

GÜDLIFE

**HOW TO BRING RESPECT BACK
TO YOUR MARRIAGE**



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HOW TO BRING RESPECT BACK TO YOUR MARRIAGE

The image above describes it. This couple is tired of fighting and acting ugly.

Disrespect is getting old. It's time for a change.

So, they make a decision—together. Let's shed the ugly costumes and act nice.

Going forward, let's show mutual respect.

BRINGING RESPECT BACK

Isn't it time we bring respect back? There appears to be a void of respect in society. Differences are expressed in contempt. As I wrote in my book **Bringing Respect Back: Communicating Without the Conflict**, *'Our society has lost respect for respect.'*

Society aside, does respect permeate your family relationships? How about your marriage? Do you exhibit self-respect?

The image above headlines chapter 4 in my book. The couple has been through a lot of marital and parental issues. They realize pointing fingers at each other only makes

matters worse. Furthermore, it is causing significant problems with their kids. The couple decides to call a truce and start showing some respect.

HOW TO BRING RESPECT BACK TO YOUR RELATIONSHIP

Bringing respect back is easier said than done—**BUT done nonetheless it must be.** Here are some obstacles to bringing respect back:

- Couples often get stuck waiting on each other to show respect first.
- Pride is a huge factor.
- So is resentment.
- Hurt is a huge barrier.
- One thinks the other will never change so “why bother!”.

So where do “we” begin?

#1: WE BEGINS WITH ME

If you wait until your spouse/partner shows you respect before you reciprocate it may never happen. Two people waiting on the other are two people stuck together in a dance of disrespect.

Are you proud of how you act toward your spouse? Do you show her/him respect on a regular basis? Or are you critical, rude, bossy, indifferent, defensive or dismissive?

If you are not proud, then it is time you act by disrobing the disrespect and learn the dance of respect. This 6-step approach I cover in chapter 2 of my book.

In the section below, choose one barrier can you work on eliminating and a script you can write to remind yourself when the barrier comes up. See page 6 for examples.

#2: START DOING THE LITTLE THINGS THAT SHOW RESPECT

No need to make a big announcement. Actions speak louder than words. Think about your demeanor when you interact with your spouse/partner. Focus on respect. Think: *"How would I like to be treated?"*

Here are some ideas about little things you can do:

- When your mate speaks, look him/her in the eye. Show warmth. Look interested.
- Give compliments and show appreciation for what they do.
- Lend a helping hand. Do things without waiting to be asked. Try: *"Anything I can help you with?"*
- Have your spouse's back when the kids act disrespectful toward her/him.

#3: ASK YOUR MATE TO JOIN YOU IN A DANCE OF RESPECT

This step won't work if you are not willing or attempting to do the first two. One of the biggest barriers to talking to a spouse/partner is pride. Relationships mired in disrespect are adversarial.

You want to come bearing an olive branch. You might say something like:

"THIS IS NOT A GRIPE ABOUT YOU, BUT A PROBLEM WITH US—
THE WAY WE TREAT EACH OTHER. I'M TIRED OF IT. I WANT US
TO BRING RESPECT BACK. HOW ABOUT YOU?"

I recommend you choose a time to make the request when you can have each other's undivided attention.

- Power down devices
- Go to a restaurant, coffee shop, or bedroom to talk
- Don't start talking about specific issues
- Focus on the negative pattern of disrespect you want to change
- Talk about the impact your pattern is having on your kids.
- Agree on some basic things you can do together to show mutual respect.

#4: FOCUS ON 3 BASIC THINGS YOU CAN DO TO GET STARTED

Don't try to overhaul your relationship at once. Focus on three basic things you can do to show mutual respect. Here are some ideas.

Check 3 you can work on this week:

- Be kind when interacting during the day
- Pay compliments and say "thank you" for acts of kindness
- Show eye contact when conversing and agree not to talk over each other
- Listen well and paraphrase what you hear
- Agree to be patient with each other
- Own mistakes and apologize

NOW IT'S YOUR TURN

Respect is an attitude of the heart. It conveys a strong caring disposition toward the other person. I encourage you to get back to the heart of it.

4 basic things you can do to bring respect back to your relationship. It begins with you, not your spouse. (If your spouse is reading this, he/she is getting the same message!)

Insanity is doing the same thing over and over expecting a different result. Disrespect is insane! Why not try the dance of respect.

EXAMPLES OF SCRIPTS TO OVERCOME BARRIERS TO RESPECT

Script #1: *"If I am the first to show respect it reflects good character."*

Script #2: *"Pride never works. Showing respect always works."*

Script #3: *"Yes, I've been hurt, but I can still show basic respect for my sake."*

Script #4: *"Resentment is not a justification for disrespect. I can still be civil."*

Script #5: *"My partner may never change, but I will remain a respectful person."*