



Unleashing the Power of Unconditional Respect

Transforming Law Enforcement and Police Training

Several officers have shared stories with me where they were in a life-threatening situation and someone they previously arrested stepped in to help. That person helped because during the previous arrest, that person was treated with respect and kindness. This is one of many examples of the power of unconditional respect.

I admit when I first read the title, I was skeptical. My biases led me to prematurely pass judgment by imagining officers holding hands with community members and singing kumbayah. However, the method presented in the book demands both physical and mental strength with an absolute commitment to do what is right, despite whatever pressures the officer may encounter.

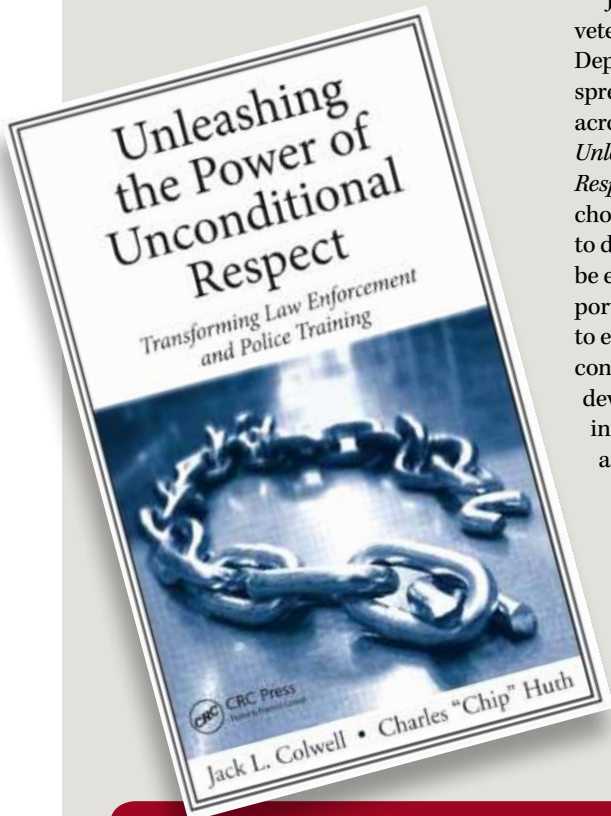
Jack Colwell and Chip Huth, both veterans of the Kansas City (Mo.) Police Department, are passionately driven to spread this power through a cultural shift across law enforcement. In their book, *Unleashing the Power of Unconditional Respect*, they draw from sociology, psychology, philosophy and police studies to de-bunk the belief that respect has to be earned before it is given. They support police giving unconditional respect to every person with which they come in contact. This can be possible through the development of a “personal anima,” or inner way, which is rooted in integrity and buttressed by courage.

Unconditional respect allows officers to see each person for what they are capable of, both good and evil. This allows us to focus on the behavior, which is more telling of the person than our own preconceived notions. Using unconditional respect, officer safety

is bolstered because officers are able to more readily read behaviors, responding to the real threat as opposed to what we think is the threat. With this approach, officers will resort to using force or authority less and address the real need of the situation. Public trust will be built in every contact within the community. Citizens complaints will not only decrease, but the community will eventually build support and mutual understanding with officers.

The last segment of this book provides a roadmap for developing a personal anima and implementing unconditional respect in the personal and professional lives of officers.

I will caution that while this book is short (just 144 pages), it does present concepts that are very intellectually challenging. At times, the concepts are not entirely straight forward, making the reading difficult to follow. However, the authors maintain a website (unleashingrespectproject.com), as well as a blog (unleashingrespect.blogspot.com), which include several videos and other materials which can further your understanding of the topic. I highly recommend incorporating this book, in full or part, into training as well as mentorships. Building a personal anima resulting in unconditional respect will powerfully impact your life. 🍷



by Jack L. Colwell and Charles Huth, CRC Press, Boca Raton, Fla., 2010