

Holden needs some  
help essay sample



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Rollo May, an American existential psychologist says “ Depression is the inability to construct a future.” (May). Mays quote relates to Holden because he has nothing to look forward to in life anymore. In the novel *The Catcher in the Rye* Holden lives day by day. Holden never knows what he is going to do next which makes him in a depressed mood. In the story Holden shows symptoms of depression. One common symptom of depression is “ Persistent sadness, anxiousness, or “ empty” feelings” (“ Depression... Therapies.”) Holden shows persistent sadness constantly in the story. Throughout the story Holden expresses what depresses him the most.

While Holden visits Mr. Spencer he notices things that depresses him like when he says, “ What made it even more depressing , old Spencer had on these very sad, ratty old bathrobes anyway” (Salinger 7). Holden becomes sadder when he sees other people who are sad or just look sad. Holden generally views the world and life as depressing. In another part of the story, Holden sits on couch looking at the girls that pass by and says, “ Girls with their legs crossed, girls with their legs not crossed...it was really nice sightseeing, if you know what I mean. In a way, it was sort of depressing, too...” (Salinger 123). Persistent sadness is common for people with depression, but in order to overcome being depressed, Holden should start viewing the world as happy not sad.

Another symptom of depression Holden shows is “ feeling lonely” (“ Depression”). While Holden talks to Ackley, he says “ I felt so lonesome, all of a sudden. I almost wished I was dead” (Salinger 48). If somebody is lonely they become sad since there is no one there to comfort them. When Holden isolates himself from everyone he thinks of all the sad things in life and

wants to commit suicide. While Holden is all alone in his hotel room, he says “ What I really felt like doing was committing suicide. I felt like jumping out of the window,” (104). Throughout this whole story, Holden feels isolated from the world. He faces between hating the world and then wanting to connect with the world.

Another symptom Holden shows is “ Insomnia” (Depression...Therapies). Holden has trouble sleeping even if it is really late at night. Like he says, “ It took me quite a while to get to sleep- I wasn’t even tired- but finally I did” (Salinger 104). One reason why Holden has trouble sleeping is because he is too indecisive, so he is awake all night trying to make up his mind. If Holden were to clear his mind, he wouldn’t have the problem of not sleeping. Holden has a minor form of insomnia which could be solved if he saw a psychiatrist.

The most obvious sign Holden shows about having depression is “ thoughts of suicide” (Depression...Therapies). Every time Holden is feeling lonely, he wants to kill himself. While Holden is having a quarrel he says, “ What I really felt like, though, was committing suicide. I felt like jumping out the window” (Salinger 104). Holden always has to be doing something or else he will have thoughts of suicide. Another example of when Holden speaks of his death is when he says, “ If there’s ever another war, and I’m going to sit right the hell on top of it. I’ll volunteer for it, I swear to God I will” (Salinger 141). Here Holden is talking about sitting on an atomic bomb, and if there was another war, he would be the first one to sit on the bomb. This is a clear sign that he doesn’t want to be alive.

Holden is suffering from Depression since he shows persistent sadness, trouble sleeping, loneliness and reoccurring thoughts of suicide. In the end he becomes less depressed but still isn't content. If people show symptoms or signs of depression they should seek medical help immediately.

#### Work Cited

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