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Mrs. Graning

English

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### Elie's Father-Son Relationship

In Elie Wiesel's memoir it shows the amazing Father-Son relationship between Elie and his father. Elie and his father's love for each other was like no other. Elie always looked up to him and followed in his father's footsteps. Elie never wanted to leave his father's side even when they were separated. Elie and his father show the relationship when they arrived at the first camp, during the deportation to Gleiwitz, and when Elie's father became ill.

During the deportation and arrival on the first day at the camp, Elie and his father didn't leave each other's side. Elie says this "Behind me, an old man fell to the ground. Near him was an SS man putting his revolver back in his holster. My hand shifted on my father's arm. I had one thought—not to lose him. Not to be left alone." (Wiesel 28). They stuck together during the process of who can work and who cannot. Elie had to say he was eighteen even though he wasn't and Elie's father said he was forty even though he wasn't either. Elie and his father both made it through without being separated for long. They were able to work so they did not go to the crematory like Elie's Mother and sister. Elie was traumatized as soon as he entered the camp because he saw babies being dumped alive into the crematory fire.

At another camp called camp Buna, Elie is brought to the camp hospital because his foot becomes infected. Elie had to lay around others who were in way worse condition with others

completed successfully. After Elie had surgery he heard rumors of the war getting closer to illnesses. Elie had to have surgery on his foot. Elie was afraid of the surgery, but it was them. Elie's foot was still healing when they were forced to evacuate the camp. He later found out that the people that stayed in the hospital were freed and his father would have never died. The people that evacuated were forced to sprint non-stop until they were told to stop and rest. When they got to an abandoned village the SS officers had said that they had run 42 miles and were almost to the next camp. The Jews were so exhausted that they were afraid of falling asleep because they did not know if they would wake up. Elie's father said "Don't let yourself be overcome by sleep, Eliezer. It's too dangerous to fall asleep in the snow. You might fall asleep for good. Come on, come on. Get up." (Wiesel 79). Elie and his father took turns sleeping and when one was asleep for a little they would wake him up and the other would sleep. There were people dying everywhere and some of which wanted to die anyway.

Elie's father had become very ill with dysentery. He was slowly dying and falling weaker every day. Elie stayed with his father instead of abandoning him like he had seen another son do to his father. Elie shared his rations with his father and whatever his father needed Elie would give it to him. The head of the block told Elie to stop wasting his food on a person that will die anyway. The head of the block said "don't give ration to your old father. There's nothing you can do for him. And you're killing yourself. Instead, you ought to be having his ration." (Wiesel 96). Elie thinks about this and wants to give up on his father but he doesn't want to abandon him. Not much later Elie went to sleep and woke up and his father had already been taken to the crematory and another ill person was laying in his father's old bed. Elie did not even get a chance to tell him goodbye. Elie felt some sadness in him but not as much as he would have felt outside the camp.

Elie had already been so hurt that when his father died it really did not hurt him as bad as it should have.

Elie's father-son relationship is shown through the first concentration camp, the selection process, and his father's illness. This shows how close Elie was to his father before his death. Elie never wanted to leave his father's side, but only did because the SS officers forced them to separate. The Holocaust had a terrible impact on the people in the camps. Most of the people that survived were traumatized so it left a big impact on these people. Elie is a role model for people that are going through hard times. Elie went through a whole year of getting beaten. Elie showed an amazing relationship with his father and he is the only reason Elie survived.

## Works Cited

Wiesel, Elie. *Night*. EMC Paradigm, 2003