

## The Struggle of Seeking Happiness on *me Before You* Movie

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### ABSTRACT

Happiness among people has been something quite familiar but unshaped, it has been difficult for people to feel happy in this era and many has started to wonder what is the real happiness. Do we need to feel the happiness in order to fell alive. This study explores the happiness in human live that consider to be important. This research undertakes the live of a character from a literary art that symbolize the authentic happiness itself. The findings indicate that characterization allow us to observe a character stages of emotions and feelings. findings also showed the three stages of happiness are the major evidence of experiencing True happiness itself and does it do. Findings showed that the happiness played a key role to help people condition and gave them the quality of living. However, research is limited to view extent considering the time allowance for the study, as well as the financial constraints experienced by the researcher. It is recommended to implement the three stages of happiness to give better Quality of living in human life.

## INTRODUCTION

In human existence both literature and psychology have a deep connection, the couple deals with human behaviours. And to show the beauty of literature itself, Psychology can be used to explore and explain things and phenomena of human life by applying the principle of psychology in the literary work (Meiliana et al., 2020). Applying principle or theory to a literature work such as movie, able to create an analysis or research to discover many things including the pursuit of happiness. The aim of human existence often measured by their happiness in many conditions. Happiness seems to be the reason for people to live. Father of Positive Psychology Martin Seligman said that "Happiness doesn't just feel good, it is good" perhaps it was an unavoidable truth (Seligman-2019-, n.d.).

In this research the author uses the help of psych literature, it deals with the characters, who serve as the symbols of the world and existence to be presented as exemplary figures to expose the meaning of life (Meiliana et al., 2020). Psycho literature see human psychology through literature art. In general, Psychoanalysis studies the conscious and unconscious human mind. All of this beautiful side of psycho literature seems so authentic and bringing positive flows within it because it shows us the worth of living.

To connect with Authentic happiness theory itself, the writer acknowledges the roof of authentic happiness theory which is positive psychology. Positive psychology is a field that focuses on the scientific study of what makes life worth living, and it encompasses positive emotions, individual traits, and institutions. It aims to improve quality of life and prevent the pathologies that arise when life is barren and meaningless. That's why with this ability the writer trying to use it to function the Authentic Happiness theory through a literary art shaped movie specifically on the main character.

Authentic Happiness was a theory proposed by the father of Positive Psychology Martin E.P. Seligman. to contribute with the good life. He put Authentic Happiness as the center of Positive Psychology. The concept is to use one's signature strengths like subjective experience, individual traits, and life events to produce Authentic Happiness. The goal is to encourage acceptance of one's past, excitement and optimism about one's future experiences (Mohamed & Mageed, n.d.). All these were grouped through three distinct kinds of lives: The Pleasant Life, The Good Life, and The Meaningful Life.

There are more authentic happiness found in literary art as climax as it giving a hidden reason behind and waiting to be discovered, therefore the author believes that this can be used as further research to find out more deeply the facts contained in the use of authentic happiness, as well as their types, and functions. And this theory will be implemented in the main character Will Traynor from the movie "Me Before You" by Jojo Moyes. It scrutinizes the three distinct kind of lives to pursue happiness that Will Traynor experience after he paralyzed and give 6 months to his mom to change his mind about assisted suicide, in relevance

to the Authentic Happiness Theory and establishes the key factors contribute to Will's success in per suiting happiness.

The novel knit story of a perfect man named William Traynor came from a wealthy family who owned one of the castles in Britain and he was a business man that have a wild life and athletic. One day he has an accident and become paralyzed (Quadriplegia), he only able to talk and move a finger. After years of trying with no result he finally decides to suicide legally or euthanasia (Assisted Suicide). Euthanasia came from Greek Language by mean "Good Death", it is the practice of intentionally ending life to eliminate pain and suffering. Will only gave her mother six month to change his mind and in that time a girl name Louisa Clark came in and gave him sight of happiness again.

Established by the story, this author contends that researching this movie was important reminding of our current situation about the quality of good life in the society supported by happiness itself. In order to balance the good life, we must first devotee to the meaning of happiness according to each signature strengths. It will be a good possibility if one day many people enlighten with the theory of Authentic Happiness and able to implement the three distinct life into their own. This might be the help that human need and this might help people who have the same condition with will to continue and see the authentic side of life. So, this study focuses on the persuade of happiness of the main character in the movie of Me Before You.

There is a lot of reason for human to live but happiness seems to be the initial one, it define as the furthest goal of human just like an art. Happiness also frequently being related to "Satisfaction with life" (Seligman-2019-, n.d.) Still, the definition of happiness interestingly remains blurred and elusive even when it is the aim of human existence.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research was conducted by using a descriptive qualitative method as a research which is providing description of a phenomenon that occurs naturally without any intervention of an experiment or an artificially contrived treatment.

The writer used a qualitative method to analyze the Movie "Me Before You" in this study. qualitative research studies investigate the quality of relationships, activities, situations, or materials. All data used is descriptive data to provide the research. Therefore, the writer will describe thoroughly to get maximum results in this research. By revealing the facts and describing based on data in the movie since the information source becomes an important part of analyzing, the writer employed the qualitative method in this research.

The writer also used Martin Seligman's approach to analyze the research data." It has been argued that people are everyday scientists who conduct research projects to answer questions about behavior," according to Nisbett and Ross (1980). The main character's behavior and psychology in the novel "Me

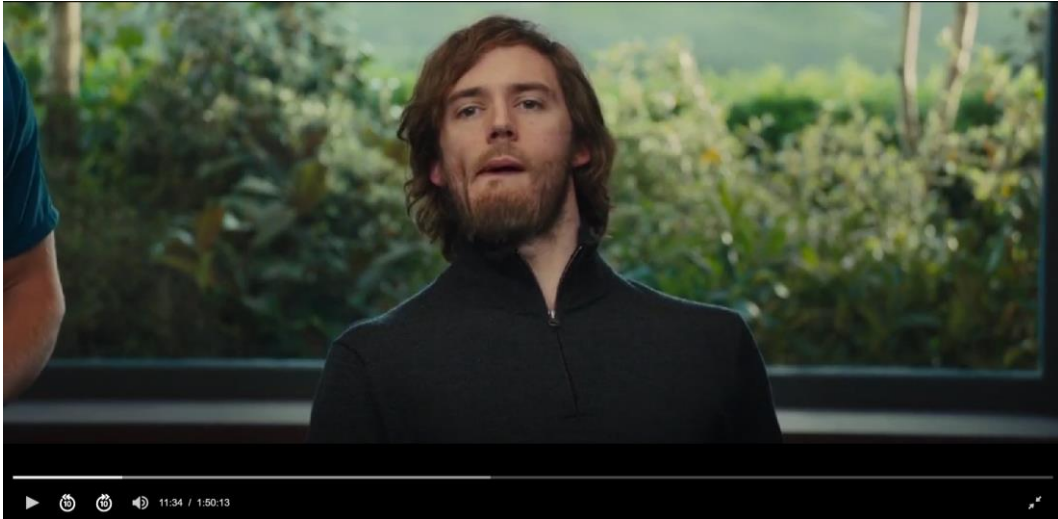
Before You” are being studied. The writer is certain that Seligman’s theory of Authentic Happiness is the best approach for this research.

## **RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **William Traynor Characterization in *Me Before You* Movie**

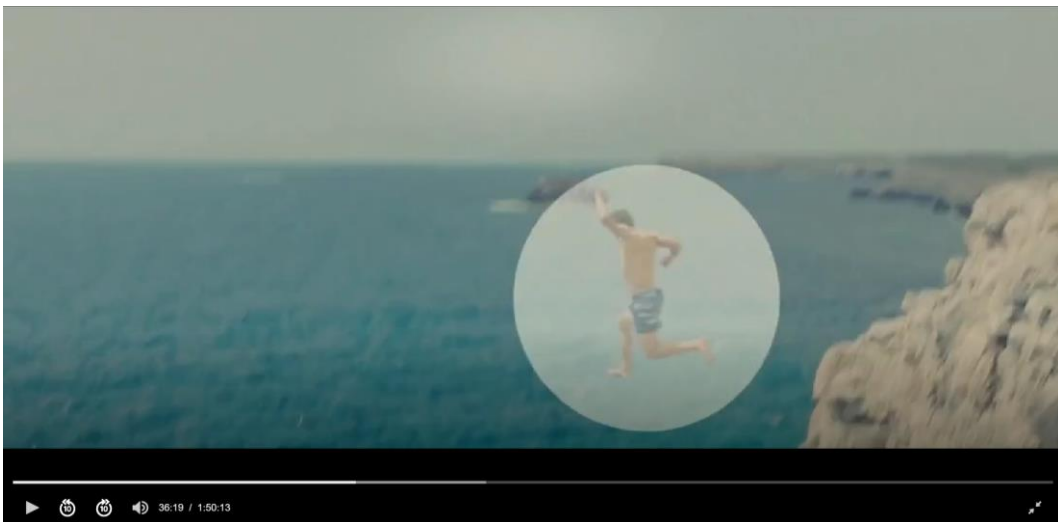
Character was portrayed by an actor that appeared in literary art; and the process creating and developing a character in literary art called characterization. Klarer stated that there are two way for character to be rendered; it is through showing and telling as two different modes of presentation (Klarer, n.d.). Every character was rendered as a type or as individuals. When a character was dominated by one specific trait and were typified it was known as flat character; and when a character denotes a persona with more complex and differentiated features it was known as round character. In this part; the researcher wishes to show the characterization of William Traynor by adopting direct characterization (showing). This method gave freedom to the viewer to judge the character.

In the movie, as the main character; William Traynor is 35-year-old man with 1.8 m in height who become quadriplegic after a motorbike accident. William Traynor was described as respectable, adorable, and incredibly wealthy, but the impairment left him moody even when he ready and able for everything nothing can help his condition. Due to this congestion he become bitter and full of anger. In physic all that left now is just young Will sitting on his wheel chair unable to move with all his memories left in his mind droving him crazy each minute with the hope to die so he able to escape the suffer. He was looking grumpy with long messy hair and his beard was all over his face, he was nowhere showing wanted to be treated. His body were no longer strong with muscle and good posture; now his body was pale and stiff unable to move a bit unless his finger tip. All the heaviness of the world was picture on his face. This is a totally different an upside down, was possible to be bear.



*Figure 1- Will after the accident (at 11:34 the first time Will meet Clark)*

Before all of the accident he is a decent man with a good life. He once loves to do extreme sport like sky diving with his best friend beside his perfection in carrier and for sure his body physically are well done. In the minutes of 36:19 there were scene when Clark use Will's laptop then see Will's birthday Video made by his best friend that show how free will's life before.



*Figure 1-William condition before the accident (at 36:19 William birthday video)*

Will was very healthy with peak physical condition. Will was known for his extreme hobbies that require and at the same time also build a good muscle on each inch of his body, not only that he was handsome for many girls in Paris easily give an eye to him as he told story to Clark;<sup>2</sup> "You don't get it, Clark. I want to be in Paris, as me. The old me. When pretty French girls, give me the eye."

William Traynor was a Protagonist with a round character in *Me Before You* movie. Just as Klarer's theory around flat and round character, William Has developed his character from dull and became grateful. He was speechless for all the impairment and the accident was none of his fault in it, its just life just slaps

him in the face avoiding him from any pleasure exist in the world; but the movie walks with Clark's appearance and she start to show Will what happiness is; Until Will want to wake up every morning again, but still even when he have a chance; he still stand strong with his choice. He impersonalizes the round characterization for the opposite change that he has in his life as the main character in the movie *Me Before You*.

### **William Traynor Achieve the *Authentic Happiness***

The Authentic Happiness Theory introduced by Martin Seligman able to be applied in the examination of William's journey in the movie *Me before you*: a paralyzed man who choose assisted suicide; experienced authentic happiness before he dies. Will experience three things that he thought he could never do with him being Quadriplegia.

There are three stages of *Authentic Happiness* according to Martin Seligman it is The pleasant life, the good life, and the meaningful life. Correspond to the three section mirrors consecutively Seligman's three distinctive interrelated stages of happiness. There for, all the happiness was intentionally planed by Clark who wanted him to continue living and accidently fall in love in the journey without realizing that's what complete Will's life, letting the Authentic Happiness Theory able to be applied in will's journey.

#### *Stage One The pleasant life*

William's journey in the movie *Me before you* able to be applied in the examination of The Authentic Happiness Theory introduced by Martin Seligman. William was a paralyzed man who choose assisted suicide; experienced authentic happiness before he dies. with him being Quadriplegia Will experience three things that he thought he could never do. Correspond to the three section mirrors consecutively Seligman's three distinctive interrelated stages of happiness. The 'pursuit of pleasure' in the Classic Music 'Mozart Oboe Concerto' with Clark is a first step for him to show up in a while and Will's success to achieve the stage of 'pleasant life'.



Figure 3 'Mozart Oboe Concerto' with Clark (at 55:06)

Will was very uncomfortable by having all the look, but he was very happy and enjoyed. After the concert Clark drove them home but will demand to stay in the car for a while.

Clark : *I loved it. did you?*

Will : *yeah.*

Clark : *Right, we're gonna get you in.*

Will : *Wait a minute, Clark.*

Clark : *Are you okay?*

Will : *I am. I don't want to go in yet. I just want to be a man who's been to a concert, with a girl in a red dress. Just a few minutes more.*

Pleasant life is experienced by finding joy and excitement in everyday pleasure, and this is the evidence of Will experiencing the Pleasant Life. William find joy by Clark charm in a red dress, something was burning inside of him; he was so excited to go to the concert with Clark dressing that way. The excitement goes on until they arrived at the concert because everyone was giving an eye to both of them making Will nervous, but Clark innocent allow William to be at ease. The beauty of literature is delivered by will is willing to appear for the first time in the elite community with Ms. Louisa Clark acknowledging he refuse every public appointment ever since he was sick. In literary we able to see the smell of the impossible love.

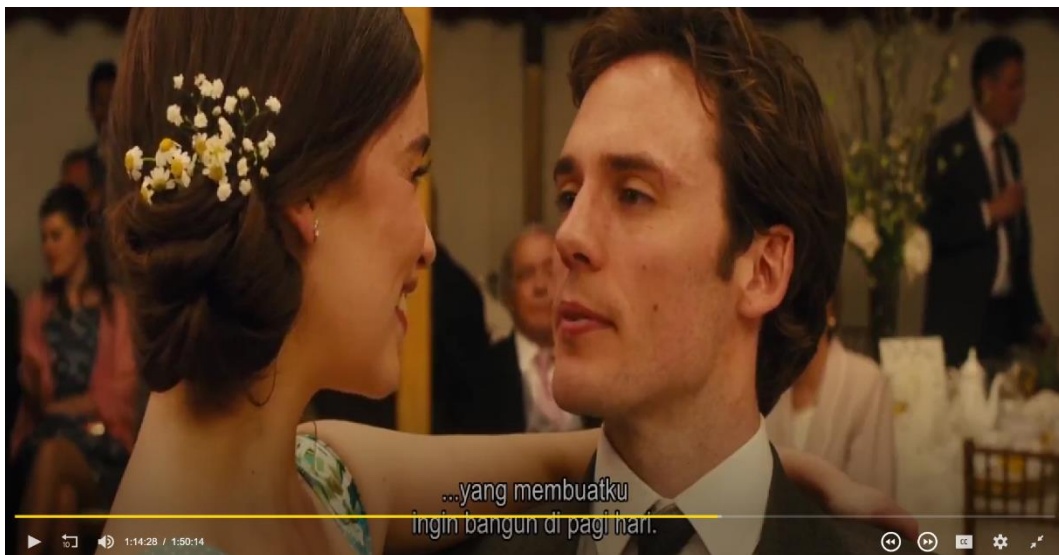
From the since we able to see the nervous face of will, but he stays there and quietly enjoy Clark companion, he was very pleased with the red dress on Ms. Clark gaining him the feel of confident with the girl that came with him, A

woman dressed in red will be certainly noticed, Wearing red she is expressing character, independence, strength, determination.

The main evidence is when they arrived at home but will demand to stay at the car, with the conversation above we able to understand after a very long time will finally able to fill "Like a Man" one more. All of these expressions showing excitement and joy in everyday pleasure that will actually able to have every day, and by this part of the movie, will experience the pleasant life.

### *Stage Two The Good life*

The good life leads to a state of immersion, absorption, and flow. This state is experienced by individuals when they are optimally engaged in their primary activities, resulting in beneficial effects. This is skill that can be learned and applied in various aspects of life, such as work, love, and raising children. Now will wouldn't be able to do work nor even raising a child, even love is impossible for him but, we couldn't really say things were impossible before it happens. Slowly will grows love with Clark and this has become his primary activities that resulting beneficial effects to his mental health.



*Figure 4 Will achieve the beneficial effect (at 1:14:28)*

*Will: Do you know something, Clark? You are pretty much The only thing that makes me want to get up in the morning.*

In this phase Will started to certain in having an excitement to wake up every morning, something that he hasn't feel in a very old time. The beneficial effect that allow William to achieve good life is him falling in love with Clark. By falling in love Will have a reason to wake up every morning and started to wonder what will Clark have in mind for us to do today, it was all fun and unexpected. The good life showing a significant colour to fixing will to prevent him doing the assisted suicide (euthanasia). This since and words from will was a proof for him is one step ahead to complete the Authentic happiness.

### *Stages Three The Meaningful Life*

a meaningful life explores how individuals find a sense of well-being and purpose by being involve in and making contributions to something bigger and more enduring than themselves. A meaningful life is one that is connected to something greater than ourselves.

Will was very happy with Clark family and can't help but notice that her dad way unemployed. It was hard for Clark's dad to find a job for some reason and that's why Clark and her sister need to work. In surprise Will employed Clark's father as the head of maintenance in the castle.



*Figure 5 Clark Father got a job (at 1:07:16 they were celebrating the new job)*

Will started to make a contribution to other people's life and helping them, he made his life to have a meaning in other's life. He gave beneficial not only for his own good but also for other. This create beautiful memories in people mind for Will. William was done enduring himself, fighting and he have enough. Somehow after all that happen, he never really making contribution to another people's life. Sure, he do help a lot of people since he's giving a work field so people can feed their family, but that's was business. Coming back to think about it his ex, best friend, and even his collogue was economically stable so nothing really changes by his contribution. But in Clark life Will change everything in her ever since they meet, he gave her dad a job even when her dad was rejected everywhere, and most importantly Will pushed and sponsored Clark to pursue her dream and to touch the world other than England. This make his life seems useful; letting him feel that he's not a burden who can't do anything only. For once Clark make him worthy for another people too. Will has proved the he exists and useful in forever Clarks live. That what complete will's Authentic Happiness.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis that refers to the reason for the main character which is William Traynor to follow the happiness plan was joy and excitement. After the researcher analyzed the character it is found that the characterization are round based on the theory of Clarer; in reasoning for he dominated by one specific trait, in fact he denotes a persona with more complex and differentiated features which refers to the *round* character. He successfully turned from dull to grateful. Will started to feel joy and excitement by Clark plans and that's begin the reason for him to follow and ending up liking her and follow the happiness plans. The plans were following the *authentic happiness* theory and it does helps with Will's condition so much.

Based on the analysis that refers to the way of Will Traynor achieve the *authentic happiness*, Will achieve it by following Clark plans of happiness. The three phase of life that explained by Martin Seligman in his Authentic Happiness Theory was Passed by William by the help of Clark, Will enjoy the excitement in his life, Will Fall in Love and improved his happiness, and he also become useful not only to himself but to all people because not only giving Clark dads a job but also founded Clarks studies. And by that Will has Complete the Authentic Happiness. Everything was ended well, after years the movie ended with Clark walking in Paris reading Will's letter with a smile in her face. Will sponsored Clark's studies and continue walking by her side in every moment on her life. It turns out that Will actually follow happiness plan for Clark, he loves Clark and hides hold back his pain in front of her so that she could be happy too. The plans work for both of them.

The movie *Me Before You* has many interesting aspects that able to be raised and analyzed. The story presents a variety of themes related to real life; such as love, friendship, quality of living, and the characters in the movie are unique to be analyzed. Through the journey of William Traynor's Character, we able to admire how strong his minds were with the unbearable situation that he had. Imaging our self in that position was possible to survive a month yet he takes 3 years and still gave his parents 6 month to change his decision. Knowing that giving up is not that easy, this work of art helps us to walk and move on.

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