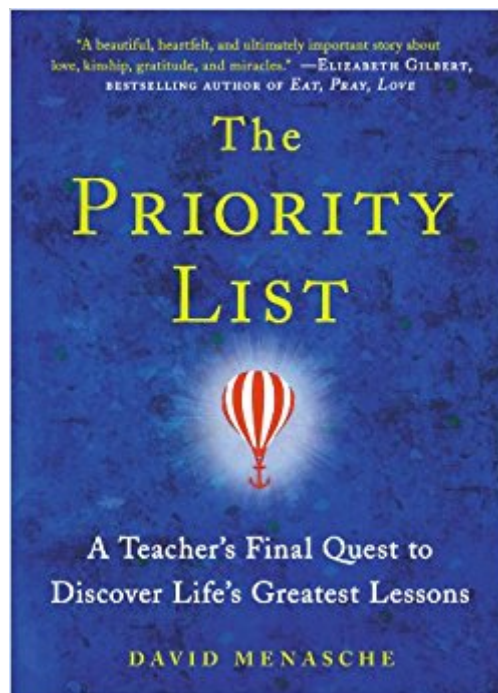




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# The Priority List: A Teacher's Final Quest To Discover Life's Greatest Lessons



## Synopsis

In this poignant and inspiring memoir, a beloved high school English teacher with terminal brain cancer undertakes a cross-country journey to reunite with his former students in order to find out if he made a difference in their lives, discovering along the way what is truly important in life.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"In an abstract way, we all know that life is short and precious. Or, at least, we THINK we know. But for David Menasche — a passionate young teacher diagnosed with terminal cancer at age 34 — that notion was anything but abstract. Filled with a wide-eyed reverence for life, he set off on an audacious journey around the country, determined to visit all his old students and speak to them (and listen to them) about the true priorities of existence. The result is a beautiful, heartfelt, and ultimately important story about love, kinship, gratitude, and miracles." (Elizabeth Gilbert, author of *Eat, Pray, Love* and *The Signature of All Things*) "When cancer told David Menasche his teaching days were over, he told cancer: With all due respect, you don't know me very well. Writing with courage and strength, his determination to share life's lessons beyond his classroom is both inspirational and enlightening." (Ron Clark, American educator and New York Times bestselling author of *The Essential 55* and *The End of Molasses Classes*) "A lot of people could write about what they would do if they were told they only had a short time to live, but few could write as thoughtfully, and with as much honesty, as David has with *The Priority List*. This former skate punk turned English teacher's life lessons will inspire anyone who reads them." (Jim Lindberg of *Pennywise*) "Within David's journey, there are powerful lessons about how we

connect to one another, and how even the smallest gestures can leave a lasting legacy. THE PRIORITY LIST is a brave and important book, which at its deepest level reminds us what it means to be human." (Jerry DeWitt, author of Hope After Faith)"A beautiful meditation." (Kirkus Reviews)"Like Randy Pausch's The Last Lecture, this memoir is a rousing testimony to the ways in which, in the face of death, living fully in the present moment becomes possible." (Publisher's Weekly)

David Menasche grew up a skate punk with a love for literature and a lack of direction. He's careful never to say that he fell into teaching but that he "rose up to it." He taught English at Miami's magnet school, Coral Reef Senior High School, for fifteen years. In 2012, he was awarded Teacher of the Year by his region. He lives in New Orleans.

I was shocked to read someone call the author narcissistic and bombastic in his mannerisms. Ugh. Why? Envy? A lack of understanding? The author talks about his relationship with his students and how he takes cancer, something that took my mother, and faced it head on. He takes a fear, a real fear, and travels from South Florida to California with merely the clothes on his back and the invitations from his former students. Wow! He must have made an impression because he had a boatload of invites and never slept on a bench! He has lots to be proud of. I don't call that narcissistic in the least. Books like this aren't my type. I tend to shun away from them but this one was read from cover to cover. I couldn't help but finish it because I felt like I was traveling with the author. I felt like his student and I'm older than he is! As a teacher myself, our job IS NOT EASY. It takes a lot to love it with the vivaciousness this man did. He cared for his students and their innumerable testimonies prove that! Just go to his Facebook page and look at the support. It is touching and eye-opening. Teachers, students, cancer patients/survivors, human beings...EVERYONE needs to read this book. It will touch your heart and inspire you. I'm proud I not only share a state with him (well, not anymore) but a passion of teaching. I plan to follow this man's life from now on. I bet you will too.

As a hospice worker, it is sometimes difficult to explain to my friends and associates what it is that we do. David Menasche does a wonderful job of explaining how, when he chose to end treatments and make his journey, that he was choosing to truly live. I would suggest reading this to anyone, and I will be sharing excerpts with my hospice staff at upcoming educational meetings. My wish for

all of us, whether we are imminently dying or imminently living, is that we could adopt for ourselves the attitudes of life, love and service that David found as he made this journey. Thank you, David Menasche, for sharing this part of your life with us. Jeff Houck, Program Director, Compassionate Care Hospice, Akron, OH

Having gone to Coral Reef whilest he still taught there I was never lucky enough to have had him as my teacher but my closest friends had. Not once was that classroom door shut during any lunch or break. Any word that came out of someone's mouth about this man was not negative but inquisitive and loving and positive. I never had the chance to personally meet him (maybe it was my own fear of also becoming addicted to his presence) but having read this book has opened my eyes and made me cry more than I would like to admit. What a fantastic idol yes idol what is said in this book is so true and there are so many more inspiring stories from so many other students/ staff members who's lives he has touched that it would fill bookshelves. This is a man with pride and great candor and this book was fantastically written to reflect it. I can't help but be reminded of the Last Lecture except it makes me so incredibly excited to know he is still here among us and is still accessible to any who want to reach him. This book was just outstanding

I actually got this book at the library and thoroughly enjoyed it. I am not a classroom teacher but have done a little professional teaching at work. While teaching to adults may be different in some ways from teaching to K12 students, I was so impressed by his ideas for captivating and engaging young minds (high schoolers in this instance) I purchased the book to give to an English teacher friend of mine. And I don't want to limit this to one particular group - there were definitely techniques and engagement ideas I could export to captivate and transform minds in a professional environment as well. I think this should be required reading for any teacher of literature. What is so wonderful is to read how the engagement that Menasche accomplished truly changed and brightened the life path for so many of his students. It is heartwarming to read of his great adventure.

My daughter is a teacher, I have been a teacher, I am a lover of words, and I am sick. I downloaded this book to my iPad 30 seconds after hearing about it. And now, some hours later, with tears still wet on my face, I'm glad I did. It's possible I wanted to read this book because the author is sick, and I was looking for insight. It is also possible that I wanted to read about a person who taught, really taught. To read about the things he said, and did, and how those things will live long after him.

And isn't that something we all want? To be remembered - in a good way ; ) Well, I will remember Menasche. I will encourage others to read his book, and hope they will be inspired as I have.

The world needs more teachers like David Menasche. He has a true gift to teach, its deep in his soul. When faced with the truth that his cancer would prevent him from teaching in a classroom, he found a way to carry on teaching through the pages of this book. I felt inspired to create my own priority list and find my own self after finishing his book. I am sure there are so many more readers out there doing the very same thing. For this, his legacy will live on and reach a classroom size he could have never dreamed to have had. All of us who read this book are now Menasche's students. Thank you for your inspiration. Your true love for your students and passion for learning and growing were conveyed in your story and it gives me hope that there are people out there that truly and deeply care for others.

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