

Team Group: Cici, Sophie, Rica, Gwin, Jenny

Work in groups to discuss the following questions. For each question, write a paragraph summarizing what your group discussed. Do not copy/paste from your notes you may have taken. Rather, summarize your discussion.

1. What did you think about Randy's decision to spend the time he had left to give a last lecture and write the book? Was it taking precious time away from his children or creating a lasting memory for them?

We had differing opinions on this point. Some people adopted the perspective that leaving his family when they had such little time together was very cruel. In addition, his desire to say goodbye to work family indicates he cares more for them than his actual family. Counterarguments to this point included the fact that he spent most of the time with his family when he wasn't working on the book, and that this lecture and book were important so that his kids would have more tangible memories of him. We ultimately concluded that the book and lecture were fair gifts to leave to his children knowing they would one day read it.

2. Pausch said he gave his lecture (not knowing it would attain such worldwide acclaim) so his children would have some memory or knowledge of their father. If you were faced with 6 months to live, how would you go about creating lasting memories? Is that an important concern or is it self-serving or self-indulgent? How would you spend the time left to you? Would you continue to work? Travel? Spend time with family and friends? Would you make changes in your day-to-day life or continue the life you're living now?

We had similar opinions about what we would do if we had 6 months left to live. We'd take photos, spend time with family and friends, recklessly spend money, and would overall experience life to its full extent in the short time we have left. Instead of saying self-serving or self-indulgent, we would like to say it is self-enjoying, we finally love and enjoy life in a really short and limited time. We may maintain the regular life or make some changes, all will be fine, the main attitude is enjoying the current.

3. Discuss Pausch's statement that 'it's not about how to achieve your dreams. It's about how to lead your life. If you lead your life the right way ... the dreams will come to you.' Do you think he's right? Might the reverse be true that only by working toward (and achieving) your dreams can you "lead your life the right way"?

No. Life is different for each person, so working hard does not equate to a good life as well as a good life may not lead to achieving the dream.

Randy remembers his childhood dreams with clarity. Do you remember your childhood dreams as vivid as his? And how important is it to hold onto your childhood dreams-might not change over time?

1. Does The Last Lecture make you rethink your own priorities —what you want out of life, your work, your friendships, your (present/future) marriage? Does it make you re-evaluate or confirm the things you thought were important?

My priority is to have quality time with people that I have in my life, and then financials after that. We would quit work, as making more money for the future would be for nothing.

2. Why is it that The Last Lecture has struck such a chord with people? Co-writer Zaslow says that "it's because we're all dying," and that Randy's fate is ours. Do you agree? Are there any other reasons?

We think the book is relatable because everyone understands that time is our only precious and limited resource.

3. What passages in particular resonated with you?

The part where he talked about being an Imagineer at Walt Disney studios resonated with members of the group. His initial rejection from his childhood dream job was a very relatable sentiment from us. However, his persistence in talking to different members of Disney until he got the job was very admirable. I think all of us wish that we could get a job at such a magical place. His ability to do so was very inspiring to all of us.

These are just a few of the things in this book that resonated with me (Prof. Traver). Feel free to discuss them or bring the sections that resonated with you to the discussion. This is for you, so discuss the aspects of the book that you want to discuss.

- The Park Is Open Until 8pm: cognitive reframing. He writes about Disney employees responding to the question "when does the park close?" with "the park is open until...". Randy approaches his metastatic cancer news similarly. Focused on living. Think about a time in your life where you received challenging news...if you focused on the negative of it, how could you have cognitively reframe it?

In freshman year, I failed Calculus 2. I focused a lot on failing that class, but it was due to personal factors in my life outside of academics. If I were to reframe it, I would have stated that I tried my best with what I was going through and that I still was able to stay at RPI. I came here to be academically challenged and achieved that goal.

- The Man in the Convertible: Randy's colleague saw him driving his convertible and wrote him an email that said, "You can never know how much that glimpse of you made my day, reminding me of what life is all about."

There is a saying goes that life does not lack beauty, but it lacks eyes to discover beauty.

- Pouring Soda in the Backseat: Randy's message: "People are more important than things." Can you relate?

Having strong connections with family and friends are considered more fulfilling for mental health than material goods.

- I'm On My Honeymoon, But If You Need Me... Time is all you have. And you may find one day that you have less than you think.*

One thing that impressed me very much was that one day I was very tired so I slept until four in the afternoon. Then I got up, washed and ate, and then five or six hours later, I went to bed again. But when I was lying in bed, I suddenly felt that I did nothing for that day. Time is just away from me and I was wondering I waste a day.