Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind

What is the “Eternal Sunshine of a Spotless Mind?” Alexander Pope’s poem, “Eloisa to Abelard,” as well as Charlie’s Kaufman’s screenscript, “Eternal Sunshine of a Spotless Mind,” both imparts the same message with regards to life. The film is fundamentally based on Pope’s poem, which is a heroic epistle about love and loss. The film’s complex nature, like the poem, is a representation of the complexity of life: the happiness, the sorrow, the anger. In simple terms, both works emphasize the frustrations of mankind and question whether or not it is “eternal sunshine” if humans do not recall the painful events they have endured at some point in their lives. However, such a question is insensible given that incidents and life events are what shape people. Hence, it is not truly “eternal sunshine,” if mankind does not remember the hurtful parts or people during their existence since humans are the sum of their experiences.

The “eternal sunshine,” to begin with, is Alexander Pope’s description of utter joy and contentment; there are no worries or pain when an individual is in this state of mind. Ultimately, bad memories are nonexistent given that there are only thoughts of happy occasions, like picnics on the beach, a first kiss, or a wedding. Overall, there are no reminiscences of the losses one has suffered during his or her lifetime, such as deaths or lost loves; thus, “eternal sunshine” is a frame of mind where sorrow is nonexistent.

In the film, “Eternal Sunshine of a Spotless Mind,” Jim Carrey’s character, Joel, attempts to erase the love of his life, Clementine, from his memory. After a disagreement, the lovers decide to go their separate ways; yet, neither can completely forget the other because the feelings between them are too strong to block out. For instance, Clementine was the first to undergo the
procedure that would eliminate Joel as well as their entire relationship from her reminiscence. Once he sees that Clementine does not acknowledge him, Joel then decides to submit himself to the same process. However, as he watches the memories they share reverse in his mind, Joel realizes that he truly does not want to forget Clementine for the reason that their love as well as adventures are too precious to forget; even the ones that include the unhappier moments in their relationship. All in all, people’s lives as well as liaisons are all composed of both good and bad moments; surviving the unpleasant ones only makes a relationship stronger.

In general, both the film and poem accentuate the same meaning: memories, even the bad, are hard for an individual to put behind them. In Pope’s poem, “Eloisa to Abelard,” Eloisa cannot forget her love for Abelard no matter how hard she attempts. Although she informs him that she would live a happier existence if she forgets him, she would undoubtedly be aware of the dearth in her heart. Eloisa, for example, will have unknown tears in her eyes and mysterious dreams all because she is missing an imperative part of her life: her husband, Abelard. In the film, the connection between Joel and Clementine is as strong as that of Abelard and Eloisa. Their emotions are fierce as well as potent; the feelings, for example, are etched in their hearts and, as a result, are a challenge to wipe out.

In conclusion, people’s experiences are what make them who they are; therefore, there is no “eternal sunshine” if individuals were able to erase their memories. In today’s society, mankind tends to turn to history for answers. Governments as well as their citizens use the past as a doctrine for the future in order to not commit the same mistakes. For instance, children train themselves through their experiences: they learn that fire burns, to run slowly down the stairs and to eat slowly while eating. In basic terms, the occurrences in people’s lives make them wiser as well as more emotionally stable. As Friedrich Nietzsche, a German scholar and philosopher, once
said, “A strong and secure man digests his experiences (deeds and misdeeds alike) just as he
digests his meat, even when he has some bits to swallow.”