

'THE CHARACTERS IN NINE DAYS NEED MORE THAN SUPPORT FROM THEIR FAMILIES TO HAVE A SUCCESSFUL LIFE.' TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE?

The non-chronological novel, 'Nine days' written by Toni Jordan, explores the struggles which the Westaway family face over four generations. Jordan endorses the requirement of family for abutment, in order to shape their perspective of achievement. Whilst individual characters are demonstrated by Jordan to require support from family, the shaping of their morals will uttermost determine, their perception of success.

The attributes of individuals are shaped by the morals displayed within their environment during childhood. The Great Depression greatly influenced the hardworking nature modelled by Jean within the 1940s. Despite her actions being criticised by Jordan, when forcing Connie to meet with "a respectable lady" to proceed with an abortion, her capability to maintain the families reputation and social stance "halfway up the hill" is advocated. The clear depiction of Kip as a "working class man," offering up his "fair wage[s] to his mother," emphasises the influence of morals which has ultimately shaped his perspective of accomplishment as a family achievement. Furthermore, depiction of Kip as a role model to Alec, provides a direct parallel between the values which we are immersed in through childhood, and those exhibited during adulthood. Jordan celebrates the demonstration of moralistic behaviour around children, and the prominent influence on their own values and perspective of a successful life.

Individuals will be limited in accomplishment due to availability of financial support. Whilst the Westaway's demonstrate a middle class family, Kip and Francis are limited to success due to their financial insecurity. Despite only being "born seven minutes" later than Francis, the social values within the pre-war era, determined this as an acceptable criteria to sacrifice Kip's education. The lack of financial aid, severely depleted Kip's capability to maintain his ideology of success, becoming a "stables boy," living under the shadow of Francis. However, Jordan does provide opportunity for Kip to still attain success, through the emphasis of Stanzi. Despite her stability as a counsellor, preceding her "major professional transgression," the observation of a new found internal achievement following a profession adjustment to "personal training", highlights the importance of recognising that success does not have to be determined by monetary value. Jordan endorses the capability of individuals to define the odds and reach happiness, despite the financial hardships experienced or desired earnings expressed by others.

The foundation required to develop achievement, is prone to come from individuals other than family members. Jordan promotes the generosity of Mr Hustings, who teaches Kip the value of morals through "gentlemen's honour." The shilling which he gifts, symbolising hope and the continuation of family. Jordan endorses this action, as it was not required of his, thus emphasising that it was genuine. The influence of this subtle gesture is also demonstrated to lessen the upheaval which the Westaway's endure over the generations, maintaining family connections, thus depicting the importance of gracious actions towards others. Jordan further reinstates this ideology through Violet. The significance of her "daddy issues," demonstrates her incapability of obtaining the required support to succeed from her family. By emphasising also, her inability to work properly with Stanzi during her sessions, further endorses the by-product of individuals who do not seek support, as illustrated by her lack of direction with life. Jordan places great significance on the role in which all members of society can influence an individual's life goals. Jordan hence demonstrating the importance of recognising when others require assistance, in junction with mastering the capability to seek external support.

Jordan advocates throughout the novel, the importance of attaining support from family, as it will ultimately guide an individual's definition of success, of which they delve to accomplish. Jordan also demonstrates the value of being able to provide and seek support, recognising this process as a cycle. Conclusively, Jordan endorses the strength of a strong family network, as not only will it force a destined path for the children involved, but will also act as a moral teaching, enabling them to also be able to offer and seek support for others within the community. Hence Jordan endorses the need for a strong family unit, to not only provide success for the individuals involved, but also for the wider community.