

The Golden Rule Project

The Golden Rule Project began in November 2003. The initial aim of the project was to place the Golden Rule in middle schools and high schools in the local community in a manner that would attract the attention of the students and encourage consideration and application of the Golden Rule. As a result, a Golden Rule document was created as a work of art. It consists of sixteen golden rule formulations taken from different cultures, philosophies and teachings placed on a two-page, framed diptych. Each page measures 21" x 13" (Golden Mean proportions). Two editions were printed. The first edition was hand-printed on an antique letterpress by Marnie Powers-Torrey and Jennifer Sorensen of the University of Utah Book Arts Program on hand-marbled Rives BFK paper. The second edition was also hand-printed by Rob Buchert of Tryst Press utilizing a similar letterpress on the same hand-marbled paper. In addition, various local artists in the community contributed their time and talents to illuminate these diptychs to create unique works of art for each recipient school.

A second series evolved shortly after the second edition printing, specifically targeted for the elementary schools. Three broadsides were conceived and are in various stages of production. This series incorporates larger text, simpler golden rule formulations and line drawings. Rather than recruit local artists to illuminate these pieces, the broadsides were designed to encourage the schools to allow their own students to participate in the embellishment of their own broadsides.

The project has gained momentum in other arenas as well. In conjunction with Crossroads Urban Center, the Golden Rule was presented to local legislators as a guiding principle in the execution of their roles and responsibilities. Wallet cards were

distributed to those willing to pledge their commitment. Additionally, Senator Fred Fife drafted and sought support for a Golden Rule Resolution further emphasizing the need to consider all constituents in the legislative process. The resolution passed with only one dissenting vote. Three Golden Rule broadsides (two in English, one in Spanish) now hang in the halls of the Utah State Capitol.

We will continue to encourage consideration of the Golden Rule as a means to normalize the behavior which we exhibit toward one another. Our project continues to garner attention from an increasing number of people in an ever widening geographic expanse. It is our sincere hope that the Golden Rule will serve as a reminder that we are all connected and that our actions are never isolated.

The Golden Rule Project

Contents

1. Golden Rule formulations on the diptych
2. Additional formulations (112 found thus far)
3. A primer for thought and discussion on the Golden Rule
4. Suggested lessons/activities involving the Golden Rule

1. Diptych Golden Rule Formulations

~ The Golden Rule ~

"There is no better training in awareness and sensitivity – even understanding and attention – because in order to consider my brother or my neighbor externally I need to take him or her into the field of my attention in a very real way. I must be open to his or her needs, sufferings, and that means putting some of my own self-absorption off to one side."

Annie Lou Staveley

Many teachings have their own versions of the golden rule:

In happiness and suffering, in joy and grief, we should regard all creatures as we regard our own self.

Lord Mahavir 24th Tirthankara, Jainism

Respect for all life is the foundation.

The Great Law of Peace, Native American

Humanists acknowledge human interdependence, the need for mutual respect and the kinship of all humanity.

Humanism

Do as you would be done by.

Persian

No one of you is a believer until he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself.

Sunnah, Islam

Blessed is he who preferreth his brother before himself.

Bahá'í

Whatsoever you do not wish your neighbor to do to you, do not unto him. This is the whole law. The rest is mere exposition.

Judaism

To those who are good to me, I am good; to those who are not good to me, I am also good. Thus all get to be good. To those who are sincere with me, I am sincere; to those who are not sincere with me, I am also sincere. Thus all get to be sincere. Taoist

Every man takes care that his neighbor does not cheat him. But the day comes when he begins to care that he does not cheat his neighbor. Then all goes well.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Try your best to treat others as you would wish to be treated yourself
and you will find that this is the shortest way to benevolence.

Mencius VII.A.4, Confucianism

Don't go around hurting people, and Try to understand things.

In Hopi Indian culture, the Spider Grandmother gave two rules

All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you,
do ye even so to them.

Christian

One should seek for others the happiness one desires for one's self.

Buddhism

One going to take a pointed stick to pinch a baby bird should first try it on himself to
feel how it hurts.

Yoruba Proverb, Nigerian

He sought for others the good he desired for himself. Let him pass on!

Egyptian

The highest aim and sense of human life is the striving to attain
the welfare of one's neighbor.

Gurdjieff

*As we try living the Golden Rule, we find that it is an ongoing process fed by a
struggle with the smaller parts of ourselves which care only about our own needs and
desires. This common striving which comes to us from all directions and all times
inspires us to persevere. The real value comes with the struggle.*

2. Additional Golden Rule Formulations

Formulations of the Golden Rule

African

"One going to take a pointed stick to pinch a baby bird should first try it on himself to feel how it hurts." Yoruba Proverb African Traditional (Nigeria)

"If your neighbor's jackal escapes into your garden, you should return the animal to its owner; that is how you would want your neighbor to treat you."

African Bush Proverb

Bahá'í

"Blessed is he who preferreth his brother before himself." Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh

"Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful." Udana-Varga, 5:18

"Oh Son of Being! Ascribe not to any soul that which thou wouldst not have ascribed to thee, and say not that which thou doest not. This is My command unto thee, do thou observe it." Arabic Hidden Words

"And if thine eyes be turned towards justice, choose thou for thy neighbour that which thou chooseth for thyself." Epistle to the Son of the Wolf

"Wish not for others what ye wish not for yourselves". Kitab-I-Aqdas

"Lay not upon any soul a load that you would not wish to be laid upon you, and desire not for anyone the things you would not desire for yourself."

Bahá'u'lláh Gleanings

"He should not wish for others what he does not wish for himself." Bahá'u'lláh

Buddhism

"Is there a deed, Rahula, thou dost wish to do? Then bethink thee thus: Is this deed conducive to my own harm, or to others harm, or to that of both? Then is this a bad deed entailing suffering. Such a deed must thou surely not do." Majjhima Nikaya 1.415

"The Ariyan disciple thus reflects, Here am I, fond of my life, not wanting to die, fond of pleasure and averse from pain. Suppose someone should rob me of my life... it

would not be a thing pleasing and delightful to me. If I, in my turn, should rob of his life one fond of his life, not wanting to die, one fond of pleasure and averse to pain, it would not be a thing pleasing or delightful to him. For a state that is not pleasant or delightful to me must also be to him also; and a state that is not pleasing or delightful to me, how could I inflict that upon another? As a result of such reflection he himself abstains from taking the life of creatures and he encourages others so to abstain, and speaks in praise of so abstaining." Samyutta Nikaya v.353

"All beings love life. All beings fear death. Knowing this the wise man does not kill nor cause to kill'." Dhammapadha

"In five ways should a clansman minister to his friends and familiars, by treating them as he treats himself." Sigalovada Sutta v 31

"Comparing oneself to others in such terms as "Just as I am so are they, just as they are so am I," he should neither kill nor cause others to kill." Sutta Nipata v 705

"Hurt not others in ways that you would find hurtful." Tripitaka Udana-varga 5:18

"...a state that is not pleasing or delightful to me, how could I inflict that upon another?" Samyutta Nikaya v. 353

"Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful."
Tripitaka Udana-Varga 5:18

Christianity

"Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets." Yahshua, Matthew 7:12

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Yahshua, Matthew 22:39

"You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD."
YHWH, Leviticus 19:18

"Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. Do to others as you would have them do to you." Luke 6.30-31

"And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? How readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: do this, and thou shalt live."
Luke 10:25-28

"Whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them."Matthew 7:12

"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus said to him, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets." Matthew 22:36-40

"Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" Romans 13:8-10

"For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."Galatians 5:14

"So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets."Bible, version unknown

"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Matthew 7:12

"...and don't do what you hate..." Gospel of Thomas 6

"What you hate, do not do to anyone." Deuterocanonical Bible, NRSV, Tobit 4:15, Roman Catholic Church and Orthodox Christianity

"The directive, therefore, 'all things that you would that men should do to you, do you also to them' represents a rule for loving one's neighbour. It is an explanation of the commandment 'thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'"

St. Thomas Aquinas

"I am convinced . . . that (the rule) would be influential and productive of fruit if we only got into the habit of remembering it and were not so lazy and inattentive . . . The book is laid into your own bosom, and it is so clear that you do not need glasses to understand Moses and the Law. Thus you are your own Bible, your own teacher, your own theologian, and your own preacher."

Martin Luther

Confucianism

"Do not do to others what you would not like yourself. Then there will be no resentment against you, either in the family or in the state." Analects 12:2

"Do not unto others what you would not have them do unto you." Analects 15:23

Tse-kung asked, "Is there one word that can serve as a principle of conduct for life?" Confucius replied, "It is the word 'shu' -- reciprocity." Analects 15:23

"One word which sums up the basis for all good conduct...reciprocity. Do not do unto others what you would not want done to yourself." Analects of Confucius 15:23

"One should not behave towards others in a way which is disagreeable to oneself." Mencius VII.A.4

"Do not impose on others what you yourself do not desire." Doctrine of the Mean 13.3
Or

"Tse-kung asked, 'Is there one word that can serve as a principle of conduct for life?' Confucius replied, 'It is the word 'shu' -- reciprocity. Do not impose on others what you yourself do not desire.'" Doctrine of the Mean 13.3

"When one cultivates to the utmost the principles of his nature, and exercises them on the principle of reciprocity, he is not far from the path. What you do not like when done to yourself, do not do to others." (Li Ki 28.1.32)

"What a man dislikes in his superiors, let him not display in the treatment of his inferiors; what he dislikes in inferiors, let him not display in the service of his superiors; what he hates in those who are before him, let him not therewith precede those who are behind him; what he hates in those who are behind him, let him not therewith follow those who are before him; what he hates to receive on the right, let him not bestow on the left; what he hates to receive on the left, let him not bestow on the

right: – this is what is called “The principle with which, as with a measuring-square, to regulate one’s conduct.” The Great Learning 10.2

“Try your best to treat others as you would wish to be treated yourself, and you will find that this is the shortest way to benevolence.” Mencius VII.A.4

“Now the man of perfect virtue, wishing to be established himself, seeks also to establish others. To be able to judge of others by what is nigh in ourselves; this may be called the art of virtue.” *Analects of Confucius* 6:30

Egyptian

“Do for one who may do for you, / That you may cause him thus to do.”
– *The Tale of the Eloquent Peasant* 109–110, [Ancient Egypt](#), tr. R.B. Parkinson.

Greek Antiquity

“We should behave to friends as we would wish friends to behave to us.” Aristotle

“Whoever thinks he can do evil to his neighbor, and not suffer evil, is not wise.”
Antiphon

“Do not do to others what would anger you if done to you by others.” or

“Do not do to others that which would anger you if others did it to you.” Socrates

“What you would avoid suffering yourself, seek not to impose upon others.” Epictetus

“Deal with weaker states as you think it appropriate for stronger states to deal with you.”
Isocrates

“Conduct yourself toward your parents as you would have them conduct themselves towards you.”
Isocrates

“I will be as careful for you as I should be for myself in the same need.”
Calypso’s promise to Odysseus in Homer’s *The Odyssey*

“What is the teaching of all wisdom? As you wish that evils should not befall you, but wish to partake of the good, act in this spirit to everyone.”
Letter of Aristeas

"I would have no one touch my property, if I can help it, or disturb it in the slightest way without my consent. If I am a man of reason, I must treat others' property the same way."

Plato "The Laws"

Hinduism

"This is the sum of duty; do naught onto others what you would not have them do unto you." Mahabharata

"Wound not others, do no one injury by thought or deed, utter no word to pain thy fellow creatures."The Ordinances of Manu

"One should not behave towards others in a way which is disagreeable to oneself. This is the essence of morality. All other activities are due to selfish desire."
Mahabharata, Anusasana Parva 113.8

"Do naught to others which, if done to thee, would cause thee pain: this is the sum of duty."Mahabharata, 5:1517

or

"This is the sum of duty: Do naught unto others which would cause you pain if done to you." Mahabharata, 5:1517

or

"This is the sum of the Dharma [duty]: do naught unto others which would cause you pain if done to you." Mahabharata 5:1517

Humanism

"The man of humanity regards Heaven and Earth and all things as one body. To him there is nothing that is not himself. Since he has recognized all things as himself, how can there be a limit to his humanity?"

Chu Hsi

"Humanists acknowledge human interdependence, the need for mutual respect and the kinship of all humanity."

"Humanists affirm that individual and social problems can only be resolved by means of human reason, intelligent effort, critical thinking joined with compassion and a spirit of empathy for all living beings. "

"Don't do things you wouldn't want to have done to you." – British Humanist Society, 19999

Islam

"Not one of you truly believes until you wish for others that which you wish for yourself." The Prophet Mohammed Hadith

"No one of you is a believer until he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself." Sunnah Islam

"The most righteous of men is the one who is glad that men should have what is pleasing to himself, and who dislikes for them what is for him disagreeable."
Muhammad

"Not one of you is a believer until he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself."Number 13 of Imam "Al-Nawawi's Forty Hadiths."
or

"None of you [truly] believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself."Number 13 of Imam "Al-Nawawi's Forty Hadiths."

Jainism

"In happiness and suffering, in joy and grief, we should regard all creatures as we regard our own self."Lord Mahavir 24th Tirthankara

"One who you think should be hit is none else but you. One who you think should be governed is none else but you. One who you think should be tortured is none else but you. One who you think should be enslaved is none else but you. One who you think should be killed is none else but you. A sage is ingenuous and leads his life after comprehending the parity of the killed and the killer. Therefore, neither does he cause violence to others nor does he make others do so." Acaranga sutra 5.101-2

"One should treat all beings as he himself would be treated." Agamas Sutrakritanga 1.10.13

"A man should wander about treating all creatures as he himself would be treated."
Agamas Sutrakritanga 1.11.33

"Therefore, neither does he [a sage] cause violence to others nor does he make others do so." Acarangasutra 5.101-2.

"In happiness and suffering, in joy and grief, we should regard all creatures as we regard our own self" Lord Mahavira, 24th Tirthankara

Judaism

"You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD."
YHWH, Leviticus 19:18

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Leviticus 19:18

"Take heed to thyself, my child, in all thy works; and be discreet in all thy behavior. And what thou thyself hatest, do to no man." Tobit 4.14-15

"Whatsoever thou wouldst that men should not do unto thee, do not do that to them." Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 31a

"A certain heathen came to Shammai and said to him, "Make me a proselyte, on condition that you teach me the whole Torah while I stand on one foot." Thereupon he repulsed him with the rod which was in his hand. When he went to Hillel, he said to him, "What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor: that is the whole Torah; all the rest of it is commentary; go and learn." Talmud, Shabbat 31a
or

"What is hateful to you, do not to your fellow man. That is the entire law: all the rest is commentary." Talmud, Shabbat 31a
or

"What is hateful to you do not do to your neighbor. This is the whole torah [Law]; all the rest is commentary." Hillel Talmud, Shabbat 31a

"...thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Leviticus 19:18
or

"Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself." Bible, The New International Version, Leviticus 19:18

Latter-Day Saints

"And let every man esteem his brother as himself, and practice virtue and holiness before me." Doctrine and Covenants 38:24

Native American

"Respect for all life is the foundation." The Great Law of Peace

"All things are our relatives; what we do to everything, we do to ourselves. All is really One." Black Elk

"We are as much alive as we keep the earth alive." Chief Dan George

"The Spider Grandmother gave two rules: 'Don't go around hurting people, and Try to understand things.'" Capo 2nd Hopi Indian culture

"Do not wrong or hate your neighbor. For it is not he who you wrong, but yourself."
Pima proverb

"Great Spirit, grant that I may not criticize my neighbor until I have walked a mile in his moccasins."
Sioux Prayer

Persian

"Do as you would be done by."

Roman Antiquity

"Treat your inferiors as you would be treated by your superiors." Seneca: Epistle 47:11

"The law imprinted on the hearts of all men is to love the members of society as themselves." Roman Pagan Religion

Shintoism

Be charitable to all beings, love is the representative of God. Ko-ji-ki Hachiman Kasuga

"The heart of the person before you is a mirror. See there your own form" Shinto

Sikhism

"Do not create enmity with anyone as God is within everyone."

Guru Arjan Devji 259. Guru Granth Sahib

"We obtain salvation by loving our fellow man and God."

Granth Japji

"Compassion-mercy and religion are the support of the entire world".

Japji Sahib

"Don't create enmity with anyone as God is within everyone."

Guru Arjan Devji 259

"No one is my enemy, none a stranger and everyone is my friend."

Guru Arjan Dev

Sufism

"The basis of Sufism is consideration of the hearts and feelings of others. If you haven't the will to gladden someone's heart, then at least beware lest you hurt someone's heart, for on our path, no sin exists but this."

Dr. Javad Nurbakhsh, Master of the Nimatullahi Sufi Order.

Taoism

"The sage . . . makes the self of the people his self."

Tao Te Ching

"Regard your neighbor's gain as your gain, and your neighbor's loss as your own loss."

Tai Shang Kan Yin P'ien

"Recompense injury with kindness."unattributed

"To those who are good to me, I am good; to those who are not good to me, I am also good. Thus all get to be good. To those who are sincere with me, I am sincere; to those who are not sincere with me, I am also sincere. Thus all get to be sincere."

unattributed

"The sage has no interest of his own, but takes the interests of the people as his own. He is kind to the kind; he is also kind to the unkind: for Virtue is kind. He is faithful to the faithful; he is also faithful to the unfaithful: for Virtue is faithful."

Tao Teh Ching, Chapter 49

"Regard your neighbor's gain as your own gain, and your neighbor's loss as your own loss." T'ai Shang Kan Ying P'ien

Utilitarianism

"To do as one would be done by, and to love one's neighbor as one's self, constitute the ideal perfection of utilitarian morality." John Stuart Mill

Unitarianism

"We affirm and promote respect for the interdependent of all existence of which we are a part." Unitarian principles

Writers

"Every man takes care that his neighbor does not cheat him. But the day comes when he begins to care that he does not cheat his neighbor. Then all goes well." Ralph Waldo Emerson

"Desire nothing for yourself which you do not desire for others."
Baruch Spinoza

"The Golden Rule would reconcile capital and labor, all political contention and uproar, all selfishness and greed." Joseph Parker

Zoroastrianism

"That nature alone is good which refrains from doing to another whatsoever is not good for itself." Dadisten-I-dinik, 94:5

"Whatever thou dost not approve for thyself, do not approve for anyone else. When thou hast acted in this manner, thou art righteous." unattributed

"That nature only is good when it shall not do unto another whatever is not good for its own self." Avesta: Dadistan-i-dink 94:5

"When a good man is beaten through malice, the effort of every one should continue just as though it happened to himself." unattributed

"Whatever is disagreeable to yourself do not do unto others." Shayast-na-Shayast 13:29

"Comparing oneself to others in such terms as Just as I am so are they, just as they are so am I, he should neither kill nor cause others to kill."unattributed

Other

"Son, that which seems evil unto thee do not do to they companion."

"Ponder well the maxim: Never do to other persons what would pain thyself."
Panchatantra Tales

Simple forms

"Do not that to a neighbor which you shall take ill from him."
Grecian

"One should seek for others the happiness one desires for one's self."
Buddhist

"Let none of you treat his brother in a way he himself would not like to be treated."
Islam

"The true rule of life is to guard and do by the things of others as they do by their own."
Hindu

"The law imprinted on the hearts of all men is to love the members of society."
Roman

Contemporary Formulations

(The golden rule is) "The most effective instrument of moral education that I know of."
Marcus Singer

"We have committed the golden rule to memory, let us now commit it to life."
Edwin Markham

"The Maxim does not imply that we should always do to others exactly that which we should wish under our own present circumstances (which may be quite different from theirs) to be done to us. What the maxim implies is that we are, as far as possible, to

put ourselves in the place of others; to consider what we would wish to be done to us, were we in their circumstances."

W.A. Spooner

"Neighbors' willingness to act, when needed, for one another's benefit, and particularly for the benefit of one another's children."

Dr. Felton Earls, professor of human behavior & development, Harvard School of Public Health

"The golden rule is like a compass. I keep it always in my pocket, and, if I ever am lost or disoriented, I take it out and immediately know which way to go."

Teddy Beard

"Only he can be just who is able to put himself in the position of others."

G.I. Gurdjieff

"Only he who can take care of what belongs to others may have his own. Treat Another's as your own and be ye so related."

G.I. Gurdjieff

"The highest aim and sense of human life is the striving to attain the welfare of one's neighbor," and that this is possible exclusively only by the conscious renunciation of one's own."G.I. Gurdjieff

"Why should the golden rule be so difficult in business and foreign relations? The happily married treat each other as they wish to be treated. They treat their children better than they wish to be treated themselves. Unless we do unto a friend as we do unto ourselves, we lose a friend. In an emergency we rush to the aid of our neighbor. Is it so great a step to realize that all people everywhere are neighbors?"

Arthur Dunn

"It is a very high goal; free and responsible development of the individual, so that he may place his powers freely and gladly in the service of mankind."Albert Einstein

Golden Rule Snippets

There are creeds and rules to guide us
And help us in life's school,
But the finest creed for every need,
Is the good old golden rule.

~ Folk Rhyme

"To do to others as I would
That they should do to me,
Will make me gentle, kind and good,
As children ought to be."

~Anonymous Children's Verse

Samuel "Golden Rule" Jones (1846-1904) was a politician who attempted to live by the golden rule in his private, business and public conduct. He became mayor of Toledo, Ohio. He said, "We must all understand the gospel of DO. I know well enough how to practice the golden rule; the difficulty comes in my unwillingness to do it entirely, my half-way doing it."

As familiar and right as the term 'the golden rule' is, this term is not biblical – indeed was not used in this way until the 17th century.

Arthur Nash published, in 1923, a book titled *The Golden Rule in Business* in which he recounts how he took a tiny firm and made it the world's largest garment manufacturer by the constant application of the golden rule. He started by doubling and tripling all of his employees' salaries, and tried thereafter to think of the employees' and customers' welfare in all his decisions.

J.C. Penney opened a store in Wyoming in 1902 called the Golden Rule Store. He believed in low prices and loving service to his customers, and was confident that "by good service to our customers we will create in them that spring of sparkling goodwill which will prompt them to want to help us to serve them." He believe that "between secular and sacred no arbitrary line exists . . . the golden rule was meant for business as much as for other human relationships."

George Boraster in a 1683 sermon pointed out that we all need a simple formula for right conduct, for "the shortness of human life, and the difficulty and tediousness of learning, and the intricacy of knowledge, and the multiplicity of particular cases, exceptions and restrictions require a brief and memorable rule to counteract these confusions and remind us of the good."

Other References

There are three different paths to reach the Highest: the path of I, the path of Thou, and the path of Thou and I. According to the first, all that is, was, or ever shall be is I, my higher Self. In other words, I am, I was, I shall be for ever in Eternity.

According to the second. Thou art, O Lord, and all it Thine.

And according to the third, Thou art the Lord, and I am Thy servant, or Thy son.

In the perfection of any of these three ways, a man will find God.

Ramakrishna, 1836-1886

He who sees that the Lord of all is ever the same in all that is, immortal in the field of mortality – he sees the truth.

And when a man sees that the God in himself is the same God in all that is, he hurts not himself by hurting others: then he goes indeed to the highest Path.

XIII. 27-28 Bhagavad Gita

Of what use are words of wisdom to the man who is unwise?

Of what use use a lamp to a man who is blind?

Hear the essence of thousands of sacred books: to help others is virtue; to hurt others is sin.

A man rises or goes down by his own actions: like the builder
Of a wall, or as the digger of a well.

The narrow-minded man thinks and says: "This man is one of us;
this one is not, he is a stranger. To the man of noble soul the
whole of mankind is but one family.

Dhammapada

One of the most famous nonviolent Abolitionists was Adin Ballou. His writings analyzed the ideas and practices of nonviolence more philosophically than any other writer of the 19th century. Ballou's argument for nonviolence began with a simple point: everyone must choose either to practice or abstain from violence. "They who will not be obedient to the law of love, shall bow down under the law of physical force."

Quotes from Kind Acts home page that reinforce the Golden Rule.

"Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless."
Mother Theresa

"We cannot all do great things, but we can do small things with great love."
Mother Theresa

"Choose being kind over being right and you'll be right every time." Richard Carlson

"We are made kind by being kind." Eric Hoffer

"Be the change you wish to see in the world." Gandhi

"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted." Aesop

"Wherever there is a human being, there is an opportunity for kindness." Seneca

"Forget injuries; never forget kindness." Confucius

"It is when you give of yourself that you truly give." Kahil Gibran

"Kindness is the golden chain by which society is bound together." Goethe

"A person's true wealth is the good he or she does in the world." Mohammed

"Do not wait for leaders; do it alone, person to person." Mother Theresa

"What wisdom can you find that is greater than kindness?" Rousseau

"The golden way was to be friends with the world and to regard the whole human family like the members of one family." Mahatma Gandhi

3. A Primer for Thought and Discussion

A simple primer for thought & discussion on applying The GoldenRule.

'Treat other people the way you, yourself would wish to be treated.'

Of all the ideas that have been put before humankind in its long and culturally diverse history, The Golden Rule is the most enduring piece of wisdom that has been passed down through the ages.

The Golden Rule is ubiquitous. [which simply means that it turns up in many places] There are many expressions of this precept, or rule of conduct, in the world's religious teachings and in those philosophies that seek to advise us upon how we should meaningfully conduct ourselves and our individual lives for our own well being and to the benefit of all. After all what is good must be serviceable, both for myself, and for those with whom I share my everyday life.

The common-sense view.

What is in our hearts and how we act each day in life contributes to the quality of the life that we all share. My actions affect other people and will affect those who shall follow me in the world that I am helping, willy nilly, to create. I hear about this idea, which calls me to have the same regard for other people that I would wish to have for myself from any other person, and it makes sense.

Reciprocity

If I have a sense of my own importance, value my own worth and care about myself, then I wish that to be respected. I can have a healthy wish to fulfill my potential. Self-respect comes from this.

Since other people surely have their own sense of self worth and importance that, too, can be respected. Can I recognise the value and the potential that lie in others?

Maybe the question could arise: what does it mean to respect myself? And, when do I not respect myself?

Is respect a given thing or does it have to be earned? What is deserving of respect? Certain people have qualities that inspire my respect, this is more than conventional respectability. I respond to something that is represented in themselves, and it alerts me to a potential I, too, can develop.¹

Depending on others.

I depend upon others and they depend upon me. Life would simply not work nor be able to continue if people only cared about themselves. I depend upon others from the very beginning of my existence and it is by people living and working together that human life, as we know it, exists and continues. I need to care about more than just myself.

How do I act upon The Golden Rule?

First of all, anyone can begin by paying attention to speech.

The thoughts one entertains in one's minds and one's everyday conversations with others are the defining activities of any personality. Speech is the key to really understanding myself. My vocabulary conditions how I think, and how I relate to others is mainly by talking. This is something we can begin to change.

We think, we say and we do. What we think and how we communicate that to others matters a lot, every day, every time we open our mouths.

We would like to have kind thoughts and exchange civil words to everyone all the time but in actual reality this is practically impossible. We have to deal with unpleasant people and we have to deal with the unpleasant in ourselves. How do we manage that?

¹ Source Funk & Wagnell's New Practical Standard Dictionary Dictionary

RESPECT tr. Verb [Latin re - back, specio - look]

1. To have a deferential regard for; esteem. 2. To treat in accordance with propriety, consideration, or obligation; to hold sacred or inviolable. 3. Demeanor or deportment indicating deference; rendering of honour.

RESPECTABLE adj. 1. Deserving of respect; being of good name and repute; also respected.

Manners

I cannot expect to reap where I have not sown, as it were. To treat others the way I wish to be treated by other people means being less self-centered and selfish and being more actively considerate of others; this can be expressed in the way that I conduct myself outwardly. One can superficially change one's manner to suit circumstances but without lasting results. Good manners are a beginning but are they enough?

Attitudes.

To change only outward behavior is merely to fulfill the letter of The Law and not to become rooted in the spirit of it. That takes a change of heart and perhaps it involves a lifetime. If one is struck by the Golden Rule in such a way that one 'takes it to heart' then its influence can change our attitudes from inside. This kind of change is deeper and more lasting. It starts in a very small way.²

Judging other people

We have hopes and expectations of others and are sometimes disappointed in the way they behave or act towards us. These experiences can diminish our expectations, and lead to a cynical view of others.

What is called 'judgement' is often merely reaction and criticism. Perhaps other people are just as weak, foolish and insincere, and even hypocritical as I am, but I find it easier to see all this in others and have great resistance to seeing it in myself, as I really must appear to them. Being too ready to judge and expecting too much from others can be an obstacle to doing something for oneself.

Sympathy, empathy and appreciation of other people.

What do I have in common with other people? They are people just like I am myself a person. We, as ordinary human beings, have insecurities and strengths and

² [ref: The Parable of The Sower.]

weaknesses. Other people have their imperfections and weaknesses and obvious faults, yet inside they are as invisible to me as my own inner life is to them. We have aspirations, hopes and fears and need each other to resolve all of these. Sympathy, empathy and appreciation are inner responses to the other. These emotional impulses leap the gap between other people and myself.

The Golden Rule.

TODAY

The Golden Rule bids us to treat other people the way I wish to be treated myself.

How do I want them to treat me?

If I think about this at all I quickly realise that I do not want other people to be unpleasant to me. I want them to have respect for me, to use my name, to treat me fairly. I don't want them taking their moods out on me. I want them to be interested in me and to listen to what I say when I am speaking. I would prefer to be met with a positive attitude.

Before I go any further I should ask myself truthfully if I treat everyone I meet with respect, or fairly and if I ever take my own moods out upon people that I know or that I meet. Do I make the effort to listen attentively to when other people are talking to me? Do I give off an un-welcoming attitude where it is not deserved? If I am honest I will recognise that I myself could do better. Try to ask these questions as simply as possible, without blame, without judging good or bad. I can always begin by making the effort to consider other people, by speaking civilly to them, and by listening to them more carefully. Begin where it is easiest, with family and friends and then try to be considerate towards more distant or difficult people. Every day will bring a new opportunity. Try a little every day. Remember, what goes around, comes around.

TOMORROW

There is a saying that goes 'Rome was not built in a day'. The same notion applies to bringing The Golden Rule into life. It is just a little idea to begin with. It seems like such a good idea today and I would like to change myself for the better once and for all. I soon learn from a little experience, however, that I can only change a little each day and that it will take many attempts over a long time before I become that better person that I wish to be.

There is a metaphor for this kind of gradual change, sometimes called transformation. [A metaphor is a way of describing an idea as a picture.]

Imagine an old house made of bricks. The owner discovers that the clay of which the bricks are made is crumbling yet he wishes to save his much-loved house intact and exactly as it is. Many birds and small animals lived there and the man knew their ways and was fond of them. He hit upon a plan. This is how he saved his house while still enjoying and preserving all the life in it. He said, 'I will cut stones of the same size as those bricks that are crumbling and I shall replace them all, one by one.' This is what he does over many years. Every day he chips out one of the old bricks and the mortar in between. He puts a new stone and fresh mortar in the space and it hardens stronger than ever overnight. Over the years he rebuilds the house completely and he knows that it will now stand for centuries against wind, rain and gales and that the lives of the people, the birds and the small animals whose home it is shall go on as they ever did.

The End. * [i]

I have to accept that it will take time and patience to live by The Golden Rule. Many people in many cultures before us have tried to live by this rule. WE can too.

[i] * story based upon original illustrative tale told by Dr. Bert Sharp.

4. Suggested Lessons/Activities
Additional Resources

Educational Supplement to the Golden Rule Diptych

To further enhance contemplation of the Golden Rule, following are some suggested applications in your school:

- 1) As an art project, students could be asked to select one of the various formulations contained in the diptych (or they could find or compose their own) and provide their own illumination. This could be a judged competition within the school, with students voting for their favorite piece. As an extension of this, the top winners could be selected as part of the group in the proceeding application.
- 2) In order to encourage an understanding or appreciation for the diversity that exists in the school community, a representative student of each cultural or ethnic group could be designated to work with the art teacher and/or a local artist (recruited by Phillips Gallery or the Art Access Gallery on behalf of the school) to produce the final Golden Rule Diptych for the school.
- 3) In a social studies context, students could be asked to select their favorite cultural version of the Golden Rule and to research and report upon that culture.
- 4) The Golden Rule diptych size is based upon proportions dictated by the Golden Mean. In mathematics, the concept of the Golden Mean can be explored as a class. (See Fibonacci as a reference)
- 5) The Golden Rule could serve as a foundation for discussing diversity and the importance of understanding, respecting and celebrating our differences. This could include ALL aspects of diversity including sexual preference, the disabled, etc.
- 6) As part of an English writing assignment, students could write a short story, essay or poem illustrating the application of the Golden Rule.
- 7) As part of an English assignment, students could be asked to compose their own version of the Golden Rule.
- 8) Students could be asked to research and share a formulation of the Golden Rule from their own cultural background. To make things a little more interesting, these formulations could be read aloud for the students to try and identify. Discussions could arise from why the students thought the formulations belonged to a specific culture.
- 9) As part of a foreign language class assignment, students could be asked to translate the various formulations into their specific language of study.

Suggested Discussion of the Golden Rule with Students

- Which version of the Golden Rule do you like the best? Why?
- How would you express the Golden Rule in your own words?
- Think of a time when someone treated you in the spirit of the Golden Rule. When was that? Who was involved? What was that like for you? How did you feel? How do you understand the behavior of the other party involved in this incident?
- Think of a time when you treated someone in the spirit of the Golden Rule. When was that? Who was involved? What was that like for you? How did you feel? What is your sense of the other party's reaction to your behavior in that situation?
- Think of a time when someone treated you in a manner that violated the Golden Rule. When was that? Who was involved? What was that like for you? How did you feel? How do you understand the behavior of the other party involved in that incident?
- Think of a time when you treated someone in a manner that violated the Golden Rule. When was that? Who was involved? What was that like for you? How did you feel? What is your sense of the other party's reaction to your behavior in that situation?
- Did anything in these different versions of the Golden Rule get you thinking? Identify it. Did it interest, stimulate or energize you? Or, did it irritate, challenge or bewilder you? Why?
- What surprises you about these versions? Why? What challenges you? Puzzles you? Why?
- What insights or good ideas come to you as you reflect on the Golden Rule?
- What doubts or questions are raised for you as you ponder the Golden Rule?
- Is there something you can name here at school that promotes or prevents the practice of the Golden Rule?
- If you were to live by the Golden Rule each and every day, what would be different in your life? Your personal life? Family life? School life? Community life? etc.

- Can the Golden Rule be realistically applied in day-to-day life? Why or why not? Can you think of a good example from your experience? Describe it.
- Is it really possible for you "to get inside another person's skin", "to walk in your neighbor's moccasins", to feel the joy and pain of another person? Explain.
- In light of the Golden Rule, what is your reaction to the following statement: "my search for happiness, meaning and freedom has everything to do with my commitment to bringing about your happiness, your meaning and your freedom"?
- As a result of my reflections on the Golden Rule, I feel moved to.....

The Golden Rule's Implications for Society

- What could things be like if everyone behaved according to the Golden Rule? Why is it that sometimes we don't behave according to the Golden Rule?
- Do you think that people generally live by the Golden Rule? Why? Why not? If not, what Rule do you think many people **do** live by?
- How do people usually treat each other at work (school, home, etc.)? Why is that so? How might the Golden Rule make a difference?
- To what current issue in your school, city or country might the Golden Rule offer a solution? How so?
- Do you think that the Golden Rule could be helpful in promoting conversation, communication and harmony within a family? Why or why not? Do you think that these writings could be helpful in promoting such communication among larger groups of people?
- How, in your opinion, does the Golden Rule challenge us in terms of our relationships with people who are hurting e.g. the hospitalized, the imprisoned, the abused, the homeless, refugees etc.?
- Do you think that the Golden Rule could be helpful in bringing about equality between women and men? Why or why not?
- Do you think that the Golden Rule could be helpful in promoting a deeper appreciation of racial, cultural and religious diversity? Why or why not?
- From the domestic to the international level, there appears to be a growing reliance on violence to resolve conflict? Do you think that the Golden Rule could be helpful in promoting a non-violent approach to conflict-resolution? Why or why not?
- Do you think that these Sacred Texts could be helpful to promote understanding between people of different religions? Why or why not?
- Where do you think there is a special need for the Golden Rule today? Why?

Additional Resources:

Please note: we are not aligned with, nor are promoting any of the individuals, organizations or programs listed in the links below. The information provided pertains to the golden rule and offers ideas, guidance and support to stimulate thought regarding its application among younger children.

www.touchthefuture.org

www.actsofkindness.org

www.tolerance.org

www.education-world.com/a_issues/chat/chat185.shtml

<http://preschoolertoday.com/resources/articles/gotmanners.htm>

