

GoldenRuleism



Living A GoldenRule-Guided Life

## Comments from Craig

This brief booklet is for all of us earthlings.

It's for our children—but it's not a "children's book."

I offer the PDF version as my gift to you.

If you find value in this booklet, please consider making a personal donation to a non-profit charitable organization of your choice. These organizations need and deserve our help. Let's give it to them.

There's a separate printed edition of GoldenRuleism. Understandably, there's a reasonable cost to purchase this version.

I've not written this booklet for personal profit. I intend to donate any net proceeds of sales, after the expenses of production, distribution, mailing, and other expenses generally associated with a booklet, to various 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organizations.

I'm indebted beyond measure to everyone who's been a part of shaping my life—especially my wife Cherie. I deeply thank you all.

In 1999, I promised Mike Snyder I'd name him in my book. It became a booklet, but promise kept, Mike.

Craig Cline / The GoldenRuleism Guy

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Cover Photo: Planet Earth as seen by the Apollo 17 crew traveling to the moon. Taken on December 7, 1972. Courtesy of NASA Johnson Space Center.

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"Do for all others, both directly and indirectly, what you would want done for you."

"Don't do to any others, either directly or indirectly, what you wouldn't want done to you."

## GoldenRuleism's Foundation

Simple—Expansive—Beneficial—Powerful—Universal

GoldenRuleism rises from the expanded application of the moral and ethical precept most widely embraced by the majority of humanity. Many of us know it as The Golden Rule.

Though The Golden Rule is generally rooted in the world's major religions, anyone can choose to live by it. Our Number One Rule has universal applicability.

Simply said, when we choose to live our lives in accord with the intent of The Golden Rule, we adopt sets of morals and ethics to guide us. They relate to what we internalize as "right" and "wrong" conduct.

I encourage you to explore the definitions of morals and ethics for yourself. For sake of discussion here, I'll note that morals are subjective, while ethics are objective.

They're related—but different. To succeed as a society, we need to constantly incorporate the omnipresence of both words into our thoughts and actions.

Because it's rooted in principles of morality and ethicality, The Golden Rule guides us to show empathy and compassion for others—to act with benevolence in mind.

## A Simple Phrase—with Simple Qs and As

"Live your life with a passion for compassion, empathy, morality, and ethicality."

This phrase can be said to embody the substance of The Golden Rule; the basic premise by which to live a Golden Rule-Guided Life.

**Q:** WHY should we live the GoldenRuleism way?

**A:** It's the right thing to do.

**Q:** WHO should live this way?

**A:** All human beings.

**Q:** WHEN should we live this way?

**A:** Today—and every day.

**Q:** WHERE should we live this way?

**A:** Wherever we are.

**Q:** WHAT enables us to live this way?

**A:** We internalize and personalize GoldenRuleism.

**WIIFM?** (What's In It For Me?)

I/you/we will be the best human beings we can be. We're likely to receive a sense of personal happiness, and even joy, because we choose to practice GoldenRuleism.

**WIIFO?** (What's In It For Others?)

The Golden Rule most people have adopted, prior to now, is typically understood to apply to other people.

GoldenRuleism encompasses the basic Golden Rule and expands its application to all others—all sentient beings—humans and nonhumans alike.

Every being—everyone—is individually placed under the universally wide umbrella of empathy and compassion.

**WIIFR?** (What's In It For Religions?)

GoldenRuleism will be beneficial for world religions and spirituality. It takes the most universally recognized and accepted model of moral and ethical behavior to an even higher-and-better level.

GoldenRuleism is Good—for religions in general and humankind in particular.

## What If You're Not a Religious or Spiritual Person?

GoldenRuleism is religion-friendly but not religion-dependent. It can be embraced and lived by anyone, anywhere, regardless of whether he or she practices a certain form of religion or spirituality.

GoldenRuleism is for benefit of ALL of us.

## Why Are The Words "Directly" and "Indirectly" in GoldenRuleism's Two Key Phrases?

This is a subject I invite you to explore on your own, and with family and friends, to discover as many examples of GoldenRuleism applicability as you can come up with. They're abundant.

Here's one: Consider the plight of someone who's hungry—or without shelter—or both.

We can, directly, give that someone food and/or shelter. But if, for whatever reason, we choose not to act directly, we can instead act indirectly.

For example, we can give our time, or our money, or both, to support nonprofit organizations working to alleviate and eradicate food insecurity and/or homelessness.

The principle of GoldenRuleism simply asks us to do something which shows empathy and compassion for others.

Remember that an inaction is in fact an action. The "GoldenRuleism Thing To Do" is to take definitive action—directly, indirectly, or both.

## Human Others—and The Other Others

GoldenRuleism guides us to act, as best we can, to help solve the plights which plague so many human others out there in our world.

Similarly, we should also act to help solve the plights which plague so many nonhuman others out there in our world, too.

The nonhuman others are, like us, sentient and deeply in need of our human capacity to show them empathy and compassion.

We tend to call these nonhuman individuals "animals," to differentiate them from us. But did you know an animal is defined as any organism which belongs to Kingdom Animalia—the animal kingdom?

Truth be told, we're all animals—humans and nonhumans alike. We ought therefore treat all animals as the GoldenRuleism precept guides us to do.

No one wants to suffer. No one wants to be the victim of injustice.

We who "speak human" should voice our objections to suffering and injustice. Those who can't speak human—the nonhuman animals—have a voice, too.

They are not voiceless. Yet, we humans often fail to listen to them.

We should listen to what we know they'd say if they could speak human. They'd all ask they not be forced to suffer or die by human hands.

That so many of us callously permit their plight of worldwide suffering or death is a grievous injustice against them.

Our complicity is a dark stain on our "humane-ity." It's time, as best we can, to end our personal role in the injustices they suffer.

## Is There a Specific Word for Such Injustice?

In a word, injustice to nonhuman animals is called Speciesism. Essentially, the word is used to portray the overriding belief and practice that humans "count more" than any other species.

One dictionary defines speciesism as "discrimination against or exploitation of animals based on the assumption that humans are superior to and more important than all other species."

I won't dwell on the manifest suffering and injustice which underlies speciesism. I simply ask you to be aware of it—and I ask you, as best you can, to please do something about it.

## Sentientism

Here's a positive step you can take right away. Look into Sentientism, a worldview which focuses on compassion and justice for all sentient beings.

It ties in nicely with GoldenRuleism—because it gives moral consideration to everyone—and seeks to reduce the suffering of anyone.

People all over the world can easily connect with each other in Sentientism's global community.



## Speciesism and Other "Isms"

Let Speciesism serve as an example of numerous societally harmful "isms" we should join together to lessen and eradicate.

In general, an "ism" is an action, a practice, a process, a cause, a state of being, a doctrine, a theory, a system, or a principle.

Here's a list of some other "isms" which GoldenRuleism, because of what it stands for, stands against:

- Ableism
- Ageism
- Amoralism
- Anarchism
- Anthropocentrism
- Antinomianism
- Casteism
- Classism
- Colonialism
- Egocentrism
- Egoism
- Fatalism
- Ignorantism
- Immoralism
- Malism
- Militarism
- Monism
- Nihilism
- Pejorism
- Pessimism
- Predestinarianism
- Pyrrhonism
- Racism
- Sexism
- Speciesism
- Terrorism
- Triumphalism

This list is certainly not fully inclusive of all the named "isms." Those listed are in alphabetical order, rather than in order of importance for us to address.

What's most important is that we become acutely aware of the suffering and injustice which underlies these kinds of "isms" – and that we work together to eliminate their harmful effects on us and others.

## How Will GoldenRuleism Bind Us?

We'll have certain values, attributes, and goals. Here's a brief list of what we'll aspire to have in common as Golden Rule-ers:

- Caring
- Character
- Commitment
- Compassion
- Cooperation
- Courage
- Courtesy
- Dependability
- Determination
- Diversity
- Friendship
- Gratitude
- Helping Others
- Honesty
- Hope
- Humility
- Integrity
- Leading By Example
- Listening
- Optimism
- Patience
- Perseverance
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Right Choices
- Service
- Sharing
- Strength
- Tolerance
- Unity
- Vision

## How Will GoldenRuleism Help?

GoldenRuleism will serve as the foundational principle which inspires us to build a worldwide Justice Movement.

People the world over will join forces to put an end to unnecessary and unjustified suffering and injustice—in all its despicable forms.

We'll do for others what we should do. We won't do to others what we shouldn't do.

GoldenRuleism will be our common bond—our guide to individual and collective action.

## How Do We Get There from Here?

We now have a definitive sense of what to stand for and what to stand against. We see what we should do. We see what we shouldn't do. But how do we move from vision to accomplishment?

A societal Justice Movement builds from our actions as individuals. Our first action is simple: We make a personal commitment to live a GoldenRuleism-Guided Life.

Let's start with that.

### Your Personal Pledge

Affirm a personal pledge to practice GoldenRuleism.

For example, you can start each day by saying a phrase like this to yourself: "I pledge, as best I can, to be GoldenRuleism-Guided today."

### Your Family's Pledge

You can also expand GoldenRuleism's sphere of influence by encouraging family members and friends to make their own similar pledge.

For example, the family members could begin their day by saying: "We pledge, as best we can, to be GoldenRuleism-Guided today."

It seems likely that when families unify around this common bond, they'll be taking a positive step for and with each other.

### Your Community's Ethic

Though a community can't readily recite a pledge like an individual can, it can benefit by creating its own Community Ethic.

The Community Ethic will be common to the community, representing what the people of the community choose to stand for—and what they choose to stand against.

GoldenRuleism can serve as the foundation upon which the Community Ethic is built—from which a Compassionate Community is built.

Communities are composites of the people who live there.

People are the parts, and their communities are the sum of those parts.

Like individual people, communities are at their best when they identify and live by certain values, attributes, and goals.



## Hierarchy of Needs

Communities everywhere in the world are likely to benefit by making Abraham Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" a centerpiece for the community's causes.

A large volume of published material is available on this topic, so I needn't fully explain it here. Let's use just one example to demonstrate why the residents of communities should embrace Maslow's work.

At the base of the hierarchy is everyone's essential physiological need for food. This particular need is critically important for children.

When communities permit "their" kids to be hungry and/or food insecure, suffering and injustice take place—in one of the worst of all ways. This is terribly harmful to the children and an abominable blight upon the community as well.

A Community Ethic could include a phrase like this: "We the people of this community will not permit our children to suffer either of the twin scourges of hunger and food insecurity. Such suffering is insufferable here."

## Our Global Ethic

When as individuals, as families, as friends, and as communities everywhere, we live by the ethic of GoldenRuleism, we both directly and indirectly build the type of Global Ethic we need.

From a global perspective, we'll come full circle. We'll do more good than we do now. We'll do less evil than we do now. We'll be better than we are now.

I won't attempt to put a phrase behind our Global Ethic. No single phrase would be adequate.

The Global Ethic will grow organically in the countries of the world. In similar fashion to the creation of the Community Ethic by people in their communities, our Global Ethic will ultimately become the sum of its parts.

## Small Actions Matter

For us to show others we care about them is of incalculable value. We should look for good—and reward it when we see it.

Always find some time to make a phone call, or even better, send a personal note to commend someone for "doing right."

And, in the moment, muster the courage to ask someone to desist from "doing wrong."

Taking these kinds of small actions helps us, and others, be the best human beings we can be.

Create your own personalized version of "YOU-niversal Share Care."

## Keep a GoldenRuleism-Guided Life Journal

You may find it both enjoyable and valuable, as I've myself found, to write in your personal journal each day. Doing that lets you keep track of what's going on in your life—and in the lives of others.

It's an annual highlight to review, at the end of any given year, what happened during it—especially if you choose to include plenty of GoldenRuleism references.

Over time, your journal entries will give you a measure of pleasure. They'll also leave a personally written record of what you thought—and what you did—during your life.

At some point, your family and friends may read and reflect on your journal writings, so "do it for them" as well as for yourself.

## Let's Start Now

We can't assume we'll "someday" get around to living a GoldenRuleism-Guided Life. We've no guarantee on how long our life will be. The clock of life is always ticking—until it isn't.

Our single biggest unknown is how much time on planet Earth we'll have. All we know for sure is that we have only one life here.

So mustn't we make the most of our lives—today and every day?

## A Final Thought

As we begin each day, let's place this question at the center of our voluntary actions and inactions—one which applies in most all normal life situations:

"What would a GoldenRuleism-Guided person do?"

## Best Wishes to You and Yours

I hope the question above, and the words of this booklet, are of personal value to you during your time on Earth.

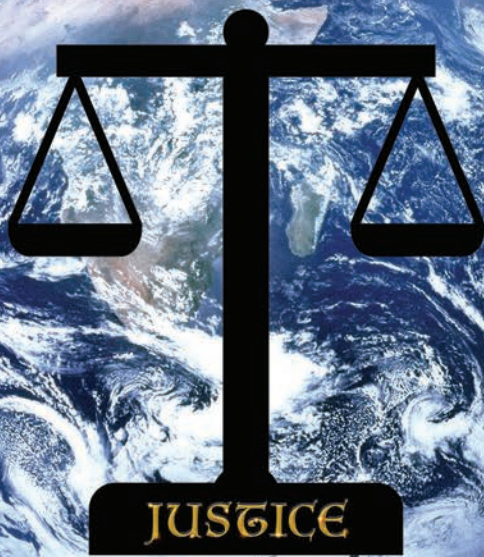
My very best wishes to you, yours, and ours—including our precious one-of-a-kind-one-and-only Mother Earth, all of Her sentient beings, and everything else that makes Her the incredible wonder She is.



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Golden Ruleism



JUSTICE

Worldwide