
Loneliness Of Main Hero In The Catcher In The Rye

The Depression of Holden Caulfield

There are many factors that can go into causing a person to be depressed, according to webmd.com, a few of those things are; abuse, conflict, death or a loss, loneliness or major events such as moving. Holden Caulfield from J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher and the Rye* is depressed because he is lonely and tries to have a conversation with anyone, he doesn't apply himself at school even though he is obviously intelligent, his brother whom he was very close with died and his parents sent him away to boarding school.

Holden is constantly trying to find someone who will just have a conversation with him. He tries to take his cab drivers out for drinks and always asks them if they know where the ducks go in the winter when the pond is frozen over. He stops and talks to nuns about *Romeo and Juliet* and even gives them ten dollars. Ackley is the guy who lives in the room next to Holden at Pencey, when Holden first describes Ackley he says "...he had a terrible personality. He was also sort of a nasty guy. I wasn't too crazy about him to tell you the truth." (19). Holden complains about how annoying and gross Ackley is but he asks him to go to the movies with him. Holden doesn't even like the movies, he actually hates them. Going to something that he hates with someone that he dislikes is a telltale sign of his loneliness. While Holden is in New York he has a prostitute sent up to his hotel room, while she is trying to get busy with him he keeps asking her "Don't you feel like talking for awhile? It was a childish thing to say but I was feeling so damn peculiar." (95). Aside from showing sign of loneliness, Holden often comes straight out and says he's feeling depressed. He also says he feels like killing himself multiple times, he says "I felt like jumping out the window." (48) (104). Though he might not have completely meant that he wanted to jump to his death it shows how he is feeling deep down and on some level he might really mean it.

Holden is obviously a very intelligent person, yet he is failing out of school. The only reason he is failing is because he won't apply himself, and he knows that, he says "they gave me frequent warnings to apply myself, but I didn't" (4). He calls himself dumb but he knows he's not. He has no motivation because he doesn't see himself going anywhere in life, I see that as an effect of his depression. When he is talking to his history teacher, Mr. Spencer, before he leaves Pencey he knows that he could've done better in school. When Mr. Spencer reads him his essay Holden says "I had to sit there and listen to that crap" (11). He knew it was an awful essay, yet he wrote it. He could've easily written a better essay but he just won't apply himself. Holden has an obsession with the ducks at the pond, even while talking to Mr. Spencer he says "I was wondering where the ducks went when the lagoon got all icy and frozen over. I wondered if some guy came in a truck and took them away to a zoo or something. Or if they just flew away." (13). The ducks are a metaphor for himself, what he's really wondering is what is going to happen to him.

Holden had a little brother named Allie who died of leukemia, Holden was clearly very close with Allie and his death made a huge impact on Holden's life. When talking about the night Allie died Holden says "I slept in the garage the night he died, and I broke all the goddam windows with my fist, just for the hell of it." (39). Soon after Allie's death, Holden's parents sent him off to

boarding school. What Holden needed was to be surrounded by family through the difficult time, but they just sent him away with nobody. Maybe his parents didn't realize that they were setting him up for failure by doing that. They lost one of their sons and they must not have known how to deal with it. Holden says "I felt sorry as hell for my mother and father, especially my mother, because she still isn't over my brother Allie yet." (155). Holden doesn't blame his parents for sending him away, but by doing so they set him up to be lonely and depressed. He gets in a fight with Stradlater and then goes into Ackley's room to talk to him about it, and even while talking to him he says "I felt so lonesome all of a sudden, I almost wished I was dead." (48). Holden was sent away from the people who care about him, and he can't seem to find anyone that makes him feel wanted.

In conclusion, Holden Caulfield is depressed because he has lost someone important, been sent away from everyone who cares about him, and is lonely. When he reconnects with his little sister, Phoebe, is when he begins to have a breakthrough, he really loves her and she is what he needs to make it through his depression.

eduzaurus.com