

Respect Me Respect

re·spect noun \ri-'spekt\
: a feeling of admiring someone or something that is good, valuable, important, etc.

Mother Theresa once said that the worst poverty is the poverty of abandonment. I can surmise such abandonment is so severe because abandonment is the ultimate disrespect. To be devalued, discounted, marginalized, and ultimately deemed that you simply do not count, so deeply scars the heart that the resuscitation of hope is rare and often unlikely. Who can bear the weight of being unimportant? You deserve respect. Your personhood is priceless. Anyone committed to care for you or bold enough to pledge his love to you will without question respect you. He will respect your need to at times have your own space. He will respect your need to have an audience of one who willingly listens to the trials and triumphs of your day regardless of how seemingly trite or tremendous they may be. He will respect the fact that people come in all shapes and sizes and it is not his place to push you into his ideal but accept you as you are because you are the miracle of life. He will respect your emotions because your emotions are you. He will respect your passions because they make your heart beat a rhythm he wants to learn and love. He will respect your wishes for they are snapshots of your dreams. He will respect your interests because their diversity paint a picture of the beauty of you that no one sees. He will respect your tears because he will want to know one day how to ease your pain and learn how to turn your frowns to smiles.

If he disrespects himself, disrespecting you will be easy. If he's smoking, he's disrespecting his body. If he compromises with alcohol and drugs he is disrespecting his life. If he is indifferent about his life plan and purpose, he disrespects his creator. Self-destructive behavior disrespects not only oneself but sets ones relationship up for catastrophe. Don't look the other way when you see him disrespecting himself or others, your turn is coming. It may not be today, or tomorrow but disrespect breeds disrespect. Respect is the only option. You are important. You matter! Demand it. To accept anything less speaks more of you than of him. If you tolerate his disrespect, abuse is inevitable. Be mindful to respect yourself. You lose credibility with your expectations of him when you fail to respect yourself, either by your own actions or the disrespect you endure but say absolutely nothing about. It's not the fruit that falls at your feet that's most valuable, it's the fruit you have to reach for! Be the fruit he has to reach for...not the fruit that falls at ones feet.