

## Discussion Questions about *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*

### Do Now:

1. The following quote appears in the movie:

"Blessed Are the forgetful for they get the better even of their blunders." –Friedrich Nietzsche

What does this quote mean? How does it relate to the plot of the movie?

2. What is Joel's initial reaction when he finds out that Clementine has erased him from her memory? Why is this so devastating to him? It seems worse than if she simply had told him not to ever see her again. Why? Comment on his reaction to this knowledge.

### Role of Memory

3. Human identity is the sense of self. In determining the meaning of human identity what, if any, is the role of memory?

4. Are Clementine and Joel different people after they have their memories erased? In other words, have their identities changed in some meaningful way?

### Ethics

5. Is Dr. Mierzwiak's business of memory erasure unethical?

6. Was it a breach of ethics for Mary to mail all of Lacuna's clients their files and recorded tapes?

### Misc.

7. In a compelling final scene, Joel and Clementine listen to tapes of each other justifying why they chose to erase each other from memory. If on a first date with someone, you could hear a tape of yourself in describing what it's like to be in a long-term relationship with that person, would you choose to listen to it?

8. Some part of Joel struggles is to keep some memories of Clementine alive. Explain the meaning of his second thoughts about the erasure, especially given the bad times he had with her and was trying to move past.

9. Did the movie have a happy ending?