

RESPECT!

By Donna Deos



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In last month's discussion, we talked about going filterless and at the end it led us to this month's topic of respect. So, here we go.

Respect is typically thought of something that is earned. Nowadays it seems more like something that is hard to find. Back in the day we were taught to respect our elders. And so we did. We revered their knowledge, wisdom and life experience. We sought out their wisdom and wanted them to teach us.

In today's world of Google and Wikipedia it is very easy to have instant knowledge at your fingertips. I feel like this has detracted from our ability to respect our elders. We not only lack the time to seek their thoughts and input we also see less need to make the time for it since we can learn lots of things in mere seconds.

What is missing then? The human connection is missing; the life experience portion of the lesson; and the real life application of the scenario in question. The many different ways it could happen told to us by someone who has witnessed many different sides to the same scenario in their lifetime is missing. What we get is one flat answer or definition that on the surface seems like enough to go on. But when you think deeper, it's lackluster.

Back before today's quick pace and instant gratification, we had more time. We had more patience and we had fascinating stories to learn from. The people who held this knowledge were our elders. This is where the 3rd joy of aging should be Respect.

Elders were revered and respected. That is why the "respect your elders" lessons came in to play, because you could and would learn from them. You could and would rely on them and they would teach you because it was their legacy to do so. They wanted to share their knowledge and experience.

Here's the kicker, they still do. The shame is we have lost the time and desire to stick by the respect your elder's mantra. It is not that they do not deserve our respect; it is that we somewhere along the line disregarded them and neglected to teach our children this lesson. Not all of us, but unfortunately enough of us so that it has made a difference.

What do you want for yourself when you are considered the elder? Do you want to be cast aside, ignored and forgotten? Discredited? Or, do you want to be valued? Do you want your loved ones to wish to spend time with you, hear your stories and do fun things with you?

Parents and children – take note: this will be your place one day. We all get older. Today let's start remembering the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Today, let us make the time to learn that respecting our elders is a wonderful thing that comes naturally when you make the time to see them for who they are, who they were and how they went from then until now. Believe me; you don't think of all the things you wish you had asked them until they are no long here to ask. Start being inquisitive today. Listen and learn. In this simple exercise you will see that they earned and deserved your respect long ago.

Here's hoping we all start thinking about respect more in all things we say and do, in all the people we cross paths with. Instead of trying to find ways to cut people down focus on ways to see the beauty in them and the lives they lead.

To the benefit of all of our futures, I respect you. You are worthy, you deserve respect; and so do the people all around you. One of the easiest ways to earn respect is to give it.

Until next month, take care!



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Way Up North

Way Up North is contributed by Jay Martin, Bow Graphic Artist

