

"What a Respectful Relationship Means to Me"

A respectful relationship means having someone to lean on, when you're broken and down. It means being with the kind of person who will go out of their way to lift you back up and still hold you in high regard, no matter how far you have fallen, and the kind of person to make you laugh and smile no matter how badly you hurt. When no one comes to your birthday or Christmas party, you know you can count on them to be there to make you smile. If you come across a bump in the road of life and don't know what to do, they are the kind of person to help you through rough times. It's not all bad times either: it can mean going to the fair, and the movies, and out to eat, someone to go shopping with, or watch the game on TV while eating popcorn and joking around. It can mean having someone to play basketball, softball, football and many other games, no matter how bad or good you may be. And it involves you as well, going out of your way to pick them up after they got fired, or hurt, or even to spend time with them, whether it is a brother, sister, mother, father, husband, wife, or even a best friend.

Once when I was not much younger than I am now, about maybe a year or so I had a very close friend. She and I did most everything together. One day she came up to me sobbing because she thought she couldn't do anything right; her grades were low and her mother and father never spoke to or about her. She told me she was ashamed of herself and disappointed in what she became. I thought she was fine the way she was and comforted her. We looked for what she was good at. It turned out she had the most beautiful singing voice, so we worked together. I helped tutor her and got her involved with teachers more and she joined chorus. Her parents still don't talk to her much, but she's happy. She has good grades and she sings better than ever.

And then a less than shining example of a respectful relationship was my parents. They often fought and degraded one another. My father often made my mother cry and, not being very emotional, would often leave for hours on end. One day my father up and left us for another woman. I'm not saying it's all his fault; my entire family forced each other over the edge bit by bit.

A respectful relationship doesn't always have to be between two people. It can be how you think of yourself. It can be your outlook on your own life; if you hate yourself, or the way you look, or even what you do, you don't respect yourself.

My definition of a respectful relationship is one that trustworthy, reliable, and above all, helpful. It means being with a person to lean on and to cry on their shoulder when needed, and vice versa- someone who takes pride in you and you take pride in.

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