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The Need for Respect

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The Need for Respect

“I’ll post those receipts the way you say to, Ken, but Mr. Roland never had me do them that way,” said Margaret Lowe to her husband in their insurance office.

“Mr. Roland ... it’s always ‘Mr. Roland did this’ or ‘Mr. Roland didn’t do that’” he snapped.

“Don’t forget, Ken,” Margaret said, “Mr. Roland was successful enough to sell out at 50 and move to Florida.”

“And when I’m 65, I’ll still be struggling to complete the down payment on the business. You might as well add that,” he growled.

For ten years, Margaret had admired Mr. Roland’s keen business sense. When Kenneth Lowe joined Mr. Roland’s sales force, Margaret thought she saw the same qualities in the new employee and she accepted his proposal of marriage after a rather hurried courtship. Then in those first few months of living together, she found she didn’t know Ken as well as she had thought.

But Margaret felt she could remake Ken. For one thing, she had been in the insurance business longer than he, and she set out to mold him in the shape of Mr. Roland.

Ken was aware of Margaret’s manipulations, and resented them. He said he was studying Mr. Roland’s methods so he could do just the opposite!

Margaret thought Ken was taking a nasty attitude; she could not cope with it. During this low point in their relationship she learned she was pregnant. After quitting work she had more time to think about this man whom, though her husband, was one for whom she had little respect.

After the baby came, Margaret Lowe suffered from periods of depression. When she began to be haunted by fears of insanity and of harming the baby, she came to me for counseling and I gave her a sympathetic ear.

It took several meetings for her to tell her story, but over the weeks I helped her to recognize her pushing and nagging. She saw that she considered Ken inferior not only to Mr. Roland, but to herself, too. For a long time she pondered the principle in

Philippians 2:3, “Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.”

As she applied this principle to her marriage, and kept at it, Ken regretted his hostility, and they had the common ground of love and peace upon which to build their marriage—and their business.

[Dr. Henry Brandt shares insights from various couples he counseled. The names and certain details in these true case histories have been changed to protect each person’s identity and privacy.]