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for

[Life](#), [Relationships](#)



Erica TanushiLaBondHonors English 10B12/22/17The Catcher in the Rye  
EssayMembers of humanity who have had bad experiences growing up are at risk of having long term psychological problems in the future which could ultimately result in a lack of communication and connection with others. Failed relationships with others can often stem from the fact that the individual who is attempting to make the connection has had bad experiences while growing up.

In the novel, Holden attempted to make connections with many different individuals, but in the end he failed tremendously. For example, in the novel Holden attempted to make a connection with a little girl he met in the park while looking for his little sister Phoebe. For instance, Holden states, " I asked her if she'd care to have a hot chocolate or something with me, but she no, thank you...

she said she had to meet her friend, kids always have to meet their friend... that kills me" (Salinger, Chapter 16). This failed attempt at a relationship with the little girl in the park demonstrates that traumatic experiences an individual has when they are younger can affect how they interact with other people. Holden felt the need to make a connection with the little girl in the park because of his brother's death.

In the novel, Holden not only admires, but idolizes his younger brother Allie who died of Leukemia when they were younger. After his brother's death, Holden punched out all of the windows in his garage. After his brother died, Holden lost his innocence and it impacted his ability to make connections with others and that's why he felt the need to interact with the little girl.

Therefore, this failed connection proves how much a traumatic experience can impact an individual's life. In today's society, many adolescents who have been through a traumatic experience are affected by it their entire lives. For instance, when psychotherapist Jerry Rothman's brother died he struggled at making relationships with others.

Rothman states, " When Joseph died I was in 6th grade and I had a terrible time in school. I got into trouble and did outrageous things to get attention, because from the time he died I felt pretty much neglected by my parents. Everyone idealized my brother and made me feel I had to follow in his footsteps, so I went to the opposite extreme" (Tamarkin). Holden and Rothman's situations are extremely similar. Much like Holden, Rothman struggled in school and had a bad relationship with his parents. It took Rothman a very long time to rebuild his relationship with his parents and connect with them all over again. " It took Rothman more than twenty five years years to come to terms with the loss" (Tamarkin).

Furthermore, traumatic experiences can impact an individual's ability to relate and connect with others. Maturation of individuals can often be impacted negatively if an individual has been through a bad experience as an adolescent. For example, in the novel, Holden repeatedly lies and takes advantage of others for his own benefit. For instance, this is shown when Holden meets up with one of his old student advisors at a previous boarding school he had went to. Carl Luce is a few years older than Holden and he is actually someone that Holden likes and admires. Holden's immaturity is shown when he begins asking Carl personal questions about his sex life.

Then, Holden asks “ No kidding, how’s your sex life?” (Salinger, 160). Carl then began to get fed up with Holden’s immaturity and then states, “ When in hell are you going to grow up?” (Salinger, 161).

Moreover, this entire situation shows that Holden’s lack of maturity is in direct correlation with the death of his brother. After his brother died, it is evident that Holden became an entirely different person. For example, in his mind his is still an innocent child, but on the outside he’s a mature young adult. Also, it is evident that Holden never came to terms with his brother’s death because of the way he treats his little sister Phoebe. Therefore, Holden wasn’t able to mature properly because of the tragic loss of his brother for several significant reasons. In today’s time, it is extremely common for individuals who have lost a sibling to suffer from emotional immaturity. For example, according to the Institute of Medicine Committee for the Study of Health Consequences of the Stress of Bereavement there is a long lasting effect when an individual loses a sibling. For example, “ Studies of adults with depression, frequently reveal childhood bereavement, suggesting that such loss may render a person emotionally vulnerable for life.

.. this special vulnerability of children is attributed to developmental immaturity” (Krupnick). The long lasting effect of losing a sibling impacted Holden’s mental health and his behavior towards others. Therefore, an individual’s maturation can be impacted negatively if the individual has been through a traumatic experience as an adolescent. Society can negatively impact one’s behavior negatively, especially if an individual has been

through a traumatic or life changing experience. For example, in the novel Holden has a strong hatred toward society and “ phony” people. However, Holden does conform to society’s standards because he always made attempts to try and make himself look older.

For instance, this can be shown when Holden was in the Lavender Room. While he was in the Lavender Room, Holden was dancing with much older girls and kept trying to order drinks for himself. After several attempts at ordering drinks and getting refused repeatedly by the waiter, Holden decided to order coke instead. When the girls noticed that he was drinking coke, they began to judge and make fun of him. Then, Holden states “ the ugly one, Laverne, kept kidding because I was only drinking cokes” (83). This negative impact that society has on Holden’s behavior is extremely obvious in this situation. Holden felt the need to act older because that’s what society expected of him.

Holden conforming to society’s standards evidently contributed to his depression. Therefore, because of the pressure society put on him Holden felt the alter his behavior, which could have been a leading cause of his depression. In today’s society, there is a tremendous amount of pressure on teenagers not only look but also act older. Due to these pressures, many teenagers can cause harm towards themselves and can have various health issues such as depression, eating disorders, and several more. Negative childhood experiences can play a role in how one reacts and behaves towards society’s standards. For example, according to Psychology Today, “ The study demonstrates that negative childhood experiences may lead to

altered connectivity in the brain's fear circuitry—which, in turn, may lead to the development of internalizing symptoms such as depression” (Brynie). Due to the unrealistic expectations of society and the death of his brother, Holden felt the need to act much older than he was. Therefore, society negatively impacts the behavior of individuals who have been in traumatic experiences as adolescents.

Works Cited  
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