

Preface

RESPECT is both a philosophy of living and a very specific set of exercises and approaches to help youth who have abused move to abuse-free lives. This is not a “manual,” albeit there are specific steps in the process. To make RESPECT work, the clinician using the approach must have integrated its principles as deeply as his/her clients. To accomplish this task, this manual moves back and forth between speaking to professionals and speaking directly to youth. This is done to give the clinician a “feel” for the way RESPECT is implemented. But the book is not meant to be shared directly with clients. There is a separate set of worksheets and accompanying CD that are available for them from NEARI Press. Hopefully, by reading through this work, you will grasp the most critical elements of living with RESPECT.

Since the original creation of RESPECT, the field has advanced significantly in its understanding of the complex diagnostic and treatment differentiations required to meet the needs of a wide range of youth exhibiting similar behaviors. One size simply does not fit all. For example, while one of the steps in RESPECT requires a client to identify his/her “offense pattern,” we are all aware now that not every client has such a pattern. That said, all of us have patterns of feelings/thoughts/actions that result in inappropriate behaviors. It is this latter type of “pattern” to which this step refers.

Last, the language used in some of the worksheets and the staff:client dialogue is only appropriate for clients with relatively high intellectual functioning and a lack of significant learning disabilities especially auditory processing issues. Once again, these worksheets and dialogues should be seen as examples. Individual clinicians should feel free to modify them to meet the assessed learning needs of their clients.

Ideally, many of those choosing to use RESPECT as their intervention of choice should seek to expand their skills through a face-to-face training. Others of you, however, may come easily to this approach either through your life experiences, or previous involvement with martial arts/eastern philosophy, etc. Young people respond positively to being treated with RESPECT. They learn to live a RESPECTFUL life, rather than simply learning to manage impulses, fantasies, or urges. RESPECT is a powerful way for all of us to approach daily living. NEARI Press hopes that this work will convey the essence of RESPECT to you, and we bow to you in mutual RESPECT for the invaluable work that you are doing.

Steven Bengis
Executive Director