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Absent Parent

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Absent Parent

Angelica Alcazar

Keywords: absentee, family, father, neglect, relationships

Introduction

My research paper was at first about overpopulation, and I had changed it to absent parents and more specifically, for me, an absent father. I liked my old research topic, but I am more connected to the current project I decided to write about because it directly affects me. At first I didn't think I was going to be able to find any research on the way I was feeling, but it turns out that there is a lot of research as to why I am feeling the way that I am. I also thought that I wasn't going to be able to find anything beneficial to me. I had to find someone to interview quickly and thankfully I did. It was hard for her to express her feelings about their father to me at first, but as the interview went on I learned a lot of things about her relationship with their father and how we feel about things in a similar way. My essay will be a deep dive into the research questions I wish to get answered.

Google scholar Research

Neglect to me is when a person, who means a lot to you, does not treat you the way you would like to be treated. In my case, it is my father who I wish treated me well, and allowed me to prosper. With my research I had realized that there were different types of neglect "Emotional neglect (i.e., acts or omissions by the caregiver that could cause the child to develop behavioral, cognitive, emotional, or mental disorders) " written by Kathryn L Hildyarda

and David A Wolfea. These authors had not only made me realize that there were different types of neglect, it has made me realize that the issues with my dad have made me cognitive and emotional challenged in some cases, I believe. It also expanded my definition of neglect, knowing what kind that I have been going through. I am not a therapist and I don't wish to self-diagnose a disorder that I may or may not think that I have. This being said, that is the reason why I said challenges and not disorders. An example of this, in my experience, is having attachment issues. When I was little I was very attached to my mother because she was the only parent that I had in my eyes. I would always want her to sleep in my bed with me, and I wanted her to go with me everywhere I went. Even though my dad was physically there, I didn't feel like he was there for me in an emotional way. Another example in my older years, being in a romantic relationship; I have often asked myself if I am enough, and was scared that that special person was going to leave me because I had to ask that question so often. I would make myself think that just because my loved one is not showing me affection at the moment, that that meant he didn't like me as much anymore.

Article Research

Having a father that is not involved in your life as much as you hoped, has put strain on me emotionally because I don't know how to cope with my emotions towards my dad. Without knowing how to cope, I think that it makes it worse to hold on to everything. "Embrace forgiveness. It takes a strong person to forgive someone they don't feel deserves their forgiveness." written by Julie Baumgardner. This has made me realize that I have to try to forgive, I never thought of the idea of forgiving because I didn't think that would help me. And I also learned to accept that things are the way that they are. I need to forgive him to start moving forward, but how do I do that? Stated by Julie "you have to find a way to communicate your feelings, not just express them." To me this quote means that I can't express my emotions through actions, like getting an attitude with my father, but instead trying to communicate with words. Using communication could be a way to start learning how to forgive my father. I have been wanting to attempt, again, my

thoughts on his actions and explain the way that I feel, but I am afraid that he will dismiss my emotions again. How do I get him to listen?

Trying to fix a broken relationship is going to be hard, but it is something that I've been wanting to do for a while now. I'm not sure what I would say to my father when I try to talk to him, but from this quote it gives me a place to start "Instead, focus on communicating, not blaming." stated by Ishak, Raven. To me this quote is saying that I should not say 'I feel this because you do this'. I think that I can say 'I feel this because I don't like this'. If I blame my dad for what I am feeling then he will get defensive and start to not listen to what I am expressing. This is how I will be approaching the conversation and trying to get him to listen. I now realize that the last time I expressed my feelings towards him I was blaming him and he was defensive, therefore, leading him to not listen to what I was saying or feeling.

Interview Research

My time speaking with Isa, who is one of my close friends from back home, I realized things about her that I haven't before. Although her and I's experience with neglect are different, we can still relate on a few aspects. She believes that "my dad would buy me things to be okay with the wrong things he was doing" This aspect I can sympathize with, my dad also buys me things to show that 'he cares' and to validate that what he was doing was okay in his mind. This is an example of emotional manipulation which is the broad statement to what Isa and I have both gone through and is still going through in present time. In Isa's situation her main issue with her father is having freedom away from him and not being able to express herself to him. Isa's father would have strict rules for Isa which would involve not having a relationship with any other man than himself. Isa believes that she is also not getting the right attention that she deserves and that her father was spending too much time with his girlfriend and on extra curricular activities. To try and cope with her neglect she stated that should try to distance herself from her dad. Isa would do this by hanging out with friends as much as she could. I asked Isa if she thinks her relationship with

her father could get better and she expressed that she believes that she can because she realized that "As I got older I realized that I don't need to please him and that I need to do my own thing". At this point of the interview I believe she got validation in what she was doing. Telling me allowed her to believe that it was okay to not please her dad. I also believe that the path that she is taking can help break her chains from her father. I then asked if she was willing to listen to "9 ways to re-establish a healthy relationship with a parent" that I found helpful, and she listened to me read key points about the article. She had some point of views about the article and specifically about giving the relationship time to heal. She said that "Time helped because, as I got older, he allowed me to grow up and express myself more". She thought that overall, the article was helpful and she realized that she too had taken some of the steps that were talked about in the article. And she too will use these steps to continue mending her relationship with her dad. This made me feel excited and happy for her because I was able to help her through the process and help her continue fixing her relationship with her dad.

Conclusion

My research has made me realize a lot about my relationship with my dad, and what I have to do to try and mend a broken relationship. The 9 steps from the article "9 ways to re-establish a healthy relationship with a parent" and "Dealing with Anger from Having an Absent Father.". This research project was beneficial for me, because it is actually something that will help me in the near future. I want to fix my relationship with my dad and now I know how to start. I also realized that there are people around me who also feel the same way and if anybody were to read my research, it would help others who also have similar issues as I do.

Annotated Bibliography

Source 1

MLA Citation

Hildyard, Kathryn L, and David A Wolfe. "Child Neglect: Developmental Issues and Outcomes." *Child Abuse & Neglect*, Pergamon, 2 July 2002,
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0145213402003411>

Content:

- Emotional neglect (i.e., acts or omissions by the caregiver that could cause the child to develop behavioral, cognitive, emotional, or mental disorders)
- Children who experience early emotional neglect seem to be particularly at risk for attachment problems
- Child neglect continues to be the most commonly reported form of child maltreatment
- Persons with histories of neglect are also at risk for delinquency, adult criminal behavior, and violent criminal behavior
- Difficulty solving problems within relationships

Authority:

Kathryn L Hildyard and David A Wolfe are part of the Department of Psychology, The University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, N6A 5C2, Canada.

Timeline:

This article was written in 2002.

Usefulness:

This article provides valuable insights into the developmental issues and outcomes associated with child neglect. The information aligns with my personal experiences and will be useful in understanding the impact of emotional neglect.

Source 2

MLA Citation:

Baumgardner, Julie. "Dealing with Anger from Having an Absent Father." First Things First, Julie Baumgardner, 23 Nov. 2021, <https://firstthings.org/dealing-with-anger-from-having-an-absent-father/>

Content:

- Embrace forgiveness and communicate feelings
- The more anger towards the past, the less capable of loving in the present
- Releasing oneself to grow, not about the other person
- Acknowledge and express anger

Authority:

Julie Baumgardner is a Certified Family Life Educator and Certified Crisis Intervener.

Timeline:

This article was published in 2017.

Usefulness:

This article offers guidance on coping with emotions related to having an absent father. The advice on forgiveness, communication, and self-growth will be valuable in dealing with my own feelings.

Source 3

MLA Citation:

Alcazar, Angelica. "Interview with Isabella Vaquerano", October 14, 2022

Content:**Define neglect, and examples**

- Isa's definition of neglect is causing emotional distress/damage(traumatic)
- Isa feels that her father was not there for her because she feels that he preferred to be at his gf's house instead of being with family.
- She feels that he did not prioritize her because of other extracurricular activities
- The only reason she would get attention was if she thought that her dad thought that she was doing something wrong, followed by yelling
- She believes that "my dad would buy me things to be okay with the wrong things he was doing" (emotional manipulation)
- Hispanic point of views on how women should act vs how his son should act Ex: "if niko does something involving a girl then atta boy, if I did something involving a guy then i get in trouble and am told to steer away"

Dealing with a relationship that isn't normal

- "Distance myself from my dad by hanging out with friends"
- "Ignore everything and do what makes my dad happy, so he doesn't do neglecting acts towards me"

How to make better

- "If I speak my feelings more like an adult then there wouldn't be tension between us, instead of saying what he wants to hear"
- "As I got older I realized that I don't need to please him and that I need to do my own thing"
- "I feel better when I speak my own feelings now, then how i used to do when I was younger"
- I asked her if she felt that she things she expressed her emotions with her dad and she said "I feel like I have been more, but it could be better"

9 steps to improve your relationship

- Communicating is better than blaming, in her case she felt that she has not blamed her father for any harsh acts he has done
- "Time helped because, as I got older he allowed me to grow up and express myself more"
- "Yes" "definitely focus onto yourself" "if i focused on myself I felt that my dad would get mad, but as I got older I realized that I need to express myself in order to be an individual and not be impacted on my dad's feelings"
- "Yes I am still afraid of conflict" afraid of expressing completely because conflict will arise. Taking weeks to express emotion because feeling sick
- "I think I will get better at expressing myself, but it'll cause more tension" "I think later on we'll push the tension to the side and our relationship will be mended."

Authority:

The interview was conducted by Angelica Alcazar who is a student at Cal State Monterey Bay and was conducted for a HCOM assignment.

Timeline:

The interview took place on October 17, 2022 and Isabella Vaquerano is credible because she has a history with neglect from her father.

Usefulness:

This interview was helpful because it got me to acknowledge a different perspective on dads who have performed neglectful acts. It also has made me realize that some of isa's and my situation are alike.

Source 4**MLA Citation:**

Ishak, Raven. "9 Ways to Re-Establish a Healthy Relationship with a Parent." Bustle, Bustle, 13 May 2016, <https://www.bustle.com/articles/159304-9-ways-to-re-establish-a-healthy-relationship-with-a-parent>

Content:

- Instead, focus on communicating, not blaming.
- you don't have to force the relationship.
- you should also try to figure out if there's anything you can fix within yourself, as well.
- Don't hold yourself back from having a potentially healthy relationship with your parent because you're afraid of conflict
- Hopefully your parents will appreciate that honesty, paving the way for a new, healthy relationship.

Authority:

Raven Ishak graduated from University of Central Florida and has a degree in Interpersonal-Organizational Communications.

Timeline:

This article was published in 2016, and I believe that all the information is still up to date. I don't think steps to trying to mend a relationship have changed much since then.

Usefulness:

This article has shown me step by step on how to mend a broken relationship. I will be using these steps in my real life with my father. I will also quote these steps in my essay to help me sort through what I should say to my father.

About the Author:

Angelica Alcazar is a student at CSUMB and is planning on graduating with her bachelor's degree in molecular biology. She is from the bay area in a city called Martinez. Angelica's hobbies include photography, caring for her snake (umi), and bowling. She was shocked when Writing Waves reached out to her to publish her work because she struggled with reading and writing when she was younger. Angelica wanted to spread the message that it is never too late to get better at something.