

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

After conducting an analysis on *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson, the writer finds that Melinda Sordino, suffers from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) through several symptoms that she develops. There are several triggers that causing and increasing the risk of the symptom development. The symptoms Melinda shows include re-experiencing trauma, avoidance symptom, and arousal symptom, in which are characterized to be the symptom of PTSD. Then, in order to cope with her problems, Melinda uses several types of defense mechanism.

1. The main trigger that causing Melinda to have the symptoms of PTSD is sexual assault that made her becomes a victim of rape. It has significantly changed her life. The thought of that event continuously haunts her for a long time. Besides, Anderson represents how the lack of support and ignorance from family, friends, and the society has increased the risk of the symptoms of PTSD to develop. As a result, Melinda assumes that no one cares about her. She feels worthless and non-existence that she choose to isolate herself.

The manifestation of the symptoms can be seen from the changes in Melinda's psychological condition and behaviors. She is frequently having flashback of the traumatic event. The recollection of the event keeps repeating

on her mind as if it is recurring. Due to the fear that constantly haunts her, she avoids people and situations associated with the event. It is followed by losing interest in involving with people and other activities. Because of her life in the present time has ruined, she has limited vision about her future. Additionally, she has difficulties in sleeping and concentrating, in which giving significant decreasing in her grades.

2. To cope with the problems, Melinda uses four types of defense mechanism. Denial is the action that she uses to get rid of the disturbing memory about the traumatic event. She denies the existence of the event to convince herself that it is not actually happening. In venting the hidden emotion, she uses displacement mechanism to find substitute for object or person that cannot satisfy her, since she is having trouble to speak up. Another object she finds as a medium of expressing her feeling is artwork that she is working on during the art class. By using sublimation, the artwork turns into a positive self-expression object where she is able to shows her true emotions through it. However, during the hard times Melinda stays silent. Her silent has caused problems and complains from others. Then, she uses rationalization in order to find excuses to justify her actions.

During the times of coping with her problems and developing defense mechanism, Melinda gains courage to fight the person who ruined her life and reveal

the truth. The unpleasant treatment that she gets has turned into respect and sympathy.

Lastly, *Speak* is a worth to read novel for anyone of any age range, especially for youth and parents. Through this novel, Anderson delivers a message of encouragement for people with certain problems to speak up. She wants to raise the awareness of adult, mainly parents towards their children's development and environment. It also tells about the importance of support from family, friends, and society for people with mental problems, so that they are able to receive proper treatment. By completing this research, the writer hopes this could enrich the information about psychological disorder for other related literary studies in the future.