

Filipinos Shows Respect to their Elders

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Influences from [the South](#) East Asian Migrations and other Asian migrations to [the islands](#) known as the [Philippines](#) are many fold, but one very strong [influence](#) that holds even today, is a respect for their elders. From youth, Filipinos are taught to respect those who are older than them. Not only have the elders given birth and raised many, but in their age, they have grown wiser, more experienced, and have, by [tradition](#) earned the respect of younger generations.

Filipinos treat elders with the utmost respect. Mannerisms, gestures and language are used to convey this respect for parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, friends, acquaintances and even strangers. Several symbolic ways in which respect is given to elders is in the use of language by calling older Filipinos "Po" and older siblings, cousins, and family friends "Kuya" and "Atee".

The most fascinating and ritualistic custom of showing respect to elders is of the greeting or salutation, the Mano. The Philippines is the only country in Asia that holds this specific tradition and its origins evolved from the mixture of western and eastern tradition. The Mano [spanish for hand] evolved from the traditions of respect for ones elders which comes from asian cultures coupled with the respect for the clergy during the spanish occupation of the Philippines.

Children are taught to respect their elders. One way of expressing respect is by "kissing" the right hand of an elder person when you greet them. Actually, you don't really kiss the hand. You just bow a bit, and gently take the elder's right hand with your right hand, and move it towards your own forehead. Sometimes, it's the back of their hand that touches the forehead. More often, it's the knuckles.

One of the most influential origins of the Mano began when the Catholic friars who occupied, colonized, and converted many insisted that the Indios [the native people] kiss their hand, as a sign of power over them. At the time, the Pope who was held in high [esteem](#) extended his hand to priests, nuns & lay people as he gave his blessings as they kissed his [signet ring](#). This ritual was appropriated by the Catholic Friars and Priests, especially in the Philippines. As a result the Filipinos appropriated this tradition as a means to show respect to one's elders by way of the Mano. The Mano is when one slightly bows to one's elder as they take the elder's opposing hand and respectfully place it to one's own forehead.

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