

# Why the Disrespect?

Children aren't born disrespectful.  
How you respond to their misbehavior can unknowingly make children feel hurt or lose respect for you.

**Judging-** their feelings, thoughts, opinions, choices, etc. is the first level of rejection, which hurts and causes more hurt-seeking behavior.

**Using punishment-** hurts children and creates a *me vs. you* relationship. They feel disconnected and disrespected, so it causes more misbehavior.

**Breaking trust-** if children don't feel you trust them or they can't trust you, this can break down a mutually respectful relationship

**Not taking accountability-** if you don't apologize when you clearly make a mistake or go overboard, your kids notice and can lose respect.

**Allowing disrespect-** letting children (or your spouse) disrespect you continually makes them lose respect for you.

**You must rebuild mutual respect.**

**Validate them-** Instead of judging, use curiosity to validate and accept them.

**Stop using punishments-** Use Connected Consequences instead (episodes 11 and 15). These enforce boundaries without hurting.

**Build trust-** Build their trust in you by being reliable and trustworthy, and build your trust in them by extending more trust in them (maybe in baby steps).

**Take accountability-** If you have hurt them or made a mistake, own up to it. This is a great way to model the right way to apologize.

**Expect respect-** If your child is rude or disrespectful, tell them you will not be talked to that way and you are going to step away until you can have the discussion respectfully (just remember *you* must also be respectful to them to maintain mutual respect).

**As the leader in the relationship, you are the one who must stop the disrespect cycle first.**

## HOMework!

1. Reflect on your responses to your child's choices, feelings, or behaviors. Do you see how some of your responses could be hurting, judging, rejecting, or disrespecting them?
2. If you feel there is no mutual respect left and you want to restart, have an honest conversation with them and let them know you are sorry for ways you have unknowingly hurt them in the past. Discuss changes you both could make to help build back mutual respect.