



# You Start Dying Slowly

- Pablo Neruda

## Paraphrase of the poem

Pablo Neruda's *You Start Dying Slowly* is an inspiring and motivating poem. The poet is the speaker in the poem. The poet is speaking to all his readers. He is speaking about keeping their self-esteem intact. The title itself suggests the theme of poem. The title 'You Start Dying Slowly' means you are losing hope of a happy future. The poet intends to keep his readers happy forever. The poet provides various circumstances in which people lose their hopes of happy future. People do not find happiness in day to day routine and lose their will to live alive. In the opening stanza, the poet tells that if you do not travel to new places and meet new people to get new experiences, you start dying slowly. However, if you do not read various books to enrich your knowledge and understand the world in better way, you start dying slowly. Moreover, we should listen the sounds of life. It means that we should understand the needs of life. If we fail to understand the sounds of life, we start dying slowly. On the other hand, you should appreciate your abilities and talents. If you do not appreciate yourself, you start dying slowly. In the second stanza, the poet advises the readers that they should keep their self-esteem intact. They should not kill their self-esteem at any cost. However, they should allow other people to help them. If you ignore your self-esteem or kill your self-esteem, not let

others help you, you start dying slowly. In the third stanza, the poet tells that becoming a slave of habits is a bad thing. If you become a slave of habits means you have addicted to particular habits, you start dying slowly. However, walking on the same path means you are unwilling to find new path at that time you start dying slowly. If you do not change your routine means you have the same routine each time, it is a start for you dying slowly. If you do not wear different colourful dresses rather than using same colour every now and then, you start dying slowly. The poet advises that we should speak to the strangers. If we do not speak with them, we start dying slowly. In the fourth stanza, the poet advises us to feel passions and emotions. The passions and emotions make our eyes glisten and heart beat fast. If we avoid to feel passion, we start dying slowly. In the last stanza, the poet tells that we should change our life. When we are not satisfied with our job or with our love, we should change them. Whatever is unsatisfactory we should change. If we do not change our life, we start dying slowly. We should risk for safe rather than uncertain. We should chase our dreams. We should allow ourselves to run away from sensible advice once in our life time. If we do not do all those things, we start dying slowly.

## **Warming Up!**

### **Chit-Chat**

1. Assuming A, B, C, D, as speakers ask the assigned questions in your group and discuss.

**1) If you do not study well, what will happen?**

Ans: If I do not study well, I will not understand all concepts in all subjects easily. I will score less marks in the examination. I will not get better job opportunities.

**2) If you wake up late on a working day, ....**

Ans If I wake up late on a working day, I will not complete my morning routines properly. I will not get company bus to reach my working place. I will not reach on time. The boss will scold me.

**3) If you do not exercise regularly what will happen?**

Ans: If I do not exercise regularly, I will be flabby and fat. I will not remain

physically and mentally fit. I will suffer from different diseases. I will have to spend a great deal of money on hospital.

**4) If you eat too much of junk food what will happen?**

**Ans:** If I eat too much of junk food, I will suffer from different diseases. I will be a weighty person.

**5) If you do not participate in school activities/games,**

**Ans:** If I do not participate in school activities/games, there will be no cultural and physical development in me. I will remain far away from all round development.

**6) If you ignore a friend in need, ...**

**Ans:** If I ignore a friend in need, I will not get help of any person. My friends will not understand my problems. I will be lonely in critical hours.

**2. Things I can do in my life**

<b>For my nation</b>	<b>For my family</b>	<b>For my friends</b>	<b>For old people</b>	<b>For the needy</b>	<b>For myself</b>
Keep my locality clean	Help all family members in their work	Help in his work	Spend some time with them	Understand their needs	Make myself an ideal person
Plant several trees in my locality	Understand problems of all members	Wait for him	Be friendly with them	Try to complete their needs	to be a balanced person
Save nation's wealth and property	Take care of all members	Share my feelings with him	Help them whenever needed	Help them to earn their living	to be a positive person
Keep dignity of my country intact	Share my views to all	Understand his problems	Understand their problems and solve them	Share my things with them	pray to God

**3. Complete the following web and write a paragraph.**

**Ans My Wish**

**I have social interest. I would like to do something for the betterment of society. I would like to work for society. I want to create environmental balance in nature. I wish to undertake tree plantation programme in society. I will plant different types of trees in my locality. My locality will be full of various birds and animals. There will be greenery everywhere in society. I want to undertake cleanliness campaign in society. I will arrange cleanliness programme once in a week. My locality will be clean and tidy. My locality will be clean and green. I would like to create healthy society. I will arrange free health check-up camps in my locality. I will check the health of people through such camps. will try to provide all medical facilities in minimum rates. I want to undertake social awareness programme. There are different problems in our society. I will create social awareness about those problems. I want to develop society on moral basis. In this way, to do social work is my wish.**

## **Margin Questions for Discussion**

### **1) What things can lead to a slow death?**

**Ans: Not travelling according to our likeness, not reading various books to enrich knowledge, not listening the sounds of life (beauty of nature) and not appreciating oneself can lead to a slow death.**

### **2) What is it that makes life worth living? Give four points**

**Ans: The following things will make life worth-living.**

- \*Helping other people in their hour of need.**
- \*Appreciating skills and abilities in others.**
- \*Enjoying natural beauty and various natural aspects.**
- \*Creating smiles on others' face.**
- \*Encouraging others to do well.**

### **3) The poet has left the last stanza incomplete. What line will you add to complete it?**

**Ans: You start dying slowly.**

## **English Workshop**

**1. Read the different messages in the poem given below. Choose the one that suits this poem, best.**

**Ans: (e) keeping your self-esteem intact, just try to relax in life.**

**2. State the following:**

**(a) Theme/Central idea of the poem.**

**Ans: One should keep one's self-esteem intact and just try to relax in life. The speaker is telling us what should be done and what should be avoided.**

**(b) Line that provides evidence of the theme.**

**Ans: When you kill your self-esteem.**

**(c) Three characteristics, from the poem, that makes a person dull and uninteresting.**

**Ans:**

**i) Becoming a slave of habit.**

**ii) Walking on the same path every day.**

**(ii) Not changing routine.**

**(iv) Not wearing different colours.**

**(v) Avoid speaking to unknown people.**

**3 Pick out four Adjectives from the poem and write them down with the nouns they describe.**

**1) same = same path**

2) different = different colours

4) turbulent = turbulent emotions

5) sensible= sensible advice

**4. Compare the structure of the poem, You start dying slowly to the poems in Unit One (1.1 and 1.3) To which poem does the structure match?**

**Ans: The structure of “You start dying slowly’ matches with Basketful of Moonlight.**

**What differences do you notice in the other ones? Note them down.**

**Structure of the poem**

**A Teenager’s Prayer      You start Dying slowly**

Does it have rhyming words?	Yes	No
Does it have a steady rhythm?	Yes	No
Are the lines of equal length?	Yes	No
Are there stanzas with equal number of lines?	Yes	No

**5. What expression is repeated in the poem? How many times? Why do you think the poet emphasizes it?**

**Ans: The expression ‘You start dying slowly’ is repeated in the poem. It is repeated for four times. The poet emphasizes it because he wants to convey the message of keeping your self-esteem intact. He wants to stress the circumstances that will spoil self-esteem.**

**6. Write the opposite of the following in the form of advice using different words and phrases.**

**(a) You do not travel x You should travel, as much as you can.**

**(b) You do not appreciate yourself x You should appreciate your skills and abilities**

**(c) You kill your self-esteem x You should keep up your self- esteem.**

**(d) You become a slave of habits x You should be far from any habit**

**(e) You refuse to speak to strangers x You should speak to strangers freely**

**(f) You do not change your life x You should make changes in your life whenever necessary**

**(g) You refuse to take a risk x You should take a risk in life**

**7. Go through the following steps and discuss in pairs about the facts mentioned in it. Write a paragraph using the points. Give another interesting title.**

**Ans Living A Happy Life** Everybody wants to lead a better and happy life. How they can live happy life is a matter of discussion. Living a happy and better life needs something to do. Man is a slave of habit. He has some good as well as some bad habits. To live happy life, he should cultivate only good habits. He must get rid | of bad habits. Bad habits lead to destruction and destruction leads to unhappy life. So, it is our duty to give up bad habits. Man should be positive in his approach. A man of positive qualities does creative work and creative work leads him to progress and happiness. He must avoid negative thoughts. Negative thoughts lead to unhappy life. Man is gifted with different abilities and talents. He should trust in his efforts. He should love whatever he does. Doing whatever we like is a key of happiness. Man must be a lifelong learner. He should read various inspiring books. However, he should get novel experiences. Experience is the best teacher for us. We should enrich ourselves by becoming a lifelong learner. Sharing and caring makes life enjoyable. Let us share our happy and joyful moments with others. Sharing is the way to live better and happy life. However, we must be careful to our relatives and friends. Caring provides you eternal happiness. Moreover, we should be humble to all people. We should respect and welcome to all people. We should accept each day with a smile. In this way, we can lead a better and happy life.

**8. Complete the following table with the things in your life which help you to change your habits and routine.**

<b>If I do this.</b>	<b>I shall..</b>
If I travel	shall visit new places. I shall  meet new people. I shall be happy.
IF I read	I shall get moral lessons. I shall enrich my knowledge.

If I change my bad habits	shall lead a better and happy life
If I play continuously on a mobile phone	I shall miss the pleasures of playing outdoor games
If I don't make friends	I shall live lonely life. I shall not share my thoughts to   anyone.

**9. Everyone needs inspiration to move ahead or make progress in our life. There are somethings which inspire us to live better. What are those things?**

**(a) stories (b) books (c) speeches**

**(d) thoughts (e) events (f) letters**

**10. Complete the web diagrams with words that go with their topics.**

	-storm
	- animals
<b>turbulent</b>	-people
	-Mob
	-sea waves
	-Eyes
	-sun
<b>glistening</b>	-Flowers
	- stars
	- leaves
	- decision
	- person
<b>sensible</b>	- action
	- advice
	- solution

**11. Write about a day when you felt very happy. Use the following questions to help you. Think/ Recollect a day....**

**Ans: A memorable Day**

**I am very lucky to have a memorable day in life. I still remember it was an annual gathering day in my school. That day boosted my confidence and made me an ideal**



**student.**

**It was the tradition of my school to select an ideal student suddenly on the occasion of gathering function. The selection was done on the basis of performance in all activities during the academic year. There was a kind of curiosity about the selection among all students.**

**As the prize distribution ceremony started, the anchor announced my name as an ideal student of the school. When I heard my name as an idea student, my joy knew no bounds, I was surprise and confused at the same time.**

**My friends and all spectators made a thunderous applause for me. They felt quite happy for my selection. They thought that my selection was absolutely right. My parents were also present on this occasion. They felt quite proud about me.**

**Then I reached on the stage to receive my honour. My parents were with me. I was honoured along with my parents. The chief guests and the president also admired me. Finally, I decided to do better performance.**

**In this way, the day on which I got an ideal student award was a memorable day. What a fantastic day it was!**

**12. Use internet or any book to write four inspirational or motivational quotes, related to the message/s in the poem.**

**Ans:**

- (a) Stay hungry, stay foolish**
- (b) Winners don't believe in justification.**
- (c) Satisfied people are always motivated in heart and keep peace of mind.**
- (d) There is no failure, it is only unfinished success.**
- (e) Excellence is the result of habitual integrity.**