

The fifth commandment is: Honor Your Father and Mother. The Rabbis have a very interesting view towards respecting your parents. They think that you have to go to any measure to make sure that your parents are respected. "When Rav Dimi came from Eretz Yisrael to Babylonia, he said: Once Dama ben Netina was wearing a fine cloak [sirkon] of gold, and was sitting among the nobles of Rome. And his mother came to him and tore his garment from him and smacked him on the head and spat in his face, and yet he did not embarrass her." This is saying that when Dama ben Netinah was wearing a gold cloak and speaking with royalty, his mother came in and tore his robe off and disrespected him, but Dama ben Netinah did not embarrass her. This passage shows that the Talmud is very strict in the way you have to honor your parents.

Today, we take a more lenient view on how to respect your parents. You shouldn't wake your parents up or shout at them for no reason, but it's okay if you don't agree with your parents and you argue with them. From my experience, you are most certainly allowed to tell your parents that they are wrong. They don't have to agree with you, but you can express your opinion without fear of violating the commandment by embarrassing them. The modern view on honoring your parents allows you more freedom when you disagree with them or need something from them.

There is another story in the Talmud about how Dama ben Netinah lost 600 gold Denarii because he didn't want to wake up his father. In my opinion, this is not a good thing to do because my father would feel disrespected if I didn't wake him up! That is why I agree with the modern view on honoring your parents.