



GOLDEN RULE PROJECT

Relentless Ribbons



Line of Inquiry: How does the Golden Rule tie us together? How do we use The Golden Rule to disentangle our complications with others?

Age Range: 4th-12th grade (Elementary-Adult)

Group Size: Students work in pairs for this activity.

Activity Time: 30-60 minutes (with reflection time)

Set-Up Time: 5 minutes

Materials: 24 feet of Golden Rule Ribbon serves 4 pairs of students (3 feet is needed for each student) yellow duct tape or plain 2" wide Ribbon/Fabric Strips can be substituted if needed, 2-3 sharpie markers. A poster of the variations of The Golden Rule is helpful to have in sight (goldenruleproject.org/poster)

Activity Objective: Untangle the ribbons so you are no longer bound to your partner.

Core Standards: Social Studies: Language Arts: Speaking and Listening: For Grades K-12 these lessons support Core Standards 1-4. In Kindergarten and 1st grade, Standards 5 and 6 are also supported. Language Arts: Writing: For Grades K-5 the reflection topics of these lessons can be used to support Core Standards 1-4,7&10 (excluding Standard 1 in Kindergarten and Standards 4 &10 which begin in 3rd Grade). For Grades 6th -12th, the reflection portion of these lessons can be used to support Core Standards 1,2,4&10. Citizenship: Demonstrate positive relationships through play and friendship, demonstrate respect for each individual and appropriate social skills necessary for working in a group, modeling appropriate group behavior and expressing feelings in appropriate ways.

Skills Developed: Problem Solving, Trust, Planning, Persistence, Communication, Creativity, Fun.



Story Card: Eleanor Roosevelt, [from the story card collection](#). Quote: “It isn’t enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it. One must work at it.” -Eleanor Roosevelt The quote as well as the entire story card (pages 6-7) can be included during this lesson.

Directions for Set Up:

1. Cut your ribbon strips or fabric into 3 foot lengths x 2” wide. Measure 8” on each end and tie into loops large enough for students’ hands to easily fit through loosely. (The “Cuffs” on each end should not be tight around the wrists, there needs to be 2” of looseness) Your finished product should resemble this shape with 12”-14” between each loop end:



If using duct tape, fold the 3 foot strips in half lengthwise so the sticky sides are stuck together (leaving you with a smooth 3 foot strip of tape about 1” wide). Measure 8” at each end and make two loops. Use another piece of tape to attach your loops securely.

2. If using Golden Rule Ribbon, skip this step. Otherwise, use sharpie markers to write a Golden Rule Phrase on each middle section of your loops. (Suggestion: Have students write their own phrase on their own loop. Older students can also assemble their own loops with guided instruction. Otherwise this step could take about 20 minutes for one facilitator to make a set of 4 by themselves depending on material choice, while a class of students could each produce their own in about 5 minutes).

Deliver the Challenge:

1. Ask students to pair up (or randomly assign pairs) and give each student a pair of ribbon/ loops.
2. Have students face each other and put their own hands through their own ribbon/ loops. Then have one student remove their hand from one loop, place their ribbon over their partner’s ribbon and re-insert their hand through the loop. Partners should now be connected by their ribbons.
3. Read the Storyline: “I have some bad news: you and your partner are now “tangle-up” in a conflict. The good news is, you are both practicing The Golden Rule. Your mission is to use your Golden Rule Ribbons to un-tangle yourselves from this conflict. You must follow all the rules.”

Present the Rules:

1. You cannot remove your hands from the loops at any time.

2. You cannot use any other tools, or alter the ribbons in anyway (ie: cutting them, ripping them, un-tying or un-taping the connections etc.).
3. If you become more tangled during the activity, you can take your hands out of the loops and start again.

Safety Lesson: Remember The Golden Rule as you practice this activity. Do not let yourself or your partner get hurt while trying to get untangled.

Establish your safety: Warning to the facilitator: Watch for pairs who might be trying to distort their bodies in attempt to get un-tangled. If you see someone getting into a dangerous position where potential injury could incur, stop the game and have them start again. Students will eventually come to the conclusion that no amount of “twisting themselves” can solve this problem.

Notes:

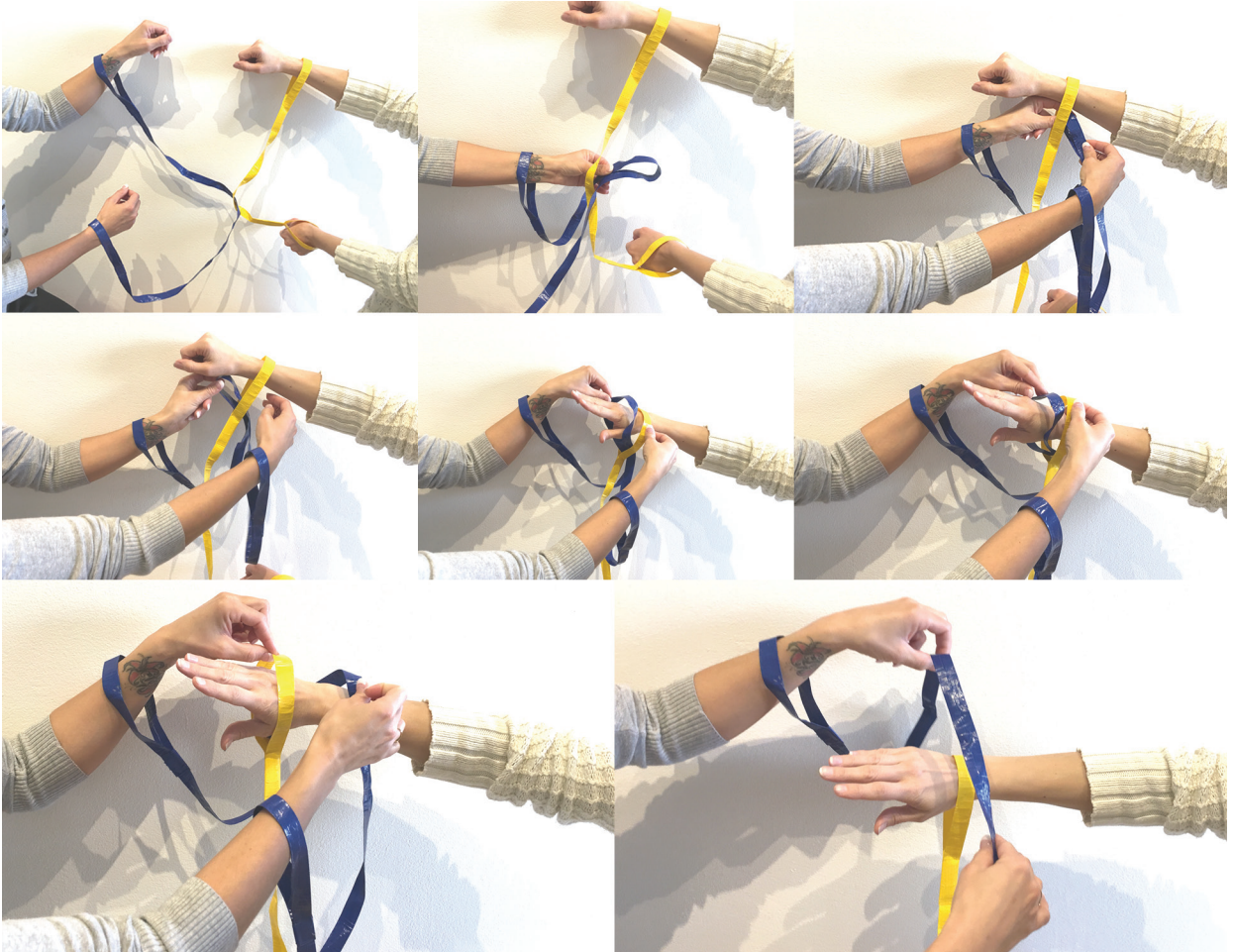
1. The facilitator should walk around and observe teams to offer encouragement and watch for safety. Some students might start to doubt that there is a solution to these “relentless ribbons.” Be prepared to assure them it is possible or ask them, “How will they choose to proceed in ‘seemingly impossible’ situations?”
2. This challenge can be solved very quickly with some groups (usually older students) and can take up to an hour or longer for others. Depending on how long you want to explore this lesson, you might want to offer small hints, such as: “You don’t have to move your whole body to solve this problem. Your feet don’t need to move at all... etc.” However, you might want to consider only offering a hint if a team wants the tip. Allowing them to make the discovery on their own is much more powerful. If a class or pair has trouble coming up with the solution in the time allotted, consider letting it continue as reward time at the end of class throughout the week, month etc. Give them the last 5-10 minutes of class to continue the exploration until it is solved.

The Solution: The way to solve this challenge is to have one person take the middle of the ribbon through the open space between the hand-loop of their partner’s loop and around the other side of their partner’s hand while it is still in the loop. This is why it is very important that when constructing these ribbons, the wrist loops are not tight against the students’ hands. See the following pictures as a guide to help you understand the solution:

Acknowledgements: We have found this lesson described in Duct Tape Teambuilding by Tom Heck, 2009.

For more activities and lessons utilizing the Golden Rule, see GoldenRuleProject.org.

Golden Rule Project Activities



Reflection Topics:

1. Sometimes problems can seem impossible, yet when we get creative and work together we often find endless possibilities. Who thought this challenge was impossible at one point? What creative solutions did you try before you found the right one? What kept you going when it seemed impossible? Who can share a story of a real problem that seemed impossible, yet you were able to solve?
2. Do impossible situations exist? Does there ever come a time when giving up might be the right answer? Who can think of some examples when giving up and trying something else is a good idea?
3. How did you use The Golden Rule in this activity? What might happen if one person on the team was not following The Golden Rule?
4. In this activity, the ribbons represent The Golden Rule. How does The Golden Rule “tie us together” in real life?

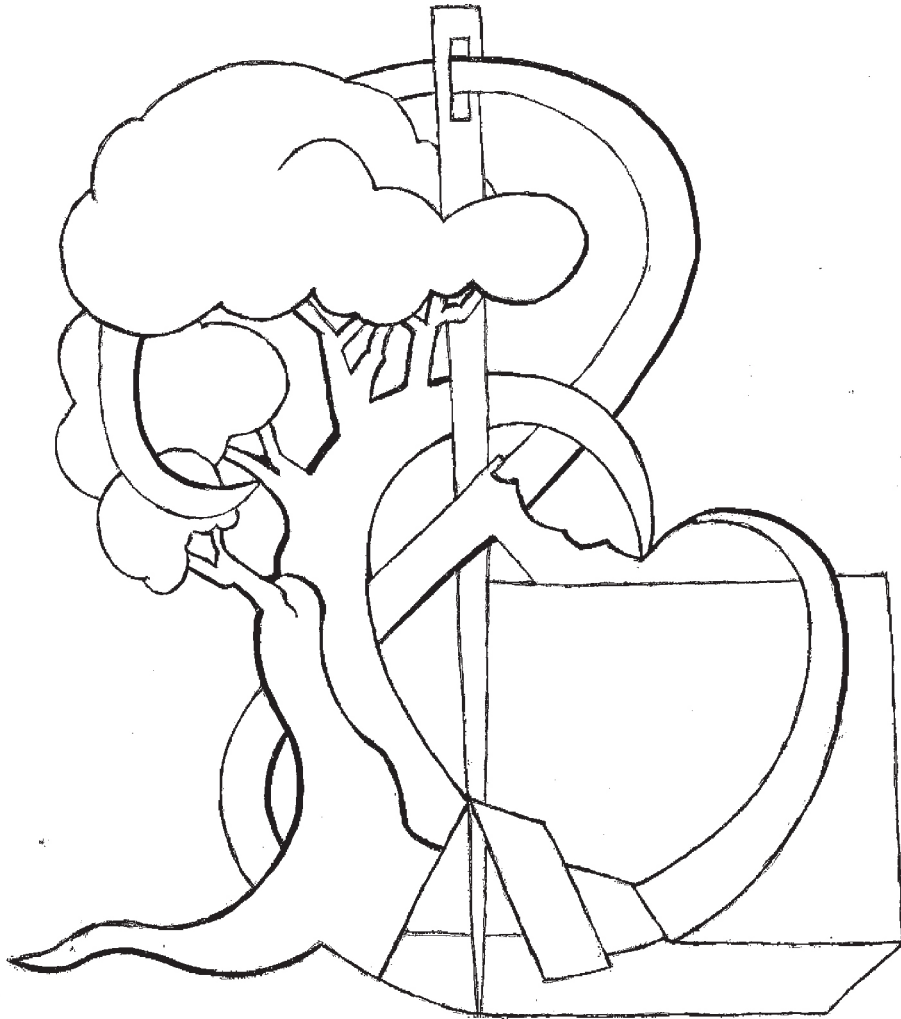
Adaptations:

1. To make this activity more challenging, or to try it in a new way, consider having pairs place the ribbon around their feet instead of their hands.
2. To make this activity more challenging, have teams use two pair of ribbon/loops. One to connect them by the hands, the other to connect them by the feet. Then ask them to try to un-tangle themselves using the same rules and principals.
3. If you have an odd number of people in the group, you can create a team of three players. Have two players connect their loops, then have the third person connect to either one of the others, all facing each other. The same solution will be applied.
4. When one team solves the challenge, you can ask them to show you how they solved the problem. If/when they are able to repeat the solution, allow them to teach another pair that wants the solution. When that pair can repeat the solution, have them find another pair to teach and so on until the entire group knows how to teach the solution. This is a great way to speed up the challenge if you are pressed for time, it also allows students to become skilled learners through teaching and vice versa while building unity and communication skills in the group.

Additional Reflections:

Here are some extended reflections that relate directly to the assembly “Attention, Magic, and The Golden Rule.” If your class has had the opportunity to view the performance, the following discussion will help students make deeper connections with their recent viewing experience and the challenge they just completed.

1. In the performance, Steffan shows us the Tetra-Flexagon and tells the story of how it helps us to solve real problems using The Golden Rule. A wonderful activity that each student can do is demonstrated. It is fully detailed at the [Golden Rule Project website](#). Have students make their own Tetra-Flexagon and have them re-tell their own story about how they solved this challenge using the same principals. Let them experiment with other stories of problems they have solved in life. This can be worked into a language arts writing assignment.
2. Use the related Golden Rule Card and Quote as a writing prompt in a Language Arts activity or as a discussion topic after the challenge. Ask students to respond to the quote and draw connections between how it applies to their experience with their partner in trying to solve the challenge. See if they can extend this thinking into how other peaceful resolutions could be made using the same ideas of “belief” and “working at it.”
3. An interesting Social Studies assignment could extend from the above conversation/writing prompt. Ask students to find an example from history that supports the Quote and explain how and why.



“It isn’t enough to talk about peace.
One must believe in it. One must work at it.”

Eleanor Roosevelt

Eleanor Roosevelt (1884-1962) was the longest serving first lady of the United States. The job of the first lady had always been to host parties and entertain foreign dignitaries and political leaders. Eleanor decided she could do more than this. Although she grew up in a fairly wealthy family, she had a tough childhood. Her mother died when she was eight and her father when she was only ten. Sometimes controversial for her outspokenness, she advocated for women's rights in the workplace, the civil rights of African and Asian Americans, and the rights of World War II refugees. Virtually redefining the role of first lady, she also served as the first chair of the UN Commission on Human Rights, oversaw the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and was the first presidential spouse to hold press conferences and speak at a national convention. She was also nominated three times for the Nobel Peace Prize.