To respect and be respected as resourceful buffers against aggression in developmental contexts

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Abstract

The chapter examines the importance of respect in two developmental contexts: the parent-child relations and the school context. Building upon conceptualizations advanced mainly in philosophical and social psychology literature, we lay out a conceptual framework for the study of respect in developmental contexts. We discuss two types of respect - unconditional and contingent - and distinguish between four related yet distinct facets by which (dis)respect is involved in fostering or preventing aggression: respecting others, being respected, feeling disrespect and self respect. We argue that an important role should be accorded to respect, as exhibited and learned within these contexts, in mitigating and preventing violence and aggression in these, as well as other, contexts. We examine how respect might be played out within each of the developmental contexts and conclude by suggesting ways in which respect might be fostered.

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This chapter looks at respect as it is manifested and experienced in two major developmental contexts: the parent-child relationship and the school context. The role of respect in inhibiting and attenuating the expression of violence and aggression has been discussed and examined primarily within adult relationships, as part of research in the realm of social psychology. In marriages, justice appraisals, politics and intergroup conflicts respect has been recognized as an important asset that helps diffuse and mitigate aggression (e.g., Janoff-Bulman & Werther, 2008; de Cremer & Tyler, 2005; Gottman, 1994). Interestingly, within the developmental psychology literature that examines the contexts in which children develop and grow, the term 'respect' has only been infrequently explicitly considered. Hence we know very little about how respect might be experienced in these contexts, its association with various outcomes, particularly aggression and violence, and how it is cultivated and developed.

Building upon conceptualizations advanced for the most part in philosophical and social psychology literature, we would like to lay out a conceptual framework for the study of respect in developmental contexts. We discuss two types of respect - unconditional and contingent - and distinguish between four related yet distinct facets by which (dis)respect is involved in fostering or preventing aggression. The first relates to respecting others; the second relates to being respected; the third, which interestingly is not the opposite of the two mentioned above, is the sense of being disrespected and humiliated; and the fourth is self respect. All four facets are important and distinct in their contribution to the prevention and attenuation, or instigation and intensification, of violence and aggression.

We then examine how respect might be played out within each of the two central developmental contexts, parent-child relationships and school. Although respect has rarely been examined explicitly in these developmental contexts, several important core characteristics of respect were considered and discussed, and their association with
aggression and the misuse of power was investigated. These relevant conceptualizations and findings will be presented and discussed. Finally we argue that an important role should be accorded to respect, as exhibited and learned within these contexts, in mitigating and preventing violence and aggression in these, as well as other, contexts.

Respect as an attitude

The concept of respect is complex and multifaceted. It refers to several distinct and yet connected aspects and seems to imply somewhat different things in different contexts and relationships. In line with others (Frei & Shaver, 2002) we suggest that respect is an attitude and not an emotion. For example, respecting others includes a major behavioral component and not just what people feel. Furthermore respect is presumed to be enacted and demonstrated also by institutions, such as the State through its regulations and laws (Margalit, 1996). Hence respect may be considered a general disposition or attitude that includes certain behaviors, feelings and cognitive evaluations, and there can a disparity among the different components. For example, individuals may behave in a respectful manner toward others, but internally may despise these people and think that they are immoral and unworthy. Conversely, individuals may feel or experience respect internally toward some individuals, but may not show such respect in their behavior. This may be seen, for instance, with adolescents who internally respect their parents but at times behave in a defiant and disrespectful manner towards them.

Unconditional respect

Various researchers and thinkers have discussed different components, types or themes that are covered by the term respect (Darwall, 1977; Frei & Shaver, 2002; Hendrick & Hendrick, 2006; Janoff-Bulman & Werther, 2008; Langdon, 2007; Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2000; Roland & Foxx, 2003). We refer here mostly to two broad meanings or types of respect discussed by most researchers though under different names.
The most basic and general meaning of respect relates to a broad humanistic perspective whereby respect denotes the value accorded to each person as a human being. We term this type of respect *Unconditional respect*. This is a general moral contention that involves an unconditional regard for every human being who has basic rights of freedom, dignity and autonomy; namely it is a moral imperative to respect others that reflects the basic human right to be respected (Rawls, 1971). Some researchers rely on philosophers such as Kant in their suggestion of such a moral imperative that views human beings as rational beings and as "ends in themselves" (Kant, 1959, p. 46), and thus deserving such unconditional respect. Others (Lightfoot, 2000) introduced Piaget (1932) who considered the ability to recognize one another as equals, and to appreciate others as having different and valuable points of view, as a developmental accomplishment. For Piaget (it was argued), respect constitutes the interpersonal accomplishment of decentration, which is the move from ego-centrism to the capacity to view and consider other points of view as well as the achievement of higher ordered thinking that is reflected in formal thought processes.

At a deeper, perhaps more encompassing level, such a stance reflects a general, often religious belief that all humans have a common Godly or divine origin and that they share that divine quality; hence the deep and basic moral imperative to value, appreciate and respect others, just as one respects the divine. This moral imperative is shared by a large number of religions and religious movements, old and new, Eastern and Western, monotheistic and others (Smith, 1991).

**Contingent respect**

The second broad meaning of respect, which after Jannof-Bulman and Werther (2008), we term here *Contingent respect*, relates to respect given to an individual who has or embodies certain qualities, attributes or status. This general category of respect includes several quite diverse types. For example, respect as social power (Langdon, 2007) relates to respect for
people with authority, such as parents or teachers, bestowed by their role and power status regardless of their specific qualities (i.e., warmth, competence, moral behavior). A different type is respect for people due to their moral character and integrity, such as hard working, trustworthy, sincere, altruistic or honest people (Darwell, 1977). A somewhat different type of respect relates to having a certain competence or attribute that is valued within a specific society. Respect for these individuals reflects their higher status, and their influence and power within the group. Jannof-Bulman and Werther (2008) suggest that such respect is often given to individuals or groups perceived as having the highest potential to contribute to the group's success. Whereas unconditional respect is not earned by any deed or accomplishment, the recipients of other types of respect are required to attain this by certain status, deeds or effort.

**Respect for others and aggression**

The general and very basic type of unconditional respect is closely associated with the prevention of aggression and violence. As an agent, when you respect others you value them as people in their own right, you consider and observe their rights for autonomy, privacy, and a sense of dignity, as well as their rights not to be shamed or de-valued. You are polite, and allow autonomy and voice; and above all, because you see the divine or the humanistic core in the other, you refrain from any act that may damage or hurt the other person either physically or psychologically.

Similarly having contingent respect for others is expected to be related to less aggression. First, respect in each of the various meanings of contingent respect involves the valuing of the individual or the group being respected. People are normally inclined to nurture and protect an entity (i.e., an individual, a group, 'nature') that is valued, and not hurt, damage or destroy it. Second, there is also a moral component of evaluation embedded in these meanings of respect. A respected individual or a respected group is also deemed
morally superior, not just better than others in a general sense (McCullough, 2008). Hence, there is also a moral inhibition to aggression against such an individual or group. Furthermore, following others (Frei & Shaver, 2002; Langdon, 2007) we contend that respecting others denotes not only general moral valuing, but also a dictum and expectation to nurture, cherish and support the respected individual or group. Thus respect involves a call for pro-social, caring orientation rather than an anti-social orientation toward the respected entity. Finally, respecting others, in particular within close relationships, breeds reciprocation of respect (Kumashiro, Finkel & Rusbult, 2002). In relationships where one feels respected there are fewer reasons to be angry, frustrated and aggressive.

**Being respected and aggression**

Besides 'respect for others', the sense of 'being respected by others' can further serve as a strong inhibitor of aggression. First, when an individual is unconditionally respected, he feels valued, protected and secure. In this situation there is little reason or cause to behave aggressively towards others. Hence respect, in this sense, serves as a protective buffer against aggression. Further, as discussed more fully in the next section, being respected in the contingent sense fulfills basic needs of people within close relations and within groups for honor, dignity and voice. Feeling respected thus eliminates a central source of anger and aggression and contributes to an atmosphere of mutual understanding and appreciation (Miller, 2001). Second, feeling respected includes an expectation by those imbuing the respect to act in a morally condoned way. Such expectations tend to be fulfilled (e.g., Jussim, 1986; Madon et al., 2008) and can attenuate, and even inhibit, the expression of aggression even in situations where frustration and anger may otherwise lead to aggressive acts. Finally, being respected often entails a stronger capacity to influence outcomes, hence a lower need to resort to aggression to achieve desired outcomes.

**Feeling disrespect and aggression**
Besides the importance of having 'respect' for others and feeling that one is 'being respected' by others, there is also the negative side of respect – that is 'feeling disrespected'. Feeling 'disrespected' is not equivalent to 'not being respected', which is a situation in which one does not receive respect, namely a neutral situation in which the positive attitude of respect is not shown. Disrespect, in contrast, means that individuals are devalued, demeaned and insulted and that their rights for autonomy and dignity are offended. A number of researchers addressed the issue of disrespect in the context of expectations for justice and the sense of injustice (e.g., Miller, 2001; Heuer, Blumenthal, Douglas, & Weinblatt, 1999). According to the main argument (Miller, 2001) people believe that they are entitled to fairness in allocation of resources (distributive justice) and fairness in processes used to determine the allocation of these resources (procedural justice). Such fairness, especially with regard to procedural justice, relates to being respected, treated as a valued member of society with status and influence, and being heard, 'having a voice'. When individuals feel that their entitlement for polite, fair and respectful treatment has been violated, or that their honor has been damaged, they are hurt and frustrated and tend to react aggressively to restore self esteem, save "face" and educate the offender (Averill, 1983; Miller, 2001). In line with these contentions disrespectful treatment, which denies people of what they believe is rightfully theirs, is commonly found to be a cause of both anger and aggression (Bettencourt & Miller, 1996; Cohen, Nisbett, Bowdle, & Schwarz, 1996). Further, being subjected to disrespectful treatment is considered a somewhat justified reason for aggression. People are less critical of aggressive acts when these actions are considered retaliation for disrespectful treatment (Harvey & Enzle, 1978; Robinson & Darley, 1995).

One interesting point to note from these discussions is the importance of the behavioral side of respect, as a social signal of status and appreciation (McCullough, 2008; Janoff-Bulman & Werther, 2008). For example, when discussing the negative outcomes of
disrespect it has been argued and observed that public disrespect in front of an audience is far more threatening, and hence has higher chances of invoking aggression, than a private display of same (Ferguson & Rule, 1981; Pitt-Rivers, 1965; Bies & Moag, 1986).

Self respect and aggression

Self respect is a somewhat more neglected concept in the social psychological literature compared to the other three notions (respecting others, being respecting and feeling disrespected). It is based on a process of self evaluation that results in a sense of having personal moral standards and a sense of autonomy, freedom and dignity (Roland & Foxx, 2003). Much of the negative effect and urge to resort to vengeance and retaliation in cases of disrespect and humiliation is said to derive from the damage incurred to one's own self respect by certain behaviors or attitudes of others. Yet, self respect is distinct from these deeds. An individual who feels respected by others may still have low self respect and vice versa.

Having self respect involves a sense of moral value and the responsibility to act in ways that reflect this value as a moral being. In other words, respecting the self means living and behaving in ways that are in accordance with one's moral standards and expectations. Respecting the self also means that one does not tolerate and accept disrespectful treatment by others, and hence protests the violation of one's rights, while remaining "within the boundaries of dignity" (Roland & Foxx, 2003; p. 250). The relevance of self respect to aggression and violence is thus quite clear. An individual with high self respect is committed to behave morally and respectfully to others and is motivated to do good, hence he or she is expected to evince low levels of aggression. Furthermore self respect is expected to be associated with a high capacity for rationality, self control and self regulation. These qualities too are expected to be associated with lower levels of aggression and violence. Finally,
individuals would tend to avoid aggression against others who show self respect and dignity (Dillon, 2007).

How and where do people learn self respect and the respect of others? Two of the most central developmental contexts in which socialization of these dispositions occurs are the parent-child relationship context and the school context. Both are considered contexts in which socialization agents are imbued by law with a moral and lawful duty to educate and raise the child to become a well-functioning adult. How is respect, with its different facets, played out in these contexts?

**Respect as played out in parent – child relations**

Respect, particularly of children towards their parents, is accorded an important role in the parent – child relations. The fifth of the Ten Commandments in the Bible – one of the most sacred texts in the world - is to respect one's parents: "Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you." A similar moral and religious mandate is embedded in another very ancient tradition - the Chinese Confucian thought, which endorses *filial piety*, love and respect for one's parents and ancestors, as one of the major virtues to be cultivated. This is respect of the *Contingent* type, which has certain specific aspects in these unilateral power relationships.

Children’s respect towards their parents is described as involving the demonstration of honor and esteem towards parents, and compliance with their demands in a polite and abiding manner (Langdon, 2007; Lightfoot, 2000). A child who disobeys the parents, or who shows defiance, is described as disrespectful whereas such behavior in an egalitarian relationship would not be considered disrespect. The underlying expectation seems to be that the moral right of parents is to be obeyed, esteemed and honored by their children, due to their parental role, almost without consideration of the parents' actual expertise, competence, knowledge or virtue. This is quite different from the conceptualization of respect within an
egalitarian relationship, such as romantic relations, in which respect reflects a certain appreciation based on perceived actual merit (Hendrick & Hendrick, 2006).

Parents, too, are expected to respect their children. For example, in his book on ten principles of good parenting Steinberg (2004) a prominent developmental researcher includes 'respecting your child' as one of these principles. What is meant by such respect? As authority figures parents are expected to listen to their children's point of view and honor their right for autonomous decision processes and autonomous pursuits, while still providing rules and regulations and monitoring their implementation. Parents' respect for their children is seen in the fair and just procedures they implement, and their allowing their children "voice". It appears that this is respect of the unconditional type, as it relates to the children's value as human beings and not to their displaying certain moral character or accomplishments. Consequently, though respect in these relationships is expected to be mutual and is often described in this way, the way it is expected to be expressed from the two sides is somewhat different in its qualities.

Both types of respect are related to aggression. When children respect, obey and honor their parents, and comply with their requests they evince the capacity for self control, the capacity to delay gratification and an appreciation of authority, rules and regulations. Each of these qualities attenuates the causal path from anger or frustration to aggression. Furthermore, children's respect for their parents usually positions them as authority figures that the children want to emulate, and in these cases there are fewer disagreements in the relations. Such clear and predictable context enhances the child's sense of confidence and security. Secure children, who have a sense of direction and meaning, are usually less prone to resort to aggression either as an instrumental means to attain a desired outcome or as an uncontrolled reaction to frustration or an offence. Furthermore, parental modeling of respect for their children would tend to be emulated and internalized and the children themselves
would internalize self respect, show respect for their parents and carry this attitude to other relations as well. Additionally, children who have been treated with respect tend to internalize a sense of security, autonomy and competence, which renders them happier, more self controlled and less frustrated (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Each of these qualities is expected to be associated with lower tendency to aggressive behavior.

For example, in a sample of Singapore adolescents, regard for parents (Sim, 2000) was associated with lower antisocial susceptibility. Regard for parents further moderated the association between parental support and self esteem, and mediated the association between parental monitoring and susceptibility to antisocial peer pressure. Similarly, in a large representative sample of Israeli youth (Scharf & Mayseless, 2005) we found that respect for parents (e.g., "I respect them") predicted lower levels of involvement in aggressive acts at school, over and above the prediction from the level of perceived parental support and acceptance. In this study we distinguished between respect as compliance (e.g., “it is important for me to do what my parent would like me to do”) and respect as positive valuation of the parent (e.g., "they are wise and have rich life experience"). Interestingly, both aspects uniquely predicted lower involvement in aggression at school, thus underscoring the importance of two types of contingent respect, one based on the parental role as an authority figure and the other based on merit due to specific positive qualifications (i.e., wisdom).

The effects of parental respect of their children have been widely examined within the literature, which looked at its negative side – namely disrespect of the child's rights for autonomy and for individuation. It appears that parenting practices and attitudes that directly involve invalidation of the child's autonomous self and an attitude of rejection toward the child, such as psychological control and guilt-induction, have clear negative consequences in terms of affect regulation, and externalizing problems (Barber, 2002). Psychological control involves intrusive parenting practices that use strategies, such as instilling anxiety, inducing
guilt and withdrawing love, to deny the child's autonomous conduct, feeling and thought (Barber, 2002; Mayseless & Scharf, 2009). In a large number of studies, psychological control was strongly associated with many adverse outcomes, prominent among them externalizing problems such as delinquency and antisocial behavior (Barber, 2002).

Parents too, when they feel disrespected by their children, tend to be aggressive and abusive. Though not targeting the term 'respect' directly, developmental researchers examined the ramifications of parents' sense of humiliation and lack of power due to disrespect and defiance by children. In particular, Bugental and colleagues (Bugental, & Lewis, 1999; Martorell & Bugental, 2006) have advanced an interesting model regarding the misuse of power by those who perceive themselves as powerless and are placed in a position of authority. Bugental and colleagues proposed and demonstrated that parents who feel powerless are more stressed by their children's misbehavior and tend to resort to coercive and abusive practices more than parents who attribute higher power to themselves in the parent-child relationship. Furthermore, this tendency to use abusive practices (e.g., spanking) was heightened when children were more challenging (Bugental & Happaney, 2004). Though not directly using the term 'respect', their description of the sense of low power in the relationship is clearly tied to parents being disobeyed and feeling disrespected.

Researchers have noted variability among cultures and ethnic groups with regard to the importance and sanctioning of respect in parent-child relations (Rubin & Chung, 2006). For example, respect as a demonstration of filial piety is highly emphasized in some of the Asian cultures, in particular Chinese oriented cultures (Ikels, 2004). In Western cultures too there are variations with regard to the importance of respect for parents. For example, Dixon, Graber and Brooks-Gunn (2008) found higher respect for parental authority among African American and Latina girls compared to European American girls, in line with the expectation for such variability in the value of respect of parents (Fuligni, 1998). Furthermore, low levels
of respect were associated with more intense arguments in the ethnic groups that place higher value on respect (African American and Latina mother-girl dyads) than in the other group (European American).

In a bi-national study that included a sample of middle class families with late adolescent girls from the USA and from Israel we found another interesting demonstration of cultural differences. The study included a revealed differences task in which each of the parents and the adolescent were asked to discuss a conflictual issue. Based on the 10-minute interaction with each parent, several facets related to respect were coded. *Autonomy-inhibiting* behaviors included over-personalizing the disagreement and pressuring the other person to agree, thus expressing disrespect of the other's space, boundaries, and views; whereas *relatedness-inhibiting* behaviors included expressing hostility and rudely interrupting the other, again showing disrespect of the other's right to be heard. We found that Israeli girls were more autonomy-inhibiting toward both parents than the US girls. In addition, Israeli girls were more relatedness-inhibiting toward their mothers compared to their US counterparts. Thus, the observations demonstrated relatively low levels of respect of Israeli girls towards their parents. These findings accord well with claims for low levels of respect toward authority in general, and for parents in particular, in Israeli society (Scharf & Mayseless, 2005; Golden & Mayseless, 2008)

**Respect in schools**

School is another central developmental context in which respect is important. Respect in schools has been studied at various levels: the general school climate, teacher-student relations, and peer relations. A large number of researchers have discussed the importance of respect in the school context suggesting that respecting the value of each student and his or her possibilities for growth and development should be at the core of education, and a central value of the school climate (Noddings, 1996). This contention was especially emphasized
with regard to students with special needs, minorities and students from high risk environments (e.g., Battistich, Solomon, Watson, Schaps, 1997).

This claim represents a humanistic perspective of education that views each individual as having the right for unconditional respect (e.g., Reiter, 2008). Yet, it also includes a pro-active moral dictum to care for the students and ensure that they flourish and actualize their potential (Noddings, 2005). Respecting individual differences in this context often means that authority figures at school are expected to create a climate in which each student is nurtured to achieve his or her higher potential and to feel valued and competent. Such a climate is expected to prevent aggression and violence and to promote cooperation and benevolence (e.g., Mulcahy & Casella, 2005). Though not assessing respect directly, such associations between a caring school climate and lower levels of violence and even a direct, presumably causal, link to a decrease in violence and aggression has been demonstrated in a large number of studies (e.g., Benbenishty & Astor, 2005; Kasen Berenson, Cohen, & Johnson, 2004). In one of the few studies that directly targeted the expression of respect LaRusso, Romer and Selman (2008) report that higher perceived teacher support and regard for students' perspectives in a high-school representative sample in the US was associated with students' perception of their schools as having respectful climates, as well as with positive outcomes such as lower levels of drug use.

Students too are expected to have and show respect toward peers and teachers. Showing respect toward peers often means not being aggressive toward them either physically or relationally, being polite to them, refraining from damaging their belongings and blemishing their reputation (DioGuardi & Theodore, 2006). Within this relatively egalitarian context, reciprocity and mutuality in respect proved highly important in sustaining respect on both sides and promoting friendships (Zongkui, Chumei, & Hsueh, 2006). On the negative side, disrespect for peers who have low social power has been conceptually
implicated in one of the most serious incidences of aggression at school – peer victimization and bullying. Peer victimization has been defined as repeated exposure to physical and verbal aggressive actions by peers (Olweus, 1991). A large number of studies identified peer bullying as one of the major problems in schools in the US (Espelage, Swearer, 2004; Geffner, Loring, & Young, 2001). Interestingly, when discussing the characteristics of bullies and factors in the school that affect the development of the bully/victim experience, it was suggested that, among other things, lack of respect for peers, and teachers who seem to overlook the problem and not intervene, might be a very important causal factor (Batsche & Knoff, 1994). Not surprisingly, some of the best known intervention programs target the promotion of respect in their title though the focus on respect in the specific intervention is not large (e.g., The Expect Respect program - Meraviglia, Becker, Rosenbluth, Sanchez, & Robertson, 2003; The Respect program – Ertesvåg & Vaaland, 2007).

Students are also expected to respect their teachers, and this type of respect closely resembles that expected from the child in the parent-child relationship. It is based on the teacher's role as an authority figure in direct charge of the child's acquisition of knowledge and competencies, as well as proper behavior and well-being. In this relational context the student, especially in elementary school, is expected to obey the teachers and show respect by abiding by their rules and expectations (e.g., Hsueh, Zhou et al., 2005). Hence, in the teacher-student relational context, teachers are expected to show unconditional pro-active respect for the students whereas students are expected to show respect that is contingent on the teacher's role as an authority figure in charge of their education.

In line with the similarity between parents' and teachers' roles, several researchers have likened the teacher to a parent in understanding teachers' influence on student adjustment (e.g., Wentzel, 1997; 2002; 2006). For example, in one of Wentzel's studies teachers' respect for students' autonomy, as in the parent-child context, was associated with
fewer behavioral problems (Wentzel, 2002). Bugental and her colleagues (Bugental, Lyon, Lin, McGrath, & Bimbela, 1999) have similarly likened parents and teachers in their authority roles and found that also in the teaching context, low perceived power is associated with inadequate practices.

As children grow older the type of expected respect is more reciprocal, whereby both teachers and students are expected to show respect of the unconditional type and in addition, students develop contingent respect for their teachers based on merit, such as expertise, knowledge, or moral personality (e.g., Zhang, Zhou, & Yeh, 2005). Often in this context, students respect their teachers as a reciprocation of the respect they receive from them (Noddings, 1996). All types of respect - that of teachers toward students and of students for teachers and peers - are expected to be negatively associated with aggression. For example, victims of violence (both "pure" victims and bullies who are also victims) report feeling less respected in the school than others (Morrison, 2006). Langdon and Preble (2008) examined both adult respect (e.g., "Most of my teachers treat students with fairness and respect") and peer respect ("Students treat each other with fairness and respect at this school") in the school using a large sample of 5th through 12th-grade students. Each type of respect uniquely predicted lower levels of bullying at the school after controlling for background variables such as gender and ethnic origin.

In general we would expect that respect from the various sources, parents, peers, teachers would all be relevant to lower levels of aggression and violence. In our own study with a large representative sample (N =~ 3500) of Israeli youth we examined the association between respect for parents and respect for teachers as reported by the adolescents and various outcomes. Our results clearly demonstrate that respect for teacher was negatively associated with aggression after controlling for respect for parents and perceived acceptance from parents, which were also associated with lower aggression (Scharf & Mayseless, 2006).
Another interesting indication of the interplay of the various sources of respect in attenuating aggression comes from a study by Knafo, Daniel, and Khoury-Kassabri (2008). Their study addressed the importance of variability in one's values to violence and aggression. Though they did not specifically use the term 'respect', they included values that are directly related to some of the facets of respect. These include the value of universalism, "Understanding, appreciation, tolerance and protection of the welfare of all people and of nature" (p. 654), which is clearly associated with the unconditional type of respect, and the value of conformity, "Limiting actions and urges that might violate social expectations and norms" (p. 654), which is directly associated with the conditional type of respect for authority. Using a large sample of Jewish and Arab students in Israel they found that youth, in both ethnic groups, who endorsed these values were less inclined to be aggressive and violent at school. Furthermore, in schools in which violent behavior was more frequent these values, and in particular universalism, were especially negatively associated with self-reported violence and provided a stronger protecting effect than in schools in which violent behavior was less frequent. It appears that variations in values that reflect respect of the two types (unconditional and contingent) either among various ethnic groups or within ethnic groups are associated with aggression and violence, and such values can mitigate the contextual drive toward aggression. In sum, though there are currently only a handful of studies examining respect directly, there are promising empirical indications that respect in the school context from various sources, teachers for students, students for teachers, and among peers, as well as internalized respect evinced in one's values, are associated with lower levels of violence and aggression at school.

Why is respect so important and in what way it is distinguished from other attitudes or emotions?
Respect is often conceptually and empirically associated with other attitudes and emotions. For example, examining respect in close relationships Frei and Shaver (2002) found that when participants were asked to identify central features of respect in romantic relations, loving and caring seem to be quite central besides the expected profile of qualities that included being honest/truthful, trustworthy, reliable and considerate. Similarly, Hendrick and Hendrick (2006) devised a scale that included issues of approval, communication, interest, and care to assess respect for a romantic partner. In addition, high status and power within groups was also discussed as emanating from respect.

These characteristics might be associated with respect and might have an important role in mitigating aggression, but they are not equivalent to respect. Respect should not be confused with love and caring or with general power and value within a group. First, unlike empathy or caring that are "warm" emotions and entail an emotional inclination to take responsibility to assure the existence and well being of the cared for entity, respect involves a general moral evaluative attitude of appreciation of the other and a moral imperative to refrain from harming the other. It is a "cold" disposition. In general love and caring are strong buffers against aggression – but this is not always the case. In fact a large number of clinical case studies of marital violence and child abuse demonstrate that love and caring can sometimes lead to violence and aggression precisely because at times love and care are associated with other attitudes that do not respect the autonomy of the other and his or her value as a separate, rational and autonomous human being (Barnett, Miller-Perrin, & Perrin, 2005). Similarly, viewing others as having high status and power is not synonymous with respect and may not be associated with lower levels of aggression towards them. In fact, history is full of incidents in which people were aggressive towards others precisely because they valued them and wanted to possess them, or tried to destroy them because they perceived that the others' higher status or value competed with their status. Respect for
others is quite different. Respect entails a moral standing and a moral imperative not to harm the other. The value accorded to the other entails consideration and acceptance of the other's rights for dignity and autonomy.

How can respect be fostered?
In each context in which children are raised and taught the value of respect, the affective and behavioral aspects of this general attitude can be demonstrated and taught. One of the most central ways by which respect can be taught and transmitted is by modeling respect in everyday life. Respect breeds respect, and values and attitudes in particular are internalized by emulating authority figures (Grusec & Kuczynski, 1997). To foster and teach respect parents, teachers, and others in positions of authority should behave respectfully toward others. Behaving respectfully means honoring and enabling the autonomy of the other, showing interest and care, allowing the other to have a "voice" even when not approving it, and appreciating the internal goodness of others. Contingent respect is learned when the unique qualities of each individual are valued, appreciated and addressed. In the school context this could be achieved by becoming better acquainted with the students' uniqueness and individual qualities, and allowing each student to be valued and successful in his or her own way and in his or her own preferred domain.

Another modeling which is fairly important is not to tolerate disrespectful behavior towards oneself or others; namely to foster respect, authority figures need to intervene when they observe disrespect either by the child they are trying to educate or by others. Such intervention should be done respectfully, but it should be decisive and clear cut. Children and others also learn respect or disrespect from the general climate and general norm in their environment. Thus, observing disrespect shown by parents to each other, or disrespect shown by a school principal to teachers, is almost as harmful to the development of respect in a child
as personally showing disrespect for him or her. In particular, to foster respect, authority figures should not allow disrespectful behavior toward themselves or among peers.

Another way that could foster respect is to promote children’s self-respect. Self-respect is linked to a sense of autonomy and self-control, and being directed by personal and moral standards (Ronald & Foxx, 2003). Authority figures can promote these aspects by targeting them as socialization goals and focusing on promoting moral values, self control and autonomy. Thus, besides modeling respect and intervening when disrespect is shown, authority figures need to teach the child about respect more directly and verbally. This includes clear discussions of values and the importance of good character and moral conduct. Articulating clear expectations for behaviors that are consistent with respect, as discussed in this chapter, provides children with concrete and much needed direction. Following this through with scaffolding helps them internalize these standards and make them intrinsically theirs. This can be done by helping children to articulate and discuss their feelings, hesitations and decision processes vis-à-vis their values. All too often in our child-centered ecology authority figures shy away from such a concrete and directive approach.

In sum, the study of respect within the developmental contexts in which children are raised, socialized and educated is currently quite scarce. Though variations related to respect have been examined (e.g., psychological control by parents), research efforts to identify how respect is defined and exhibited in these contexts, its relation to various outcomes and its unique contribution to these outcomes are clearly lacking, as are research efforts to understand how respect can be fostered. We hope that the conceptual framework elucidated in this chapter will open new possibilities to study and examine respect and its vicissitudes in developmental contexts. We wish to conclude with Gabriel Garcia Marx words: "I have learned that people have the right to look down at others only when they are going to help them to get up." Let us hope that other people will learn this too.
References

American Psychologist, 28, 1145–1160.


