The Golden Rule Solution to Racism
(as applied to Anti-Semitism)

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http://www.Bullies2Buddies.com
The Golden Rule Solution to Racism

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Introduction

Prejudice. Racism. Sexism. Discrimination. These are problems that have plagued mankind throughout history. The modern democratic world has made an unprecedented effort to create an egalitarian society in which everyone treats each other as equals regardless of group affiliation. For decades, civil rights and minority activist groups have been lobbying for laws forbidding discrimination and hatred. We have been taking power away from the oppressive majority and giving it to the disenfranchised minorities. Both formal and informal educational measures have been used to foster understanding of and sympathy for minority groups.

These approaches have made significant inroads, but probably not nearly to the extent that most minority groups have hoped for. While legal advances have been made in guaranteeing minority rights, prejudice stubbornly continues to exist, as though there were an impenetrable wall keeping us enslaved to our fear and hatred of each other's groups. Most of us still live in segregated communities and our friends tend to belong to our group. The American dream remains that - a dream - for several minority groups.

Why are we hitting this brick wall in our attempt to end discrimination? Perhaps it's because there are limitations to the traditional approaches to the problem.

For many years I have been teaching individuals how to stop being victimized in their personal and work relationships without having to resort to help from the government or lawyers. At my seminars, I have also been demonstrating through role-playing how these same Bullies
to Buddies(r) principles can be used to handle prejudice. Those of you who follow my newsletters know that I have been writing about these principles one at a time. This manual brings these lessons together in one document. I hope that you will find it useful enough that you will want to pass it on to others.

**Law Versus Psychology**

What is the main reason for the inadequate progress in reducing prejudice? It's that we're trying to solve a psychological problem with a legal approach. The predominant belief in the social sciences is that prejudice exists because the majority population uses its power to create a political system that supports them and keeps weaker groups suppressed. The weaker groups are therefore victims - "the good guys" - and the powerful are the perpetrators - "the bad guys".

A legal solution corrects this unfair situation by passing laws protecting the weaker groups and forcing the stronger to compensate them for having made them suffer. The responsibility is put solely on the powerful side - the perpetrator. No requirements are made of the weaker side since they are the innocent victims.

This legal process is essential for society. However, it is not sufficient. Laws can prevent people from acting badly, but it cannot legislate what people feel and think. Law cannot make people respect each other and want to be friends. Interpersonal relationships is a psychological function, not a legal one.

There is a fundamental difference between the legal profession and the psychological profession. In the legal view, when a crime has been committed, one side is the victim and the other side is the perpetrator.
But psychology is supposed to be scientific. Science is not about who is the good guy and who is the bad guy. Science is about understanding objective reality, figuring out how things work, and making changes if possible.

If I am a psychotherapist and you are my client, my job is to help you figure out how you are causing or contributing to your problems and to lead you to a solution. If I am holding someone else responsible for your problems, how can I help you? I have to work with the other person and make them change.

On the other hand, if I am a lawyer and you are my client, my job is to hold someone else responsible for your problem and sue them and make them pay. If I am holding you responsible for your problem, I am not helping you. I am working against you. You should fire me and get yourself a good lawyer.

The legal and the psychological roles are therefore diametrically opposed. The legal profession needs clients to see themselves as victims so that someone else can be held responsible; that is how lawyers make their money. Psychology is supposed to get clients to stop seeing themselves as victims and to solve their own problems.

But the legal profession has gotten increasingly involved in the mental health professions - and at our own request. For decades we have been actively lobbying for laws to protect victims from abusers and bullies. We have been fighting for laws against inequality. In essence, we have been acting as though the goals of the legal profession and the mental health professions are identical. In reality, they are opposites.
When we combine law with science, science becomes less objective. It becomes less about understanding what is really going on and more about who is the victim and who is the abuser or perpetrator or bully. And victims, of course, are blameless. They have no responsibility to do anything about their situation since it isn't their fault.

Furthermore, when law is combined with science, law takes over. The legal system decides what we are allowed to do and how we're supposed to do it. If you have to make a decision between doing what you believe to be scientifically correct and doing what's legal, you had better do the legal thing or you are going to get into trouble.

And that is what is limiting the modern approach to discrimination. We are treating the problem like a legal one, in which the victimized minority is encouraged to complain to the courts and the evil majority has to reform itself and make restitution.

Unfortunately, the legal approach doesn't make people love each other. If I take you to court for being mean to me, is that going to make you like and respect me? Of course not! You will hate me even more and completely lose respect for me. You will also hate the legal system as well. So you will want to get back at me and the system.

The only way to get past this brick wall is by realizing that the legal approach that puts all the responsibility on the powerful side and makes no requirement of the weaker is not going to work. If we have to wait for society to get rid of "power differentials" in order for us to be happy, we are going to be miserable forever. Only when we understand that we have something to do with our situation is there
any chance of meaningfully achieving good relationships among people.

**Chapter One: The Golden Rule - The Only Solution**

What do we want? For everyone to treat each other like friends. This is the Golden Rule: Love Thy Neighbor As Thyself. 2400 years ago, Aristotle explained that if everyone lived by the Golden Rule there would be no need for government. If we all treated each other the way we would like to be treated, we would have Peace on Earth.

How can I get you to treat me like a friend? Can I do it by treating you like an enemy? Of course not! If I treat you like an enemy you will treat me back like an enemy. The one and only way I can get you to treat me like a friend is if I treat you like a friend. The problem is that we don't know what it means to treat people like friends. The Golden Rule is little more than a slogan for most people. We have no idea how to apply it. We routinely treat others like enemies without realizing it, and then we wonder why others are mean to us.

Many people think that the Golden Rule is needed by bullies and abusers. The truth is that it is needed by victims as well. If you are being repeatedly victimized, it's because you are not living by the Golden Rule.

This manual will teach you how to reduce prejudice by yourself, by applying the Golden Rule. The legal approach - trying to get people in trouble with the law for being mean to you - is not nice. It is a violation of the Golden Rule and should be considered only as a last resort, when you can't find a better way.
Focus on Anti-Semitism
This manual is intended to be a guide for all groups. However, I will demonstrate the approach strictly for handling anti-Semitism (prejudice against Jews). Why?

It's not because I am a Jew (I am) or that I feel my group's problem is more legitimate or urgent than others'. It is because I don't want people complaining, "Who are you to tell my group how to live our lives and solve our problems?" So I will address the problems of my group, and I hope that you will be able to generalize the lessons to your group as well.

All groups are different, and Jews may be substantially different from yours. Jews, at least in the US, don't look substantially different from the mainstream white population, though our noses may be a tad larger on average, fewer of us have blond hair and blue eyes, and some of us dress differently. And we are, as a group, financially successful. Nevertheless, many people in the world still hate us and want to kill us. In fact, Jews may have the distinction of being the most hated minority in history. But regardless of what group you belong to, I believe that the Bullies to Buddies(r) approach to anti-Semitism will work for you, too.

My Personal Background
I'd like you to know about my own background. I grew up in the shadow of the Holocaust. My parents survived World War II (which ended in 1945) and were sent to a displaced person's camp in Munich, Germany. That was where they met, married, and had my sister. In 1951, they were allowed to immigrate to the USA - New York City (Hymie Town) - and one year later I was born in the Bronx. My dad
apparently suffered from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (I wasn't aware of that disorder when I was a kid), as he would often scream horribly in his sleep. Awareness of the horrific events of World War II and of my parents' experiences has colored the way I look at life. I've learnt we humans are capable of becoming monsters, and I'm rarely surprised by new examples of our inhumanity toward each other.

I attended Jewish schools from first grade through high school, and I always wore a yarmulka (Jewish skullcap). This made me a visible target of Jew haters. I was often derided verbally and occasionally attacked physically, a couple times quite seriously. Had these attacks happened in recent years, they may have made the local news. Society has become far more tolerant in recent decades, and physical attacks are much rarer than they were when I was growing up.

Despite the recurring attacks, I didn't develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (I believe today many mental health professionals would rush to assume PTSD would be an inevitable consequence of my experiences.) Nothing I experienced could compare with what my parents suffered, and I wasn't traumatized by attacks that seemed quite normal to me. I don't consciously harbor any bitterness towards non-Jews for the way I was treated and I have no desire for revenge. They helped me realize that the world is not Heaven. My motivation today is to help others stop suffering needlessly.

From this point forward, I will be talking about anti-Semitism. Please realize that it is merely one example, and despite specific differences between Jews and other groups, my intentions are universal.

The Failure to Eradicate Anti-Semitism
For decades, a slew of Jewish organizations have been fighting anti-Semitism. You'd think the problem would be gone by now. Not so! Seems every new generation discovers an excuse to "get" the Jews, and our organizations have to ratchet up their activities again. We seem to be going around in circles. Why is it so hard to get the world to stop hating us?

I suggest that many of the things Jewish organizations have done to combat hatred of Jews have backfired. As I demonstrate at my seminars, our actions often accomplish the exact opposite of what we expect. Just as I teach victims how to stop being bullied without being against bullies, I'm going to show you how to deal with anti-Semitism without being against anti-Semites.

This will, of course, outrage some of my fellow Jews. They'll accuse me of blaming Jews for anti-Semitism. I want to make it very clear: I don't blame Jews, just as I don't blame any victims for the crimes committed against them.

I honestly don't believe or accept that anything we Jews have ever done—even the possible complicity in the killing of Jesus—justifies the way we've been persecuted.

For thousands of years other groups have treated us like enemies, and we want them to finally stop. However, we Jews have been so concerned with defending ourselves we haven't noticed we've been treating others like enemies. We'll only end anti-Semitism when we learn to treat the rest of the world like friends. As Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. King so eloquently taught: "Meet hate with love."
A Recent Example
I was inspired to write this manual on racism/anti-Semitism by the hullabaloo caused by an article entitled "The Jews" appearing in the October 2004 issue of The Chronicle, the Duke University student newspaper. (You can access the article at http://www.chronicle.duke.edu/vnews/display.v/ART/2004/10/18/4173b1de57041?in_archive=1 if it is still available Online). The author was a Black student, Philip Kurian, who was apparently inspired by a Palestinian conference at Duke. In response, massive protests were held by Duke's Jewish students as well as national Jewish organizations. The school subsequently organized a big "healing" conference to raise sensitivity and re-establish a feeling of trust on campus. One of the results was an apology issued by the author of the article.

Philip Kurian took some truths and half-truths and wrote an article that I would not consider totally objective. But what article is? Personally, I think Mr. Kurian made some good points, and I was impressed by his knowledge of Jews. I think he may know more about Jews and Judaism than many Jews. But it's amazing how much anger and upset the writer generated. The article itself would probably not have had any consequences on the well-being of the Jewish people, but the reaction to the article has. By giving so much attention and power to those who criticize Jews, we're unwittingly encouraging people to continue to rant against us. It's so easy and so much fun to get these Jewish crybabies upset!

The "Light" of Victimhood
For centuries, we Jews have seen ourselves as a "light unto the nations," meaning that it's our job to teach the rest of the world how
to live properly. Unfortunately, we've been doing a lousy job of teaching the true lessons of Judaism - how to live by the Golden Rule. Instead, we've done an exemplary job at teaching other groups to see themselves, like Jews, as victims.

For the past sixty years, we've emphasized the Holocaust so much, not only to others but to ourselves, that Jewish identity has become almost synonymous with victimhood. Ask most people in the world what they know factually about Jews, and there's a good chance they'll say we were victims of the Holocaust. Our Holocaust museums have made it their objective to fight intolerance not only of Jews but of any ethnic and religious groups. Our organizations go into schools to teach about intolerance. And the students are learning well.

I believe we Jews can take credit for teaching the public that the worst thing that can happen to them is to have someone say something negative about their group.

I think it is high time our Jewish organizations stopped promoting a victim mentality and went back to teaching the Golden Rule. The rest of this manual will show how it can work.

**Chapter Two: Bullies to Buddies® Rule #1: Refuse to Get Angry**

As I demonstrate at my seminars, when we get angry at people for doing things we don't like, we're actually encouraging them to repeat those actions, because when we get angry at others, we make them win. They get so much fun driving us crazy and making us look like idiots that it's impossible for us to get any respect. Furthermore, anger is what we feel towards an enemy, so when we get angry at people, we treat them like enemies. So how can we expect them to treat us like friends?
What do we Jews typically do when others criticize, insult, or blame us? We get angry! And that gives anti-Semites a great weapon to use against us. No matter how much power we may accumulate, no matter how intelligent or educated or talented we may be, they can easily defeat us by saying or writing things that we react to with anger and indignation. And since we're treating them like enemies, they stay our enemies.

**Step One**
In combating anti-Semitism we have to stop getting angry when people express their views against us. We need to stop giving them the pleasure of enraging us and, perhaps more importantly, we need to stop treating everyone who expresses anti-Semitic sentiments as enemies. We say we're against discrimination, but when we get angry at non-Jews for criticizing us, we're discriminating against them. Jews can criticize Jews, but non-Jews can't? Are we not all brothers? And are any of us truly perfect? We Jews see each others' faults and we criticize one other. Jewish newspapers are full of criticism of Jews. If we can criticize ourselves, why can't others criticize us, too? The idea that "We can criticize our own, but no one else can" is discriminatory and contrary to the Golden Rule. So is the idea that "They can't insult us for being Jews, but we can insult them for being anti-Semites."

Furthermore, we violate the Golden Rule when we get angry at verbal expressions of anti-Semitism. We believe it's legitimate for us to express anger at other groups, but they have no right to be angry at us. Where does this double standard come from? It comes from the victim mentality. It's the belief that since we're victims, we're automatically the good ones, so we're allowed to be angry and
vengeful toward our bullies. Our bullies are bad, so they're not allowed to be angry and vengeful toward us. What brilliant moral reasoning!

**Freedom of Speech**

Freedom of Speech is the cornerstone of democracy, yet is so poorly understood even by citizens of democratic countries. For most people it is little more than a slogan. In my survey of four thousand mental health professionals and educators, virtually all of them answered, "Yes," to an item asking if they support freedom of speech. Yet about half of them answered affirmatively to an item asking if they believe children should be punished for saying things that can hurt others' feelings. I'm sorry to break the news to you, but the two don't go together.

Freedom of Speech is possibly the single most important principle for getting rid of anger. It's really the Constitutional version of the old "sticks and stones" adage. It recognizes the fundamental difference between physical and verbal aggression.

The results of physical aggression are objective: If you attack me physically and I get hurt, you're the one who hurt me.

The results of verbal aggression are subjective: If you attack me with words, it's up to me—not to you—if I feel hurt.

That's why the First Amendment protects us from being punished for verbally expressing ourselves. As long as the other person's words are not directly causing damage to our bodies or possessions, or preventing us from living or working where we choose, it's not a crime. When we get angry at people, it's because we believe they are
violating our rights, e.g., "You have no right to talk to me that way!"
When we realize that others do have the right "to talk to us that way"-it's guaranteed by our Constitution-we're less likely to get angry when people say things we don't like. Jews need not worry that we will lose respect when we start handling criticism and insults without getting angry. On the contrary-we'll be WINNERS and our respect will rise in the eyes of our detractors.

**The Limits of Freedom of Speech**
You're not convinced? You're resisting what I've said about Freedom of Speech, and you have a point. Freedom of Speech is not a simple concept to apply because words can, indeed, have very real and catastrophic results. I'm a great advocate of Freedom of Speech, but it has its limits.

Freedom of Speech applies where words have the potential of hurting people's feelings. It doesn't apply to situations in which the words directly result in damage to bodies and possessions. Thus, it doesn't cover the classic case of yelling "fire" in a crowded theater. And it doesn't cover threats of violence and incitement to violent. You can sue others in court for slander and libel (though these can be difficult to prove) because they can cause tangible damage to people's lives.

**When Authority Speaks**
Unfortunately, one area of speech that SHOULD be forbidden is largely being permitted. The words of authority figures have much greater power than those of ordinary people. When leaders tell people what to do, many go and do it. When leaders call for hatred and violence against other groups, they should be treated as committing acts of violence.
There are numerous countries in the world in which government and/or religious leaders are currently preaching hatred and encouraging violence against Jews and others, particularly Americans. I believe the official policy of any country that calls itself a democracy should be to refuse to conduct business with countries whose leaders preach hatred.

We're so concerned about fighting terrorism. Yet our government continues to foster friendly relationships with countries like Saudi Arabia that officially expresses anti-Semitic ideas and funds religious schools that teach hatred of both Jews and Americans. How can we have friendships with people who are creating the next generation of terrorists?

Similarly, when the leaders of our own country label other countries as evil, they are guilty of inciting violence. Our leaders imply that those countries don't deserve to exist because they are evil and that we have the moral right to destroy them. As a result, many of our own citizens will be eager to join the armed forces and go blow them up. And people in those other countries will feel incited to go blow us up because we have declared ourselves to be their enemies and believe we have the right kill them.

While I criticize the large Jewish defense establishment for unwittingly contributing to the perpetuation of anti-Semitism, I need to qualify my criticism: I have no objection to their efforts in combating official expressions of hatred for other groups. When government officials, state-controlled newspapers, and religious leaders call for violence, that is incitement to violence and is not protected by Freedom of
Speech. They deserve to be fought as forcefully as if they were bombing us.

The double standard of the victim mentality also allows some unconscionable actions to take place within our own borders. We occasionally hear of minority leaders calling for hatred and violence against the majority. We let them get away with this criminal behavior because we don't want to offend members of a "victimized" group. However, it is no more ethical for minority leaders to incite violence against the majority than the other way around.

**Chapter Three: Bullies to Buddies® Rule #2: Treat Criticism as the Words of Your Best Friend**

If we want people to be our friends rather than enemies, we have to treat their criticism as the words of friends. So what do Jews do? We respond as though anyone who criticizes us is our enemy. We should only treat people like enemies when they try to hurt our bodies or possessions. Otherwise, we need to consider their words, no matter how nasty or angry, as though they're trying to give us valuable advice. It doesn't mean we have to believe or do what they tell us, only that we should be grateful they've taken the time and effort to tell us what they feel or believe. Remember that old saying: "When three people tell you you're drunk, go lie down."

**Here's the wrong way to REACT:**

Anti-Semite: Hitler should have finished you all off!
Jew: How dare you say that!
Anti-Semite: It's true. You Jews are filth and ruin everything for everyone.
Jew: No we don't! It's bigots like you who ruin society.
Anti-Semite: I'm warning you! You're asking for trouble!
Jew: Yeah? What kind of trouble?
Anti-Semite: I'll send you to hell where you belong!
Jew: I'm calling the police. You'll rot in jail, where you belong, for hate crimes.

Now this is the right way to RESPOND:
Anti-Semite: Hitler should have finished you all off!
Jew: You know, a lot of people feel just the way you do.
Anti-Semite: And for good reason!
Jew: What's that?
Anti-Semite: You're the bloodsuckers of the planet.
Jew: What do you mean by that?
Anti-Semite: You all cheat and suck up all the money so the rest of us have to live like dogs.
Jew: Your life is really that bad?
Anti-Semite: Yeah, it is! I have to live in a trailer park while all of you live in the ritzy part of town.
Jew: Yes, we do tend to live in the expensive neighborhoods. Do you believe it's the Jews' fault you live in a trailer park?
Anti-Semite: Of course! You take all the good jobs and we have to live on public assistance.
Jew: Would you like to have a good job?
Anti-Semite: Of course!
Jew: You could get one the same way we do.
Anti-Semite: How's that?
Jew: By getting a good education.
Anti-Semite: Who's got money for a good education?
Jew: I see what you mean. But the truth is if you try hard enough, you can get a good education even without having a lot of money.
Anti-Semite: What're you talking about?
Jew: The government has lots of education programs for poor people. You just have to be motivated to work hard. If you want, I can try to
help you find the right offices to go to.
Anti-Semite: Thanks. I'll think about it.

Of course, it might not turn out this nicely. But, as you can see, treating the anti-Semite as a friend has a much better outcome than treating him as an enemy.

**Chapter Four: Bullies to Buddies® Rule #3: Don't Be Afraid**

Fear, by definition, is felt toward enemies. We don't need to fear our friends because they're not out to harm us. By fearing anti-Semites, we are treating them like enemies. Can we expect them to treat us in return like friends?

Furthermore, when we fear others, we put them in the stronger position and we automatically lose. All living creatures are biologically programmed to seek power and to win conflicts, so the very act of fearing anti-Semites actually encourages them to keep on doing what scares us. And since we're in the losing position, they can't respect us.

We hate those we fear. How can we expect to turn anti-Semites into our friends when we hate them? They'll hate us right back!

It's well known that the best way to reduce racism is by having contact between groups so that we can get to know each others as fellow humans rather than as stereotypes. But when we fear people, we avoid them. By keeping our distance from those we consider anti-Semites, we prevent the possibility of improving our attitudes toward one another.
Being Who We Are
Jews have often wanted to hide their identity to avoid discrimination and/or the embarrassment of being different. Most of us have abandoned outward display of our Jewishness, and many of us have changed our names to sound less Jewish. Ultimately, I don't think we can earn respect from the non-Jewish world by trying to disguise who we are, and it certainly doesn't increase our respect for ourselves. I have great admiration for those Jews, particularly the Ultra-Orthodox, who retain their traditional dress and customs with no concern that others will see them as strange or funny-looking.

Fear Makes Victims
When we fear others, we feel like victims, and victims tend to be self-righteous. Some of the nastiest, most vindictive people I've come across are people who feel like saints by virtue of their victim status. They think they're allowed to say or do anything because they're on the side of right. Thus, we Jews may sometimes say some pretty hateful things about those we perceive as hating us, not even realizing that we're sometimes being meaner to them than they are to us. We're unaware that such actions make us at least as bad as those we're condemning.

The ultimate road to peace is not to "hate your enemy," but to "love your enemy." Unfortunately, many Jews reject this idea because it's attributed to Jesus, and shun his teachings as a reaction to the long history of Christian persecution.

I was recently informed by a Jewish scholar that the idea of "loving your enemy" is also found in Jewish mysticism. Let's not forget that Jesus was born and died a Jew, and his moral teachings were Jewish
teachings. If you think about it, "love your enemy" is the ultimate expression of the Golden Rule: since we would want our enemies to love us (which would stop them being our enemies), we have to love them, too. This is the only chance we have of turning them into friends.

**True Fear**

Not all fear is unjustified. The best predictor of future behavior is past behavior. We should fear those who have hurt us before. Millions of Jews have been killed by those who have hated us over the millennia and, of course, the possibility of further atrocities is always there. But we have to be realistic. Most of the individuals who hurt Jews in the past are already dead, and just because some people today hate Jews, it doesn't mean we have to treat them as though they were the same individuals that harmed us in the past.

In most countries today - at least in the ones where Jewish populations thrive - harming Jews is just as much of a crime as harming anyone else. They have legal systems to protect us, so we don't have to fear anti-Semites as though they're about to kill us. But by fearing them, as I've stated above, we're unwittingly increasing the likelihood they might do so. So, our fear becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

I've heard many people criticize Jews as paranoid, and there's certainly some truth to that. For a group that has produced a disproportionately high percentage of mental health professionals, we should learn to give up this unhealthy attitude. Most people, especially in the world's democracies, don't hate us as much as we may think they do. Christian leaders, in particular, have made great strides in
accepting Jews and denouncing anti-Semitism.

Nevertheless, many of us remain suspicious of Christians, and believe this new friendliness is only a step towards their true goal of converting us to Christianity. The truth is that many Christians do, indeed, befriend Jews with the hope of converting us. This doesn't mean they hate us and want to do us harm. From their perspective, they're doing us a favor. Wanting to convert non-Christians is part of being a Christian. If our Jewish identity is not strong enough to withstand their efforts, who's fault is that?

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I've heard many people criticize Jews as paranoid, and there's
certainly some truth to that. For a group that has produced a disproportionately high percentage of mental health professionals, we should learn to give up this unhealthy attitude. Most people, especially in the world's democracies, don't hate us as much as we may think they do. Christian leaders, in particular, have made great strides in accepting Jews and denouncing anti-Semitism.

Nevertheless, many of us remain suspicious of Christians, and believe this new friendliness is only a step towards their true goal of converting us to Christianity. The truth is that many Christians do, indeed, befriend Jews with the hope of converting us. This doesn't mean they hate us and want to do us harm. From their perspective, they're doing us a favor. Wanting to convert non-Christians is part of being a Christian. If our Jewish identity is not strong enough to withstand their efforts, who's fault is that?

**Chapter Six: Bullies to Buddies® Rule #5: Don't Attack**

Who do we attack-friends or enemies? Enemies, of course. So we shouldn't attack others, even if they attack us first. Here, I'm not referring to instances in which our attackers are truly intending to injure or kill us!

We tend to think of attacking as the province of bullies. The truth is that most attacks, and certainly the most vicious, are carried out by people who feel like victims. A major problem of the victim mentality is that it equates weakness with virtue; people who feel like victims believe whatever they do is right because they're the "good guys". It's hard to combat this warped way of thinking because the anti-bully/pro-victim mindset has permeated society. That's why society so readily excuses minorities for their belligerence. After all, they're
weaker, so their anger and hostility are justified.

We Jews are so used to thinking of ourselves as victims that we don't recognize when we act like bullies. We can't stand it when others attack us, but don't think twice about attacking them. But past victimization does not exempt us from living by the Golden Rule in the present.

**Name Calling**

We have countless organizations and individuals acting as watchdogs with their ears, eyes, and noses ready to detect anti-Semitism. As soon as someone, especially anyone in position of power, says something that belittles or criticizes Jews in any way, our watchdogs eagerly pounce to brand them as anti-Semites. This is especially true whenever anyone, God forbid, compares some atrocity to the Holocaust. And for some strange reason, despite all of our attacks against anti-Semites, they keep at it.

We seem to forget that "anti-Semite" is not a compliment. It's an insult, and people don't enjoy being called anti-Semite any more than we Jews enjoy being called Kike. It's an attack, and when we label others that way, they don't experience us as being their victims; they experience us as being bullies. If anything, it confirms the way they feel about us.

It's possible that some people feel so ashamed when we call them anti-Semites that they repent and commit themselves to only saying nice things about Jews. But most folks are not like this. They resent us for insulting them and they fight back. They angrily deny they're anti-Semitic and try even harder to prove that their views are correct and
not a result of bigoted distortions. So instead of our attacks stopping attacks against us, they lead to a continuation and escalation of hostilities. No wonder our pro-Semitic watchdogs haven't succeeded in staunching the stream of anti-Semitism.

Please don't get me wrong. I'm not against combating anti-Semitism. When Jew-haters cause us physical or financial harm, or threaten to do so, they're criminals and should be stopped and punished. I'm only against fighting anti-Semitism when it's unnecessary or counterproductive to do so.

**What's in an Insult?**
Disliking Jews and expressing that dislike are not crimes. People should have the freedom to think and say what they want about us as long as no tangible damage is done. If we want the freedom to insult anti-Semites, we have to give others the freedom to insult Jews. Our attitude should be: Say what you want; just don't kill me, rape me, burn my house down, or prevent me from competing in the job market.

Very often, the people who get called anti-Semites really are not; they may not even care enough about Jews to want to insult them. In fact, they may even like Jews. It's just that they occasionally happen to think that something Jews are doing is wrong. And sometimes they're right! Maybe we'll even learn something of benefit if we treat criticisms as the words of our friends.

**The Holocaust: A Sore Spot for Jews**
Jews often go on the attack when someone compares an atrocity to the Holocaust. Jews have earned a reputation as fine abstract thinkers,
yet when it comes to the Holocaust, our thinking becomes downright concrete. We have to realize that when an event is compared to the Holocaust, it doesn't necessarily mean it's exactly the same - only that it's similar in some way.

We need also to remember what celebrities have learned: that bad publicity is better than no publicity. When someone compares an atrocity to the Holocaust, even if it's an inaccurate comparison, they're helping to keep alive the memory of that event as the ultimate example of man's cruelty to man. Rather than attacking them, we should be grateful.

**Chapter Seven: Bullies to Buddies® Rule #6: Show Your Are Hurt, Not Angry**

This is probably the subtlest of the rules. But the truth is that you hardly have to use this one if you use the other ones - especially Rule Number Two - because very little will actually hurt you.

If you hurt me, how do I want you to feel about what you did to me? I want you to feel sorry. I want you to apologize. Then I'll forgive you, and we'll go back to being friends as usual.

But what happens when others hurt us? We tend to get angry. Anger is a biological response to pain or fear of pain. So let's say you hurt me and I get angry at you. What feeling am I showing you? Anger! And what will you probably feel towards me? Since anger tends to bring out anger in the other person, you will get angry back at me. Do I want you to be angry at me if you hurt me? Of course not. I want you to feel sorry. So if I get angry at you for hurting me, I will get the exact opposite of what I want. Instead of you feeling sorry and
apologizing to me, you are angry at me as though I should feel sorry and apologize!

But let's say you hurt me, and all you see is that I am hurt. I am not angry in the least. How will you probably feel about what you did to me? Sorry! Which is exactly what I want. So if you hurt me, I will only let you know that I am hurt, sincerely, but without any anger.

So what do we do when others hurt us by attacking our group? We get angry! And then we wonder why our attackers keep on attacking us instead of repenting.

Almost everyone makes this mistake. We get angry at people instead of showing them our pain, and then we wonder why they don't feel sorry. Why do we make this mistake?

It's because we are programmed for life in Nature. If you hurt me when we were living in Nature, you may have been intending to injure or kill me. I had better get angry or you will demolish me in an instant.

But we don't live in Nature any longer. In Civilization, there are laws against injuring people. You are not allowed to physically hurt me or you can go to jail. Today, it is not necessary for me to get angry with you when you hurt me because you are not trying to send me to the hospital. In fact, you may be trying to help me, but I am too sensitive about what you're saying. So all I need to do is let you know how you hurt me, and then you will probably feel bad about it.

If we want to get anti-Semites to stop attacking us, we need to stop getting angry at them. All we need to do is tell them sincerely how
they are hurting us, and as long as we don't fall into the trap of slipping into anger, we are more likely to get what we want. Here is an example.

**Wrong Way**
Anti-Semite: Hitler should have finished the job.
Jew: How dare you say something like that?!
Anti-Semite: It's true! The world would be a better place if the Nazis had gotten rid of every last one of you!
Jew: Oh, I can't believe you are actually saying something like that!
Anti-Semite: Well, it's true. And not only that, you Jews exaggerate how many actually were killed. Six million my arse! It was probably no more than six thousand!
Jew: I can't believe someone could actually believe that today? Are you an idiot? Haven't you seen the pictures of all the bodies?
Anti-Semite: Sure! And I didn't see millions of bodies. Thousands at most. And don't call me an idiot?
Jew: Why? It's okay for you to say Hitler should have finished off the Jews, but it's not okay for me to call you an idiot?

This of course leads nowhere but endless hostility.

**Better way**
Anti-Semite: Hitler should have finished the job.
Jew: What do you mean?
Anti-Semite: He should have killed all the Jews.
Jew: I can't tell you how sad I feel when people say that.
Anti-Semite: But it's true. The world would be a better place if the Nazis had gotten rid of every last one of you.
Jew: I know a lot of people think like that, but it still hurts to hear it.
Anti-Semite: Why should I care if it hurts you?
Jew: You don't have to. It's just that I'm sure that if you realized that we are flesh and blood human beings just like yourself, you probably wouldn't think such things. And I guess it scares me that if it could have happened to my ancestors in Europe, it could happen to us here, too.
Anti-Semite: But it didn't really happen in Europe. You Jews exaggerate the Holocaust to get sympathy from the world.
Jew: I know it's hard to believe that the Nazis systematically exterminated six million Jews, and I know the number can't be 100% accurate. But I do know that my dad lost his whole family.
Anti-Semite: Maybe he was an exception.
Jew: It would be great if he were. But my mother also lost many relatives. And if you talk to anyone whose parents or grandparents lived in Europe during World War II, you would find they all had lots of relatives who were killed just for being Jews.
Anti-Semite: I still think Jews exaggerate the Holocaust.
Jew: Many people think that. But do you know how painful and scary it is to know that people want me dead just because of my ancestry. Do you actually think I did something to deserve it?
Anti-Semite: Well, maybe not you personally, but Jews in general.
Jew: Why?
Anti-Semite: Because Jews are evil.
Jew: If you were to get to know us, I don't think you would continue to feel that way.
Anti-Semite: Why would I want to get to know Jews?
Jew: Just try it. I'm having some friends over next weekend. I'd be glad to have you come hang out with us.
Anti-Semite: No way!
Jew: What are you so afraid of? That you'll discover you like gefilte
fish?
Anti-Semite: What's a gefilte fish?
Jew: You never heard of gefilte fish? Come and you'll find out.

Now we've made some progress. And the Jew doesn't sound like an angry fool.

**Chapter Eight: Bullies to Buddies® Rule Number Seven: Don't Tell on Bullies**

We are so concerned about getting people to be nice to each other, but we easily forget that one of the meanest things you can do to people is try to get them in trouble with the authorities. If you're not sure about this, try the following experiment. The next time you hear your neighbors yelling at their children, report them to your local child abuse prevention agency - and let your neighbors know you were the one who made the call! You'll see how popular you become in your neighborhood. (I am not referring to incidents of true abuse, only yelling.)

Unfortunately, modern society is increasingly encouraging people to be informers. The government passes laws making all kinds of bullying behavior illegal, which means that we no longer have to deal with mean people on our own. We can now turn to the legal authorities to punish people whenever we don't like the way they treat us. We are telling kids in school, "telling is not tattling." Zero-tolerance policies in the workplace are directing employees to complain to management whenever a coworker does something that upsets them. Our country put so much effort into toppling the "Evil Empire" known as the Soviet Union, only to be emulating their abominable practice of instructing their citizens to inform on their comrades - including their own
parents! - for violating Party rules. "Big Brother" does not require sophisticated electronic surveillance to deprive people of their freedom. All that is needed is a citizenry trained to inform on each other to the authorities.

While the government can punish us for upsetting people, regretfully it can't force us to like and respect one another. If I get you punished for the crime of insulting my racial or religious group, are you going to want to make a charitable donation to my group and invite me over for dinner? You'll probably feel like blowing us up!

When people are doing or saying things against Jews - as long as there is no immediate threat to our bodies or property - about the worst thing to do is rush to report them to the authorities. Instead, we should talk to them directly, not with anger, but as to friends. Ask them sincerely why they are doing or saying it. If there is something wrong about their motivation or understanding, let them know what their mistake is. If they insist on continuing to do what you believe is wrong, talk to them again, but without anger. Pain, yes; anger, no.

If their actions are breaking the law, tell them something like, "I would hate to see you getting in trouble." The implication is that you are trying to protect them from punishment by giving them a chance to stop their illegal activity. If they still insist on breaking the law, then it is appropriate to inform the legal authorities. But only do so if their actions may result in objective harm to people. Just because something is technically illegal, it doesn't mean that you must get the authorities involved. Jaywalking is illegal, but when is the last time you called the police on someone crossing on red?
Chapter Nine: Bullies to Buddies® Rule Number Eight:
Don't Be a Sore Loser

Life is like a game. It may be far more serious than a game, and we play "life" without being asked if we want to play. But there are similarities nonetheless.

No one wins all the time. But if I go into a rage, stay bitter, and try to get back at you when I lose, I lose triply. Once - I lose the game. Twice - I lose your respect by getting angry and looking like an idiot. Triple - my loss becomes perpetuated, as I continue suffering after the game is over.

No one likes sore losers, and you won't want to play with me again. Except, perhaps, to have the fun of getting me into another rage and having me look like an enormous idiot.

Another thing that is likely to happen is that I will overreact to future losses. My pent up resentment is unleashed with every new loss. We will never become friends if I don't let go of my resentments toward you.

On the other hand, if I lose gracefully, commend you for having played better than me, and make a decision to try to play better next time, you will respect and like me. I will have turned my loss into a social gain.

Jews seem to have made it part of our culture to remember our past defeats and keep them fresh in our minds. Perhaps this has helped keep us together, but it has also helped keep us apart from the Gentiles. We have difficulty trusting them because we suspect they are
capable of doing to us what their ancestors did to ours. And they can't respect us because we look like sore losers who can't get over our past losses. Thus, they may keep on being mean to us, as we have unwittingly created a self-fulfilling prophecy.

In recent years, Jews have come across like sore losers in our attempts to get European countries and their banks to make restitution for money and property lost to Jews who perished during World War II. It is perfectly okay for individual Jews to bring lawsuits because they have clear proof of property that was confiscated. But class action lawsuits are another matter. These lawsuits have succeeded in getting millions of dollars to be distributed to individuals and to Jewish groups, but I wonder if these millions were worth the price. They caused tons of ill will between Jews and Europeans and seemed to confirm the stereotype that the only thing Jews care about is money. Six millions Jews dead, and fifty years later we want their material possessions.

Of course not all Jews who survived the Holocaust rebounded. But as a group, we can be very proud of them. They started over in new countries, often without any professions and with little knowledge of their new homelands' languages and culture. Within one generation, their offspring are mostly middle class and higher. The millions of dollars won through class action lawsuits may have brought temporary help to some individuals and groups, but money is quickly spent and forgotten. In the long scheme of things these awards may have made little difference to our wellbeing. But if the closing chapter of the saga of the Holocaust is the story of our haggling over money, we will have permanently eroded respect for ourselves and our ancestors.
Every group in the world has lost people and possessions in illegal ways. Many groups have been wiped off the face of the planet. Some have morphed into different groups. Some were scattered over other countries and continents. If justice requires that all property obtained illegally be returned to its original inhabitants, every one of us would be kicked out of our homes and be in the impossible situation of trying to figure out where on Earth we belong. So let's stop being sore losers. We should be grateful we are still here and aspire to do better in the future.

It's about time we Jews stopped thinking like victims and treating everyone like enemies. People do have a right to think and talk badly of us, just as we do of others. Maybe we'll even learn something of value from their criticism, so we should thank them. We should only act when others commit true crimes against us. And even then, we need to do it in the right way.

Good luck!

Chapter Ten: Closing Thoughts: Racism and the Entertainment Media

Hollywood and Racism
Television is blamed for so much of what is wrong with society. I'm not an apologist for the entertainment industry. I certainly don't think everything it presents is worthwhile, I do believe most people spend way too much time being "entertained," and I think television has done more to destroy social life than any other single factor. However, it seems we only hear about the harm it causes. Since television isn't about to disappear, we need to recognize its beneficial sides.
I strongly believe television has been a major factor in reducing racism, which has been on a steady decline in recent decades, and I think television has had more to do with this than the combined efforts of legislators, school programs, and tolerance organizations.

How does racism get reduced? By contact between groups. When we get to know each other as human beings, the stereotypes dissolve and we become more tolerant and compassionate toward each other. Most people tend to limit their close relationships to those of their own groups, so we have limited opportunity for close contact with other groups. Television brings people of all backgrounds right into our living rooms. We love entertainment because it's great fun to suspend reality while vicariously living through the characters' experiences. Watching a good movie or show can be a more effective learning tool than the best lectures, which is why more people eagerly pay to attend movies and plays than lectures.

**Movies as Lessons**

Recently, during a flight, I got to see the movie, *Remember the Titans*, starring Denzel Washington as a Black high school football coach. It's hard to imagine any lecture or seminar doing a better job of promoting racial tolerance than this film. And *Remember the Titans* isn't unusual. Many movies and shows have a similar effect.

I recommend *Remember the Titans* for a couple of additional reasons.

One: I was impressed by how the protagonist refused to let anyone treat him or the Black students as victims in any way. He was, in effect, illustrating my lessons on anti-Semitism and the victim
mentality.

Two: there's a great locker room scene that illustrates what I teach about humor. One kid insults another kid's mother. That kid gets mad and wants to fight the kid who insulted his mother. Then a third kid saves the day. He insults another kid's mother. In a matter of seconds, they're all insulting each other's mothers and laughing their heads off.

Three cheers for Hollywood.