



# Death – A Ceaseless Introspection in *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*

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## Abstract

This article aims at exploring the connection between all humans, not only on earth and after the death of every individual on heaven with reference to the Connectedness theory and The Ripple Effect theory. The connection between the characters become stronger after the death of the protagonist, Eddie who dies in an accident and goes to heaven. This article analyses how life doesn't end in death and it is the beginning of new phase. The novel *The Five People You Meet in Heaven* written by Mitch Albom sheds light on self-realization and is the goal of all human endeavors. Eddie learns the purpose of life through every character he met in heaven and all characters shows that every human is somehow connected to others through directly or indirectly.

**Keywords:** Interconnectedness, Forgiveness, Purpose of life, Ruby Pier, Heaven.

## Introduction

Mitchell David Albom is an American author and in all his works, all characters are connected in unexpected ways even their lives on earth are separated. Likewise in the novel *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*, all characters are united in heaven and realized that they are interrelated on earth. Mitch Albom is born in Jewish family, and he is a journalist, screenwriter, dramatist, radio and television broadcast, musician, and novelist. He became one of the most award-winning sports writers of his time while at the Detroit press. This

novel was a huge success which was published in Hyperion Books. As it has huge reach, it was again published onto the New York Times best-seller list. It sold about ten million copies in thirty-five languages across thirty-eight territories. This novel was also adapted into a movie in 2004, which also got 18.7 million viewers. This novel is about how death isn't the end and it is the merely start of a new phase, where one realizes that life doesn't finish with death. Albom describes his imagination of what a person should experience when they go to heaven after dying. He was the bestselling memoir of all time and was one of the New York Times bestsellers including *Tuesdays with Morrie*, which was his notable work. He has won about two hundred awards for his variety of works.

### Glimpse of the novel

*The Five People You Meet in Heaven* is a story of a ride mechanic, Eddie. He was killed in a park accident, and he goes to heaven where he met five people who had a impact on his life while he was alive. Eddie always wanted to leave Ruby Pier to have another life. One day when he made his ordinary journey, he saw a cart is falling, where Eddie quickly helps to get the people out with the help of other workers. When he tries to save a little girl Annie, the cart falls on him and he died. Eddie arrives heaven where he meets Blue Man, who was one of the Circus freaks at Ruby Pier. Blue Man explained to him that he was the reason of his death. When Eddie was a child, he ran into the road after a lost ball where Blue man had a heart attack in order to avoid hitting him.

Eddie meets Captain, who shot Eddie in World War II. Eddie decided to enlist in the war to prove his bravery. But he returned home permanently crippled and bitter. To get Eddie out of the fire, he shot him. Also, Captain reveals that he died in the war while escaping from the fire. Then, he leaves. At present Eddie, sees his father through the window. Here the novel recalls the childhood memories of Eddie, where Eddie tries to win the love of his father. In heaven, appears Ruby where her husband was the one who built Ruby Pier in her honor. During the first burn of Ruby Pier, Emile was admitted in the husband next to the bed of his father. Ruby explained that his father died by saving the life of his friend, Mickey.

Next, Eddie finds his wife Marguerite, where remembers their idea of adopting a child. But she got into a disastrous car accident. So dropped that plan. After all she died from brain tumor. In heaven he spends a long time with Marguerite. The last person he met was a little girl, Tala. Tala revealed that she was killed by Eddie. During the war, she was the small shadow moving around the hut. By hearing this Eddie lost his hope and thought of thinking that he was deserved to be in darkness. But by his maintenance job at Ruby Pier, Eddie keeps all children safe.

### Death as a Ceaseless Introspection

In the novel, *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*, the protagonist Eddie dies and goes to heaven where he met five different people and realizes that these five characters has a significant impact on his life on earth, directly or indirectly. Death is not the end, and it is the new phase whereas it explores the afterlife and the idea

that our lives are interconnected in many ways, which we may not realize during our lives on earth. The story isn't in a strictly chronological order. It is employed with flashbacks and shifts in times. Eddie undergoes a deep introspection as he learns about the interconnectedness of his existence with others and the ripple effects of his actions.

The theory, Ripple effect also delves into the idea that every action you take, no matter how small, has a ripple effect on the other's life (Albom 36). Eddie in his childhood made an accident, which caused the death of Blue Man. But it was not known by Eddie. When Eddie arrives in heaven, came to know about this incident. From this, Eddie came to know that every individual, all events in his life on earth are connected in some way and have a impact on others' life.

In the novel, after passing away and entering paradise, Eddie encounters five persons who had a profound influence on his life. Each interaction shows how Eddie's deeds, no matter how insignificant, had a profound impact on others. As Eddie comes to terms with the fact that his seemingly tiny deeds had a huge impact on the people he encountered throughout his life, the idea of the ripple effect theory is illustrated. It emphasizes how interwoven our lives are and how decisions and deeds can have unanticipated effects on others, even after we're gone(web). This subject emphasizes the notion that every life has meaning and significance and that, even if we are not conscious of it while we are alive, the effects of our activities can last a lifetime. Food and gender plays a vital role in ceaseless introspection. Suganya et al states the same in the articles, "Communal Expectancy and the Authentic Self of Men and Transgenders - Arms and the Man by George Bernard Shaw and Birthday by Meredith Russo" and "Gender Performance on the Reinvigoration via Food"(Suganya et al.).

The Connectedness theory also applied by demonstrating how every person's decisions and actions have effects that go beyond their immediate environment (Web). Eddie learns how his actions, even those that seemed little at the time, had an impact on the lives of others as his life and experiences are connected to those of the individuals he encounters in heaven. This interconnection is a major subject, underscoring the fact that our lives are not isolated but rather a part of a complex web of connections and occurrences.

The novel reaffirms the notion that all lives are intertwined and that our choices can have a significant impact on those of others through Eddie's trip in heaven. The value of empathy, compassion, and understanding in our interactions with others is emphasized as readers are prompted to think about their own lives and how they are connected to the people and events around them.

## Conclusion

Each character in the novel teach Eddie different things and shows how humans are interconnected. The character Blue man teaches him the lessons of human connection, that all lives are connected, even those of strangers. Eddie learns from the captain that giving up something is necessary for survival and should be embraced rather than grieved. He learns the value of forgiving others through Ruby, as a result, Eddie lets go of his

resentment towards his father. From Marguerite, he learns that love transcends death. The novel concludes with a message of redemption, healing, and the belief that there is a greater purpose to our existence, which can be discovered when we reflect on the impact on others life.

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