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**Arm Wrestling with My Father**

It is a well-written essay by Brad Manning which narrates the strong relationship of a father with his son. However, from the contexts it seems that it is written for the young age guys of college or high school level. It is written in very simple words so that people of every age would clearly understand the main idea. Manning remembers his childhood and the relationship of him with his father. He starts the story telling about the relationship that how they physically expressed this relationship. All those physical contacts were aimed to express the love and affection between son and father. At the same time, the essay also explores the relation of father and son and its development over time. At very young ages, sons are unable to get this expression but they are learn it when they are grown up. Therefore, this a very sensitive matter and the writer has beautifully highlighted the strengths of this relationship for his readers. It can help all the young readers to relate the situation with their own experiences with their fathers. Similarly, this paper aims to reflect on the essay written by Manning and identify the major understandings from it.

This essay is full of lessons for the college students so it is up to them that what they can get form the topic. The very first thing is the importance of a father son's relationship that how fathers are affectionate towards their children and use different ways to express their feelings and love. In the beginning, Manning declares that they never shared their emotions with each other. As he grew older, he realized how much his father loves him and used little acts to express his love and care toward him. The physical bond that his father had with him from the initial stage was the way of communication he used. Winning of his father always made him proud and he would take it as pride that he has the strongest father in the world. This is communicating a strong message to the young aged boys that fathers might find it difficult to express their emotional connection with them but physical connections in the form competition depict fathers’ concern very well.

Therefore, the second thing a reader can extract from this essay is that ‘Actions speak louder than words.' The physical connection that Manning's father developed with him were giving the most significant lessons of life to him, which may not be that effective the other way. It was the way his father shared his love from the physical relationship such as playing baseball and arm wrestling and at the end hugging him and telling him "I love you” (Manning, p. 149). As Manning grew older by the physical contact he had with his father made him realized that his father had become weak protecting the writer and his brother throughout his life. He would save them from all the storms of the life. It took so many years for the writer to realize that his father was trying to protect the whole family and all the sacrifices he made were supposed to keep the family safe.

Another lesson can be extracted from this essay is that there are different ways to express your emotions. These ways can change over time with the age of the people. Likewise, when Manning got older, his father began to realize and started showing love towards his son. Instead of directly writing to his son, Manning’s father would chose an article from the newspaper convey the message. He would indirectly spoke like what the writer’s mother would write to tell Manning to be careful in his life. Small things in life can make difference and it takes time to realize it. Likewise, Manning was not aware of the importance of the arm wrestling his father used to play with him. As he gets older, he realized that how his dad kept on communicating with him. He thought he is not having a good and strong relationship with his dad and it is only confined to arm wrestling.

Thirdly, the essay also sheds some lights on the ways fathers used to teach lessons to their sons. Despite of the positive and negative thoughts of the author regarding his father, he also confirms the way his father used to communicate his son the awareness of competition. The writer also describes his growth and gaining of strength with the time. Likewise, there came a point in Manning’s life that he became superior to his father in the physical activity of arm wrestling. Now, when the writer wins the match he goes through all those emotional moments. He learns that his father is no more as strong as he used to be once and he also observed the new changings between him and his father.

Another most important message that the author is trying to convey is the significance of father son’s love and what fathers do out of that love. Father’s love must be appreciated and credited because it is always there. It may change its forms, but fathers are always there to protect their children and family by doing the small acts. Fathers are the saviors to their sons and it needs an acknowledgement from the sons. As fathers play central roles in the household and have a lot of responsibilities on their shoulders. From managing the household expenses to providing their children with all the necessities of life. Besides, they are also accountable to protect their family from all the odds. Likewise, in the story Manning’s father not only takes the responsibility of earning bread and butter for the family but at the same time teaches important lessons to his son in different ways.

In short, this is a meaningful essay which communicates a very delicate topic in our society. Relationship within the families define the futures of the children. However, no one can ignore the bonding of children with their parents. The same way, Brad Manning has written this essay to express his feelings for his father and to describe the relationship he had with him. There is a message to all the sons out there in the world. However, people of other ages can also learn the lessons from it. At the same time, the author also gives a message that that winning does not matter all the times and it takes time for the sons to realize it at a certain point. The writer further narrates that it took time for him to realize the love of his father and how he has been protecting him throughout his life in his strength. The essay further illustrates the relation of son and father and how fathers use different ways to express their and affection towards their children. The physical bond with the fathers are the ways of communication and fathers use different techniques to express their emotions for their sons. However, these ways change with the change in age of people. At the same time, these ways also aim to teach lessons to their sons. Therefore, sons should respect their fathers and appreciate their efforts.

# Works Cited

Manning, "Arm Wrestling With My Father", 2017