

**A QUEST FOR SELF LIBERATION IN MITCH ALBOM'S TUESDAYS
WITH MORRIE AND PAULO COELHO'S VERONIKA DECIDES TO DIE**

AN ABSTRACT

BY

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This study explored the processes of spiritual development and the growth of self awareness of the main characters in the novels Tuesdays with Morrie and Veronika Decides to Die. It focused on the impact of social values on the main characters, Mitch and Veronika, and argued that the social value drove them to lose their sense of real self due to the prevalent materialist value. The process of becoming aware of self of the main characters was then examined by applying the theories of Friedrich Nietzsche and Martin Heidegger. It was discovered that they both learned to free themselves with the help of spiritual guides and that they could face with the reality of impermanence and mortality. After they reached a state of self liberation, they could eventually overcome their problems and understand the true meaning of life.

การแสวงหาอิสรภาพแห่งตนใน TUESDAYS WITH MORRIE ของ MITCH
ALBOM และ VERONIKA DECIDES TO DIE ของ PAULO COELHO

บทคัดย่อ
ของ
ศศิวิมล ฉายากุล

เสนอต่อบัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ เพื่อเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษา
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ในการวิจัยครั้งนี้ได้ศึกษากระบวนการพัฒนาทางจิตใจและการตระหนักรู้ถึง
ความเป็นตัวตนของตัวละครเอกในนิยายเรื่อง TUESDAYS WITH MORRIE และ
VERONIKA DECIDES TO DIE การศึกษาครั้งนี้มุ่งวิเคราะห์ผลกระทบของค่านิยมใน
สังคมที่มีต่อตัวละครเอกซึ่งก็คือ Mitch และ Veronika และเสนอว่าค่านิยมในสังคมที่
ผลักดันให้พวกเขาสูญเสียความเป็นตัวตนที่แท้จริงไปคือวัตถุนิยม ในการศึกษาได้นำ
ทฤษฎีของ Friedrich Nietzsche และ Martin Heidegger มาใช้ในการวิเคราะห์ จากผล
การศึกษาพบว่า พวกเขาเรียนรู้การปลดปล่อยตัวตนที่แท้จริงจากการอาศัยคำแนะนำจากผู้
ชี้นำทางจิตใจและนั่นทำให้พวกเขาสามารถเผชิญหน้ากับความไม่ยั่งยืนและความตายได้
หลังจากที่ Mitch และ Veronika เข้าถึงการปลดปล่อยตัวตนที่แท้จริงได้แล้ว พวกเขาก็
สามารถแก้ปัญหาของตนและเข้าใจคุณค่าของชีวิตได้ในที่สุด

**A QUEST FOR SELF LIBERATION IN MITCH ALBOM'S TUESDAYS
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**A MASTER'S PROJECT
BY
SASIWIMON CHAYAKUL**

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
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The Master's Project Advisor, Chair of the Master of Arts degree in English and Oral Defense Committee have approved this master's project A Quest for Self Liberation in Mitch Albom's Tuesdays with Morrie and Paulo Coelho's Veronika Decides to Die by "Sasiwimon Chayakul" as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in English of Srinakharinwirot University

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Rationale

In this paper, the researcher explored the processes of becoming aware of self of the main characters in two novels: Tuesdays with Morrie and Veronika Decides to Die. These main characters have lived ordinary lives in a modern society in such a way that many people, including the researcher, do. Their struggle to compromise with societal norms and to discover the values they truly cherish is worth examining as useful guidance for modern people to cope with this world.

Tuesdays with Morrie by Mitch Albom is about the reunion of the author, Mitch, who is a well-known and successful journalist, and his former teacher, Morrie Schwartz, who is dying from Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS). Mitch learns how to overcome a sense of emptiness and improve his life by witnessing the process of Morrie's dying. Veronika Decides to Die was written by a famous Brazilian writer, Paulo Coelho. It is about a beautiful young lady who has a normal and relatively easy life but who attempts to commit suicide because she thinks her life is dull and just the same old routine. However, she wakes up in a mental hospital where she is told that she has only a few days to live. There, she learns the meaning of life and how to live more happily.

These two stories have been chosen as they both have similar themes of conflict between the society and a sense of individuality or self. Moreover, both of them are based on the real experiences of the authors. Tuesdays with Morrie is based on the real-life meeting of Mitch Albom and Morrie Schwartz, while Veronika Decides to Die is based on the real experience of Paulo Coelho who was sent to a mental hospital three times.

Another reason that Tuesdays with Morrie and Veronika Decides to Die have been chosen is that they both are contemporary novels. The former was published in 1997 while the latter was published in 1998. The researcher believes that to study contemporary novels is useful because the results of such examination can be compared with the events or situations at the present time. As the novel can reflect society, we then are able to see our problems, our society and even our selves through contemporary novels. Tuesdays with Morrie and Veronika Decides to Die both illustrate the issues and problems confronting society and people. Both stories describe feelings of emptiness and depression, which is similar to which contemporary people experience despite. That is, having everything they need, they are still depressed and confused. Even modern material things and technology cannot help them to overcome these feelings. Additionally, they often make things worse. For example, in a report by the World Health Organization in 2004 in Japan, one of the most technologically developed countries in the world there were 30,247 suicides. The report suggests that a high suicide rate comes from the stress created by the increasingly complex social environment of a high-tech and competition-oriented society (“Suicide prevention”). As for Thailand, according to the Department of Mental Health, more people are getting depressed, especially in industrial areas. The rate of suicide is also increasing (“Department of Mental Health”).

This study aimed to examine the causes of the conflict between society and the individual through the main characters in Tuesdays with Morrie and Veronika Decides to Die. The researcher then explored how the main characters attain what Martin Heidegger calls ‘authenticity’ – finding the real self and living a more contented life despite the pressures of society. Although considerable research on Tuesdays with Morrie and Veronika Decides to Die has been conducted on the notion of searching for self, no

attention has been paid to self liberation. In studying these issues, the researcher has, therefore, applied aspects of Friedrich Nietzsche's theories of destruction and Heidegger's theory of Dasein and authenticity of self. These theories have been used to analyze the cause of the conflict between society and the individual in the self liberation of the characters.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to

1. examine the values in society that cause people to suffer and lose their sense of self.
2. analyze the major effects of conformity to social values.
3. examine the main characters' process of getting authenticity through the help of spiritual guides and facing death.
4. analyze the effects of attaining authenticity.

Significance of the Study

This study showed readers how the process of becoming authentic helps people overcome suffering while living with others in society and be able to see the meaning of life. Readers, especially those living in big cities, may be able to apply the process as a spiritual guide in order to cope with contemporary life and live more contently.

The Scope of the Study

This paper analyzed two main characters in the two novels - Mitch in Tuesdays with Morrie and Veronika in Veronika Decides to Die - by applying theories of Friedrich

Nietzsche and Martin Heidegger. The concentration of the analysis was on the following issues:

1. the conflicts between society and the individual, focusing on causes and solutions posed in the novels
2. the effects of the conflicts on the main characters: Mitch and Veronika
3. the processes of coping with the conflicts and the main characters' solutions.

Definition of Terms

1. Authenticity: a stage of self awareness in which people know their true selves and realize what is really important to them. Authentic people are not confused or upset with their lives and can reconcile their approach to life with society's expectations.
2. Inauthenticity: a stage of self that is dominated by others or society. An inauthentic person will do anything according to the social values in order to please others or get acceptance from the society. With an inauthentic person, true desires will be suppressed or ignored only because they are afraid of being seen as different from others.
3. Social values: beliefs or abstract standards which society considers as important; they are often considered to undermine individual values or the true desires of an individual.
4. Self liberation: a stage of self that can overcome the effects of social values. Once liberated, an individual can be independent from social values and thus authentic. Following self liberation, a person is able to balance his/her real self with social values in order to live happily.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is an overview of the related literature, including historical background, critical reviews of Tuesdays with Morrie and Veronika Decides to Die, and Nietzsche's and Heidegger's theories of self.

Historical background

The 20th century was a time that the world experienced immense changes, especially in terms of technology and science. The development of technology and science created in turn a world which is now characterized by consumerism and materialism. The century was also very important for communication and mobilization because they both became faster and better. In short, there were many innovations that helped people to have more convenient lives. However, that convenience may have come at a cost. For example, in recent decades, technology has developed to such an extent that people have come increasingly to rely on technology, until, arguably, they have lost touch with their 'real' selves. Agatha Taormina, in "The 20th Century Novel," describing people and society in the 20th century, says that people began to wonder about the existence of God, ask themselves about their worth and lose their sense of reality. The cause of the confusion and a sense of loss came from their continuously trying to keep up with changes in society, which could later raise levels of stress.

Furthermore, in the late 20th century, the loss of self and the stress of coping with rapid changes have been aggravated not only by new technology but also by a new culture of big corporations, which have become more influential since the turn of the century, the time that is known as the post-colonial period. Since everything is linked

together and the world is more ‘unified’, multinational corporations can control everything to the degree that the stability of big companies affects people’s lives. Their lives can turn upside down or immediately change just because of those companies. As Imre Szeman notes, when we study about the postcolonial period, it is about “the effects and consequences of the unequal relations of power between different sites... .” As big companies grow more powerful, people are more powerless. They live a life that is deemed acceptable or worthy according to the company’s standards in order to keep their jobs and to earn more. Their own aims or their own real selves are gradually ignored. In such a society, people experience a lot of pressure as they try to adapt to powerful sources, but have less time or opportunity to understand or care for themselves. Therefore, many people feel despair in their lives and finally they end up committing suicide. According to the World Health Organization report, suicide has become a major public health problem (“Suicide prevention”). To live in society is no longer ‘simple’ and comfortable; it is more complicated and tougher. People can be misled and make big mistakes if they cannot balance their own selves with social expectations. The struggle of such people is often depicted in modern fiction. Tuesdays with Morrie and Veronika Decides to Die are two novels that show the conflicts between society and the individual.

Critical Reviews

Tuesdays with Morrie

Tuesdays with Morrie was the first novel by Mitch Albom, a Detroit Free Press columnist, which was first published in 1997. It is immensely popular among both the public and the critics. The book has been republished 10 times and become an

international bestseller with 14 million copies in print worldwide. It has been published in forty countries and in forty-two languages. Its success does not only come from its reflection of people's lives in modern society, but also from useful advice for everyone who has become disillusioned by modern society. As Timothy Reverend Taugher writes, "The book chronicled what Mitch learned in their Tuesday meetings and how he was able to bring a new perspective to his own life, which was overwhelmed by work and desperate for love and meaning" (239).

This book is about how to live a life by daring to reject wrong or unsuitable social values, particularly values that focus on wealth and power. People chasing wealth and power cannot reach real happiness, as Mitch's case demonstrates. Charles Lauer states in "Health care industry, Values, Success" that Tuesdays with Morrie illustrates how people always chase the wrong things and are brainwashed to believe that money is everything; therefore, there are many lonely rich people in society. In order to see the meaning of life as Morrie does, people should devote themselves to helping and loving others instead of chasing wealth and material things. However, Lauer points out that it is difficult to go against this social value because materialism is still a prevailing value orientation. Moreover, many critics agree that this book accentuates the fact of death. In the article "Facing Death," Lynda Juall Carpenito-Moyet mentions that Tuesdays with Morrie is about how individuals face the possibility or reality of their death, and concludes that getting ready for our own death is the way to face death calmly. In Tuesdays with Morrie, death is to be accepted and cannot end relationships as long as we have love. Eugene Kane states in "Death, Life's Cruellest Moment, Reminds us to Cherish Life, Take" that Tuesdays with Morrie reinforces the message that death "needn't be a gaping hole in your soul or a disruption that fills your life with grief and regret." Death in this

story is presented as the way to help people to better understand life. Taugher uses Morrie's case as an example in stating that Morrie can understand the meaning of life by experiencing a crisis or death. He also points out that crisis or death is useful for all of us because it is like a turning point that helps us see things in a different way and we can get answers to difficult moral questions and even find the meaning of life (239-240).

To sum up, Tuesdays with Morrie provides many useful life lessons, for example how to oppose wrong social values and how to view death in a positive way; therefore, this story sheds light on the meaning of life and how to enjoy it.

Veronika Decides to Die

Veronika Decides to Die is an internationally successful book which was written by a famous Brazilian writer, Paulo Coelho. It was originally published in Portuguese and was first published and translated in English in 1998. Like Tuesdays with Morrie, the theme of Veronika Decides to Die is about being dissatisfied with life and in turn finding the meaning of life.

It received positive reviews from The Herald newspaper as a novel of redemption and has inspired and moved many people. Although there is no significant research about this story, many critics and readers have stated that it reflects and satirizes society very well. According to critics and readers, there are two main points about this story that give inspiration to its readers and critics.

Firstly, it shows readers how to maintain their real selves while living with others by daring to be "mad" or abnormal, and thereby going against some social values. It is similar to Tuesdays with Morrie in that they both argue that some social values may not

suit everyone and that people have a right to choose whether or not to believe and follow those values. In Veronika Decides to Die, the true self is presented through the process of madness. The book encourages people to have a new positive view of madness, which makes them willing to be abnormal in order to maintain their true selves. The development of Veronika in a mental hospital and the experiences that she gets from other mad people make us question the meaning of madness and celebrate individuals who do not fit into patterns society considers to be normal

Secondly, Veronika Decides to Die uses the prospect of death in similar terms to Tuesdays with Morrie. There is the idea that awareness of death leads to awareness of life. Dr. Igor. Believing that when people have an awareness of death, they will get an awareness of life, Dr. Igor lies to Veronika by telling her that she will not survive that weekend. Thus, the book's main theme is that by being constantly aware of death and thus life, one lives to the fullest.

Tuesdays with Morrie and Veronika Decides to Die, therefore, have the same theme. They are both about the conflict between society and the individual. The main characters of these stories have different lifestyles, live in different societies and are opposite in gender, but they both show the same sufferings which come from society. Thus, the philosophies of Friedrich Nietzsche and Martin Heidegger can be used to analyze both novels.

Theories of Nietzsche and Heidegger

Nietzsche and Heidegger were both significant German philosophers. Nietzsche was an important thinker in the 19th century whose ideas have become a foundation for many philosophers, including Heidegger who was a major philosopher in the 20th century.

In the present time, the theories of these two philosophers continue to influence many thinkers.

Both of them address the relation between people and society: the status of people, the influence from society and how people and society affect each other. Also, their famous works have the theme of self and society. Thus Spoke Zarathustra, which was translated by Walter Kaufmann in 1978, is one of Nietzsche's most famous books and is about the journey of finding the real self. Being and Time, which was translated by Joan Stambaugh in 1996, is an important book by Heidegger about the question of what it is to "be", or to exist in the world. Nietzsche and Heidegger both agree that modern society, which is materialistic and capitalist, causes people to suffer. This suffering comes from social norms that influence people to keep chasing money, fame and objects in order to get acceptance from other people in society. However, while they are striving to meet society's expectations, they gradually forget their real desires, forsake their real dreams, and finally lose their real self, since the more they follow the social mainstream, the more remote they become from their spirituality. Therefore, people in such a society can easily be misled by social norms, so they cannot find the meaning of life and feel empty as their spirituality is not fulfilled.

Superman

To the effects mentioned above that people get from society, Nietzsche offers the solution that one should be extremely independent from everything in order to be free of effects from any social norms or any rules. Nietzsche calls a person who is able to become independent in this way "superman." Nietzsche's superman knows what is good and what is evil and does not allow religion or society to determine these things for him. Superman finds happiness by determining his own values. Nietzsche believes that

superman is different from and better than modern humans because superman forges his own destiny; he is at his highest intellectual and creative ability. However, Nietzsche himself accepts that this superman seems only an ideal. One of the reasons that people cannot be a superman is that people have a consciousness that keeps warning them to behave in a way that they can live happily with others. Nietzsche believes that we cannot become free spirits or supermen easily because of our own consciousness. He states that humans are the only living things that have consciousness; in turn, however, humans dare not follow their real desire, unlike other animals that follow their instincts. Therefore, consciousness creates a gap between humans and nature.

With this in mind, Nietzsche believes that men must create their own values. In Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Nietzsche argues that people have to create their own order, purpose, and meaning by themselves.

Let your spirit and your virtue serve the sense of the earth, my
 brothers; and let the value of all things be posited newly by you.
 For that shall you be fighters! For that shall you be creators!
 With knowledge, the body purifies itself; making experiments
 with knowledge, it elevates itself; in the lover of knowledge all
 instincts become holy; in the elevated, the soul becomes gay
 (Kaufmann 77)

Master Morality and Slave Morality

Nietzsche also asserts that people's beliefs and traditions are simply interpretations for which the original reasons and causes cannot be found. Therefore, he does not want people to follow those norms, values or even morals. Moreover, those values or roles are maintained by those in power, or the elite group, which he calls the

master morality group. The master morality group is willing to do everything for power. They are stronger so they become rulers. Since they are powerful and love to have authority, they take advantage of others. There is an explanation of master morality from Bernd Magnus and Kathleen M. Higgins, in The Cambridge Companion to Nietzsche: “Master morality, typified by those in position of power, involves a primary judgment of oneself as good and a judgment of others in reference to one’s own traits” (47).

This is in contrast with the slave morality group, which is afraid to show its opinion, and just keeps following what the majority does. They do not like to take any risks because they want to live safely and peacefully. Therefore, they are often abused by others.

Slave morality by contrast, as the moral outlook of those who are oppressed, is primarily concerned with the reactions those in power might have to any contemplated act. Although slaves hate the master and everything the master represents, they still refer their behavior primarily to the master. Even self-esteem is achieved by reference to the master (Magnus & Higgins 47).

In our society, rules and what is considered good or bad depend on the master morality group. Most people have to compromise or suppress their real desires to go along with society. Therefore, Nietzsche believes it is not good that people keep following the norms and values of the majority. “You will yet perish of your many small virtues, of your many small abstentions, of your many small resignations.” (Nietzsche, “Thus” 171).

The master morality can be applied to today’s societies. In Beyond Good and Evil, Nietzsche describes the master morality group as having the power to determine a society’s values (125). In similar terms, Pierre Bourdieu, one of the most influential

social theorists of the 20th century who was influenced by Nietzsche (Webb et al 5), discusses the power of what he called the bourgeois class to determine a culture's tastes and desires (Fraser). This privileged class can refer to the powerful or rich people who can afford to consume and display goods and wealth. The middle and working classes look up to this group as superior, and subsequently feel inferior, embarrassed and in turn lose self esteem. Consequently, as Chang and Arkin show in the article "Materialism as an attempt to cope with uncertainty", materialism and pursuit of wealth make people have self doubt, and that trying to copy the bourgeois or the rich can cause feelings of insecurity.

Nietzsche's ideas serve as a foundation for Heidegger's theory of self. He uses the German word "Dasein", which applies to human existence.

Dasein

In Heidegger: A Very Short Introduction, Michael Inwood explains that Heidegger uses the word "Dasein" to refer to both the human being and the type of being that humans have. "Dasein" is a German word which means "to exist" or "to be there, to be here". For Heidegger, Dasein and other living things or objects are both "thrown" into the world. The difference between them and Dasein is that Dasein can be concerned about itself and other things around, and can also question its being (22). Moreover, in Introducing Heidegger, Jeff Collins and Howard Selina interpret Dasein in terms of relationships that Dasein has to relate with itself and other things. The relationship between Dasein and other things can refer to the situation that Dasein has to live with other people in society. Heidegger called this relationship "being-with-others" (63-65).

Society and Individual

As being-with-others is like living with others in the society, this relationship can make Dasein neglect its real self. Many critics have explained that to live in society, Dasein has to adjust itself to live with others by following the rules, avoiding conflicts and compromising in order to avoid any problems even though those values might hurt Dasein's feelings or prevent it from getting what it wants. Therefore, being-with-others can mislead Dasein away from its true self because it will be immersed in its surroundings and governed by others. Heidegger named this situation "they" or "they-self" (Collins& Selina 63). Dasein who is concerned about they-self will finally not dare to reveal or even find its real needs.

In this light, we can see many ordinary people at the present time in the state of they- self as they continue to follow social values that require them to be rich and have as many material possessions as they can. Especially in modern society, people can get lost in they-self easily as in such a society there are many attractive things to dominate Dasein.

As Anita Sparks Bremseth Byran notes in her dissertation "Coping with Modernity: A Heideggerian Reading of the Novels of Walker Percy", in modern society, people cling to objects and technology and they cannot see their own aims in their lives, because the society pays attention to material possessions and sets material success as the aim of life instead. However, Byran states that to get back to self, people should view and use technology or modern things as an instrument to help them live their lives, not to govern their lives. Otherwise, people will be prevented from knowing their own selves (19-23).

Although the relationship with others in the society or 'being-with-others' can cause Dasein to lose its real self and being as 'they-self', Dasein cannot escape from this situation because Dasein cannot live alone in the world. Dasein must interact with others one way or another. However, according to Paul Gerner in Heidegger's Being and Time: An Introduction, Dasein can choose what it wants to be because it understands its being as a possibility. There are two modes of possibility that Dasein can choose to be: authentic or inauthentic. If Dasein dares to reveal itself and go against the social values, Heidegger called it authentic. If Dasein surrenders to the social values or being 'they-self', Heidegger called it inauthentic. (7-17)

Authentic and Inauthentic

To be authentic refers to when Dasein can take its existence as its own or is able to be one's own self and not depend on others; this is in contrast with the inauthentic mode which means to depend on others, not oneself. As Collins and Selina in Introducing Heidegger explain:

Authentic being lies in the unifying of the scattered constituents of Dasein's being...They have to be recognized for what they are, not lost in the practical world, not washed out by the Them. In Inauthentic being, Dasein takes up the tempting offer of 'home' in the world, with Them, and allows itself to find its security there. Thereby it closes off possibilities, sealing out Dasein's recognition of its unity. (84).

Thus the authentic Dasein refers to people who do not let the social values influence their decisions. They know what they really want for their lives and the most important thing is that they can maintain their real selves even though they are

surrounded by others. This makes the authentic people live fully as they do not lose their spirits. Inauthentic Dasein, however, refers to people who are compliant with others and consequently lose their real selves. Inauthentic people live like a robot as they lack spirit and just follow the programs which are set by society.

However, Heidegger proposed that the solution for inauthentic Dasein is to get back to the real self by facing death.

Being-toward-death

Many critics explain Heidegger's theory of facing death as helping Dasein to return to being authentic because the anxieties of facing death makes Dasein accept the temporal nature of existence. Once Dasein understands that everything is not permanent, it stops clinging to objects or any norms. Dasein then will consider itself more. Finally, Dasein realizes the difference between itself and they-self or others in society. This awareness of facing death can help Dasein release itself from they-self, attain freedom and become authentic.

There is a psychological theory which supports the idea that facing death can have a positive effect or help people consider things in a more spiritual way. "Terror Management Theory" (TMT) developed by Jeff Greenberg, Tom Pyszczynski and Sheldon Solomon in 1986 explains that when people are facing a terrifying event, they will be "motivated to quell the potential for terror inherent in the human awareness of vulnerability and mortality by investing in cultural belief systems (or worldviews) that imbue life with meaning, and the individuals who subscribe to them with significance" ("Terror Management Theory"). Wray Herbert explains this system in Newsweek:

the brain has evolved into a kind of two-engine processor, which allows us to think about dying, even to change the way we live our lives, but not cower in the corner, paralyzed by fear. The automatic, unconscious part of our brain in effect protects the conscious mind... the brain is involuntarily searching out and activating pleasant, positive information from the memory banks in order to help the workaday brain cope with an incomprehensible threat.

Herbert points out that this theory corresponds to the belief of psychologists that people will have a greater sense of morality when they are approaching death or getting older.

To summarize, Dasein is like the existence or the self of human beings. Dasein cannot live alone as human is a social animal and to survive in the society one must be in contact with others. Dasein who can maintain the true self and not get unduly influenced by social values is named authentic. Authentic Dasein can be considered as one who has already found the meaning of life. In contrast, inauthentic people, who get lost in social values, do not know who they are or what they really want. Inauthentic Dasein cannot save its true self, it is, therefore, called 'they-self'. Inauthentic people will just follow what the majority does without considering their real desires.

Heidegger proposed the way to help Dasein to get to authentic mode by facing death, which is called "being-toward-death.", when people are informed that they are going to die, they will realize the impermanence of life. Then they stop clinging to material things or social values. Facing death will help people consider their desires or take care of their spirituality more. People finally reach their real self.

Moreover, this idea is supported by modern psychologists who subscribe to the Terror Management Theory (TMT) which suggests that when people face death their brain will try to cope with it by remembering the value of spirituality.

In light of what is mentioned above, Heidegger is concerned about the damaging effects of society on individuals. As social values, modern life, or even rules lead people away from their real freedom and prevent them from finding their real selves. This idea is quite similar to that of Nietzsche, who believes that people can get lost and cannot find the real self because of the modern world. Since modern society keeps telling people a great deal more about the nature of mankind than do individuals, the modern world deprives individuals of the strength or courage to fight for their real desires or to find their real selves. Therefore, the real self for Heidegger and Nietzsche has to be independent from other things or groups and have its own aims which fulfill the needs of itself, not society. Since Nietzsche and Heidegger's perspectives of society and individual are quite similar, the researcher then applied those theories to analyze the two books in this paper.

The slave morality of Nietzsche and they-self of Heidegger are used to explain the inauthentic characteristics of Mitch and Veronika who are followers that let the social values lead and influence their lives. Mitch keeps chasing social values and forgets his real dream. Veronika tries to accept the norms set by other people even though it is not what she wants.

The master morality concept of Nietzsche and Heidegger's theory regarding "being-with-others" are compared with the state of the societies in these two novels. Mitch and Veronika's societies both have beliefs and social values which are set or interpreted on the powerful groups in the society. Then other people somehow have to

follow and agree with them in order to get acceptance. One of these values, for example, is the notion that success is measured by property and money.

Nietzsche's superman and being-toward-death of Heidegger are applied for analyzing the process of becoming authentic of the main characters. Mitch and Veronika are able to liberate themselves from some social values and realize what they really want. Also both of them experience facing death which makes them understand and accept the impermanence of the world.

These applied theories were used to explore the four objectives of the study. The first objective was to explore the values in society that cause people to suffer and lose their sense of self. It was argued that materialism and consumerism make people suffer. The researcher gave the examples of situations, conversations or behavior to show the materialism and consumerism in Mitch and Veronika's society.

The second objective of the study was the effects of conformity to social values. The researcher used Heidegger's perspective about technology and modern things to argue that materialism can lead people to lose their sense of true self because people think of and use technology and modern things in the wrong way. Moreover, a social value that shapes people in the same pattern is analyzed as the value that makes people lose individuality. This point was supported by the theories of Dasein, which is about what Heidegger calls they-self, being-with-others and authenticity. Also this point was explained by Nietzsche's theory in terms of the master morality and slave morality. The researcher then showed the effects from social values through Mitch and Veronika's behaviour and thoughts. Mitch is confused with his life because he has become lost in the social mainstream, while Veronika has a deep depression caused by being unable to

balance her real self in the society whose values contrast with her real self until she feels she cannot continue living.

The third objective that was analyzed here was about how the main characters attain authenticity through the help of spiritual guides and facing death. The researcher examined the people who act as psychological and spiritual guides to shed light on the problems faced by Mitch and Veronika. For the process of achieving authenticity, the notion of social liberation is supported by Heidegger's view of authenticity and Nietzsche's view of superman. Facing death is supported by Heidegger's theory- being-toward-death. The last point of analysis was about what these main characters get after they achieve authenticity and the way they balance their selves with society.

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF TUESDAYS WITH MORRIE AND VERONIKA DECIDES TO DIE

In this chapter the researcher explored the social values that cause dissatisfaction and disillusionment in the lives of the two main characters, Mitch, and Veronika in the novels Tuesdays with Morrie and Veronika Decides to Die respectively. The researcher then analyzed what effects these social values have on the two protagonists. Finally, the researcher analyzed how both main characters undergo the process of 'self liberation' or became 'authentic', namely, with the help of the spiritual guides and the exposure to mortality. These issues were examined in light of philosophical positions held by Heidegger and Nietzsche.

Society and social values

Both Tuesdays with Morrie and Veronika Decides to Die portrayed the contemporary societies of the main characters as being materialist. In these societies people pursued wealth and possessions until they lost touch with a deeper, 'real' self and likewise lost any sense of individuality. Ultimately, they did not know themselves and lived their lives without a spiritual dimension, thus leading to unhappiness. Both Mitch and Veronika represented this kind of existence as they did not know how to reconcile their own values (indeed, they did not know what their own values were) with the values of their respective societies.

In Mitch's society, set in a big city of Michigan, the dominating social values were consumerism and materialism. Competition to acquire more and to be better than

others was an enduring motive for people and was valued as that which was supposed to offer fulfillment. Thus, the more people acquire, whether it was money, possessions or fame, the more attention and praise they received from other people. "Wherever I went in my life, I met people wanting to gobble up something new. Gobble up a new car. Gobble up a new piece of property. Gobble up the latest toy. And then they wanted to tell you about it. 'Guess what I got? Guess what I got?'" (Albom 125). The consequence of this was that people were judged both superficially and from the outside. In other words, it was only what one could *show off* that was valued, and instead of being judged for one's character, for example, one was judged on the basis of job, salary, what kind of car one had and so on. Additionally, the judgment of one's worth came from *other people* rather than oneself.

This process of being evaluated on the basis of one's possessions or status not only happened with people in a big city in America, but also occurred with people in European towns such as Ljubljana, the setting of Veronika Decides to Die. People there were also shown to focus on wealth. Money and fame were viewed as the primary mean to judge whether one had a good life. As a consequence, pressure was placed on children not to pursue the professions they wanted or to be happy from what they chose, but they were taught how to get money. Thus, Veronika's mother dissuaded Veronika from her passion to be a pianist: "No one makes a living playing the piano, my love...Forget about being a pianist, and go and study law, that's the profession of the future" (Coelho 85). Moreover, in this society people were also judged superficially in terms of their appearance, status and property: people, therefore, had to make an effort to create a good image to attract admiration of others: "She gave all her friends the impression that she was a woman to be envied, and she expended most of her energy in trying to behave in accordance with the image she had created of herself"(Coelho 161)

Both Tuesdays with Morrie and Veronika Decides to Die could be compared in terms of the factors that caused these two characters' depression, namely the social emphasis to acquire money, materials and luxury items. People willingly let these things define and limit their happiness.

Effects of conformity to social values

According to Heidegger, a lifestyle that was defined by and clings to materials or modern things was dehumanizing. It results in people being unable to find the source of their individual happiness. Heidegger argued that technology or modern things should be used only as instruments to help people to live their lives, but not be used to lead us or tell us how to live. Otherwise, people would be led astray and distracted from getting to know their own selves (Bryan 19-23). Arguably then, Heidegger's theories could be used to understand the sources and reasons for Mitch and Veronika's states of mind at the onset of each novel: they had lost their true selves and were not happy with their lives because they never tried to follow their own aims.

The consequence of their misplaced efforts to conform to social values by trying to find happiness in material possessions had led them to ignore their individualities. Living in society made everyone believe in the same things and acted in the same ways. To be influenced and controlled by the mainstream society without caring for oneself was called they-self. For Heidegger, people became 'they self' when they followed, acted or believed what others do or think.

For Mitch, society shaped him to focus on they-self and it was difficult for him as a young man to pursue his real desires or real self because defying his society's values would mean the risk of having a difficult life. Like many people, he became despondent easily because his circumstances did not change in order for him to become a musician:

"The world, I discovered, was not all that interested...the lights were not turning green for me...the dream soured..." (Albom 14). Most people chose to abandon their own values because they were afraid to end up having to spend their lives struggling against the mainstream. Mitch too was one of these people who eventually neglected his own values and became a workaholic and pursues wealth as others did. However, the inability to balance one's own values and aspirations with those of society caused suffering, internal conflict and confusion: "My days were full, yet I remained, much of the time unsatisfied. What happened to me?" (Albom 34) Mitch devoted his time to work. He did not even have time for his family and finally he felt empty and lonely.

Likewise, Veronika cared about they-self when she lived her life by following the wishes and expectations of her mother and others. She too neglected her desires to be a musician in order to please other people. Veronika did not have space for herself as she lived her life as others expected her. This caused suffering. Her life became routine and she could not find any enjoyment. Once she could not enjoy it, her life was meaningless: "She was even happier that she would not have to go on seeing those same things for another thirty, forty or fifty years, because they would lose all their originality and be transformed into the tragedy of the life in which everything repeats itself and where one day is exactly like another." (Coelho 9)

Their predicaments occurred because like all humans they must have relationship with others. Heidegger called this inevitable social existence 'being-with-others'. He argued that people could lose their selves when they had to live with others in society. "Dasein is subject to take-over bids by the Others. It exists as an 'I am' but also as an 'I-am-with-the-Others'. It cannot be entirely or securely an 'I am', if it also has to be a 'with-them'" (Collins& Selina 63). In other words, there existed a conflict among humans in that, while essentially individual, they must also co-exist and in turn be

influenced if not dominated by others in the social arena. This was a state of existing in what Heidegger called 'they-self'.

But being shaped by they-self obstructs people from self liberation. Mitch and Veronika did not care what they really wanted and instead cared how people would judge them. Therefore, they did what people in society think was good and right:

"In its inconspicuousness and unascertainability, the real dictatorship of the They is unfolded. We take pleasure and enjoy ourselves as they take pleasure; we read see and judge about literature and art as they see and judge; we find shocking what they find shocking. The 'they', which all are, prescribes the kind of being of everydayness." (Collins& Selina 65).

Moreover, being they-self led people to a state that Heidegger called 'inauthentic'. Heidegger explained that people who experienced the 'inauthentic' could not find the self and did not have any space for themselves. Therefore, Mitch and Veronika became inauthentic because they-self obscured their true self. Finally they could not enjoy their lives because all the things that they got ultimately satisfy society, not them.

To lose the real self and being inauthentic person could also be explained by Nietzsche's theory in terms of the master morality and slave morality. Mitch and Veronika could be considered victims of master morality in that they behaved according to the slave morality which kept following and accepting the social values or norms which were determined by master morality: in this case capitalist and consumerist ideology. Even though those social values or norms were not actually what they wanted, they initially surrendered to them. In Mitch's case, he followed the mainstream by chasing money and materials, though it contradicted the promise he made to himself that

he would never work for money. Veronika, obeyed every social expectation even though she thought that such a life was mind-numbing and routine-like.

Both Tuesdays with Morrie and Veronika Decides to Die described societies that could make people lose their real selves and where people could be led astray by seeking money, possessions and fame. The two characters of the novels, Mitch and Veronika, represented people who had lost their real selves because they let themselves surrendered to the master morality of they-self: they had surrendered themselves to forever attempting to meet expectations set by their respective societies. The result of this surrender, which also required that they neglected their real desires and their authentic selves, was a profound spiritual and emotional emptiness.

How Mitch and Veronika become authentic

There were two factors that helped Mitch and Veronika attained self liberation or authenticity. Firstly, Mitch and Veronika met people who acted as spiritual guides as they guided Mitch and Veronika to release themselves from social values. Secondly, they learnt the meaning of life through terminal illness.

Spiritual guides

Spiritual guides were significant characters in Tuesdays with Morrie and Veronika Decides to Die and acted as the main catalysts leading Mitch and Veronika to clarify the source of their problems as well as the solutions to them. Morrie was a spiritual guide for Mitch, while Zedka and Mari were spiritual guides for Veronika. They were called ‘spiritual guides’ in this paper because they showed Mitch and Veronika the way to seek and attain their real selves as opposed to their constructed selves in materialist society where people had no time or chance to consider their own feelings, emotions and spirits.

These spiritual guides had similar qualities: they were mature and were themselves enduring difficult times in their lives. Morrie, Zedka and Mari were more mature and had more experience than Mitch and Veronika. Since they had all faced the world more and dealt with more problems, they were able to see the causes of life's problems more clearly. Moreover, these spiritual guides had already passed the crises of their lives. Morrie was terminally ill while Zedka had dealt with her depression which was destroying her life. Mari suffered terrible panic attacks which resulted in losing her job and her family. All of them, after passing through personal crises appreciated their lives and could see the worth of living. Zedka, for example, notes: "When I came here, I was deeply depressed. Now I'm proud to say I'm mad...I'm going to allow myself to do a few foolish things...But I know that my soul is complete, because my life has meaning..." (Coelho 148). Thus the crises in their lives had taught them an important lesson about how to choose and balance between their own values and those of society. They then realized the dangers of social values and material things and learnt to release themselves. As Morrie told Mitch: "Well, for one thing, the culture we have does not make people feel good about themselves. We're teaching the wrong things. And you have to be strong enough to say if the culture doesn't work, don't buy it. Create your own" (Albom 35 -36). These experiences were important for them and others as well because their own crisis made them understand life, and later they could transfer this understanding to others, as when Mari taught Veronika: "That's how it should be with you; stay mad, but behave like normal people. Run the risk of being different, but learn to do so without attracting attention. Concentrate on this flower and allow the real "I" to reveal itself." (Coelho 92).

With the help of these spiritual guides, Mitch and Veronika could gradually become authentic or attain liberation from society by releasing themselves from social values. From his meetings with Morrie, Mitch released himself from social values little by little

after he learnt to understand his real self and society. He started to take risks by not following all social values."...I no longer rented a cellular phone for the rides from the airport. Let them wait, I told myself, mimicking Morrie" (Albom 55). He gradually realized that he had a right to choose what he wanted because he started to agree with Morrie's perspective. During the process of liberating himself from society, Mitch recalled his dreams and his real self which had been forgotten for a long time: "Morrie's high, smoky voice took me back to my university years, when I thought rich people were evil, a shirt and tie were prison clothes...I promised myself I would never work for money..."(Albom 33-34). Finally his empty feeling was overcome when he had time to consider society and himself more "...I liked myself better when I was there" (Albom 55).

Heidegger's theory of authenticity could be used to understand Mitch's development. Heidegger believed that when people became their own master and independent from the domain of society, they were authentic because they could act according to their own will and feeling. "Authentic historiography is 'a way of painfully detaching oneself from the falling publicness of the 'today'" (Heidegger 397). As we could see from Mitch's case, when he detached himself from the main society he could see the suffering of others around him. "...I had gotten knocked over by a British photographer who barely muttered 'Sorry' before sweeping past ...I thought of something else Morrie had told me: 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...I know he was right" (Albom 43). Mitch thus became more reflective and meditative.

To detach from social values and become authentic could also be explained by Nietzsche's theory in terms of superman, as releasing the real self from society could refer to freeing the spirit which was one of the significant qualities of the superman "He is called a free spirit who thinks differently from what, on the basis of his origin, environment, his class and profession, or on the basis of the dominant views of the age, would have been expected of him." (Nietzsche 108).

Veronika could free her real self from social values by understanding society and herself. Veronika learnt to understand society from Zedka. Zedka taught her about society by telling her the king story. The story was about a kingdom where everyone went mad because they drank a magic potion. However, the king and his family did not go mad because they had a separate well from the others. The king tried to help his people, but they thought that the king was mad. Then the people turned against the king. When the king decided to leave his throne, the queen suggested that they should drink the magic water in order to be the same as their people. Finally, they drank the water. They then went mad like the others, and could get along well with them so they could govern the kingdom happily. (Coelho 30-31). What Zedka would like to explain was comparable with Nietzsche's theory of master morality and slave morality because the king story illustrated that in society people always had to choose to follow the majority's norms in order to get acceptance, even though they had to sacrifice their real selves. The story allowed Veronika to understand why she had been unable to enjoy living. She realized that she was a conformist or follower - comparable with being a slave in Nietzsche's philosophy – who accepted to follow all society's rules and expectations:

“...she had found everything so stupid that she had ended up accepting what life had naturally imposed on her. In adolescence, she thought it was too early to choose; now, in youth, she was convinced it was too

late to change. ..She had given up many of her desires so that her parents would continue to love her as they had when she was a child..." (Coelho 39).

With Mari's teaching, Veronika dared to release her real feelings and desires. For example, she slapped someone when she felt angry. She cried out loud in a public place. She masturbated without any embarrassment in front of a man she liked. She then liked the feeling of being free from social values or anything. To release her feelings was like claiming freedom from social obligations and self control. This sense of freedom, that she had never tasted before, helped her to understand herself better: "I didn't know that other Veronikas existed inside me, Veronikas that I could love" (Coelho 59). This feeling made her feel that life was not meaningless or boring. She knew that she could have pleasure from life when she was being herself.

If we consider Veronika's case from Heidegger's perspective, we could see that she could release her real self, as Mitch did, by detaching herself almost totally from social values because living in the mental hospital gave her a chance to become detached. Therefore, she was also finally able to transform herself from inauthentic into authentic.

Again, like Mitch, what Veronika did in the mental hospital also supported the notion of superman. She dared to go against the social values and any master moralities. While she was in the hospital, she was free from society and the slave morality situation. This place was like another world where any values or master morality did not exist. People could be like a superman and free themselves from the social values. Therefore, life was worth living because Veronika no longer wanted to die after she had learned from her spiritual guides how to release herself.

Facing death

According to Heidegger's theory of being-toward-death, facing death led people into the authentic mode because people could learn the most important concept of life, namely its impermanence. Once people understood and accepted that life did not last forever, they would become more concerned about their quality of life and spent more time considering their real desires instead of clinging to social values (Inwood 77-78). This argument was certainly borne out in both novels in which Mitch and Veronika each had to deal with terminal illness which was a factor that helped them understand their real self and became authentic.

The modern society in which Mitch lived made people inauthentic and oriented to they-self. In this society people viewed death as a taboo topic. Heidegger noted, inauthentic people treated death as if it would never happen to them. They somehow denied it or refused to think or talk about it. People who had ideas like this were caught in they-self forever because if they did not understand death they would not understand themselves. Therefore, the way to understand oneself or to attain freedom from they-self was to understand and accept the temporality of life. "Awareness of one's own death snatches one from the clutches of the 'they': since Dasein must die on its own-dying is not a joint or communal enterprise-death." (Inwood 70). Mitch gradually accepted the temporality of life by witnessing Morrie's illness and death. At first he did not allow Morrie to say that he was dying because as an inauthentic person at this stage he (Mitch) could not accept the fact of death. "Everyone knows they're going to die, but nobody believes it." (Albom 80). However, by facing Morrie's terminal illness, Mitch accepted that nothing was permanent and he himself had to die someday as well. In keeping with Heidegger's argument, Morrie told Mitch "To know you're going to die, and to be prepared for it any time. That's better. That way you can actually be more involved in

your life while you're living...Once you learn how to die, you learn how to live.”(Albom 81-82). Therefore, the terminal illness led him to stop clinging to money, power, or material things. He gradually stopped chasing and following social values, but began to look at his own feelings more. As Bryan noted “...those who realize that they will one day die and be ‘nothing’ realize also the importance of responding to life as individuals and of being all they can be”(Bryan 15).

For Veronika, even though at first she attempted to commit suicide, it did not mean that she accepted death or understood herself or had any kind of freedom. In contrast, it was the act that Heidegger called ‘doing something silly’ which happened with inauthentic people while they were in they-self. (Inwood 70). However, while she was in the mental hospital, Veronika actually faced the true profundity of death which made her anxious.

The very moment she thought this, she noticed a sharp pain in her chest, and her arm went numb. Veronika felt her head spinning. A heart attack!...Veronika was horrified to realize that she was about to experience the worst of her fears: suffocation. She was going to die as if she were being buried alive, or had suddenly been plunged into the depths of the sea. (Coelho 73-74).

As Heidegger argued, the anxiety that occurred at the time one faced death led people to a moment of vision. This vision took people to their inner consciousness. After that, people learnt about impermanence and understood how to live life (Chantarottron). For Veronika, her vision and what she learnt from her spiritual guides led her to choose to be free from they-self and to consider her desires, emotions and the real self more

“How much time have I got left?...Twenty-four hours, perhaps less...I want to ask two favors. First, that you give me some medication, an

injection or whatever, so that I can stay awake...I've got a lot to do, things that I always postponed for some future date, in the days when I thought life would last for ever. Things I'd lost interest in, when I started to believe that life wasn't worth living." (Coelho 126-127).

Effect of attaining authenticity (self liberation)

Reaching the authentic mode changed Mitch and Veronika's lives in a positive way. Mitch considered himself, spent time on himself and loved himself more. It also helped him solve his problems with his brother because by being authentic he had already learned how to respect and relate to others with sincerity and without feeling embarrassed to show it even though this might go against social values.

Not long after Morrie's death, I reached my brother in Spain. We had a long talk. I told him I respected his distance, and that all I wanted was to be in touch—in the present, not just the past—to hold him in my life as much as he could let me. "You're my only brother," I said. "I don't want to lose you. I love you." I had never said such a thing to him before. (Albom 190-191).

For Veronika, becoming authentic also made her happy as she's already learned how to maintain her real self while living in society: "She would consider each day a miracle, which indeed it is when you consider the number of unexpected things that could happen in each second of your fragile existences." (Coelho 191).

From the two main processes discussed we could see how becoming authentic changed Mitch and Veronika's lives. Once Mitch and Veronika recognized their real self, they could reconcile themselves with their respective societies, since when people

understood themselves they were able to understand their experiences. They then could live happily and adapted themselves to their surroundings as they truly knew who they were, what they wanted and what the reason for living life was.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR FURTHER STUDIES

By using Heidegger and Nietzsche's theories to analyze Tuesdays with Morrie and Veronika Decides to Die, this paper found that social values often caused inner conflicts in people as they tried to reconcile their own values with those of their society. In turn, the resolution of these conflicts was to balance the needs of society with the needs of the individual. In order to get to this balance, the individual had to know how to attain self liberation or seek 'authenticity'

The social value that was examined concerned materialism, as both novels showed how this aspect of society pressure people into the same patterns of thought and behavior to believe that the acquisition of material objects made one happy. This social value led people to set their aims with consumer goods and objects and lost their real aims of achieving happiness or at least contentment in life. The value also made people neglect their individuality and not dare to show what individuality they have. It was argued that materialism caused Mitch and Veronika to be dissatisfied with their lives since this social value not only contradicts people's real desires but also inhibited the spiritual dimension in their lives and rejected their individuality.

The solution to this problem required that the individual seek self liberation and authenticity. This paper compared the two novels in order to illustrate the similar ways for getting to self liberation or authenticity. This step started with learning to take a risk to be different, as both main characters had previously followed mainstream society. Once they had learned to become liberated, they were able to get closer to their real

selves because their real needs were no longer suppressed or confined. They then could see the meaning of life and their unhappiness gradually passes.

In addition, the help of others or external experiences played a big part in the main characters' social liberation and learning process. These people acted as their spiritual guides. Morrie taught Mitch to express his feelings more and dare to go against some social values. Zedka and Mari revealed to Veronika their experiences and views on life that enlightened her and encouraged her to free herself.

Another significant thing that led these main characters to the state of self liberation or authenticity and allowed them to balance the needs of society with their own needs was to face death. Mitch and Veronika had to face death and this taught them an important lesson of life, although they experienced it quite differently; Mitch dealt with death through Morrie's sickness while Veronika faced it with her suicide attempt, but both finally accepted the reality of death. Thus, an important theme of both novels was that facing death and accepting the temporality of life made people reach what Heidegger called authenticity

The help of spiritual guides to get to social liberation, together with accepting the truth of death, allowed people to become authentic. To be so not only meant finding the real self but also understanding others and everything around them. Mitch and Veronika found who they were and what they wanted and they attained happiness by learning to balance their lives even though there were many things in their societies that were still in conflict with their real self. Therefore, becoming authentic by learning how to be different and accepting the impermanence of life helped people attain an awareness of self and led them to a new perspective on life

Recommendations for Further Studies

1. As Thai society becomes more materialistic, there should be a study on what social values make Thais suffer the most and which values cause inauthenticity for the Thai people and in turn how Thai people get to authenticity.
2. There should be a further study on how males and females respond to the pressures of society and its expectations and whether males and females use similar ways to cope with them or not.
3. Since society keeps changing, there should be a study on how people in other periods of time got through the conflict between society and individuality.
4. Authenticity is not easily attained by all people. Therefore; the effect of being unable to reach authenticity should be studied.
5. There should be a study on other stories whose characters also become socially liberated and face death in order to become authentic.
6. There should be an application of other philosophers and their theories to these novels.

The researcher believes that these two books are not only for entertainment, but that they also portray the world in the present time when people pursue material success and ignore their spiritual lives and individualities. Such behavior is also increasingly seen in Thailand, where the society is becoming more materialistic. People like to consume more and are always in search of buying the latest innovations. Although those things are in trend for only a few months, most people keep updating and buying new versions and releases of gadgets and toys and accessories. Thus, the possession of consumer items becomes a measure of life and success, while spirituality is ignored. This can be seen in the abandonment and deterioration of religion. The temple is no longer the center of

society, as the department store has taken its place. People do not refine their inner lives; they cannot live in society happily. People care for each other less and less and there are a lot of disagreements and arguments which defy compromise because the lack of spirituality leads people to ignore understanding others and even themselves.

APPENDIX I

Summary of Tuesdays with Morrie

The story is about the reunion between a university student, Mitch Albom, and his professor, Morrie Schwartz who is going to die from Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS). Mitch, a sportswriter, is a former student of Morrie who was a sociology professor at Brandeis University. After Mitch graduated, he did not keep in touch with anyone at the university. He does not even open the newsletters from his university because he thinks they are only asking for donations. He spends all of his time working hard in a variety of jobs until he becomes successful and rich. However, he also somehow feels unhappy. One day he sees Morrie on the news on television by chance and learns that his favourite professor is dying. He realizes that he should visit him. After the first meeting, they decide to meet every Tuesday. In these meetings Morrie teaches Mitch the meaning of life and how to live. This helps Mitch to reconsider himself, the society and life more until he can solve a long standing problem between himself and his brother. Mitch gradually attains happiness that he has not felt for a long time. He finds that everything that they talk about is very useful. Therefore, they record their discussions, as if they are doing their last thesis. Mitch Albom reveals all these experiences through this book with a hope that it will help people to live a more fulfilling life

APPENDIX II

Summary of Veronika Decides to Die

It is about a 24 year old librarian who has everything she could wish for. She is young, pretty, has plenty of attractive boyfriends, a steady job and a loving family. However, she finds that her life is boring because it has become the old same routine. She is afraid that she has to live life like this forever. She thinks there is nothing to do about this and that she is powerless to change this routine. Therefore, she attempts to commit suicide by taking an overdose of sleeping pills. However, she wakes up in a mental hospital, Vilete, where the chief doctor, Dr. Igor, does an experiment on her. He wants to prove that people will have an appreciation of life when they are faced with their own death. Therefore, Veronika is told that she has only a few days left because her heart is damaged. During her stay in the mental hospital, Veronika meets three important people; Zedka, Mari and Eduard who make a big impact on her life. Zedka has lived in Vilete for a long time even though her depression is cured. Although Zedka is about to leave Vilete while Veronika has just arrived, Veronika still gets a life lesson from Zedka about how to understand and live in a society. Mari is a member of the Fraternity, a group of long standing members who could have left several years ago, but stay at the state's expense due to the hospitals familiarity. Mari teaches Veronika to release her emotion and be herself. Eduard is a schizophrenic, but he is the one who teaches Veronika about giving and receiving true love. From these people's teachings Veronika sees life in a new perspective. She realizes the value of every moment in her life and learns how to live happily.

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