

Dear Mr. Albom:

My dad has been a teacher for more than 40 years. He began to teach high school when he left the army, and he later became a university teacher. I like having a father who teaches, but I did not understand how he valued his career until I read your book, Tuesdays with Morrie. Your book had a profound impact on me; it helped me understand my father better while at the same time I learned about Morrie Schwartz. Now I must tell you at the beginning of this letter that my father is no Morrie Schwartz. He is tall where Morrie is short, and he teaches journalism not sociology, but more importantly my father does not suffer from an incurable disease.

Despite their differences, my dad is as thoroughly committed a teacher as was Morrie in your book, and he has made a difference in the lives of thousands of students. In fact, rarely can my mom and I go shopping in Indianapolis without some man or woman coming up to us to thank my dad for changing some aspect of his or her life. I have never seen my dad teach although I have visited his school and met some of his students, and I have seen the respect they have for my father. Yet, I never understood the passion he brought to teaching until I read your conversations with Morrie, and for the first time learned about the difference a good teacher can make in the lives of students.

In your introduction to the "Fourth Tuesday" chapter, you quote Henry Adams who my Dad told me was the grandson of a President and the great-grandson of another. Adams said, "A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops." You make it clear that a teacher can influence if only he is compassionate, caring, and loving by nature, and only if he cares about each individual he meets. In your book, Morrie Schwartz had these qualities. My father shares similar qualities because I have heard him talk about students, and I have heard him worry about their failures and become excited about their successes.

Until I read your book, I never understood how my dad could do the same thing all his life, and why he seemed content to attend the same school, on the same street, without getting bored or tired and without complaining. Perhaps his enthusiasm for teaching can be explained by what you write on page 36 of your book. You say that many people with "far smaller problems than Morrie are so self-absorbed, their eyes glaze over if you speak more than 30 seconds." You paint a picture of people too busy to listen and too busy to care. Then you quote a lesson from Morrie: "Part of the problem, Mitch is that everyone is in such a hurry. People haven't found meaning in their lives, so they're running all the time looking for it. They think the next car, the next, the next job. Then they find those things are empty, too, and they keep running."

After reading that page, and, of course, finishing the book, I finally understood what has driven my dad and why he considers that he has lived a satisfying life. Material things never matter to my father because he has taken time to learn what is important in his life.

My father always has time for his students. They call him at home, and he offers advice when called upon, and he encourages his students constantly. In addition he lives the

values he teaches students, and they know that whenever they need something, he will be available. Morrie Schwartz was like that and when I met him in your book, I understood my dad better and what he experiences trying to guide his students.

Finally, Mr. Algom I wanted to thank you for writing a book that had more love than sadness in it, and creating a remarkable picture of a wonderful teacher who showed humor, love, and hope not only to his students but to everyone he met. Because I read your book, I will see my father more clearly. I will appreciate what he has accomplished, and I will understand what teaching has meant to him. Hopefully, during my education, I will find a teacher like Morrie Schwartz, or maybe if I truly fortunate, I will find a teacher like my dad.

Sincerely,

Lindsay Levin