

# Negative effects of psychological trauma

Business



During childhood development, an infant's mind changes rapidly and does so based upon their environment and surroundings. Life altering experiences can be traumatic towards their development, one of the biggest being psychological abuse.

Mental trauma, especially during childhood, dramatically affects a person's adulthood. Children are not only forced to go through transformative experiences, but they also do not know how to cope with it due to their lack of mental growth. These altered traits are the reason why previously traumatized adults act abnormally compared to a normal person would. In the novel, *Flowers for Algernon* by Daniel Keyes, and modern sources, all authors express the negative effects of childhood psychological trauma. Adolescents universally attach themselves to their caregivers. This causes the relationships with loved ones as adults to be directly affected by the way their caregivers treated them as a kid.

Both the novel, *Flowers for Algernon*, and the article, "The Relationship between Witnessing Parental Conflict during Childhood and Later Psychological Adjustment among University Students: Disentangling Confounding Risk Factors" by Terry Diamond and Robert Muller, show the dependence children have on their caregivers. In the novel, *Flowers for Algernon*, the main character, Charlie Gordon, slowly regains his memories of his childhood as his intelligence increases. Through these memories, the realization that he was not treated correctly by his mother comes to picture, the author stating, "Now he had the clear image of Charlie's mother, screaming at him, holding a leather belt in her hand, and his father trying to hold her back" (Keyes 112). This statement explains the violence that was

brought upon Charlie by his own mother. Charlie's mother uses a "leather belt" which not only shows the physical abuse that could have inflicted negative effects on Charlie, but it also expresses how her screaming and the act of her father forcefully pulling her away from Charlie can cause psychological damage visually.

Children rely on their parents, especially mother figures, so for Charlie's mother to violently attempt to attack him at such a young age can cause for him to believe that his caregiver does not want him, thus leading to other difficulties with relationships for him growing up. Charlie later shows the effects of his harsh relationship with his mother when he avoids her throughout his adulthood and then hesitates in meeting her when he has the chance. The article, also supporting this central idea, explains the effects on a child's behavior due to an unfriendly infancy. The information provided in this text is based upon the fact that minors revolve around their parental figures, especially the mother, the author stating, "Parents who are in domestically violent relationships are generally under a great deal of stress as a result of frequent spousal conflict. This stress may be taken out on someone lower to the 'totem pole,' such as a child, in the form of direct psychological abuse" (Diamond and Muller 305). This statement directly addresses the fact that spousal conflict causes parents to act upon their children, mentally abusing them.

A mother-child relationship is one of the most crucial aspects of adolescence, it is the time they rely on their mother to care for them and be their upmost role model. Psychological abuse from loved ones causes the adolescent victims to engage in relationships differently as adults because of fear of

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attachment. This can lead to many conflicts with communication and love, both factors that the children were not exposed to at their age. Psychological abuse also curtails the development of a child's behavior and actions for as an adult. This type of trauma can cause the victims to act with more caution or carelessness, or overall behave abnormally compared to an average individual. In the novel, *Flowers for Algernon*, as well as the articles, "The Effects of Psychological Trauma on Children and Adolescents" by Mary Armsworth and Margot Holaday and "Psychological Trauma" by Bessel Van der Kolk, the authors express the effects on behavior due to psychological abuse as a child.

Charlie, in the novel, develops his behavior through his intelligence experiment. His trauma as a juvenile has led him to forget about his family, Keyes stating, "I dint see my mother or father or my little sister Norma for a long long long time. Maybe their ded to" (Keyes 14). Charlie's dialogue shows his disconnection from his family and his behavior during this time because his lack of knowledge of them. The fact that he believes his family is dead and does not show any emotion towards that statement clearly displays his impassive personality. Charlie's demeanor is due to his lack of attention and emotion given to him as a kid; he is forced to fend for himself since his family left him behind.

The effects on behavior can also be seen in the article, "The Effects of Psychological Trauma on Children and Adolescents," which discusses the central idea that experiences as kids will have a lasting impact on their lives and memories. This article goes over the traits of adults that could have been caused by psychological trauma, the author stating, "Memory  
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impairment may occur, which in turn may affect intellectual functioning or the ability to perform in the present or think of the future” (Armsworth and Holaday 50). This sentence shows the possible consequences kids will face as adults due to mistreatment, Charlie being a prime example of these results. His memory impairment can be seen when he does not recall where his family is and his weak intellectual stability can be seen when comparing his IQ to others. The article, “ Psychological Trauma,” also demonstrates the damage on an adult’s personality because of past experiences, the author stating, “ Many trauma victims with a semblance of normal functioning are in fact suffering from profound constriction in their involvement with others and reduced capacity to modulate feelings” (Van der Kolk 14).

Intimacy directly becomes a problem for traumatized children because they are not given it as a child. This also prevents them from being very open with their feelings, thus causing more independence and other characteristics that keep them isolated from others. Charlie experiences this with his family and also with many women he attempts to get close with. The way actions and behaviors are taught to a kid during childhood are what they learn and develop into themselves to form their personality and behavior as an adult. Children experiencing psychological abuse are then destined to behave unusually, causing a negative impact on how they are able to live their lives. The formation of other disorders or diseases are prone to children who have gone through mental conflicts.

These distressing experiences determine a child’s mental state, which in many cases will result to incompetent minds. Referring to the novel, *Flowers for Algernon*, and the article, “ The Relationship Between Witnessing Parental  
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Conflict During Childhood and Later Psychological Adjustment Among University Students by Terry Diamond and Robert Muller," the authors state what psychologically abused children go through that lead them to develop disorders in adulthood. The novel, *Flowers for Algernon*, distinctively shows the formation of depressing and even suicidal thoughts from the main character. Charlie's past trauma as a child and growing up has led him to a state of despondency, the author explaining, " Downhill. Thoughts of suicide to stop it all now while I am still in control and aware of the world around me" (Keyes 278). Charlie's thoughts clearly show the development of depression that has swept upon him.

This is directly caused by the psychological trauma he was faced with by his family, his so called " friends," and professors. The buildup of his emotions over time from childhood is the reason it is so likely for him to form other diseases revolving around depression. The article also argues that victims or witnesses of domestic violence or psychological trauma are destined to establish other problems as an adult. The traumatic events are engraved in the child throughout their lives, the author supporting this when stating, " Experiences of psychological abuse have been found in several adult samples to be more highly associated with internalizing behaviors (i. e., depression, anxiety, low self-esteem) than other forms of abuse" (Diamond and Muller 305).

This sentence explains the " several adult samples" that have proven psychologically abused children will have a higher probability of developing internalizing behaviors, and even stated examples including depression. Charlie can be seen as depressed as he discusses suicidal thoughts, which in <https://assignbuster.com/negative-effects-of-psychological-trauma/>

turn is bluntly associated with the mental abuse he experiences from his parents. This concludes that traumatic abuse causes self-conflicts, thus resulting to the likeliness of them forming mental disorders in adulthood. Negatively, these disorders cause victims to constantly go through psychological tension, even after their initial abuse as a child has been terminated. The negative effects of psychological trauma during childhood can be distinctly perceived when looking at the novel, *Flowers for Algernon*, and current sources.

Psychological abuse is usually taken for granted when compared to other types of trauma. In reality, mental trauma can be extremely detrimental, especially to children. This trauma not only negatively affects adolescents, but it also leads to injurious consequences as an adult. Negatively affecting a person's youth is the most direct way of botching the rest of their life. This can lead to them living a more depressed life because of the acts of being looked down upon and made fun of as a kid. Psychological abuse should be looked at more closely, for it is something that turns an innocent, gleeful child's life into something almost not worth living.?