

RESPECT FOR SENIORS PROJECT

The following information has been gathered to contribute to the "Respect for Seniors" project.

The questions are as follows:

- What does respect mean to you (generally, then leading into respect regarding an older person?)
- How do you show respect to others?
- When do you feel respected by others?
- What does mutual respect mean to you?
- Do you think there's any difference between mutual respect and reciprocal respect?
- What do you think about a balance of respect in relationships?

All names of participants have been changed for privacy reasons. Not all questions have been answered by participants. Some contributors have not wished to provide their age or occupation which I have respected. There are fifteen participants. Eleven of those chose to contribute via email. Four participants have kindly supplied a face to face interview. Those four interviews were taped and then transcribed.

Please note, I have made some minimal corrections where needed such as minor spelling or typing mistakes. Apart from those minor corrections, I have relayed the information as it was received to order to make it as credible and true as possible.

At the end of this report I have added some reflection statements to summarise the comments made by the participants.

Christopher Age: 38 Occupation: Radio Announcer

Q: What does respect mean to you?

A: Appreciating experience and difference.... Acknowledging a persons value and treating them as you wish to be treated... In regards to the elderly - embracing the knowledge that comes with having lived a long life....

Q: How do you show respect to others?

A: By acknowledging their skills and values

Q: When do you feel respect by others?

A: When people look to me for advice and value my opinion.

Q: What does mutual respect mean to you?

A: Valuing each for their unique skills....

Q: Do you think there's any difference between mutual respect & reciprocal respect?

A: Mutual is without having garnered the respect of another..... Reciprocal is more a reaction to how you are treated by another.

Q: What do you think about a balance of respect in relationships?

A: Extremely important.... especially in the long term.... Where friendship develops stronger in the relationship.

Melissa Age: 45 Occupation: Executive Assistant

Q: What does respect mean to you?

A: The older I get, there more I understand the importance of respect. Not only to myself but for everyone else, young and old. In general I think the older you get the more important it is to be shown due respect. Having said that, respect is a two-way street. One should not expect respect if you do not show this to others, regardless of their age.

Q: How do you show respect to others?

A: In a variety of ways....

Listening (that's a big one), being polite, showing good manners, acknowledging a person. Being helpful (even if this is inconvenient to myself)

Q: When do you feel respect by others?

A: When they show what I have said above...to me.

Q: What does mutual respect mean to you?

A: When we are both engaging in good manners to one another, plus being friendly and helpful.

Q: Do you think there's any difference between mutual respect & reciprocal respect?

A: No. I don't think so?

Q: What do you think about a balance of respect in relationships?

A: Very important. Again, it must be a mutual respect....but also; you both must truly want to show your respect. Not just because it's the right thing to do.

Lara Age: 25 Occupation: Contracts Officer

Q: What does respect mean to you?

A: Respect is important as I feel it shows what type of a person you are. Respect for older people shows an appreciation for a lifetime of experience and knowledge. Respect for someone usually means having a value for that person.

Q: How do you show respect to others?

A: Being

polite and listening to others.

Q: When do you feel respect by others?

A: When people take an interest in what I say.

Q: What does mutual respect mean to you?

A: An understanding of each other.

Q: Do you think there's any difference between mutual respect & reciprocal respect?

A: Reciprocal respect could maybe mean treating others how they treat you. I don't think that respect from someone can be faked. Mutual respect means having an understanding and appreciation between people.

Q: What do you think about a balance of respect in relationships?

A: It should be equally high. An imbalance could create problems within a relationship whether intentional or not.

Justine Age: 21 Occupation: Account executive and student.

Q: What does respect mean to you?

A: Respect to me means valuing the person's opinion, listening to them and showing them that you care by doing what they say. This doesn't mean

commit a crime; it is more based on advice. Respect is something someone has to earn as well. You can't just respect them because they tell you too. It is shown by their actions and the way they treat you. I am more lenient to older people and tend to give them respect much more easily than I would to someone my age.

Q: How do you show respect to others?

A: I show them respect by listening to them and acknowledging them as a human as opposed to ignoring them or degrading them. I am also showing them respect by doing well by them; I wouldn't intentionally do something they don't approve of.

B: When do you feel respect by others?

A: I feel respect by others when I give respect or when I see the person treat me nicely and value what I have to say. This could be anywhere ranging from home to public areas.

Q: What does mutual respect mean to you?

A: Mutual respect to me means both people respect each other. When someone respects me, I respect them. The feelings are mutual.

Amanda

Occupation: Coordinator/Facilitator

Q: What does respect mean to you?

A: To me respect falls into two categories.

1. Respect others as human beings as you would respect creatures.
2. Secondly there is the respect that you and other earn. This comes from how they treat you and others, by their views and how they conduct themselves as a human.

Regarding an older person, I don't necessarily respect an older person more than someone else; it depends on their attitudes etc as above

Q: How do you show respect to others?

A: I try to accept other people and demonstrate this by being considerate and reasonable in my dealings with them. If I have respect for them in terms of their attitudes etc I generally will say this either to the individual and or other relevant individuals.

Q: When do you feel respect by others?

General respect is felt when people are polite i.e. respect my wishes. Respect of who I am is when I am told this or by the way the individual/s interacts with me such as deference/ admiration or something similar i.e. I have enormous respect for such and such...

Q: What does mutual respect mean to you?

A: Mutual recognition.

Q: Do you think there's any difference between mutual respect & reciprocal respect?

A: Mutual refers to the respect for the individuals based on the individuals themselves. Reciprocal is about being polite to another in response to how you are being treated

Q: What do you think about a balance of respect in relationships?

A: Often lacking in a lot of relationships. I also think that some individuals seek out relationships where this will be the case based on their development they possibly feel safe in this type of environment so is it really an unsatisfactory situation? I think that relationships are based on needs so in essence this is not necessarily a negative situation, however shouldn't we continue to strive to develop our selves and consequently our relationships with our other humans? If you agree then the imbalance is counterproductive to that development.

I believe that the type of relationship where there is an imbalance is counterproductive for both individuals, however I also firmly believe in Ying and Yang....

Jeffrey Age: 50 Occupation: Analyst

Q: What does respect mean to you?

A: Respect is giving everyone your attention when being spoken directly, speaking kindly, not interrupting the person and allowing them to get their point across. Even if you don't agree with a person accept the fact that they are allowed to have a different opinion without being dismissive. In regards to older people having patience with them and listening to what they have to say plus assist them as required (eg open a door or allow them through a door first etc

Q: How do you show respect to others?

A: Listen, don't interrupt, speak kindly, good eye contact, allow them to have their own opinion, don't criticise or put them down or be rude.

Q: When do you feel respect by others?

A: As per previous answer but towards me.

Q: What does mutual respect mean to you?

A: When both people treat each other as above. This is usually due to the fact that they know and like each other or appreciate they have knowledge or experience in life or their chosen field.

Q: Do you think there's any difference between mutual respect & reciprocal respect?

A: I think you may initially have reciprocal respect which turns into mutual respect.

Q: What do you think about a balance of respect in relationships?

A: In some instances the respect is not balanced as one person or the other think they play a greater part in the relationship whether it be a higher pay or they think their smarter or bottom line think they are a better person. It also can be a control act to not show as much respect for the partner. I feel that this is why many relationships fail.

Sophie Age: 34 Occupation: Credit Officer

Q: What does respect mean to you?

A: Respect means to think about others too, respecting elders' means putting them first with whatever the case may be.

Q: How do you show respect to others?

A: getting up if someone older than you needs a seat.

Q: When do you feel respect by others?

A: When they aren't being selfish.

Q: What does mutual respect mean to you?

A: You know what or how the other person wants to be treated.

Loretta Age: 43 Full-time mother of two

A: What does respect mean to you?

A: To me, respect means taking the time to pay another person your full attention. To show consideration for the way they are regardless of their “position” in the community. To appreciate someone’s worth.

To show respect to an older person is to recognise their advancing years, and the experience and knowledge their life journey has taught them. To disregard respect to the older generation is to belittle their intelligence and wisdom.

Q: How do you show respect to others?

A: To pay attention and give eye contact. Listen and don’t ignore.

Q: When do you feel respect by others?

A: I would feel respect by others if my opinions were being considered, I wasn’t being ignored. That my point of view was acknowledged rather than dismissed out of hand.

Q: What does mutual respect mean to you?

A: If two people consider each other’s opinions and feelings to be in line with each other.

Q: Do you think there’s any difference between mutual respect & reciprocal respect?

A: I would consider mutual respect to be an unspoken agreement between two individuals who like each other and share a common goal or interest. A reciprocal respect is more likely to be compromise between business partners or political adversaries who would benefit from putting aside their differences for the common good.

Q: What do you think about a balance of respect in relationships?

A: In an ideal relationship, the balance should be equal. In practice there is more likelihood of one partner, whether in personal or business relationship, being dominant and the balance being uneven. Respect outside of a relationship can be entirely one-sided, but mutual respect within a personal relationship (be it parent/child, husband/wife, or within a friendship) is what we should all be aiming for to engender a sense of peace and wellbeing in our lives.

Annabelle

Occupation: Marketing Manager

Q: What does respect mean to you?

A: Treating others as I wish to be treated. By this I mean being polite, considerate and thoughtful.

Q: How do you show respect to others?

A: I like to think I am quite a respectful person. I always make sure I wait for others to go first in any situation, I hold doors open, I generally put others before myself.

Q: When do you feel respect by others?

A: When a little consideration is paid back.

Q: What does mutual respect mean to you?

A: People being considerate of each other. Treating others as they would like to be treated.

Q: Do you think there's any difference between mutual respect & reciprocal respect?

A: Mutual respect to me means when there is respect from both parties whereas reciprocal would be when the other party is respectful only because they were treated respectfully, otherwise they may not have.

Q: What do you think about a balance of respect in relationships?

A: Definitely needs to be balance and I would go as far as to say complete balance. The relationship wouldn't work if one was being disrespected.

Naomi Age: 33

Q: What does respect mean to you?

A: Respect means understanding my beliefs and those around me. IN relation to older people it means knowing that they have more experiences and knowledge and seen many more changes than I have and allowing them the time to express these experiences when they can

Q: How do you show respect to others?

A: Giving up seat on buses etc
Being helpful i.e. directions, time for a chat, encouraging my children to spend time with elderly neighbours, explaining views to children on elderly people we have neighbours with dementia who go wandering, we bake for our neighbours also as they are too old too.

Q: When do you feel respect by others?

A: Not often. I feel it places where people are similar minded to myself i.e. Scout meetings, soccer etc. I am often drawn to people who have similar values and only deal with people who do not once, if I can help it.

Q: What does mutual respect mean to you?

A: Listening, allowing differences of opinion but still dealing with each other, giving me time, talking stopping at crossings, courtesy on the road. Knowing I come from a different place than you but we are all here in the one world, or community.

Q: Do you think there's any difference between mutual respect & reciprocal respect?

A: Yes mutual is the same and reciprocal is about giving respect once it has been given to you. Reciprocal may not be the way to go, as you should do thins respectfully all the time rather than just when it is shown to you.

Q: What do you think about a balance of respect in relationships?

Definitely. It takes a long time in a life to understand this is what relationships are about and often you may have been in one for a while before you realise you do not have this. Relationships cannot be fully developed without this otherwise there is some in balance of power or politics why the relationship occurs (not healthy).

Joanne Age: 45 Occupation: Self Employed

How do you show respect to others?

A: I think every person you come into contact with deserves your respect, until they prove other wise and I don't think you need to know someone personally or very well to show them respect. I think things like that are sadly missing from our society today. I show respect to others by being polite to people, by being considerate. I look people in the eye when I speak to them, whether it is someone I know well, or the young assistant at the corner shop. I thank people for anything they do for me, no matter how small. When I go for a walk I say good morning to every person I walk by, regardless of whether they are trying to avoid eye contact with me.

I think it's respectful to acknowledge people, when you walk by them. I especially show respect to the elderly, by listening to them when they speak, offering my seat on a crowded train. By stopping and asking how an elderly person is, when I walk by their house if they are sitting on the porch or watering their garden. By offering to help them with things if they need it. By

just giving them a little bit of your time, you can learn so much from the elderly and just a smile can go along way.

Q: When do I feel respected by others?

I feel respect by others when I'm acknowledged by others. It doesn't have to be a conversation, eye contact, a smile or a nod is just as good. When I'm thanked or appreciated for something I have done.

- When I'm asked for my opinion or my input.
- When someone comes to me for advice.
- When my daughters ask my permission or advice on a situation.
- When my nieces and nephews give me a hug when they see me.

Q: What does mutual respect mean to you?

A: When I respect someone who also respects me in return.

FACE TO FACE CONVERSATIONS

Patricia: - **age: 49**

Question: What does respect mean to you?

Patricia: Well respect means to me, I would treat people the way that I would like to be treated, and that I demand respect from other people and if I don't get it, I tell them.

Interviewer: *So how do you demand respect?*

Patricia: Well if I feel that if I'm not being respected, I tell them the way I feel and that I wish to be respected.

Interviewer: *Do you actually do that? I say that because most people would like to think that they would say something, but often don't feel brave enough or want to rock the boat so to speak.*

Patricia: I do tell them and I have. I have always demanded respect from my children and I've pulled them up if I felt they had been disrespectful. I have also pulled a couple of people up in my age group when I felt that I haven't been respected.

Interviewer: *So you feel the issue of respect is something that you need to fix or call attention to if you don't feel as though you're being respected.*

Patricia: Yes, exactly.

Q: What does respect mean to you in regards to an older person?

Patricia: It wouldn't differ in regard to an older person. An older person is still a person, they may not have as many faculties as a younger person and they may be frail but they still ought to be respected.

Q: How do you show respect to others?

Patricia: Well I try to be polite, as polite as I can. Sometimes I have difficulty with people that I don't like, but I'm always polite to them. I may not be as warm to them as I am to people I do like. I try to listen to other people's opinions and to take them on board.

Q: When do you feel respected by others?

Patricia: Well they show friendliness to me, they are polite to me and use good manners.

Q: What does mutual respect mean to you?

Patricia: It means that I treat people fairly and politely and kindly and I hope that people treat me the same way.

Q: Do you think there's any difference between mutual respect and reciprocal respect?

Patricia: To me, mutual and reciprocal mean the same thing.

General comments

Patricia: In regards to older people, they have had a lot of life experience and they have in most instances they have a lot to give people with all the experiences that they have had in their life. They should be listened to and cared for.

Interviewer: *We often say that, but do you think in reality that's the case? Or do you think in reality we just often dismiss people who are old and we don't want to be patient?*

Patricia: Well it all depends on the person. You could have a person who has got no respect for anybody, but most people, the general population I think *do* respect the elderly and feel that they should care for them.

Interviewer: *Has your notion of respect and what it means to you changed with age?*

Patricia: Probably it has. When you are a young person you tend to be quite centralised. You mostly think about how everything is going to affect you.

Interviewer: *When you were younger were the rules stricter then in regards to respect?*

Patricia: I didn't have anything drilled into me by my parents, I just knew it instinctively, and it's just the way you are brought up. I suppose it's just the beliefs of the family group. With regards to my children, I tried to get them to think about how another person would be feeling. Tried to put themselves into another person's skin and if somebody's being attacked verbally, they should try to think about how that person feels (the one that's being attacked) and try and help them.

Interviewer: *Can I ask what sort of rules in regards to respect did teach or instil in your own children?*

Patricia: All I said was, just try to think how you would feel if that incident was happening to you, for instance if you had a weight issues or you wore glasses or you were a different colour, how would *you* feel inside that person's skin? If somebody was saying awful things to you, how would you feel, hopefully you would try and help that person. Another rule I had with my kids when they were very young was that when a grown up person was talking and one of the kids came along and interrupted, I would make them wait until the other person was finished speaking, then I would signal the kids to say "excuse me". That was a big thing with me!

Caroline **Age: 48**

Q: *What does respect mean to you?*

Caroline: Respect is being thoughtful and caring to other people. Respect to me is respecting other people's feelings, so being thoughtful of the people around you. I think listening to people and understanding people is part of respect as well. Also I think putting yourself in other people's shoes. Treating others the way you would expect to be treated.

Interviewer: *How do you learn that?*

Caroline: You learn that from your parents. You learn that at a young age and it carries you through life. And I guess if you are not shown how to respect then you will probably never know. It's like learning a life skill in a way.

Interviewer: *Would your opinions about respect differ when talking about an older person?*

Caroline: I think with older people you need to be more tolerant and patient. Because quite often an older person can be set in their ways so you might have to go above and beyond what you would do with a younger person.

Q: *How do you show respect to others?*

Caroline: Well I try to be thoughtful and kind to others but unfortunately it's not always reciprocated.

Q: *When do you feel respect by others?*

Caroline: That's a difficult question.....I suppose when people listen to what I say and are kind and offer help.

Q: *What does mutual respect mean to you?*

Caroline: Well mutual respect is when I treat you the way you treat me. So if I was thoughtful to you then you would be thoughtful to me in return.

General comments

Caroline: I think young people don't understand respect because young people are now encouraged to speak up. For example my 12 year old son thinks it's his right, if he's not happy with something to actually voice his opinion. Whereas in our day we were told to be quiet and not say anything unless we were spoken to. Young people these days they're encouraged to voice their ideas and to a degree it's now coming back to get us. Because kids don't just accept what you tell them to do anymore.....they argue with you.

Interviewer: *Yes there is a change. When we were at school, some of the teachers were intimidating and you didn't tend to talk back, but now kids say "you can't talk to me like that", or the teacher can't touch me or hit me, there is a lot more protocol involved.*

Caroline: They can't touch them, they can't punish them really, they have to make them feel good about themselves. I read an article in the newspaper the other day where Day Care Workers not being able to say "good boy or good girl" because the opposite of that is "naughty boy or naughty girl". I think that is quite ridiculous.

Also I find it interesting when I watch TV shows like Australian Idol with people who go on the show and think that they are good at singing and yet when they get on the show and sing and it's obvious to everyone that they *can't* sing, no one has ever told them that before. They say things like "my Mother never told me I couldn't sing".

My son had an interesting thing happen the other week at school. He was involved in a school debate in which he ended up winning. A friend of his who was also competing but didn't make it into the top three, said to my son "the

only reason you won is because you knew the judge". The kid insisted this was the case and that's the only way he could have beaten him. This boy obviously hasn't been taught any skills when it comes to losing gracefully. This boy thought he was the best when he obviously wasn't. My son was very hurt. This child obviously hasn't learnt that you can't win all the time. In real life you can't and don't win all the time. I got slightly off the track with that story but it does tie in with respect in a way!

Lisa **Age: 37**

Q: What does respect mean to you?

Lisa: Respect means to treat people in a polite way, speak politely and speak to them in the way you would like to be spoken to.

Q: How do you show respect to an older person?

Lisa: I work in a job where I speak to a lot of elderly people and you would always address them as Mr or Mrs. Speak to them without using lots of jargon, no swearing, speak slowly and politely.

Interviewer: *Do you feel as though you need to have a certain amount of patience when dealing with older customers?*

Lisa: Lots more patience, especially with technology and things like that. A lot of them want to learn it but don't have the capacity to do so, so it's important not to speak down to them, like they don't know what they are talking about. Each person is different, you have to change the way you speak to people by the situation. Some are more technologically savvy; you can speak a lot quicker. You just have to assess the situation. Listening is very important. You need to get all the information first before you jump in, before you make a judgement about the person.

Young people you can joke around and be a bit looser with whereas with older people you need to assess the situation before you speak to them and then you get that rapport so you can then treat them in a different way. You can usually tell at work within the first minute or two of a call with a customer how the call is going to go. Whether they are happy for you to be a lot less formal and you can usually tell that within the first minute or two and then you adjust the way to speak to them in that way.

Q: When do you feel respected by others?

Lisa: Often when people ask you questions about your life, about what you've been doing, about how you feel. That's when I feel that they are interested in my opinion and that I do feel respected. They want to know how

I feel, what interests me, what I'm all about and that makes me feel respected.

Interviewer: *So it's when sometimes takes a bit of time and shows a bit of interest in you.*

Lisa: It's nice to be asked about ME, occasionally, you feel as though other people care.

Q: What does mutual respect mean to you?

Lisa: Mutual respect means no matter about your race, religion, marital status, how much money you have or don't have. A mutual respect to me means you can look at another person as a person and if you like the way they look at life, if they have good ideals and the same values as you have, then that is what I feel is mutual respect. It doesn't matter where they live or how rich they are or what sort of job.

Interviewer: *What happens if they don't have same values as you?*

Lisa: Well then is it more difficult to have a mutual respect but you try not to judge them and find some sort of happy medium. You are not going to always find people that think about life exactly the way you do. For example, I have a lady that I sit next to at work who in the majority of things we get along like a house on fire, we are happy to talk to each other about things. However, she has a few views that I don't agree with and so I try and steer away from certain types of conversations and stick to the things that we have in common. So the things that I don't agree about I don't tend to talk to her about. And if she tries to pull me in and talk about them I tend to back off and move to a mutually agreeable subject.

Interviewer: *I think that actually shows a type of mutual respect, that you respect each others ideas and opinions and perhaps know that if you get into a discussion or argument that might get heated, you tend to steer clear. You respect each other by not crossing each or pushing each others buttons, particularly in the work place.*

Lisa: I don't like conflict. Sometimes I don't like to be confrontational especially in the workplace, so I often back off and let subjects go and talk about something else.

Interviewer: *But in a way you are respecting your workplace because you know if you get into a delicate conversation it may affect the equilibrium of the work environment.*

Lisa: You need to be very careful in the workplace because often there are lots of different people together in a small space. You try not to get into

conflict or voice your personal opinions too much because that causes tension and you have to work with these people everyday.

Interviewer: *You sound like a bit of a peacemaker!*

Lisa: (laughs) I am, yes. I try to avoid conflict.

Kate Age: 45

Q: What does respect mean to you?

Kate: As a mother, I like my children to show respect to me in the way they speak to me. I don't like when they get a smart tone when they answer me. Respect to other people shows in the way you speak to people. To be respectful is to be courteous to others. It's about treating people how you like to be treated.

Interviewer: *Some one once told me there are ways of teaching people to treat you in a particular way, that he often trains people. He sets his own standards on how he wants to be treated I suppose.*

Interviewer: In regards to your own children, do you teach them respect or is it something that you instil in them on a daily basis?

Kate: I think a lot of people think that respect is earned, I'm not sure that is necessarily true. For example, when I'm working as a teacher, I don't like it when the kids don't listen to you. I think the children have a job as well as the teacher. They are there for a reason and for them to be able to learn, they are required to listen to what the teacher has to say.

Interviewer: *So it's a reciprocal thing?*

Kate: It's definitely a reciprocal thing. You need to be able to listen to your students, children or friends. So I think that's one way of showing respect is that you have to listen to people and to pay attention to what they are saying. It's easy to pretend like you are listening. Everybody has roles to play in life don't they, everything you do you take on a different role, when you're with your friends, when you're with your family or at work?

Interviewer: *Is your notion of respect the same for an older person?*

Kate: I like to think that I'm respectful to elderly people because I believe that they deserve a degree of respect. You tend to do things like, just say if someone older than me is coming into a room I would stop and open the door for them and let them go through before me. I guess that's the way I was

taught as a child that an older person should go before you. Or if I was on a bus I would get up for an older person or a pregnant woman.

Interviewer: *It can be a rocky road seat offering sometimes I've found. I once offered an older gentleman a seat on a bus and he declined and looked slightly offended that I'd offered.*

Kate: I haven't had that one but I did have a pregnant woman who I felt was quite rude when I offered a seat and she didn't want it. I always make my kids stand up and offer a seat to an older person if we are travelling together. I'm not sure if they would do that if I'm not there, but when I'm with them I would certainly give them a nudge and make them move.

Q: How do you show respect to others?

Kate: Well I think you show it by the way you behave towards them, by listening to them. It's just about being courteous I think with respect. Being aware of other people and trying to fulfil their needs as well as your own. People deserve to be treated with respect and if you treat me respectfully then I will show respect in return. But if you treat me like I'm a piece of dirt then I'm not likely to want to treat you very nicely because the other person isn't doing what they are suppose to be doing. I think there is an element of power involved with respect. A person who has a position of power over someone else and therefore they are able to assert their power, so things become unbalanced. So there is always someone who holds that position of power.

Interviewer: *So if you are the person in the relationship with the lower status, you might not be feeling able to assert yourself and ask for respect you believe you deserve.*

Kate: Yes, and I often feel that people don't respect me, not because I might feel on a lower status, but because people not people might not be interested in what I have to say, or me being female or of a certain age. I think people in general can be a little self-centred. And I think kids as well. When I'm teaching I experience it. In the past teachers were respected more I think. You would have kids that were much better behaved than they are now. Whereas I think kids of today aren't as well behaved because they have been taught that they have rights, which indeed they do, but then they use that to their advantage as well to get them out of doing things and to be held responsible and accountable. In regards to crime and what's happening out on the streets, there was once upon a time when the community itself would have probably done more to stop children from doing things than they do now. Whereas now people think it's not my problem and the police don't seem to have the same degree of authority that they used to. There was once a level of authority that people used to respect whereas now the balance has changed. I do like the fact that things are more open and the playing fields

are more equal, however that has also caused problems in that other people are not as respectful and that there are less boundaries.

I also think in today's society people don't spend enough quality time with their elderly relatives anymore. When I grew up we spent a lot of time with my grandparents. I would like my kids to spend more time with my parents. But as the kids grow older they have so many activities and things happening, we don't see them as much as we should.

Q: *When do you feel respect by others?*

Kate: Again in the way that a person speaks to you and how they treat you. When others listen to what you have to say.

Interviewer: *In regards to your teenage kids, do you get respect from their friends?*

Kate: I have often commented on the fact that when kids come to my house they should either introduce themselves or if I know them come and say hello. My theory is if you are coming into my house and you are going to be there for some considerable amount of time, that if I walked into the room, I would expect them to greet me and say hello. Some kids don't even say hello to you when their in your home! And even when you say hello to them, they don't even answer you. It may be due to shyness, but I would only accept that if the child was quite young. I think if someone is in my house then they should acknowledge me. Especially so when most of the time, they expect to get food and drink from you. Also when you take kids places, I would expect kids to say thankyou for picking me up and taking me. I expect that of my own kids that I be thanked for driving them places.

I think that is probably one of my greatest faults, my expectations. Because my standards aren't necessarily reflected in the standards of others, so I'm constantly disappointed!

Q: *What does mutual respect mean to you?*

Kate: I think that comes down to people having respect for each other. You should be mindful of how you treat other people. It doesn't always happen in the real world.

Interviewer: *I think when it comes to values or beliefs people often seek out others with the same values, people with similar views perhaps.*

Kate: I think that's true.

Q: *Do you think there's any difference between mutual respect & reciprocal respect?*

Kate: You can have mutual respect with another person but a reciprocal respect for example could be when maybe two people are work colleagues and they would say, we are working on a project and that we would have some form of reciprocal respect for our standing as work colleagues and for what we've done within our organisation or in our careers. So you should have what sort of respect for me for what I've done and you have to respect them for what they've done. Whereas perhaps mutual respect is more like someone saying I have respect for you. A reciprocal respect is a more distant type of respect; it's not a close type respect.

Q: *What do you think about a balance of respect in relationships?*

Kate: I think once again it goes back to that power base. As a parent you generally have more power in the relationship, you can say no you can't do this or that. I think in every relationship there is usually some sort of balance of respect and it changes with any given situation. I suppose it comes down to what you're willing to put up with if you want to have a relationship with people. You have to find where to draw the line in the relationship, what you are happy to put up with.

AUTHOR COMMENTS

Throughout the discussions on *respect* one of the most prevalent themes was to treat others as you would wish to be treated. Melissa explains this well by saying "*respect is a two-way street. One should not expect respect if you do not show this to others, regardless of their age*". Kate makes an insightful comment in regards to the use of language and respect by saying "*respect to other people shows in the way you speak to people*".

Another common theme mentioned was the art of listening. I think many of us are guilty of only half listening to what another person has to say (myself included). Often we tend to only half listen because we are busily preparing a response in our heads. By doing this we often lose important and meaningful parts of the conversation. By not listening we are not valuing each others opinion or giving it the respect it deserves.

Another common theme is acknowledgement. By truly acknowledging a person we are validating their existence. We are allowing them to be heard, we are truly seeing them.

The subject of manners was also spoken about in various forms. Being considerate, polite and understanding was mentioned often. To accept a different point of view or opinion and to appreciate the difference was also noted.

Finally, I thank all the participants for their contribution. Many took a great deal of time and thought with their comments.

Loretta encapsulates the whole spirit of the project by saying:

To show respect to an older person is to recognise their advancing years, and the experience and knowledge their life journey has taught them. To disregard respect to the older generation is to belittle their intelligence and wisdom...
