

The Wise Panther A Meditation

In a forest next to the vast savannah, there lived an old panther, known throughout the region for his wisdom. One day, as the panther was meditating in the forest, he was disturbed by a great commotion coming from the savannah – growling and roaring and the sounds of a vicious fight.

When the panther came to the savannah, he saw before him a lion, a tiger, and a leopard. All three were bloody and grievously wounded, and they lay in the grass staring hatefully at one another. Being a great sage, the panther immediately sized up the situation and approached the lion with three questions: “What deity do you worship? What is the deity’s lesson on how you should treat others? And why are you fighting your fellow cats?”

The lion answered, “I worship the Great Lion God. The Great Lion God teaches us to do unto others as we would have them do unto us. I am fighting the others because they do not worship the Great Lion God nor do they obey His laws or His priests.”

The panther next addressed the tiger, “What deity do you worship? What is the deity’s lesson on how you should treat others? And why are you fighting your fellow cats?”

The tiger answered, “I worship the Great Tiger Goddess. The Great Tiger Goddess teaches us to do unto others only as we would have them do unto us. I am fighting the others because they do not worship the Great Tiger Goddess nor do they obey Her laws or Her priestesses.”

Finally, the panther addressed the leopard, “What deity do you worship? What is the deity’s lesson on how you should treat others? And why are you fighting your fellow cats?”

Likewise, the leopard answered, “I worship the Great Leopard Spirit. The Great Leopard Spirit teaches us to do not unto others as we would not have them do unto us. I am fighting the others because they do not worship the Great Leopard Spirit nor do they obey Its laws or Its counselors.”

Outraged, each of the warring cats roared mightily against the others, accusing them of heresy, of blasphemy, and of infidelity.

“If you are so faithful to your deities,” asked the panther calmly, “why do you all not follow their lesson? If you would not want to be attacked for worshipping your deity, why would you attack the others for worshipping theirs?”

How well do we follow the Golden Rule?

Baha’i – 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*

Buddhism – Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful. *Udana-Varga 5:18*

Christianity – And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. *Luke 6:31*

Confucianism – Do not do to others what you do not want them to do to you. *Analecets 15:23*

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*

Hinduism (Brahmanism) – This is the sum of Dharma [duty]: Do naught unto others which would cause you pain if done to you. *Mahabharata, 5:1517*

Humanism – Don’t do things you wouldn’t want to have done to you. *British Humanist Society*

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

Judaism – What is hateful to you, do not to your fellow man. This is the law: all the rest is commentary. *Talmud, Shabbat 31a*

Native American – All things are our relatives; what we do to everything, we do to ourselves. All is really One. *Black Elk*

Neoplatonism – May I do to others as I would that they should do to me. *Plato, The Laws*

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

Sikhism – No one is my enemy, none a stranger and everyone is my friend. *Guru Arjan Dev : AG 1299*

Stoicism – What you would avoid suffering yourself, seek not to impose on others. *Epictetus*

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 – 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*

Wicca – An it harm none, do what thou wilt [do whatever you will, as long as it harms nobody, including yourself]. *The Wiccan Rede*

Yoruba (Nigeria) – 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*

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

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