

Chick's Resilience from Broken Home in Mitch Albom's *For One More Day*

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Abstract—The objective of the research is to describe the resilience process of Chick Benneto as a broken home child in the novel. The subject of this research is the novel *For One More Day* by Mitch Albom and the object is Chick's resilience from broken home. This research is grouped into library research and used a descriptive qualitative method to analyze the data. The data are analyzed using theories namely (1) psychological approach theory by Wellek and Warren (1956) and (2) the theory of resilience from broken home by Kumpfer (2002). The research findings and discussion of the research is the resilience process of Chick as a broken home child are divided into three phases are childhood, adolescent, and young-adult. In the childhood phase, Chick faced some problems, they are parental divorce and inferiority; in the adolescent phase, Chick had an abusive father that made traumatic experience; in the young-adult phase, Chick experienced father's second marriage, protested and made a rebel to God, felt uneasy & realized problems in him, did cognitive reframing, realized bad anger management problem, felt uncomfortable with his family condition, and began to change. Chick's resilience made him succeed in dealing with parental divorce.

Keywords—*resilience, broken home, for one more day, psychological approach*

I. INTRODUCTION

A child can grow and develop well depending on the family environment. A good family environment will form a good child's personality. Instead, a family environment that is not good or can be called broken home can disrupt a child's personality. Broken Home or an incomplete family is a condition where the family experiences a split or a gap in the household, whether it starts from the bickering of the parents, infidelity, even fights which result in the breakup of strings that are strung together or divorce. The impact of a broken home itself can be divided into two, which will have a negative impact on their personal and social life or a good impact. The success or failure of a child in dealing with parental divorce depends on the child's endurance. The endurance or capacity in dealing conflicts is called "resilience" (Chen, 2005; Masten, Best, & Garmezy, 1990).

Resilience refers to successful risk and adversity adaptation (Kumpfer, 2002: p.180). Specifically, resilience is broadly defined as the process, capacity, or outcome of successful adaptation of challenging and threatening conditions. Resilience is the positive outcome when individual faced risk condition or under pressure, and can heal from trauma (Masten et al., 1990: pp. 425-444).

Masten & Coatsworth (1998: pp. 425-444) resilience consists of seven aspects: (1) emotional control, (2) impulse

control, (3) optimism, (4) problem analysis, (5) empathy, (6) self-efficacy, and (7) achievement. Liu, Reed, and Girard (2017: 314) found the dynamics of the resilience process to be individual interactions with the social and ecological context. Olsson, Jerneck, Thoren, Persson, and O'Byrne, (2015) also said that resilience is a unifying concept in ecology and environmental studies.

Kumpfer's (2002) resilience framework contains six major resilience predictors: (1) stressor or challenge, (2) environmental context, (3) interactional person-environment process, (4) internal self-characteristics, (5) resilience processes, and (6) positive outcomes.

In the resilience process, there are the risk and protective factors that can be a challenge or support (Kumpfer, 2002). Resilience is built after a complex interaction between individual, family, and community-level risk and protective factors (Mitchell, 2011: p. 121). The context in which the process of socialization takes place is families, neighbors, schools, and peers. The environment can be a buffer for its negative impact when an acute stressor occurs. Intrafamily support, extended family support, and level of community (Mitchell, 2011: p.121). The context in which the process of socialization takes place is families, neighbors, schools, and peers. The environment can be a buffer for its negative impact if an acute stressor occurs. Intra-family support, extended family support, friend support, religion, open family communication, work, and financial security were factors divorced family resilience (Greeff & Van Der Merwe, 2004). Intra-family support refers to support given to each other by family members. In the meantime, extended support for the family refers to support from extended kin such as grandfather, grandmother, cousins, aunt, and uncle. Social support then refers to neighborhood support, schools, and other institutions.

Children might be at risk from either a high-risk environment such as dysfunctional families (Kumpfer, 2002). Snyder and Lopez (2002) describe four psycho-social resilience protective factors in children and adolescents, including (1) in the child, (2) in the family, (3) in the family or other relationship, and in the community.

It can be understood that to deal with the problems or difficulties faced by children from broken home family, there needs to be a resilience capability where the emotional resilience of the child is developed so that it can turn it into a positive one. Thus, the urgency of this study is to know resilience as a broken home child. It focused on the resilience process as a broken home child.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This research applied a psychological approach which means a writer's psychological survey as a sort and person, or the study of the creative process, or the study of the psychological types and regulations currently in literature works, or, lastly, the effects of literature on its readers (Wellek and Warren 1956: 81). In the current research, Psychological approach was used to observe the psychological aspects of resilience.

The subject in this research is the novel entitled *For One More Day* by Mitch Albom and the object of the study is focused on the resilience of Chick Benneto from broken home in the novel *For One More Day*. Data collecting techniques used in this study were visiting libraries, reading sources, making notes, and categorizing data. To enhance credibility, qualitative analysis is appropriate for this research. In this qualitative analysis is the content of a book being observed or data resources, which deal with the object of the study.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The process of resilience includes the interaction between individual characteristics and final outcomes. It also includes both short-term and long-term resilience that individuals learn through stressors. The stressors help individuals be able to bounce back. This paper will not only identify the protective factors in the environment but also identify the way to create resilience factors by designing and learning the process of achieving resilience.

A. Childhood

1) Parental divorce

When Chick was a child and has been faced with the situation of his parents were divorced.

‘I’ll take you,’ she whispered. ‘Whenever it is.’ ‘Why can’t Daddy take me?’ I asked. ‘Daddy’s not here.’ ‘Where is he?’

She didn’t answer.

‘When’s he coming back?’

She squeezed the corn puffs and they crumbled into floury dust. (Albom, 2006 p.22-23)

For a child, divorce is indeed a strange word. When one of his parents left, all he knows is to leave temporarily and return home. Although the reality is different, it is a decision or the final result of a divorce. Also, as parents, they are in an awkward position where parents want to explain to a child. They chose to remain silent, however, just because they didn’t want a child to feel strange and anxious.

‘My family collapsed before that age of enlightenment; when my father was gone, he was gone’. (Albom, 2006 p.57)

The reason for divorce is that only parents understand it. There is also curiosity as a child, curious about the causes of divorced parents. So one parent had to leave just like home and family.

‘I can’t remember when he got his stuff. One day we came home from school and the house just seemed more roomy. There was extra space in the front hall closet. The garage was missing tools and boxes’. (Albom, 2006 p.57)

Divorce clearly changes the situation. The situation is usually warm, crowded full of chat. Now it’s as quiet as an uninhabited house. There’s nothing left, just a shadow of memories with his father in every corner of the house.

2) Inferiority

After being a child of a divorce victim, Chick felt embarrassed even feel inferior to people. It can make Chick difficult to communicate with the surrounding people.

‘For a while, after my parents split up, we tried to stay the same. But the neighbourhood wouldn’t allow it. Small towns are like metronomes; with the slightest flick, the beat changes. People were nicer to my sister and me. There’d be an extra lollipop at the doctor’s office or a larger scoop on the ice cream cone. Older women, encountering us on the street, would squeeze our shoulders earnestly and ask, ‘How are you kids doing?’ which struck us as an adult question. The kids’ version began with ‘what.’ (Albom, 2006 p.64)

The story of the life of a person can not always be understood by others. Can not ask others to understand the hurt experienced. Being a child who is a divorce victim isn’t an easy thing to be prepared to accept the situation or answer questions from others who sometimes make your heart hurt and even feel embarrassed.

‘In that first year after the divorce, she’d drop my sister and me at school in her white nurse’s outfit and her white shoes and white hose. She always got out to kiss us good-bye, and I was acutely aware of the other mothers staring. Roberta and I became self-conscious, approaching the school door as if we squeaked’ (Albom, 2006 p.65)

This is strange where his father's usual activities, now have to be held by his mother. Where the mother has to do everything alone. Like, delivering to school is usually a father's duty. Everything feels strange when other people pay attention to their family's strangeness. He heard the bully whisper that was aimed at him.

‘You’re the divorcee’s kid, right?’ I looked back, wordless. (Albom, 2006 p.67)

Chick felt strange hearing of foreign words he hadn’t heard before. However, the topic of everyday talks is now being obtained. It is probably sensitive because even small things can be very painful after the parents have divorced and become a child of divorce.

‘I felt as if my mother was standing behind me, and I was the only thing between them.’ (Albom, 2006 p.67)

Accept the fact that everyone connects him with the divorce child issue. It’s odd to be faced with this question, confused to answer it because of a wrong answer, himself who will get a blast from that person.

‘Oooweee,’ Leon cooed, ‘look at the divorcee...’

I don’t think I ever felt fury like that, not before and not since. (Albom, 2006 p.69)

Be aware that he is the divorce victim's child, but it is not appropriate to use such a thing as a joke. This makes him out of control and makes it even less an embarrassment to hang out with his friends again.

“At Christmastime, you would see cars in front of houses and mingling adults visible through the bay windows. But my mother would be in our kitchen, mixing the cookie dough.”

“Aren’t you going to that party?” we’d ask.

“We’re having a party right here,” she’d say. (Albom, 2006 p.74)

Even on the eve of the new year, which should be a family moment, is a sad moment. While there is a small party in front of the house, Chick and family choose to stay inside the house as far as sitting drinking syrup in the TV room.

“I am moving as I yell this, and the moving seems to give me strength, confidence as if she can’t hit me. This is after she has taken a job at the beauty parlor, and instead of her nursing whites, she wears fashionable clothes to work—like the pedal pushers and turquoise blouse she is wearing now. These clothes show off her figure. I hate them. (Albom, 2006 p.85)

His mother was fired at the hospital as a nurse. Then, get a job as a beauty salon. Certainly makes Chick embarrassed at this time about the work of his mother. As a lover of baseball, Chick doesn't want his mother to work like that. From that moment on, Chick hated his mother. Chick was embarrassed by the situation

“It was true, as a teenager, I had pushed my mother away. I refused to sit next to her at movies. I squirmed from her kisses. I was uncomfortable with her womanly figure and I was angry that she was the only divorced woman around. I wanted her to behave like the other mothers, wearing housedresses, making scrapbooks, baking brownies.” (Albom, 2006 p.89)

Already ashamed of being the child of a divorce victim, Chick is now ashamed of his mother's work. Chick wants his mother like a mother out there, wearing housedresses, making scrapbooks, baking brownies. This sometimes makes Chick jealous of the lives of children out there.

“Chick Benneto, professional baseball player, not Chick Benneto, salesman. Now, I’d learned that after Posey Benneto, nurse, and Posey Benneto, beautician, it was Posey Benneto, cleaning woman. It angered me that she had dropped so low.” (Albom, 2006 p.134)

After being fired as a nurse at the hospital, then working in a beauty salon until finally working as a cleaning woman. All the work was done by Chick's mother to support her children, Chick and Roberta. Chick was always embarrassed by the job, just looking at her mom in the lounge made her embarrassed, especially as a cleaning woman. A job that's really absurd for Chick. This is what makes Chick feel embarrassed and insecure about people.

A. Adolescent

1) Abusive Father

After not meeting his father for so long, Chick suddenly met his father at a game and his father invited him to stay with him. Chick gets his father's inner violence because of his changing characteristic. Apparently, it didn't last long because suddenly his father left Chick.

“Instead, I do what he asks me to do. I seek permission to skip the bus ride home.” (Albom, 2006 p.119)

Chick did not meet his father after years, even at the last moment, his father decided to leave his family. Chick saw his father that day and was able to talk to him.

“I dropped out to play minor league baseball, at my father’s suggestion and to my mother’s everlasting disappointment.” (Albom, 2006 p.131-132)

It is about hobbies, without thinking long, Chick accepts his father's advice and makes his mother disagree with Chick deciding to get out of college for baseball. Because since childhood Chick likes baseball and according to his father, it is clear that he has chosen to go with his father to take part in the baseball tournament.

“Not Surprisingly, my father faded with my athletic career. Oh, he came to see the baby a few times. But he was not as fascinated by a grandchild as I hoped he would be. As time passed, we had less to talk about.” (Albom, 2006 p.142)

Unexpectedly before, the person who had been defended all this time, whose inspiration began to behave strangely like there was no sense of caring at all. When I wish him a situation, but it turns out that it's only limited to expectations. Painfully, his father didn't change like the father he knew before. Without understanding what the reason is, everything hurts when the father becomes a stranger.

“Even though I needed a job, he never once offered one.” (Albom, 2006 p.143)

Not understanding what caused the change, even though his father didn't care when Chick was at the lowest point. Indifferently, it really hurts the feelings of Chick.

2) Traumatic Experiences

At first, Chick did not expect his father to treat him like a father's attitude toward his child. Having received such treatment from his father, especially when his father left him without any clear reason, Chick hated hearing the word "father or daddy" coming out of another person's mouth. He was terrified when his father persuaded him to live again with his father.

“They’re my dad’s,” Leon said.

I hated hearing that word. I handed them back. (Albom, 2006 p.69)

Once the figure that became his inspiration, the proudest figure has now become the person he most hates. Even hearing the word 'father' just made Chick trauma, made Chick remember again when his father left him for the second time when he

was more obedient to his father's orders and made his mother disappointed by leaving her education.

“--- Happen, that’s how they happen, Chick. You get a foot in the door ---” “But I ---”

“it’s who you know when these jobs open---” “Dad. I have a job”.

A pause. My father could hurt you more with a pause than any man I’d ever known.”

“Look,” he said, exhaling, “I finagled an opening, You want this or not?” His voice had shifted, the fighter angering, balling his fists. He had dismissed my current existence as

swiftly as I wished I could. It made me recoil, and in recoiling, of course, a fight is lost.

“Just get your butt out here, OK?” he said. (Albom, 2006 p.159)

The insistence reappeared after being abandoned without any clear reason. This can be taken as a lesson that during this time Chick misjudged his father, it turns out that his father was able to make his heart so sick as other men out there. The rant that is not supposed to be asked out of his father's mouth to a young child like Chick. Also, Chick did not expect his father to be like that.

B. Young-adult

1) Father Second Marriage

It caused his own fear in him after being abandoned by his father. Then, Chick was faced with the fact that his father had another wife besides his mother, and his father had a son other than himself.

My head was spinning, “What do you mean, his wife? You were his wife.” She nodded slowly.

“Yes, I was.”

“You can't have two wives.”

“No”, she whispered. “You're right. You can't.” (Albom, 2006 p.179)

After being shocked and wondering what was the divorce and why his parents were divorced. Now, Chick faces a truly foreign sentence that means his father remarried after divorcing his mother, “his father has a wife other than the chick of his mother”. And that's one reason the mother and father split up.

2) Chick Protested & made a rebel to God

Insistent problems came to Chick's life and the secrets were revealed one by one. Chick feels that only he gets this problem all the time. It made him worse and protested against God that only he felt it all.

“I felt dizzy as if falling backward. Even telling you now, I have trouble getting the words out. My father, who had demanded my devotion, my loyalty to his team, our team, the men in our family. He had another son?” (Albom, 2006 p.182)

As the saying goes that as smart as the carcass is covered, the smell will smell too. The same is true of a big secret that turned out to be hidden by his mother. After the secret that his father had a wife other than his mother, Chick was now shocked by the news that his father had a son as well. Actually, everything goes beyond notion. Not everything outside is good, the inside is good, and not all things look bad, the inside is bad.

3) Feeling Uneasy & Realizing problem in Him

After Chick protested against God because of a problem that continues to come, Chick realized there was a problem and feeling uneasy in him that made him do something like that.

“There are many things in my life that I wish I could take back. Many moments I would recast.” (Albom, 2006 p.185)

It is not an easy thing to accept the fact that being a child who is a victim of divorce. Sensitivity, insecurity and unstable emotions make many people stay away from Chick and make him have no friend or a close person. From there he realized there was something strange about him that had to be addressed.

4) Cognitive Reframing

With the many problems that come and feeling uneasy because the attitude cannot accept the reality set by God. Chick decided to use his cognitive abilities by the cognitive reframing of view that there would be positive things for him behind all the problems he faced to make him rise again to live his life.

“I feel ashamed now that I tried to take my life. It is such a precious thing. I had no one to talk me out of my despair, and that was a mistake. You need to keep people close. You need to give them access to your heart.” (Albom, 2006 p.193-194)

Regret that he was wrong in making a very influential decision in his life. It is wrong not to try to communicate with others so that all problems are only considered by yourself without asking others for solutions. This causes of the problem end without getting the best solution and all of them end up in despair.

5) Realizing Bad Anger Management in Problem

Since he changed his perspective, Chick discovered that during his life he could not control his emotions in dealing with his family's problems. It began when he had a traumatic experience by abusive his father.

“Catherine's gone, Mom. I drove her away.... Maria, I'm not even in her life..... she's married.... I wasn't even there.... I'm an outsider now.....I'm an outsider to everything I loved....”

(Albom, 2006 p.187)

It is too late to realize the mistakes made in the past, where all the closest ones are going at the moment. The wife left, the child left, and his father left. Now only Chick was alone, he was not accompanied by anyone.

6) Uncomfortable with his Family Condition

Chick realizes that he can't control his emotions in dealing with his family's problems. That certainly makes Chick feel uncomfortable with the condition of his family. He feels sad, shy, and unsafe. Making himself an introvert, too.

“That was all I got out. I fell to the floor, sobbing uncontrollably, emptying myself, wailing. The room shrunk to heat behind my eyes. I don't know how long I was like that. When I found my voice, it was barely a rasp.

“I wanted it to stop, Mom this anger, this guilt.

“That's why I wanted to die....” (Albom, 2006 p.187)

After all, it was too late and they all left alone because of the mistake he had made. Such as, he can't control his emotions so it had bad consequences for his life. Chick wanted to end his life when despair came. He felt uncomfortable with such a condition. He's embarrassed, he feels guilty of making the wrong decision.

7) Chick Began to Change

Sometime later, after he realized everything. Chick decided to change. Chick is someone who is emotional, sensitive, and introverted. However, Chick tried to turn out to be a better person than before.

“There are many things in my life that I wish I could take back. Many moments I would recast.” (Albom, 2006 p.185)

Learn from the problems experienced, from there can form a big change. Even though it's all too late when the closest people leave. Chick realized that all this time he had not been able to do good things for the people around him. Therefore, Chick does something big who can at least be able to fix everything.

IV. CONCLUSION

As previously explained, the resilience process is supported by several aspects and several factors. Those aspects can be from both internal factors (the child's self) and external factors (the environment). The resilience process begins with (1) the problems experienced by Chick in childhood, such as the problems of the two divorced parents that make them embarrassed and even insecure to interact with other people. (2) Then in adolescent, Chick chose to live with his

father but what was found was precisely the violence of a father that could trigger a sense of trauma in a child. (3) Entering the young-adult period, where Chick began to understand the cause of their divorced parents. He found information that his father second marriage. So, it makes Chick feel worse until he protested against God because he could not accept the conditions of his life. Problems that are constantly being faced are able to make Chick aware that there are problems in him that must be corrected in order to continue to live. Chick tried to changing his perspective that behind all the problems there would be positive things for him. Through his efforts to survive, Chick can realize that he cannot control

his emotions in facing problems that occur in his family. After being aware of that, Chick felt uncomfortable with his family condition who is made him become an introvert. All the problems he experienced triggered Chick's desire to change and improve his condition so that he could continue to run life despite many problems from his broken family.

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