

Does familiarity breed contempt? essay sample

[Life](#), [Relationships](#)



We have all heard the idiom 'familiarity breeds contempt', but what exactly causes our regard and respect for another person to suddenly turn into dislike? How is it that we can despise the very same person that we proclaimed our love for just a short time before? In fact, becoming 'familiar' with someone should be natural and normal in order to bond and create intimacy. Yet, the contempt does not arise from the familiarity itself but when boundaries are overstepped or not drawn clearly. In the Greek language, the word for familiarity 'ekeoteta', means 'I feel at home' and is used with a positive meaning. However we can too often slip into a negative aspect of familiarity, when someone talks and behaves in such a way they would as if they were at home; casual, open and sometimes too frank. For example, when the shortcomings of others are mentioned in public, or the tone is too casual, or private or confidential issues shared inappropriately. Often in the early throes of a love relationship or friendship, we feel safe and even enjoy opening up to another, and each feels the foundation of their relationship gives them the right of expression.

But by your allowing them to become all too familiar with you, they feel they have this right to say things others cannot. This is where you have let the other person in too close where they are privy to your secrets. And when the relationship loses its shine you may regret having said so much. If you find you are being talked to with disrespect, then you are probably allowing the other person to enter your safe space and treat you that way. It is important to use discernment power to gauge just how much to allow them into your inner world. Not all people can be safe boxes that can keep your deposited secrets. Neither should we feel we have a right to divulge the secrets of

others or use information against them because our familiarity with them gives us a sense of ownership. In fact, we can be close to others and have a respectful and loving relationship without being too familiar.

When relationships are honoured and treated with privacy and trust, they can go a long way. If we continue to cherish and appreciate the other person, there can never be contempt. Devaluing comes from focusing on the shortcomings, but if we focus on the goodness of the person, we will always hold them in high regard. And if I continue to give regard then I will also receive it in return. It's time... to set clear boundaries and not to blame others for overstepping the mark. To treat others as you would like to be treated yourself and to enjoy the closeness that respect and appreciation brings to your relationships. Try to have few secrets and then you won't need to worry about them being divulged!