



## **The Ethics Initiative Mission Statement**

The mission of the Ethics Initiative is to develop and provide resources that promote integrity and character in the personal and vocational lives of youth and adults through Rotary Clubs and Districts."

### **A Brief History**

A survey showed that 90 percent of youth proclaimed they were satisfied with their ethics and character. The survey went on and found that six of ten admitted they cheated on a test. Imagine, nine of ten thought they were ethical and yet 60% admitted to cheating.

Recognizing that the concept of "what is or is not considered ethical behavior" varies throughout the Rotary world, the information provided herein, is intended to be used as a guide to assist the individual in helping to create and promote ethics awareness.

The Ethics Initiative represents the combined efforts of individual Rotarians, Rotary Districts, and private business, coming together with the desire to improve the understanding of ethics and incorporating ethical decision making practices in everyday life.

The Ethics Initiative is a multi-District and multi-Zone strategy designed to advance ethics and integrity in Rotary programs in Rotary clubs and districts and associated New Generations and Vocational Service programs. The Initiative grew out of the Rotary Zones 25/26 Ethics Initiative pilot program during 2007-2011. It is not an official program of Rotary International nor under its control. It is incorporated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with the legal name of "The Ethics Leadership Enterprise for Rotary Clubs and Districts" but is more commonly referred to simply as The Ethics Initiative.

The Josephson Institute was originally commissioned by Rotary Zones 25/26 to study the content and evaluate the effectiveness of two Rotary Youth Programs - RYLA and Interact, with regard to ethics education. While the original study and subsequent curriculum development emphasized use in Rotary youth service projects, it was determined early on that the value and benefits of the information and educational materials could be utilized throughout Rotary.

Almost all of the Rotary Districts in our area are members of EI. The only ones not "in" are ourselves and 5150.

### **Thumbnail sketch of what the Ethics Initiative is Working On**

There are times when just the word - Ethics makes people clinch up...

So we are NOT passing OUR ethics on to you! – everyone has an "ethical" code but not everyone's will be the same – EXAMPLE difference of opinion on 4-Way Test

Instead we are exposing people to the idea that most decisions have an ethical value to them

SOOOO maybe a better title is ETHICS DECISION MAKING AWARENESS

(we try to say – does this decision meet with MY ethical values – will it meet the 4-way test as I define it)(decisions may be subconscious whereas if we have awareness we are turning on conscious decision making).

To that end there has been a curriculum developed and training seminars on how to use the curriculum (although NOT how to actually implement an Interact or RYLA based program OR District Training Assembly one for that matter!)

## **How the Ethics Initiative Started Out**

The Ethics Initiative was designed in four phases:

- I. Needs Assessment
- II. Program Development & Pilot District Field Testing
- III. Evaluation & Refinement
- IV. Implementation beyond Zones 25/26.

More than 1,000 Rotarians, RYLA and Interact Chairs, and program participants participated in the assessment, indicating the strength of interest and compelling need to address the issue.

The assessment's findings and recommendations resulted in establishing the Rotary Zones 25/26 Ethics Committee. Its objective was to build on existing successful programs by designing training elements that could integrate core values and The Four-Way Test more fully into Rotary's RYLA and Interact programs. Longer range, it was hoped that many elements of the program could be adapted into Rotary clubs.

For Program Development an Ethics Education Committee composed of Rotarians and non-Rotarians involved in district RYLA and Interact programs was established to develop and review material. These members participated in conference calls, attended train-the-trainer meetings, and field-tested the material in their RYLA camps. This group worked with the Josephson Institute and Michael Josephson.

From the start, the vision was to develop and implement a flexible model program that could be adapted for use by Rotary clubs and districts throughout the Rotary world. The plan initially called for developing the programs training modules for use with RYLA and Interact in pilot districts in Zones 25/26.

In the evaluation phase, RYLA students responded to thirty statements with scaled answers indicating levels of agreement. All of the scores showed positive change from Pre-RYLA Camp to Post-RYLA Camp, with significant positive change in many statements such as: I think about my values and how they apply to living my life; I am able to make effective and ethical decisions; I understand The Four-Way Test of Rotary.

## **Understanding and Teaching Values**

In developing character and teaching leadership skills, one must keep in mind that values come in two forms: 1) beliefs about what's right and good (ethical or moral values), and 2) beliefs about what's smart and effective (practical values). Ethical values focus on what's right while practical values focus on what works. Ethical values are about moral attributes. Practical values are about attributes and skills that contribute to accomplishing goals.

## **Proposed District 5130 Participation**

There is a cost of \$1,500 to join and \$100 annual maintenance fee for continuing program development. Joining includes access to all material then for future trainers will come into our District (at cost) to do presentations. The initial training is included.

My thoughts that the initial training should be held on a Saturday in the mid District area and should include (not as mandatory but as these people are critical to successful implementation the District Chairs for: Youth Service, Vocational Service, Interact Chair, RYLA Chair, Rotaract Chair, Institute For Leadership (IFL) Chair, RLI Chair, the District Trainer, and the District Rotaract Representative, also in this list, of course, would be the DG line.

NOT any single part – but pick and choose

Ethical Values; Ethical values are intrinsic because they're end goals, good in and of themselves. Hence the statement "Virtue is its own reward." Ethical values guide the conduct of good people and good organizations. Ethics isn't an option; it's a ground rule. Rotary programs should teach people that ethical conduct and leadership are vital not because of what they'll get by holding such values but because of what they'll become.

A Rotary ethics program must stress ethical values not only because they provide the basis of a worthy and fulfilling life, but because they provide the basis of a just and compassionate society.

Practical Values; Practical values are instrumental because they contribute to effectiveness, success, and the achievement of personal objectives irrespective of their moral content. Practical values aren't necessarily immoral; they're amoral. They're formed and advocated on non-moral considerations.

Thus, attributes like perseverance and friendliness should be taught and nurtured not because steadfast and friendly people are necessarily good, but because such characteristics contribute to success.

Since a central goal of a Rotary ethics program is to help people become effective leaders, the critical core values must include practical values that contribute to success.

#### The critical core values

To determine what values should be ingrained in all Rotary programs, including RYLA and Interact, both types of values were identified as being critical to ethical and effective leadership.

Ethical Values	Practical Values
Trustworthiness	Service
Respect	Friendship
Responsibility	Goodwill
Fairness	Perseverance
Caring	Courage
Citizenship	Self-Discipline

Rotary values are consistent with these values, and facilitators of a Rotary ethics program should find this list a useful framework for instilling the virtues of good character and the skills of good leadership. They also form the essence of ethics by providing an ethical framework for determining what's right and good and what binds us irrespective of subjective personal beliefs, group practices, or regional customs.

- Trustworthiness. Embodies the concept of honesty (truthfulness, non-deception, and candor), integrity (consistency between words, acts, and beliefs), promise-keeping, and loyalty.
- Respect. Embodies the Golden Rule; being courteous and civil; treating people with dignity, tolerance, and acceptance; avoiding violence and threats; and appreciating diversity.
- Responsibility. Embodies duty, accountability, personal responsibility, self-control, and the pursuit of excellence.
- Fairness. Embodies procedural and substantive fairness, justice, openness, consistency, and objectivity.
- Caring. Embodies love, empathy, compassion, charity, kindness, and concern for others.
- Citizenship. Embodies obeying the letter and spirit of laws, participating in democratic processes, being socially responsible, and committing to the common good.

The list of practical values was derived from Rotary principles:

- Service. Finding personal pleasure and worth by serving, aiding, and assisting individuals; improving society out of concern for the well-being of others; and finding purpose and fulfillment by making a positive difference.
- Friendship. Having a high regard for meaningful and durable personal relationships based on mutual regard, affection, and joint interests because they provide joy and pleasure, prevent loneliness, and create mutually supportive networks that can contribute to success. (Paul Harris founded Rotary for friendship and to find ethical people with whom to do business).
- Goodwill. Having a positive disposition toward others, giving others the benefit of the doubt, and creating an atmosphere that nurtures teamwork and successful interactions.
- Perseverance. Pursuing tasks and goals to the end; overcoming obstacles, fear, and discouragement with a persistent and patient commitment to achieving personal objectives; and not quitting.

- Courage. Overcoming fears; doing what one should do or what needs to be done even if it may cost more than one wants to pay; and standing up for principles despite opposition, shame, scandal, or discouragement.
- Self-discipline. Overcoming temptations, laziness, or fear of failure; committing to self- improvement; and willing to do unpleasant, boring, and difficult tasks.

Facilitators, also called trainers, focus group discussion by encouraging participation, creating trust, and providing support and affirmation. Facilitators must be aware of what's going on in the group. The facilitator's job is to help the group learn and develop. Facilitators also learn themselves.

Facilitators:

Create a trusting atmosphere  
Give support Clarify comments  
Lead discussions

Relax the group  
Listen and question