

TITLE: Tuesdays with Morrie

GENRE: Biography, Memoir, Philosophical Fiction

CRITIQUE PAPER

Death was something I have always been afraid of. The thought of dying, leaving this world, unexpectedly, in a life I may have never got to truly live – was my worst nightmare. I used to think that most people thought of that too; that the loss of life frightened them as well. So, when I got to read *Tuesdays with Morrie*, I was **hooked**.

Tuesdays with Morrie is a memoir written by American author Mitch Albom about his former Sociology professor, Morrie Schwartz. It was first published in 1997 and was later adapted into a television film in 1999. The book follows the story of Morrie, a bright professor whom Mitch described as someone who was truly compassionate, being diagnosed with Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. The disease caused Morrie to lose control of his legs first, and eventually spread to his upper body. 16 years after Mitch's graduation, he finally went to see Morrie again. Faced with his love and career problems, Morrie begins their last class together – *the meaning of life*.

But just what makes the book remarkable compared to other memoirs? What makes the novel special isn't about the death of Morrie, or his cheerful spirit that he kept through the end of his life – the story is exceptional because of its **philosophy**.

It touched sensitive subjects that we hesitate to talk about. Morrie talked about his death as if it does not scare him. He even held a funeral for himself alive. The truth is, Morrie fears death – like every one of us, but Morrie accepted his fate and made every day count. He saw the importance of living life to the fullest and giving back to people who truly matter. The book reminds us of the important things – life, love, and family (Wilson, 2019). Silence is another topic that was discussed in the novel. Morrie questioned our embarrassment about silence and finding comfort about noise. True enough, we often find it painful to face our core; we label silence as 'awkwardness'. Noise lets us ignore our most difficult struggle and our most precious possession: our true and profound selves (Leff, R.B. 2017).

It makes us feel normal. In a way, we could all relate to Morrie. Although Morrie seemed to be 'inherently' good and true to himself, the novel also discussed how life brought him to be like that. The novel discussed Morrie's "early mornings" where he raged and questioned what he ever did to deserve that – showing that good people are still people who feel anger and resentment towards the world, but unlike most of us, they move on from that and chose forgiveness.

However, such sensible and occasionally moving advice does not make up to a wise book. Mitch claims that Morrie's remarks have changed him but based on the evidence in "Tuesdays With Morrie," it's difficult to see why. It's no doubt correct to be advised that we should think more about love and less about money, but it's difficult to put such counsel into practice unless it's accompanied by an understanding of why we ever thought otherwise.

Nonetheless, the novel is inspiring and could offer us a valuable life lesson or two. In my situation, the most important lesson I learned from the story was that it's never too late to change your life and redeem yourself. What you do today will have a long-term influence on your life. Truth is, I still fear death, but I no longer fear my own fate. After all, Morrie said that death ends a life, not a relationship. All the

love you created is still there. All the memories are still there. You live on – in the hearts of everyone you have touched and nurtured while you were here.

REFERENCES:

Leff, R. B. (2017). *Torah with Morrie: The Value of Silence*. Aishcom.

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