

THE BIG THINGS
 - HOW WE THINK, WHAT WE VALUE -
 THOSE YOU MUST CHOOSE
 YOURSELF.
 YOU CAN'T LET ANYONE
 - OR ANY SOCIETY -
 DETERMINE THOSE FOR YOU.
 - MORRIE SCHWARTZ

NOTHING HAUNTS US
 LIKE THE THINGS
 WE DON'T SAY."

"I thought about how often this was needed in everyday life. How we feel lonely, sometimes to the point of tears, but we don't let those tears come because we are not supposed to cry. Or how we feel a surge of love for a partner but we don't say anything because we're frozen with the fear of what those words might do to the relationship. Morrie's approach was exactly the opposite. Turn on the faucet. Wash yourself with the emotion. It won't hurt you. It will only help. If you let the fear inside, if you pull it on like a familiar shirt, then you can say to yourself, "All right, it's just fear, I don't have to let it control me. I see it for what it is."

"Life is a series of pulls back and forth. You want to do one thing, but you are bound to do something else. Something hurts you, yet you know it shouldn't. You take certain things for granted, even when you know you should never take anything for granted. "A tension of opposites, like a pull on a rubber band. And most of us live somewhere in the middle."

"The big things—how we think, what we value—those you must choose yourself. You can't let anyone—or any society—determine those for you."

It's not too late to... ask yourself if you really are the person you want to be, and if not, who you do want to be.

In order to move on, you must understand why you felt what you did and why you no longer need to feel it.

"A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops."

"I thought about all the people I 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. Just a few tearful minutes, then on with the day."

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN LIFE IS TO learn how to GIVE OUT love AND TO let it COME IN

Love Each Other & Remember the Feeling MORRIE SCHWARTZ

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're in the dark. Even when you're falling. - Mitch Albom,

DEATH ENDS A LIFE, NOT A RELATIONSHIP.

"It's not just other people we need to forgive. We also need to forgive ourselves. For all the things we didn't do. All the things we should have done. You can't get stuck on the regrets of what should have happened. That doesn't help you."

"Dying is only one thing to be sad over. Living unhappily is something else."

"So many people walk around with a meaningless life. They seem half-asleep, even when they're busy doing things they think are important. This is because they're chasing the wrong things. The way you get meaning into your life is to devote yourself to loving others, devote yourself to your community around you, and devote yourself to creating something that gives you purpose and meaning."

"If you hold back on the emotions—if you don't allow yourself to go all the way through them—you can never get to being detached, you're too busy being afraid. You're afraid of the pain, you're afraid of the grief. You're afraid of the vulnerability that loving entails."

"Don't let go too soon, but don't hang on too long."

Tuesday's With Morrie

Name

Hour

If today was your last day on this earth, what are the top five pieces of advice about life you would offer someone?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

How is life like a “classroom?” Think of a time in your own life where you learned something from your life instead of in a classroom.

Who is someone (teacher, coach, mentor, etc.) who has made an impact in your life? How?

The Curriculum pg. 1-4

1. Where does Mitch Albom’s last class with Morrie Schwartz take place?
2. What is the symbolism of the hibiscus plant?
3. What type of class is Albom enrolled? What were the requirements?
4. What are some of the topics they cover? What is held in lieu of graduation?

Name

Hour

5. Explain Albus's recapitulation of his final day with Schwartz in 1979. What is revealed about each of them? Explain Morrie's parting request of Mitch and Mitch's reply.

The Syllabus pg. 5-13

1. Identify Morrie's fatal illness. What is the prognosis? What famous person is the disease named for?
2. What was one of Morrie's favorite activities? How do you think the loss of this experience affects him?
3. Who is Charlotte? What are her primary concerns after learning of Morrie's diagnosis?
4. How does Morrie initially react to the diagnosis of ALS? Quote and explain his feelings?
5. What is Morrie's approach to dying? How does he incorporate his years of teaching?
6. Describe ALS.
7. What does Morrie ask of his friends if they want to help?
8. How does Morrie conduct his "living funeral"? Why does he do so? What is the outcome?

Choose one of the quotes you wrote down and explain its significance and why you chose this quote.

Name

Hour

Think of a time when life was a “series of pulls back and forth” (when you want to do one thing but you are bound to do something else). Describe the situation. Which side won?

The Student pg. 14-17

1. Identify three major events in Mitch’s life since he last saw Morrie.
2. How does Mitch’s life change after his uncle dies? Why do you think he makes these changes?
3. What do you think of Mitch’s new perspective on life? What could be positive about this way of living? What could be negative?

The Audiovisual pg. 18-25

1. How does Mitch learn about Morrie’s illness?
2. Describe Morrie’s physical and mental condition the first time Ted Koppel interviews him.
3. How does Morrie initially react to Koppel? Why do you think he does so?
5. An **aphorism** is a brief sentence or phrase that expresses an opinion or makes a statement of wisdom. Quote one of Morrie’s aphorisms and explain what you think it means.

Name

Hour

6. During Koppel's interview, how does Morrie explain his philosophy about living with a terminal illness? What does he most dread about the decay of his body? Why do you think this especially bothers him?

7. Analyze the personification of death, "...he was not about to powder its nose."

8. Explain how Morrie and Mitch react to each other when they first meet at Brandis University. What does Mitch begin to call Morrie? What does this reveal about both of them?

Choose one of the quotes you wrote down and explain its significance and why you chose this quote.

The Orientation pg. 26-31

1. What is Mitch doing when he first arrives at Morrie's house after seeing him on "Nightline"? What do you think this reveals about Mitch?

2. Why do you think we choose to make such decisions even though we seem to know the "better choice?"

Name

Hour

3. How does Morrie react to Mitch's first visit? How does Mitch first react? How does Morrie introduce the "last class" he will ever have with Mitch?

4. Describe Mitch when he first met Morrie. How is Mitch able to relax around Morrie? What does Mitch call Morrie?

What are you ideal about? What do you think is important? What do you care about? Do you think when you're older you'll still care about the same things? Why do you think people stop believing/caring about certain things when they grow older?

The Classroom pg. 32-40

1. How does Mitch analyze his life during the past 16 years? Explain whether or not you think he is happy with his life.

2. How does Morrie explain the interest people have in him since his appearance on "Nightline"? Why do you think he refers to himself as a "bridge"?

3. How does Morrie explain the dying process? How does Mitch react?

4. What does Morrie mean by, “The culture we have does not make people feel good about themselves. And you have to be strong enough to say if the culture doesn’t work, don’t buy it.” How can people do this?

6. Explain what Morrie means by the “tension of opposites.” How do you think this phrase exemplifies Mitch’s life since college? Identify tension of opposites in your own life.

Taking Attendance 41-47

1. What major event does Mitch cover a few weeks after his visit with Morrie? How has Mitch changed since his visit? Why do you think these changes have occurred?

2. When Mitch returns from London, what has happened at the newspaper where he works? How does he react?

3. Is there someone in your life, other than a relative that you can just talk to? Why do you find it easy to talk to them? Why do you think it’s important to have someone like this in your life?

4. During his sophomore year in college, what does Mitch tell Morrie he wants to do when he gets out of college? How does Morrie react?

Name

Hour

5. Why do you think Mitch “lost his dream”?

Choose one of the quotes you wrote down and explain its significance and why you chose this quote.

In this section Morrie gives an aphorism about the most important thing in life. He says that, “the most important thing in life is learn how to love, and to let it come in. Yet, we think we don’t deserve love. We think we’ll become too soft.” Do you agree? Why or why not? Why do you think people find it hard to allow themselves to feel loved?

The First Tuesday—We Talk About The World pg. 48-54

1. Explain Morrie’s increasing dependency on others and his reaction to this.

Name

Hour

2. Mitch says that death is the great equalizer. Explain what he means.

3. What does Mitch mean when he tells Morrie they are “Tuesday people”?

4. Explain what Morrie did to teach his students about silence. Do you think this is an effective teaching tactic? Explain why you are most comfortable with silence or with noise.

Is it okay to feel sorry for yourself? Explain.

The Second Tuesday—We Talk About Feeling Sorry For Yourself pg. 55-61

1. How far does Mitch travel for his Tuesday visits with Morrie? How do you think he feels about being there?

2. How does Morrie respond when Mitch asks if he feels sorry for himself?

3. Mitch mentions two disturbing events. What are those events and why do you think he mentions these?

Name

Hour

4. What is Morrie's lesson about trust?

Write about your own regrets and experiences. What are some of your own regrets? What do you regret about these experiences? How would you change them? Do you learn from every experience? How do you know?

The Third Tuesday—We Talk About Regrets pg. 62-68

1. In addition to food, what does Mitch begin to bring to his Tuesday sessions with Morrie? Why does he do so? How does Morrie react?

2. Analyze Morrie's discourse on regret and Mitch's reaction.

3. List the subjects Mitch wants to discuss with Morrie. Explain which one of these is most important to you and why.

Name

Hour

4. When Mitch is in college, what is the subject of his thesis? How long does it take him to complete it? How does this thesis fit into his future career?

Choose one of the quotes you wrote down and explain its significance and why you chose this quote.

The Audiovisual, Part Two pg. 69- 72

1. What's different about this interview with Ted Koppel compared to their first interview?
2. Identify two signs that Morrie's health is deteriorating when Ted Koppel comes for his second "Nightline" interview. What physical functions does Morrie most dread losing? Why? Which one would you dread most?
3. What does Morrie say about his friendship with Maurie Stern? Do you think this is true assessment of being friends with someone for so long?
4. Explain the letter with a schoolteacher in Pennsylvania. What "pain" has Morrie retained for seventy years? Do you think you ever get over that pain?

Name

Hour

The Professor pg. 73-79

1. How old was Morrie when his mother died? How did he cope with her illness?
2. What happened to Morrie's brother, David? Why does Morrie feel responsible?
3. Who is Eva and explain her significance in Morrie's life?
4. What does Morrie's father prevent Morrie from talking about? Why? What was the only thing he had left of his mother's?
5. Where does Morrie's father want him to get a job? Why does this plan fail? How does Morrie feel about this? How does Morrie decide to become a teacher?

**“A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.” –Henry Adams
Do you agree with this quote? Write a letter to a teacher, coach, or mentor who has had a lasting effect on your life. Include how this person has made an impact on your life.**

Name

Hour

The Fourth Tuesday—We Talk About Death pg. 80-89

1. What is the newest addition to Morrie's house when Mitch arrives for his fourth Tuesday?
How does Mitch react to it?

2. Explain what you think Morrie means by his aphorism, "Once you learn how to die, you learn how to live."

3. Explain the metaphor, "He (Morrie) was a religious mutt."

4. How does Morrie apply the idea "if you accept that you can die at any time" to Mitch's life?

Choose one of the quotes you wrote down and explain its significance and why you chose this quote.

In what ways is your family important to you?

Name

Hour

The Fifth Tuesday—We Talk About Family pg. 90-99

1. Explain Morrie's philosophy about family. What kind of rapport does he have with his own family? Explain whether you do or not agree with Morrie's philosophy.

2. What is the "painful price" Morrie must pay for having children?

3. Who is Mitch's brother? What is their relationship?

4. What reason does Mitch give for being drawn to Morrie?

The Sixth Tuesday—We Talk About Emotions pg. 100-108

1. When Mitch arrives, how does Charlotte react to Mitch's gift of food? What does she tell Mitch?

2. How does Morrie think a person should approach emotion? How does this contrast with the way Mitch feels? Explain which approach is closest to the way you deal with emotion.

2. How does Morrie tell Mitch he wants to die? What prompts this statement?

3. What animal would Morrie like to be if he were reincarnated? Why do you think he chooses this animal?

Name

Hour

Choose one of the quotes you wrote down and explain its significance and why you chose this quote.

The Professor, Part Two p. 109-114

1. Explain Morrie's first work experience after receiving his Ph.D. and how this affects his future.

2. What effect does the Vietnam War have on Morrie's department at Brandeis University during the 1960's?

3. Morrie mentions different events that happened in the 1960's. What are they? And what did he see as their cause?

4. How do you know Morrie was an effective educator?

How do you feel about growing older? Do you ever wish you could go back in time? What do you think is the perfect age and why? What age are you most looking forward to?

Name

Hour

The Seventh Tuesday—We Talk About The Fear of Aging pg. 115-122

1. How does Morrie now feel about his dependence on others for everything except breathing and swallowing his food? How do you think you would react to becoming this dependent?

2. Briefly summarize how Morrie feels about aging?

3. Do you think it's possible to BE every age you have experienced living, up till your own? Can you still be a two-year-old, a sixteen-year-old? In what ways?

The Eighth Tuesday—We Talk About Money pg. 123-129

1. What doesn't Ted Turner want written on his tombstone? What do you think this reveals about him? How does Morrie react to Turner's statement?

2. What does Morrie mean when he refers to the "brainwashing" going on in the United States? Explain why you agree or disagree.

3. What is Morrie's philosophy about money and power?

4. What does Morrie believe is the key to a meaningful life? Explain whether you agree or disagree?

Choose one of the quotes you wrote down and explain its significance and why you chose this quote.

Name

Hour

They say you die the day the last person who knew you speaks about you. Do you agree?

How do we keep those we've lost alive?

The Ninth Tuesday—We Talk About How Love Goes On pg. 130-141

1. What is Morrie's latest aphorism when Mitch comes for the ninth Tuesday?
2. Does Morrie think he will be forgotten after he dies? Why or why not?
3. What is Morrie's philosophy about money. How does this compare to Mitch's?
4. What does Morrie want engraved on his tombstone? Explain whether or not you think this portrays his life.
5. What does Morrie think about being present, about paying attention? Why is this important?
6. How did Morrie put his energy into people? What is Mitch's theory for why he had so many visitors?
7. Explain the flashback about the death of Morrie's father. How does this his relationship with his father compare to his Morrie's relationships and how he prepares for his own death?

Name

Hour

The Tenth Tuesday—We Talk About Our Marriage pg. 142-151

1. Who is Janine? What does she do for Morrie? How does he react?
2. What does Mitch think is his generation's primary struggle with marriage? How does Morrie respond to Mitch's concerns about marriage?
3. Do you agree with Morrie's opinion about marriage and younger generations?
4. How long have Morrie and Charlotte been married? How would you describe their marriage?
5. What are some of Morrie's rules about love and marriage? What's the biggest one?

Choose one of the quotes you wrote down and explain its significance and why you chose this quote.

The Eleventh Tuesday—We Talk About Our Culture pg. 152-159

1. Describe Morrie's physical condition when Mitch comes for the eleventh Tuesday. What does Mitch mean when he says that Morrie's disease is dangerously close to his surrender spot? What does Mitch do to help him?
2. How has Mitch changed during the months he has been visiting Morrie?

Name

Hour

3. What does Morrie mean by, “People are only mean when they’re threatened...and that’s what our culture does. Do you agree with this statement? Explain.

4. What does Morrie mean about people building their own little subcultures? Explain why you agree or disagree.

The Audiovisual, Part Three pg. 160-163

1. What is Morrie and Koppel’s relationship like now? Why do you think Morrie is such a likeable person?

2. What does Morrie tell Koppel living means to him? What prompts his statement? Explain whether or not you agree with Morrie.

3. Quote Morrie’s aphorism about dying and explain how Morrie wants to die.

4. What are Morrie’s final words to the TV audience? To Ted Koppel? What did Morrie admit for the first time?

What do you want to be remembered for? Explain.

The Thirteenth Tuesday—We Talk About Forgiveness pg. 164-170

1. Quote Morrie’s aphorism about forgiveness and explain how this applies to himself and others. Why do you think many people struggle with forgiveness?

Name

Hour

2. What two things does Morrie regret in his life?

3. Who is Norman, and why is he significant to Morrie?

4. How does Morrie apply the “tension of opposites” to himself?

5. What does Morrie want Mitch to do after his death? Why is this significant?

Choose one of the quotes you wrote down and explain its significance and why you chose this quote.

What is the perfect day for you?

The Thirteenth Tuesday—We Talk About The Perfect Day pg. 17-180

1. What is Morrie’s aphorism about death and relationships?

2. According to Morrie, how can we die without ever really going away?

3. Explain Mitch and Morrie’s conversation about the perfect day and what Mitch concludes from the conversation.

Name

Hour

4. What does Morrie tell Mitch about his brother?

The Fourteenth Tuesday—We Say Good-Bye ph. 181-186

1. Explain Morrie and Mitch's farewell visit. How do you think each of the men has changed since their first lesson began?

2. What was Morrie's last word to Mitch?

3. What was Morrie finally able to do?

Graduation pg. 187-189

1. Why do you think Mitch titles the chapter about Morrie's death and funeral "Graduation"?

2. When and how did Morrie die?

3. Which of Morrie's words does Mitch recall as he watches Morrie's ashes being placed into the ground? Why do you think this is significant?

Conclusion pg. 190-192

1. What does Mitch want to tell the person he was before he rediscovered Morrie?

2. What does Mitch say is at least the one thing that Morrie taught him?

Name

Hour

3. How do Mitch and his brother reestablish contact? What do you think their future relationship will be?

4. What does Morrie call the book Mitch writes about their visits? Who names it? How does the publication of the book assist Morrie?

5. What makes Mitch miss Morrie more?

6. What does Mitch say about teachers in the conclusion of the book?

Choose one of the quotes you wrote down and explain its significance and why you chose this quote.

What's the most significant thing you have learned from Morrie?