



## Fostering mutual respect...

One definition of respect is to have due regard for the feelings, wishes or rights of others. Synonymous with politeness, courtesy and consideration, respect helps us negotiate with family, employers, neighbours and diverse cultures; it's an essential ingredient for good communication and effective conflict resolution, which is crucial for healthy, lasting relationships.

### A lack of respect is a common cause of conflict

If you've been on the receiving end of behaviour that lacked respect then you'll know it doesn't make you feel good and it certainly doesn't result in respect for the person who made you feel that way. A lack of awareness can cause you to retaliate and engage in conflict. When you're aware of the importance of respect it encourages you to develop strategies for maintaining integrity and you model a skill for life!

Disrespect is often an attack on another's character. With family members, even though you love them, it's important to be careful of comments that make them feel inadequate or 'not enough'. For instance, if a child leaves their toys everywhere, telling them, "You're so lazy" makes them feel bad about themselves and is a *generalised statement about a specific problem*. On the other hand, saying, "When you leave your toys all over the house it makes the house feel untidy and I'd like you to put them away now", you state a fact and invite cooperation. What if they don't cooperate? Then you have the perfect opportunity to show respect by introducing a logical consequence.

### Being respectful means being respected

Being respectful naturally results in being respected, which is what everyone wants. Address problems at the source (not by talking behind their back), strive to reduce the drama and remember to stick to the facts. If you slip up, don't be afraid to apologise and say, "What I just said wasn't very respectful, but I'll do better next time." Careful listening and a willingness to embrace the perspectives of others are vital components of a thriving family.

Providing correction and encouragement to do better can be done respectfully when we ask ourselves, "How will this make them feel?" The goal is to help the other party realise that even though the behaviour in question isn't desired, you have confidence in their ability to do better next time. Managing conflict in this way lays a foundation for self respect which is a key feature of resilience.

Bare Hands is run by allied health professionals committed to helping women embrace positive change by providing access to practical education. To find out more give us a call, email us or visit [www.barehands.com.au](http://www.barehands.com.au).

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- ✓ Less drama leads to more respect
- ✓ Stick to the facts - they can't be misinterpreted
- ✓ Manage your own behaviour to show others how you want to be treated

*"A person's a person,  
no matter how small."*

Dr. Seuss

Encouraging women to develop and enjoy dynamic family relationships is Laurie's special focus. With four children, a clinical practice and as the co-founder of Bare Hands, she understands many of the challenges of modern day families and has spent the last 30 years studying and practising strategies and skills that really make a difference.



Laurie Morrison Co-founder Bare Hands, Mother, B.HSc, Strategic Psychotherapist.

**Bare Hands**  
Practical life strategies for women