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## The Relationship Between Gregor Samsa and His Father in The Metamorphosis, a Short Story by Franz Kafka

In Franz Kafka's short story, "The Metamorphosis", the character Gregor Samsa wakes up one morning and finds that he has transformed into a bug. Gregor's metamorphosis into a bug reveals a lot about his relationship with his family. In regards to his relationship with his father, Gregor's true feeling for his father is revealed to be that he feels that he has an obligation to support his father financially. Gregor's father, however, is revealed that his true feelings towards Gregor is that he despises him and that he does not care for him.

Gregor feels that he has an obligation to support his father. After he realizes that he has turned into a bug, Gregor is completely unconcerned about his physical state. The only thing he cared about was his job, worrying that his "boss would certainly come round with the doctor from the medical insurance company, accuse his parents of having a lazy son, and accept the doctor's recommendation not to make any claim as the doctor believed that no-one was ever ill but that many were workshy" (Metamorphosis). Gregor works at a job he despises to pay off his father's debt and to take his father's place as the supporter of the family after his father's business failed. He says that "if I didn't have my parents to think about I'd have given in my notice a long time ago" (Metamorphosis), showing that the only reason that he works at the job is for his parents. Even as a bug, Gregor was selfless and "was still there and had not the slightest intention of abandoning his family" (Metamorphosis). He does everything that he can to benefit his father and his family, without being concerned about the pain that he is causing himself. When Gregor was attempting to open the door after his transformation, he thought about his family and "bit on the key with all his strength, paying no attention to the pain he was causing himself" (Metamorphosis). Gregor, both as a human and as a bug, cares more about his father than he cares about himself.

Gregor's father's true feelings for Gregor are completely different from Gregor's selfless feelings for him. His father despises him and uses him for his own benefit. After his father's business failure, Gregor worked hard to provide for the family since his father no longer could. At first his father and his family was "astonished and delighted" but then he "had got used to it" (Metamorphosis). By providing for the family, Gregor's relationship with his father distanced, saying that he "only remained close to his sister now" (Metamorphosis). This suggests that by Gregor taking over as the provider for the family, his father might be ashamed that his son has to pay off his debt and of the reversal of roles since the father is supposed to support the family. After Gregor's transformation into a bug, his father's true resentment for him shows. Because he is no longer providing for the family and has become a burden instead, his father shows disgust

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and hostility towards him. When he first sees him as a bug, he is hostile towards him and “seized the chief clerk’s stick, picked up a large newspaper from the table, and used them to drive Gregor back into his room” (Metamorphosis). When Gregor gets stuck between the door, “his father gave him a hefty shove from the behind which released him from where he was held and sent him flying, and heavily bleeding, deep into his room” (Metamorphosis). He also shows extreme hostility towards Gregor when he “had decided to bombard him” with apples and his sister had to “[beg] him to spare Gregor’s life” (Metamorphosis). His hostility towards Gregor and his disregard for causing him injuries shows that he does not care for him nor does he feel sympathy for him despite all that Gregor has done for him when he was human. As a human, Gregor did not have a close relationship with his father, but his father tolerated him because he was using him for support. As a bug, he is now a burden and no longer supporting him, so he is able to show his dislike towards him since he is no longer dependant on him anymore.

In Franz Kafka’s short story, “The Metamorphosis”, Gregor’s metamorphosis into a bug shows the true feelings that Gregor and his father have towards each other. Gregor genuinely believes that he has a obligation to support his father and help him when his business failed. He put his wants and needs after his father’s. His father’s true feelings for him is that he despises him, both before and after his metamorphosis. His despise for Gregor shows after Gregor’s metamorphosis because Gregor could no longer support him and therefore he sees no use for him.

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