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Neglect Becomes Who

Childhood neglect, simply put, is the loss of connection between parent and child. Many mistake it for being less than what it is when in reality neglect plays a huge role on a kids development. Neglect manifests itself into personalities of those affected by it, even sometimes without acknowledgment. Sadly, this lack of care plays an active role in the child's decision making from that point on. This concept is displayed in Hosseini's book, *The Kite Runner*. Amir—the cowardly male lead and narrator—yearns for the attention from his father, Baba. Being both intimidated and proud of his high credentialed father, those two will never be able to meet eye to eye.

Tension between Baba and Amir is due to the fact that Baba does not see himself when evaluating Amir. He isn't pleased with Amir becoming a writer and quickly rejects Amir completely for not being enough like him. Instead of facing the facts and embracing his son for all that he is, he spends most of his time out of the house on trips or locked away in a room with his friend, Rahim Khan, claiming it's adult time. On the other hand Amir becomes greedy for Baba's attention, desperately attempting anything in order to obtain his father's attention but in doing so he only pushes his beloved father further away. The neglect Baba has shown his son Amir will forever affect him as a person and will alter his decision making in a way no non-neglected person would be able to comprehend. This desperate attempt to gain attention is

also demonstrated in the poem “Daddy” by Sylvia Plath and piles on the evidence that neglect causes developmental issues within the mental health of a child.

The majority of “Daddy,” parallels the ideas of neglect portrayed in *The Kite Runner*. The poem comes from the perspective of a woman who receives neglect from her father—just like Amir. She's enraged at the way she is treated by her father, even comparing herself to a useless and dismissed “black shoe” (Plath, Line 2). In “Daddy,” the woman states, “I have always been scared of you” (Plath, Line 44). However, the poor girl still wishes to be loved by her dear brute of a father. The neglect from her father caused her to grow up differently and see the world in a whole other perspective. She clearly states that her sense of personality was destroyed by “the vampire who said he was you and drank my blood for year” (Plath, Line 77). Both Amir and the young women in the poem mirror each other with the neglect of their fathers.

These two pieces of literature parallel each other in the aspect of neglect. Thus, growing up with such neglect caused their individual personalities and even decision making to be altered. Many people have numerous preconceptions about those who act out or have different ideas and concerns than the majority of us. Next time you see someone with a very outgoing personality don't be so quick to deem them a horrific person, they could have just been neglected as a child.

Works Cited:

Hosseini, Khaled. *The Kite Runner*. New York: Riverhead, 2003. Print.

Plath, Sylvia. "Daddy." *Poets.org*. Academy of American Poets, n.d. Web. 01 Nov. 2016.
<<https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/daddy>>.