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ANALYZING THE MOVIE “MY LIFE” UNDER THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE KÜBLER-ROSS

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Objective: To analyze the five stages of death and dying through the narrative of the movie “My Life” (1993), directed by Bruce Joel Rubin.

Method: Exploratory and descriptive study grounded in qualitative approach. We regard the movie as a possible pedagogical byword of the death and dying process, under the outline of the verbal and non-verbal content of the narrative. We, therefore, identified, analyzed, and described its scenes, before classifying them into categories under the Kübler-Ross frame.

Results: After we select and discuss the scenes which illustrate the stages of denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance, we achieve the following conclusions: denial was shown just after receiving the bad news, when Bob, the main character, insisted on pursuing the cure of a disease without cure; anger was evident during the scene in which Bob entered the medical office without authorization and expressed his non-conformism with the diagnosis; bargaining was evidenced by the moment when the main character asked God to let him live long enough time to see his son’s birth; depression was illustrated when Bob entered a more introspective mood, under which his sleep was dysregulated and he solely remained watching television, the introspective state characterizes a preparatory grief with little need for words. It is a beneficial and necessary stage to overcome agony and anxiety, in order to die under the stages of acceptance and peace. Acceptance was evident when Bob claimed for his son not to feel bad about his departure and reported feeling grateful for the time he could spend with him. Those reactions demonstrate that Bob recognized and accepted his finitude.

Conclusion: We found out that the movie “My Life” elucidates the stages of death and dying. It can moreover be used as a pedagogical tool to stir up critical reflections on the theme.

Stages of Kübler-Ross in the movie “My Life”	
Denial	Bob insists on pursuing the cure of a disease without cure.
Anger	Bob enters the medical office without authorization and expresses his non-conformism with the diagnosis.
Bargaining	Bob asks for God to let him live long enough to see his son’s birth.
Depression	Bob enters a more introspective mood, in which his sleep is dysregulated and he could only remain watching television.
Acceptance	Bob claims for his son not to feel bad about his departure.

Figure 1. Describes scenes from the movie “My Life” that illustrates the five stages of death and dying of the Kübler-Ross Model.

Biography

Mariana Ribeiro is a nurse. She is specialized in aging by the Federal University of São Paulo and a master candidate at the Postgraduate Nursing Program of the University of Brasília, Brazil.

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