many of their waking hours feeling sorry for themselves. How useful it would be to put a daily limit on self-pity. (169)

According to Iika Gordon, Medical Lib., Fairview General Hosp., Cleveland, February 15/2005/ Journal; its a inspirational example to all readers about the postponing the suspense by the use of pauses and speech intonations. Most of the serial are postpone to raise the curiousness to the readers.

*Tuesdays with Morrie* is the best-selling inspirational true story of Albon and the discussions he had with his dying sociology professor and mentor, Morrie Schwartz. The topic is life, and Schwartz has profound advice for his former student. The author does an excellent job reading his book; we can hear Schwartz getting weaker physically through the narrator's pauses and speech intonations. Highly recommended for all public libraries. (3)

Martin Kohan, *T.W.M (Tuesday with Morrie) Double Day New Work, 1997*, examines the book as the precious treasure of life. He mentions that it displays the internal human psyche while in the eleventh stage of life. He says,



There Tuesdays “seminars” explore perennial value issues of everyday of life. “Family,” “Emotions”, “Money”, “Marriage”, “Our Culture”, “Fear of Aging”, etc. The interchanges fortunately are studded with “pearls of wisdom from Morrie. Not only is careful listening and wise telling extolled, but a subtext revealing. Albom’s search for and rediscovery of discarded ideals also unfolds in the book. (192)

This novel is a wonderful and realistic product that explores the life of all human beings. The protagonist, Morrie Schwartz is leaving the world very soon. His expressions are full of wisdoms. Stephanie Bowen considers it as the inspiration how one gets from other. He says:

He wasn’t a superstar athlete, a successful entrepreneur or famous actor. He was not a household name. His only claim to fame was an appearance on *The Nightline*. But ask anyone who knows him and they’ll likely to tell you that Morrie Schwartz made more of an impression on them than Michael Jordan, Bill Gates and Jodie Foster combined. *Tuesdays With Morrie* is more than just a dying man’s last words. It is an inspirational recount of a man’s life- a man whose passion for the human spirit has continued to live long after his last breath. (3-4)

Morrie spends a simple but meaningful life that inspires anyone for living. It becomes the inspiration to the people. In the world of busy, unfulfilled lives, material things, lack of commitments and fear, it’s refreshing to trip upon a book that re-awakens our real purpose in life. For Jon Kabat, “It is a courageous story of a dying man who faces each of his time boldly wishing that what can he gain instead of thinking what he is

losing”. He says a deeply moving account of courage and wisdom shared by an inveterate mentor looking into the multi texture face of his own death.

It is a natural law that we should be demise from this material world. It is rule of nature that our life is for the continuation of the world of running. Robert Bly, author of *Iron John*, says that no one escape of the nature’s law. He says,

This story of Mitch Albom and Morrie Schwartz illustrates many universal truths, including this law of nature. And perhaps that law has an emotional equivalent as well. Morrie’s illness and death gives Mitch a prospective that directly changes his life. This very success that caused him to neglect the most important things become the means to send Morrie’s message to all who need reminders of what these things are- Action and Reaction.

(208)

Immediately after its publication in 1997, it is being examined from various perspectives by different critics. Human beings have reason. So, it makes human beings the supreme animals in the world. In this novel, the narrator gets great shocked by the death of the central character, Morrie who was the dearest teacher and later a good friend of life. It is felt that there is necessity of further study and analysis on it in the light of traumatic perspectives. So, by the cause of the lose of the friend, the author collects all his professor feelings where he had spoken during various Tuesdays and also with flashbacks of their college, Brandies University, brings out as *Tuesdays with Morrie* for the remembrance of his beloved teacher. The present research is an attempt to show how human beings suffered psychologically in the dearest cases. This research paper moves around “how trauma affects the over all way of life” on human beings.

## **II. Psychological Trauma**

Trauma represents "a wound" any injury, whether physically or emotionally inflicted. "Trauma" has both a medical and a psychiatric definition. In medical discourse, "trauma" refers to a serious or critical bodily injury, wound or shock. This definition is often associated with trauma medicine practiced in emergency rooms and represents a popular view of the term. In psychiatry, trauma has assumed a different meaning and refers to an experience that is emotionally painful, distressful or shocking which often results in lasting mental and physical effects. Some causes of trauma are a serious injury or shock to the body as from violence or an accident. An emotional wound or shock that creates substantial, lasting damage to the psychological development of a person often leads to neurosis. The cause of trauma is an event or situation that causes great distress and disruption of human psyche.

There are mainly two types of trauma. They are historical trauma and psychological trauma. Psychological trauma is a type of damage to psyche that occurs as a result of a traumatic event. When that trauma leads to posttraumatic stress disorder, damage may involve physical changes inside the brain and to brain chemistry which damage the person's ability to adequately cope with stress. Psychological trauma is an emotional or psychological injury usually resulting from an extremely stressful or life-threatening situation. In psychological trauma, the post-cult trauma is the intense emotional problems that some members of cults and new religious movements experience upon disaffection and disaffiliation.

Historical trauma is cumulative emotional and psychological wounding over the life span and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma experiences. The

historical trauma response is a constellation of features in reaction to this trauma. The historical trauma response may include substance abuse as a vehicle for attempting to numb the pain associated with trauma. The historical trauma response often includes other types of self-destructive behavior, suicidal thoughts and gestures, depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, anger and difficulty recognizing and expressing emotions. Associated with historical trauma response is historically unresolved grief that accompanies the trauma.

While studying about trauma it is necessary to talk about trauma team which is a group of healthcare workers who attend to seriously ill or injured casualties who arrive at a hospital emergency department. Trauma Center, a hospital equipped to provide comprehensive emergency medical services to patients suffering traumatic injuries.

A traumatic event involves a single experience or an enduring or repeating event or an event, that completely overwhelm the individual's ability to cope or integrate the ideas and emotions involved with that experience. The sense of being overwhelmed can be delayed by weeks, years, even decades, as the person struggles to cope with the immediate circumstances.

Trauma can be caused by a wide variety of events but there are a few common aspects. There is frequently a violation of the person's familiar ideas about the world and of their human rights, putting the person in a state of extreme confusion and insecurity.

Psychological trauma may accompany physical pain or exist independently of it. Typical causes of psychological trauma are sexual abuse, bullying, domestic violence, the victim of alcoholism, the threat of either or the witnessing of either, particularly in childhood. Catastrophic events such as earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, war or other

mass violence can also cause psychological trauma. Long-term exposure to situations such as extreme poverty or milder forms of abuse, such as verbal abuse can be traumatic though verbal abuse can also potentially to be traumatic as a single event.

However, different people will react differently to similar events. One person may experience an event as traumatic while another person would not suffer trauma as a result of the same event. Some theories suggest childhood trauma can lead to violent behavior. They believe such violent behavior can be as extreme as serial murder. For example, Hickey's *Trauma-Control Model* suggests "childhood trauma for serial murderers may serve as a triggering mechanism resulting in an individual's inability to cope with the stress of certain events" (24).

The quality of the attachment bond between mother and baby affects the child's ability even as an adult to feel safe in the world. If he has felt disrupt in his childhood, he may be a cruel to others because he could not get from parents especially from the mother. Early-life trauma disrupts this important attachment bond, resulting in adult relationship difficulties.

So, emotional and psychological trauma is the result of extraordinarily stressful events that shatter sense of security, making feeling helpless and vulnerable in a dangerous world. Traumatic experiences often involve a threat to life or safety but any situation that leaves feeling overwhelmed and alone can be traumatic even if it doesn't involve physical harm. It's not the objective facts that determine whether an event is traumatic or not. The more frightened and helpless the person feels, the more likely he is to be traumatized.

People who go through these types of extremely traumatic experiences often have certain symptoms and problems afterward. How severe these symptoms are depends on the person, the type of trauma involved and the emotional support they receive from others. Reactions and symptoms of trauma can be wide and varied and differ in severity from person to person.

After a traumatic experience, a person may re-experience the trauma mentally and physically, hence avoiding trauma reminders, also called triggers, as this can be uncomfortable and even painful. They may turn to psychoactive substances including alcohol to try to escape the feelings.

Triggers and cues act as reminders of the trauma and can cause anxiety and other associated emotions. Often the person can be completely unaware of what these triggers are. In many cases this may lead a person suffering from traumatic disorders to engage in disruptive or self-destructive coping mechanisms, often without being fully aware of the nature or causes of their own actions. Panic attacks are an example of a psychosomatic response to such emotional cues.

Consequently, intense feelings of anger may come in surface frequently. Sometimes in very inappropriate or unexpected situations, as danger may always seem to be present. Upsetting memories such as images, thoughts or flashbacks may haunt the person and nightmares may be occurring in frequent. Insomnia may occur as lurking fears and insecurity to keep the person vigilant and on the lookout for danger in both day and night.

When a emotive mind gets highly traumatized, he may not aware what is happening in his real life. He thinks that he is alright in his performance. But the society

becomes the opposition. It leads him to be more traumatic. This can produce a pattern of prolonged periods of acute arousal punctuated by periods of physical and mental exhaustion. Emotional detachment as well as dissociation can frequently occur.

Dissociating from the painful emotion includes numbing all emotion, and the person may seem emotionally flat preoccupied, distant or cold. The person can become confused in ordinary situations and have memory problems.

Some traumatized people may feel permanently damaged when trauma symptoms don't go away and they don't believe their situation will get improved. This can lead to feelings of despair, loss of self-esteem and frequently depression. If important aspects of the person's self and world understanding have been violated, the person may call their own identity into question. Often despite their best efforts, traumatized parents may have difficulty assisting their child with emotion regulation, attribution of meaning and containment of post-traumatic fear in the wake of the child's traumatization leading to adverse consequences for the child.

The psychological trauma caused by man-made and natural disasters, including war, abuse, violence, earthquakes, mechanized accidents, medical emergencies, etc. Some people may be highly psychologically injured by the case, some may be less injured. It depends on to their enduring capacity.

There are several behavioral responses common towards stressors including the proactive, reactive, and passive responses. Proactive responses include attempts to address and correct a stressor before it has a noticeable effect on lifestyle. Reactive responses occur after the stress and possible traumas has occurred and are aimed more at

correcting or minimizing the damage of a stressful event. A passive response is often characterized by an emotional numbness or ignorance of a stressor.

Those who are able to be proactive can often overcome stressors and are more likely to be able to cope well with unexpected situations. On the other hand, those who are more reactive will often experience more noticeable effects from an unexpected stressor. In the case of those who are passive, victims of a stressful event are more likely to suffer from long term traumatic effects and often enact no intentional coping actions. These observations may suggest that the level of trauma associated with a victim is related to such independent coping abilities.

How the trauma affect to human beings if he had got it in his childhood. What types of behaviour does he perform to the people when he remembers his past? Jennifer Freyd talks about psychological trauma in his *Betrayal Trauma: The Logic of Forgetting Childhood Abuse*:

Betrayal trauma theory suggests that psychogenic amnesia is an adaptive response to childhood abuse. When a parent or other powerful figure violates a fundamental ethic of human relationships, victims may need to remain unaware of the trauma not to reduce suffering but rather to promote survival. Amnesia enables the child to maintain an attachment with a figure vital to survival, development, and thriving. Analysis of evolutionary pressures, mental modules, social cognitions, and developmental needs suggests that the degree to which the most fundamental human ethics are violated can influence the nature, form, and processes of trauma and responses to trauma. (307)



There is also a distinction between trauma induced by recent situations and long-term trauma which may have been buried in the unconscious from past situations such as childhood abuse. Trauma is often overcome through healing. In some cases this can be achieved by recreating or revisiting the origin of the trauma under more psychologically safe circumstances such as with a therapist.

French neurologist Jean-Martin Charcot argued that psychological trauma was the origin of all instances of the mental illness known as hysteria. Charcot's "traumatic hysteria" often manifested as a paralysis that followed a physical trauma, typically years later after what Charcot described as a period of "incubation". Sigmund Freud, Charcot's student and the father of psychoanalysis, examined the concept of psychological trauma throughout his career. Jean Laplanche has given a general description of Freud's understanding of trauma which varied significantly over the course of Freud's career: "An event in the subject's life, defined by its intensity, by the subject's incapacity to respond adequately to it and by the upheaval and long-lasting effects that it brings about in the psychical organization" (465-9).

The French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan has claimed that what he has called "The Real" has a traumatic quality. As an object of anxiety, Lacan maintained that the real is "the essential object which isn't an object any longer, but this something faced with which all words cease and all categories fail, the object of anxiety par excellence" (164).

Earl Giller Jr. says that trauma occurs by the past event to his current life. So, the mental health professionals have to be up to date to traumatized mind to cure him. He says:

Psychological trauma is a concise, comprehensive, integrated overview of research and the state-of-the-art thinking about post-traumatic stress disorder. These chapters break new ground in summarizing current basic and clinical research to inform the theoretician, practitioner, and researcher in the field. It is essential reading for all mental health professionals to be up to date in this burgeoning field. (128)

What do therapists say when we talk about trauma? One definition of Pearlman & Saakvitne, Saakvitne, K.W., & Pearlman, L.A. response to "*Managed Care and the Sexual Abuse Victim*" by M.J. Bennett, M.D., *Berkshire Mental Health Review*. They says: "psychological trauma is the unique individual experience of an event or enduring conditions in which: the individual's ability to integrate his/her emotional experience is overwhelmed or the individual experiences (subjectively) a threat to life, bodily integrity, or sanity" (60).

The important part of this definition in my practice is the emphasis on unique individual experience which experiences are traumatic, whether or not it would impact others in the same manner. Psychological trauma is the result of extraordinarily stressful events that shatter the sense of security and result in feeling helpless alone and vulnerable in this dangerous world.

Sometimes therapists talk about "big T trauma" and "little T trauma". This is in no way meant to imply that any traumatic events are insignificant. Some psychologists classify big 'T' traumas: childhood sexual, physical or emotional abuse, natural disasters, war experiences, severe car accidents, rape. Little 't' traumas can be just as damaging, especially because they tend to occur over time and build upon each other. Examples

would be ongoing emotional abuse or neglect, experiences of shame, humiliation, being left out, bullied or ridiculed and feeling not cared for. The experience of growing up gay in a homophobic culture would be an example of this sort of trauma. All traumatic experiences affect how we experience the world around us and our relationships with other people.

In time of war, psychological trauma has been known as shell shock or combat stress reaction. Psychological trauma may cause an acute stress reaction which may lead on to posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). PTSD emerged as the label for this condition after the Vietnam War in which many veterans returned to their respective countries demoralized and sometimes addicted to drugs.

Following traumatic events, persons involved are often asked to talk about the events soon after sometimes even immediately after the event occurred in order to start a healing process. This practice may not garner the positive results needed to recover psychologically from a traumatic event.

Victims of traumatic occurrences who are debriefed immediately after the event in general do far better than others who receive therapy. Though there is also evidence to suggest forcing immediate debriefing may distort the natural psychological healing process.

The psychological damage resulting from uncontrollable, terrifying life events is a central focus of psychiatric interest around the turn of this century. Many early psychiatrists understand psychological trauma to be the ultimate source of much psychopathology. Freud at first has regarded many psychiatric problems as manifestations of early childhood traumas; for example, he has interpreted the cognitive,

emotional and behavioral symptoms of hysterical patients as symbolic repetitions of early traumatic events. After Freud has come to believe that the development of neuroses is more intimately related to childhood fantasies and misinterpretations of childhood events, external psychological trauma loses its central importance in psychoanalytic thinking. Although Freud continues to show interest in the consequences of psychological trauma dynamic psychiatry in general has paid little attention to the consequences of actual overwhelming experiences until a recent resurgence of interest. In the past decades psychiatry has gradually shifted from a dynamic, intra psychic model to a biomedical model emphasizing genetic and biological determinants of major mental illness. Much of the present renewed interest can be attributed to a heightened concern about the impact of child abuse, the attention paid by the women's movement to the consequences of rape and incest, the unexpectedly high incidence of delayed stress reactions and the recognition of psychiatric consequences of political persecution.

### **III. Psychological Trauma in *Tuesdays with Morrie***

The central character of the *Tuesdays with Morrie*, Morrie is the best professor of the narrator, the author of the novel. This is a real story of the author's life with his professor. The professor is suffering from the Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), a fatal disease. The professor is going to die soon due to ALS. He gets pain and torture physically. It creates a mental torture to Mitch Albom, the author of the novel who is going to lose his professor. So, by the cause of ALS to Morrie, he gets physical pain for short times but he leaves all those remembrances from Brandeis University to his end of life to Mitch Albom. ALS creates a mind blowing pain. This pain eventually converts to psychological trauma to Mitch Albom because there recollects traumatic feelings in the absence of Morrie. So, this book is a gift of Mitch's psychologically traumatized mind by the cause of death of his dearest professor due to the ALS.

The narrator of the novel, Mitch Albom gives a brief introductory explanation of his weekly meetings on each Tuesday with Morrie. He calls these meetings as a continuation of his studies with Morrie. Each of them has a separate class of the meaning of life. The class has been held in Morrie's home, in his study room. There is a pink hibiscus plant which symbolizes the Morrie's life because it also losing its life as the life of Morrie. "The last class of my professor's life took place once a week in his house, by a window in the study where he could watch a small hibiscus plant shed its pink leaves ... The subject was Meaning of Life. It was taught from experience" (1). This plant serves as an important symbol throughout the book. Mitch reflects that no grades have been given and that no books have been required for his final class with Morrie.

Morrie's death sentence had arrived in the summer of 1994 when he had given up dancing. He used to dance, regardless of what kind of music was being played. He used to go to a church in Harvard Square each Wednesday night for an event called "Dance Free," which catered mainly to students and other young people. Morrie, a distinguished doctor of sociology, would go in sweat pants and a T-shirt and dance all night until he was soaked with sweat.

However, when Morrie had developed asthma in his sixties, he stopped going in dance. One day as he was along the Charles River, a cold gust of wind had left him breathless and he was rushed to the hospital and injected. A few years later, he had trouble walking and fell down on the stairs at a theater. Most had seen these health problems as common symptoms of old age but Morrie had known that it was something more serious as he had dreams of dying and was weary all the time. Doctors had found nothing wrong from his blood and urine samples though after testing a muscle biopsy.

On a hot day in August of 1994, Morrie and his wife, Charlotte, had been told by his doctor that he was suffering from amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, an incurable illness which attacks the neurological system and causes loss of muscle control. The doctor had patiently answered Morrie and Charlotte's questions for nearly two hours and had given them informational pamphlets to study. Morrie had felt as if the world had come to an end.

Mitch compares ALS to a lit candle, saying it melts the nerves and leaves the body a pile of wax. "ALS is a lit candle: it melts your nerves and leaves your body a pile of wax. Often begins with the legs and works its way up... This takes no more than five years from the day you contract the disease" (9-10). He says soul is awake though the

body is completely deadened. Morrie's doctors guessed that it would take two years for his body to deteriorate completely though Morrie had known it would be less and had decided that his own death will be his final project. In time, Morrie cannot even go to the bathroom by himself which would be embarrassing for most people, though eventually, it is not for Morrie. After attending a colleagues' funeral, Morrie is depressed that the deceased never get the opportunity to hear the good things said about them at their funerals. Thus, he decides to hold a "living funeral" for himself, which is a great success. It creates good feelings toward meaning of life. One woman reads a poem about a "tender sequoia". Morrie drop downs tears after listening the songs.

In nearly every chapter of the book, Mitch flashes back to his days at Brandeis University. These flashbacks provide a clear picture of Mitch during his youth, a picture that starkly contrasts the money-hungry businessman he has grown to be in his adulthood. The flashbacks also help to explain why Mitch feels compelled to see his professor, as he knows that he can help him to regain the goodness and faith he possessed during his college years. In his flashback to his graduation from Brandeis, Mitch's feelings of love and admiration for Morrie, his favorite professor, are unmistakable. Mitch talks about his first class of 1976 where he found Morrie as a fantastic teacher even in his first meeting. Morrie had been taking attendance, and then Mitch hears "Mitchell". Mitch raised his hand and Morrie told him that "Do you prefer Mitch? Or is Mitchell is better" (24)? This saying impacts to Mitch and thought about it. "I have never been asked this by a teacher" (24). Mitch answered "Mitch" and the further relationship grows with this foundation and ends with the friends. So, it is clear that the two men have shared a unique relationship which is gradually revealed in the flashbacks.

Morrie's personality is further revealed when Mitch relays the story of his former professor's wild nights at "Dance Free" in Harvard Square. Morrie is an old man with an exceptionally youthful, enduring spirit, which perseveres throughout his illness and will play a key role in his Tuesday lessons with Mitch. When the body that contains Morrie's youthful spirit is prescribed an expiration date by medical professionals, Morrie surely feels as if a part of him has been killed, as he can no longer enjoy even dancing, his long-time favorite hobby.

In March of 1995, Morrie is interviewed by Ted Koppel, the host of ABC-TV's news program, "Nightline." Koppel arrives at Morrie's house in West Newton, Massachusetts in a limousine, with his television crew behind him. Morrie is now confined to a wheelchair, as he cannot walk. Despite the progression of his illness, Morrie refuses to get depressed and writes small philosophies about accepting one's own death. Maurie Stein, a friend of his, sends some of these aphorisms to a *Boston Globe* reporter who publishes a feature story on Morrie. By chance, Mitch sees this television program as he is flipping channels one night, a chance that serves as the catalyst for the reunion between him and his old professor.

Mitch flashes back to the spring of 1976, when he has his first class with Morrie. In Morrie's classroom, he wonders if he should take the class, as it will be hard to cut with so few students. Morrie takes attendance and asks Mitch if he prefers to be called "Mitch" or "Mitchell," a question he has never been asked by one of his teachers. He replies that his friends call him "Mitch," and Morrie, after deciding on "Mitch," replies that one day, he hopes he will call him a friend.



As Mitch pulls up to Morrie's house in his rental car, he is on the phone with his producer. Morrie sits in a wheelchair on his front lawn waving at Mitch though Mitch slinks down in the seat of his car and finishes the conversation with his producer before he greets him, their first reunion in sixteen years. He regrets this and wishes he had immediately dropped the phone and run to hug and kiss his professor. Mitch is surprised at the intense affection with which Morrie greets him and hugging him, feels that no trace remains of the good student Morrie remembers him as being. After he takes his pills, Morrie asks Mitch if he shall tell him what it feels like to be dying.

Morrie's appearance on "Nightline" has made him somewhat of a celebrity and many people call and ask to visit. Mitch remembers his college friends when he is in front of their professor, Morrie Schwartz. He wonders what has happened to him in the time that has lapsed between college and the present. Essentially, he has traded the dreams he had in youth for wealth and success. However, his financial success alone does not satisfy him. Morrie struggles to eat his meal and when he is finished, tells Mitch that many of his visitors are unhappy which he thinks is a result of the culture. Morrie expresses the gratitude he feels for having love around him while he dies which he says is better than living unhappily. Mitch is shocked by his lack of self-pity, namely the gratitude he feels for his slow, painful death. He is forever haunted by Morrie's explanation that he will die of suffocation as the ALS will eventually attack his lungs. Mitch avoids an honest response, and Morrie urges him to accept death as it is clear that he has no more than five months left to live. To prove his imminent death, Morrie demonstrates for Mitch a test that his doctor asked him to take. He first asks Mitch to inhale then exhale while counting to the highest number he can. Mitch counts to seventy.

Morrie can only reach eighteen before he must gasp for air. When he first saw the doctor, Morrie was able to count to twenty-three. Morrie proves to Mitch that he will die soon. So, he used to say not to break the promise as the previous. Morrie had broken the promises for 16 years to keep on touch with Morrie.

Mitch's behavior upon his reunion with Morrie reveals the enormous transformation he has undergone since he has last seen him. He has not seen his beloved professor for sixteen years, yet he waits to finish the phone conversation he is having with his producer before he greets Morrie. The mannerism and general behavior that Mitch exhibits at the beginning of the book differ from his behavior as described in the flashbacks to his college years to understand the drastic transformation he has undergone in growing older. Mitch has yet to undergo another transformation, a sort of reversion, in his new relationship with Morrie.

Mitch and Morrie embodied by the nicknames they call one another, Morrie being the "coach" and Mitch being the "player." "I began to call Morrie coach, the way I used to address my high school track coach Morrie likes the nick names. Coach, he says. All right I'll be your coach" (31). Morrie has lived a long, experienced life and passes his experiences on to Mitch, so that he may learn from them, as Morrie has, and literally play them out in his life.

Although he has learned much from Morrie, Mitch is still learning his most pressing lesson: to reject the cultural norm if it is not conducive to one's own happiness. Mitch is clearly entangled in the norms of culture, living the life of the young, successful professional who is too overrun with work to think of anything else. His trouble with breaking from these cultural norms is most obvious in his hesitation to be honest about

death and the physical embarrassment that comes with aging. Eventually with more Tuesday visits, Mitch will learn from Morrie how to break free of these norms and will gradually come to accept Morrie's physical debilitation and impending death as a natural part of the life cycle.

A few weeks following his reunion with Morrie, Mitch flies to London to cover the Wimbledon tennis tournament for the newspaper he works for. Typically, Mitch reads the British tabloids while he is in England but on this visit, he remembers Morrie and his inevitable death. Mitch thinks of how many hours he has spent on mindless, meaningless endeavors such as reading the tabloids and instead wants to use his time as Morrie does, immersed in those endeavors that will enrich his life.

Mitch remembers how much Morrie loves food and brings an arsenal of treats to his first Tuesday visit. Even in college, Mitch and Morrie had met routinely on Tuesdays, mostly to discuss Mitch's paper which Mitch says he wrote at Morrie's suggestion. They slip into conversation easily as they did when Mitch was in college. When Morrie must go to the bathroom, his aid, Connie, helps him. He remembers telling Ted Koppel in his interview that he feared eventually needing someone else to wipe him after using the toilet, as it is the ultimate sign of dependency.

Mitch mourns for Morrie's death and in a very real sense, his own. A part of Mitch has died since his college days and he grows increasingly sad and nostalgic for that part of him with every Tuesday he talks with Morrie. Mitch feels as though he has wasted a part of his life having been deadened to emotion and caring and now wants to resuscitate the caring man he had been so that he will not waste any more precious years of his life, trudging through each day with a healthy body and a deadened spirit. Morrie

however, suffers from just the opposite affliction which unlike Mitch's problem is irreversible. Mitch has the potential to revive his spirit and his kindness and can redeem himself if he so chooses. Morrie, however, must inevitably suffer as a lively spirit trapped within a dying, withered body.

Like a newly born baby, Morrie cries often and needs just as much attention as a child would from his mother. Throughout the book, a repeated connection is made between children and the elderly as both are completely dependent on others for their own survival. Morrie tries to enjoy the process of being a child once more because he wants to get love from the family and friends. This love and attention is also absent in the lives of many adults as the culture's rules regarding affection between adults is drastically different and drastically scarce compared to those for children and the elderly.

Mitch loves to talk with Morrie too much so he decides not to bring the cell during the trip so that his colleagues do not disturb his meaningful time with his old professor. The union at the newspaper he works for in Detroit continues to strike and he is therefore without a job.

Mitch notices evil and the potential for evil in the media and in his everyday surroundings as he does when he reads about the murder and hatred in the newspaper and when he notices the irritation on the faces of the people at the airport, who are so severely agitated by the heat, they look ready to kill. These passages in *Tuesdays with Morrie* string together to create a stark contrast between the popular social culture which is inherently evil and driven by greed and the invented culture that Morrie adheres and that Mitch is slowly adopting which is founded on love, civility and understanding.

Morrie tells Mitch that everyone is aware that they will eventually die though no one actually believes it. Mitch notes that Morrie is in a business-like mood on this Tuesday as he scribbles notes in his now undecipherable handwriting. In Detroit, the newspaper strikes continue and Mitch remains out of work. Once again, he notes the disgustingly violent news stories he has heard and read about, namely the O.J. Simpson murder trial. In Morrie's office however news events are inconsequential, and they focus on more meaningful subjects.

Morrie is now somewhat dependent on an oxygen machine to breathe. Mitch asks him how one can be prepared to die. Morrie responds with a Buddhist philosophy that every day, one must ask the bird on his shoulder if that day is the day he will die. Morrie adopts values and parables from many different religions. "Morrie borrowed freely from all religions. He was born Jewish, but became an agnostic when he as a teenager, partly because of all that had happened to him as a child. He enjoyed some of the philosophies of Buddhism and Christianity, and he still felt at home ..." (82). Mitch refers to Morrie as a "religious mutt" because he has created his own religion from a variety of different religious philosophies. The Buddhist philosophy Morrie shares about asking the bird on his shoulder if today is the day he will die serves as a metaphor for his awareness that he may die at any moment. The bird itself is symbolic of Morrie's consciousness that his death is fast approaching and his readiness to accept it when it does arrive. His lesson however pertains more to Mitch than to himself. In telling the parable, he wants Mitch to realize that this bird is on everyone's shoulder at every moment of their lives, despite how young or old they may be. When he tells Mitch that one must know how to die before one can know how to live, he means that one must accept the possibility of one's own death

before he can truly appreciate what he has on earth, as the sobering awareness that one day, it will all be out of reach, prompts the urge to appreciate and value what one can have only for a limited period of time, and to use every moment of that time doing something that one will not regret when the bird sings its last note.

When Morrie tells Mitch that he may not be as professionally ambitious as he is if he were aware and accepting of his own death, he is continuing with his idea of time as a precious, irreplaceable gift. What Morrie means by this is not that Mitch should be lazy, but that he should reassess his priorities. He assumes that if Mitch were to truly and completely realize that his will someday die, he would surely rearrange his values system and realize that dedicating his time to love family, and friends is far more important than spending his life at work, earning money that does not fulfill him. Mitch feels a void in his life which he stuffs with dollar bills, believing that material wealth what he wants and needs. But Morrie sees through Mitch's superficial desire, and knows that the only salve for Mitch's emotional void is love and friendship.

Morrie reveals that it is only once a person knows how to die that he can then know how to live. "Once you learn how to die, you learn how t live" (82). He repeats this idea for reinforcement and Mitch asks him if he had considered death before contracting ALS. Morrie responds that he had not thought very much about death before his illness; in fact, he had once vowed to a friend that he would be "the healthiest old man" his friend had ever met.

Morrie enjoys this physical closeness as he now feels a stronger need for affection than ever. He tells Mitch that one's family is one's foundation, as the love and caring that a family gives is supremely valuable. He then quotes Auden, his favorite poet, who said,

"Love or perish." Mitch writes this down. Friends, Morrie urges, are not the same as having family. They can be there sometimes but family is there constantly.

At the close of nearly every chapter, Mitch reflects on an experience of his life that somehow relates back to his friendship with Morrie. He often flashes back to his days at Brandeis, a conversation he has shared with Morrie as in his seventh Tuesday, describes the values and practices of a culture he has researched. Mitch has taken to researching various cultures since his reunion with Morrie, as his professor has stressed that he has created a culture all his own and to reject any part of the popular culture that does not cooperate with his own values. Mitch replies the Morrie's self culture. He says "Forget what the culture says, I have ignored much of my life. I am not going to be ashamed. What's the big deal" (176)?

Morrie urges Mitch to give of himself which is more meaningful than giving money. He advises him to devote himself to loving and giving generously to his community, possibly by volunteering at a local senior center. Mitch is now realizing that, after all of his years spent driven by financial success, he cannot find happiness in money and professional power.

Morrie had been asking to meet Janine since his first meetings with Mitch. One night, Morrie had been on the phone with Mitch, and he had asked to speak to Janine. Janine had taken the phone and had conversation with Morrie as if they had been friends for many years, though they had never spoken before. Mitch thought that had he been put in her position, forced to speak on the phone with a complete stranger, he would have refused to take the call. When Janine had finished her conversation with Morrie, she announced that she would be joining Mitch on his next trip to Boston to meet his

professor. Mitch takes his wife, Jannie with him to meet his dearest professor on the tenth Tuesday. When they, Morrie and Jane meet, talk as if there were older friends. Morrie requests a song for him. She sang a Ray Noble song sweetly. "The very Thought of you and I forget to do" (146). While she was singing, Morrie closed his eyes to observe the notes of the songs and Mitch found him "as my wife's loving voice filled the room, a crescent smile appeared on his face. And while his body was stiff as a sandbag, you could almost see him dancing inside it" (146).

Mitch is now less self-conscious and less embarrassed about helping Morrie. Now, he wants to observe and learn how to help him. Even Morrie is less embarrassed by his own physical handicaps, such as not being able to go to the bathroom without assistance. He reports that he and Morrie now hold hands regularly. Morrie complains that the culture deems that natural physical need is socially embarrassing, and thus we must reject it. Mitch asks him why he had not moved to a place with a less selfish culture. Morrie tells him that every culture has its own problems, thus he has created his own. The biggest problem with most cultures, he says, is its inability to visualize and utilize its potential. Morrie advises that we must invest in people as we need others not only at the very beginning and very end of our lives, but during our middle years, as well.

Since his second visit, Mitch has brought Morrie delicious food to eat each time he arrives, as he remembers his professor's passion for food. Mitch had brought the food because he believed it was the only thing he could give to Morrie that would ameliorate his pain. Now that Morrie can no longer eat solid food, Mitch again feels helpless as he did when his favorite uncle died, as he is powerless against Morrie's disease and powerless to stop him from dying. Now, he feels he cannot even bring him happiness by



buying him food each week. However, on his eleventh Tuesday with Morrie, Mitch begins to understand how he can provide for Morrie, even without the gift of good food. Morrie can no longer eat any of the food Mitch brings him, as he is restricted to a diet of liquids. His condition is drastically worse as the disease has reached his lungs, which he had always said would mark his death. He is now reliant on an oxygen tank, and suffers violent, hour-long coughing spells, each a serious threat to his life.

But the gift that Mitch gives to Morrie is intangible. The gift Mitch gives to Morrie is his friendship and his time. Morrie appreciates Mitch not because he brings him good food to eat each week, but because he sits with him, listening for hours to his life stories and soaking up the lessons he teaches to him. The greatest gift Mitch gives to Morrie is the book itself, what they refer to as *The Book of Morrie*. Morrie wants Mitch to relay his story and his lessons to the largest audience possible. Morrie explains that "death ends a life not a relation" (174). Life ends with a death but name and fame do not end. So he brings out this book as the gift to Morrie by the request of Morrie.

Mitch also provides Morrie with the gift of physical comfort which Morrie now needs as much as a small baby would from its mother. Morrie thrives on physical affection in part because he was so deprived of it as a boy, but namely because in losing his independence, he has gradually metamorphosed into a child. He is saddened by popular culture's dismissal of physical affection as a form of nurturing that is necessary only during childhood because he knows from experience that it is necessary throughout all stages of life, for children, for adults and for the elderly.

This idea that Morrie is growing younger as his condition worsens supports his belief in an ever-changing self. Morrie believes that every individual, regardless of age,

undergoes infinite transformation and is aware of the mental, spiritual, and physical changes he has experienced since learning of his illness. Mitch, too, is gradually becoming more aware of the changes he is making in his own life.

Morrie asks to see the hibiscus plant on the window ledge of his study. Mitch cups it in his hands and brings it close to his professor's face which makes Morrie smile. Death, Morrie says after seeing the plant, is only natural. Morrie again mentions that a person can die without ever completely going away as they are recalled by the living who lovingly remembers them. The love one creates while alive, he says, remains long after death.

Brutally realistic, Morrie has never hoped that his illness could be cured. He tells Mitch that there is no possible way he could ever return to being the man he had been before contracting the disease, as he is now a completely different self. Mitch then asks what Morrie would do if he could have twenty-four hours of full health. Morrie replies, very simply, that he would do what he would have done on any average day, such as eat lunch with friends and go for an evening walk. Mitch is surprised at first, and then realizes that Morrie is trying to exemplify that there is perfection in the average day. Morrie tells a story he had heard about a wave on the ocean. The wave had felt good until it had realized that, like all the other waves, it would soon crash to shore and be destroyed. Another wave tells him not to be afraid, for all of the small waves are a part of the larger ocean. That story is about the real life of Morrie. He mentions there are two waves having conversation. He assigns the answer for himself. The first wave says "you don't understand! We're all going to crash! All of us waves are going to be nothing! isn't it a terrible"(179)? Second wave replies "no, you don't understand. You're not a wave,

you're part of ocean" 180). His story means that human life is to crash. Sometimes we are in center and after sometimes we are left to the shore.

"He wants you to come visit" (181). Charlotte had called the day prior to Mitch's visit to let him know that Morrie had not been doing well, a sign that he had reached his final days. Morrie is asleep when he arrives on this last and fourteenth Tuesday, and he must wait to see him. For a moment, Mitch worries that he has forgotten to bring tapes for his tape recorder. He has brought food for him, as usual, though Morrie has not been able to eat such food for quite a while. He apologizes to Charlotte for bringing the food, and explains that it has become a tradition. Mitch reads the newspaper while he waits for Morrie to wake, and again reads of murder and hatred. As he enters Morrie's bedroom, he notices a 24-hour hospice nurse sitting in the hall. "I had seen him like this only one other time—when he was getting messaged—and the echo of his aphorism when you're in bed, you're dead began anew inside my head" (183). Mitch gets great trauma by his aphorism of bed and dead.

Morrie is barely able to speak, though he manages to tell Mitch that he is his friend, a good soul, and that he loves him. Throughout their last conversation, Mitch holds Morrie's hand. Morrie cries and Mitch comforts him by stroking his head. He tells Morrie that he will return next Tuesday, as he knows that Morrie is tired, and leaves without ever having turned on the tape recorder. He gives Morrie one last farewell kiss, and finally, he cries.

Morrie had died on Saturday morning, the fourth of November. In the two days prior to his death, he had slipped into a coma. Each of his family members had worked various time shifts to watch over him, though Morrie had waited until they had all gone

to the kitchen for coffee to finally pass away. "When those he loved had left the room just for a moment—go grab coffee in the kitchen, the first time none of them were with him since the coma began—Morrie stopped breathing" (187). Mitch believes Morrie had died this way purposely as not to scar any of his family members in the way that he had been scarred by each of his parents' tragic deaths. Morrie waits this chance because he had to suffer especially by his mother's last respiration. The funeral gathering is small, though many had wanted to attend. Mitch recalls Morrie's suggestion that he talk to him at his gravesite, which Mitch does during the funeral. To his surprise, it feels almost natural.

Mitch reflects on how he has changed since his final lessons with Morrie. He wishes he could reach back and shake sense into the jaded man he had been before his reunion with his old professor, but finds comfort in Morrie's lesson that he is ever-changing.

Now, it is time for Mitch to accept that Morrie is dying and will not be with him on earth for much longer. Mitch's urge to yank the oxygen tube from Morrie's nose is a manifestation of his fear; he is afraid of what he will become without Morrie to guide him and essentially wants to revert time to a day when Morrie was strong, cogent and in good health.

But in time, Mitch realizes that to do this is impossible and that he must accept death as Morrie has with patience and courage. His realization comes when he hears Morrie speak about the pink hibiscus plant. Since the start of the book, the pink hibiscus plant has served as a symbol of life's fragility. The plant represents both life and death. As Morrie's condition deteriorates, the plant begins to wither and shed its leaves. The health of the hibiscus plant, in essence, keeps the pace with Morrie's physical

deterioration, serving as an example of nature's intended life cycle for every life, be it man or hibiscus. As Morrie's body deteriorates, so does the condition of the hibiscus plant. The plant's pink petals wither and fall as Morrie grows increasingly dependent on his aides and on oxygen. As his death approaches, so does the death of the plant. It is continually used as a metaphor for Morrie's life and for life itself. Like the plant, humans, Morrie in particular, experience a natural life cycle, which inevitably ends in death. Morrie must accept this inevitable fate.

Although Morrie's belief in the afterlife is not absolutely defined, it is strongly implied that he holds some belief in the possibility of reincarnation. Throughout the book, he and Mitch have discussed the beliefs of other cultures in the afterlife, such as the tribe that believe in miniature creatures (the soul) within each larger animal (the body). Morrie has also said that if he could be reincarnated, he would return as a gazelle, as he yearns to once again be limber and fast. The story Morrie tells Mitch on their fourteenth Tuesday together is also indicative of his belief in reincarnation after death. In the allegory, each wave on the ocean does not die, but becomes a small constituent of the larger body of water. Morrie's appreciation of the story can be interpreted to reveal his belief that after his death, he, the one small wave, will somehow return to the human race, the vast ocean, and again contribute to a cycle he has unknowingly repeated many a time, just as the waves on the ocean continuously break on the shore and dissipate, only to return with the white-capped crest that follows.

Reincarnation and renewal are presented as facets of both life and death; in life, Morrie teaches that a person is ever-changing and in death, looks forward to some form of new life with the natural progression of the life cycle. With Morrie as his mentor,

Mitch is able to reincarnate himself in life, transforming a man who was once motivated by material wealth into a man who is motivated by a passion to love and to emulate the man who has so touched on his life. Morrie reveals that despite his old age, he is still changing as every person does until their dying day.

Human beings do not bring anything with their dead bodies but they left their remembrance to the living people. Due to the love and remembrance of the dead people, the dearest relatives mourn on his demise. To forget the pain and sufferings of the demise of the dearest people, the living people do something to heal the shock. Some people make their statue and some people establish fond of various purposes of the remembrance of the dead people to avoid their psychological torture and some people extracts some writings on the dedication of the demise people for the remembrance. The whole world is moving on belief. The entire real story is the same which runs about the dearest professor. So, the traumatized mind of the author entering into the novel being narrator brings out the real story how he has left his days with his professor in their college life in Brandies University and even in the end of the life of the professor. The author spent most of Tuesdays of his time with his professor since his reunion period to relief the professor about the physical torture by the cause of ALS.

Mitch gets first psychological shock after listening about the Morrie's voice in ABC Television because he has broken the promises of their meeting even after the college days. Mitch has not contacted him for sixteen years. This creates a great psychological pain to Mitch Albom. While after listening about the sickness, the second shock produces in his mind because he is the best teacher of his life. Mitch has not met for sixteen years. He knows about the disease amyotrophic lateral sclerosis which is in

his professor, creates a great shock to Mitch. An incurable disease to Morrie converts an incurable trauma to him. In this way, there produce a great psychological trauma to Mitch Albom. These three subject matters of psychological trauma come in before their meetings after long gaps. After the meeting Mitch sees his best professor, Morrie, he dreams back in their Brandies University where Morrie was the oldest professor and he was the youngest student. Mitch compares his previous days in college and meetings with Morrie. He used to dance in the class, he plays with student, now he is in a wheel chair. It changes Mitch Albom's life when he sees about the Morrie's condition. It hurts Mitch's heart. They talk about their life and Morrie tells about his present condition and the upcoming his death. Mitch listen his best teacher's death from his own mouth. The professor wants to share his experiences to his old student, Mitch who was the best student of the Brandies University. It adds more psychological suffocation. Morrie's this condition creates a great psychological trauma to Mitch after the meeting of his best professor.

Various researches prove that the emotional pains and physical pains are the basic features of the psychological trauma. Recent research in neuroscience suggests that physical pain and psychological pain may share some underlying mechanisms of neurology. Psychological torture is found in the mind of the narrator by the cause of the ALS to his mentor. The disease makes him upset. Pain of ALS to Morrie draws him to the psychological upsetting. This upsetting mind becomes a background of psychological trauma.

Mitch Albom introduces us to his old professor, Morrie Schwartz and remembers his days as a student in Morrie's sociology classes. He recalls their mutual affection and

his graduation. Mitch reminds that Morrie is the oldest lecturer of the college and the Mitch is the youngest student of the class. Mitch memoirs the days of the college where Morrie has preferred to tell him as his friend. "Mitch I say. Mitch it is what my friends called me. Well, Mitch it is then, Morrie says, as if closing a deal. And, Mitch? Yes? I hope one day you'll think of me as your friend" (25). The saying hurts Mitch Albom after the demise of his dearest professor. They seem as if they are the teacher and student of their class. Their relation is only teacher and student. There is no any sub relation between them. Morrie's this statement comes true even in the eleventh hour of Morrie's life. Their relation converts from teacher and student to friends. Morrie wants his friend to be with him. So, Morrie arranged their meetings for every Tuesdays for their discussion of "Meaning of Life". So, friend becomes their second and final relation. He finally loses his best friend. Losing a friend becomes a great shock to his mind. So, Mitch reveals his hurt heart.

After graduation, Mitch faces the first shock of the terminal illness and death of his favourite uncle whom he idolized and who had always encouraged him in his endeavors as a musician. Mitch eventually gives up music and turns to journalism. He has nearly broken completely with his past when he sees his old professor on a segment of Nightline with Ted Koppel.

The following quoted aphorisms always haunt to Mitch. These saying are binds his mind to think about the Morrie. So, they become the most traumatic points to bring out them as the *Tuesdays with Morrie*.

"Dying is only one thing to be sad over. Living unhappily is something else" (35). Upon learning the news, Mitch flies to Boston to visit Morrie. During this first



session, Mitch is unsettled and overwhelmed by Morrie's candid comments about his disease and impending death. He is also put on the defensive by his old professor's relentless questions about his personal life and his own happiness.

"How about every Tuesday? (45)" Because Mitch has a daily routine to visit with Morrie on every Tuesdays. It haunts him to be aware. So with this question Mitch gives some times for Morrie.

"Once you learn how to die, you learn how to live (82)." Mitch brings a tape recorder to his third visit with Morrie, but shuts it off when Morrie becomes upset at remembering the death of his mother when he was a young boy. It adds even Morrie a psychological trauma because he has to leave his mother in his young age. It helps to learn to live.

"Love each other or die" (163). Throughout the book, Morrie recites a quote by his favorite poet or this variation in his own words. This is one of the most important lessons he wishes to teach Mitch and expresses on "Nightline". Morrie feels that love and compassion are necessary for a person to be fulfilled. Morrie says that when love abounds, there is no higher sense of fulfillment one can experience. Love is also important to Morrie as he is nearing the final days of his life. He feels that without the care of those who love him, he would perish. Morrie is not afraid of dying, as he so often tells us throughout the novel but he hangs on because he wants to share his story and his lessons to Mitch. It makes Mitch to be aware about the feelings of Morrie.

Morrie's physical condition is quickly worsening and Mitch arrives to find a spilled pitcher and glass of water. After the mess is cleaned up, the conversation

eventually turns to relationships and family. Morrie challenges Mitch on his reservations about love and commitment, until the younger man angrily ends the conversation.

Mitch talks about their class that there was a class of talking with a girl about human life and feelings. Morrie says "you closed your eyes. That was the difference. Sometimes you cannot believe what you see, you have to believe what you feel. And if you are ever going to have other people trust you, you must feel that you can trust them too-even when you are in the dark. Even when you're falling" (61).

Morrie always used to follow the culture but he has the experienced of all culture so he had develop his own culture. It also haunts to Mitch's mind. Morrie used to say in their every visit. "The culture we have does not make people feel good about them. And you have to be strong enough to say if the culture doesn't work, don't buy it" (42).

According to Howard Brody because one copes with illness with the strength of one's convictions, the "illness experience must be given an explanation of the sort that will be viewed as acceptable, given the patient's existing belief and worldview" (Brody, 6). It may force a change, "so that the story that will be told of one's life includes the previous life plan up until the sickness occurs, followed by a reexamination and a formulation of a new life plan" (83). And this involves grieving the old life of Morrie's life.

Everyone has different experiences with loss or threats but in almost every case, it changes the person. In Mitch Albom's *Tuesdays with Morrie*, Morrie experiences a major and irreversible threat on his life when he gets sick. This causes him and his old student Mitch to reexamine the way they lived their lives and the way they are going to live the rest of their days. In the society, people face various kinds of life during the living

period. Some people are waiting to die since their birth and some wait to death for the long sickness and some people left the world without the symptoms of death. The world is amazing.

After remembering Morrie's own physical body, he wants to satisfy by a great mourn and great scream. He says "I give myself a good cry if I need it. But then I concentrate on all the good things still in my life. On the people who are coming to see me. On the stories I'm going to hear. On you– if it's Tuesday. Because we're Tuesday people" (75). Mitch brings out this saying in this book for his self peace.

Physically tortured body of Morrie, collects his past with his scholar, Albom to release him from the alarm of his death. Waiting from Tuesday to coming Tuesday, his rest days are moving of the destination of Tuesdays. So his psyche searches a destination of Tuesday when he can express the dominated desire of his life. Mitch also adds various topics to forget the death of his dearest professor. To minimize the death, the tortured mind, Mitch becomes a character of drama where they are in the past of their college life. It makes them a teacher and a student in a class during the gossiping. So they both are trying to forget the physical pain and psychological pain respectively.

One day Mitch was calling to high school track coach but it goes to Morrie. Morrie likes the nick name. "Coach", he says. "All right I'll be your coach you can be my player. You can play all the lovely part of life that I'm too old for now" (31). Mitch has once talked about their sports coach. Morrie comes as the coach in their college life. Once again Morrie becomes the coach of life. Mitch is playing the game of life while the coach is observing with invisible way.

"It cracks me up. The whole time I know him, I have two overwhelming desires: to hug him and to give him a napkin" (31). This unfulfilling desire remains the same for ever on his life. Mitch wants to be in hug with Morrie but now he is no more.

Morrie wants to clear about any confusion of the classes even in the whistling of his death. "I wanted that clarity. Every confused and tortured soul I knew wanted the clarity" (66). He even says that confused and tortured soul. This saying psychologically affected to Mitch because Morrie even knows that Mitch gets psychologically affected. It proves that the tortured soul gives the great psychological trauma to him even in the life of Morrie.

Mitch has collected some list about their classes. They are "Death", "Fear", "Aging", "Greed", "Marriage", "Family", "Society", "Forgiveness", "Meaning of life" (66). While carrying this list after the class of Tuesdays, Mitch has to face a great suffocation at the Logan airport because the terminal was not working properly. People fanned themselves to wipe out sweats of forehead. It signifies that environment also plays a great role to add psychological trauma while the lists are in his bag.

When Mitch Albom reaches in new place there he gets the image of Morrie to be aware. Various sectors of life where now Mitch enters there he gets remembrances of the best professors' dialogues to be aware in the field. He says in his conclusion,

I look back sometimes at the person I was before I rediscovered my old professor. I want to talk to that person. I want to tell him what to look out for, what mistakes to avoid. I want tell him to be more open, to ignore the lure of advertised values, to play attention when your loved ones are speaking, as if it were the last time you might hear them. (190)

It is the day of Tuesday, especially their classes of fourteenth Tuesdays becomes the last class of the dearest professor for his final student, Mitch. So being the unique student of the professor, he leaves all his credit to his final student, it also becomes a special factor to be traumatized. So, Morrie loves and closeness mind creates a trauma by his demise. "The last class of my old professor's life had only one student. I was the student." It signifies that he becomes the only one student of the final class of Morrie's life. So he has to be responsible to bring out as a book what he has learned during their classes although there were no exams about what is the meaning of life. So to fulfill the desire of the demised Morrie he has to bring out the book as *Tuesdays with Morrie*.

As Schwartz's condition deteriorates, it signifies the hibiscus plant a top of Schwartz's study. It represents the natural trajectory of life. Schwartz tells the story of a wave crashing into shore, symbolizing death. He acknowledges his fear of death, simultaneously reassuring Albom that he will go on to something greater. Schwartz repeats "when you're in bed, you're dead"(131). It proves after the fourteenth Tuesday, the coming Saturday, Morrie leaves the world.

Mitch Albom keeps various poets and philosopher's views to add more stress to relief his psychological trauma. He mentions Henry Adams quotes "a teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops" (79). Teachers' teaching is not for a single moment. It stays for eternity. Mitch Albom has also kept W.H. Auden, Morrie's favorite poet's views: "fate succumbs many a species: one alone jeopardises itself" (122). Mitch Albom tries to give peace for demised professor's soul by keeping his favorite poet's views in his memoirs. He also adds Mahatma Gandhi's views, "each night, when I go to sleep, I die. And the next morning, when I wake up, I am reborn" (129). Mitch

wants to meet with his professor in the dream. So, he recites here the views of the Gandhi where sleeping is a kind of death. e.e cummings had given a salutation to his father which was cited by the Morrie's son, Rob, in memorial service, "my father moved through theirs of we, singing each new leaf out of each tree (and every child was sure that spring danced when she heard my father sing) ..." (189). This Rob's recitation adds a peace to Morrie's soul. So, Mitch Albom's may get a bit relief by putting the salutation of the family to his dearest professor. Mitch Albom wants to add more peace for the demise soul, so these four quotations are kept in single page separately.

While Mitch is coming for fourteenth Tuesday the environment gives him more torture. He gets more physical pain. He noticed some unpleasant and deserted images during this time journey to Morrie, the cut of the hill, the stone facade of the house, the pachysandra plants, the low shrubs, etc. He walk slowly stepping dead wet leaves that flattened beneath his feet, these all symbols signifies that he has to face unpleasant moment so Mitch and Morrie say good bye for each other. As those dead wet leaves flattened beneath his foot, the coach leaves all of his memoirs to Mitch Albom's head. It makes more traumatic to bring out their classes as *Tuesdays with Morrie*. So before meeting in fourteen Tuesday he has to face physical pain and after the meeting he has to face psychological pain that becomes a great trauma to him.

Linguistically, the psychological traumatized mind of Mitch Albom, starts this experienced book from the curriculum where he remembers the days of the last class in his house and ends the book with the same paragraph with an additional sentence, a single line paragraph which shows the Mitch Albom, now in single.

The teaching goes on” (192). The last sentence of the book proved that Mitch Albom now in single in teaching learning process. There is the absence of teacher’s physical body but Morrie’s all instructions are there in his mind which guides him for all his life. So, the Mitch Albom mind remains psychologically traumatized by Morrie's remembrance. He always walks single where the teaching goes on. Morrie is coaching him even in invisible manner.

“And he was gone” (187). This single sentenced paragraph means he left this physical world in single. There is no students, friends and relatives were participated while leaving the world because he has left the world in fourth November, when there are no people for a moment, the first time none of them are with him since the coma has begun- Morrie stops breathing and he left the world.

Mitch has used 'my professor' that signifies that the most closeness to them. 'I' becomes responsible to 'my' because 'my' is the possessive form of 'I'. So, Mitch becomes the responsible factor for fulfilling the desires of Morrie. There are some dots which have left by the coach they should be fulfilled by the player, Mitch. While saying good bye he teaches his student to say good bye by putting his hand to self chest and says, "This ... is how we ... say good bye"-"Love ... you" – "know you do ... know ... something else ...? " – "you ... always have ..." (185). These all dots need to fill. These all dots signify that the rest of the works are to be completed. So, Mitch Albom's mind gets great psychological trauma to complete the spaces of the dots. So, he leaves all as it is to analyze to all readers how he has to be responsible.

Mitch Albom presents all images as lively as they are for the seeing off to his friend, Morrie. He says that all surroundings are mourning in the death of the professor.

When there is funeral process, there is the wet grass, sky was the colour of milk, pond water lapping against the edges, ducks shaking off their feathers. This all symbols signify that the climates, surrounding and all human beings were psychologically traumatized of the death of Mitch Albom's dearest professor. It proves that Mitch himself gets a great shock so he can imagine the mourning of all images.

Mitch raises a question even in his acknowledgements, "Have you ever had a teacher like this?" He remembers his professor in the lines of the whole book. It does not become enough to him and he mentions this question for the readers to think about their favourite teacher. This question adds teacher's value and their love for their students. After reading this novel or even reading the acknowledgements, readers once diverts their mind to their teacher. Mitch raises this question keeping all the memoirs in his mind. It also proves that Mitch Albom was psychologically traumatized.



#### **IV. Conclusion**

Real depiction of human life is the key features of Mitch Albom's writings.

*Tuesdays with Morrie* is also about his real professor's life and himself. Morrie dies due to the fatal disease amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. Because of Morrie's death due to the ALS, Mitch gets psychological pain. The main purpose of the novel is to heal his psychological trauma of the loss of the dearest professor. In this novel, he collects all his memoirs of the past and brings out in the lines of the novel. So, this novel is the outcome of a psychologically traumatized mind of the author.

People are the superior animal of the world. Even small creature mourns for their baby's death. They care them while baby crying. It is human beings who mourn for the demise of the relatives and they express their mourning in various ways. Some people make their statue, some makes fond for help in their names, some brings out extracts for them, etc. In this novel Mitch has extracted his all psychological traumatic memoirs as in the lines of the book.

It can be said that this book is the fulfillment of Morrie's incomplete life's desires. These all desires stop due to the death. The death occurs because of the ALS. So, the ALS becomes the foundation of creating psychological trauma to the narrator, the author of the book. All the subjects which are stopped due to the demise of the professor are to be fulfill by the author. There is a strike in Mitch Albom's office, he has to solve the problem. He need to do his daily work for the news, he has to even give his times to his home. Then also he has to manage his time to his dearest professor for every Tuesdays who is in seven hundred miles far. It becomes the great challengeable subject matters to

manage for him. These all tensions have been created due to the ALS to his professor. So, the basic subject of psychological trauma is the disease.

Mitch Albom gets psychological trauma due to ALS to Morrie because he is the best teacher later becomes the friend. Morrie's reasonable behaviour for all people, he remains as the best teacher to Mitch. He used to behave all students as his friend. It attracts to Mitch even after a long time. So, Mitch meets his dearest professor after listening about the Morrie's life and the incurable disease that has attacked to Morrie. Morrie's romantic behaviour such as dancing, singing even in the critical time of life, doesn't stop to Mitch to be traumatized. Mitch thinks that Morrie's lessons for life are unforgettable. So, Mitch makes them a list in this book smoothly. His whispering and his pauses are also memorable to Mitch because they are presented as it is what Morrie has spoken. His pauses and speech quality, his behaviour automatically signifies that there is something happening in his life. Psychologically traumatized mind of Mitch get relief by presenting them all as it is. Writing something is to bring out hidden feelings then the writers get relief, if not these feelings enroll inside the mind that creates a great psychological suffocations, later it becomes a psychological trauma. So, Mitch Albom writes this novel to reduce his psychological trauma by sharing all readers about his traumatic feelings. While Morrie is living, the narrator runs here and there to make his mentor happy because Morrie is the best teacher of his life and a source of inspiration. So, he could not forget him from the college days and up to the end of the life. It won't be great things to say the ALS adds the physical pain to Morrie, converts psychological trauma to Mitch.

So, *Tuesdays with Morrie* comes out due to the ALS to Morrie. Mitch Albom extracts all his memoirs in this book from Brandeis University to the Morrie's funeral possession with various flash backs. Coming back to previous days are the great examples of psychological trauma. He extracts all memoirs in this novel to heal the psychological trauma. So, it won't be a great matter to say that *Tuesdays with Morrie* is an outcome of the psychologically traumatized mind of the author.

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