

10 Ways to Show Respect to Your Irresponsible Mate

- **Pray like mad FOR your mate and ABOUT the situation.** God knows everyone better than they know themselves. Besides, you're going to need His help to follow through on the rest of the list. Ask Him to help you, then trust Him to do it. (You are already talking to Him regularly – aren't you?)
- **Accept and rejoice in your mate's autonomy.** While your mate may be irresponsible, they are also an individual created in the image of God and therefore capable of choosing their own path.
- **Accept them, reject their behavior.** Don't allow yourself to see your mate's irresponsible behavior and their person as one. (Their behavior isn't all there is to them. There have to be positive things about them, or you wouldn't have gotten involved with them. Right?)
- **Be kind as often as you can do it - genuinely.** Accept the fact that irresponsibility does not make them unworthy of receiving kindness. (No one likes being spoken to or treated harshly, no matter what they've done.)
- **Don't lie to them about how their behavior affects you and the way you feel about them.** As honestly and lovingly as possible, make them aware of any personal limits you may have with your current circumstances.
- **Don't do what is their responsibility to do.** (i.e., When they don't pay the bill collectors as they promised – don't make or receive the call explaining why the payment wasn't made. As adults they can speak for themselves.)
- **Accept the reality that they CAN do better.** Their irresponsible choices may have led you to believe that they are hopeless. Don't believe that!
- **Don't try to control them or their choices - anymore.** You may have been trying to stop any consequences for their behavior from affecting you. They probably experienced these actions as your trying to control them. If God leads you to apologize for *your* controlling behavior, do it.
- **Be patient. Give your mate room to make mistakes and learn from them.** If a person has been irresponsible for a long time, it will take a while for them to become accustomed to handling their affairs responsibly.
- **Don't be a hypocrite!** Maintain integrity by being responsible when you make choices. Otherwise, you're just the pot calling the kettle black.



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