

10 Rules for Respect

In every Letter of Agreement I have had with congregations I have asked that the "Rules for Respect" spelled out below be made part of the agreement. I first saw these in an article by Church of the Nazarene pastor Charles Christian. I think they are quite helpful in framing our communication and life together. I vow to do my best to follow them and invite you to do the same. We will all fail, but through gentle challenge and loving encouragement these can become a foundation for healthy communication for us all. Blessings to you! + Greg

- 1) If you have a problem with me, come to me (privately).
 - 2) If I have a problem with you, I will come to you (privately).
 - 3) If someone has a problem with me and comes to you, send them to me. (I'll do the same for you)
 - 4) If someone consistently will not come to me, say, "Let's go to Greg together. I am sure he will see us about this." (I will do the same for you.)
 - 5) Be careful how you interpret me-I'd rather do that. On matters that are unclear, do not feel pressured to interpret my feelings or thoughts. It is easy to misinterpret intentions.
 - 6) I will be careful how I interpret you.
 - 7) If it's confidential, don't tell. If you or anyone comes to me in confidence, I won't tell unless
a) the person is going to harm himself/herself, b) the person is going to physically harm someone else, c) a child has been physically or sexually abused. I expect the same from you.
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- 8) I do not read unsigned letters or notes.
 - 9) I do not manipulate; I will not be manipulated; do not let others manipulate you. Do not let others manipulate me through you. I will not preach "at you." I will leave conviction to the Holy Spirit (she does it better anyway!)
 - 10) When in doubt, just say it. The only dumb questions are those that don't get asked. Our relationships with one another, at the end of the day, are the most important things so if you have a concern, pray, and then (if led) speak up. If I can answer it without misrepresenting something, someone, or breaking a confidence, I will.