

Holden's depression in the catcher in the rye



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Lens of Depression

The Catcher in the Rye written by J. D Salinger is about Holden Caulfield. A young curious, lost kid who does not seem to understand the true meaning of life. His transition with adolescents and his curiosity don't manage well together. Holden is immature he makes many mistakes, and acts as though he has not made any. Holden does not seem like a normal seventeen year old. Holden is classified as an adult, but I do believe that because he is suffering from depression he does not act his age although he may think he is. Holden dislikes the society he lives in and goes on a long pilgrimage to discover himself. Holden is a critical person, judgemental, seems very anxious, has sarcasm, this leads him on a path of self destruction. The way that Holden acts in the novel makes me think he is unstable, and judgemental about everything. I am viewing this novel from a psychological lense but more specifically through depression. Holden's childhood seemed to have affected him and caused depression. His childhood is what made Holden and due to his childhood he is suffering from depression in his older age,

Holden's childhood has shaped who is today. His personality and his attitude in his life are the results of his childhood experiences. At a young age he lost many connections with his family members especially his parents. Due to bad relations with his parents we can understand where his loneliness comes in. In the novel Holden always seems to be alone. I felt that he wants someone to be around him to comfort him, to fill that empty feeling he was suffering from. Holden Caulfield needs physiological needs, he needs comfort and love because at a very young age his brother has passed away

(" it wasn't just that he was the most intelligent member in the family. He was also the nicest God, he was a nice kid, though" (57).. " Allie's death triggered a deep loss in Holden because Holden could actually talk to him and was deeply connected to him. It was the only person in Holden's life that Holden felt was a good person. As Holden was healing from his brother's loss he started looking up to his brother D. B. again (I mean, that's all I told D. B. about, and he's my brother and all. He's in Hollywood. That isn't too far from this crummy place. (11)". Holden, dealing with tons of emotion, began to see his older brother's fakeness which was bothering Holden to the extent that he started labeling his brother as a " phony". D. B. was a very good writer but gave it all up because of his selfishness. He lost his writing talent to become famous in Hollywood for money. Holden went back into his shell and became even more upset (What I was really hanging around for, I was trying to feel some kind of good-bye. I mean I've left schools and places I didn't even know I was leaving them. I hate that. I don't care if it's a sad good-bye or a bad good-bye, but when I leave a place I like to *know* I'm leaving it. If you don't, you feel even worse. (18)". I believe that Holden became even more judgemental and criticized everyone after this blow from his brother. He began to lose respect for him. When a person is depressed even the smallest thing that makes them second-guess a person's actions will bother them. It will cause the person to become even more upset, lost, and confused on the path they should take. First Holden losing out on his parents' relationship, then Holden losing two brothers made him even more secluded and upset than he ever was before in his life. For a depressed individual, company is key for them to recover and see hope in their eyes. D. B. made it even harder for Holden to see that because he gave up his real self for money. Due to D.

B's actions Holden also started questioning his ability to do anything and follow his true passions.

More than 18.1% (40 million) of the population in the United States is affected by depression every year. (ADAA) Depression is a mood disorder that affects the emotion of a everyday human being and puts their emotions into the dirt. Being affected by depression can cause lack of activity, suicidal thoughts and bad habits like drinking and smoking as well as doing things they would not normally do.. Depression is so powerful when it hits some may think that it is permanent and effects the way people are towards the world going through it. The main character of " The Catcher in the Rye" Holden is going through a tough time in his life and everything that he is doing is making it worse for himself. Holden does things that make him even more depressed. He is living life not the way he wants too.

Another cause of Holden's depression I believe was due to Holden being anxious. I felt that Holden was very anxious throughout the novel because he seems to be afraid of growing up. His attitude is that he tries to avoid anything that makes him feel as if he is getting older. Holden uses shields throughout the novel as his defense mechanisms. " If there's one thing I hate, it's the movies. Don't even mention them to me"(2). He says the movies are phony and so are the people that go to them. Even though he says this he goes to the movies and he has very strong feelings about them. Holden does many things to contradict himself throughout his story. " Anxiety disorders develop from a complex set of risk factors, including genetics, brain chemistry, personality, and life events." (ADAA). Holden's life events prove that his anxiety issues did not just come out from nowhere.

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They triggered more and more issues deepening his depression." It's not uncommon for someone with an anxiety disorder to also suffer from depression or vice versa. Nearly one-half of those diagnosed with depression are also diagnosed with an anxiety disorder." (ADAA) We can confirm from this that anxiety leads to depression, and or they come in hand in hand.

The pressure to succeed and his confusion with the way the World works caused Holden to be very pessimistic. Due to this Holden led his life to a path of self destruction. Holden wants to live in a World of perfection, yet his depression and anxiety are keeping him from doing that. Holden's kept all his feelings inside his heart, he faked his way due to being afraid of being rejected. His loneliness, depression is all based on what had happened throughout his life. relating to my claim Depression is so powerful when it hits some may think that it is permanent and effects the way people are towards the world going through it . I felt that the viewing this novel in a psychological lens (depression) could be greatly connected in reading The Catcher in The Rye.

Work cited

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- [" The Danger of Suppressing Sadness"](#)