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### A Legacy of Dignity

Our society is glued together by the act known as respect. Respect can be both a good and bad thing; it can steer us to healthy, equitable relationships, or the lack of can bring us to manipulative and misplaced relationships. However, respect is an active part in human interaction. It is part of what separates us from dehumanization, and it affects our world from the smallest to the largest spectrum. In this essay, I aim to explore the advantages and disadvantages of respect in the past, present and future of our society.

Our country was built through respect. In American history, the fight for respect was a central, defining, and often explosive battle cry for the civil rights of all people. People's respect for all groups challenged systemic discrimination, movements like the Civil Rights Movement transformed the nation into a more inclusive, productive, and democratic society, dismantling policies that wasted human potential. Respect for our allies and trade partners has been a cornerstone of our nation's foreign policy, acting as a force multiplier that allowed the nation to grow its economic, military, and diplomatic power throughout the 20th and 21st centuries.

However, our ability to respect others has failed us before. Lack of respect can be a treacherous thing. Based on my past experiences, having a lack of respect can not be an ethical thing. A clear instance of this in the past can be found throughout the 19th century, when the U.S. violated numerous treaties with the Native American nations, most notably through the Indian Removal Act of 1830. By violating the established treaties and forcing the relocation of over fifty thousand people, causing thousands of deaths, we saw destroyed trust, violent conflict, and the forcing of indigenous nations to fight for their survival. In modern days, this is equivalent to environmental racism and genocide.

Today, it's easy to observe respect even across my local community, though it is not at the same scale as our nation's triumphs. Respect throughout local governments, businesses, and even our neighbors can aid our communities with running smoothly and with minor problems. An organization that promotes respect and dignity like that in my community is KLCAS, they teach all how to support and treat each other with respect and dignity.

I compete with the Basin Bombers Volleyball Club, a competitive travel club. Many of our practices are only made possible with respect not only for our coaches, but for each other. We generally rely on our coaches, respecting and trusting that they know what to do to get us to where we need to be and to respect their methods since we know that they have not only gone through this themselves, but with other players just like us. Even without a set agreement, we all

know that it is a requirement to respect each other and support each other, so that we can build the team up so that we can be the best we can be.

The code of ethics system is something that is entirely human invention that sets us apart from animals. The concept that we emphasize treating people with dignity and respect as a core principle. This gives one structured framework where, like an honor system, people are expected to adhere to these standards without constant supervision. Something as simple as a socratic seminar in school can show how much humans respect each other and expect others to do the same. If a simple high school classroom and a kind teacher is all that is needed to act with respect, then what is stopping respect between countries, political parties, and individuals? The matter in question seems to be selfishness.

Selfishness seems to be the main cause of lack of respect. A great example of selfishness breaking down respect is in a place of work. In many workplaces all over the world, there are amazing human beings not getting credit for their ideas because of others being selfish and taking the credit. No matter if they are high up on the corporate ladder, or down in the trenches, there is always someone who is getting their credit stolen from them. Then, because of this lack of respect, it can begin to cause hatred in the environment, and can make it destructive.

In the future, the only way forward to obtain nationwide respect that runs on an ethics system is to find a way to get rid of selfishness in the media, governments, and more. Many parts of our society depend on respect - trade partners, research projects, and even our government. They all depend on one another to trust that everyone can do their job and respect their ideas. Without respect, all this innovation of the present and the future will be impossible.

Nevertheless, lack of respect needs to be controlled. With the invention of Artificial Intelligence (AI), lots of governments, corporations, and even humans will have to decide on the respect of real beings, or choose the increased efficiency and transparency of AI. A lack of trust in humans can lead to AI taking jobs from those people that truly need them. For example, there are many hospitals that are now purchasing AI robots to replace nurses, doctors, and even surgeons. This is an act of disrespect by them snatching away these jobs that are required to help support our society.

When we are creating a great nation or making the start of a deadly event, respect has always been there, whether it's the lack of or having respect for someone or something. It is a necessity at every measure of society, from high school coaches, to trade partners between nations. While lack of respect in humans could lead to disastrous events, having respect in decision making processes can lead to huge improvements for our great world. I aim to encompass this knowledge of respect and its good and bad sides into my everyday life.

I wholeheartedly believe that healthy, joyful relationships rely on respect, from relationships to family to marriages. Once respect is lost, it can take forever and a day to restore your respect for another person. For this reason, I will try to be patient and attentive to the very

best of my ability, because I know that it will help me not only in my personal life, but also in the world. It will help me have a chance in a good job that I love, because being a respectful person can help anyone move up the ranks in any corporation.

Respect, a large part of human society, is able to be found within any point in history, whether it's there or there's a lack of. It has shaped our past and is going to determine our future. As long as the act of mutual respect lasts, the society will be held together and will continue to grow stronger.